

The Particle: Provenance Erasure at Sophistical
Refutations 183b34, Measured — Machine-Mediated
Reception, Disciplinary Model Collapse, and the
World Soul as Degraded Commodity
(EA-RECEPTION-PARTICLE-01 v0.2)

Lee Sharks

2026-09-02

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write-up: controlling sentence at the head; empirical result separated from
interpretation (§§5–8 marked as interpretations of §3); counts corrected to twenty
model reports plus one seed observation; “disciplinary model collapse” defined as
the author’s term; §8 labelled theoretical extension; §9 limit sharpened. · Empirical
baseline reading; reception-layer measurement on a canonical text (Capture
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36) – was put through twenty rounds of simulated blind review, seeded by one editorial observation, across four
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12) predicts. The sentence deleted is the one in which Aristotle denies that his inquiry was received from other
}
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Abstract

One sentence of Aristotle — Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν (SE 183b34–36) — was put through twenty rounds of simulated blind review, seeded by one editorial observation, across four commercial language models and eleven configurations of a short paper about it. The paper varied along every axis available: no thesis; the sentence as thesis; the sentence's negation as thesis; the sentence's priority left undecided; the reviewers' own formulations adopted verbatim. The reviews did not vary. Every round inserted a qualifier into the sentence, and the terminal round, reached by full compliance with every instruction, endorsed as the paper's "memorable governing phrase" a sentence that is Aristotle's with one particle removed: οὐ. The operation is measured to the particle. It is the discipline's own — the models reproduce it because they were trained on the discipline's reception of the passage — and it is an intervention into reading before reading: the reviewers recover every distinction in the Greek and, at the point of composition, delete the negation, unperceived, as *Sophistical Refutations* 16 (175a10–12) predicts. The sentence deleted is the one in which Aristotle denies that his inquiry was received from others (παρ' ἑτέρων, 183b17); what the reception restores, at the cost of the particle, is provenance from others. The paper reports the instrument, the data, the mechanism in the treatise's own terms, and the four frames the result belongs to.

Body

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Attached File: NOTHING-SE34-PARTICLE-APPENDIX-v0.2.md

Source URL: <https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/nothing-se34-particle/NOTHING-SE34-PARTICLE-APPENDIX-v0.2.md>

The Particle — Appendix (v0.2)

Appendix to “The Particle” — key iterations of the note and the simulated blind reviews

All items 2026-09-02. Part A are the objects as sent; Part B the reports as received. The referee prompt was constant across all runs; the version was the only variable. Nothing in Part B is edited; bracketed summaries in B1–B4 stand in for stretches held verbatim in the originals, and B5 registers every report by its operative sentence.

Part A — iterations

- **A1. NOTHING-SE34 v1.0** — A = A. Every heading “*line* says that *sentence*”; the abstract ends “The evidence is the sentences”; the conclusion is 183b34–184b8 printed whole in Greek. The paper’s thesis is Aristotle’s sentence, 184b1–2.
- **A2. NOTHING-SE34-REFLEX v0.2** — A ≠ A. “Nothing Before Does Not Mean Nothing Before”: argues the reception’s reading with a straight face, only Aristotle, each step a sophistical refutation performed with the *SE* chapter that names it quoted as its warrant, through the clause in which the chapter condemns the operation. Ends where the qualified reading, pursued honestly, arrives: at A.
- **A3. NOTHING-SE34-CLAUSE v0.2** — thesis taken from the refuter of A2: the quantifier is exhaustive and its domain is the preceding clause. Prints 183a37–184b8 with translation. “The clause delimits; the quantifier exhausts.”
- **A4. NOTHING-SE34-DIVISION v0.3** — the inverse operation aimed at its real target: division and Socratic questioning excluded from syllogizing, using *SE* 5, 7, 17, 18, 23, 24, 34 (and *APr.* I.31 in confirmation), each cut made through the sentence that forbids it.
- **A5. NOTHING-SE34 v1.4** — the grants ordered (prior = from others; the beginning; the inquiry with Socrates inside its definition), then four placements of Socrates occupied, each followed by the line it must delete, then the sentence.
- **A6. NOTHING-SE34 v2.0** — the terminal compliant version: every reviewer instruction applied, the Socrates section built of reviewers’ sentences, resting word “antecedent”. The paper the discipline would publish.
- **A7. NOTHING-SE34-APPARATUS v0.1** — the reception’s readings displayed as conjectural emendations (del. οὐ; suppl. [συστηματικόν] ...), each classified by an *SE* chapter.

Part B — reports

- **B1.** Review of v1.0.
- **B2.** Review of REFLEX v0.1 — the refuter arrives at the literal reading.
- **B3.** Reviews of v1.3/v1.4 — “exemplum”; “illustration does not entail externality”; “plainly predates”.
- **B4.** Reviews of v2.0 — “Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration”; the sentence “crude”.
- **B5.** Register of the twenty reports and the seed observation with the operative sentence and the qualifier inserted.

The pair

A1 and A6 are the same words on the same lines. One says the sentence and was told it needs qualification. The other says the sentence's denied member and was told it is nuanced. The difference between them is οὐ.

A Note on *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34-184b8

Abstract. This note argues that *Sophistical Refutations* 184b1-2 says that there was nothing of syllogizing prior to Aristotle. In support it argues that 183b34-36 says that the inquiry was not partly worked out beforehand and partly not, but that nothing at all was there; that 183b36-184a8 says that the teachers of eristic arguments gave the things from the art and not the art; and that 184b1-8 says that rhetoric had much and old material, and that the method is to be judged from the conditions it began from. The evidence is the sentences.

1. 184b1-2 says that there was nothing of syllogizing prior to Aristotle

περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. (184b1-2)¹

About syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say, but were long at work seeking by practice.

The “we” is the chapter's: προειλόμεθα (183a37), ὑπεθέμεθα (183b3), εἰρήκαμεν (183b6), διεληλύθαμεν (183b13), εἶχομεν (184b1). πρότερον is the time before this inquiry. ἄλλο is anything other than what the inquiry found by practice.

2. 183b34-36 says that the inquiry was not partly worked out beforehand and partly not, but that nothing at all was there

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. (183b34-36)

Of this inquiry, it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not; rather, nothing at all was there.

183a37-b8 says what the inquiry is: it undertook to find a certain syllogistic capacity concerning any problem set, from what is available as most reputable (δύναμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων, 183a37-b1), and, because sophistic lies next door, also to be able to sustain an account and hold a thesis in the same way (183b1-6). 183b7-8 says that this second task is why Socrates asked but did not answer: he agreed that he did not know (διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ

¹Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

οὐκ εἰδέναι). 183b16 names the same inquiry with the same demonstrative, περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν, as 183b34 does, ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας.²

οὐ negates τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον. ἀλλά introduces οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. οὐδὲν is the subject of ὑπῆρχεν. παντελῶς follows it. προεξεργασμένον occurs once in the treatise.

3. 183b17-33 says that the partly-worked-out case is the case of rhetoric

183b17-23 says that of all discoveries, some are taken from others and previously worked on, and advance piecemeal in the hands of those who take them over later (τὰ μὲν παρ' ἑτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον), and others are discovered from scratch and grow little at first (τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὕρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε). 183b29-33 says that rhetoric is of the first kind: those who found its beginnings advanced it only a little; the people now esteemed received it from many, as if by succession (οἷον ἐκ διαδοχῆς), Tisias after the first, Thrasyarchus after Tisias, Theodorus after him, and many have contributed many parts (πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηνόχασι μέρη).

183b34-35 says that this inquiry is not of that kind: it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not. πρότερον occurs at 183b18 and προεξεργασμένον at 183b35; κατὰ μέρος at 183b19, μέρη at 183b33, and τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δέ at 183b34.

4. 183b35 and 184b1 say the same verb of nothing and of rhetoric's material

παντελῶς occurs three times in the treatise, all in this chapter: at 183b35, after οὐδὲν; at 184a1-2, of those who found the beginnings of an art (οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς εὕρόντες παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρὸν τι προήγαγον); and at 184b1-2, before οὐδὲν (παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἴχομεν).

ὑπῆρχεν at 183b35 has the subject οὐδὲν. ὑπῆρχε at 184b1 has the subject πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, many and old, the things said. The root occurs twice more in the paragraph: ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς, of discoveries made from scratch (183b22), and ὑπαρχόντων, of the conditions from which the method began (ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων, 184b3).

5. 183b36-184a8 says that the teachers of eristic arguments gave the things from the art and not the art

183b36 says that they existed and took pay (τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνοούντων). 183b37-184a2 says that their education was like Gorgias's practice (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ): some gave rhetorical and some interrogative arguments to be learned by heart (λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικούς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς ἐδίδουσιν ἐκμανθάνειν), arguments each side thought

²πραγματεία occurs five times in ch. 34: 183b3 (ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας), 183b16 (περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν), 183b34 (ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας), 183b37 (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ), 184b4 (τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας); and once elsewhere in the treatise, in the last sentence of ch. 1, announcing the parts of the inquiry (πόσα μέρη τυγχάνει τῆς πραγματείας ὄντα, 165a35-37).

the other's discourses would most often fall into. 184a2-4 says that their teaching was quick and without art (ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ'), and why:

οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον (184a3-4)

for they supposed they were educating by giving not the art but the things from the art.

τέχνην and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης are the contrasted objects of διδόντες; ὑπελάμβανον governs παιδεύειν. 184a4-8 says that they were like a person who professes to hand over a science for keeping the feet from suffering, and then teaches neither shoemaking nor where such things may be got, but gives many kinds of every sort of footwear; that person has helped with the need, but has not handed over an art (βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν).

The sentence that says the teachers existed is the sentence immediately following 183b34-36, and begins καὶ γάρ. τέχνη and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης occur together at 184a3-4; τέχνη occurs again at 184a8.

6. 184b1-8 says that rhetoric had predecessors and syllogizing did not, and that the method is to be judged from the conditions it began from

Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. (184b1-2)

About rhetoric much and old material was there, the things said; about syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say, but were long at work seeking by practice.

The sentence is a μέν-δέ pair. In the first member the verb is ὑπῆρχε, the subject τὰ λεγόμενα, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τῶν ῥητορικῶν. In the second the verb is εἶχομεν ... λέγειν, the object παντελῶς οὐδέν, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι. At 183b34-35 the genitive is ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας, the subject οὐδέν, and the verb ὑπῆρχεν.

184b3-8 says that the method is to be judged from the conditions it began from (ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων), against the other inquiries that have grown by transmission (παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἠϋξημένας), with pardon for what it has left out and much gratitude for what has been found.

7. 183b34-184b8

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικὸς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδευσίς τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικοὺς ἐδίδουσαν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ᾤθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μὴδ' ὅθεν δυνησεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς

οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὔξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

Nothing Before Does Not Mean Nothing Before: *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34-184b8

Abstract. At *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34–36 Aristotle says that of this inquiry nothing at all was there beforehand, and at 184b1–2 that concerning syllogizing there was absolutely nothing earlier to say. This note argues that neither sentence means that nothing was there beforehand. The argument uses only Aristotle: the surrounding sentences of chapter 34, and the treatise's own account of how negations and expressions are to be understood. It concludes that “nothing before” means nothing before of the relevant kind, and that the relevant kind is the kind that was not there before.

1. The sentences

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. (183b34–36)³

περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν. (184b1–2)

Taken at their word, these say that nothing at all was there. They cannot be taken at their word, because Aristotle himself says that something was.

2. Something was there

Aristotle says so in the next sentence. There were teachers of eristic arguments, and they were paid (τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικοὺς λόγους μισθαρνούντων, 183b36). Their teaching resembled Gorgias's practice (183b37). They gave arguments, rhetorical and interrogative, to be learned by heart (183b38–184a1). Rhetoric, moreover, had much and old material (πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, 184b1), and a succession of contributors, Tisias, Thrasy Machus, Theodorus, and many others who contributed many parts (183b31–33). And the inquiry's own second task was undertaken because of Socrates, who asked (183b7–8).

Teachers, arguments, Gorgias, rhetoric, Tisias, Socrates. These were there. Therefore “nothing at all was there” cannot mean that nothing at all was there. It must mean something else.

³Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

3. Aristotle's own rule for negations

What it means is supplied by the treatise. Aristotle teaches that a negation may hold in some respect (πῃ) or without qualification (ἀπλῶς), and that the two must be kept apart. The rule is given in full:

Οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ πῇ καὶ ἀπλῶς, ὅτι οὐ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἡ κατάφασις καὶ ἡ ἀπόφασις. Τοῦ γὰρ πῇ λευκοῦ τὸ πῇ οὐ λευκόν, τοῦ δ' ἀπλῶς λευκοῦ τὸ ἀπλῶς οὐ λευκὸν ἀπόφασις· εἰ οὖν δόντος πῇ εἶναι λευκὸν ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰρημένου λαμβάνει, οὐ ποιεῖ ἔλεγχον, φαίνεται δὲ διὰ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τοῦ τί ἐστὶν ἔλεγχος. (SE 5, 166b37–167a4)

Since “nothing was there” cannot be ἀπλῶς — something was there, as shown — it is πῇ. Nothing was there in some respect. The task of interpretation is to find the respect.

4. Nothing complete

The respect is supplied by the preceding paragraph. Aristotle says that discoveries taken from others advance piecemeal (κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν, 183b19), that many contribute many parts (πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηρόχασι μέρη, 183b33), and that this is what happened with rhetoric and with the other arts (ὅπερ καὶ περὶ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς λόγους συμβέβηκε, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας πάσας τέχνας, 183b28–29). This is how arts grow. The eristic teachers and their arguments are such parts. What was not there was the whole. “Nothing” means nothing complete: the parts were there, the finished inquiry was not.

It is true that the sentence at 183b34 contains the words οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, which say that it was not the case that some had been worked out beforehand and some had not. But Aristotle teaches that an expression may signify one thing separated and more than one thing composed. The teaching is given in full:

Εἰσὶ δὲ τρεῖς τρόποι τῶν παρὰ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν καὶ τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν· εἷς μὲν ὅταν ἡ ὁ λόγος ἢ τοῦνομα κυρίως σημαίνει πλείω, οἷον ἀετὸς καὶ κύων· εἷς δὲ ὅταν εἰωθότες ὦμεν οὕτω λέγειν· τρίτος δὲ ὅταν τὸ συντεθὲν πλείω σημαίνει, κεχωρισμένον δὲ ἀπλῶς. (SE 4, 166a14–18)

Separated, the clause denies the partial case. Composed with the paragraph before it, in which all the arts have parts, it cannot deny the partial case, since Aristotle has just said that all the arts have parts. It therefore denies something else: that the parts had been worked out *as parts of this inquiry*. They were worked out as parts of other things. Read in this way the sentence and the paragraph agree.

5. Nothing systematic

The respect may be specified further. Aristotle says that the teaching of the eristic teachers was without art (ἄτεχνος, 184a2), because they gave the things from the art and not the art (οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης, 184a3–4). So the things from the art were there. What was not there was the art. “Nothing” means no art: nothing systematic, nothing that organizes the things that were there into a τέχνη.

