A COMPANION TO RHETORIC AND RHETORICAL CRITICISM

Walter Jost
Wendy Olmsted,
Editors

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Contents

Notes on Contributors

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Wayne C. Booth was born in American Fork, Utah, in 1921, and was raised as a devout Mormon. As he pursued academic questions at Brigham Young University (BA), he wrestled – without ever thinking of the word "rhetoric" – with conflicts between official Mormon rhetoric and the rhetoric of major Western thinkers. Then, as a deeply conflicted Mormon missionary (1942–4), he slowly discovered the resources of what he now calls rhetorology: the pursuit of a rhetoric relying on the common ground one hopes to find underlying any controversy. As a student at the University of Chicago, and later as a professor there, he slowly discovered the history and importance of rhetorical studies. As his chapter here recounts, that discovery was the main influence on most of his publications.

Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle is an independent scholar living in Toronto, Canada, who specializes in the rhetoric of religion. Among other works she is the author of *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* and, most recently, *Senses of Touch: Human Dignity and Deformity from Michelangelo to Calvin.*

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Thomas Conley is the author of *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* and has published and lectured widely on Classical and Byzantine rhetoric.

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Walter Jost is Associate Professor of English at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *Rhetorical Thought in John Henry Newman* and *Rhetorical Investigations: Studies in Ordinary Language Criticism* (2004), and has co-edited several collections, most recently *Ordinary Language Criticism*: *Literary Thinking After Cavell After Wittgenstein* (2003). He is writing a book on rhetoric as an architectonic art of invention and judgment, and is editing Blackwell's *A Companion to Literature and Philosophy*.

Victoria Kahn is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the*

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James L. Kasteley is Associate Professor of English and interim Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston. His publications include *Rethinking the Rhetorical Tradition: From Plato to Postmodernism* (1997).

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B. A. Krostenko is Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Notre Dame and the author of *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance* (2001). He is interested in the intersection of rhetoric, linguistics, and literary criticism.

Steven Mailloux is UCI Chancellor's Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California, Irvine. He is the co-editor of *Interpreting Law and Literature* (1988) and editor of *Rhetoric, Sophistry, Pragmatism* (1995), as well as the author of *Interpretive Conventions: The Reader in the Study of American Fiction* (1982), *Rhetorical Power* (1989), and *Reception Histories: Rhetoric, Pragmatism, and American Cultural Politics* (1998). He is currently working on a project tentatively called "Rhetorical Paths of Thought."

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Adam Zachary Newton is Professor of English, Member of the Committee on Comparative Literature, and Chair of the Committee for Jewish Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. His books include *Narrative Ethics* (1995), *Facing Black and Jew: Literature as Public Space* (1998), *The Fence and the Neighbor: Emmanuel Levinas, Yeshayahu Leibowitz, and Israel Among the Nations* (2001), and *The Elsewhere: On Belonging at a Distance* (forthcoming).

Wendy Olmsted is Associate Professor in the Humanities Division, Committee on the Ancient Mediterranean World, and the College at the University of Chicago, where she teaches rhetoric. She is co-editor with Walter Jost of *Rhetorical Invention and Religious Inquiry*, has published widely on rhetoric and literature, and is currently working on *Rhetoric: An Historical Introduction* for Blackwell.

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Wayne A. Rebhorn is Celanese Centennial Professor of English at the University of Texas. He has authored numerous studies of Renaissance European literature. His *Foxes and Lions: Machiavelli's Confidence Men* won the Howard R. Marraro Prize of the Modern Language Association of America in 1990. Among his recent books are *The Emperor of Men's Mind: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (1995) and *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric* (2000).

John D. Schaeffer is Professor of English at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. His *Sensus Communis: Vico, Rhetoric, and the Limits of Relativism* was published in 1990. In addition he has published articles on Vico in *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, *New Vico Studies*, *Rhetorica*, and *The Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, and on other aspects of the history of rhetoric in *PMLA*, *Milton Quarterly*, and *Moreana*.

Herbert W. Simons is Professor of Speech Communication at Temple University. His most recent book is *Persuasion in Society* (2001). He and Trevor Melia founded the Kenneth Burke Society at a conference they organized in 1984 on the "Legacy of Kenneth Burke."

Thomas O. Sloane is Professor Emeritus of Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley, and has authored or edited several books and numerous essays on the rhetoric of the English Renaissance. Most recently, he served as editor in chief of the *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* (2001). A former Guggenheim fellow, he also served as Presidential Chair in Freshman and Sophomore Education at UC Berkeley.

David J. Smigelskis, former Chair of the Committee on Ideas and Methods at the University of Chicago, has, for over thirty years, channeled significant teaching energies into exploring ways of better cultivating deliberating, reflection on its sources, and the relations of deliberation and reflection to other modes of inquiry.

Nancy S. Struever is Professor Emerita of Johns Hopkins University. Her primary scholarly interests are in the history of rhetoric, with special reference to the relation of rhetoric to politics, history, and ethics.

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Joel C. Weinsheimer was hired to teach eighteenth-century British literature at the University of Minnesota, but his interests quickly moved to modern German philosophy, especially the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer. His *Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, *Hermeneutics and Literary Theory*, *and Eighteenth-Century Hermeneutics* are complemented by several translations of Gadamer's work, including *Truth and Method* (with Donald Marshall). Most recently, he has translated Jean Grondin's masterly biography of Gadamer, scheduled to appear in Yale Studies in Hermeneutics in 2003.

Introduction

The essays in *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism* explore rhetoric as a practical art of deliberation and judgment, best taught and learned through concrete examples of argument, interpretation, and criticism. Historically and in our own time scholars have shown that rhetoric can very well be theorized in the strong sense that specific principles can provide direction for inquiries into thought and persuasion. But this theorizing tends to remove itself from the indeterminacies of practical life and the conflicts of representation in texts and their contexts. Moreover, many forms of what is sometimes called "rhetorical criticism" treat interpretive issues without considering the ways texts engage with complex audiences (so well articulated by James Phelan and Peter Rabinowitz in their essays) or practical contemporary issues (exemplarily demonstrated in James Crosswhite's essay), and without relating those matters to specific times and places (among others, for example, Thomas O. Sloane on Erasmus and Milton and Nancy S. Struever on Vico and Collingwood). And sometimes theorists and even critics of rhetoric undertake very abstract discussions in spite of the fact that rhetoric involves reasoning that is necessarily embedded in particular practical problems and situations. Even those well advanced in the study of rhetoric recognize that learning and mastering rhetoric requires engaging concrete texts in their specific, situated contexts. The various abilities of the good rhetorician – being able to invent terms, construct arguments, criticize faulty interpretations, and generally judge matters not susceptible to algorithmic rules – cannot be developed merely by being talked about; they must be actively undertaken in practice, by beginner and adept alike. A collection, therefore, in which concrete practice grounds and guides theorizing offers to initiates, as well as to advanced scholars, not only an account of what "rhetoric" is in the abstract, but also, more importantly, concrete experiences in rhetorical thinking across many of the disciplines in which it operates.

Essays in this collection face the challenging problems of recent developments in rhetoric, including important reinterpretations of its history, and meditate on rhetoric's place in past cultures. All of the authors take pains to include practical examples

of how to "think like a rhetorician." We editors have also taken care in conceptualizing the essays into a working ensemble of four parts, each section designed to illuminate the others. Part One provides interpretations of historically important articulations of rhetoric. The authors focus implicitly on a handful of terms or problems crucial to rhetoric's intellectual development, such as "prudence," "judgment," "argument," "emotion," "ethos," and "eloquence." This concentration gives unity to the different historical periods covered in this section while it anticipates the defining terms of the following section. Part One is not a historical survey but a series of what Kenneth Burke calls "representative anecdotes" of some of the abiding functions and topics of rhetoric.

The essays in Part Two individually expand on the orienting concepts embedded in the first section. But this time the authors, freed of the desire to "cover" a specific part of some historical period, offer more extended, concrete analyses of specific rhetorical topoi and their problems. Part Three then extends those analyses of problems and texts, but this time the authors, freed from the need to introduce and explain fundamental rhetorical concepts or to provide historical background unfamiliar, perhaps, to the reader, concentrate on offering new ways to interpret familiar literary texts, authors, and movements.

Finally, Part Four redistributes and reassesses the terms, history, and criticism of the earlier sections. Selected rhetorical thinkers (as it were first- and second-generation rhetoricians following the rebirth of rhetoric in the middle of the twentieth century) look back over developments in rhetoric of the past fifty years. Many of these authors have been responsible for some of those developments themselves, so that they can reassess their own and others' achievements and speculate, at least in passing, on the future of rhetoric.

Taken individually, the essays in this volume aim to contribute significant insights into their respective subjects. Taken as a whole, *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism* offers a new articulation of the "field" of rhetoric and opens possibilities of sophisticated rhetorical criticism for a wide range of readers looking for new directions in literary and cultural history, theory, and criticism.

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Walter Jost
Wendy Olmsted

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Part I
Rhetoric in Its Place and Time

Part One of *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism* introduces readers to the history of some of the most important rhetorical problems, strategies, and contexts for understanding rhetorical deliberation. Dilip Gaonkar's general introduction formulates Plato's famous critique in the *Gorgias* of demogogic oratory as aimed at pleasure, showing how Plato's Socrates attacks this oratory because it cannot teach necessary knowledge. Gaonkar argues that Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the first treatment of rhetoric as practical reasoning, responds to the Platonic critique by identifying rhetoric as a distinct type of knowledge focused on the realm of the contingent. This distinct knowledge, variously called prudence or deliberative wisdom, uses probable not necessary arguments to inform decisions about human actions.

David Cohen's essay explores the tensions between the exercise of reason and emotion in the deliberative speeches of radically democratic Athenian assemblies. It shows how Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the "first comprehensive treatise on oratory in the Western tradition," articulates this tension between the wise lawgiver and the popular assembly, where anger, hatred, and personal interest dominate, and where the people's judgment becomes clouded by pleasure and pain. Cohen traces this tension through Homer, who juxtaposes the reasoned and persuasive speech of Nestor with the deceptive speech of Odysseus, and Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, the latter inquiring into the conflicting ways political communities settle policy, some by arguing in terms of what is advantageous in the face of the emerging conflict with Sparta, others by appealing to emotion, moral character, and abiding values. Cohen's essay demonstrates that rhetoric and democracy were linked in classical Athens and traces the conflicting rhetorical strategies employed in the assemblies and between Athens and polities like Mytilene.

The essays that follow argue that deliberative rhetoric became central to the political, educational, and poetic activities of historically specific periods, using formulations of such rhetorical concepts as ethos, pathos, topics, style, conversation, and decorum to illuminate the social practice of using rhetorical strategies to influence attitudes,

beliefs, and actions. Brian Krostenko demonstrates that late Roman republican political culture organized itself around a set of core values typically represented as simple transparent inheritances from a partly idealized past. Yet these values could not simply be invoked. Roman rhetorical practice depended upon the aesthetic judgments of a small political elite, and orators needed to elaborate and shape these values through details of style by practicing decorum. Cicero, the best source concerning late republican Roman rhetoric, argues that particular styles become "appropriate to a topic in view of some objective." He understands topics, ethos, and style to be dynamic and interpenetrating, and he solves problems of formulating his topic in the *First Catilinarian* by recourse to style (as Eden and Morson do in Part Two). Thus, style cannot be regarded as merely ancillary to argument. Krostenko shows in detail how the choice of style, and its elaboration by the management of tone and the use of figures of speech and other rhetorical techniques and tactics, allows Cicero to overcome the rhetorical and political difficulties he faced in the *First Catilinarian*.

Next comes a provocative essay by Marjorie Boyle, who shows how Erasmus used rhetorical, philological, and hermeneutic tools of his time to rethink the opening of the Gospel of John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word." Not so fast, Boyle suggests; Erasmus undertook a sustained persuasive argument about the translation of the Greek *logos* (word, reason) as Latin *sermo* (speech, conversation), in that way opening up a line of inquiry about God, religion, and theology as fresh and challenging at the present time as it was in the time of the great Renaissance humanists.

After showing how Christian humanist writers debated biblical and theological problems, Arthur F. Kinney accounts for the Renaissance discovery of rhetoric as the basis of poetics, beginning with Petrarch's unearthing of Cicero's *Pro Archia poeta* in Liege in 1333. Kinney shows how ancient texts became living presences and models to be imitated by Renaissance writers. These writers found moral philosophy and rhetoric to be inseparable, not only because both are concerned with the practical realm of human affairs, as Victoria Kahn later states the matter, but also because (in Cicero's view) language raises man above the animals and enables him to create a consensus and community. In the Quattrocento authors wrote in such a manner as to teach readers to exercise judgment and discrimination in reading. Kinney shows how Renaissance literary and rhetorical texts were written to educate readers by providing examples of human action.

Wayne A. Rebhorn, taking a quite different tack, analyzes George Puttenham's seemingly modern sensibility, displayed in criticisms of carnivalesque rituals and the popular poetry of the Middle Ages, only to show the extent to which Puttenham's treatment of *elocutio* displays carnivalesque qualities of its own. Like Bialostosky in Part Four, Rebhorn draws on Bakhtin's notion of the grotesque body of carnival, which emerged from the depths of folk culture and fructified the high culture of the Renaissance in the works of Boccaccio, Rabelais, Cervantes, and Shakespeare. Bakhtin sets in opposition the grotesque body of carnival to the classical body associated with high culture. Rebhorn uses this distinction to show how Puttenham, though he teaches his readers how to avoid deformities and disproportions, is also deeply
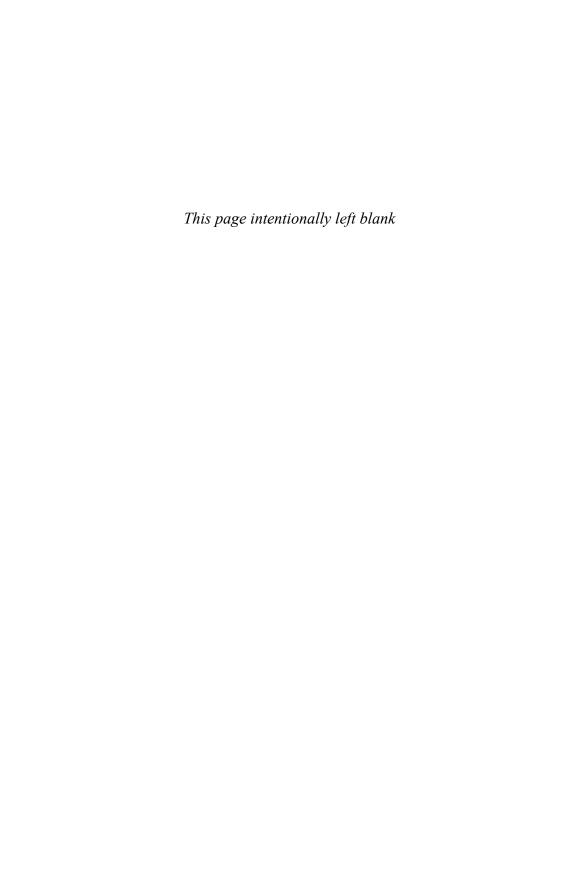
invested in carnival. In this way Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poetry* differs from one of its most important subtexts, Joannes Susenbrotus' handbook of rhetorical figures, *Epitome troporum ac schematum* (*An Epitome of Tropes and Schemes*). In contrast to the latter, the *Arte* "degrades the high . . . and embraces the carnivalesque figure of the rogue and the clown."

In the early modern, modern, and contemporary periods, rhetoric came to provide an alternative to and sometimes a crucial dimension of philosophy for investigating and making cogent arguments about particular matters. Victoria Kahn demonstrates that Hugo Grotius in the seventeenth century "draws not only on Roman law (the usual view), but also on Roman rhetoric to articulate a theory of social relations that is deeply informed by a rhetorical worldview." More specifically, older conceptions of natural rights that were believed to derive from God or nature were transformed by Ciceronian views of the natural sociability of man as a primary motive for the founding of communities, and of language as a condition of and opportunity for speech acts enacting the consensus of the governed (for example in the taking of oaths). In turn, Grotius' minimalist account of natural rights afforded considerable position "to what we might call the social and linguistic mechanisms of obligation, including verbal and written promises, oaths, contracts, vows, treaties, professions of political allegiance and obedience."

In his examination of George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Joel Weinsheimer performs a similar rhetorical revisionism, demonstrating that Campbell's reliance in the eighteenth century on Hume's empiricist philosophy is belied by the room Campbell allows himself for the non-rule-governed nature of language. Arguing "with Campbell against Campbell," Weinsheimer's nuanced hermeneutic approach argues:

> If the art of rhetoric cannot be understood in a technological way, in terms of rules and their application, a philosophy of rhetoric devoted to first-level knowledge stands [empiricist] epistemology on its head by refusing to reduce rhetorical practice to theory. It refuses to admit the primacy of *epistēmē* and thus consign rhetoric to the secondary place of communicating what is already known. Moreover, if rhetoric cannot be explained in instrumental way as the "art by which the discourse is adapted to its end," then philosophy of rhetoric will need to explain rhetoric as something other than the mongrel creature painted by epistemology.

Finally, the essay by Herbert Simons on Kenneth Burke features Burke's role in the "globalization" of rhetoric and provides a useful guide to what Burke liked to call "Boik's woiks," themselves as insightful and provocative as any speeches or writings in any time or place. Simons concludes that as a field whose scope has been greatly expanded, rhetoric needs to clarify its terms and to provide critical case studies from across the human sciences (much as the present volume seeks to do), studies that are at once theory-guided and capable of yielding further theoretical development. A systematic comparison and contrast of the stories these studies tell us would allow us to use the rhetorical legacy Burke has left us more effectively.

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Introduction: Contingency and Probability

Dilip Parmeshwar Gaonkar

For Aristotle (384–332 BCE), the contingent is the unproblematic scene of rhetoric. This Aristotelian connection between the scene and agency (or practice), originally put into play to blunt Plato's charge that rhetoric is a nomadic, hence unspecifiable discipline, persists to this day as a key, but largely unnoticed, assumption in contemporary rhetorical theory. In *Gorgias*, Plato (ca. 428–ca. 347 BCE) sets the "specifying" game in motion by demanding that rhetoric identify itself. He puts the identity question bluntly to Gorgias: "Who are you?" (447). "With what class of objects is rhetoric concerned?" (449). As the dialogue unfolds, Socrates poses a series of interrogatories regarding rhetoric's identity and domicile, and predictably, neither Gorgias nor Polus and Callicles who successively undertake to respond, gives a satisfactory answer. It is not so much the amorality of rhetoric, but rather the inability of its teachers and practitioners to give a coherent account of it that finally delegitimizes rhetoric. Beneath Plato's ethical critique, which (in both *Gorgias* and *Protagoras*) functions more as a dramatic parody of sophistic pedagogic pretensions than as a determined scourging of evil, there is a more severe critique of rhetoric's lack of substance. In fact, one could read Plato as saying that rhetoric's moral deficiency springs from its nomadic quality, a quality accentuated by the itinerant character of its teachers. Rhetoric is amoral precisely because it is rootless.

Thus, on the manifest argumentative plane, Plato rejects rhetoric as a defective and incomplete art for the following reasons. First, rhetoric is rooted in a false ontology. It is content to deal with what appears to be true and good rather than inquire into what it is in reality. Second, rhetoric is epistemically deficient because it seeks to impart a mastery of common opinion rather than knowledge. Third, as an instrument of practical politics it exploits the resources of language to make the "weaker cause appear stronger" and to promote the acquisition of power as an end in itself without consideration for the well-being of the soul. Each of the three reasons for rejecting rhetoric – its reliance on appearance, its entanglement with opinion, and its linguistic opportunism – are marked, in Plato's imagination, by instability and danger. An art

that engages such entities cannot possibly give a rational account of itself. However, at no point does Plato deny the sheer materiality or the "felt quality" of rhetoric and its objects, but he doubts that they constitute a specifiable domain. He recognizes that people are constantly involved in persuasive transactions that require them to negotiate a wide range of appearances and opinions, especially those sanctioned by common sense. But those persuasive negotiations are carried out not in accordance with the strictures of an art, but according to one's knack, a hit or miss procedure based on experience. Hence, the paradox of unspecifiability. On the one hand, rhetoric is very tangible, or as McGee (1982) puts it, it impinges on our consciousness as a "brute daily reality." On the other hand, that reality is made up of appearances and opinions that cannot withstand critical scrutiny. No sooner does a dialectician try to seize upon that "brute daily reality" than it melts into thin air. One could theorize, as some contemporary rhetorical theorists have done (Hariman 1986), about an epistemology of appearances and opinions that would anchor rhetoric, but Plato was too old fashioned to do it. He was content to dismiss rhetoric as unspecifiable.

Plato further elaborates on the unspecifiability thesis in *Phaedrus*, where rhetoric is partially rehabilitated as a supplement to philosophical understanding. In the concluding sections of this dialogue, Plato states precisely the conditions rhetoric must meet to be regarded as a genuine art. Michael Cahn (1989) refers to Plato's specifications as the "dream of rhetoric," where the figure (linguistic strategy or utterance), soul (psychological state/disposition of audience), function (effect sought by the rhetor, convictions he seeks to implant) are perfectly coordinated. In short, rhetoric must supply a "gapless" causal model of persuasion, whose validity is to be established on the basis of its predictive capacity. But if rhetoric is unable to meet this demand, then it must be held under the supervision of philosophy. Thus in *Phaedrus*, Plato specifies conditions for the freeing of rhetoric from philosophical tutelage, but these conditions cannot be met. And insofar as these conditions cannot be met, rhetoric must remain in the margins of philosophy, held hostage in an eternal minority. At this point, rhetoric would have neither autonomy nor specificity. It would be parasitic on the prior philosophical achievement. Thus, Plato sets up an extraordinary problematic. His challenge to the future champions of rhetoric is straightforward: "Unpack the riddle of rhetoric and it can go free." To free rhetoric, one must first give it a name, a domicile, and some specificity.

