

3. Evolution of Public Speaking

3.1 Three Parts of Persuasion by Aristotle. The art of speaking in public is not new. Its long tradition can be traced back to Classical Greece (approximately 490–322 BC). Any young men leaving at that time were expected to acquire and develop public speaking skills as part of their duties as citizens. The first rules of a public speech were elaborated on over 2000 years ago by the Greek philosopher and teacher of Alexander the Great – Aristotle. We know them as the Three Basic Parts of Persuasion: ● Ethos (credibility or the speaker) ● Logos (logic behind any conclusions drawn by a speaker) ● Pathos (emotional appeal or ability to create connection between the speaker and his audience) These key elements still lie at the base of any successful public speech. First, in order to be asked to share their thoughts, observations and ideas publically a speaker should possess a certain level of authority and knowledge about the chosen topic (ethos). *To make sure that the message is received and understood correctly by the audience, it has to be conveyed in a clear, informative and logical manner (logos). *And to capture and hold the audience’s attention the speaker must first establish an emotional connection with the listeners. (pathos). After the ascension of Rome, public speaking techniques developed in Greece were copied and modified by the Romans. Here, oratory lost its dominance in the political arena, but gained wide popularity as a form of entertainment, allowing famous orators to gain political power and wealth by using their public speaking skills. Amongst such people was Marcus Tullius Cicero – a lawyer, politician, philosopher, who gained fame as Rome’s greatest orator. Around 50 B.C. Cicero wrote his treatise called “De Oratore” where he explained his “Five Canons of Rhetoric” that are widely used by many public speakers up to this day.

3.2 Cicero believed that the process of eloquent speech preparation consists of five main steps: ● Invention – development and refinement of the argument (finding ways to persuade) ● Arrangement – creation of the structure of a coherent argument ● Style – the process of determining how to present an argument, using rhetorical techniques and choosing the words that have the greatest impact on the audience ● Memory – the process of learning and memorizing the speech while making it sound natural ● Delivery – the process of making effective use of voice and body language