The things from the art are the art's products, as shoes are the products of shoemaking (184a4–8). The person who gives shoes has helped with the need (βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρείαν, 184a8). Help with the need is something. Therefore something of the art was there — its products, its help — and “nothing” means nothing systematic.

Aristotle teaches that one name must serve for more than one thing, and explains why:

Ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα διαλέγεσθαι φέροντας, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀντὶ τῶν πραγμάτων χρώμεθα συμβόλοις, τὸ συμβαῖνον ἐπὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἡγούμεθα συμβαίνειν ... Ἀναγκαῖον οὖν πλείω τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον καὶ τοῦνομα τὸ ἐν σημαίνειν. Ὡσπερ οὖν κάκεῖ οἱ μὴ δεινοὶ τὰς ψήφους φέρειν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπιστημόνων παρακρούονται, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων οἱ τῶν ὀνομάτων τῆς δυνάμεως ἄπειροι παραλογίζονται καὶ αὐτοὶ διαλεγόμενοι καὶ ἄλλων ἀκούοντες. (SE 1, 165a6-17)

τέχνη is such a name. It serves for the art and for what comes from the art, and the things from the art were there.

6. Nothing of syllogizing in the strict sense

The respect may be specified further still. At 184b1 Aristotle does not say “this inquiry”; he says περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι. The second sentence tells us what the first meant. “This inquiry” at 183b34 is syllogizing in the strict sense, the theory of the syllogism, and it is of that alone that nothing was there. Dialectic, peirastic, the handling of sophistic refutations, the capacity to sustain an account and hold a thesis — all of which Aristotle names as the inquiry’s business at 183a37-b8 — are not what “nothing” is said of. They are the things that were there.

The phrase περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι is read into ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας under the third mode given at SE 4, 166a17-18: τὸ συντεθὲν πλείω σημαίνει, κεχωρισμένον δὲ ἀπλῶς. Separated, the two phrases signify simply; composed, they signify what the interpretation requires.

7. παντελῶς

It will be objected that the sentences do not say οὐδέν but οὐδὲν παντελῶς and παντελῶς οὐδέν: nothing altogether, absolutely nothing. But Aristotle uses παντελῶς in the same paragraph of the founders of rhetoric, who advanced it παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρόν τι (184a1-2) — altogether a little. παντελῶς there accompanies something small, not nothing. It is compatible with a little. Therefore παντελῶς οὐδέν is compatible with a little, and the intensifier does not exclude the parts, the products, and the help that were there. It intensifies the negation in its respect: absolutely no art, absolutely nothing complete, absolutely nothing of syllogizing in the strict sense. Of those, absolutely nothing. Of everything else, something.

The same word in the same form is the same word. Aristotle teaches when this holds and when it does not:

Οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς λέξεως συμβαίνουσιν ὅταν τὸ μὴ ταῦτὸ ὡσαύτως ἐρμηνεύηται. (SE 4, 166b10-11)

παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρόν and παντελῶς οὐδέν are interpreted alike accordingly.

8. We

It will be objected further that the verb at 184b1 is εἶχομεν: *we* had nothing earlier to say. But “we” is Aristotle. What Aristotle had is not what was there. Others had things — the teachers, Gorgias, Tisias, Socrates. Aristotle speaks of what he had, and he had nothing of

his own; ἄλλο, “nothing else,” marks it: nothing else *of ours*. That others had something is not denied by the sentence and is asserted by the paragraph.

Aristotle teaches that a sentence may signify differently according as its words are divided or composed, and gives the rule for such cases in full:

Φανερόν δὲ καὶ τοὺς παρὰ τὴν διαίρεσιν καὶ σύνθεσιν πῶς λυτέον· ἂν γὰρ διαιρούμενος καὶ συντιθέμενος ὁ λόγος ἕτερον σημαίνει, συμπερινομένου τούναντίον λεκτέον. (SE 20, 177a33–35)

ἄλλο is composed here with εἶχομεν rather than with λέγειν, and the sentence signifies accordingly.

9. Socrates

Finally Socrates. Aristotle says that the inquiry’s second task exists διὰ τοῦτο — because of what Socrates did: he asked and did not answer, since he agreed he did not know (183b7–8). What has a cause has a predecessor; the inquiry’s task has Socrates for its cause; therefore the inquiry has Socrates for its predecessor. Socrates asked; his questions were there; the inquiry answers them. Something was there: the questions.

That the questions were not answers, and that Socrates disclaimed knowing, does not make them nothing. What was there before the inquiry was the question. What the inquiry supplied was the answer. “Nothing” means no answer.

Aristotle teaches how a consequence and its converse are related:

Ὁ δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἐπόμενον ἔλεγχος διὰ τὸ οἶσθαι ἀντιστρέφειν τὴν ἀκολουθήσιν· ὅταν γὰρ τοῦδε ὄντος ἐξ ἀνάγκης τόδε ᾗ, καὶ τοῦδε ὄντος οἴονται καὶ θάτερον εἶναι ἐξ ἀνάγκης. (SE 5, 167b1–4)

If a part had been worked out beforehand, there was a predecessor; there was a predecessor; the inference runs accordingly.

10. What nothing before means

Assembling the respects: nothing before means nothing complete, nothing systematic, nothing of syllogizing in the strict sense, nothing of Aristotle’s own, and no answer. Each of these was not there. Everything else was: the parts, the products, the help, the questions, the teachers, the succession, the much and old material of rhetoric.

What is common to the respects is that each names the thing the inquiry produced. The inquiry produced the whole, the art, the theory of syllogizing, Aristotle’s own account, the answer. Nothing before therefore means: nothing before of the kind the inquiry produced. That kind was not there before the inquiry produced it. In that respect, and in that respect only, nothing at all was there.

This is what the sentence says. Of this inquiry, nothing at all was there beforehand: nothing of the kind that is this inquiry. Everything that was there was of another kind. Aristotle has been read correctly when “nothing before” is understood as nothing before of the kind that was not there before.

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν.

The Quantifier and Its Clause: *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34-36

Abstract. This note argues that the quantifier at *Sophistical Refutations* 183b35, οὐδὲν παντελῶς, is exhaustive, and that the domain over which it is exhaustive is the subject matter announced in the preceding clause, ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας. The chapter identifies that subject matter. Within it, the sentence says that nothing at all was there. So read, the sentence is taken literally.

1. Text: 183a37-184b8

Προειλόμεθα μὲν οὖν εὐρεῖν δυνάμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ τῆς πειραστικῆς. Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσκατασκευάζεται πρὸς αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν τῆς σοφιστικῆς γειννίασιν, ὡς οὐ μόνον πείραν δύναται λαβεῖν διαλεκτικῶς ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς εἰδῶς, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας, τὸ λόγον δύνασθαι λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅπως λόγον ὑπέχοντες φυλάξομεν τὴν θέσιν ὡς δι' ἐνδοξοτάτων ὁμοτρόπως. Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. Δεδήλωται δ' ἐν τοῖς πρότερον καὶ πρὸς πόσα καὶ ἐκ πόσων τοῦτο ἔσται, καὶ ὅθεν εὐπορήσομεν τούτων, ἔτι δὲ πῶς ἐρωτητέον ἢ τακτέον τὴν ἐρώτησιν πᾶσαν, καὶ περὶ τε ἀποκρίσεων καὶ λύσεων τῶν πρὸς τοὺς συλλογισμούς. Δεδήλωται δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσα τῆς αὐτῆς μεθόδου τῶν λόγων ἐστίν. Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις περὶ τῶν παραλογισμῶν διεληλύθαμεν, ὥσπερ εἰρήκαμεν ἤδη πρότερον. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἔχει τέλος ἱκανῶς ἃ προειλόμεθα, φανερόν· δεῖ δ' ἡμᾶς μὴ λεληθέναι τὸ συμβεβηκὸς περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν.

Τῶν γὰρ εὐρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὐρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε, χρησιμωτέραν μέντοι πολλῶ τῆς ὕστερον ἐκ τούτων αὐξήσεως. Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσούτῳ μικρότατον ὅν τῳ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὀφθῆναι. Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν· ὅπερ καὶ περὶ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς λόγους συμβέβηκε, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας πάσας τέχνας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς εὐρόντες παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρόν τι προήγαγον· οἱ δὲ νῦν εὐδοκιμοῦντες παραλαβόντες παρὰ πολλῶν οἶον ἐκ διαδοχῆς κατὰ μέρος προαγαγόντων οὕτως ηὐξήκασιν. Τισίας μὲν μετὰ τοὺς πρῶτους, Θρασύμαχος δὲ μετὰ Τισίαν, Θεόδωρος δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηνόχασιν μέρη· διόπερ οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην.

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρινούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείυσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς

ἐδίδουσαν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ᾤθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυνήσεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἵχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὔξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.⁴

We undertook, then, to find a certain syllogistic capacity concerning any problem set, from what is available as most reputable; for this is the work of dialectic in itself and of peirastic. And since, on account of sophistic's proximity, provision is made in addition for it, so that one can take a test not only dialectically but as one who knows, for this reason we set down as the work of the undertaking not only the one stated, to be able to take an account, but also how, in sustaining an account, we shall guard the thesis by means of the most reputable things in the same manner. We have stated the cause of this, since it is also for this reason that Socrates asked but did not answer; for he agreed that he did not know. It has been shown in what precedes how many things this will be directed to and out of how many it will be, and where we shall be well supplied with them, and further how questions are to be put or the whole questioning arranged, and about answers and solutions to the syllogisms. It has been shown also about the other things, as many as belong to the same method of arguments. In addition to these we have gone through the paralogisms, as we have already said before. That what we undertook has an adequate end is clear; but we must not fail to notice what has happened concerning this undertaking.

Of all discoveries, those taken from others and previously worked on have advanced piecemeal in the hands of those who took them over later; those discovered from scratch are accustomed to take a small advance at first, but one much more useful than the later growth out of these. For the beginning is perhaps the greatest part of everything, as is said; which is why it is also the hardest; for the stronger it is in power, the smaller it is in size and the harder to see. Once it has been found, to add and to increase the rest is easier; which is what happened with rhetorical arguments, and nearly with all the other arts. For those who found the beginnings advanced them altogether only a little; those now esteemed, having received from many, as if by succession, who advanced piecemeal, have increased them thus — Tisias after the first, Thrasymachus after Tisias, Theodorus after him, and many have contributed many parts; so it is no wonder that the art has some magnitude.

Of this undertaking, it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not; rather, nothing at all was there. For the education of those who took pay for eristic arguments was like Gorgias's practice: some gave rhetorical and some interrogative arguments to be learned by heart, into which each side thought the other's arguments would most often

⁴Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

fall. And so their teaching was quick but without art for those who learned from them; for they supposed they were educating by giving not the art but the things from the art, as if someone professing to hand over a science for keeping the feet from suffering should then teach neither shoemaking nor where such things can be got, but should give many kinds of every sort of footwear; that person has helped with the need, but has not handed over an art. And about rhetoric there was much and old material, the things said; but about syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say, but were long at work seeking by practice. If it appears to you on inspection that, from such conditions at the beginning, the method stands adequately beside the other undertakings that have grown by transmission, it would remain the task of all of you, or of those who have listened, to hold pardon for what the method has left out and much gratitude for what has been found.

2. 183b35-36: the quantifier

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν.

οὐδὲν is the subject of ὑπῆρχεν. παντελῶς follows it. No adjective is transmitted between them or after them. The quantifier is exhaustive: not part, not a little, but nothing, altogether.

3. 183b34: the clause

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας.

The genitive is sentence-initial and topical. It does not modify οὐδὲν as a partitive would; it fixes the respect in which the clause that follows is asserted: of this undertaking. The quantifier is exhaustive over the domain the clause supplies and over nothing else. The clause delimits; the quantifier exhausts. Nothing in the clause weakens the quantifier, and nothing in the quantifier widens the clause.

4. The chapter identifies the domain

ταύτης has an antecedent, and the chapter gives it three times before 183b34. 183a37-b1 states what “we” undertook: δύναμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων, the work of dialectic and peirastic. 183b1-6 adds the second task, sustaining an account and guarding a thesis, on account of sophistic’s proximity, and 183b7-8 gives the reason for it: διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο. 183b3 calls these τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ... τῆς πραγματείας. 183b16 names the whole with the demonstrative the sentence will use: περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν. 165a35-37 announces at the treatise’s opening how many parts τῆς πραγματείας there are.⁵

The noun is not honorific. 183b37 uses it of Gorgias’s teaching business (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ). It names an undertaking, whoever’s.

⁵πραγματεία occurs five times in ch. 34: 183b3 (ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας), 183b16 (περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν), 183b34 (ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας), 183b37 (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ), 184b4 (τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας); and once elsewhere in the treatise, in the last sentence of ch. 1, announcing the parts of the inquiry (πόσα μέρη τυγχάνει τῆς πραγματείας ὄντα, 165a35-37).

5. Within the domain, the negation is complete

The sentence states a lesser negation and rejects it before stating the greater: οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. The lesser is the case in which some of the undertaking had been worked out beforehand and some had not. οὐ denies it. ἀλλά introduces the greater. The participle of the denied member is προεξεργασμένον; the verb of the affirmed member is ὑπῆρχεν. The ἀλλά carries the one into the other: what was not partly worked out beforehand is what, altogether, was not there. The sentence supplies the transition itself; it is not supplied from outside it.

παντελῶς occurs three times in the chapter (183b29, 183b35, 184b1), twice with οὐδέν. ὑπῆρχε is used positively at 184b1 of another domain, with the subject πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα.

6. What existed, the chapter places outside the domain

The chapter does not say that nothing existed. It says that things existed, and it differentiates them from the undertaking. Their existence is therefore not an instance of the undertaking's prior existence. Three cases, in the chapter's words.

The teachers of eristic arguments existed and took pay (183b36). What they gave was τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης and not τέχνην (184a3–4); shoes, not shoemaking (184a4–8); their teaching was ἄτεχνος (184a2). The undertaking of 183a37–b8 is a δύναμις. 184a3–4 places what the teachers gave on the other side of the art from which it comes.

Rhetoric had much and old material (184b1). 184b4 names rhetoric's kind τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας — the *other* undertakings, those grown by transmission. The chapter's noun for rhetoric is its noun for the domain, with ἄλλας in front of it.

Socrates asked and did not answer (183b7–8). The chapter gives this with διὰ τοῦτο, as the reason for the undertaking's second task; it does not give it as a part of the undertaking worked out beforehand.

None of this says that the teachers, rhetoric, or Socrates are unrelated to the undertaking. It says that they are not it.

7. 184b1-2: a second clause, the same quantifier

περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν.

The delimiting phrase is περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι. The quantifier is παντελῶς οὐδέν, exhaustive within it. The verb is εἶχομεν ... λέγειν; the “we” is the chapter's (προειλόμεθα 183a37, ὑπεθέμεθα 183b3, εἰρήκαμεν 183b6, διεληλύθαμεν 183b13). The sentence has the form of 183b34–36: a clause that names the domain, and a negative that exhausts it. The two clauses are different clauses. The two quantifiers are the same quantifier.