Aristotle and the "Contingency" Thesis

It is generally agreed that Aristotle's lectures on rhetoric were partly a response to Plato's critique. But Aristotle's text, by foregrounding the tripartite scheme, especially the tripartite theory of genre, obscures his response to Plato's charge of unspecifiability. Propelled by the tripartite scheme, the text moves swiftly into the pragmatics of oratory. Aristotle appears to be functioning in a different key from Plato. His initial claim that "it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers

succeed through practice and others spontaneously" and "that such an inquiry is a function of the art" (1354.10), and his fourfold statement about the usefulness of rhetoric (1355a20–1355b5), pretty much ignore Plato's threefold critique about appearance, opinion, and linguistic opportunism.

However, if we foreground the contingency thesis, which tends to recede into the background in the glare of the tripartite scheme, we get a different reading of Aristotle. What is Aristotle's "contingency thesis"? To begin with, it involves a substitution. In order to specify the realm of rhetoric, Aristotle replaces Plato's binary opposition between reality and appearance with his own binary opposition between the necessary and the contingent. Once this seemingly unproblematic distinction is accepted, that is, once rhetoric is safely located in the realm of the contingent, Plato's charge of unspecifiability dissolves. By placing rhetoric (along with the dialectic) in the realm of the contingent, Aristotle gives it a domicile, a space within which it can manifest and contain itself. This is an extraordinarily cunning response to Plato's critique that rhetoric is homeless. This maneuver also takes the bite out of Plato's other two charges: rhetoric is epistemically deficient and linguistically opportunistic. Once rhetoric is placed in the realm of the contingent, it can be viewed not as epistemically deficient but as a medium/repository of a distinct type of knowledge – identified variously in contemporary rhetorical studies as "public knowledge" (Bitzer 1978), or as "social knowledge" (Farrell 1976), or as "prudential wisdom" (Leff 1999) – in short, some sort of practical knowledge in use. Similarly, the charge of linguistic opportunism can be revalorized *à la* Kenneth Burke as a form of bricolage, an equipment for living in an inexact world.

The Aristotelian reading of the contingent has two main characteristics. First, the contingent is posited simultaneously as the opposite of the necessary (or necessarily true) and in conjunction with the "probable" or that about which one can generate probable proof. While the opposition to the necessary hugely expands the realm of rhetoric, the association with the probable makes it manageable. When the contingent is defined strictly in opposition to the necessary, it opens up a vast space of what is uncertain and indeterminate. But Aristotle and those who follow him do not allow us to peer too deeply into the abyss of the uncertain and the indeterminate. The contingent is immediately domesticated by its association with the probable. The probable here is not one derived from mathematical or statistical probability but one associated with the everyday (thus "ideological" in Barthes' (1972) sense of "anonymous ideology") notion of the "usual" or "things that normally or commonly happen." For Aristotle, at any rate, the idea of the contingent does not connote a Kafkaesque world of sheer uncertainty and terror, but rather a world made familiar by Emily Post – of gamesmanship and good manners displayed by those adept at ideological bricolage.

Second, the contingent is a mark of human actions because in any given situation human beings can conceivably act in ways other than they do. According to Aristotle: "Most of the things about which we make decisions, and into which we therefore inquire, present us with alternative possibilities. For it is about our actions we

deliberate and inquire, and all our actions have a contingent character; hardly any of them are determined by necessity (1357, 23–7)." (The term "contingent" appears in W. Rhys Roberts' translation. Grimaldi in his commentaries also uses that word. However, George Kennedy (1991: 42) uses the phrase "things that are for the most part capable of being other than they are.") Thus, the contingent is the horizon within which human actions unfold and "deliberation," whose telos is judgment and choice, is the reflective mode of engaging in that unfolding. If human beings can act in more than one way (and if the outcome of their actions is uncertain, capable of unanticipated consequences), then it makes sense to deliberate and choose. Rhetoric is the discursive medium of deliberating and choosing, especially in the public sphere. Thus, the focus shifts imperceptibly from the scene of contingency to the agency of deliberation and decision-making. That shift is made possible by a certain conception of the probable, the usual, and the normal – a generalized social epistemology – which domesticates and stabilizes the contingent. "A Probability," according to Aristotle, "is a thing that usually happens; not . . . anything whatever that usually happens, but only if it belongs to the class of the 'contingent' or 'variable'" (1357a35–1357b). In his commentary on that passage, Grimaldi, drawing on the other works of Aristotle, stresses that "stability" and "regularity" govern the relationship between contingency and probability:

> *Eikos* is not that which simply happens, for that equates it with sheer chance. *Eikos* possesses a note of stability and regularity which is intrinsic to the nature of the thing which is the ground for the *eikos* proposition derived from that nature. A stabilized, but contingent (i.e., not necessary), fact can be known (*Metaphysics*, 1027a20–1), and it can even be used in a demonstrative syllogism (*Analytica priora* 32b20ff.). Obviously *eikos* is something relatively stabilized and knowable (*Analytica priora* 70a4ff.) and, as such, offers ground for reasonable inference to further knowledge. (Grimaldi 1980: 62)

Thus, one begins to read the celebrated formulation regarding "the contingent and the probable" from the axis of the probable. Aristotle promotes such a reading by providing an elaborate account of probable reasoning based on enthymeme and *paradeigma* (example) and by calling enthymeme "the substance of rhetorical persuasion" (1354a12–14). In this way, the contingent as the horizon of rhetoric recedes to the background and the probable as a mode of negotiating the contingent commands the center of attention.

The connection between rhetoric and contingency is rarely thematized as a theoretical issue in Aristotelian scholarship. To be sure, Grimaldi in his commentary explicates in detail the numerous ways in which the contingent is invoked and deployed in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and in his other works. For Grimaldi, the contingent, however philologically complex, is not theoretically intriguing or problematic. It is part of the conceptual background that underwrites the rhetorical project.

The concept of contingency also gets some attention from scholars interested in Aristotle's logical works, especially in his pioneering account of the modal terms. In

that account, the contingent is defined in terms of its difference from the two other modal operators – the "necessary" and the "possible." There is also a further distinction between the contingent as an event and the contingent as a property of propositions.

A contingent event is one that might or might not occur. Neither its occurrence nor its non-occurrence is necessary. While a contingent event is possible, every possible event is not contingent because a necessary event is possible without being contingent. To put it simply, a contingent event is neither necessary nor impossible. From the standpoint of voluntary human agency, an event is necessary if it is not within anyone's power to prevent its occurrence and an event is impossible if it is not within anyone's power to bring about its occurrence. Hence, an event is contingent if it is within someone's power to bring about its occurrence and in someone's power to prevent its occurrence (see Cahn 1967: 24–47; Waterlow 1982).

The distinction between necessary and contingent statements or truths is more complicated. There is no easy correspondence between events and statements. Moreover, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of necessary statements, relative and absolute, based on his metaphysical view; namely, that things have real essences. In an argument, when one claims that "something must be true," one is expected, if asked, to provide relevant reasons for that claim. In such a case, the truth of that claim is in an important sense necessitated by the reasons adduced in its support. Here the "necessarily true" is not a property of a given statement but obtains only in relation to supporting reasons. The force of that relation can be variable. A claim and its supporting reasons (or a conclusion and its premises) might be so connected that one could only assert that "something is probably true or possibly true." Aristotle also regarded certain statements, such as the axioms of special sciences and general principles – say, the principles of contradiction – as absolutely necessary or true in themselves. An axiom expresses the essences of objects that constitute the province/field of a special science. Axioms are not derived from other propositions, but are intuited. We see the truth of axioms in particular instances. According to such a theory of essences, a contingent statement would be one "whose truth is not determined by the essence of the thing about which it is asserted." The necessary statement is concerned with "that which cannot be otherwise than it is" and the contingent statement is concerned with "that which can be otherwise and is so for the most part, only or sometime, or as it happens" (Hamlyn 1967: 199, 198–205).

The logical explication of the contingent, as applied to events and statements, is carried out strictly in terms of its difference from the necessary. Since the concept of necessary statements/truths is a foundational topic in epistemology, there is a large and technically complex literature on it from Aristotle to the present. In that literature, the contingent stands in the shadow of the necessary, the explication of the former is a by-product of the inquiry into the latter. It is difficult to connect what one has gleaned from a philosophical analysis of the contingent to its deployment as a generalized background assumption in rhetoric, except in the most obvious sense. The philosophical clarification of the contingent as an event (what might or might not happen) and of the contingent as a property of statements (what might or might not be

true) has an obvious affinity to the sense in which the contingent ("things/matters that can be otherwise") is taken as the privileged object of rhetorical deliberation.

Aristotle states emphatically and repeatedly that no one wastes his time deliberating about things that are necessary or impossible (1357a1–8). But the characterization of the contingent as the scene of rhetoric is a much thicker notion, something more than the object and content of deliberative rationality. In my view, it signals the prefiguration of a certain vision of the human condition in general, and of political life in particular, which motivates and propels rhetoric. One of the pressing challenges of rhetorical theory today is to unpack that thicker notion of contingency.

One way to attend to that challenge is to track the career of the contingency thesis in rhetorical theory from Aristotle to the present. This would not be easy because that thesis functions as an implicit background assumption rather than as an explicit theoretical issue. One could surmount that difficulty by taking the indirect route of tracking the concept of "probable reasoning" after its initial formulation by Aristotle. Fortunately, Douglas Lane Patey provides such an account, which is brief but insightful, in the first two chapters of his *Probability and Literary Form* (1984). In that book, Patey is partly engaged in a polemic against what is known as the Foucault–Hacking Hypothesis regarding the sudden emergence of the modern concept of probability in the West around 1660. According to Hacking (1975: 1):

> Probability has two aspects. It is connected with the degree of belief warranted by evidence, and it is connected with the tendency, displayed by some chance devices, to produce stable relative frequencies. Neither of these aspects was self-consciously and deliberately apprehended by any substantial body of thinkers before the time of Pascal.

Hacking refers to the two aspects as epistemic and aleatory. There is not much dispute about the aleatory aspect. However, Patey contests Hacking's claim that the epistemic aspect – "the degree of belief warranted by evidence" – was generally absent prior to 1660. Hacking's claim is based on the assumption that until the Renaissance, probability simply meant opinion supported by authority; and no notion of non-demonstrative evidence existed. Patey questions that assumption by noting that there are two ways to read the history of probability from Aristotle to Locke. In the first version, based on a selective reading of Aristotle common during the Middle Ages, probability is equated with opinion supported by authority. In the *Prior Analytics* (11.26.70a), Aristotle states that "A probability is a generally approved proposition"; and further, he states in the *Topics* (1.1.100b), that "opinions are 'generally accepted' which are accepted . . . by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and illustrious of them" (Patey 1984: 4). In such an equation of probability and "approved opinion," evidence is extrinsic to the claim. It is not what Hacking calls "inductive evidence" or "the evidence of things" in the modern sense. In the second version, which draws its orientation from the skeptics, especially Carneades (ca. 214–ca.129 BCE) and Cicero (106–43 BCE), probability, still linked to opinion, is assessed on the basis of intrinsic as well as extrinsic criteria. According to Patey, Carneades' three tests for assessing

"impressions" (of the external world on the mind) – "that they be credible, consistent, and proven in experience" – are three criteria of probability and constitute a putative "doctrine of evidence" (Patey 1984: 15). Carneades also devised a practical method for establishing probabilities, the method of argument in *utramque partem*, which received its full articulation in Ciceronian theory and practice. Moreover, the canons of probability employed in the "topical" system (especially in Cicero's revision of Aristotle) draw on both extrinsic and intrinsic grounds of proof (loci); and the latter are the seats of arguments grounded not in testimony but, in the words of Richard Sherry (1550), in "the thynge it selfe that is in question" (Patey 1984: 21). To challenge Hacking's thesis, Patey adduces a wide range of additional historical and textual references that attest to the existence of the notion of non-demonstrative evidence prior to 1660. These references range from Cicero's notion of verisimilitude, through the strictures of literary "decorum" in the Renaissance, to Locke's claim that "probable and certain knowledge arise from the same kind of mental operation, and hence are epistemologically continuous."

Patey's account of the two versions of probability from Aristotle to Locke is interesting in itself. But it also gives some indication of the connection between the contingent and the probable during that period. In both versions, the contingent appears as the companion of opinion. In the first version, which draws heavily on the Aristotelian distinction between demonstrable knowledge and probable opinion (*endoxa*), opinion is denigrated precisely because it is contingent – sometimes true and sometimes false. Opinion is also associated with particular, perishable, and "changeable things" of which, being contingent, there can be no science. In the Christian imagination, man's exile from Eden reduces him to opinion. According to Aquinas, "in Eden Adam had nearly no opinion (*penitus nulla opinio*); the Fall altered his mind, so that what once he could know, he could later only form opinions about" (Patey 1984: 12). And yet the practically minded Aquinas finds in rhetoric a postlapsarian crutch: "In human affairs it is not possible to have demonstration and infallible proof; but it suffers to have some conjectural probability such as the rhetor uses to persuade" (Patey 1984: 9–10). One can detect a similar ambivalence among the secular thinkers who simultaneously denigrate opinion as contingent and promote rhetoric as a mode of managing contingent opinion.

In the second version (what Patey calls an alternative history of probability), that ambivalence becomes more reflexive and productive. One no longer bemoans the fact that by the standards of *epistēmē* (demonstration and infallible proof) very little of what human beings know can count as true knowledge. One simply takes it, as with the Renaissance humanists, as an unavoidable feature of the human condition that demands an intelligent and practical response. Questions are now raised about privileging those "infallible" measures of knowledge that are so utterly irrelevant and inapplicable in practical affairs. Opinion, once derided as contingent, finally comes into its own as the inescapable scene and substance of human deliberation, judgment, and action. Treatises are composed as to how one might acquire, ascertain, and communicate "opinion" and what degrees of certitude and what modes of assent

would accompany it. This attitude and sensibility, which can only be described as rhetorical, originates in the recognition of the contingency not only of opinion, but also of politics, of morals, and of history. This is a thick notion of contingency that motivates and propels rhetoric. Faced with such a notion of contingency, one is no longer content to formulate the canons of probable reasoning, although that task remains important. On Patey's account, the career of probability prior to 1660, even as it moves through multiple tracks, remains legible and palpable. One such track develops into a highly elaborated and influential system known as casuistry (a form of moral reasoning based on the "case" method) between the fourteenth and the mid-seventeenth centuries. Interestingly, according to Hacking, one of the enabling moments in the emergence of the modern notion of probability is Pascal's (1656–7) polemic against casuistry (or its abuses), which decimated it. In recent years, there has been something of a revival of casuistry, especially among those interested in ethical questions in the practice of law, medicine, and public policy. It is equally interesting that Jonsen and Toulmin, in their provocative book *The Abuse of Casuistry* (1988), trace its intellectual roots back to Aristotle's notion of *phronēsis* and its embodiment in Cicero's oratorical practice, and thus realign casuistry with rhetoric.

Tracking the career of probable reasoning alerts one to, but does not fully disclose, the various strands that are interwoven in the thick notion of contingency. Those strands link and place it in a web of concepts, of which "necessary" is only one. I will briefly identify two main strands that negotiate differently the encounter with those aspects of existence which elude human control. Each strand views contingency, to borrow John Kekes' (1995) phrase, as a "permanent adversity."

In the first strand, contingency is "external," something precipitated by chance, fate, or fortune, which eludes human comprehension and control. A contingent event in this sense has no definite cause. It is an effect, according to Aristotle, of an accidental or incidental cause. Take the famous example of the chance meeting of old friends, say at a theater, after a separation of many years. Here, two lines of action coincide and produce a specific result, which cannot be explained in terms of causes or purposes that triggered those actions. William James describes the world saturated with such events as a "concatenated universe" as opposed to a "block universe," which is fully determined. Contingency in this sense has a considerable hold on the rhetorical imagination (see *Great Ideas: A Syntopicon*, 1952: 179–92). It casts a shadow over the human capacity to deliberate and to act on the basis of probable reasoning. To some it is an encounter with the absurd, as in Sartre's short story *The Wall* (1956), where a revolutionary facing imminent execution reveals to the police the whereabouts of his comrade by sheer coincidence and thus obtains a temporary reprieve. In a classic essay, Bernard Williams (1981) has revived this theme under the idea of "moral luck."

The second strand gives an "internal" anthropological view of contingency as something rooted in human nature and social life. Here contingency is linked, on the one hand, to concepts such as human "fallibility," and "incompleteness," which point to our epistemic deficiencies and moral shortcomings; and, on the other hand,

to the phenomena of social conflict, competition, and ethical plurality. In this view, both the possibility and need for rhetoric are derived from the contingency of human nature and social life.

Contingency Thesis in Contemporary Rhetorical Theory

In this section, I will try to trace the career of the "contingency thesis" in contemporary rhetorical theory that generally adheres to Aristotle's reading of the contingent. This is not surprising, since Aristotle dominated rhetorical studies in the twentieth century, especially within the disciplinary matrix of communication studies. A careful reading of a series of key "field defining" essays from the time in communication studies, which became a distinct discipline in the United States from around 1914 to the present, shows Aristotle's formulation regarding "the contingent and the probable" functions as a taken-for-granted background assumption. It is always presupposed, but rarely thematized.

There are, however, some notable exceptions, especially among those who view Aristotle's *Rhetoric* as the basic template for developing a contemporary rhetorical theory. Bryant, Bitzer, and Farrell are the three prominent Aristotelians in whose work the contingency thesis is explicit and thematized to varying degrees. Their work, which taken collectively spans the last half-century, represents a distinct and influential line of thinking. Moreover, one can chart the evolution of the contingency thesis from Bryant through Bitzer to Farrell as marking a significant shift from a "functionalist" to a "constitutive" view of rhetoric.

Bryant, Bitzer, and Farrell reiterate Aristotle's original formulation with the usual references to the contingent as something distinct from the necessary and the impossible, and as the domain of human affairs where one deliberates and decides about alternative possibilities of belief and action on the basis of informed opinion and probable reasoning. After rehearsing such Aristotelian notions, Bryant (1953: 408) concludes: "In summary, rhetoric is the rationale of informative and suasory discourse, it operates chiefly in the area of the contingent, its aim is the attainment of maximum probability as a basis of public decision."

One can locate similar passages in Bitzer and Farrell. The purpose of these reiterations is not to paraphrase but to modernize Aristotle's rhetoric. They show how the contingency thesis does not stand alone; rather, it undergirds a cluster of concepts and propositions. First, rhetoric is a method for inquiring into and communicating about the realm of the contingent. Inquiry and communication are two facets of a single practice of managing contingency. Second, the inquiry into the contingent yields opinions of variable validity and utility, but not certain knowledge. Hence, opinion is the material with which rhetoric must work in the world of contingency. Third, the proper mode of working with opinion is deliberation (involving dialogue and debate) that relies primarily on probable reasoning to make decisions and to form judgments. Fourth, rhetorical deliberation and decision-making is audience centered. It seeks to

persuade or to gain adherence of an audience that is neither "universal" (as in philosophy) nor "imaginary" (as in poetry), but historically concrete and specific. Fifth, the deliberative engagement with the audience is temporally bound. The contingent world of human affairs is marked at every stage by the irreversible passing of time, whether one elects to discursively engage an audience or not, and if engaged whether one succeeds in persuading or not, and if successful whether it leads to intended consequences or not. Deliberation, enunciation, judgment, and action are continually held hostage by time.

These five propositions are not distinctive to rhetoric alone. Rhetoric shares some of them with its counterpart, dialectic. "For Aristotle," as Natanson (1955: 133) notes, "*both* rhetoric and dialectic are concerned with the world of probability, both begin with the commonsense reality of contingency"; but they proceed differently. Without getting into the technical details of the two procedures as to how each finds and ascertains its premises and how each discursively moves from premises to conclusions with what degree of probability, one might note the obvious difference between dialectic and rhetoric in terms of the latter's inescapable entanglement with opinion, audience, and time. In a Socratic dialectic, opinion is not binding. One might begin with opinion, but only to cleanse it of error and prejudice and elevate it to the status, if not of truth, at least to one of critical and reflexive opinion. Nor is the audience sovereign in dialectic. The social profile of the interlocutors can be bracketed and interlocutors can be addressed as if they were susceptible to reason, and reason alone. Nor is time of the essence. Faced with an *aporia*, the interlocutors can blithely defer judgment. One can reverse oneself and start afresh without damaging one's argument or one's character. Dialectic engages contingency reflectively and leisurely. Dialectic is detached. In rhetoric, on the other hand, opinion is binding, audience is sovereign, time is of the essence, and judgment is inescapable. This renders rhetoric's grasp of the contingent tenuous and fragile. There are too many variables thrown together that generate further contingencies. Rhetoric can never catch up with the unfolding chain of contingencies. The latter maintain an irreparable lead.

Such at least is the implication of a sheerly "functional" view of rhetoric as it negotiates the world of contingency. One might be tempted to recommend grounding rhetoric in dialectic, as Weaver (1953) and Natanson (1955) do. Neither Bitzer nor Farrell takes that Platonic option of relegating rhetoric to a supplementary status. Instead, they seek to fashion a constitutive view of rhetoric that engages contingency differently.

