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The aim of the *Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World* series, according to its blurb, is to ‘provide an international audience of students, scholars, and general readers with sophisticated, one-volume companions to classical and near eastern civilizations, classical literature, and ancient history’. The chapters in each volume are to be written primarily for those approaching the topic for the first time (be they undergraduates, graduates, or members of the public) and for scholars operating in adjacent fields of study, but at the same time those working in the particular field should also find them stimulating. Writing for these different types of reader at the same time is difficult, and so I should say at the outset that the chapters in this Companion are ultimately written for its primary audience, but I hope specialists in the field will find them beneficial. Each chapter provides an overview of the main issues of its topic, at times raises new questions or adopts a fresh approach to its subject matter, and has a bibliographical essay that acts as a guide to further reading. All quotations from ancient sources are translated into English. An introductory chapter (1) discusses the idea of rhetoric, the status of rhetoric studies (present and future), and summarises the various chapters of this volume.

There has been much work undertaken on rhetoric in recent years, as will be obvious from the discussions in the following chapters and references in their notes. More than that, translations of ancient works dealing with rhetoric, speeches by orators, and so forth, are appearing with welcome regularity these days, thus making these works available to a wider reading audience. One recent venture that should be singled out is the University of Texas Press’ Oratory of Classical Greece series. Under the general editorship of Michael Gagarin, the series will consist of translations of all of the speeches and major fragments of the Attic orators, and several volumes have already been published.

We seem to be living in an era of Companions and ‘Introductions to’ as even a cursory glance at the number of publishers producing such books, often on the same subject, shows, and one can question why there is a need for this one. Put simply, the
aim of this book is to be the most comprehensive treatment of Greek rhetoric within one set of covers. It is a mixture of narrative and thematic analysis that traces the history of rhetoric from Homer to Byzantium and through a variety of approaches considers rhetoric in a number of historical, social, political, intellectual, and literary contexts. Included are the usual ‘staple’ chapters such as rhetoric and politics, rhetoric and law, rhetoric and philosophy, rhetoric and various literary genres, along with topics that are deserving of more attention, such as rhetoric and emotion, rhetoric and logic, rhetoric and ethics, rhetoric and knowledge, rhetoric and religion. All contribute to give us different insights into how the Greeks saw and used rhetoric, and how it was as fundamentally at the heart of their society as law, politics and religion – and by extension, how it influenced, and became part of, many of the things that we take for granted today. This book also partners Blackwell’s Companion to Roman Rhetoric, edited by W.J. Dominik and J. Hall (Oxford: 2007), which, on the Roman side, covers a broad range of topics and involves a variety of modern approaches.

An editor’s job is not an easy one given the quickness of reviewers to criticise Companions if their chapters are uneven in content and style or if the book lacks coherency because contributors did not discuss their work with each other. The editor usually bears the brunt of criticism, and in many cases rightly so. Since I have no desire to be lambasted in reviews any more than I usually am, I asked the contributors to write for the book’s primary audience while appealing to specialists, not to argue some narrow angle or to grind a particular axe, and where possible to ask new questions. I also asked them to communicate with those whose chapters overlapped with, or had some bearing on, their own, rather than writing in a vacuum (many did so, either in email exchanges or by exchanging drafts). Thus, the chapters are written in as uniform a manner as one can get with three dozen different people, for the most part take the work of others into account, and are approximately the same length (with the exception of Chapter 11 on Rome: see its first note for explanation). I hope that the book will appeal to even critical reviewers.

I have a number of people to thank. I was delighted when Al Bertrand at Blackwell invited me to edit this Companion, and my thanks go to him, as they do to Sophie Gibson and Angela Cohen at Blackwell for their support. I am very grateful to Annette Abel, whose keen eye at the copy-editing stage saved this book from many errors and inconsistencies. I am indebted to the contributors to this book, not only for agreeing to write on their topics in the first place (and doing such a first-class job) but also for putting up with a demanding editor who tried to be diplomatic and more than a few times failed. Years from now, some of us may look back on this project and laugh. My long-suffering family has also my heartfelt thanks for continuing to put up with me, despite knowing that as one project ends another begins.

Ian Worthington
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University of Missouri-Columbia
January 2006
References in the text and notes to a scholar’s name followed by a chapter number (e.g., M. Gagarin, Chapter 3) refer of course to the contributor and his/her chapter in this book.

All dates are BC except where indicated and in Professor Elizabeth Jeffreys’ chapter on Byzantium (12).

In deference to the fact that the majority of contributors live in North America and England, I have allowed both English and American spellings.

I have also allowed contributors to cite works such as Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* in one of two (sometimes both) ways and to transliterate Greek words using a ‘y’ or ‘u’ (e.g., *hubris*, *hybris*) depending on their inclination. Greek names are anglicised, but some terms and technical words are transliterated, and these will be obvious when they appear.
Abbreviations

Names of journals are abbreviated as in *L’Année Philologique* (less well-known or common ones to classicists are given in full), although consistent with English practice the ‘h’ is dropped (thus, *CP* not *CPh*).

Titles of ancient works are given in full except in the case of speeches by the Attic orators (see p. xiv) and in the following two frequently cited works:

- *Rh*et. *Alex.* *Rhetoric to Alexander* (attributed to Anaximenes)

Frequently cited ancient authors are abbreviated as follows:

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