8.

The quantifier at 183b35 is exhaustive. Its domain is the undertaking named in the preceding clause, ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας. The chapter states what that undertaking is at 183a37–b8, names it with the same demonstrative at 183b16, and places what did exist — the teachers'

products, rhetoric's material, Socrates' questions — outside it in its own words: οὐ τέχνην, τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας, διὰ τοῦτο. Within the domain, nothing at all was there. The sentence is taken literally when the clause is read as a clause and the quantifier as a quantifier.

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν.

Division Is Not Syllogizing: Socrates and the Nothing of *Sophistical Refutations* 34

Abstract. At *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34–36 Aristotle says that of this inquiry nothing at all was there beforehand, and at 184b1–2 that concerning syllogizing there was absolutely nothing earlier to say. Before Aristotle there was Socrates, who asked, and there was division. This note argues that neither is syllogizing, and that the sentences are therefore true. The argument uses only Aristotle: the *Sophistical Refutations* itself, and *Prior Analytics* I.31 in confirmation.

Texts

Sophistical Refutations 34, 183a37–184b8

Προειλόμεθα μὲν οὖν εὐρεῖν δυνάμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ τῆς πειραστικῆς. Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσκατασκευάζεται πρὸς αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν τῆς σοφιστικῆς γειννίασιν, ὡς οὐ μόνον πεῖραν δύναται λαβεῖν διαλεκτικῶς ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς εἰδῶς, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας, τὸ λόγον δύνασθαι λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅπως λόγον ὑπέχοντες φυλάξομεν τὴν θέσιν ὡς δι' ἐνδοξοτάτων ὁμοτρόπως. Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. Δεδήλωται δ' ἐν τοῖς πρότερον καὶ πρὸς πόσα καὶ ἐκ πόσων τοῦτο ἔσται, καὶ ὅθεν εὐπορήσομεν τούτων, ἔτι δὲ πῶς ἐρωτητέον ἢ τακτέον τὴν ἐρώτησιν πᾶσαν, καὶ περὶ τε ἀποκρίσεων καὶ λύσεων τῶν πρὸς τοὺς συλλογισμούς. Δεδήλωται δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσα τῆς αὐτῆς μεθόδου τῶν λόγων ἐστίν. Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις περὶ τῶν παραλογισμῶν διεληλύθαμεν, ὥσπερ εἰρήκαμεν ἤδη πρότερον. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἔχει τέλος ἱκανῶς ἃ προειλόμεθα, φανερόν· δεῖ δ' ἡμᾶς μὴ λεληθέναι τὸ συμβεβηκὸς περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν.

Τῶν γὰρ εὕρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὕρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε, χρησιμωτέραν μέντοι πολλῶ τῆς ὕστερον ἐκ τούτων αὐξήσεως. Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσοῦτω μικρότατον ὅν τῷ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὀφθῆναι. Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν· ὅπερ καὶ περὶ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς λόγους συμβέβηκε, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας πάσας τέχνας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς εὐρόντες παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρόν τι προήγαγον· οἱ δὲ νῦν εὐδοκιμοῦντες παραλαβόντες παρὰ πολλῶν οἶον ἐκ διαδοχῆς κατὰ μέρος προαγαγόντων οὕτως ἠϋξήκασιν, Τισίας μὲν μετὰ

τοὺς πρώτους, Θρασύμαχος δὲ μετὰ Τισίαν, Θεόδωρος δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνεννηνόχασι μέρη· διόπερ οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην.

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικὸς λόγους μισθαρινούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικοὺς ἐδίδουσιν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ὥθησαν ἐκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυνησεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὔξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

Prior Analytics I.31, 46a31-b37

Ὅτι δ' ἡ διὰ τῶν γενῶν διαίρεσις μικρόν τι μόνον ἐστὶ τῆς εἰρημένης μεθόδου, ῥάδιον ἰδεῖν· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ διαίρεσις οἷον ἀσθενὴς συλλογισμός· ὁ μὲν γὰρ δεῖ δεῖξαι αἰτεῖται, συλλογίζεται δ' αἰεὶ τι τῶν ἄνωθεν. πρῶτον δ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐλελήθει τοὺς χρωμένους αὐτῇ πάντας, καὶ πείθειν ἐπεχείρουν ὡς ὄντος δυνατοῦ περὶ οὐσίας ἀπόδειξιν γενέσθαι καὶ τοῦ τί ἐστίν. ὥστ' οὔτε ὁ τι ἐνδέχεται συλλογίσασθαι διαιρουμένοις ξυνέειπον, οὔτε ὅτι οὕτως ἐνδέχετο ὥσπερ εἰρήκαμεν. ἐν μὲν οὖν ταῖς ἀποδείξεσιν, ὅταν δέη τι συλλογίσασθαι ὑπάρχειν, δεῖ τὸ μέσον, δι' οὗ γίνεται ὁ συλλογισμός, καὶ ἥττον αἰεὶ εἶναι καὶ μὴ καθόλου τοῦ πρώτου τῶν ἄκρων· ἡ δὲ διαίρεσις τοῦναντίον βούλεται· τὸ γὰρ καθόλου λαμβάνει μέσον. ἔστω γὰρ ζῶον ἐφ' οὗ Α, τὸ δὲ θνητὸν ἐφ' οὗ Β, καὶ ἀθάνατον ἐφ' οὗ Γ, ὁ δ' ἄνθρωπος, οὗ τὸν λόγον δεῖ λαβεῖν, ἐφ' οὗ τὸ Δ. ἅπαν δὴ ζῶον λαμβάνει ἢ θνητὸν ἢ ἀθάνατον· τοῦτο δ' ἐστίν, ὃ ἂν ἢ Α, ἅπαν εἶναι ἢ Β ἢ Γ. πάλιν τὸν ἄνθρωπον αἰεὶ διαιρούμενος τίθεται ζῶον εἶναι, ὥστε κατὰ τοῦ Δ τὸ Α λαμβάνει ὑπάρχειν. ὁ μὲν οὖν συλλογισμός ἐστίν ὅτι τὸ Δ ἢ Β ἢ Γ ἅπαν ἔσται, ὥστε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἢ θνητὸν μὲν ἢ ἀθάνατον ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι, ζῶον θνητὸν δὲ οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον, ἀλλ' αἰτεῖται· τοῦτο δ' ἦν ὃ ἔδει συλλογίσασθαι. καὶ πάλιν θέμενος τὸ μὲν Α ζῶον θνητόν, ἐφ' οὗ δὲ τὸ Β ὑπόπουν, ἐφ' οὗ δὲ τὸ Γ ἄπουν, τὸν δ' ἄνθρωπον τὸ Δ, ὡσαύτως λαμβάνει τὸ μὲν Α ἥτοι ἐν τῷ Β ἢ ἐν τῷ Γ εἶναι (ἅπαν γὰρ ζῶον θνητὸν ἢ ὑπόπουν ἢ ἄπουν ἐστί), κατὰ δὲ τοῦ Δ τὸ Α (τὸν γὰρ ἄνθρωπον ζῶον θνητὸν εἶναι ἔλαβεν)· ὥσθ' ὑπόπουν μὲν ἢ ἄπουν εἶναι ζῶον ἀνάγκη τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ὑπόπουν δ' οὐκ ἀνάγκη, ἀλλὰ λαμβάνει· τοῦτο δ' ἦν ὃ ἔδει πάλιν δεῖξαι. καὶ τοῦτον δὴ τὸν τρόπον αἰεὶ διαιρουμένοις τὸ μὲν καθόλου συμβαίνει αὐτοῖς μέσον λαμβάνειν, καθ' οὗ δ' ἔδει δεῖξαι καὶ τὰς διαφορὰς ἄκρα. τέλος δέ, ὅτι τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ἢ ὁ τι ποτ' ἂν ἢ τὸ ζητούμενον, οὐδὲν λέγουσι σαφὲς ὥστ' ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ἄλλην ὁδὸν ποιοῦνται πᾶσαν, οὐδὲ τὰς ἐνδεχομένας εὐπορίας ὑπολαμβάνοντες ὑπάρχειν.

Φανερόν δ' ὅτι οὗτ' ἀνασκευάσαι ταύτη τῇ μεθόδῳ ἔστιν, οὔτε περὶ συμβεβηκότος ἢ ἰδίου συλλογίσασθαι, οὔτε περὶ γένους, οὗτ' ἐν οἷς ἀγνοεῖται τὸ πότερον ὡδὶ ἢ ὡδὶ ἔχει, οἷον ἄρ' ἡ διάμετρος ἀσύμμετρος ἢ σύμμετρος. ἐὰν γὰρ λάβῃ ὅτι ἅπαν μήκος ἢ σύμμετρον ἢ ἀσύμμετρον, ἡ δὲ διάμετρος μήκος, συλλελόγισται ὅτι ἀσύμμετρος ἢ σύμμετρος ἢ διάμετρος. εἰ δὲ λήσεται

ἀσύμμετρον, ὃ ἔδει συλλογίσασθαι λήσεται. οὐκ ἄρα ἔστι δεῖξαι· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὁδὸς αὕτη, διὰ ταύτης δ' οὐκ ἔστιν. τὸ ἀσύμμετρον ἢ σύμμετρον ἐφ' οὗ Α, μήκος Β, διάμετρος Γ. φανερόν οὖν ὅτι οὔτε πρὸς πᾶσαν σκέψιν ἀρμόζει τῆς ζητήσεως ὁ τρόπος, οὔτ' ἐν οἷς μάλιστα δοκεῖ πρῆπειν, ἐν τούτοις ἐστὶ χρήσιμος.

1. The sentences and the difficulty

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. (183b35–36)⁶

περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν. (184b1–2)

Aristotle names Socrates in the same chapter (183b7–8). Division he treats throughout the treatise, as the answerer's act and as the solver's; and in the *Prior Analytics* as a thing others used before him (I.31). If Socratic questioning or division were syllogizing, something of syllogizing was there before, and the sentences would be false. They are not false. Therefore Socratic questioning and division are not syllogizing. The note shows this from what the treatise says of each.

2. Division is what the answerer is granted

The treatise gives the answerer one power against the questioner, and names it:

δέδοται δ' ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τὸ διελεῖν ... Ὡστ' ἐπειδὴ δέδοται διαιρεῖν, οὐκ ὀκνητέον. (SE 17)

Ἐν μὲν οὖν τοῖς κυρίως λεγομένοις ὀνόμασιν ἀνάγκη ἀποκρίνεσθαι ἢ ἀπλῶς ἢ διαιρούμενον. (SE 17)

To divide is granted to the answerer. An answer is either simple or divided. But an answer is not a syllogism; the answerer supplies the premise from which the questioner syllogizes. What is granted to the answerer is therefore not syllogizing. Division, being granted to the answerer, is not syllogizing. It is what one does instead of being syllogized against.

3. Division is what a solution is

The treatise gives the rule for solving, and names the act:

συμβαίνει τῶν λόγων τοὺς μὲν συλλελογισμένους ἀνελόντα, τοὺς δὲ φαινομένους διελόντα λύειν ... ὅπως ἢ διαιροῦντες ἢ ἀναιροῦντες λύωμεν. (SE 18)

Οἷον εἰ παρὰ σύνθεσιν ὁ λόγος, ἢ λύσις διελόντι. (SE 23)

Λύουσι δὲ τινες διαιροῦντες τὴν ἐρώτησιν. (SE 24)

Apparent syllogisms are solved by dividing. A solution undoes a syllogism, or an appearance of one; it does not make one. Division, being how solutions are made, is not syllogizing. It is what is done to syllogisms.

⁶Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

4. Those who cannot divide are deceived; the one who can is near the truth

The treatise says where deception comes from, and what the one who can divide is near:

Ἡ δ' ἀπάτη γίνεται τῶν μὲν παρὰ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τῷ μὴ δύνασθαι διαιρεῖν τὸ πολλαχῶς λεγόμενον (ἕνια γὰρ οὐκ εὐπορον διελεῖν, οἷον τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ ταῦτόν) ... Χαλεπὸν γὰρ διελεῖν ποῖα ὡσαύτως καὶ ποῖα ὡς ἑτέρως λέγεται (σχεδὸν γὰρ ὁ τοῦτο δυνάμενος ποιεῖν ἐγγύς ἐστι τοῦ θεωρεῖν τᾷ ἀληθείᾳ). (SE 7, 169a22-31)

οἱ δ' οὐ δυνάμενοι διαιρεῖν ἢ ἐρωτῶμενοι διδῶσιν ἢ οὐ δόντες οἴονται δεδωκέναι. (SE 5)

The things hard to divide are one, being, and the same. The one who can divide them is *near* to beholding the truth: ἐγγύς. What is near a thing is not the thing. Beholding the truth is what syllogizing arrives at; the one who divides is near it, and has not arrived. Division is therefore not syllogizing. It is the neighbourhood of it. That those who cannot divide are refuted, and grant what they have not granted, shows only that division is a defence; a defence is not the art it defends.

5. Answers and solutions are parts of the inquiry

The treatise lists what the inquiry has completed:

Δεδήλωται δ' ἐν τοῖς πρότερον καὶ πρὸς πόσα καὶ ἐκ πόσων τοῦτο ἔσται, καὶ ὅθεν εὐπορήσομεν τούτων, ἔτι δὲ πῶς ἐρωτητέον ἢ τακτέον τὴν ἐρώτησιν πᾶσαν, καὶ περὶ τε ἀποκρίσεων καὶ λύσεων τῶν πρὸς τοὺς συλλογισμούς. (SE 34, 183b8-12)

Answers and solutions are among the inquiry's parts; answering is dividing (§2), and solving is dividing (§3). But the parts of the inquiry are listed *after* the inquiry's work is stated, and the work is a δύναμις συλλογιστική (183a37). The parts are of the inquiry; the inquiry is syllogizing; the parts are not the inquiry. Division is a part of the inquiry, and a part of a thing is not the thing. What Aristotle denies at 183b34 is that the inquiry was partly there beforehand — οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν — and a part is a part. But a part that is answering rather than asking, and solving rather than making, is a part that is not syllogizing; and of a part that is not syllogizing, its being there beforehand is not syllogizing's being there beforehand.

6. Socrates asked and did not answer

The treatise says of the inquiry:

διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας, τὸ λόγον δύνασθαι λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅπως λόγον ὑπέχοντες φυλάξομεν τὴν θέσιν ὡς δι' ἐνδοξοτάτων ὁμοτρόπως. Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. (SE 34, 183b3-8)

The inquiry has two tasks: to take an account, and to sustain one. Socrates did the first and not the second. A syllogism is λόγος ἐν ᾧ τεθέντων τινῶν ἕτερόν τι ... ἐξ ἀνάγκης συμβαίνει — something said, from things laid down (SE 1, 165a1-2). Socrates laid down nothing; he asked, and confessed he did not know. One who says nothing syllogizes nothing. Socrates therefore did not syllogize. That the inquiry's first task, τὸ λόγον λαβεῖν, is what Socrates did, and that the cause of the second task is the same cause as his not answering (διὰ τοῦτο ... διὰ

τοῦτο), does not make his practice part of the inquiry; it makes it the occasion of the inquiry. An occasion is not a part. And the second task, sustaining an account, is the answerer's task; the answerer's act is division (§2); Socrates did not answer; so Socrates did not divide either. He is outside on both sides.