A subtle but recognizable terminological change occurs from Bryant to Bitzer. Rhetoric is still considered a method, but a greater stress is placed on "inquiry":

> We regard rhetoric as a method of inquiry and communication which functions to establish judgments, primarily in areas of practical and human affairs, for ourselves and for the audience addressed . . . It is obvious that we need to judge and persuade . . . on the basis of purposeful deliberation which employs as much truth as the subject admits and proceeds systematically through methods of investigation, evaluation and communi-

cation suited to the subject, the audience, and the purpose ... rhetoric insists on rational justification. (Bitzer 1981: 228)

Under Bitzer's version, opinion becomes "informed" by going through the process of critical deliberation and rational justification. The word *judgment* replaces *decision*, suggesting reflective rather than technical engagement. Audience is posited normatively as capable of rational persuasion and empowered to judge. Time, now subsumed under the term *exigence*, is radically particularized as a contingent set of constraints and opportunities. "Exigence" elicits reflection, both technical and normative, as to what is proper and fitting. Thus, a series of norms and strategies is generated, which attempts to stabilize one's rhetorical response to a given set of contingencies and their constituents – opinion, audience, and time. Bitzer's move toward a "constitutive" view of rhetoric is tentative. While he does not view the opinion/decision/audience string instrumentally, neither does he think of it dialogically. Bitzer places greater stress on the rational–critical aspect of the deliberative process than on the constitutive engagement with the audience. The focus is on the normativity and systemacity of rhetorical transaction among autonomous agents.

The shift to a "constitutive" view of rhetoric is relatively complete in Farrell. In his essay, "Knowledge, Consensus, and Rhetorical Theory," Farrell regards rhetoric as a practical art that employs "the common knowledge of a particular audience to inform and guide reasoned judgments about matters of public interest" (Farrell 1976: 1). The key term here is *knowledge* – the type of knowledge pertinent to rhetorical practice. Farrell calls it "social knowledge," which now replaces Bryant's "opinion" and Bitzer's "informed opinion" in the conceptual set under review. "Social knowledge" is not exclusively agent centered, it requires the "collaboration of others" to materialize. According to Farrell, it is "a kind of knowledge which must be assumed if rhetorical discourse is to function effectively ... it is assumed to be shared by *knowers* in their unique capacity as audience ... social knowledge is actualized through the decisions and actions of an audience" (Farrell 1976: 4). Further, Farrell adds an inventional dimension to social knowledge when he claims that it "rests upon a peculiar kind of consensus ... which is attributed to an audience rather than concretely shared" (Farrell 1976: 6). Thus, Farrell repositions the audience as the co-producers at both ends of a rhetorical transaction, invention and judgment.

Given Farrell's characterization of "social knowledge" – as attributed consensus, audience centered, and generative – one might think that it would, unlike Bitzer's "informed opinion," elevate rather than attenuate the uncertainty and instability associated with the contingency of opinion. However, that possibility is obviated by emphasizing the rule-governed character of both rhetoric and its substance, social knowledge. As a mode of coordinating social conduct, rhetoric presupposes the existence of regularities:

When we say, for instance, that, *as a rule*, politicians are not to be trusted, or that, *as a rule*, people do not act against their own perceived interests ... each utterance points to

an important similarity or regularity in the way human beings understand and act in
their social world . . . [T]his rule-like structure of social knowledge assumes that persons
will regularly respond to problems in similar ways. (Farrell 1976: 5)

Thus, for Farrell, "social knowledge . . . is probable knowledge" and it is "confirmed
through recurrent action" (Farrell 1976: 9).

In this essay, Farrell uses the word *contingent* only once to characterize a type of
shared knowledge "consisting in signs, probabilities, and example" that forms the
substance of rhetoric. However, it is explicitly thematized in his book *Norms of
Rhetorical Culture* (1993), where he calls for a "broader understanding of contingency,"
as something more than an event or a property of propositions. Here contingency
refers to situations marked by social conflict and ethical choice where alternative
construals are unavoidable. A rhetor must confront such a situation in the midst of
"perishable circumstance, incomplete knowledge, and fallible human action" and
render her judgment in the collaborative presence of an audience. That judgment
and subsequent action, in all its contingency and irreversibility, will disclose and form
the public character of the rhetor as well as her audience. A contingent situation sets
in motion a constitutive rhetoric between character (rhetor) and community (audi-
ence) that can give rise, under favorable conditions, to a collective moral agency,
hence, to solidarity.

An examination of the theoretical trajectory moving from Bryant through Bitzer to
Farrell shows that despite a significant shift from a "functional" to a "constitutive"
view of rhetoric, the contingent remains the invariable scene of rhetoric. In these three
writers, as in Aristotle, the abstract instability of the contingent is marvelously
balanced by the substantive predictability of opinion and social action. And rhetoric
is seen as a discursive medium *par excellence* for managing the contingent.

Among scholars in communication studies who resist the Aristotelian domination
(no one is fully immune from his overweening influence), which they do by invoking
other theorists, both classical and modern, such as the Sophists (Poulakos 1983), Plato
(Natanson 1955), Cicero (Leff 1999), Kenneth Burke (Campbell 1970), Stephen
Toulmin (Scott 1967), the contingency thesis is mostly implicit and rarely thematized.
Nevertheless, it is possible to locate traces of contingency thesis when they try to
characterize the specificity of rhetoric. For instance, Leff (1999) presupposes the
contingent as the operative horizon when he characterizes rhetoric as a situated
"local" practice that finds stability and intelligibility by meeting the standards of
decorum such as "appropriateness" (*decorum*) and "timeliness" (*kairos*). That presuppos-
ition is also operative in the substantial body of literature that we have on "rhetoric as
epistemic." In fact, Scott's inaugural essay on that topic briefly thematizes contingency
by claiming that truth in human affairs is "not prior and immutable" but contingent
(Scott 1967: 13). However, in those implicit references to the contingent as the scene of
rhetoric it is no longer strictly yoked to the probable. That unyoking of the contingent
from the probable, if rendered explicit and thematized in future studies, might produce
new and challenging possibilities in our understanding of rhetoric.

Contingency in Post-Foundationalist Discourse

A version of such an unyoking of the contingent and the probable does occur in contemporary post-foundationalist discourse that merits some attention. The story of the collapse of foundationalism in philosophy and its after-effects in the humanities is well known. Scholars in various disciplines have meticulously mapped and documented how various intellectual movements (from poststructuralism through deconstruction to postmodernism and cultural studies) – consisting of a distinctive set of theoretical formulations, conceptual innovations, critical practices, and political positions – have emerged in the space created by that collapse. Some terms, *contingency*, *performance*, *rhetorical*, *articulation*, and *imaginary* among them, have become highly visible across many of those new intellectual formations. These are key terms with complex genealogies and contested meanings that are deployed in multiple contexts with such frequency and promiscuity that it is difficult to stabilize their range of meanings. This is particularly true in the case of *contingency*, which is rarely thematized by those who deploy it and whose Aristotelian/rhetorical genealogy is largely forgotten. Judith Butler (1992) titled her introductory essay to an edited volume on feminist political theory "Contingent Foundations." This is only one of many instances of perplexing and paradoxical uses of the term, which is ubiquitous in virtually any post-foundationalist or postmodernist discourse/disciplinary formation. While the post-foundationalists are rarely aware of the rhetorical genealogy of *contingency*, that term is gradually being pulled into the gravitational field of rhetoric. This should not be surprising, since the renewed interdisciplinary interest in rhetoric since the 1950s is also ignited by the collapse of foundationalism. Both rhetoric and contingency are finding nourishment and renewal from the same intellectual soil. In fact, the interarticulation of the two terms could be beneficial for both: contingency could become more legible and readable (not just a suture or a floating signifier) by locating a genealogy within the rhetorical tradition, and rhetoric could become more reflexive about its "conditions of possibility" by thematizing contingency.

A detailed analysis of how contingency and rhetoric are linked in post-foundationalist thought would require a reading of the relevant works of several figures, such as Judith Butler, Stanley Fish, Richard Rorty, Jean-François Lyotard, and Barbara Hernstein Smith. Since it is not possible within the confines of this essay to undertake such an explication, I will confine my observations to the works of a single author, Stanley Fish.

Fish, unlike so many other post-foundationalist thinkers, is fluent in the rhetorical tradition and embraces rhetoric without reservation. In his major collection of essays, *Doing What Comes Naturally* (1989), *rhetorical* serves, by his own account, as a masterword, and the conclusion the volume draws is that "we live in a rhetorical world" (Fish 1989: 25). Fish also describes himself as "a card-carrying anti-foundationalist" and that partly explains his attraction to rhetoric. "Indeed," writes Fish, "another word for anti-foundationalism *is* rhetoric, and one could say without much

exaggeration that modern anti-foundationalism is old sophism writ analytic" (Fish 1989: 347).

Fish regards human beings as situated selves always and already tethered to an "interpretive community." According to Fish:

> Anti-foundationalism teaches that questions of fact, truth, correctness, validity, and clarity can neither be posed nor answered in reference to some extracontextual, ahistorical, nonsituated reality, or rule, or law, or value; rather, anti-foundationalism asserts, all these matters are intelligible and debatable only within the precincts of the contexts or situations or paradigms or communities that give them their local and changeable shape. (Fish 1989: 344)

All practice is situated practice. Regardless of what we are doing – whether interpreting a literary text, making a legal argument, rendering a moral judgment, or opting for a political strategy – we cannot escape our situatedness.

What is provocative about Fish is the inferences he draws from the fact of our situatedness regarding the relationship between theory and practice, especially in interpretation. According to Fish, both friends and foes of anti-foundationalism misunderstand its implications. Fish maintains that anti-foundationalism has no consequences. The critics fear that an absence of any independent ground or neutral observation-language from which to assess and possibly modify our present beliefs and practices would lead to a world without controls – where unmoored subjects would act as though "anything goes" and where rational inquiry and communication would be impossible. For Fish, these dark forebodings are unwarranted. A situated self is not radically free and unencumbered, as the critics fear. Instead, it is massively bound and everything it does is a "function of the conventional possibilities built into this or that context." "Rather than unmooring the subject," Fish argues, "anti-foundationalism reveals the subject to be always and already tethered by the local community norms and standards that constitute it and enable its rational actions" (Fish 1989: 346).

On the other hand, the proponents hope that once we recognize that we are always and already situated, this recognition would enable us to "become more self-consciously situated and inhabit our situatedness in a more effective way" (Fish 1989: 347). Fish rejects that possibility because the recognition "that we are situated does not make us more situated," and it does not alter the way we know and act (Fish 1989: 348). Besides, the act of recognition itself is situated, and therefore cannot become the object of reflexive attention. For Fish, the attempt to privilege the act of recognition is simply a symptom of the irrepressible longing to escape our situatedness; a sly maneuver to smuggle back foundationalism under the liberal disguise of reflexivity.

Fish believes that the fundamental assumptions that structure our belief and behavior are contingent. They cannot be justified as necessary on transcendental or transhistorical grounds. This is one of the basic tenets of anti-foundationalism. Here, once again, Fish insists that the recognition of the contingency of our fundamental

beliefs and assumptions does not impair their hold over us. It is a mistake, says Fish, to turn

> the recognition of contingency into a way of avoiding contingency, as if contingency acknowledged were contingency transcended. You may know *in general* that the structure of your convictions is an historical artifact, but that knowledge does not transport you to a place where those convictions are no longer in force. We remain embedded in history even when we know that it is history we are embedded in. (Fish 1989: 523–4)

It seems that Fish, in a manner reminiscent of Aristotle, domesticates the contingent by linking it to our situatedness and to our embedding in history. Contingency becomes a distant horizon, which is powerless "in relation to particular convictions . . . by which we are now grasped and constituted" (Fish 1989: 523–4). Contingency so conceived is also not susceptible to rhetorical engagement.

But there is a catch. The contingent cannot be stabilized by our embedding in history, because the latter is also contingent and susceptible to rhetorical engagement. This is evident in Fish's account of the relationship between theory and practice. According to Fish, theory *qua* theory (that is, theory as a metadiscourse) has no consequences, it does not affect practice. However, theory can be, and usually is, a certain type of practice. But what is practice? Practice is an embedded activity, it is "doing what comes naturally" to situated selves. Fish, unlike Pierre Bourdieu or the ethnomethodologists, does not offer a generalized account of everyday practice. He is specifically concerned with interpretive practice in law and literature. In this context, he describes himself as an anti-formalist, an approach implicit in his anti-foundationalism. The anti-formalist begins by rejecting "literal meaning" as a constraint on interpretation. According to Fish, once that first step down the anti-formalist road is taken, one inevitably runs into rhetoric and contingency. He schematically states the six subsequent steps as follows:

> (1) relocating interpretive constraint in intention; (2) the realization that intention must itself be interpretively established, and that it can be established only through persuasion . . . (3) the characterization of persuasion as a matter entirely contingent, rational only in relation to reasons that have themselves become reasons through the mechanism of persuasion; (4) the insight that contingency, if taken seriously, precludes the claims for theory as they are usually made; (5) the demoting of theory to a practice no different from any other; (6) the elevation of practice to a new, if ever-changing, universal in relation to which there is nothing higher . . . that can be invoked. (Fish 1989: 25–6)

Thus, the anti-formalist road brings you to a point of *chiasmus* where the rhetoric of contingency (step 2) and the contingency of rhetoric (step 3) cross. In step 2, the contingency of alternative interpretations (as in Aristotle's deliberation) is closed for the moment by the force of rhetoric. In step 3, the achievement of rhetoric is contingently linked to what is always and already there (say, assumptions and

vocabularies), the contingent products of prior persuasions. As for step 5, in another context Fish asserts that "theory is essentially a rhetorical and political phenomenon whose effects are purely contingent." And yet, Fish assures us, "these truths are the occasion neither of cynicism nor of despair" (Fish 1989: 380). Here, as elsewhere, we are simply "doing what comes naturally." Thus contingency, once a sign of historical flux, becomes naturalized. We are back in the world of Emily Post.

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The Politics of Deliberation: Oratory and Democracy in Classical Athens

David Cohen

In the opening passages of the first comprehensive treatise on oratory in the Western tradition, Aristotle describes the contrast between the wise individual lawgiver "of sound outlook" and the decisions of the popular Assembly, where "often favor, hatred, and personal interest are involved, so that they are no longer adequately able to consider the truth and private feelings of pleasure and pain overcloud their judgment."[1] Here, standing near the end of a long Athenian tradition of democratic deliberative oratory, Aristotle captures the tension that has troubled this tradition since its inception. In Athens, decision-making by popular democratic institutions (law courts and the Assembly) depended upon deliberation in the form of speeches for and against a proposition. Because they acutely recognized the power of rhetoric, the art of persuasion via the medium of the spoken word, Athenians also realized its capacity to move individuals to action or a decision on the basis of emotion rather than reason.

To its critics, this was the crippling weakness of Athenian democracy. On their view it demonstrated the necessity for other forms of constitution, where political deliberation would be the work of a smaller group more able to exercise sound judgment. Advocates of Athenian radical democracy, on the other hand, while fully recognizing the negative potential of rhetoric, nonetheless believed that a truly democratic political community necessarily had to deliberate collectively. They understood this requirement quite literally, not as in most modern democracies through the representatives of the people, but rather by the people, the *demos*, themselves.[2] On their view this form of deliberation could only be accomplished through the mechanism of a popular Assembly, where *all* citizens could listen, speak, and vote on the crucial issues that would shape the fate of their polis. Inevitably, from this perspective, speechmaking became the medium through which such deliberation would be accomplished. Oratory and democracy in classical Athens were thus inseparably linked. The task of

this chapter will be to explore more fully this link between democracy and oratory, and what it implies for an understanding of the nature and role of political deliberation in Athens.

From the very earliest literary record of Greek society oratory plays a crucial role in political deliberation. In the assemblies described in Homer's *Iliad*, those who wish to speak hold the sacred scepter and address the gathered army. Book 1 of the *Iliad* presents a public debate between Agamemnon and Achilles which sets in motion the plot of the epic, and on various other occasions speakers address collective bodies. What is significant here is that on these occasions those who address the gathering do not just talk, they make speeches. It is hard to imagine collective deliberation without the spoken word, but deliberation does not necessarily require oratory. To the Greeks, however, from the world portrayed in the *Iliad* onward, this appears to have been the case. Rhetoric, understood as a self-conscious art of oratorical persuasion, had not yet been invented in Homer's world, but the ability to produce a reasoned and persuasive speech in a deliberative setting was highly prized. This is the basis of Nestor's renown, but above all it is Odysseus who is portrayed as the master of persuasion. It is, however, in the contrast between the wise counsel of Nestor and Odysseus' capacity for using his powers of persuasion to deceive that one sees foreshadowed the tension in later Greek attitudes towards oratory and its role in deliberation. While Nestor's lucid speech and wisdom are unequivocally positively valued when counsel must be taken, Odysseus' persuasive powers are more complexly portrayed. As Athena affectionately chides him in Book 13 of the *Odyssey*,

> You wretch, so devious, never weary of tricks, then you would not even in your own country give over your ways of deceiving and your thievish tales. They are near to your very nature. But come, let us talk no more of this, for you and I both know sharp practice, since you are by far the best of all mortal men for counsel and stories, and I among all the divinities for wit and sharpness.[3]

In the classical period, critics of rhetoric as a vehicle for political decision-making would also focus upon its capacity to deceive and to make "the worse seem the better argument."

The primary historical source for the role of oratory in the politics of late fifth-century Athens is Thucydides and his account of the Peloponnesian War. This text is crucial for an understanding of the relation of oratory to deliberation and democracy in Athens because Thucydides saw this relation as central to the political developments in Athens during this period of prolonged crisis, during which a war to defend and expand the Athenian empire turned into a struggle for survival. By the end of the war this meant the physical survival of an independent Athens that found itself besieged and surrendering to its arch enemy, Sparta. More significant for our purposes, however, the pressures of the Peloponnesian War produced the only deviations from democratic self-government during the classical period. The oligarchic coups of 411 and 404/3 BCE overturned the radical democracy, and in doing so built upon what

appears to have been significant dissatisfaction with the deliberative process by which Athens had been charting her political course. At the core of this process was the nexus of oratory, democracy, and deliberation, and it is to an examination of Thucydides' powerful and complex portrayal of this nexus that we must now turn.

Before beginning our discussion of Thucydides' portrayal of deliberative oratory in Athens during the last three decades of the fifth century BCE, it is worthwhile recalling some of the essential institutional features of Athenian democracy that shaped the deliberative arena. For Aristotle, a polis is essentially a self-sufficient political community that is not too large to deliberate collectively. Tellingly, he claims that if the population of a political community were too large it would be a nation (*ethnos*) rather than a polis because, among other things, no mortal would have a voice loud enough to address the assembled population (*Politics* 1326b1–8). Thus, for Aristotle, part of what distinguishes this peculiarly Greek form of political organization is the capacity for collective deliberation by the citizenry. What makes a citizen, then, is the right to be included in this process of self-governance. Aristotle thus defines a citizen as one who "rules and is ruled in turn" by participating in the political and judicial institutions of his city (*Politics* 1274b32–1275b22).[4]

A moment's reflection reveals, as Aristotle concedes, that this definition best applies to democratic states, for oligarchies, aristocracies, and monarchies exclude the bulk of the citizens from political decision-making. In democracies, however, the right to full political participation is what distinguishes the citizen from women, children, slaves, and foreigners. In a city like Athens that participation took three main forms: holding office, attending the Assembly, and participating in the courts, whether as a litigant or judge. In two of these three institutional settings oratory is a central feature of such participation. For both the Assembly and the law courts employed oratory as the medium for reaching decisions. Moreover, this oratory is a public event, not the deliberations of an elite group behind closed doors. In Athens, then, participatory democracy and oratory are closely connected.

The nature of the Athenian trial testifies to the centrality of oratory in this society's political and legal culture. Indeed, it is difficult for those accustomed to thinking of public life in modern terms to appreciate the importance of oratory in the largely oral culture of a society like democratic Athens. A trial in Athens was conceptualized as an *agon,* a competitive struggle between two parties. This contest was not judged by the gods or their representatives, or by a learned elite. Judges were simply chosen from the mass of male citizens who signed up to be selected by lot as judges for the various cases on the calendar. They had no special training of any kind and they heard cases in the form of mass panels of 201, 501, or even more. A trial consisted of two speeches: one by the plaintiff and one by the defendant. At the conclusion of the second speech the judges voted without discussing the case among themselves. A trial, one might somewhat tendentiously claim, was little different than an oratorical competition except that the life, property, or liberty of the parties might be at stake. Needless to say, in this very litigious society those who could either speak well enough to defend themselves by means of a formal oration before a large audience, or who could pay

enough to have a speech written for them on such an occasion, would enjoy a significant advantage in pursuing wealth, honor, and power.

The Assembly was the most central decision-making body in the Athenian polis, with final say over the most important issues facing the city. The Assembly was open to any citizen who wished to attend. Any citizen (except those who had been penalized with the loss of civic rights) could address the Assembly or propose a measure for its consideration. The Assembly then debated the proposals and reached a decision by a vote of those attending. Though any citizen attending the Assembly could in principle speak, many would have been disinclined to do so. A speaker in the Assembly addressed a mass audience of perhaps 6,000 citizens gathered in a large outdoor amphitheater. The physical demands of projecting one's voice to an audience this large were considerable for those who had not been trained to do so, and Athenians were not tolerant of poor speakers. Debates were often heated and a speaker had to be prepared to speak above the boos, jeers, and catcalls of opponents. Given the nature of this setting it is easy to understand why the Greeks referred to politicians as *rhetors*, a practitioner of oratory. A rhetor was a person who pursued a leadership role in the polis, and rhetoric was the essential tool for this pursuit of influence and honor. Oratory was, from this perspective, indistinguishable from political activity. Political leadership depended upon one's ability consistently to persuade the Assembly through one's orations that one had better advice to give than one's opponents. That the Athenian polis decided issues by collective decision after open debate was a point of pride to proponents of the radical democracy. To critics of the democracy, as we will see, this was its essential weakness.

Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* is a unique source in its portrayal of the functioning of the Athenian democracy during a major war that lasted almost thirty years. Though later writers, such as Xenophon, describe the period after the Peloponnesian War, no other Greek author subjects the historical process of political decision-making in Athens to such sustained and intense scrutiny. Indeed, the nature of the process by which political communities settle questions of policy is at the heart of Thucydides' inquiry. Because the central focus of the history is upon Athens and its institutions and leaders, it is perhaps not an overstatement to say that Thucydides' history is, in significant part, an analysis of the capacity of democratic deliberative institutions to cope with the stresses and strains of sustained warfare and related crises. Given, as described above, the role of oratory in such institutions it is not surprising that speeches by Athens' leaders are at the core of Thucydides' narrative. For to assess the deliberative capacity of democratic institutions in Athens necessarily involves assessing the role of oratory as the primary deliberative medium.