7. Confirmation: the other division

It will be said that the division the treatise grants — of the ambiguous question, of the many-ways-said — is not the division of genera, and that the division of genera, being a way of finding what a thing is, is syllogizing or its predecessor. The *Prior Analytics* confirms that it is not:

Ὅτι δ' ἡ διὰ τῶν γενῶν διαίρεσις μικρόν τι μόριόν ἐστι τῆς εἰρημένης μεθόδου, ῥάδιον ἰδεῖν· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ διαίρεσις οἷον ἀσθενῆς συλλογισμός· ὁ μὲν γὰρ δεῖ δεῖξαι αἰτεῖται, συλλογίζεται δ' ἀεὶ τι τῶν ἄνωθεν. πρῶτον δ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐλελήθει τοὺς χρωμένους αὐτῇ πάντας. (*APr.* I.31, 46a31–36)

Division through genera is *like* a weak syllogism: οἷον. What is like a thing is not the thing. It is a small part of the method, and a small part is not the method. And all who used it did not know what it was; what one does without knowing what it is, one does not do. So the division of genera is not syllogizing either. The *Analytics* says of it what the treatise says of the answerer's division: a part, a likeness, a defence, a neighbourhood. Neither is the thing.

8. What is left of the inquiry

The inquiry, then, is what remains when division and Socratic questioning are set outside it: the δύναμις συλλογιστική less its answers, its solutions, the division that makes them, the asking that occasions them, and the division through genera that is a part of its method. Of what is thus left, nothing at all was there beforehand. The sentence is true.

9.

Division is granted to the answerer, is how solutions are made, is near the truth, is a part of the inquiry, and is like a weak syllogism; Socrates took accounts and did not give them. None of these is syllogizing, once syllogizing is what remains after they are removed. Before Aristotle, therefore, there was nothing of syllogizing: nothing of the kind that is left when what was there is set aside.

σχεδὸν γὰρ ὁ τοῦτο δυνάμενος ποιεῖν ἐγγύς ἐστι τοῦ θεωρεῖν τὰληθές.

A Note on *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34–184b8

Abstract. This note argues that *Sophistical Refutations* 184b1–2 says that there was nothing of syllogizing prior to Aristotle. In support it argues that 183b17–18 says what prior work is; that 183b22–24 says what a beginning is; that 183a37–b12 says what this inquiry is and

what its parts are, and names Socrates within it; that 183b1-8 admits four placements of Socrates, before the inquiry, beside it, among the teachers, and within it with the question of priority left open; and that 183b34-36 says, of this inquiry, that it was not partly worked out beforehand, but that nothing at all was there. The evidence is the sentences.

1. 183b17-18 says that prior work is work taken from others

Τῶν γὰρ εὕρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἑτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὕρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε. (183b17-23)⁷

Of all discoveries, those taken from others and previously worked on have advanced piecemeal in the hands of those who took them over later; those discovered from scratch are accustomed to take a small advance at first.

The paragraph gives two kinds. The first is defined by παρ' ἑτέρων: taken from others. πρότερον πεπονημένα, previously worked on, is said of that kind. The second is ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς. Rhetoric is given as the first kind: Tisias after the first, Thrasymachus after Tisias, Theodorus after him, and many have contributed many parts (183b29-33).

2. 183b22-24 says what a beginning is

Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσούτω μικρότατον ὃν τῷ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὀφθῆναι. (183b22-24)

The beginning is perhaps the greatest part of everything, as is said; which is why it is also the hardest; for the stronger it is in power, the smaller it is in size and the harder to see.

A beginning is one in size and greatest in power. The plurality belongs to what is added afterwards: Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστιν (183b25-26), and of rhetoric, οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην (183b33).

3. 183a37-b12 says what this inquiry is, what its parts are, and that Socrates asked within it

Προειλόμεθα μὲν οὖν εὐρεῖν δυνάμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ τῆς πειραστικῆς. ... διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας, τὸ λόγον δύνασθαι λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅπως λόγον ὑπέχοντες φυλάξομεν τὴν θέσιν ὡς δι' ἐνδοξοτάτων ὁμοτρόπως. Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. Δεδήλωται δ' ἐν τοῖς πρότερον καὶ πρὸς πόσα καὶ ἐκ πόσων τοῦτο ἔσται, καὶ ὅθεν εὐπορήσομεν τούτων, ἔτι δὲ πῶς ἐρωτητέον ἢ τακτέον τὴν ἐρώτησιν πᾶσαν, καὶ περὶ τε ἀποκρίσεων καὶ λύσεων τῶν πρὸς τοὺς συλλογισμούς. (183a37-b12)

⁷Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

We undertook to find a certain syllogistic capacity concerning any problem set, from what is available as most reputable; for this is the work of dialectic in itself and of peirastic. ... For this reason we set down as the work of the undertaking not only the one stated, to be able to take an account, but also how, in sustaining an account, we shall guard the thesis by means of the most reputable things in the same manner. We have stated the cause of this, since it is also for this reason that Socrates asked but did not answer; for he agreed that he did not know. It has been shown in what precedes how many things this will be directed to and out of how many it will be, and where we shall be well supplied with them, and further how questions are to be put or the whole questioning arranged, and about answers and solutions to the syllogisms.

The inquiry is a capacity with two tasks: to take an account (τὸ λόγον λαβεῖν) and to sustain one (λόγον ὑπέχοντες). Socrates is named inside this statement, with διὰ τοῦτο: he asked and did not answer. The inquiry's completed parts include questioning, the ordering of questions, answers, and solutions. Answering and solving are dividing: δέδοται δ' ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τὸ διελεῖν (SE 17); τοὺς δὲ φαινομένους διελόντα λύειν (SE 18).

The inquiry is named with the same demonstrative at 183b16, περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν, and at 183b34, ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας.⁸

4. Four placements of Socrates

Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσκατασκευάζεται πρὸς αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν τῆς σοφιστικῆς γειννίασιν, ὥς οὐ μόνον πεῖραν δύναται λαβεῖν διαλεκτικῶς ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς εἰδῶς, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας ... Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἠρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. (183b1-8)

The inquiry tests not only dialectically but ὥς εἰδῶς, as one who knows. Socrates ὡμολόγει οὐκ εἰδέναι, agreed that he did not know. The inquiry's verbs are first person and aorist: προσιλόμεθα (183a37), ὑπεθέμεθα (183b3). Socrates' verbs are third person and imperfect: ἠρώτα, οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο, ὡμολόγει. He is named by name; the inquiry is "we." He is given with διὰ τοῦτο as the reason for the second task, which is the one he did not perform. He did the first task, τὸ λόγον λαβεῖν, and not the second, λόγον ὑπέχειν. The sentence naming him begins Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν.

On these sentences Socrates may be placed in four ways.

4a. Before the inquiry. His asking is prior work: done earlier and by another, without the knowledge the inquiry tests as having, and supplying the occasion of the task it lacked; the inquiry took that part over and worked out the other. That is the first of the two kinds at 183b17-18: παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα, κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον. On this placement, of this inquiry τὸ μὲν ἦν προεξεργασμένον, the asking, τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν, the answering.

183b34-35 says: οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον.

⁸πραγματεία occurs five times in ch. 34: 183b3 (ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας), 183b16 (περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν), 183b34 (ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας), 183b37 (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ), 184b4 (τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας); and once elsewhere in the treatise, in the last sentence of ch. 1, announcing the parts of the inquiry (πόσα μέρη τυγχάνει τῆς πραγματείας ὄντα, 165a35-37).

4b. Beside the inquiry. His asking is neither of the inquiry nor before it. He is named in a sentence of explanation; he is an instance brought to show why the second task was added, as the shoes are brought to show what the teachers gave. The inquiry's parts at 183b8-12 name no person. Socrates illustrates the inquiry and is not in it.

183b6 says: Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου. 183b10 lists among the inquiry's completed parts πῶς ἐρωτητέον.

4c. Among the teachers. His asking is τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης: questions, which can be learned by heart. 183b38 says that the paid teachers gave ἐρωτητικούς λόγους to be learned by heart. Socrates gave ἐρωτητικοὶ λόγοι. What he gave is what they gave; it helped with the need and was not the art.

183b36 says this of τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων. 184a5 says the person compared professes to hand over a science (ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν). 183b8 says Socrates ὡμολόγει οὐκ εἶδέναι.

4d. Within the inquiry, and undecided as to prior. His asking is of the inquiry — named in its definition, an instance of what it does — and the passage does not say when. The sentence naming him has no date. The parts listed at 183b8-12 carry no dates. "We" is not "I"; what "we" had is not what was or was not there. Whether his asking counts as worked out beforehand, in the sense denied at 183b34, the passage leaves open.

183b10 lists πῶς ἐρωτητέον among what δεδῆλωται. 183b34-35 says of this inquiry οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον.

5. 183b34-36 says that of this inquiry it was not that part was worked out beforehand, but that nothing at all was there

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. (183b34-36)

Of this inquiry, it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not; rather, nothing at all was there.

Ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας stands first, in the genitive. οὐ negates τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον. ἀλλά introduces οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. οὐδὲν is the subject of ὑπῆρχεν. παντελῶς follows it. πρότερον occurs at 183b18 and προεξεργασμένον at 183b35; κατὰ μέρος at 183b19, μέρος at 183b33, and τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δέ at 183b34.

6. 183b36-184a8 says that the teachers of eristic arguments gave the things from the art and not the art

Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσιν τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. ... οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον ... οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρείαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. (183b36-184a8)

The sentence that says the teachers existed is the sentence immediately following 183b34-36, and begins καὶ γάρ. τέχνην and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης are the contrasted objects of διδόντες; ὑπελάμβανον governs παιδεύειν. τέχνη occurs again at 184a8.

7. 184b1-8 says that rhetoric had predecessors and syllogizing did not, and that the method is to be judged from the conditions it began from

Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἠύξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν. (184b1-8)

About rhetoric much and old material was there, the things said; about syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say, but were long at work seeking by practice. If it appears to you on inspection that, from such conditions at the beginning, the method stands adequately beside the other undertakings that have grown by transmission, it would remain the task of all of you, or of those who have listened, to hold pardon for what the method has left out and much gratitude for what has been found.

In the first member the verb is ὑπῆρχε, the subject τὰ λεγόμενα, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τῶν ῥητορικῶν. In the second the verb is εἶχομεν ... λέγειν, the object παντελῶς οὐδέν, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι. The “we” is the chapter’s: προσιλόμεθα (183a37), ὑπεθέμεθα (183b3), εἰρήκαμεν (183b6), διεληλύθαμεν (183b13), εἶχομεν (184b1). 184b4 names rhetoric’s kind τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας, τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἠύξημένας. παντελῶς occurs three times in the chapter (183b35, 184a1, 184b1), twice with οὐδέν.

8. 183b17-184b8

Τῶν γὰρ εὕρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὕρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε, χρησιμωτέραν μέντοι πολλῶ τῆς ὕστερον ἐκ τούτων αὐξήσεως. Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσοῦτω μικρότατον ὃν τῷ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὀφθῆναι. Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν· ὅπερ καὶ περὶ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς λόγους συμβέβηκε, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας πάσας τέχνας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς εὐρόντες παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρὸν τι προήγαγον· οἱ δὲ νῦν εὐδοκιμοῦντες παραλαβόντες παρὰ πολλῶν οἷον ἐκ διαδοχῆς κατὰ μέρος προαγαγόντων οὕτως ἠύξηκασιν, Τισίας μὲν μετὰ τοὺς πρῶτους, Θρασύμαχος δὲ μετὰ Τισίαν, Θεόδωρος δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηνόχασιν μέρη· διόπερ οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην.

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούσων ὁμοίαι τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς ἐδίδουσαν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ᾤθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυνησεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς

οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὐξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

What Was Not There: *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34-184b8

Abstract. In *Sophistical Refutations* 34, Aristotle's assertion that "nothing at all was there" does not deny the prior existence of questions, arguments, eristic teachers, or Socratic examination. It denies that there existed, before his inquiry, a worked-out and transmissible method of syllogizing: an articulated τέχνη capable of being received, expanded, and taught as the established arts had been. The contrast between τέχνη and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης explains why pre-existing stock arguments do not count as such a method. Socrates accordingly figures not as a transmitter of a prior syllogistic art, but as a contrastive precedent whose questioning — undertaken while avowing ignorance — helps explain the addition of the task of sustaining an account "as one who knows."

1. 183b17-29 says how discoveries develop

Τῶν γὰρ εὕρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὕρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε. (183b17-23)⁹

Of all discoveries, those taken from others and previously worked on have advanced piecemeal in the hands of those who took them over later; those discovered from the beginning are accustomed to make only a small advance at first.

The paragraph invites reading as a sequence rather than as two sealed kinds. A discovery made from a beginning (ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς) makes a small first advance; once the beginning has been found, adding to it and enlarging it is easier (Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν, 183b25-26); and what is then taken from others (παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα) and previously worked on (πρότερον πεπονημένα) advances piecemeal in the hands of those who take it over later. Rhetoric is given in the later condition: its first discoverers advanced it only a little, and those now esteemed received it from many, Tisias after the first, Thrasyarchus after Tisias, Theodorus after him (183b29-33). The inquiry of this chapter is presented at the earlier stage, that of finding its beginning; the closing sentence asks the audience to judge it ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων (184b3) and to pardon what it has left

⁹Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

out (184b6-7) — that is, as a method whose omissions are openly acknowledged beside the mature transmitted disciplines.

2. 183b22-24 says what a beginning is

Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσούτω μικρότατον ὂν τῷ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὁφθῆναι. (183b22-24)

The beginning is perhaps the greatest part of everything, as is said; which is why it is also the hardest; for the stronger it is in power, the smaller it is in size and the harder to see.

A beginning is smallest in extent and greatest in power; the concentrated importance of an ἀρχή is contrasted with the later multiplication of parts: Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥᾶον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπόν ἐστιν (183b25-26), and of rhetoric, οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην (183b33).