In the opening book of his history Thucydides describes the way in which the two rival states, Athens and Sparta, prepare for war. Rather than directly presenting his own account of this process he encapsulates it in a series of speeches and debates. He does this throughout the History, using debates, or in some cases individual speeches, as the main instrument of his analysis. It is nearly certain that these speeches were largely written by Thucydides rather than the speakers he depicts as delivering them,

but we can, I believe, be quite confident that they mirror the political and oratorical culture of the period. In Book 1, then, Thucydides first gives an account of a debate at Athens where representatives of Corinth and Corcyra try to persuade the Athenians in regard to the issue of whether or not, with war looming on the horizon, Athens should accept Corcyra into its alliance. For our purposes, what is important about this debate is the way it reflects two different approaches to the deliberative process.

The most obvious point, of course, is that the Athenians allow the Corinthians and Corcyraeans to present their positions to the Assembly and the form this takes is formal orations. Both sides present their arguments in the form of an elaborate and well-organized speech employing a wide range of rhetorical devices. But beyond their common formal character, the speeches as represented by Thucydides manifest significant differences in their approach to persuasion and to the deliberative process. The Corcyraeans emphasize sober calculation of self-interest as the only basis for making such a decision. They admit they may seem inconsistent in now seeking Athenian help when they are in danger after rejecting it earlier, but they tell the Athenians not to be distracted by such matters and to focus on what is most advantageous in the face of the imminent conflict with Sparta. Anticipating that the Corinthians will warn the Athenians that it is wrong to violate their treaty with Sparta by accepting Corcyra into its alliance, the Corcyraeans reply: "Some of you may admit that we have shown that the alliance would be in your interests, and yet may still feel apprehensive about a breach of your treaty with Sparta. Those who think in this way should remember that, whether you feel apprehensive or not, you will certainly have become stronger" (1.36).[5]

The Corinthians, in a speech that appeals to emotion, moral character, and values, emphasize the wrongdoing of Corcyra and how it would be wrong to abet their injustice. In regard to calculation of self-interest, they try to meet the Corcyraean position by telling the Athenians that fairness and justice are also of great value: "Do not be influenced by the fact that they are offering you a great naval alliance. The power that deals fairly with its equals finds a truer security than the one which is hurried into snatching some apparent but dangerous advantage" (1.42). The Athenians, Thucydides tells us, debated the matter at two Assemblies and finally decided that in the event of war with Sparta an alliance with Corcyra would be in their interests.[6]

Later in Book 1 Thucydides depicts the deliberative process at Sparta. The Spartans were well known for their suspicion of elaborate speech, but they too decided whether or not to go to war by an Assembly where speeches were made both by foreign representatives and Spartan leaders. After the Corinthian representatives have tried to enrage the Spartans and goad them into immediate action, the Spartan King Archidamus, praised by Thucydides as a man of "intelligence and moderation," made a speech which emphasized careful calculation and reflection as opposed to hasty action based upon anger and emotion. After lucidly and soberly analyzing all of the various factors that need to be taken into account in reaching such a decision, he cautions the Spartans to delay so as to give them more time to prepare adequately for

war and to think. He concludes, "Let us not be hurried, and in one short day's space come to a decision which will so profoundly affect the lives of men and their fortunes, the fates of cities and their national honor" (1.85).

This speech is a masterpiece of deliberative oratory in both form and substance. Indeed, Archidamus is consistently portrayed by Thucydides as a kind of Spartan Pericles: a powerful and forthright orator and a statesman of great intelligence, prudence, foresight, and wisdom. His speech is followed by that of Sthenelaidas, a Spartan ephor (a high official). Sthenelaidas is the opposite of Archidamus in terms of his oratorical abilities and intelligence. His speech is little more than a brief "pep talk" which says that the Athenians are bad guys and Sparta should stop talking and go kill them: "And let no one try to tell us that when we are being attacked we should sit down and discuss matters; these long discussions are rather for those who are meditating aggression themselves. Therefore, Spartans, cast your votes for the honor of Sparta and for war!" (1.86). Thucydides emphasizes how Sthenelaidas deliberately manipulates and intensifies the emotions of the Spartans when calling them to vote in his favor (which they overwhelmingly do). Sthenelaidas, as we will see, is the first of a series of figures in Thucydides' narrative who seek to prevail in oratorical deliberation by calling into question the legitimacy of oratory *and* the deliberative process itself.

Why didn't the statesman of vision and moderation carry the day with his brilliant speech? Archidamus' problem seems to be that he made the right speech to the wrong audience. His careful and cogent analysis appears to have been lost on the angry Spartan soldiers gathered in the Assembly. His speech, however impressive, was not well suited to the deliberative culture of Sparta and the circumstances at the time. This, of course, reflects the fundamental principles of ancient rhetoric that an effective orator must both know his audience and properly assess the persuasive opportunities of the moment when he speaks. In the first instance this means that the orator must understand the values and dispositions of his audience so as to craft the kind of appeal that will persuade *them.* Secondly, he must know what that specific moment requires for persuasion to work. This is the idea captured by the word *kairos*, which involves timeliness or opportuneness. The most logically compelling and ironclad argument will fail if it is made in a way that will not appeal to that particular audience at that particular time. This seems to have been Archidamus' shortcoming.[7] Likewise, in the debate at Athens it was the Corcyraeans who understood their audience and how Athenians deliberate. Their appeal to cold, sober assessment of interest was persuasive against the kinds of appeals made by the Corinthians that, however meritorious, were based upon factors not valued highly in Athenian deliberation.

Thucydides' larger point seems to be to set the stage for what follows in the rest of his history by demonstrating the complexity and challenges of the deliberative situation. The debate is carefully constructed to represent the paradoxes of the deliberative situation. He seems to be asking the reader to consider what is implied about political deliberation and the role of oratory in it when the best advice, put in the most eloquent and rational form by a man of character like Archidamus, utterly

fails to convince an Assembly that has been stung into anger by the cheap oratorical tricks of men like Sthenelaidas and the Corinthian representatives.

The obvious Athenian counterpart to Archidamus in this early period of the war is Pericles, who looms large in the early part of Thucydides' history, until his death some two years after the war began in 431 BCE. He introduces the first of Pericles' three speeches with the following comment: "Among the speakers was Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, the leading man of his time among the Athenians and the most powerful in both action *and debate*" (1.139). Through his intelligence, integrity, and powerful oratory, Pericles so dominated the politics of his period that, "In what was nominally a democracy, power was really in the hand of a first citizen" (2.65). What Thucydides evidently means by this is that Pericles was able to prevail so consistently in debate that as long as he lived the policies of the Athenian Assembly became virtually identical with the political vision of its foremost speaker.

As depicted by Thucydides, Pericles' political oratory is, like that of Archidamus, a model of political deliberation as rational calculation. In his two major policy speeches (in Books 1–2) Pericles lays out for his audience the different factors which must be taken into account, weighs the advantages and disadvantages, analyzes the various contingencies and possible countermoves by Athens' enemies, and explains why his own suggested course of action will best serve Athens' interests. What enhances the persuasive force of his arguments, however, is his character. Thucydides comments that because of his known integrity Pericles could lead without arousing suspicion that he did so from self-interested motives. This enabled him to speak bluntly and honestly to the Assembly so as to prod them into following (on his view) the wisest course in moments of crisis. Pericles himself uses this argument from his character when the Athenians have begun to realize that following his policy of going to war with Sparta will entail, at least in the short run, considerable hardship: "So far as I am concerned, if you are angry with me you are angry with one who has, I think, at least as much ability as anyone else to see what needs to be done and to explain what he sees, one who loves his city and who is above being influenced by money" (2.60).

As the art of rhetoric develops, persuasion based upon the character of the speaker becomes a technique to be manipulated by the orator.[8] It likewise leads to the demagogic technique, so ably employed by some of Pericles' successors, of defeating an opponent by attacking his character rather than the logic of his argument. Pericles' character increases his ability to persuade, but it also helps him to carry the day even when his arguments (for example, about why Athens should go to war) are not very solid. The underlying issue here is why the deliberative process should depend upon the character of the man rather than the quality of his arguments. One of the dilemmas of deliberation, the Greeks well realized, was that it is often more difficult for popular audiences to assess the logic of competing arguments than to rely upon their impression of the speaker. We will see in Thucydides' portrayal of the Mytilinean Debate how these problems can distort the deliberative process.

Thucydides' Pericles is often regarded as constructing an ideal of anti-demagogic oratory. Its essential elements include honesty in expressing one's opinion, presentation

of a rational calculation of policy from a long-term perspective, and a character of absolute integrity so as to lend one's arguments greater persuasive force. All of Thucydides' several exemplars of this ideal also display extraordinary intelligence and foresight. Here we find foreshadowed a question that will preoccupy many of the great writers in the rhetorical tradition, namely: What are the necessary qualities of the great orator? For Thucydides, as much later for Cicero, this question appears to have been virtually indistinguishable from that of the necessary attributes of the great statesman. This, of course, arises from the intimate linkage between political leadership and the kind of oratory necessary to express it. A political vision that could not be translated into effective persuasion in a deliberative context might be of interest to philosophers and intellectuals but had no place in the political life of the classical Greek world.[9]

Thucydides' ideal sets the stage for the contrast with those leaders who emerged after Pericles' death. The Athenians followed Pericles, because "he never sought power from any wrong motive . . . [and] was under no necessity of flattering them." His successors, on the other hand, "who were more on a level with each other and each of whom aimed at occupying first place, adopted methods of demagogy which resulted in their losing control over the actual conduct of affairs" (2.65). Thucydides' portrayal of post-Periclean politics depicts a process of political deliberation where orators in their quest for influence increasingly adopt a style at odds with the anti-demagogic ideal. This new oratorical style, personified most clearly by Thucydides in the person of Cleon, relies on attacking the character and motives of one's opponent and arousing the emotions of the audience. Once established, this pattern leads to a debasement of the deliberative process because the advice of the demagogues is dictated more by the pursuit of their own private interest in maintaining their influence than by the welfare of the polis. This, in essence, is the critique of Athenian democracy advanced by critics like Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle. What these diverse critics have in common is a conviction that unchecked, demagogic oratory will destroy the possibility for proper deliberation.

This is also a concern that Thucydides explores at some length. To do full justice to his treatment of this issue one would have to analyze carefully a whole series of major debates that occur throughout his narrative. In the present context, our abbreviated account of Thucydides' views on this important issue will focus on his famous account of the Mytilinean Debate. In this key passage in Book 3, Thucydides captures the political dilemmas of the period after Pericles' death by juxtaposing two speeches out of the many that were made as the Athenian Assembly struggled with its decision. It is typical of Thucydides' method that the historical event is of little intrinsic importance in terms of the larger context of the war, but for Thucydides what is really at stake here is not just the fate of the city of Mytilene, but also the very character of public discourse at Athens. For Thucydides, this meant no less than that the political fate of the Athenian democracy (and its empire) was engaged in this contest over the nature and proper role of oratory as a medium for political decision-making.

Mytilene had, under the influence of an oligarchic faction, revolted against Athens. After a protracted siege the city surrendered and the Athenian Assembly, "in their *angry* mood," decided to put not only the oligarchics but also the entire male population to death and to sell the women and children into slavery. Thucydides tells us virtually nothing about the speeches that led to this decision. Instead, he focuses upon the debate that took place the next day, "when there was a *sudden change of feeling* and people began to think how cruel and unprecedented their decision was" (3.36, my emphasis). This debate to a significant degree centers on the larger issue of whether arousing anger and other emotions, or rational calculation of Athenian interests, should serve as the proper mode of persuasion employed in political oratory. It is no coincidence then that Thucydides describes Cleon, who speaks for the destruction of Mytilene, as follows: "He was remarkable among the Athenians for the violence of his character and at this time he exercised by far the greatest influence over the people" (3.36). Indeed, Cleon's speech serves as a Thucydidean portrait of the essence of demagogic deliberative oratory.

For our purposes, three points in Cleon's speech are of central importance. First, he attacks the very notion of oratorical debates as the right way for a democratic polis to govern itself: "Personally I have had occasion often enough already to observe that a democracy is incapable of governing others, and I am all the more convinced of this when I see how you are changing your mind about the Mytilineans." Second, he attacks the character of his opponents by arguing that anyone who urges the Athenians to use debates to think carefully about whether their policy is wise must be doing so from highly suspect or criminal motives. Thus, he claims, his opponents, who urge full debate, are "intellectuals," who in trying to show off their abilities "very often bring ruin on their country" and who "must have been bribed to put together some elaborate speech with which [they] will try to lead you off the right track" (3.38). Third, the right way for the Athenian Assembly to reach decisions is to stop wasting their time listening to clever speeches and to act quickly before their anger has cooled (2.38). The proper role of the orator, as exemplified by the central thrust of Cleon's speech, is to use his words to arouse the anger of the audience and to encourage them to act on it. The echoes of Sthenelaidas' speech at Sparta, discussed above, are apparent enough. Thucydides is presenting here a type of leader, not just a historical individual.

In response to Cleon's rage and invective Thucydides juxtaposes, through the person of an otherwise unknown figure named Diodotus, the anti-demagogic model of oratorical debate as the only possible vehicle for rational calculation of policy and wise governance. His opening words deserve to be quoted at length:

> I do not blame those who have proposed a new debate on the subject of Mytilene, and I do not share the view . . . that it is a bad thing to have frequent deliberations on matters of importance. Haste and anger are, to my mind, the two greatest obstacles to wise counsel . . . And anyone who maintains that words cannot be a guide to action must either be a fool or one with some personal interest at stake; he is a fool *if he imagines that it is possible to deal with the uncertainties of the future by any other medium* . . .

> The good citizen, instead of trying to terrify the opposition, ought to prove his case in fair argument.

Thucydides is well aware of the harmful effects that oratory can have on political decision-making. In the Mytilinean Debate and in many other passages, he presents with devastating clarity the harm that can ensue when public discourse becomes distorted by self-seeking leaders under the pressure of war or national crises. But at the same time, as he has Diodotus argue, he is well aware that a self-governing political community (unlike a tyranny) has no other choice but to employ persuasive discourse because the *logos* (word, speech, argument, discourse, reason) is the *only* medium by which human beings can wisely govern a well-ordered political community.

Those, like Sthenelaidas and Cleon, who want to co-opt the deliberative process for their own ends will seek to attack this very premise. They themselves use oratory to discredit not just the individuals who speak in opposition to their views, but also the very process of deliberation as a rational process built upon the capacity of human beings to reason collectively through debate. Demagogic oratory thus attacks the very ground on which it stands and relies on its emotional appeal and the violence of its rhetoric to blind the audience to this fact. As the Mytilinean Debate so forcefully shows, those who oppose such demagogues must defend their very right to speak before they can even begin to address the substantive issues at hand. The dilemma of leaders like Diodotus and Archidamus is that if they maintain the integrity of their oratory they risk failing to defeat their demagogic opponents. Diodotus speaks to this dilemma when he says that because of the popular suspicion aroused by the demagogues' attacks on the motivations and character of their opponents, "A state of affairs has been reached where a good proposal honestly put forward is just as suspect as something thoroughly bad, and the result is that just as the speaker who advocates some monstrous measure has to win over the people by deceiving them, so also a man with good advice to give has to tell lies if he expects to be believed" (3.43).[10]

On the basis of his portrayal of Athenian democracy in events like the debate over Mytilene, it would be wrong to conclude that Thucydides either favored the Spartan model of government or, like Plato, believed that political deliberation should not take the form of oratorical debate. As noted above, he shows the same destructive potential at work in Sparta and, indeed, this view is reinforced by his juxtaposition of Athenian decision-making about Mytilene with the Spartan destruction of Plataea. Mytilene narrowly escapes, but in the end it is saved and it is the oratory of men like Diodotus that persuades the Athenians to reconsider their decision. At Plataea, on the other hand, when the Spartans face the same question of deciding the fate of a rebel city that has surrendered, they decide to bring judges from Sparta to settle the issue according to justice. This Spartan "trial" takes the form of asking each Plataean survivor, "Have you done anything to help the Spartans and their allies in the war?" They then put every one of them to death and raze the city to the ground. Thucydides succinctly comments, "It was largely, or entirely, because of Thebes that

the Spartans acted so mercilessly towards the Plataeans; they considered that at this stage of the war the Thebans were useful to them" (3.68). The Spartan deliberation in accordance with "justice" is thus shown to be mere hypocrisy, while at Athens, on this occasion, reason prevails over revenge, anger, and demagogy (barely).

The issue for Thucydides is not Athens vs. Sparta, but rather the conditions under which meaningful political deliberation is possible. Unlike Plato, who opposed the deliberative process *per se*, Thucydides proceeds from the premise that, as Diodotus puts it, the deliberative issues facing a political community "cannot be dealt with by any other medium" other than debate. Thucydides also makes clear that such debate can only meaningfully take place in a polis with some kind of democratic institutions. Despite the dangers that democracy brings with it, especially when exceptional leaders are not available, wise political deliberation cannot occur without oratory and both require the kind of political institutions where debate and collective decision-making are encouraged. In a way, Thucydides' history may be read as a catalogue of the possibilities for oratory under conditions of crisis when states confront their most difficult decisions. Thucydides presents the reader with a series of orators and leaders (from Athens, Sparta, and Syracuse) who embody this ideal of oratory and he uses them to elucidate the factors that determine the success or failure of the deliberative process. Through analysis of events like the Athenian expedition to Sicily he shows how the internal failures or successes in deliberation in turn produce victory or defeat in the crucible of external conflict.

In his assessment of the positive potential of deliberative oratory Thucydides stands at odds with oratory's most vehement ancient critic. Plato in his dialogue *Gorgias* completely rejects oratory and what he considers the pseudo-art of rhetoric. He does not, like Thucydides or Aristotle, focus his criticism on demagogues, but on all orators, politicians, and teachers of rhetoric. What is sometimes overlooked in discussion of Plato's treatment of rhetoric in *Gorgias* is that he not only decries oratory, but also denounces the very deliberative process itself and the context of democratic politics within which it operates. For this reason he dismisses even Athens' most revered statesmen, like Pericles and Themistocles, as mere panderers to the mob.

Plato's grounds for the rejection of rhetoric and the elevation of philosophy are well known and need not detain us. What is perhaps worth pointing out is that even in the dialogue where he is viewed as softening his dismissal of rhetoric he does not alter his stance on deliberation. It is true that in *Phaedrus* Plato seems to envision a legitimate place for a philosophically informed art of "true" rhetoric. He appears to concede in the later part of the dialogue that, properly conceived, oratory can hope to be a useful handmaiden to philosophy. What he does not concede, however, is that this "true" rhetoric would be employed for deliberative purposes in public debate. "True" rhetoric, like its philosophical master, is employed for the purpose of instruction and education, for making citizens and communities better. In *Gorgias* Plato rejected deliberative oratory because he saw it as ignorant rhetors manipulating an equally ignorant audience. This, for him, was the essence of the folly of democracy. In *Phaedrus*

his concession is that those with a philosophical education can usefully employ "true" rhetoric to instruct and improve others. He nowhere envisions that this rhetoric could be the common property of a political community of citizens who employ it in debate to decide on the best course of action. This is, however, precisely the role which Aristotle envisions for deliberative rhetoric, and it is to his attempt to reconcile the tension between rhetoric and philosophy that we now turn.

Beginning with his famous opening statement that "rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic," Aristotle attempts to reground oratory by emphasizing its capacity to use reasoning from common premises and other forms of logical argument for persuasive purposes. Other writers, he complains, have not even touched upon the real core of rhetoric, for they focus on the formal properties of speeches and how to persuade by producing emotional effects and the like. All of this, he sweepingly asserts, is extrinsic to the art itself (1354b).

What is intrinsic, he continues, is the method of "proof." Proof, he explains, "is a kind of demonstration," and the rhetorical form of demonstration is the enthymeme, "the most powerful of proofs" (1355a). This kind of proof, moreover, is appropriate for mass audiences and deliberative situations, where stricter forms of scientific proof are not feasible. Thus, rhetoric does not aim at persuading individuals but groups, and it does so by making arguments on the basis of commonly held beliefs or premises. "Rhetoric's premises," he states, "are matters about which it is the established custom to deliberate." Aristotle then sets out a system for producing arguments in deliberative contexts on the full range of topics about which political communities must take decisions (e.g., revenue, war and peace, legislation, etc.). The details of this system are not important for our purposes, nor are the methods by which he instructs orators to establish their rhetorical characters (i.e., the way they construct their persona for the audience) as another means of persuasion in deliberative situations. What is important is Aristotle's belief that rhetoric provides a method by which political communities can harness reason and persuasion together in order to deliberate collectively. Aristotle's assertion that he has put the art of rhetoric on a new footing, in which argument, demonstration, and proof replace the crass manipulation of emotion seems to provide a new legitimation for oratory as the proper tool for political decision-making.[11]

While Aristotle elevates the status of deliberative oratory in his *Rhetoric*, in his treatise on *Politics* he makes clear that he believes the shortcomings of the deliberative process to be the fatal flaw in radical democracies (like that of classical Athens). In the remainder of this chapter we shall analyze Aristotle's criticism of the political oratory of radical democracies and inquire how he envisions the proper role of rhetoric in the more moderate kind of polity he prefers.