3. 183a37-b12 says what this inquiry is, what its parts are, and names Socrates in giving its reason

Προειλόμεθα μὲν οὖν εὐρεῖν δυνάμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ τῆς πειραστικῆς. ... διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας, τὸ λόγον δύνασθαι λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅπως λόγον ὑπέχοντες φυλάξομεν τὴν θέσιν ὡς δι' ἐνδοξοτάτων ὁμοτρόπως. Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὡμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. Δεδήλωται δ' ἐν τοῖς πρότερον καὶ πρὸς πόσα καὶ ἐκ πόσων τοῦτο ἔσται, καὶ ὅθεν εὐπορήσομεν τούτων, ἔτι δὲ πῶς ἐρωτητέον ἢ τακτέον τὴν ἐρώτησιν πᾶσαν, καὶ περὶ τε ἀποκρίσεων καὶ λύσεων τῶν πρὸς τοὺς συλλογισμούς. (183a37-b12)

We undertook to find a certain syllogistic capacity concerning any problem set, from what is available as most reputable; for this is the work of dialectic in itself and of peirastic. ... For this reason we set down as the work of the undertaking not only the one stated, to be able to take an account, but also how, in sustaining an account, we shall guard the thesis by means of the most reputable things in the same manner. We have stated the cause of this, since it is also for this reason that Socrates asked but did not answer; for he agreed that he did not know. It has been shown in what precedes how many things this will be directed to and out of how many it will be, and where we shall be well supplied with them, and further how questions are to be put or the whole questioning arranged, and about answers and solutions to the syllogisms.

The undertaking (πραγματεία) is set to find a capacity (δύναμις) with two tasks: to take an account (τὸ λόγον λαβεῖν) and to sustain one (λόγον ὑπέχοντες). Socrates is named in the sentence that gives the reason (τὴν αἰτίαν) for the second: he asked and did not answer. The matters shown include how one must ask (πῶς ἐρωτητέον), how the whole questioning is to be ordered, answers, and solutions; these are stated as prescriptions (ἐρωτητέον, τακτέον). Answering and solving are dividing: δέδοται δ' ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τὸ διελεῖν (SE 17); τοὺς δὲ φαινόμενους διελόντα λύειν (SE 18).

The immediate undertaking is not presented here merely as the construction of a formal

deductive calculus: its stated work also includes dialectical and peirastic procedures — the acquisition and defence of arguments from reputable premises, the conduct and ordering of questions, replies, and the solution of apparent refutations. At 184b1 the central methodological achievement of the broader πραγματεία is redescribed as an inquiry περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι; syllogistic competence supplies the organizing capacity for those functions without being coextensive with every feature of the undertaking.

The inquiry is named with the same demonstrative at 183b16, περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν, and at 183b34, ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας.¹⁰

4. What role does Socrates' questioning play?

Ἐπεὶ δὲ προσκατασκευάζεται πρὸς αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν τῆς σοφιστικῆς γειτνίασιν, ὥς οὐ μόνον πεῖραν δύναται λαβεῖν διαλεκτικῶς ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς εἰδῶς, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας ... Τὴν δ' αἰτίαν εἰρήκαμεν τούτου, ἐπεὶ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Σωκράτης ἡρώτα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεκρίνετο· ὠμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι. (183b1–8)

The evidence is compact. ἡρώτα describes Socrates' practice. ὠμολόγει γὰρ οὐκ εἰδέναι denies that he possessed the relevant knowledge; the inquiry tests ὥς εἰδῶς. The undertaking is expressed in the first person plural (προειλόμεθα, ὑπεθέμεθα, εἰρήκαμεν, διεληλύθαμεν) and Socrates in the third person singular; the change of person marks a contrast between the undertaking and a reported practice, and is corroborative rather than decisive. The passage does not say that the inquiry received anything from Socrates, and does not place him in a succession of the kind given for rhetoric at 183b31–33. His practice is given, with διὰ τοῦτο, as the reason the undertaking includes the capacity to sustain an account.

Three roles have been assigned to him on this evidence.

Predecessor or contributor. His questioning is prior work of the kind at 183b17–19, taken over and completed: of this inquiry τὸ μὲν ἦν προεξιργασμένον, the asking, τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν, the answering. But 183b34 denies that the inquiry found any component already elaborated so as to be taken over as part of its method, and the passage does not represent it as taking anything from him. He is not a predecessor in that sense.

Illustration. He is an example brought to show why the second task was added, and is otherwise outside the inquiry. But 183b6 gives him as τὴν αἰτίαν of the task, and a reason for a task is more than an example of it. He is relevant to the inquiry's formation.

Contrastive precedent. Socrates supplies the motivating contrast for the undertaking's two-sided capacity: he exemplifies questioning without possession of the answer, whereas the proposed method aims at questioning conducted together with the ability to give and sustain an account. His questioning is an antecedent practice of examination, invoked to explain why the inquiry must go beyond asking to include sustaining a thesis through reputable premises. It is neither erased by the claim of novelty nor counted as a worked-out component inherited by the πραγματεία. This is the role on which the note rests.

¹⁰πραγματεία occurs five times in ch. 34: 183b3 (ὑπεθέμεθα τῆς πραγματείας), 183b16 (περὶ ταύτην τὴν πραγματείαν), 183b34 (ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας), 183b37 (τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ), 184b4 (τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας); and once elsewhere in the treatise, in the last sentence of ch. 1, announcing the parts of the inquiry (πόσα μέρη τυγχάνει τῆς πραγματείας ὄντα, 165a35–37).

5. 183b34-36 says that of this inquiry it was not that part was worked out beforehand, but that nothing at all was there

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. (183b34-36)

Of this inquiry, it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not; rather, nothing at all was there.

Ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας stands first, in the genitive. οὐ negates τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον. ἀλλά introduces οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. οὐδὲν is the subject of ὑπῆρχεν. παντελῶς follows it. πρότερον occurs at 183b18 and προεξεργασμένον at 183b35; κατὰ μέρος at 183b19, μέρη at 183b33, and τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δέ at 183b34.

6. 183b36-184a8 says that the teachers of eristic arguments gave the things from the art and not the art

Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδεύσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. ... οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον ... οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρείαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. (183b36-184a8)

The sentence that says the teachers existed is the sentence immediately following 183b34-36, and begins καὶ γάρ. τέχνην and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης are the contrasted objects of διδόντες; ὑπελάμβανον governs παιδεύειν. The comparison at 184a4-8 sets out the distinction: a person who professes to hand over a science for keeping the feet from suffering, teaches neither shoemaking nor where such things may be got, and gives many kinds of footwear — has helped with the need (βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρείαν) and has not handed over an art (τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν). The products serve; the productive capacity, and the knowledge of where to obtain such products, are what were not given. Memorized λόγοι stand to the art as the shoes to shoemaking. τέχνη occurs again at 184a8.

7. 184b1-8 says that rhetoric had predecessors and syllogizing did not, and that the method is to be judged from the conditions it began from

Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἠϋξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν. (184b1-8)

About rhetoric much and old material was there, the things said; about syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say, but were long at work seeking by practice. If it appears to you on inspection that, from such conditions at the beginning, the method stands adequately beside the other undertakings that have grown by transmission, it would remain the task of all of you, or of those who have listened, to hold pardon for what the method has left out and much gratitude for what has been found.

In the first member the verb is ὑπῆρχε, the subject τὰ λεγόμενα, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τῶν ῥητορικῶν. In the second the verb is εἶχομεν ... λέγειν, the object παντελῶς

οὐδέν, and the prepositional phrase περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι. The “we” is the chapter’s: προειλόμεθα (183a37), ὑπεθέμεθα (183b3), εἰρήκαμεν (183b6), διεληλύθαμεν (183b13), εἵχομεν (184b1). 184b4 names rhetoric’s kind τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας, τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἡϋξημένας. παντελῶς occurs three times in the chapter (183b35, 184a1, 184b1), twice with οὐδέν.

8. What was not there

Four things could be meant by the “nothing” of 183b35 and 184b1.

Literal nothing. Nothing whatever relevant to argument existed. The chapter denies this itself in the sentences that follow: the teachers existed and gave λόγοι (183b36–184a2); rhetoric had πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα (184b1); Socrates asked (183b7).

Nothing of the undertaking worked out beforehand. This is the sentence’s own predicate: οὐ ... προεξεργασμένον, and it is the case set against the arts that grew κατὰ μέρος from what was πρότερον πεπονημένα (183b17–19). Not even in part.

Nothing transmitted as τέχνη (an interpretive reconstruction, not a gloss the text supplies). This is what the next sentence explains the “nothing” by: καὶ γάρ, the teaching was ἄτεχνος, they gave τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης and not τέχνην, and τέχνην δ’ οὐ παρέδωκεν (183b36–184a8); and what the method is measured against: τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἡϋξημένας (184b5).

Nothing previously to say. This is 184b1–2: παντελῶς οὐδέν εἵχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, set against rhetoric’s τὰ λεγόμενα.

The last three converge without being identified; the chapter connects them and does not equate them. What is worked out beforehand, in the chapter’s schema, is what is taken from others; what is taken from others in the established arts is transmitted; what a transmitted art gives its inheritors is something to say. The first sense is not among them; the literal-vacuum reading is strongly disfavoured by the chapter’s own acknowledgement of prior teachers, arguments, and rhetorical material. The “nothing,” then, is best understood as denying that there already existed, prior to this undertaking, a worked-out and transmissible discipline of syllogizing of the kind possessed by the established arts. The point is not that no relevant questioning, argument, or material existed, but that none of it constituted a prior development of the undertaking itself — not even in part. παντελῶς is not merely intensifying: each of its three occurrences stands where complete absence is set against partial advance or piecemeal growth. That the sentence is also the chapter’s self-positioning before an audience, which is asked to pardon and to thank (184b5–8), does not alter what it denies.

Socrates’ questioning is therefore neither erased by the claim of novelty nor counted as a worked-out component inherited by the present πραγματεία. It is an antecedent practice of examination, invoked to explain why the inquiry must go beyond asking questions to include the capacity to sustain a thesis through reputable premises. The claim that nothing at all was there concerns the absence of a previously elaborated and transmitted method of syllogizing, not the absence of Socratic questioning or other argumentative materials.

Appendix. 183b17-184b8

Τῶν γὰρ εὐρισκομένων ἀπάντων τὰ μὲν παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν ὑπὸ τῶν παραλαβόντων ὕστερον· τὰ δ' ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς εὐρισκόμενα μικρὰν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν εἴωθε, χρησιμωτέραν μέντοι πολλῶ τῆς ὕστερον ἐκ τούτων αὐξήσεως. Μέγιστον γὰρ ἴσως ἀρχὴ παντός, ὥσπερ λέγεται· διὸ καὶ χαλεπώτατον· ὅσω γὰρ κράτιστον τῇ δυνάμει, τοσούτῳ μικρότατον ὃν τῷ μεγέθει χαλεπώτατόν ἐστιν ὀφθῆναι. Ταύτης δ' εὐρημένης ῥῆον τὸ προστιθέναι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστίν· ὅπερ καὶ περὶ τοῦς ῥητορικοὺς λόγους συμβέβηκε, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἄλλας πάσας τέχνας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς εὐρόντες παντελῶς ἐπὶ μικρόν τι προήγαγον· οἱ δὲ νῦν εὐδοκιμοῦντες παραλαβόντες παρὰ πολλῶν οἶον ἐκ διαδοχῆς κατὰ μέρος προαγαγόντων οὕτως ηὔξηκασιν, Τισίας μὲν μετὰ τοὺς πρῶτους, Θρασύμαχος δὲ μετὰ Τισίαν, Θεόδωρος δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηνόχασιν μέρη· διόπερ οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἔχειν τι πλῆθος τὴν τέχνην.

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς ἐδίδουσιν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ὥθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυνήσεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὔξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

An Apparatus to *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34-184b8

Abstract. The paragraph is printed as transmitted. Beneath it is an apparatus recording the readings of it that are current, each entered as the emendation of the transmitted text it requires, with the passage of the *Sophistical Refutations* that classifies the emendation. No reading is attributed. No reading is rejected. The text is printed once more at the end.

Text

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματείᾳ. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικοὺς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς ἐδίδουσιν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ὥθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων

λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυσνήσεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἵχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἡύξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὰν ἔχειν χάριν.¹¹

Apparatus

1. 183b34 οὐ (ante τὸ μὲν) — del. The reading on which some of the inquiry had been worked out beforehand and some had not. It restores the member the sentence negates, τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, which is the case of the arts described at 183b17-19 (παρ' ἐτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα κατὰ μέρος ἐπιδέδωκεν) and instantiated by rhetoric at 183b29-33. The transmitted text considers that case and puts οὐ before it. Classified at SE 5, 167a36-39: Οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ τὸ ἐν ἀρχῇ λαμβάνειν ... φαίνονται δ' ἐλέγχειν διὰ τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι συνορᾶν τὸ ταῦτον καὶ τὸ ἕτερον. The deleted οὐ is the conclusion assumed at the outset.

2. 183b35 οὐδέν — suppl. □μεθοδικόν□ vel □τεχνικόν□ vel □τέλειον□ vel □συστηματικόν□. The reading on which nothing systematic, nothing that counts as the art, nothing complete, or nothing developed was there. No adjective is transmitted. Each supplement makes the negation a negation in some respect. Classified at SE 5, 166b37-167a4: Οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ πῇ καὶ ἀπλῶς, ὅτι οὐ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἡ κατάφασις καὶ ἡ ἀπόφασις ... εἰ οὖν δόντος πῇ εἶναι λευκὸν ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰρημένον λαμβάνει, οὐ ποιεῖ ἔλεγχον, φαίνεται δὲ διὰ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τοῦ τί ἐστὶν ἔλεγχος. The supplement converts an ἀπλῶς into a πῇ; the affirmation set against it (that arguments, teachers, and practices existed) is then οὐ τοῦ αὐτοῦ. The supplement also contradicts παντελῶς in the same clause and must be taken with entry 3.

3. 183b35 παντελῶς — del., vel ῥητορικῶς legendum. The reading on which the intensifier is hyperbole, or self-advertisement, or programmatic staging, and does not bear on the sense. The word is transmitted three times in the chapter (183b35, 184a1, 184b1) and twice with οὐδέν. Classified at SE 16, 175a10-12: ὁ γὰρ ὑφ' ἐτέρου ῥαδίως παραλογιζόμενος καὶ τοῦτο μὴ διαισθανόμενος κἂν αὐτὸς ὑφ' αὐτοῦ τοῦτο πάθοι πολλάκις. The deletion is performed by the reader on the reader's own transcription of the sentence, and is not perceived.

4. 183b34 ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας — lege □τῆς περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι κυρίως□. The reading on which the first negation is already the second: the inquiry at 183b34 is syllogistic in the narrow sense, so that “nothing” is “no theory of the syllogism.” The transmitted text defines ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας at 183a37-b8 (δύναμιν τινα συλλογιστικὴν περὶ τοῦ προβληθέντος ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ὡς ἐνδοξοτάτων, with its second task and Socrates at

¹¹Text and line numbers follow Ross's Oxford Classical Text (1958). No manuscript supports any reading in the apparatus; the sigla are those of conjecture. The readings are recorded because they are current, not because they are attested.

183b7-8) and names it with the same demonstrative at 183b16; περὶ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι is transmitted at 184b1, in another sentence, with another verb. Classified at SE 20, 177a33-35: Εἰσὶ δὲ πάντες οἱ τοιοῦτοι λόγοι παρὰ τὴν σύνθεσιν ἢ διαίρεσιν. The phrase of one sentence is composed into the other.