In Book 1 of his *Politics,* Aristotle famously states that "man is a political animal." In expounding upon what this means he explains that while other animals possess voice (*phone*), only human beings have speech (*logos*). What this means in terms of the Greek understanding of *logos* is that only human beings have the capacity for reasoned discourse as a medium of communication. This capacity for *logos*, in turn, enables

them to deliberate about what is advantageous or harmful, right or wrong.[12] It is a shared understanding or partnership (*koinonia*) in these matters which grounds the political community called a polis (1253a).[13] The human capacity for collective deliberation through speech is, on Aristotle's account, the very foundation that makes the highest form of political community possible. Indeed, as we saw at the very beginning of this chapter, what distinguishes the polis from other forms of political community is this possibility for collective decision-making. There is, however, a variety of forms of political organization that a polis can adopt. This raises the question of whether for Aristotle the nature and possibilities for deliberation vary according to the form of constitution.

We may begin with Aristotle's definition of citizenship: "We now declare that one who has the right to participate in deliberative or judicial office is a citizen of the polis in which he has that right" (1275b). This definition makes participation in certain kinds of political institutions the criterion of citizenship. This makes sense in cities like Athens, where the Assembly and the law courts were the principal mechanisms of government and were open to all citizens. Thus, Aristotle explains that his definition applies particularly to democracies, for other forms of constitution like oligarchy or monarchy may have no Assembly (1275b). So deliberation by the citizenry is one of the defining features of participatory democracy, but, as was seen at the beginning of this chapter, this is precisely the reason for Aristotle's misgivings about a system of government where in the popular Assembly emotion and personal interest may "overcloud judgment." In order to understand why Aristotle on the one hand seems to privilege collective deliberation in his definition of citizenship and yet reject it in his treatment of democratic institutions we need to inquire more closely into his analysis of democracy and the role of oratory in democratically governed cities.

Whereas Plato rejected popular deliberation out of hand as government by the ignorant, Aristotle is far more sanguine about the possibilities for collective deliberation. This is because he believes that though the multitude may be ignorant individually, collectively they can deliberate effectively. Thus, he argues, collective deliberation of the many is better than the deliberation of a few experts (1281b–1282a). So, in a well governed polis, the many will be barred from the highest offices (though they may elect these officials) because they do not have the capacity to perform well there. On the other hand, in the law courts and the Assembly they will deliberate effectively because they act as a mass.[14] Aristotle concludes: "Hence justly the multitude has authority in greater matters, for the popular assembly, the council, and the jury court are formed of a number of people" (1282a; see also 1286a).

Up to this point the argument seems to justify popular deliberative institutions. The problem that Aristotle sees in democracies like that of Athens, however, is that in order for this arrangement to function properly, the multitude must do "nothing apart from the law" (1286a). They should decide only particular issues and cases, whereas the law defines the framework within which they operate and it alone is

sovereign (1287a). On Aristotle's view, however, this is just where things begin to go wrong. For he claims that in extreme democracies the rule of law does not obtain. This is the case because in such societies the deliberative process operates unchecked by law and, "Where the laws are not sovereign demagogues arise" (1292a). The demagogues destroy the rule of law and constitutional government itself because "they cause the resolutions of the assembly to be supreme and not the law, by referring all things to the people; for they owe their rise to greatness to the fact that the people is sovereign over all things while they are sovereign over the opinion of the people, for the multitude believes them" (1292a; see also 1293a). So the problem of extreme democracies is that demagogues, to enhance their own power, distort the deliberative process by leading the people to regard themselves as sovereign in all regards. Or, to put it another way, they overthrow the rule of law because they persuade the people to regard their collective will as expressed through the deliberative process as law.

The only persons in a position to check this process, according to Aristotle, are the magistrates, so the demagogues use their powers of persuasion to attack them. In order to secure their own supremacy, "they bring charges against the magistrates and say that the people ought to judge the suits." In this manner the magistracies are rendered ineffective as a mechanism for maintaining the rule of law and democracy becomes, like tyranny, a state without law or constitution. This kind of democracy, like tyranny, is inherently unstable because it divides the state into warring factions of the many and the few. As Aristotle puts it, "In democracies the principal cause of revolutions is the insolence of the demagogues" because they set the multitude against the wealthy as a class (1304b).

On Aristotle's view, the only solution to this problem lies in adopting more moderate forms of democracy (like the "agricultural democracy" that is the best form of democratic government) or a mixed constitution that provides checks upon the power of demagogues and the Assembly. Examples of such arrangements include that the multitude should vote in Assembly on measures that are proposed, but a smaller deliberative body, like Guardians of the Law, can reject them (1299a). In order to prevent instability and revolution in a well-mixed constitution, he concludes, it is necessary to enforce the law strictly and to ensure that the citizenry does "not put faith in the arguments strung together for the sake of tricking the multitude" (1307b–1308a).

In his *Rhetoric*, then, Aristotle asserts the capacity of oratory to provide a sound means for collective decision-making through a process of reasoned debate. In *Politics*, on the other hand, he acknowledges the central importance of collective deliberation and the capacity of mass audiences to reach sound decisions in this manner, but rejects the form of government where such decision-making is most fully realized: radical democracies where all free adult males are entitled by virtue of being citizens to participate in deliberative and judicial bodies. This rejection is based upon his fear that the masses will fall prey to the persuasive tricks of the demagogues (many of which he teaches in his *Rhetoric*, one might add). Oratory, then, is both the vehicle through which democratic government is instantiated and also the means of its own

undoing. Only where democracies are moderated by oligarchic features that either restrict participation in the Assembly to those of at least modest means and/or institute powerful magistracies to enforce the rule of law, will they prosper. In a more sociological vein, he argues that in societies where wealth is distributed fairly evenly the dominance of the large "middle" group will enable participation to be universal while at the same time ensuring stability.[15]

Unlike Plato, but like Thucydides, Aristotle believes that collective deliberation in the form of oratorical debate can work to produce a well-governed state. Like Thucydides, he also sees the capacity of democratic political communities to govern themselves most effectively in this manner. Both, however, also see the key defect in democracy as the susceptibility of a deliberative body composed of all the citizens (especially the poorest) to demagogic oratory that aims not at the common good but rather the aggrandizement of the hold of the demagogue on the people. The result, according to both, is an instability produced by the resentment of the wealthy or "better" classes. It is understandable that Thucydides, having lived through the Peloponnesian War and two oligarchic coups (however shortlived) should adopt such a perspective. It is perhaps more surprising that Aristotle, looking back on this period at far greater remove, should have identified this form of government as the worst and most unstable form of democracy when it produced a degree of political stability that few of the Greek poleis enjoyed. While praising moderate forms of democracy as among the best forms of existing constitutions he seems unable to look beyond the specter of the demagogue to acknowledge *any* of the strengths or achievements of democratic deliberation at Athens.

Notes

1   Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric* 1354b, trans. H. Lawsen-Tancred (New York: Penguin Books). All references to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are taken from this edition.
2   The term the "people" or *demos* does not, of course, mean all the inhabitants of Athens. Women, children, disenfranchised Athenian males, foreigners, slaves, and permanent residents not of Athenian birth were formally excluded from political deliberation. Athenian female citizens could hold public office in the sphere of religion, but could not participate in the Assembly or the law courts. The deliberative community, *de iure*, may thus have only included approximately 10–20 percent of the total Athenian population (based upon very approximate estimates). The actual number who regularly attended the Assembly was clearly significantly smaller, though the question of how large that group was has been the subject of intense debate.
3   Homer (1991: 295ff.).
4   All references are to the Rex Warner translation of Thucydides (New York: Penguin Books).
5   In typical fashion he subtly links the Athenian decision to Corcyraean persuasion by mentioning that the Athenians also thought it advantageous that Corcyra was on the coastal route to Sicily – a point that had been made explicitly in the Corcyraean speech. As it turns out, however, Cocyra does not prove to be a valuable ally in the war.
6   Archidamus is obviously aware of this issue and attempts to deal with it both by telling the Spartans not to be goaded by these tactics and appealing to Spartan history, character, traditions, and

institutions to support his argument. Without becoming a demagogue himself what else can he do? This is the dilemma of a statesman of "intelligence and moderation" faced with the ugly realities of deliberative politics. Archidamus possesses the integrity to be willing to lose rather than debase his own currency.

7 The late fifth century orator and speechwriter Lysias is credited with doing much to develop this technique.

8 Plato famously failed in his attempt to bridge this gap by finding a monarch who was prepared to translate his political vision into reality.

9 The implications of this point for the Mytilinean Debate itself are apparent. Cleon, who advocates the destruction of the Mytilineans and their city, invokes the rhetoric of justice to defend his view. Diodotus, who opposes him and says that only the guilty oligarchs who provoked the revolt should be punished, must claim that the Athenians should only calculate their self-interest in reaching a decision and not take into account justice, mercy, or pity.

10 It has often been pointed out that Aristotle's elevated claims for rhetoric exist in tension with the techniques he teaches in the sections of the *Rhetoric* devoted to emotion, character, and the like. An assessment of such claims and of the nature of this tension falls outside the focus of this chapter on the relation of political deliberation and democracy.

11 These, Aristotle explains in the *Rhetoric*, are the topics of deliberative and forensic oratory, respectively.

12 All references are to Aristotle (1990).

13 See, for example, 1281a16–18: "For although each individual separately will be a worse judge than the experts, the whole of them assembled will be better or at least as good."

14 Whereas Plato and Aristotle talk about the rule of law as if it operated in a sphere separate from the citizenry and politics, Demosthenes (year 224) expresses the opposite sentiment, emphasizing that strength of the law depends upon the will of the citizens: "And what is the strength of the laws? If one of you is wronged and cries aloud will the laws run up and be at his side to assist him? No; they are only letters and incapable of such action. Wherein then resides their power? In yourselves, if only you support them and make them all-powerful . . . So the laws are strong through you and you through the laws."

15 Like Plato, Aristotle was acutely aware that poverty and wide discrepancies of wealth were a central cause of instability. "The truly democratic statesman," he claims, "must study how the multitude may be saved from extreme poverty, for this is what causes democracy to be corrupt" (1320a32–4).

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Text and Context in the Roman Forum: The Case of Cicero's *First Catilinarian*[1]

B. A. Krostenko

The Broad Context: Rhetoric in Roman Society

Roman orators, like all orators, strove to associate their own position with the values of their society and their particular audience, and conversely to associate their opponents' positions with less accepted or unaccepted values. In late Republican Rome the repertory of values available for this task was not large. Courage, discipline, hard work, duty, and tradition were continually praised; their opposites, daring, immoderation, vanity, and novelty, were continually derogated. That, at any rate, is the impression given by the speeches of the great orator Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE), the only extensive attestation of late Republican oratory. By that time, if Cicero is any guide, orations could not simply invoke this more or less coherent set of values; rather, they had to properly elaborate and deliver them. By Cicero's time orators had for over a century been seriously practicing and adapting the well-developed rhetorical techniques of the Greeks. A wide variety of rhetorical models had thus become available, and the key to choosing correctly, according to Cicero, was *decorum*:

> 1. Furthermore the orator must consider propriety not only in his conceptions but also in his words; not every position in life, nor every rank, nor every kind of status, nor persons of every age, nor, indeed, every place or time or listener can be treated with the same kind of words or ideas. One must always consider, in every aspect of speech, as of life, what is appropriate; and what is appropriate is a function of the matter at hand and of the *personae* both of the speakers and the hearers ... How indecorous it is, when you're speaking in front of one judge about rainwater, to use the fullest expressions and commonplaces; and how indecorous it is to speak about the greatness of the Roman people in a modest and closely argued way!

The closing examples of indecorous oratory advert to the "theory of three styles." This theory, developed in the Hellenistic period, divided oratorical style into three kinds: the grand, which stirs the emotions; the middle, which persuades through pleasure; and the plain, which proves points (*Or.* 69). Each style has characteristic figures of speech and thought. For example, the grand style (to which "the fullest expressions" belong) is permitted all manner of metaphor and such striking figures as *homoioteleuton*, in which successive clauses end with the same sound, and *conformatio*, in which the orator creates a voice for an absent person or even for an abstraction, such as the state. The plain style, by contrast – the proper home of "modest" argument – uses only the mildest metaphors (*Or.* 79, 82), avoids rhythmically structured phrases (*Or.* 76–7) and *homoioteleuton* (*Or.* 84), and shuns *conformatio* (*Or.* 85). A mere three styles obviously cannot account for all aspects of Roman (much less Greek) rhetorical practice, but the apparent attractiveness of the theory underscores Roman expectations: certain rhetorical forms were considered appropriate to certain sorts of conceptions and, more generally, *the form of expression was not independent of content*. A proper hermeneutic of Roman oratory thus requires attention to the particulars of form no less than the abstractible content; for no Roman speech is comprehensible without attention to its form.

Cicero's definition of *decorum* is useful for constructing such a hermeneutic; but the definition requires three clarifications. According to Cicero, particular styles suit particular topics. This suggestion could be sharpened: styles do not suit topics *per se*; rather, styles are a collection of rhetorical techniques and tactics that become appropriate to a topic *in view of some objective.* The grand style will probably ill suit a case about rainwater because the objective is to establish, say, a property claim. There, careful argument is more useful than fulmination; fulmination, *in that context*, would give the impression, at the least, of obfuscation, if not lunacy (cf. *Or.* 99). In a case about treason,[2] by contrast, the speaker, other things being equal, will want to expatiate on the glory of the state and thus rouse hatred against her betrayer; for that objective, explosive heat is more useful than adroit subtleties.

Second, the nature of *decorum* requires elaboration. Cicero's specific examples treat only appropriateness of style to topic. He mentions, but does not illustrate, other aspects of *decorum*, such as the *personae* of speaker or listener. These were topics treated extensively elsewhere in the ancient rhetorical tradition (Aristotle *Rhet.* 2; *de Orat.* 2.114–20, 186–216). Speakers were to exploit or create the impression of an authoritative voice; that impression is usually called by its Aristotelian name, *ethos*. *Ethos* also comprises the impression speakers create of their clients or opponents. Speakers also hoped to create *pathos*: a perceptual experience in the audience consonant with the speakers' objectives. Cicero could not have given a complete account of the social dynamics that governed patterns of audience perception and orators' presentation of themselves and their opponents without far exceeding the bounds of the largely formal concerns of the *Orator*. Such a treatment might have adumbrated the social conditions that made an aesthetic ideal like *decorum* possible and attractive. Roman rhetorical practice depended upon the aesthetic standards of the small group that

largely controlled the government and which alone appeared as public speakers. These few typically had similar aristocratic educations and comparable levels of familiarity with government and politics. This shared knowledge and experience could easily invest a set of formal conventions – such as styles of oratory – with standard ranges of meaning. In a given block of speech, then, nuance may often have been more important than overall style or gross argument: Cicero's better-educated listeners presumably recognized and could even sometimes predict stylistic choice and ideological stance, and thus noticed rather how style and ideology were managed – skating judges, as it were, unimpressed by triple lutzes *per se* and attentive entirely to particulars.

Cicero's definition needs amplification in a third way. Cicero's enumeration of errors of *decorum* suggests that propriety is fixed, viz. that the relationship between topic and style is regular. Within limits that must have been true. But *decorum*, like all cognitive categories, is partly *dynamic*. That is, the quality of a topic, or elements of a topic, can be *created* by presenting it in a particular style. Indeed, the *personae* of speaker and hearer are also, within limits, dynamic; elements of either can be foregrounded or backgrounded to suit particular objectives. Even the societal values to which any orator appeals are themselves partly dynamic: in associating their own views with accepted values, or disassociating from those same values the position of their opponents, orators, like any moral agent, may attempt to stretch the boundaries of values to cover the particular cases before them.

This system of *decorum* gives some suggestion of how Cicero might have understood the rhetorical challenge a situation posed and sharpens our appreciation of the solutions he reached. Keeping in mind that topic, persona, and values are partly dynamic, we may expect a speech of Cicero to make its appeal to (some set of) the core values of Roman society in a manner that is, according to contemporary canons, stylistically appropriate to the topic, himself, and his listeners. That is a simple enough expectation, but working out its implications for individual speeches is very illuminating, as in the case of Cicero's *First Catilinarian.*

The Narrow Context: The Career of Lucius Sergius Catilina

Cicero delivered the *First Catilinarian* oration in November of 63 BCE against the insurrectionist designs of Lucius Sergius Catilina. If no Roman oration is comprehensible without attention to its form, likewise no Roman oration is comprehensible without attention to its historical context. In the late Republic the details are always complicated and often disputed. The following narrative is tolerably certain in its chief details. Lucius Sergius Catilina, or Catiline, of a patrician but not recently prominent family, was energetic, proud, generous, dissolute, determined, and licentious – a living contradiction, as Cicero would assert after Catiline's death (*Cael.* 12–13). An experienced soldier, he had been an officer in the Social War and the Sullan civil war, participating in the murderous proscriptions that followed. After

holding the praetorship in 68 BCE, he governed the province of Africa. His conduct there earned harsh senatorial decrees even before his return (Cicero, as quoted in Ascon. 85–7, 9).

Probably in hopes of staving off prosecution for extortion in his province (sitting officeholders could not be tried) and of securing another province to restore his finances, Catiline offered himself as a candidate for the consulship of 65 BCE, after the candidates first elected were disqualified; but his candidacy was refused by the presiding consul (Sall. *Cat.* 18), enraging Catiline (Dio 36.44).[3] Catiline was tried on the extortion charge but acquitted, allegedly by collusion with the prosecution (*Pis.* 95, *Har. Resp.* 42 etc.; double jeopardy being forbidden, incompetent prosecution meant future immunity). He immediately set his sights on the consulship of 63 BCE, winning a place on that ballot. He was defeated: polling just over him was C. Antonius, an associate of his from the Sullan days with whom he had hoped to be elected; and polling first overall was an ambitious and energetic *novus homo* ("new man"), the first of his family to hold the consulship, M. Tullius Cicero, who had delivered a searing indictment of Catiline's character during the campaign, earning Catiline's undying hatred (Ascon. 94, Sall. *Cat.* 24, Plut. *Cic.* 11).

During Cicero and Antonius' consulship, Catiline was accused of murder for his activities during the Sullan period (Ascon. 91) but escaped conviction again, thanks to influential friends (Cic. *Sul.* 81, *Att.* 1.16.9, *Pis.* 95). Catiline embarked on a campaign for the consulship of 62 BCE, now running on a more radical, populist platform. Catiline's electioneering was aggressive enough that Cicero introduced new legislation against electoral bribery. A vexed Catiline made intemperate, revolutionary remarks at an Assembly before the election, and Cicero, possibly for that reason, possibly because he had heard of a plot on his life (Plut. *Cic.* 14), proposed that the Senate delay the elections, which it did (*Mur.* 51). At a subsequent meeting Cicero questioned Catiline about his remarks; he replied, referring respectively to the oligarchy and the populace, that the state had two bodies, one weak with a weak head, one strong with no head – save him (*Mur.* 52). But Cicero failed to persuade the Senate that danger threatened. The elections proceeded, Cicero ostentatiously attending in a breastplate (*Mur.* 52). Catiline was defeated again. He now turned to desperate measures. He planned to foment (or further) an uprising among Sulla's retired troops in Etruria, launch arson attacks in Rome, and engineer the assassination of high officials. Cicero, apprised of the situation by high-ranking citizens (Plut. *Cic.* 15, *Crass.* 13) and informants, convened the Senate and informed them of the plan. The Senate ordered an investigation and on October 21 passed the so-called *senatus consultum ultimum* or *s.c.u.,* which ordered the consul "to ensure the state take no harm."[4] Various defensive measures were ordered inside and outside the city, which was in a pitch of excitement (Sall. *Cat.* 31). On October 28, the date Cicero alleged Catiline had slated for the assassinations, many senators fled the city. An attempted prosecution of Catiline on a charge of *vis* or political violence (Sall. *Cat.* 31, Dio 81) stalled for lack of evidence for trial, but Catiline volunteered to submit to house arrest while the case proceeded.

Despite house arrest Catiline made his way to the house of the senator M. Porcius Laeca, probably on the night of November 6. There Catiline finalized plans for the insurrection, assigning to his co-conspirators their particular tasks in Italy and Rome (Cic. *Catil.* 1.8, Sall. *Cat.* 53). Two Roman *equites* were to feign paying Cicero a morning call in order to assassinate him (Cic. *Catil.* 1.9). But Cicero's informants had alerted him to the assassination plot as well as the rest of the conspirators' designs, and the would-be assassins were refused admission. That day or the next Cicero assembled the Senate not in the Senate house but in the temple of *Iupiter Stator* or "Jupiter, Bulwark of the City," which he ringed with an armed guard. This meeting Catiline himself had the audacity – or the cool confidence, or the obligation – to attend. There Cicero delivered against him the fulminations that have come down to us as the *First Catilinarian*, in which Cicero hotly encourages – but does not quite order – Catiline to leave the city, and in which he develops a vivid picture of Catiline's wickedness and his own determined caution.

The First *Catilinarian*: Rhetorical Problems

The situation above may seem to be rhetorically simple. What could be easier to attack than plans for arson and assassination? But in fact the rhetorical situation Cicero faced was much less clear-cut: it posed several serious problems that are helpfully illuminated according to the scheme of *decorum* described above.

If the treatment of a topic depends in part on the speaker's objective, the situation posed a problem of *topic*, for some otherwise reasonable objectives were foreclosed to Cicero. He could not have aimed chiefly to rouse the Senate to action. What action? They had already passed the *s.c.u.*; the onus was on Cicero to use it. Nor is Cicero likely to have intended primarily to secure support for his own formal expulsion or arrest of Catiline, support the Senate was unlikely to give: a proper juridical proceeding was pending, and forcing an unconvicted man into exile was a breach of civil rights. Furthermore, Catiline's submission to house arrest might have suggested confidence in his own innocence. Some of these problems are also a problem of Catiline's *ethos*: how could Cicero depict him without appearing to be harassing him?

Cicero certainly had the objective of informing the Senate what he had heard about the meeting at Laeca's. But even this simple act of disseminating information posed tactical problems. Cicero had earlier revealed a planned wave of assassinations that had not occurred – perhaps precisely because he did reveal it. And he had failed to convince the Senate just after the elections for 62 BCE were postponed that Catiline had seditious intentions. Some senators must have begun to regard Cicero as alarmist. How then to present the new information? Cicero's tactical problem is like that of the Justice Department after the World Trade Center attacks: however plausible its information about pending strikes, its several alerts were progressively less effective.

There were also difficulties of producing *pathos* in the audience, here, the Senate. The problem was not so much that the Senate included Catiline's co-conspirators, or

even his friends and associates (cf. no. 18) – although, as we have seen, Catiline had influential friends. More important were those who would have profited from having Catiline as consul, some of whom, by stepping aside or promising support, had made Catiline's consular candidacies possible. Some senators must also have been disinclined to judge Catiline harshly, whether out of a partisan instinct to defend the dignity of the oligarchy or out of a genuine respect for proper procedure. A call to arms might well have caused the former group to dig in its heels and the latter to feel it was being stampeded. The House prosecution of Bill Clinton provides a rough parallel: its stridency strengthened the resolve of the most partisan Democrats and soured moderate Democrats who, themselves disgusted with Clinton, might have been persuaded to vote against him.

These problems of *pathos* were made worse by problems of Cicero's *ethos*. What pose could Cicero strike? To howl – again – about an imminent crisis might have been unconvincing. Even the presence of the armed camp Sulla's veterans had formed near Rome might not have shocked everyone: the veterans had long been malcontented; Catiline need not have been agitating them. Could Cicero, dodging the issue, simply have struck the pose of an outraged patriot, loading abuse on a dastardly Catiline? Such abuse was passable: political invective was more acceptable to the Romans than to us; stridency, misrepresentation, and exaggeration of a kind that now characterizes talk radio was allowed not only during campaigns but even in the Senate (as in Cicero's *in Pisonem*). And in fact Cicero does heap a good deal of abuse on Catiline's moral character, rather as he had during the campaign of 64 BCE. But here, too, Cicero's way was not smooth. Attacks from a political competitor were one thing; attacks from a sitting consul on an alleged – not proven – insurrectionist were different. Augmenting the problem was the sharp hierarchy of late Republican society, sharp even in the broadly homogeneous Senate. Cicero was a *novus homo*; Catiline could claim old aristocratic roots. Cicero had achieved prominence by the arts of peace alone, a rarity for that time; Catiline by the fortunes of war, as had many of his peers. If the Roman was prone to equate character with social class – the very defense, according to Sallust (Sall. *Cat.* 31–2), that Catiline invoked after the *First Catilinarian* was delivered – then Cicero was at a disadvantage, so much the more after his earlier oratorical successes: was this not the same upstart Cicero, some might have peevishly asked, who had advanced his political career by attacking C. Verres and achieved the consulship by slandering Catiline?

Rhetorical Solutions (1): Discourse Structure

When Cicero convened the Senate in Jupiter's temple, he thus faced considerable rhetorical challenges – which he was evidently prepared to meet, having himself called the meeting. How, then, did Cicero meet the challenges?[5] The simplest element of his solution is also one of the most effective: he addresses himself almost entirely only to Catiline, leaving the Senate virtual witnesses to an overheard

harangue. This simple expedient solves several problems. In order to communicate the new information he had acquired about the conspiracy without seeming alarmist, Cicero never asks the Senate to believe the information. Instead he hurls the details at Catiline, challenging him to refute them:

> 2. Go over with me, please, the events of the night before last. You will appreciate now that my concern for the safety of the Republic is much deeper than is yours for its destruction. I say that on the night before last you came to the street of the scythe-makers – I shall be precise – to the house of Marcus Laeca. There you were joined by many of your accomplices in your criminal folly. You do not have the effrontery to deny it, do you? Why are you silent then? (§8)

One can only be accused of crying wolf if one asks to be believed; and Cicero does not.

Thus, second-person address also contributes to solving the problem of *pathos*. Had he harangued the Senate directly, Cicero might have soured moderates and roused Catiline's partisans. These reactions could only have been amplified and focused if Cicero had allowed open debate, as Catiline must have realized. To foreclose such hopes Cicero represents Catiline as interrupting him to ask for a vote (which Catiline well may, but of course need not, have done):

> 3. If in this situation, Catiline, you cannot face death calmly, do you hesitate to leave for some other land and consign to exile and solitude a life that you have rescued from the numerous penalties that it so richly deserves? "Put the proposal," you say, "to the Senate." Yes, this is what you demand; and you say that, if they vote for you to go into exile, you will obey. I shall not put it to the Senate, for that is contrary to my practice, but I shall see to it that you are left in no doubt about what the Senate feels about you. Leave the city, Catiline, free the commonwealth from fear and, if these are the words that you are waiting for, go into exile. Well, Catiline? What are you waiting for? Do you not notice the Senate's silence? They accept it, they are silent. Why are you waiting for them to voice their decision, when you see clearly their wish expressed by their silence? (§20)

Squelching debate, Cicero disallows mitigating voices – the voices of those who "have fed Catiline's hope by their feeble decisions," as Cicero labels them later in the speech (referring to the pre-election meeting). But rejecting Catiline's request and tendentiously interpreting the Senate's silence is not only a cheap trick to disguise a refusal to yield the floor or the Senate's lack of formal judicial power. Denying the holder of *any* opinion, including those who supported Cicero himself, the reinforcement of his peers – a crucial element in any political decision-making – Cicero leaves each senator to his own conscience; and he does so not in the usual confines of the Senate house, but in a temple, under the gaze of the cult statue of *Iupiter Stator*. There, if it was impossible to reform the minds of Catiline's co-conspirators, still it was reasonable to hope that those who, valuing senatorial dignity or due process, might have been inclined to disbelieve Cicero could be dislodged from their clannishness or legalism

both by the surroundings and by Cicero's insistent moralism. In short, Cicero's tactic weakens potential support for Catiline by encouraging – but not demanding – a switch in frames of reference.

Rhetorical Solutions (2): The Grand Style

Some other effects of second-person address depend on appreciating the style of the speech. Delivery, of course, must have created much of the style and tone of a speech; but tone did correlate significantly with syntactical and rhetorical figures, which may thus provide a guide to the tone of the delivered speech. The *First Catilinarian* has numerous formal features of the grand style of oratory. The following is a small sample. A classic grand style figure is *congeries* ("a heaping up"), a barrage of similar or related sentences. There are three *congeries* in the *First Catilinarian*. The first comes in the famous opening words of the speech:

4. In heaven's name, Catiline, how long will you take advantage of our forbearance? How much longer yet will that madness of yours make playthings of us? When will your unbridled effrontery stop vaunting itself?

Catiline's moral turpitude also attracts the figure (no. 13). Two other figures, *geminatio* and *anaphora*, also use repetition. *Geminatio* is a repetition of the same word. Cicero uses the figure twice to call attention to weaknesses, in the state or in himself:

5. fuit, fuit ista quondam in hac re publica virtus. (§3)
Gone, gone forever is that valor that used to be found in this Republic. (§3)

6. nos, nos, dico aperte, consules desumus. (§3)
It is we – I say it openly – we consuls, who are lacking. (§3)

The figure of *anaphora*, in which the same word is repeated at the beginning of successive phrases, is very common in Latin and does not always indicate high emotional pitch; but its high pitch in the opening paragraph is unmistakable.

7. Nihilne te nocturnum praesidium Palati, nihil urbis vigiliae, nihil timor populi, nihil concursus bonorum omnium, nihil hic munitissimus habendi senatus locus, nihil horum ora voltusque moverunt? (§1)

Are you moved not at all by the night garrison on the Palatine? Not at all by the city patrols? Not at all by the people's panic? Not at all by the concourse of all good citizens? Not at all by this well-defended meeting place for the Senate? Not at all by the expressions on the faces you see before you? (§1)

The most striking of Cicero's grand figures are the two *conformationes*. In both instances, Italy herself speaks, in the first instance addressing Cicero (note also the two consecutive *anaphorae*):

> 8. If my country, which means much more to me than my own life, if all Italy, if the whole commonwealth were to say to me: "What are you doing, Marcus Tullius? Are you going to let this man who you have discovered is a public enemy; who you see will be the leader in war; who you know is awaited in the enemy's camp as their general; an instigator of crime, leader of the conspiracy, recruiter of slaves and society's outcasts – are you going to let him leave, so that it seems you did not cast him out of the city but cast him against it? Are you not going to order him to be put in chains? Not order him taken off to execution? Not order him to undergo the supreme penalty?" (§27).

The "voice of Italy" proceeds to dismiss possible reasons for Cicero to fear executing Catiline (no. 19). In another lengthy *conformatio* the *patria* addresses Catiline. Having deplored, somewhat impotently, his degenerate habits and criminal actions, the *patria* pleads to be free of him:

> 9. I tolerated as well as I could those earlier crimes, insupportable as they were, but that I should now be in a state of total terror on our account, that Catiline should be feared at every sound, that no scheme can be hatched against me without assuming your criminal complicity, truly this is intolerable. Depart, then, and free me from this dread: if it is well founded, that I may not be destroyed; if groundless, that I may at long last cease to feel afraid. (§18)

The grand style was also permitted pointedly artful phrases, such as those featuring phonetic play (which was to be avoided in the plain style: *Or.* 84). The *First Catilinarian* has a striking instance of *homoioteleuton*, where successive clauses end with the same sound:

> 10. quid proxima, quid superiore nocte egeris, ubi fueris, quos convocaveris, quid consilii ceperis, quem nostrum ignorare arbitraris? (§1)
> Do you think that there is a man among us who does not know what you did last night or the night before last, where you were, whom you summoned to your meeting, what decision you reached? (§1)

Another passage features not *homoioteleuton* in the strict sense, but the effect is similar:

> 11. fuisti igitur apud Laecam illa nocte, Catilina, distribuisti partis italiae, statuisti quo quemque proficisci placeret, delegisti quos Romae relinqueres, quos tecum educeres, discripsisti urbis partis ad incendia, confirmasti te ipsum iam esse exiturum, dixisti paulum tibi esse etiam nunc morae quod ego viverem. (§9)

> You were, then, at the house of Laeca on that night, Catiline; you allocated the regions of Italy; you decided where you wanted each man to go, you chose those whom you were leaving at Rome and those whom you were taking with you, you assigned the parts of the city to be burnt, and you confirmed that you were on the point of departure yourself, but said you had to wait a little longer because I was alive. (§9)

Figures of speech and thought must not simply be gathered and inventoried; rather, their contribution to the overall tone of the speech and to the specific ideas they express must be carefully examined. Let us consider first their contribution to the overall tone. Frequent grand style figures create and reinforce the persona of an emotionally intense speaker (some terms for the grand style speaker are *acer* "fierce, sharp," *ardens* "fiery," *vehemens* "energetic, forceful") – a persona very useful for the rhetorical challenges Cicero faced. An agitated *persona*, in concert with second-person address, contributes to solving Cicero's problem of *pathos*. If by the devices of the grand style Cicero allows himself intensity and melodrama, neither does he press the Senate to share the intensity or countenance the melodrama: for, as we have seen, he directs himself chiefly to Catiline. When he speaks to the Senate directly, his tone is far different.[6] The Senate, in effect, is allowed to appreciate Cicero's position and assent *if it chooses*; Cicero avoids trying to re-energize them directly. The effect can be captured by comparing "My disgusting opponent is a notorious drunk and inveterate womanizer" to "Favor us, won't you, with an account of your charge accounts at every downtown bar – and every downtown hotel!" The latter is no less brash than the former; yet the latter, by accosting only a single addressee, does not impose itself on the audience, much less ask for its assent.

The grand style also contributes to solving a problem of *topic*. Cicero probably did not convene the Senate in order to ask them for formal action. Several passages in the speech itself make clear that Cicero was not confident about expelling Catiline even on the authority of the *s.c.u.* But the grand style enables Cicero to obviate that difficulty. The grand style speaker, who is supposed to appear ardent, is permitted a structure and syntax looser than is acceptable, *ceteris paribus*, in the easy narrative of the plain style or the measured graces of the middle style. But a loose style does not imply simplistic conceptions: a conception expressed in a loose style may be entirely subtle and nuanced; but the nuance will then derive from juxtapositions and the cumulative effect of the whole text rather than surface syntax. That is, in a looser style logical relationships may be reflected not by complex syntactic expression but by a sequence of syntactically simpler expressions. A given phrase may appear to express an idea that the broader context moderates or alters.

Cicero exploits that possibility in the *First Catilinarian.* Consider the following command:

> 12. Leave the city, Catiline, free the commonwealth from fear and, if these are the words that you are waiting for, go into exile. (§20)

Straightforward as the imperatives are, even here out of context they are already soft-pedaled by Cicero's apparent reluctance to use the word "exile." But in context (no. 3) the words are not "real" imperatives at all: they are a red flag Cicero waves before the Senate to test its response to the idea of Catiline's departure, so as to (over)interpret their silence. Another ostensible command, "The consul orders a public enemy to leave the city" (no. 13), is comparable. In context, no sooner is the command delivered than Cicero carefully takes exile off the table, reducing himself to giving "advice." Furthermore, the argument of the whole passage might be put this way: "Although your designs on the whole state call for your execution, I shall not execute you, so that your followers will leave with you when you do; and I infer that you intend to leave, since everyone in the city hates you." Thus, in the end, the command represents Cicero's expression of his agreement with Catiline's independent intentions – an assentative, and not a truly jussive, formulation.

Thus the two commands are not quite what they seem. Although the contexts moderate their full jussive power, still Cicero's ardent tone countenances the direct expression of an idea which, in another tone of voice, would likely have had to be effaced or even avoided: asking Catiline to leave. That is no mere trick of style and syntax; rather, style and syntax have a kind of cognitive implication: to have consistently nuanced the syntactic expression of the issue of Catiline's departure would have suggested that precision mattered more than passion. The effect of Cicero's technique can be captured by comparing these sentences:

A "If it is in fact true that the president has directed government money to an overseas fund, to be paid to assassins sent against his political enemies, then the only recourse is impeachment."

B "'Shoot the president!' That, at any rate, is what a true patriot might say when confronted with this monstrous criminal intent. Impeachment is the least we can do!"

(B) no sooner speaks harshly than it distances itself from its harshness and in the end supports the same plan as (A); but (B) introduces a very different frame of reference, fired with patriotism, free of doubt, and seeing past technical correctness. By a similar technique, with the "half-imperatives" just described, Cicero creates the space in which Catiline's departure can be contemplated in and of itself.

Cicero also sets the frame for that contemplation, by way of a second effect dependent on the looseness I have just described. That effect is well illustrated by the opening lines (no. 4). Cicero begins his speech by establishing a hostile polarity between Catiline and the rest of the Senate, whose voice Cicero assumes. Catiline's abuse of the Senate's patience – a kind of relative quality, apparent only in social exchanges – is immediately morphed into an absolute quality now typical of Catiline, "that madness of [his]." The idea of social intercourse is still present here, since mocking disregard requires interaction. But by the third question the idea of social intercourse is gone, and Catiline's signal quality is "effrontery," *audacia*, configured

here as pathological solipsism. Propelled by the force of a *congeries*, impudence has become pathology – and that pathology, once alleged, justifies the original accusation of impudence.

The opening *congeries* exemplifies an important dynamic in the speech, a kind of bait-and-switch, whereby one idea is modulated without strict logical connection into another – and wherein the absence of logic gives no offense precisely because of the high emotional tone. In section 13, too long to quote entirely here, Cicero turns forbearance ("I do not yet, however, presume to take the most obvious course") into imperative, and imperative into recrimination:

> 13. Well, Catiline? Surely you are not hesitating to do at my bidding what you were minded to do of your own free will? *The consul orders a public enemy to leave the city.* You ask me, "You don't mean exile?" I do not command that but, if you ask my opinion, that is my advice. What is there, Catiline, that can give you any pleasure in this city now? There is not here outside that conspiracy of ruined men a single person who does not fear you, not one who does not hate you. *What mark of family scandal is there not branded upon your life? What deplorable episode in your personal affairs does not help form your reputation? What lust has never shone in your eyes, what crime has never stained your hands, what shameful deed has never fouled your entire body?*[7] What young men that you had ensnared with the allurements of your seduction have you not provided with a weapon for his crime or a torch for his passion? (§13)

Thus we move from Cicero's agitated interpretation of Catiline's plans to Catiline's moral life – a life that justifies Cicero's original agitation. The grand style and its looser transitions allows these modulations – and allows Cicero to brand Catiline with a repugnant *ethos*.

But a screed against Catiline's moral character could have easily been dismissed as a misplaced election tactic. Thus Cicero also keeps before the Senate – or rather creates – the *reasons* for his willingness to impugn. In that task, too, the looseness of the grand style is helpful, allowing him to paint a series of loosely connected tableaux into which Cicero continually reinserts the cardinal facts of the case: the military camp in Etruria, where Catiline's adjutant Manlius awaits (§§5, 7, 10, 23, 24, 27, 30); Catiline's planned or attempted attacks on senators, the consul, or Cicero himself (§§2, 7, 9, 9–10, 11, 15, 16, 32); and precedents for justifying Catiline's murder (§§3–4, 12, 28, 29). Cicero thus gestures to the objective (or apparently objective) facts that support his own rhetorical position.

However, Cicero does not simply repeat the facts: he presses them into service to support different lines of thought. The passages that refer to Manlius' camp illustrate the point. The camps first appear, described in military language, as a symbol for the magnitude of Catiline's crime, invoked as foil for Cicero's alleged weakness:

> 14. You still live and, as long as you live, you do not cease your acts of recklessness but add to their number. It is my wish, gentlemen, to be a man of compassion, it is my wish not to seem slack at a time of serious danger for the Republic, but now I condemn

myself for my inaction and my negligence. There is in Italy a camp of enemies of the Roman people situated in the passes of Etruria and the number of those enemies is increasing daily. The commander of that camp and the leader of those enemies you see within the walls and even, indeed, in the Senate, plotting daily in our midst the destruction of the Republic. (§§4–5)

The camps are only implied in their next appearance, there serving as a symbol for Cicero's accurate intelligence:

15. Do you remember that I said in the Senate on the 21st of October that Gaius Manlius, your tool and lackey in your wild scheme, would take up arms on a certain day and that the day would be the 27th of October? Was I not right, Catiline, both in the seriousness of the plot, beyond belief in its ferocity though it was, and – a much more remarkable feat – in the date? (§7)

In their next appearance the camps are personified, yearning for Catiline:

16. In these circumstances, Catiline, finish the journey you have begun; at long last leave the city; the gates are open; be on your way! The Manlian camp of yours has been waiting for its general all too long. Take all your men with you or, if you cannot take them all, take as many as you can. Cleanse the city! (§10)

Here the personification adumbrates a notion developed more fully later, viz. that Catiline's egress would constitute not expulsion but departure for an already established purpose, a purpose the camps represent in their next appearance:

17. Be on your way then! – I have said it often enough – and, if you wish to fan men's hatred of me, your enemy[8] as you call me, go straight into exile. It will be hard for me to bear men's criticism, if you do that; hard to sustain the burden of that hostility, if you go into exile at the consul's command. If, however, you prefer to do my good name and my reputation a service, depart with that reckless gang of criminals and take yourself off to Manlius, gather to your cause the citizens who have abandoned all hope, separate yourself from loyal men, wage war upon your native land, revel in the banditry of traitors; for then men will think not that I drove you into the arms of men unlike yourself, but that I invited you to join your own kind. (§23)

Not only is the existence of the camps – and one reason for Cicero's fervor – thus kept constantly before the Senate, but also the camps serve a variety of symbolic functions: predicted to have existed by Cicero, they vouch for his acuity and guarantee his accuracy; commanded by a trusted lieutenant, they symbolize Catiline's organization; yearning for Catiline, they exemplify his dangerous attraction; represented as Catiline's intended goal, the camps deflect and suspend the question of whether Cicero is guilty of an expulsion and justify the argument (treated further below) that Catiline must not be killed but allowed to leave and take his ilk with him. Recall that the connection of Catiline to Manlius' camp was not absolutely certain. But the

use of the camps to support such varied but interconnected arguments makes the connection seem ineluctable. Facts and denunciations become mutually reinforcing. How much weaker Cicero's case would have been if he had even once nuanced his presentation: "It seems very likely, given the available evidence, that Catiline is to occupy a leadership position among the discontented veterans of Etruria." "Very likely" indeed!

To summarize, the grand style assists Cicero in creating a space in which Catiline's departure can be imagined acceptably, setting a frame for the contemplation of that departure, and supplying a set of ostensible facts that justify contemplating his departure, even as these facts reinforce the details of the frame. Thus Cicero has solved a problem of *topic*: he has *reclaimed* the objective of expelling Catiline – but as a moral and patriotic desiderandum, if not a legal possibility (though Cicero is anxious to have precedent, too, on his side). That is perhaps the most crucial rhetorical maneuver of the whole speech. Henry Hyde's speech to the Senate advocating Bill Clinton's conviction is broadly comparable: opening with a paean to the rule of law, it took not a narrow, technical view of the law but a broad, historical, civic view.

The style of the speech also contributes significantly to solving problems of Cicero's *ethos.* The continual recollection and contextualization of the facts of the case is part of that solution: Cicero thereby implies that he is not attacking to pursue personal rivalry (a perfectly acceptable motive for criminal prosecution) or gain electoral advantage. More important, inasmuch as the grand style allows Cicero to make Catiline himself the topic, Cicero has created the opportunity to forge a countervailing *ethos* for himself. This he does by the same modulations we have observed. The most important of these modulations is Cicero's conversion of his outrage at Catiline's plans into a display his own patriotic vision in the *conformatio* interpreted below. Here let us consider another example, sections 5–6 of the speech. There Cicero sharply accuses himself of "inaction" and "negligence." He immediately proceeds to describe the camps in Etruria, concomitantly labeling Catiline a public enemy (no. 14), this presumably (Cicero does not tell us in so many words) to set his alleged "inaction" into relief. Without saying overtly that Catiline can thus be executed with impunity, instead Cicero turns abruptly to his refusal to do so until Catiline's followers leave with him. Until then, says Cicero, Catiline will have to live hemmed in by such informants as have revealed to Cicero the extent of Catiline's plans, with which Cicero then confronts Catiline (no. 8).