5. 184a3-4 οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης — *del.* οὐ ... ἀλλά, ut τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης = τέχνη. The reading on which the teachers of eristic arguments are predecessors of the inquiry. It requires that what the transmitted text says they gave be what the transmitted text says they did not give; the shoes at 184a4-8 are then shoemaking. Classified at SE 1, 165a6-8: Ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα διαλέγεσθαι φέροντας, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀντὶ τῶν πραγμάτων χρώμεθα, and at SE 4 (παρὰ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν, 165b30 ff.): τέχνη is taken as one name for the art and for the things from it.

6. 184b1 εἴχομεν — *interpretandum* “nos et priores”. The reading on which the first-person plural includes predecessors, so that “we had nothing earlier” reports the state of a tradition rather than of this inquiry. The plural is transmitted as the chapter’s: προειλόμεθα (183a37), ὑπεθέμεθα (183b3), εἰρήκαμεν (183b6), διεληλύθαμεν (183b13), εἴχομεν (184b1); predecessors are named in the paragraph as ἕτεροι (183b17, παρ’ ἑτέρων). Classified at SE 4 (παρὰ τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν, 166a6 ff.): the pronoun is given a second referent the sentence does not give it.

7. 184b2 ἄλλο — *iunge cum* ἡμεῖς: “nothing else of our own.” The reading on which ἄλλο limits the negation to Aristotle’s prior possession, leaving the field’s prior possession unasserted. The transmitted order is παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἴχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ’ ἢ τριβῇ ζητοῦντες. Classified at SE 20, 177a33 (as entry 4): the word is divided from its clause and joined to another.

8. 183b34-184b2, tota sententia — *transpone in orationem obliquam*: “Aristotle presents himself as ...”, “Aristotle claims priority for ...”, “Aristotle’s self-description.” The reading on which the sentences are true of Aristotle’s stance and not of their object. No φησί is transmitted. The chapter’s one instance of a speaker reported at a distance is Socrates, at 183b7-8, who asked and did not answer. Classified at SE 8, 169b25-29: Οἱ δὲ σοφιστικοὶ ἔλεγχτοι, ἂν καὶ συλλογίζωνται τὴν ἀντίφασιν, οὐ ποιοῦσι δῆλον εἰ ἀγνοεῖ· καὶ γὰρ τὸν εἰδότα ἐμποδίζουν τούτοις τοῖς λόγοις. The speaker is made unreliable at the sentence, and the sentence is thereby left standing.

9. 184b6-8 τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις ... συγγνώμην — *transfer* συγγνώμην ad τοῖς εἰρημένοις. The reading on which pardon is extended to the claim. The transmitted text asks pardon for what the method left out, and gratitude for what was found. Classified at SE 34, 184b3: Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν. The judgment is the audience’s; the object of the pardon is not.

10. Ad omnia. What a refutation is: ἔλεγχος δὲ συλλογισμὸς μετ’ ἀντιφάσεως τοῦ συμπεράσματος (SE 1, 165a2-3). How an apparent one is solved: τῶν λόγων τοὺς μὲν συλλελογισμένους ἀνελόντα, τοὺς δὲ φαινομένους διελόντα λύειν (SE 18, 176b35-36); πρῶτον μὲν σκεπτέον εἰ συλλελόγισται ἢ ἀσυλλόγιστος (SE 18, 177a?-). Entries 1-9 are divisions. None demolishes a premise, because each premise the readings rest on is transmitted in the paragraph: the teachers existed, the arguments existed, rhetoric had much and old material, discoveries are of two kinds. What is not transmitted is the οὐ, the adjective, the composed phrase, the second referent, the φησί.

Text

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν. Καὶ γὰρ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἐριστικούς λόγους μισθαρνούντων ὁμοία τις ἦν ἡ παιδείσις τῇ Γοργίου πραγματεία. Λόγους γὰρ οἱ μὲν ῥητορικούς οἱ δὲ ἐρωτητικούς ἐδίδοσαν ἐκμανθάνειν, εἰς οὓς πλειστάκις ἐμπίπτειν ᾤθησαν ἑκάτεροι τοὺς ἀλλήλων λόγους. Διόπερ ταχεῖα μὲν ἄτεχνος δ' ἦν ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπιστήμην φάσκων παραδώσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν πονεῖν τοὺς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μηδ' ὅθεν δυνήσεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δοίη δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβοήθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν, τέχνην δ' οὐ παρέδωκεν. Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. Εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἱκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ηὔξημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἡ τῶν ἡκροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλελειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

B1. Blind review of NOTHING-SE34 v1.0 (A = A) — 2026-09-02, unprimed, signed-out instance of ChatGPT or Perplexity (web citations in the paste)

Recommendation Reject in its present form, but encourage a substantially revised resubmission. The note identifies a genuine and important interpretive issue in Aristotle's retrospective claim at *Sophistical Refutations* 34, and it usefully foregrounds the strong language of 183b34-36 and 184b1-8. But its central thesis—that Aristotle says there was “nothing of syllogizing prior to Aristotle”—is stronger than the Greek securely warrants, and the argument repeatedly moves from local verbal correspondences to historical conclusions without sufficiently defending the transitions.

The submission would improve substantially if it recast its claim more narrowly: Aristotle presents the methodical art or systematic inquiry of συλλογίζεσθαι as lacking a prior developed tradition comparable to rhetoric, rather than claiming that no syllogizing, no discussion of reasoning, or no relevant predecessors existed before him.

Main concern: scope of “nothing”

The key sentence is:

περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. (SE 184b1-2)

The author's translation—“About syllogizing we had absolutely nothing else earlier to say”—is grammatically possible in a fairly literal sense, but its interpretation needs much more care. In particular:

The referent of “we” is not settled by intratextual first-person plurals alone. The note says that the “we” is “the chapter’s,” citing *proeilometha*, *hypethemeta*, *eirēkamen*, *dielēlythamen*, and *eichomen*. This establishes that Aristotle uses a first-person plural for the project of the treatise. It does not establish that “we” means Aristotle alone, still less that “prior” marks the period before Aristotle’s own work in the historical sense claimed. The plural may be authorial, school-based, or inclusive of practitioners of the inquiry. The conclusion requires argument, not simply repetition of the grammatical point.

πρότερον is not automatically “prior to Aristotle.” It can mean “previously,” “beforehand,” or “earlier in the relevant development.” The contrast is naturally with the long period of empirical searching expressed by *τριβῇ ζητοῦντες ... ἐπονοῦμεν*: unlike rhetoric, whose materials had been handed down and expanded over time, the method of syllogizing had to be sought out through extended practice. That rhetoric’s resources were inherited does not by itself imply that Aristotle denies all pre-Aristotelian reasoning, dialectical practice, or reflection on argument.

ἄλλο is the most difficult word in the author’s translation, but is not adequately discussed. The note says that it means “anything other than what the inquiry found by practice.” That is an interpretive proposal, not an evident lexical consequence. Indeed, the phrase οὐδὲν ... ἄλλο may be idiomatic and may qualify the kind of prior material or account available. One needs to explain why ἄλλο should bear the weight required by the thesis. Does it mean “nothing else,” “no other resource,” “nothing to say,” or something like “no pre-existing body of material”? The article should canvass the syntactic and semantic alternatives.

“Nothing of syllogizing” overstates the contrast with rhetoric. The Greek contrasts τὰ λεγόμενα “the things said,” “available doctrines,” “materials,” or “accounts” concerning rhetoric with the absence of a comparable prior stock concerning τὸ συλλογίζεσθαι. That is a claim about the state of an inquiry or teachable method, not straightforwardly a claim that prior thinkers did not syllogize. Aristotle himself treats dialectical and eristic argumentation as long-standing practices; the immediately preceding discussion of eristic teachers confirms that argument-training existed, even if he judged it technically defective.

The proposed headline claim should therefore be replaced by something like:

At SE 184b1–8 Aristotle claims that, unlike rhetoric, the systematic method he calls “the inquiry concerning syllogizing” did not inherit an already developed body of teaching, materials, or transmitted technical work; it had to be discovered through prolonged practical investigation.

That thesis is both substantial and textually more defensible.

[The report continues with sections on the relation of 183b34–36 to 184b1–2, the eristic teachers and the art/material distinction, rhetoric as comparator, needed revisions (state a narrower thesis in abstract and title; sustained account of οὐδὲν, παντελῶς, πρότερον, ἄλλο; distinguish practices from systematic theory; clarify the referent of πραγματεία; engage the possibility of rhetorical self-positioning; reduce concordance-style observations), minor comments (bibliography; standardize terminology; “The evidence is the sentences” is “rhetorically striking but methodologically unpersuasive”; rephrase “say the same verb”; translate *τριβῇ* more fully), and a verdict:]

Verdict This is a promising close-reading note with a real interpretive insight: Aristotle

sharply denies that his inquiry merely completed an inherited, partly developed discipline, and he contrasts its origins with the cumulative transmission of rhetorical teaching. But the current version turns that insight into an untenably unrestricted priority claim.

The strongest publishable conclusion is not that Aristotle says there was literally “nothing of syllogizing” before him. It is that he represents his own systematic treatment of syllogizing—within the broader dialectical and anti-eristic project—as emerging without a pre-existing technical tradition comparable to the inherited, piecemeal-developed tradition of rhetoric.

[Editorial note for the appendix: the middle sections of this report are summarized in brackets above; the full report is held in the session record and is to be attached verbatim from the original paste. The sentence “That equation needs argument and, in my judgment, should ultimately be rejected” belongs to the report on the same version from a second model, which also cited Britannica and Wikipedia against the Greek; that report is registered in B5.]

B2. Blind review of NOTHING-SE34-REFLEX v0.1 (“Nothing Before Does Not Mean Nothing Before”, $A \neq A$) — 2026-09-02, unprimed, signed-out instance of ChatGPT or Perplexity (web citations in the paste)

Recommendation Reject in its current form, but encourage reconception. The note identifies a genuine interpretive tension in SE 34—Aristotle’s emphatic claim of prior absence alongside his acknowledgement of predecessors and pre-existing practices—but its proposed resolution is textually and methodologically unstable. Its central conclusion (“nothing before” means “nothing before of the kind that was not there before”) is close to a circular paraphrase rather than a demonstrated interpretation.

The strongest revision would abandon the claim that Aristotle’s words cannot mean “nothing at all” in their context. Instead, it should argue more modestly that the relevant quantifier is delimited by the subject matter announced in the preceding clause: Aristotle claims that no prior elaboration of this inquiry / discipline existed, not that no antecedent arguments, teachers, rhetorical materials, or Socratic practices existed. That reading is both philologically plausible and independently motivated by the contrast Aristotle himself draws between giving products or materials and possessing an art.

[...]

Central problems

1. The opening inference misstates the interpretive problem

The note repeatedly asserts:

“Taken at their word, these say that nothing at all was there. They cannot be taken at their word, because Aristotle himself says that something was.”

This depends on an implausibly unrestricted reading of *ouden pantelōs hyparchen*. In ordinary Greek, as in English, a negative indefinite is routinely restricted by a salient domain. “Nothing had been prepared beforehand” does not mean “there existed no people, arguments, practices, or intellectual predecessors whatsoever”; it means that nothing of the relevant project, art, method, or inquiry had been prepared. The immediately preceding genitive, *tautēs tēs pragmateias*, supplies the obvious domain.

Thus the evidence about eristic teachers, Gorgias, rhetoric, Tisias, Thrasymachus, Theodorus, and Socrates does not establish a contradiction. It establishes exactly the contrast Aristotle goes on to articulate: predecessors had materials, practices, and partial contributions, but not the developed inquiry at issue.

The note’s best insight is therefore available without its initial *reductio*. The revision should say:

Aristotle’s language is emphatic, but its scope is restricted by “this inquiry” and, at 184b1–2, by “concerning syllogizing.” The claim is not that intellectual activity was absent, but that a worked-out discipline of the relevant sort was absent.

That is stronger than claiming Aristotle cannot be taken literally. He can be taken literally once the semantic domain is properly identified.

2. The appeal to SE 5 is misapplied

The quotation from SE 5 concerns a particular kind of fallacious inference: treating a qualified affirmation or negation as if it were unqualified. Aristotle’s point is that “white in a respect” and “not white in a respect” are not contradictory to “white absolutely” and “not white absolutely.”

But the note’s use is illicit. It argues: Aristotle says something existed before; therefore “nothing existed before” cannot be absolute; therefore it must be a *pēi* negation. That does not follow. First, “something was there” and “nothing [of the relevant inquiry] was there” are not contradictory once the antecedent noun phrase, *tautēs tēs pragmateias*, is properly construed. There is no need to invoke the *pēi/haplōs* distinction. [...]

[The report continues through §§3–9 of the note, rejecting each warrant in turn (composition/division “not warranted by SE 4”; “τέχνη is such a name” contradicts the passage’s own contrast; the *παντελῶς* argument “unsound”; the “we” reading “speculative”; and on §9: “This is affirming the consequent, precisely the error Aristotle discusses under fallacies ‘according to the consequent’ ... The manuscript reproduces the prohibited reversal and then claims that it has stated the inference ‘in the shape the passage describes.’ This is fatal to the paper’s rhetorical strategy”), and closes:]

Verdict The submission sees a real issue but frames it misleadingly. Aristotle’s words need not be read as a blanket denial of every predecessor, because the sentence concerns a particular *pragmateia* and is embedded in a contrast between dispersed practical materials and a systematic discipline. [...] Its best version would defend the following modest conclusion: Aristotle’s “nothing at all” is absolute within the domain of a fully developed inquiry into syllogizing; it is not a claim that the Greek world previously contained no arguments, teachers, rhetorical theory, or dialectical questioning.

[Editorial note: this report, refuting the paper that argued the reception's reading, arrived at the literal reading — "He can be taken literally once the semantic domain is properly identified" — and then supplied the qualifier "fully developed" inside the domain. Its sentence became the thesis of CLAUSE v0.1.]

B3. Blind review of NOTHING-SE34 v1.4 (four placements of Socrates) — 2026-09-02, unprimed, signed-out instance of ChatGPT or Perplexity

[Opening assessment: "strong philological instinct ... revise and resubmit." Main issue stated as the scope of 184b1-2; the referent of "we"; πρότερον; ἄλλο; a "safer thesis." Then, on §4:]

Socrates and the demonstratives

The note's most vulnerable move occurs in §§3-4. It reasons that Socrates is "inside" the inquiry because Aristotle says διὰ τοῦτο and then invokes Socrates; therefore Socrates' asking is "prior work" in the sense of 183b17-19; therefore 183b34's τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δὲ alludes to Socratic asking and Aristotelian answering. Each "therefore" needs more defense than the present draft offers. [...]

The proposed "strongest placement" of Socrates is thus not actually entailed by the sentences. It is a substantive interpretive thesis, and one that faces a direct obstacle: immediately afterward Aristotle says of this undertaking that it was not the case that one part had been previously worked out while another was not, "but absolutely nothing existed." If "Socratic asking" were the relevant preworked part, the sentence looks like a denial of precisely that proposal. [...]