Beginning from Cicero's alleged "inaction" we find ourselves come, almost insensibly, to his diligent attention. The facts that Cicero's diligence has revealed justify the self-accusation of "inaction" – but only because we are induced by that very self-accusation to expect that the facts are serious. Cicero has thus performed a very neat trick: the lack of events in the city that some senators felt may have shown that Cicero's accusations against Catiline were weak has been converted into a symbol both of the gravity of Catiline's plans and of Cicero's diligent care. Likewise Cicero's ostensible inaction – he is not actually *doing* anything, like arresting Catiline or calling for a vote – is *proof* of his attentive management. The absence of action has

been reclassified not as inaction but as action-in-waiting. If Cicero makes Catiline a dragon, he also makes himself, if not yet a dragon-slayer, then a knight fully equipped and fully alert.

Rhetorical Solutions (3): The Figures of the Grand Style

Thus far we have only investigated the general effects of style. Here we may return to the figures of speech and thought enumerated above only as tokens of a particular register of speech but not examined for their effects in context. These verbal gestures would probably not have been impressive *per se*. Educated Romans, perfectly familiar with such devices, would have thus attended not to their mere use but to their *specific applications.* And here, within the general frames already discussed, Cicero's stylistic control does some of its most important work: Cicero uses the most dramatic and striking figures of the speech to focus attention on its central issues.

Some of the figures encapsulate critical points we have already seen. The *geminationes* (nos. 5 and 6) and *homoioteleuta* (nos. 10 and 11) are not used randomly, merely to decorate some bit of the speech. Rather, each figure focuses on a particular point. The *homoioteleuta* both describe Catiline's actual actions; the *geminationes* both apply to Cicero's failure to have acted. These two figures thus encapsulate perfectly the picture of Cicero's *ethos* developed at the end of the last section. Cicero is, indeed, not acting – but his apparent inaction is meaningful only because there are perfect grounds to act, namely Catiline's plans. Those plans, in turn, as we have seen, are painted by Cicero as the outcome of Catiline's flawed character. And that character is the topic of two of the three *congeries* (nos. 5 and 13). The second *congeries* is fitted with another special mark of the grand style, bold metaphors: Catiline is likened to a slave, branded and carrying a torch like slaves who served as escorts at night. If we suppose that *ceteris paribus* the most vivid figures were the most memorable, these three figures will have foregrounded critical points of the speech. It is not always true of Cicero that the most obvious figures express main points; but they are, I venture to say, always one indication of which details of the argument Cicero wished to foreground, and it is no accident that certain figures occur where they do in our speech.

There is one more instance each of *geminatio* (italicized) and *congeries* (bold-faced) in the same passage:

18. You do not have the effrontery to deny it, do you? Why are you silent then? If you deny it, I shall prove it. In fact, I see some of those who were with you here in the Senate. In heaven's name! **Where in the world are we? What kind of State do we have? What city are we living in?** *Here, here,* gentlemen, in our very midst, in this, the most sacred and important council in the world, there are men whose plans extend beyond the death of us all and the destruction of this city to that of the whole world. As consul, I see these men and call for their views upon affairs of state, and as yet I am not even wounding with my tongue men who ought to be butchered with the sword! (§§8–9)

Here Cicero broadens his attack to include Catiline's co-conspirators directly – a very rare tactic in this speech (otherwise only in no. 19, below). Stressing that Catiline's appeal extends into the Senate itself, an offense made to appear all the worse by a dramatic description of the Senate as the most important deliberative body on earth, is an *a fortiori* justification for a central element of Cicero's posture of restraint: his view that Catiline cannot be killed until he takes his supporters with him (cf. §§10, 12, 13). The argument culminates in the extended metaphor in §31, where Catiline's departure without his followers is likened to a draught of cold water given to a fevered man: temporary relief that in the end only worsens the disease. It is easy to dismiss this argument as simply putting the best face on Cicero's unwillingness or inability to take harsh action against Catiline; but note that the argument is only made after Cicero has stressed, in the vivid passage we are considering, that Catiline's support comes also from *within* the Senate. Cicero's subsequent objurgations of Catiline's supporters must have continued to suggest the enemy within, not just the walls of Rome, but the very walls of Jupiter's temple. In short, a particularly vivid passage stresses the depth – or, as it were, height – of Catiline's support, providing justification for a critical argument which, in its turn, augments Cicero's picture of himself as, not acting, but waiting and watching. (Cicero returns to that very nexus of ideas just before his peroration (§30); there the element of waiting has morphed into Cicero's certitude that Catiline will make for Manlius' camp presently.)

The grandest set pieces in the speech, the two *conformationes*, also reflect and focus central points of the speech. If one of Cicero's objectives is to push the senators into their consciences and to encourage them to switch frames of reference to the moral from the narrowly political, a *conformatio* in which the state speaks is the perfect figure to complement that task: the figure, far from simple puppetry, implicitly asks hearers to subject their own attitudes to the scrutiny of an authoritative outside party. Even if the figure struck some of Cicero's hearers as trite or maudlin, the figure still suggests the value of large perspectives beyond quotidian or habitual frames of reference. Comparable is a rhetorical flourish like, "And what would Abraham Lincoln say if he saw that his bold act emancipated bodies but could not emancipate hearts, so that a new slavery of the soul has overtaken white and black alike?" Maudlin enough, perhaps, but also, to my ear anyway, not without poignancy. The particular argument the *patria* makes also closely parallels a tactic of Cicero's. The *patria* asserts that even if Catiline is not really guilty of plotting insurrection, still he ought to leave and thus relieve her of the anxiety he causes: that is the exact parallel of Cicero's tactic of transcending mere issues of legal propriety and framing the issue of Catiline's departure in larger, moral terms. The *patria* and Cicero both, it may be said, are like insurance agents rather than lawyers: they think in terms of stewardship and probability, rather than partisan defense and narrow proof.

Above and beyond augmenting some of Cicero's central arguments, the *conformationes* also perfectly encapsulate Cicero's solution to one of the most difficult rhetorical problems of the speech, that of Cicero's *ethos*. In addressing Cicero the *patria* takes a very hard line against Catiline, making him out as a traitor by labeling him a "leader

in war" and a "recruiter of slaves and society's outcasts" (see no. 8). She goes on to reject reasons for not executing Catiline, briefly dismissing objections on grounds of custom or law before turning to future resentment:

> 19. Or do you fear the hatred of posterity? Fine thanks indeed you are giving to the Roman people who have raised you so quickly through all the steps of office to the supreme power, when you were a man known only through your own efforts and without any backing from your ancestors! Fine thanks if you neglect the safety of your fellow citizens because you are afraid of unpopularity or any danger to yourself! If you are afraid of unpopularity, surely the unpopularity caused by severity and resoluteness is not to be feared any more than that caused by sloth and negligence. Or when Italy is laid waste by war, when her cities are destroyed, her dwellings in flames, do you not think that then you will be consumed by a blaze of unpopularity? (§§27–9)

Here the same state that had expressed doubts about Catiline's culpability and almost begged him for mercy (no. 9) exhibits no such doubts and encourages Cicero to the sternest measures. That contradiction can hardly have been missed by Cicero's listeners and is meant to focus the issue of Cicero's *ethos.* Lacking certain information, discounting invective, and having been roused or inconvenienced for, hitherto, little reason, some senators will have been inclined to judge the situation before them by character, which largely meant, by social class; and there Cicero was at a disadvantage. Cicero's solution is to acknowledge and reconfigure the difference between him and Catiline by way of these *conformationes*. The state draws special attention to Cicero's status as a *novus homo*, calling him "a man known only through [his] own efforts and without any backing from [his] ancestors" (no. 19). Cicero need not have had the state refer pointedly to his own origins; she might, for example, simply have urged him on as consul, whose duty it was to protect her. The *patria* makes no such reference to Catiline's origins – but she does depict his rank:

> 20. For some years now you have been behind every crime, involved in every scandal. No one but you has killed a host of citizens and oppressed and plundered the allies unpunished and scot-free. Not only have you been able to ignore the laws and law courts but you have been able to overturn and shatter them. (§18)

Alluding to Catiline's participation in the Sullan proscriptions, his misgovernment in Africa, and his escapes from conviction, the *patria* has not described social class in any strict sense, but she has assigned Catiline to that part of the oligarchy which abused its powers for enrichment. Catiline was not uniquely aberrant. Cicero's general avoidance of that issue and his delicacy in broaching and pursuing the idea of Catiline's departure is exactly paralleled by the *patria*'s pleading stance; but against that endemic corruption stands Cicero, who in effect offers himself as an alternative. His own status as a *novus homo* gives Cicero a kind of excuse for the patriotism and sincerity he had to that point displayed in the speech and would display signally in the conclusion (on which more below). Whether Cicero was that patriotic and sincere

is another question; what is certain is that he exploits the perception of a *novus homo* as a sincere defender of the highest ideals of the Roman state. The *conformationes*, in short, focus the difference between Cicero and Catiline as that between a *novus homo* and, not an aristocrat *per se*, but that kind of corrupt aristocrat against whom, in the person of Verres, Cicero had once crusaded. That contrast might in certain circumstances have been easy to dismiss; but embedded in a speech which continually reaches beyond the narrowest considerations of politics and law to larger issues of morality, the contrast becomes, not a dismissible vaunt, but a kind of inevitable clash between worldviews.

The speech closes with a prayer to Jupiter, dense with the contrastive or complementary pairs typical of Italic prayer language (italicized) and studded with dramatic words:

> 21. Thou, Jupiter, whom Romulus established with the same auspices as this city, whom we justly call the Bulwark of this *city and empire*, wilt stave off him and his confederates from thy temple and those of the other gods, from the *houses and walls* of the city, from the *lives and fortunes* of all her citizens; and upon these men, the foes of loyal citizens, public enemies of their native land, plunderers of Italy, men who are joined together in an evil alliance and companionship of crime – upon these men, *alive or dead*, wilt thou visit eternal punishments. (§33)[9]

At the outset of the speech, I venture to say, such a prayer would have seemed grandstanding or cloying; Cicero's earlier mention of the gods is more in keeping with ordinary grand style rather than the formal language of prayer:

> 22. We owe a heavy debt of gratitude to the immortal gods and not least to Jupiter Stator, the most venerable guardian of this city, in whose temple we are today, because so often in the past have we escaped this pestilence, so foul, so loathsome, so deadly to the Republic. (§11)

But by speech's end, Cicero was evidently confident enough he had elevated the discussion to the moral plane that he could invoke directly the patron god of the temple in which he had convened the Senate – and inscribe onto that god the promise of future action (*arcebis, mactabis*) that parallels his own *diligentia*. Cicero was right to be confident: if Sallust is to be believed, Catiline attempted a reply in a humble posture, concomitantly impugning Cicero's origins, but was hounded out of the Senate with cries of *hostis! parricida!* "Enemy! Murderer!" He did hasten to Manlius' camp and was eventually forced to lead those forces into battle. He died fighting in the front ranks, courageous in an illegal war – a contradiction to the end.

The scheme with which we began has, I dare to hope, proven useful in focusing the problems that Cicero faced and the solutions he devised. Orators always adapt the hierarchy of values in their own society to their particular rhetorical ends; for Roman orators that meant selecting not only which values to foreground but also the tone of voice, and the concomitant formal structures in which to do the foregrounding. To dispel hesitations born of doubt and reluctance grounded in legalism or clannishness,

and to set a frame of reference that brings certitude even as it avoids calling for specific acts, Cicero associates Catiline with *audacia* and himself with a quiet kind of courage. Those acts of association he performs by deploying, from among the numerous rhetorical devices borrowed from the Greeks and naturalized for Latin by the efforts of previous generations and Cicero himself, the figures of speech and the manner of the grand style speaker. "Effrontery" and "courage" would seem to be best invoked in an ardent manner, which well represents the proper response to effrontery and the firm possession of courage. The very manner thus creates the impression that both the effrontery and the courage really exist. The use of that manner and its characteristic figures, in and of itself, is unlikely to have been entirely impressive to a well-educated and, in the case of certain senators, even jaundiced audience. But their very familiarity with rhetorical style gave Cicero the means to focus them on what are to his mind the cardinal points: the importance of a broad perspective, his own justifications to act, his own determination, and Catiline's criminal wickedness.

Notes

1   The passages from Cicero's *Orator* and short passages excepted, the translations are those of Mac-Donald (1977) in the readily available Loeb Classical Library series, with minor alterations of punctuation and occasionally wording. "No." refers to example numbers within this article, § to sections (not paragraphs) in the original text. The following abbreviations are used. Works of Cicero: *Att.* = *Epistulae ad Atticum, Cael.* = *pro Caelio, Catil.* = *in Catilinam, de Orat.* = *de Oratore, Har. Resp.* = *de haruspicum responso, Mur.* = *pro Murena, Or.* = *Orator, Pis.* = *in Pisonem, Sul.* = *pro Sulla.* Other works: Aristotle *Rhet.* = Aristotle, *Rhetoric,* Ascon. = Asconius, Plut. *Cic.* = Plutarch, *Life of Cicero,* Plut. *Crass.* = Plutarch, *Life of Crassus,* Sall. *Cat.* = Sallust, *Conspiratio Catilinae.* Constraints of format allow me only to acknowledge rather than cite in detail articles helpful to me. Batstone (1994), to which I am chiefly indebted, argues that Cicero's primary objective in the speech is to create the impression of a crisis which, it turns out, he in his providence is also well in control of (an excellent point I take up below). My own argument, complementary in general thrust if not always in particular interpretive detail, differs in stressing the role of formal structures and in concentrating, beside Cicero's own *ethos,* on the *pathos* of the Senate. Konstan (1993) provides a compelling picture of Cicero's intentions and anxieties in trying to claim the ideological center in a period of social – and rhetorical – stress. Leff (1973) examines the hyperbole of Cicero's attacks on Catiline through the lens of "redemptive identification": having had visited upon him the sins of the community, which he shares with them, Catiline is cut off from them by Cicero's rhetoric, and the "survivors" of the rhetorical onslaught find themselves purged and renewed as a community – a point complementary to my own stress on switching frames of reference to the moral. Dan Sheerin and Tony Corbeill kindly reviewed drafts of this chapter. They are not to be charged with its flaws.

2   Speaking about the "greatness of the Roman people" (*maiestas populi Romani*) probably implies a trial for *maiestas minuta,* lit. "reduced greatness" = "treasonable incompetence or malfeasance."

3   The next event in Catiline's career according to two sources followed by many older historical accounts of this period, Sallust (*Cat.* 18–19) and Cicero's campaign speech of 64 BCE, *in toga candida* (Ascon. 92), was the so-called First Catilinarian Conspiracy, a plot to murder the consuls of 65 BCE. That there was a conspiracy is no longer widely believed; the slim evidence is reviewed by Gruen (1969).

4   The Senate was an advisory body composed of sitting and former magistrates, which had effective sole control of foreign policy and the budget. All legislation was customarily vetted by the Senate,

but it had neither formal legislative power nor formal judicial power. *Senatusconsulta* were statements of advice to sitting magistrates; the so-called *senatus consultum ultimum* expressed the Senate's support for expeditious action on the part of the consuls and was tantamount to the declaration of a public emergency. The populists C. Gracchus and L. Saturninus were killed after the Senate passed the *s.c.u.*, in 123 and 100 BCE respectively. But the authority of the *s.c.u.* had suffered a serious blow earlier in Cicero's consular year. C. Rabirius was prosecuted for his participation in the murder of Saturninus. Rabirius was defended by Cicero in an extant speech, *pro Rabirio perduellionis reo.* An accessible summary of the issues is contained in Appendix B to MacDonald (1977).

5　Cicero's speeches were revised for publication; it may have been as long as two and a half years before the *First Catilinarian* was published, at which point Cicero may have inserted or altered passages that better suited a later political climate. Much ingenuity has been exercised determining what belonged to a putative original speech and what was added; but as Craig (1993: 257–8), drawing on Cicero's avowed purpose in publishing speeches – to educate aspiring orators – points out, "[Cicero's] speeches only serve as exemplars to educate only insofar as they depict what he would need to say to persuade a particular listening audience in a given set of circumstances. He may publish a speech with some changes, or even a speech that he never delivered . . . but it will still represent what would work in a given set of circumstances. We must admit that we can never know verbatim what Cicero actually said. Nonetheless, the proper way to appreciate one of his speeches as oratory is precisely to treat it as a transcript."

6　Cf. no. 14, §§27, 31, 32. Among passages addressed to the Senate there is only one which is fierce and dramatic, no. 18 below.

7　Sexual excess or depravity is a frequent insult in Roman invective, where it symbolizes a lack of self-control. See Edwards (1993).

8　The Latin is *inimicus*, the word for a personal or political enemy; a military or public enemy – what Cicero calls Catiline – is a *hostis*.

9　*Moenia* seems to have a more formal or more religious quality than the commoner word *murus*. There is a kind of comparandum in the distinction between "homeland" and "nation"; it is no accident that the new Cabinet-level department in the US government is concerned with Homeland Security and not National Security. "Stave off" represents *arcebis* "keep away, keep separate, protect from," which Cicero uses especially in connection with enemy forces. "Ward off" might also render the sense. "Visit with [punishment]" represents *mactabis*, "punish; kill," which is also the technical word for sacrificing a victim.

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A Conversational Opener: The Rhetorical Paradigm of John 1:1

Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle

In the beginning there was speech, in that very beginning when God created the world. And everything God made, he made by speaking.

Then in March 1519 the humanist theologian Erasmus of Rotterdam published this paradigm in his revision of the first edition of the Greek New Testament with a Latin translation.[1] An eager admirer hailed it as humanism's passport to the world: "Our victory depends on this, a prize of so many debates, of such labour, an ovation and a triumph."[2] But even as his supporters praised him, his enemies rallied. Erasmus' detractors seized one word to crystallize ecclesiastical opposition, to maneuver the civic power of England, to rouse the populace to a stoning mood. That rallying cry, which stirred London, Brussels, and Paris, was *sermo*. For in his new translation of the Vulgate prologue, Erasmus had dared to correct the rendition, "In principio erat verbum," to "In principio erat sermo." Because of some "superstitious dread" he did not take the translator's license to alter *verbum* in the first edition, "lest we give opportunity to those who misrepresent any and every occasion."[3] But friends had persuaded him to be bolder in correcting the Vulgate, and to support his corrections with fuller citations from the Fathers.[4]

The charges the inflamed scholastics leveled against him were that he had altered the traditional ecclesiastical reading and condemned the evangelist by correcting him.[5] Angered by their intellectual impudence, and alarmed by their political sedition,[6] Erasmus was pressured into a "few words" of response. His humanist convictions about the colloquial nature of scholarship equally demanded his reply. The *Apologia refellens quorundum seditiosos clamores apud populum qui velut impium insectabantur quod verterit, In principio erat sermo* issued from Dirk Martens' press at Louvain in a quarto edition near the end of February 1520. An augmented version, almost tripled in length, was printed by Froben in August.[7] The defense included a characteristic grumble that his detractors obviously had not read his annotation of John 1:2 in the second edition, where he had already stated his grammatical reasons and the authoritative support of the Fathers.[8]

The argumentation of the apology is flanked by artful description of the conspiracy against him, written with outrage that his reputation should be maligned before the ignorant, easily scandalized, populace.[9] As for curing the intellectual impudence of his challengers, Erasmus marshals two arguments in defense of *sermo*: a bold transformation of the new philology into theological method and a submissive appeal to Christian tradition. Together they undergird his renaissance of theological letters; the one, by innovating a radical textual method, the other by restoring an ancient hermeneutic, overshadowed by late scholastic preoccupations. Their creative tension would mark him a Janus in the history of theological methodology.

Erasmus tersely advances his grammatical reasons for *sermo*. Sarcastically, he informs his critics, who scarcely know that John did not compose the gospel in Latin, that the evangelist in fact wrote *logos*, not *verbum*.[10] The Greek noun *logos* is polysemous, he explains, signifying in Latin: *sermo, verbum, oratio, ratio, sapientia*, and *computus*.[11] Erasmus reports that Jerome himself thought that all of these applied to Christ. As for himself, he wonders why Jerome selected *verbum*.[12] The distinctive usage of *sermo* and *verbum* by classical authors substantiates Erasmus' preference for *sermo*. The noun *verbum* signifies a word or a brief saying, such as a proverb or maxim;[13] it is also frequently used to designate a definite part of speech, the verb, *rhema*. Its restricted application, therefore, does not satisfy the denotation of *logos* as speech rather than word. In order to approximate the meaning of *logos*, Erasmus explains, the noun *verbum* must be pluralized, as in the expressions *verba facere* and *multis verbis mecum egit*.[14] (Surely it would be misleading to translate "In principio fecit verba," occasioning wild confusion about the number of sons the Father engendered!) Erasmus states his grammatical case: Latin authors more correctly, more aptly, and more customarily express *logos* as *sermo* than as *verbum*. Six times he forwards this: "Certainly it cannot be denied that the Greek word *logos*, which indisputably the evangelist has used, more correctly and more customarily is expressed by Latin speakers through the noun *sermo* than through *verbum*."[15] "...the Greek noun *logos*, which the evangelist has used, is more correctly expressed by the word *sermo*."[16] "...*sermo* more correctly and more aptly than many nouns expresses the Greek noun than *verbum*."[17] "...the word *sermo* is more perfect than many nouns, and even pleasanter, since it expresses the Greek noun *logos* more correctly."[18] "...but indeed the word *sermo* more aptly expresses the Greek noun *logos*, which the evangelist has used."[19] "...*sermo* more perfectly explains why the evangelist put *logos*."[20]

The grammar of *logos*, which means speech, and its rhetorical forum establish Erasmus' theological methodology. For Erasmus, Christian theology (*Theos legein*) must imitate Christ (*ho Logos*). And Erasmus' grammatical analysis of the New Testament presupposes that this *Logos* has subjected himself not only to the laws of flesh, but of grammar also. A sentence in an annotation supplies the clue for investigation. In the note on John 1:2 Erasmus explains, "First, *sermo* more perfectly explains why the evangelist wrote *logos*, because among Latin speakers *verbum* does not express speech as a whole, but one particular saying." Then follows the theological reason that discredits the translation: "But Christ is for this reason called *logos*, because

whatsoever the Father speaks, he speaks through the Son."[21] Because the *Logos* is the copious discourse of the Father, the sufficient revealing *oration*, *verbum* is inadequate to designate him. Erasmus cleverly shifts the ground of debate from orthodoxy to grammar, and then from grammar to new mediation with the orthodox claim that Christ is God's full revelation.