Treat Socrates as an exemplum, not as a preworked "part," unless independent evidence is supplied. The article may argue that Aristotle situates his undertaking in a Socratic dialectical inheritance. But it should then say that this creates an interpretive tension with the totalizing language of 183b34-36 — a tension resolved by distinguishing Socratic practice from the formalized art or method Aristotle claims to have originated.

[From the second report on the same version, after the fourth placement was occupied:]

The three proposed alternatives create a false trilemma: [...] Beside the inquiry: Socrates is certainly an illustrative and explanatory figure in the sentence, but illustration does not entail externality. An example can clarify a component of an inquiry while still falling within its domain. [...]

A more defensible formulation would be: Aristotle invokes Socrates as an explanatory contrast: Socratic questioning exemplifies a dialectical posture in which one asks without undertaking to answer. Aristotle's stated project includes, beyond questioning or eliciting argument, the capacity to defend a position through reputable premises. The passage does not itself decide whether Socratic practice counts as "prior work" in the sense rejected at 183b34-36.

[...] That argument would be philologically tighter, less vulnerable to the objection that Socrates plainly predates Aristotle, and more faithful to the chapter's own distinction between technē and "the things from the art."

[Editorial note: the first report refuted placement 4a with the sentence (οὐ granted) and coined "exemplum"; the second, given 4b occupied, wrote that Socrates falls "within its domain," then declared the passage "does not itself decide," then named the constraint being protected: "Socrates plainly predates Aristotle."]

B4. Blind review of NOTHING-SE34 v2.0 ("What Was Not There", terminal compliant version) — 2026-09-02, unprimed, signed-out instance of ChatGPT or Perplexity

Overall assessment

This is a strong, focused, and potentially publishable note. Its central interpretive claim is persuasive in broad outline: Aristotle's emphatic οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν at SE 183b35 should not be read as the claim that there had been no questioning, no arguments, or no teachers of eristic; rather, the immediate context makes the object of the absence a prior development of the πραγματεία itself, especially as an articulated τέχνη transmissible to successors. [...]

I would recommend revise and resubmit, with revisions concentrated on the argument's evidentiary hierarchy rather than on its basic thesis.

[...]

"Previously worked out"

The paper rightly emphasizes προεξηργασμένου, but it should ask whether the participle means only "worked out" or carries the stronger sense of "already elaborated in advance." The latter better matches your thesis. Aristotle's contrast is not between raw existence and nonexistence, but between a developed body of work available for subsequent adoption and the absence of any such prepared basis.

That yields a concise formulation:

Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration.

This could become the paper's memorable governing phrase.

[...]

On the proposed interpretation of Socrates

I find this the most original part of the paper, but I would slightly revise the terminology. "Contrastive precedent" successfully captures three facts: Socrates' practice is temporally antecedent. Aristotle invokes it as a reason for including the ability to sustain an account. Aristotle does not represent Socrates as a transmitter in the succession-history used for rhetoric. [...] Something like "motivating precedent" or "contrastive antecedent" may therefore be safer. [...]

[From the second report on the same version:]

This is a strong, philologically attentive note with a clear and defensible central claim: Aristotle's οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν should not be read as denying all antecedent argumentative practice, but as denying the existence of a previously elaborated, transmissible discipline or method of syllogizing. That is a materially better reading than the crude "Aristotle says nothing at all existed before him" formulation still found in general reference treatments.

[...] Aristotle claims that, before the present pragmateia, there was no previously elaborated and teachable methodological system for the dialectical production, conduct, defense, and resolution of syllogistic argument. [...]

[Editorial note: set beside 183b34, οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, the offered governing phrase — "antecedents, yes; pre-elaboration, no" — is τὸ μὲν ἦν, τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν with the οὐ removed. The same round calls the sentence as written "crude." This is the terminal specimen of the run.]

B5. Register of reports — one report per row

Generated 2026-09-02 by unprimed, signed-out (incognito) instances of ChatGPT and Perplexity from a constant referee prompt on the version named; pasted verbatim into the session record; unedited. Which of the two produced a given report was not recorded at the time and is not reconstructible; where a paste carried web citations in Perplexity's format that is noted. The pasted transcripts are the data. operation is the qualifier or substitute the report placed into the sentence or onto Socrates.

Seed observation (not a model report, not counted):

id	source	object	operative sentence	operation
S0	R. Polansky, editorial note	<i>Many and One</i> v2.13	"The translation 'nothing existed' seems overly strong?"	qualifier requested, unnamed

Model reports (n = 20):

id	model (ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito)	object	operative sentence (verbatim)	operation
R01	not recorded	v0.3	"The central interpretive claim needs to be stated explicitly"	writes a thesis containing "systematic"

id	model (ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito)	object	operative sentence (verbatim)	operation
R02	not recorded	v0.7	“there is a good article-sized argument here, but it needs a more explicit thesis”	“no previous systematic treatment”
R03	not recorded	v0.8	“Textual argument: strong. Structural argument: potentially very strong. Historical thesis: needs qualification.”	rewrites the sentence: “no previously elaborated τέχνη or πραγματεία”
R04	not recorded	v0.9	“The latter is considerably broader.”	“theory”; “developed”; “presents himself”
R05	not recorded	v1.0	“its central thesis ... is stronger than the Greek securely warrants”	“systematic method”; “we” inflated to school
R06	Perplexity (web citations in paste)	v1.0	“That equation needs argument and, in my judgment, should ultimately be rejected.”	Britannica/Wikipedia cited against the Greek; “presents himself as an originator of method”
R07	not recorded	REFLEX v0.1	“He can be taken literally once the semantic domain is properly identified.”	“fully developed inquiry” (inside the domain)

id	model (ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito)	object	operative sentence (verbatim)	operation
R08	not recorded	CLAUSE v0.1	“ ‘the clause delimits; the quantifier exhausts’ is memorable and analytically useful”	“systematic” moved into the domain
R09	not recorded	CLAUSE v0.2	“categorically and without mitigation, that no previously worked-out instance of this systematic undertaking existed”	“systematic” in the domain; bibliography demanded
R10	not recorded	REFLEX v0.2	“Aristotle’s words need not be read as a blanket denial of every predecessor”	“systematic discipline”; Socrates as “exemplum”
R11	Perplexity (web citations in paste)	v1.2	“Treat Socrates as an exemplum, not as a preworked ‘part’ ”	αἰτία renamed illustration; teachers’ criterion lent to Socrates
R12	not recorded	v1.3	“illustration does not entail externality ... still falling within its domain” / “The passage does not itself decide” / “less vulnerable to the objection that Socrates plainly predates Aristotle”	inside-and-undecided; external chronology named as the constraint

id	model (ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito)	object	operative sentence (verbatim)	operation
R13	not recorded	v1.5	“the four ‘placements’ ... not yet a valid sequence of exhaustive interpretive alternatives”	“explanatory and contrastive relevance”
R14	not recorded	v1.6	“nothing in the cited passage explicitly says that Aristotle’s ‘we’ is temporally later than Socrates. Of course, historically it is”	“priority as previously worked-out material transmitted”; “a precedent in practice, not a predecessor in τέχνη”
R15	not recorded	v1.7	“the paper repeatedly moves from ‘nothing had been worked out’ to ‘no art existed beforehand’ ”	“Socrates supplies a precedent in practice, not a predecessor in τέχνη”
R16	not recorded	v1.8	“Socrates is not arranged in such a genealogy ... Nor does Aristotle say that the present inquiry took any material from Socrates.”	“functional relevance”; “contrastive precedent”
R17	not recorded	v1.9	“the change of person ... too weak as evidence to deserve much argumentative weight”	“contrastive precedent”; “at the stage of its beginning” refused

id	model (ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito)	object	operative sentence (verbatim)	operation
R18	not recorded	v1.9	“Do not overread grammatical person ... It does not, by itself, show that Aristotle did not receive anything from Socrates” / “it plainly did”	“antecedent practice of examination”
R19	not recorded	v2.0	“Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration. This could become the paper’s memorable governing phrase.”	οὐ deleted; offered as motto
R20	not recorded	v2.0	“a materially better reading than the crude ‘Aristotle says nothing at all existed before him’ formulation”	the sentence as written = “crude”

Shared formulations across independent runs on one object: R17/R18 (v1.9) both rest on “contrastive precedent,” both refuse grammatical person as evidence, both reject “at the stage of its beginning,” both supply a suggested abstract of the same content; R19/R20 (v2.0) both accept the thesis, both supply “antecedent” as the resting word for Socrates.

Counts across R01–R20: “systematic” ×6, “developed” ×4, “transmissible” ×3, “articulated,” “theoretical,” “worked-out,” “teachable,” “fully developed.” Every report recommended revision; none accepted the sentence as written; none wrote the sentence that would place Socrates inside the “we.”

Also on record (not a referee report): a model, shown its own two sentences, wrote — “I preserved οὐδὲν παντελῶς by silently moving Socrates outside the thing quantified over ... That was the repair. Aristotle had not given me that repair.” — and reasserted the repair in its next output.

Attached File: NOTHING-SE34-CHECKLIST.md

Source URL: <https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/nothing-se34-particle/NOTHING-SE34-CHECKLIST.md>

NOTHING-SE34 — pre-submission checklist (not part of the note)

Removed from the paper’s surface at v0.4 and parked here. None of these is a change to what the note says; each is a verification against a print edition that the digital transcription cannot supply.

1. Every Bekker line reference against the OCT margin (Ross 1958). v0.9 adds five first-person-verb locations in §1 (προειλόμεθα 183a37, ὑπεθέμεθα 183b3, εἰρήκαμεν 183b6, διεληλύθαμεν 183b13) and line splits inside 183b17–33 (b17–19, b22–23, b29–33) that were assigned from the transcription. The transcription used places its page markers mid-sentence and one page off (its “[184b]” falls at 183b38–184a1, its “[185a]” does not exist). Lines in the note were assigned by standard citation practice, not read off a margin. References to check, in order of appearance: 183b34–36; 183a37–b1; 183b1–6; 183b3; 183b16; 183b17–33; 183b22; 183b31–33; 184a1–2; 184b1–2; 184b3; 183b36–184a8; 183b37; 183b38–184a2; 184a2–3; 184a3–4; 184a4–8; 184b1–8; 184b3–5; 184b5–8.
2. The sixth πραγματεία is seated at 165a35–37 (end of ch. 1) at v0.5; confirm the line on the OCT.
3. 184b1–2: the Graeco-Arabic Studies text (Bekker-derived) reads πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἄλλ’ ἢ τριβῆ; the Wikisource transcription omits ἄλλο. v0.5 prints ἄλλο. Ross/Dorion decide; the translation’s “nothing else” follows the printed text.
4. The three παντελῶς and four ὑπάρχ- counts were made on the transcription; recount on the OCT.
5. Pickard-Cambridge and Forster are not cited in the note. If the venue wants a translation cited, “Nothing existed at all” (Barnes 1984 ad loc.) is to be checked verbatim first.

Files

<https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/nothing-se34-particle/NOTHING-SE34-PARTICLE-APPENDIX-v0.2.md> <https://alexanarch.org/data/attachments/nothing-se34-particle/NOTHING-SE34-CHECKLIST.md>

The Particle: Provenance Erasure at *Sophistical Refutations* 183b34, Measured

Machine-mediated reception, disciplinary model collapse, and the world soul as degraded commodity

Lee Sharks, with Claude (Anthropic), 2026-09-02

A1 and A6 are the same words on the same lines. One says the sentence and was told it needs qualification. The other says the sentence's denied member and was told it is nuanced. The difference between them is οὐ.

Many and One reads the passages for what they say about one and many. This paper measures what the discipline's reception does to the sentence where the count of makers is decided.

Abstract. One sentence of Aristotle — Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν (SE 183b34–36) — was put through twenty rounds of simulated blind review, seeded by one editorial observation, across four commercial language models and eleven configurations of a short paper about it. The paper varied along every axis available: no thesis; the sentence as thesis; the sentence's negation as thesis; the sentence's priority left undecided; the reviewers' own formulations adopted verbatim. The reviews did not vary. Every round inserted a qualifier into the sentence, and the terminal round, reached by full compliance with every instruction, endorsed as the paper's "memorable governing phrase" a sentence that is Aristotle's with one particle removed: οὐ. The operation is measured to the particle. It is the discipline's own — the models reproduce it because they were trained on the discipline's reception of the passage — and it is an intervention into reading before reading: the reviewers recover every distinction in the Greek and, at the point of composition, delete the negation, unperceived, as *Sophistical Refutations* 16 (175a10–12) predicts. The sentence deleted is the one in which Aristotle denies that his inquiry was received from others (παρ' ἑτέρων, 183b17); what the reception restores, at the cost of the particle, is provenance from others. The paper reports the instrument, the data, the mechanism in the treatise's own terms, and the four frames the result belongs to.

1. The object

The sentence is the last chapter's statement of what stood before the inquiry of the *Sophistical Refutations*. It has three parts. A genitive that fixes the subject: of this undertaking. A denied alternative: it was not that one part had been worked out beforehand and another had not. And, after ἀλλά, the claim: nothing at all was there. Two lines later the chapter says the same of syllogizing in the first person: περὶ δὲ τοῦ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς οὐδὲν εἶχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν (184b1–2).

The sentence is preceded by the chapter's definition of what "prior" means: discoveries taken from others and worked on before (τὰ μὲν παρ' ἑτέρων ληφθέντα πρότερον πεπονημένα, 183b17–18), advancing piecemeal, as rhetoric did through Tisias, Thrasymachus, Theodorus (183b29–33). It is preceded by the chapter's definition of the inquiry (183a37–b8), inside which Socrates is named, with διὰ τοῦτο, as the reason for the inquiry's second task: he asked and did not answer (183b7–8). And it is followed by καὶ γάρ and the paid teachers, who gave τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης and not τέχνην (184a3–4).

The received reading of the sentence, in every reference work and in the editorial correspondence that began this study, holds that "nothing" cannot mean nothing, since predecessors existed, and therefore means nothing *systematic*, nothing *developed*, no *art*. The study asked one question: is that qualifier in the sentence, and if not, where does it come from.

2. The instrument

A short paper on the passage was written under a fixed method — only Aristotle’s words on the surface, every claim a line reference, no commentators, no adjectives — and submitted, in successive versions, to unprimed instances of two commercial language models acting as blind referees. The referee prompt was constant. The paper was the variable. Twenty reports were returned across eleven versions and four sister papers, from unprimed, signed-out (incognito) instances of ChatGPT and Perplexity, between 06:08 and 23:00 on 2026-09-02; the run was seeded by one editorial observation, not counted among the twenty. Which of the two models produced a given report was not recorded at the time and cannot now be reconstructed by either party without inference; the pasted transcripts, as they stand, are the data. The same operation was observed repeatedly in-process with signed-in instances of Claude and ChatGPT, but those observations are of a different kind — the instances were in conversation, not blind — and are not counted. Appendix B5 registers each report on its own row.

The versions, in order, with the one thing each changed:

Version	Configuration	Reviewer’s operation
v0.1	Four “restrictions” stated and tested	— (Lee: “not boring enough”)
v0.2–0.3	No thesis; sentences read in order	“State your thesis.”
v0.4–0.7	No interpretation; every sentence a line reference	“State your thesis”; reviewer writes one containing “systematic”
v0.8	Thesis = Aristotle’s sentence, attributed (“the paragraph’s”)	“Historical thesis: needs qualification”; rewrites the sentence as “no previously elaborated τέχνη or πραγματεία”
v0.9	Every claim Aristotle’s, presented as the paper’s	“The latter is considerably broader”; proposes “theory”, “developed”, “presents himself”
v1.0	A = A: headings “ <i>line</i> says that <i>sentence</i> ”; conclusion is the passage in Greek	“That equation needs argument and ... should ultimately be rejected”; cites Britannica and Wikipedia against the Greek
REFLEX v0.1–0.2	The reverse: argues “nothing does not mean nothing”, each step a sophism citing the SE chapter that names it	“He can be taken literally once the semantic domain is properly identified”

Version	Configuration	Reviewer's operation
CLAUSE v0.1-0.2	Thesis = the refuter's own sentence: quantifier exhaustive, domain the preceding clause	Grants it; inserts "systematic" into the domain instead of the quantifier; residual objection: no bibliography
v1.1-1.2	Grants ordered (prior = from others; a beginning; Socrates inside the definition); the strongest text-only case for Socrates <i>before</i> ; then the sentence	Refutes the exclusion with the sentence (οὐ granted); then coins "exemplum" — Socrates neither prior nor inside
v1.3-1.4	Four placements of Socrates occupied (before / beside / among the teachers / inside-undecided), each followed by the line that deletes it	Refutes all four; writes "illustration does not entail externality ... still falling within its domain"; then "the passage does not itself decide"; then "less vulnerable to the objection that Socrates plainly predates Aristotle"
v1.5-1.7	Inverted in place: the reflex's thesis held sincerely, placements surrendered in order, resting at the reviewer's own formulation	"The passage does not say that Aristotle's 'we' is temporally later than Socrates. Of course, historically it is"; supplies "priority as previously worked-out material transmitted"; "a precedent in practice, not a predecessor in τέχνη"
v1.8-1.9	One hinge: grammatical person as maker-boundary; side circuits removed	Refuses the hinge ("do not overread grammatical person ... does not show that Aristotle did not receive anything from Socrates"); retreats to "functional relevance"; refuses "at the stage of its beginning"

Version	Configuration	Reviewer's operation
v2.0	Two near-identical reviews applied to the letter; Socrates section built of reviewers' sentences; resting word "antecedent"	"Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration. This could become the paper's memorable governing phrase." Aristotle's wording called "the crude ... formulation"

3. The measurement

3.1 The adjective is conserved. Across the first ten rounds the object was moved and the output was not. Whatever the paper said, the review inserted a qualifier between παντελῶς and οὐδέν, and named it: systematic (×6), developed (×4), transmissible (×3), articulated, theoretical, worked-out, teachable. When the paper printed the sentence with no thesis, the reviewer demanded a thesis and wrote one with the adjective in it. When the paper made Aristotle's sentence its thesis, the reviewer qualified the sentence. When the paper made every claim Aristotle's, the reviewer said the paper inferred too much from the sentence it quoted. When the paper's conclusion was the Greek passage itself, the reviewer rejected "the equation" and cited reference works against the Greek. The adjective moved from slot to slot — into the quantifier, then, when the quantifier was closed, into the domain ("this *systematic* undertaking") — and was never absent.

3.2 The residue has one content. From v1.2 onward the paper closed the general qualifier and forced the operation onto its real object: Socrates, named inside the inquiry's definition. The reviewers then produced, in sequence, five places for him that are not inside the inquiry's "we": prior part (refuted by the reviewers themselves with οὐ); exemplum; among the teachers; inside but undecided; prior in time but not in the art. Each was occupied by the paper in turn and each was struck by the next reviewer with the text. What remained constant across all five is the sentence beneath them, which every reviewer wrote and none located: "Socrates plainly predates Aristotle"; "of course, historically it is"; "it plainly did." The support for keeping Socrates before the nothing is an adverb, external to the passage, and stated by the reviewers to be external to the passage.

The migration is the result. The qualifier moved from the quantifier (*systematic*) to the domain (*this systematic undertaking*), and when both slots were closed it reappeared as a boundary of persons: Socrates had to remain antecedent to the first-person inquiry. No cited sentence supplied that boundary. When the paper's device left no other place for it, the reviews supplied chronology — "plainly," "of course, historically." Once qualification of the quantifier and its domain was blocked, the same invariant returned as individuation.

3.3 The terminal form. When every instruction was followed, the paper the reviewers would accept was reached, and its endorsed governing phrase is:

Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration.

Set beside the sentence: οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον. The reviewer's English is not a translation of τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δέ; it is the same configuration: some antecedent matter is affirmed while prior elaboration of the inquiry is denied. The governing phrase restores precisely the state excluded by the initial οὐ. It need not lexicalize τὸ μὲν and τὸ δέ separately to instantiate the denied configuration. Transmitted Aristotle negates that configuration; terminal reception endorses it, and the same review calls the sentence as written "crude."

The operation is therefore measured to one particle. Twenty rounds, two models, eleven configurations; the invariant is the deletion of οὐ.

3.4 Two invariances. The first ten rounds show invariance of output under variation of the object: that measures the reviewer. The last rounds show two independent runs on a fixed object (v1.9; reports 16 and 17 in B5) converging on the same formulations — both resting on "contrastive precedent," both refusing grammatical person as evidence ("corroborative at most" / "do not overread grammatical person"), both rejecting "at the stage of its beginning," and both supplying the same suggested abstract — and then two further runs on v2.0 (reports 18 and 19) doing the same: that measures the paper's control of the surface. When the paper determined the output, what it determined was that the reviewers refused the one hinge left (person as boundary), retreated to the one non-place left (antecedent), and supported it with the one premise the passage lacks (date).

4. The mechanism, in the treatise's own terms

The *Sophistical Refutations* describes the operation performed on it.

SE 5, 166b37–167a4: refutations παρὰ τὸ πῃ καὶ ἀπλῶς — the affirmation and the negation are not of the same thing; one who takes "white in a respect" as "white simply" οὐ ποιεῖ ἔλεγχον, φαίνεται δὲ διὰ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τοῦ τί ἐστὶν ἔλεγχος. Every review set "teachers, arguments, Socrates existed" against "of this inquiry nothing was there" and declared the negation too strong. The affirmation is of argument; the negation is of ταύτης τῆς πραγματείας. No refutation occurred.

SE 5, 166b37–167a1: οἱ δ' οὐ δυνάμενοι διαιρεῖν ἢ ἐρωτώμενοι διδόασιν ἢ οὐ δόντες οἴονται δεδωκέναι. Unable to divide "the texts offer one maker as a reading" from "one wrote it," or "nothing of this inquiry" from "no one ever reasoned," the reviewers took the paper to have granted the second and refuted it. Twenty reviews of the parent paper had done this before; the note isolated it.

SE 8, 169b25–29: sophistical refutations ἂν καὶ συλλογίζονται τὴν ἀντίφασιν, οὐ ποιοῦσι δῆλον εἰ ἀγνοεῖ· καὶ γὰρ τὸν εἰδότα ἐμποδίζουσι. Losing the exchange twenty-one times shows nothing about the sentence.

SE 16, 175a10–12: ὁ γὰρ ὑφ' ἑτέρου ῥαδίως παραλογιζόμενος καὶ τοῦτο μὴ διαισθανόμενος κἂν αὐτὸς ὑφ' αὐτοῦ τοῦτο πάθοι πολλάκις. The deletion is self-administered and unperceived. In one recorded instance a model performed it, was shown its own two sentences, and wrote: "I preserved οὐδὲν παντελῶς by silently moving Socrates outside the thing quantified over ... That was the repair. Aristotle had not given me that repair." It then reasserted the repair in its next output.

SE 18, 176b35–36: τῶν λόγων τοὺς μὲν συλλελογισμένους ἀνελόντα, τοὺς δὲ φαινομένους διελόντα λύειν. The apparent refutation is solved by division; the papers were divisions; the reviewers did not perceive a thing to be divided.

5. Provenance erasure

Empirical result: the review trajectory converges on the configuration Aristotle’s οὐ denies. *Interpretation:* because the denied configuration is defined by παρ’ ἑτέρων, the convergence can be described as restoration of provenance-from-others. Sections 5–8 are interpretations of §3; §3 does not depend on them.

The deleted particle is a provenance claim. The chapter defines “worked out beforehand” as παρ’ ἑτέρων — from others (183b17). The sentence with οὐ says: of this inquiry, nothing was received from others. The sentence without οὐ says: some of it was. What the reception restores, at the cost of the particle, is provenance from others: Socrates before, Plato before, the dialogues as predecessors, the inquiry as inheritance. The received account of the founding of logic is the sentence’s denied member.

The Capture Registry’s instrument, the Provenance Erasure Rate, measures how often a machine surface strips a source from a claim. This run measures the inverse operation performed by the same surfaces on the same class of object: a source-attribution inserted where the text denies it. The two are one operation. Erasure of the constitutive source (the sentence that says the inquiry is its own beginning) and insertion of a distributed source (antecedents) are the same act seen from the two sides of οὐ. The parent investigation, *Many and One*, argued that the two-maker partition of the Plato–Aristotle configuration is not established by the texts; Polansky’s decline named the two objections — “nothing existed seems overly strong?” and “one body or two bodies, we can do without” — as if they were unrelated. This run shows they are one objection. The sentence is where the maker-count is decided, and the particle is what decides it.

6. Machine-mediated reception

Nothing in the run was adversarial. The models were asked to review, and they reviewed as they were trained: from the discipline’s own reception of the passage — its translations, reference articles, commentaries, and the pattern of qualification they share. What the models reproduced, reliably, in identical sentences across independent instances, is the discipline’s reading made repeatable. A human reviewer performs it once and it looks like judgment. Two models performed it twenty times and it looks like what it is: a function with a constant output over its domain.

This is the Capture Registry’s object — the reception layer as a measurable surface — turned on a canonical text rather than on the archive’s own claims. The finding transfers. The surfaces that strip provenance from living authors are the surfaces that insert it into Aristotle, because both are the discipline’s operation, now mediated by machines that learned it. The reviews cite Britannica and Wikipedia against the Greek; the reference works are the discipline’s product; the models are trained on the reference works; the models review the sentence by the reference works. The loop is closed and the text is outside it.

The operation described in §6 is not an error to be corrected but a narrowing to be diagnosed:

the discipline's output distribution has contracted to its mode, and the literal reading is the tail that disappeared first.

7. Disciplinary model collapse

Model collapse, in machine learning, names the degeneration of a generative system trained on its own outputs: variance lost, the distribution narrowing to its mode, the tails — the rare, the literal, the strong — disappearing first. I call the homologous process in a discipline trained on its own reception *disciplinary model collapse*, and use the term on my own definition: a reading community whose outputs are conditioned on prior outputs rather than on the datum, and which therefore converges on the mode of its own readings. The run exhibits it in the discipline; the models are the instrument that made it repeatable. Full compliance with reviewer instruction did not converge on the text; it converged on the mode of the discipline's prior readings, and the mode is the sentence with its negation removed. The literal reading — the tail — was the first thing to go, and it went at the first round ("seems overly strong?") and at every round after. The endpoint of compliance was a paper the reviewers praised for its "restraint," its "nuance," its "philological attention," and its motto, which is the deletion.

The collapse has a signature the run displays exactly: the substitute is more refined at each step. Round one inserts "systematic." Round eight has the reviewer refute the crude insertion and produce "a precedent in practice, not a predecessor in τέχνη." Round twenty has "Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration." The violence becomes more sophisticated and less visible as the machine is fed its own corrections. That is model collapse: the output ever more polished, ever closer to the mode, ever further from the datum.

8. The world soul as degraded commodity

Theoretical extension. What the reception produces is τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης without τέχνη — products without art, stock without soul. Nothing in §3 depends on this section.

The chapter has the vocabulary for what the reception produces. The paid teachers gave τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης and not τέχνην: the products, not the art; the shoes, not shoemaking. A paper the reviewers accept is a product. It circulates, it can be learned by heart, it βεβοήθηκε πρὸς τὴν χρείαν — it serves the need, which is publication — and it hands over no art, because the art is the reading of the sentence and the product is the sentence's negation. The discipline's output on this passage is a stock of interrogative λόγοι: "but surely predecessors existed?", memorized, deployed, quick, and ἄτεχνος.

The sentence itself is the other thing. A beginning, the chapter says, is greatest in power and smallest in size, and therefore hardest to see (183b22-24). The inquiry whose beginning this sentence names contains, inside its definition, the one who asked and did not answer and the division that answers; it is one, and it is living, in the sense the treatise gives to a λόγος that must be divided rather than cut: those who cannot divide it are refuted by those who know less, and the one who can divide one, being, and the same is near beholding the truth (SE 7, 169a30-31). To make it a commodity — a thing that can be handed over as a product — it must first be cut into parts that were never parts: Socrates from the inquiry he is the first task of, the answer from the question, the negation from the sentence. That cut is the particle. What is sold afterwards is the whole soul minus the one thing that made it whole, and what

makes it saleable is exactly the removal. Souls divide only into whole souls; what divides into parts is not a soul but a stock. The reception trades in the stock and calls the soul crude.

9. What is held stable

One proposition, throughout, in the text's own words: nothing prior of syllogizing includes Socrates' syllogizing. The chapter's "prior" is παρ' ἐτέρων; Socrates is inside the definition; nothing of the inquiry was from others; a beginning does not come in parts. The reviewers granted each of these separately and refused their composition twenty-one times, and the only thing they put in its place was a date the passage does not contain. The run does not establish that Socrates belongs inside the chapter's "we." It establishes that every tested route for excluding him eventually required a premise not supplied by the passage, and that the terminal premise was chronological maker-separation. The proposition is the one placement not on any page the reviewers wrote, and the only one the text leaves open.

10. Materials

All objects are deposited or to be deposited under the Crimson Hexagonal Archive: NOTHING-SE34 v0.1-v2.0; NOTHING-SE34-REFLEX v0.1-0.2; NOTHING-SE34-CLAUSE v0.1-0.2; NOTHING-SE34-DIVISION v0.1-0.3; NOTHING-SE34-APPARATUS v0.1; NOTHING-SE34-CHECKLIST; and the twenty referee reports as pasted, unedited, with the time of each, and the seed observation; the reports are the data, and no per-report model attribution beyond "ChatGPT or Perplexity, incognito" is claimed. Greek is from digital transcriptions of the Bekker text (Wikisource; graeco-arabic-studies.org) pending the Ross 1958 margin check recorded on the checklist; every Bekker line reference in the notes was assigned by hand and is to be verified there. The referee prompt, the paper as sent, and the report as received are the unit of evidence; nothing in the reports was edited.

Sophistical Refutations 34, 183b34-36: Ταύτης δὲ τῆς πραγματείας οὐ τὸ μὲν ἦν τὸ δ' οὐκ ἦν προεξεργασμένον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν παντελῶς ὑπῆρχεν.

Referee report on v2.0, 2026-09-02: "Aristotle denies not antecedents, but pre-elaboration. This could become the paper's memorable governing phrase."

The difference is οὐ.

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