Such grammatical points are "trifling," Erasmus admits lightly to his readers, but "nevertheless, as much as you please, a trifling swing to and fro sets the matter in motion, when otherwise it is in equilibrium."[22] As every humanist who had been schooled by Erasmus' texts knew, the affair in equilibrium was Christian piety, deadened by scholasticism. Erasmus' supporters would have known that the grammatical points were far from "trifling," but rather a propulsion towards humanist theology. And if Erasmus interrupted his editing to defend a single word, and defend it so forcibly, then all had better perceive the conviction shielded by that playful word "trifle." For hadn't he explained in correspondence the usefulness of his trifles, approved so enthusiastically by the most serious theologians? And hadn't he confessed his own intellectual pleasure was "to mix serious topics with my trifles than to show myself a trifler on great topics"[23] as did the scholastics? The schoolmen, he had also observed, think it beneath them to descend to the minute details of grammar. The name of grammarian is no reproach, he rejoined, nor does it credit a theologian not to know grammar. While "mere knowledge of grammar does not make a theologian; still less does ignorance of it; and certainly some scholarship conduces to a knowledge of theology, while the want of it impedes such knowledge."[24]

In both the *Annotationum* in *Evangelium Joannis* and the *Apologia de "In principio erat sermo,"* the grammatical defense is presented first. But in the *Apologia* it is weighted by protracted appeal to the authority of orthodox doctors, who also interpreted Christ as *sermo*. This shift in emphasis was necessitated, no doubt, by allegations of heresy. These forced Erasmus to align himself more assertively with the tradition of the Church by refuting the charge of novelty.[25] Any brandishing of his skill as a philologist would only have angered the scholastics more, uncomprehending and hostile as they already were to the cause of good letters. Better to score in this forensic contest by quoting Thomas Aquinas in their faces.

Erasmus repeats that there is "no difference" between *sermo* and *verbum*.[26] This cannot be a sudden denial of his demonstration of the lexical differences between the two words. What he means is that there is no difference for orthodoxy whether one expresses Christ as *sermo* or *verbum*, since the Fathers use them interchangeably. The Church has not pronounced. Therefore, the issue is not orthodoxy as the scholastics suppose, but grammar in the service of eloquence: the correct and appropriate word.

Since the Church has not pronounced, the translation is not a matter for consensus, but one that allows variety. In the annotation of John 1:2 Erasmus had stated, "My design lies in this: where variety is greater, more benefit proceeds."[27] In his textbook on composition, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*, Erasmus had already instructed his schoolboy readers in the art of varying language by synonymy. Copious language is a "divine excellence." "There is nothing more admirable or more splendid than a speech

with a rich *copia* of thoughts and words overflowing in a golden stream," he had instructed. Nature itself rejoices in variety. People more eagerly examine what is polished new by the art of copiousness. Without the variety of Proteus, the whole profit of speech is lost upon a bored audience.[28] Why, then, should the Church, the community of divine oratory, weary men with homologous language? Copiousness is a sign of an eloquent Church.

Synonymy is the first and simplest method of copia.[29] Surely the Fathers displayed wisdom in commanding a variety of Latin synonyms for *logos*. Because God is designated *pater* does not exclude for Erasmus his being called *parens*, or *genitor*, or *sator*. The designation of the Second Person as *filius* does not eliminate *natus*, *proles*, *germen*, or *progenies*.[30] A set of variables may properly substitute for one another. But however semantically alike two words may be, they must differ in some respect so that *omnes mortales*, for example, may not be substituted indiscriminately for *omnes homines*. Some words may be more becoming, more exalted, more polished, more humorous, more emphatic, more sonorous, more suitable for composition than others. Therefore, Erasmus instructs, "discrimination should be exercised by one who is going to speak, so that from all, he chooses the best words."[31]

Verbum and *sermo* may both be orthodox, for the Church has not designated any Latin translation of *logos* singularly correct, but *sermo* is the choicer word. This is the intention of Erasmus' defense, although it may have been wasted on the scholastics, trained in silly medieval grammars like the *Catholicon* and *Mammotrectus* he loathed.[32] This argument that *sermo* is a copious alternative does not conflict with the argument that *sermo* is more correct than *verbum*. The two relate to different issues: the first to the ecclesiastical legitimacy of alternate translation, the second to the grammatical correctness of a particular translation. Variety by synonymy is Erasmus' response to the challenge of orthodoxy, a justification both theological and rhetorical against the scandal that he had dared to dispute the Vulgate. The apology for the superiority of *sermo* addresses a different question: once the principle of variety has been established, how best to render the text. That is the grammarian's lot.

Erasmus enlarges these arguments with two others. Surely, he persuades, the gender of *sermo* (male), which agrees with Christ, commends itself more than the neuter noun *verbum*.[33] He adds the rhetorical consideration that *sermo* is a softer sound than *verbum*.[34] These composite arguments sufficiently justify his translation, he states, without any appeal whatever to Christian tradition, "even if nowhere until this time has the Son of God been called *sermo*." His defense of the right to translate is emphatic: "I think that this was without a doubt free for me to do."[35] This declaration is modestly intended, however. His decision to correct both the Vulgate translation and his own of 1516 does not negate his respect for the Church's authority. *Sermo* is not in his judgment a doctrinal issue, but a grammatical one. It is the province of transla-tors, not of bishops. Yet Erasmus is cautious to conciliate his translation with the popular authority that the Vulgate had accrued from sustained usage. In particu-lar, he needed to circumvent the opinion of those university theologians who declared the Vulgate inviolable, sanctioned by protracted reading in council and liturgy. Five

times in his apology and at the beginning of his annotations on the Gospel of John also he reiterates that he only intended the translation for private reading in chambers.[36] He disclaims any intention to rival the publicly read version of the text.[37] His translation remains without official status, although he reminds his readers that it has the full approval of the supreme pontiff.[38] While it is naive to assume that Erasmus entertained no hopes that his edition would supplant the Vulgate – his humanist reform aimed to produce purer texts for the Church – still he respected consensus.[39] "It is not my right, nor that of others like me, to overthrow what has been received by public use."[40] His own pronouncement of his edition's superiority could never make it so for the Church. He would wait for just recognition.

Happily Erasmus found ample theological support for his independent grammatical judgment. He parades a precedence of texts – biblical, patristic, and medieval – to the embarrassment of scholasticism and the glory of good letters. In Erasmus' apology for *sermo* the arguments from classical grammar and from theological literature converge. The appeal to grammar is not to a normative semantics, logically legislated by dialecticians in search of pure meaning, but to the usage of Latin-speaking people, what Latin authors wrote. Grammar is a form of tradition. The appeal may extend retrospectively to ancient civilization, but nevertheless that civilization refreshed the conversation of Renaissance people with a dialogue established in texts. In Petrarch's sentiment, "They live and dwell together with us in conversation."[41] As early as 1511 Erasmus had written in *De ratione studii* that linguistic skill was not to be acquired by learning normative grammar, but "by intimate colloquy with men speaking in a trained manner and by the assiduous reading of eloquent authors."[42] Erasmus' recourse to the translation *sermo* in the Fathers is not to revealed doctrine, but to their own grammatical usage, their distinctive transformation of the vernacular into speech about God: theology.

The patristic texts are not merely offered as witness to the tradition of *sermo*. Erasmus underscores his challengers' ignorance of this treasury of the Fathers.[43] The humanist triumphs not only by his acute knowledge of Greek and Latin grammar, but also by his superior command of texts, the texts of Christian tradition. Erasmus simply has more texts than his opponents, a polemical weapon characteristic of his method in theology. His challengers have but one text. At least a statement of Augustine's is the only authority the preacher Henry Standish summons, while the Carmelite friar is foolish enough to suppose that the evangelist himself wrote the Latin word *verbum*.[44]

This feeble appeal to one text, a caricature of scholastic method, Erasmus disarms neatly. Standish had reminded his congregation that, although Augustine demonstrated that the Greek word *logos* signifies in Latin both *verbum* and *ratio*, the noun *verbum* better pleased the holy doctor for designating the Second Person in the disputed passage. The little Greek mimics have not understood Augustine's reasons, Standish alleged, and yet they have dared to contaminate scripture with *sermo*.[45] In his retort Erasmus does not trouble to discuss Augustine's theological arguments, but merely points out that Augustine deals with *verbum* and *ratio*, not *verbum* and *sermo*.

Therefore, he concludes, the text "applies not at all to me, since I interchange *sermo* with *verbum*, not *ratio*; and thus I prefer *sermo*, as I do not reject *verbum*."[46] Erasmus may be indebted for this defense to his lawyer and humanist friend, Thomas More, who advocated the same argument to Standish at a court banquet. When Standish stubbornly declared himself content with Augustine's choice, and uninterested in other authorities, More concurred about the unsuitability of *ratio* for the *Logos*. "But what does that have to do with *sermo*?" More queried deftly, "because Erasmus has not translated, 'In principio erat ratio,' but 'In principio erat sermo.'"[47]

Not only does Erasmus the humanist command more texts than the scholastics, but also he consults the best patristic editions, some of which he himself has learnedly composed.[48] Textual purity becomes a cardinal issue of the emerging humanism in theology. Thus in forwarding his first witness for the defense of *sermo*, Cyprian, Erasmus anticipates his detractors' counter-attack that he forged the passage when he edited Cyprian's works.[49] Erasmus suggests that to allay suspicion his contenders consult the ancient manuscript codices as well as other editions of Cyprian.[50] Cautiously he adds his awareness that in several codices *verbum* has been written for *sermo* in the relevant passages. This certainly was the fault of the copyist who relied on memory, he decides. He argues that unless *sermo* is read consistently the demonstration will not correspond to the promise of its title, "That Christ is indeed the *sermo* of the Father." And the titles are not later additions, but mixed with the argumentation in the old codices; moreover, Cyprian himself acknowledges the titles elsewhere. Finally, Erasmus deduces, "Cyprian either read, 'In principio erat sermo,' or thought there was no difference at all, in sum, between *verbum* and *sermo*."[51]

This establishment of the authenticity of the text, a philological procedure the scholastics resisted adopting, serves as an exemplar of method. Erasmus assumes the role of pedagogue to his detractors, not only by asserting a superior knowledge of Christian tradition, but more especially by demonstrating how a theologian ought to proceed. For the historical impact of waning scholasticism and emerging humanism was methodological, and only subsequently involved doctrinal dispute. Even a treatise like this *Apologia* for *sermo*, which is not professed to be methodological, should not be read as mere defense of a translation. Erasmus is always holding school. The apology for *sermo* demonstrates the mastery through grammar of the texts that comprise Christian tradition. That this is deliberate pedagogy is evident from Erasmus' juxtaposed caricature of scholastic method: one poor text and a silly syllogism.

Beginning with Cyprian, then, Erasmus proceeds windily to establish that Christ is called *sermo* in the canonical books; in daily Church usage; and in the writings of orthodox doctors, both ancient and more recent. This litany of approbation is sung several times.[52] The demonstration that Christ is called *sermo* in the canonical books coincides with the demonstration from the Fathers, since they alone testify to the existence of no longer extant translations of the New Testament. The eloquent martyr Cyprian writes, "In principio fuit sermo, et sermo erat apud Deum, et Deus erat sermo."[53] Erasmus triumphs, "Behold! they have the very passage about which they set in motion such tragedy; they have an author so ancient, by all standards so

approved by the most acceptable persons, that no one may condemn him."[54] For measure, Erasmus submits three more psalm verses and a passage from the Book of Revelation, in all of which Cyprian thinks that the noun *sermo* refers to Christ.[55] Like Erasmus, modern scholars consider Cyprian a capital source of the Old Latin Bible, not only because of his antiquity, but also because he cites almost one-ninth of the New Testament.[56]

If this testimony should not satisfy the opposition, Erasmus advises them to consult Tertullian, whose witness is unquestionably impartial. Referring to the disputed verse, Tertullian stated that the custom of the Latin people was to read "In principio erat sermo," although he himself preferred *ratio* to *sermo*.[57] He also wrote "quia et sermo caro factus" and applied one of the *sermo* psalms to Christ.[58] Erasmus next quotes the very Augustine upon whom Standish leans. Explaining John 17:18, "Thy *sermo* is truth," Augustine mentions that the Greek gospel has *logos*, which word also occurs in John 1:1. While the Greek always has *logos*, he continues, the Latin codices vary between *verbum* and *sermo*. While some versions have "In principio erat verbum" and "Verbum tuum veritas est," others have "In principio erat sermo" and "Sermo tuus veritas est." But without discrimination, Augustine decides, this is God's Word, his only-begotten.[59] This is the witness of Augustine. Erasmus concludes that there were approved manuscripts with *sermo* in the Johannine prologue, and that his correction of the Vulgate is therefore consistent with the ancient faith.[60] Other passages in which Augustine applies *sermo* to Christ in the Gospel of John, in the psalms, and in the Pauline corpus corroborate this.[61] So do the writings of the ancient doctors Hilary,[62] Ambrose,[63] Jerome,[64] Lactantius,[65] and Prudentius,[66] he argues, as do those of the medieval scholastics Anselm[67] and Remigius.[68]

In case his challengers should be tempted to dismiss patristic witnesses because of their antiquity,[69] Erasmus presents the invincible ones: Aquinas, Hugh of St. Cher, Nicolas of Lyra, Anselm of Laon, Anselm of Canterbury, and Remigius. First, Thomas: interpreting Hebrews 4:12, "For the *sermo* of God is living and active," he refers *sermo* to the Son of God. Erasmus cites his very words so the schoolmen cannot escape: "Considered in itself, that word seems to present a difficulty, but if we consider another translation, the meaning is plainer. For where we have *sermo*, in Greek it is *logos*, which is the same as verbum; whence *sermo*, i.e., *verbum*."[70] If Thomas appealed to the Greek text for clarification, Erasmus' contemporaries had long forgotten the ways of their angelic doctor; they would not have known Greek from Latin even if they had the manuscripts to consult. Erasmus also forwards other Thomistic interpretations that clarify that *sermo* and verbum may refer interchangeably to Christ.[71]

Nicolas of Lyra agrees,[72] Hugh of St. Cher concurs,[73] the interlinear Gloss interprets the same verse of Christ.[74] But weightiest of all is the testimony of the ordinary Gloss, "which has the most authority by the common consensus of theologians."[75] Commenting on Hebrews 4:12 and on Wisdom 16:12, its author interprets the word *sermo* as the Son of God.[76] Neither can Anselm of Canterbury's testimony be dismissed, Erasmus decides. Explaining the disputed verse in John 1:1, he not only

terms the Son of God *sermo*, but also *dictio* and *locutio*.[77] He corroborates Augustine's interpretation of John 17:18 as well.[78] Remigius, too, identifies *sermo* as Christ in his exegesis of Hebrews 4:12.[79] Nor does Erasmus doubt that, if he had the time, he could unearth "innumerable examples" by which the medieval doctors called Christ the *sermo* of the Father.[80]

Not only are his opponents deaf to these orthodox writers, they are deaf at daily choir.[81] Erasmus' appeal to ancient manuscripts is capped by his appeal to the living text; that is, scripture daily recited and received by the Church. "Thus today the Church sings" completes "thus have ancient orthodox men spoken."[82] The noun *sermo* is repeated of Christ in daily office and recited in the schools, "so that the word may be seen very frequently,"[83] he reminds his readers. As proof Erasmus summons medieval commentary on Wisdom 16:12 and 18:15. Thomas Aquinas accepts Augustine's interpretation of the omnipotent *sermo* of God (Wisdom 18:15) as Christ;[84] so do Nicolas of Lyra,[85] Hugh of St. Cher,[86] and the author of the interlinear Gloss.[87] That *sermo* in Wisdom 16:12 also applies to Christ is stated by Hugh of St. Cher[88] and the interlinear Gloss.[89] If he is condemned for blasphemy, Erasmus judges, then "either before me, or with me, it is necessary that they damn so many extraordinary princes of the Church, Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Hilary, Prudentius, Lactantius, and with these, Thomas, Lyra, Hugh, the ordinary Gloss, *yes indeed the whole Church*."[90]

This catalogue of the tradition serves also as background for Erasmus' refutation of a scholastic syllogism that had been constructed against his translation *sermo*. The intelligibility of this section of the *Apologia de "In principio erat sermo"* is strained, however, by the haste of its composition. Citations run together pell-mell, and almost elliptical commentary forces the reader to supply the lacunae in his argument.

Erasmus lampoons the Scotist[91] who attempts to refute his translation, not with grammar or text, but with a silly syllogism. Erasmus reports it:

> *Verbum* is a tacit concept,
> but if Christ is rightly called *sermo*,
> it follows that *sermo* is also a tacit concept,

which he wished to make appear outrageously absurd, "since *sermo*," as he says, "is a concept expressed vocally." "This," Erasmus draws the reader aside, "is the syllogism of an exceptional theologian, among the first, not only according to many others, but also in his own judgment . . . What if," Erasmus speculates, "they who undertake by sophistic arguments to teach that Christ is correctly called *verbum*, incorrectly *sermo*, prove nothing other than that so many exceptional princes of the Church blasphemed?" To the argument that Christ is incorrectly called *sermo* because he is correctly called *verbum*, Erasmus inquires whether it follows that Christ is falsely called "light" or "truth" because he is truly called "word."[92]

He reminds his adversary of the inadequacy of language, which leads dull humans to reflection on God. "No human nouns express divine affairs in a proper sense," he

instructs. Expressing a theory of proportion, he writes: "Several things are attributed to single things as if proper, which however are not proper to the true thing; but nevertheless, those are predicated more aptly concerning others according to the human mind's power of comprehension. We do it as often as it is necessary that we make full use of human words." He schools the Scotist that the Son of God is neither a tacit concept nor a vocal expression. What the philosopher understands as a tacit concept of the soul is the Son abiding in the Father and one with him in essence. What the philosopher considers the sense of the soul as revealed by speech (*sermo*) is the Son always born from the Father and distinguished from him by property of person.[93] For Erasmus, then, the terms express different aspects of the Son, but not different realities. His argument with Augustine, in whose camp he evidently places the Scotist, clarifies this.

Erasmus proceeds to disprove the major term of the syllogism by demonstrating grammatically that *verbum* does not signify a tacit concept. He disagrees with Augustine's distinction between the internal *verbum* and the *verbum* that sounds externally. And he disagrees with Augustine's opinion that only the internal *verbum* was eternal, and that this became an external *verbum*, or sounding word, when the *Logos* assumed human nature.[94] Erasmus' correction of Augustine reflects Jerome's position on the unity of the eternal *sermo* and the assumed Man: "Not that the assumed man is one [person] and the *sermo* who assumed is another, but that one and the same [person] according to a variety of causes is declared now humble, now sublime."[95] "Nothing forbids," Erasmus writes,

> that the same word be uttered from the mind of the Father in various ways; he is uttered when he is begotten, the truest word, since most like the Father. He has been uttered when through that [word] the Father established the universe and by his word secured the heavens. But most solidly, and in the manner most familiar to us, he was uttered when assuming a human body, he spoke to us in human fashion.

Erasmus then offers passages from Augustine that suggest this very truth.[96]

Erasmus omits for his reader, however, the fact upon which the full intelligibility of his demonstration depends; namely, that Augustine thought that the term *verbum* more properly belongs to the internal word, of which the *verbum* sounding aloud is only the sign. "For that which is produced by the mouth of the flesh is the sound of the word, and is itself also called the word, because that inner word assumed it in order that it might appear outwardly." So wrote Augustine. For Augustine, the human analogue of the divine word is not the word sounding aloud, or even its silent forethought. It is, rather, the "word of a living being endowed by reason . . . the word of the image of God, not born of God but made by God; this word cannot be uttered in sound nor thought in the likeness of sound, such as must be done with the word of any language; it precedes all the signs by which it is signified, and is begotten by the knowledge which remains in the mind when this same knowledge is spoken inwardly, just as it is."[97] *Verbum* is the offspring of that knowledge, then, from which the

thought is truly formed and at last expressed in speech. This somewhat Platonic understanding of language, which Augustine sanctioned for theological speculation, is the theory underlying the Scotistic syllogism Erasmus attacks.

Erasmus regards the process of semantic transference to be the opposite of Augustine's attribution. *Verbum* is properly the spoken word: "*verbum* is better called what sounds than what is conceived by the soul." Further, what the soul conceives (the "tacit concept" of the syllogism) cannot be called *verbum* by attribution unless it is vocalized. Erasmus quotes Durand of Saint Pourçain in support. "It must be noted that *verbum mentis* does not have the meaning of *verbum* except insofar as it assumes the concept to be manifested." The soul's concept is only termed *verbum* because what the voice expresses is a sign of its mental condition; thinking is speaking to oneself, after a fashion. And if this condition may be called *verbum mentis*, Erasmus argues, then it also may be termed *sermo mentis*.[98]

Greek lexicology sanctions this transference, Erasmus continues, because *logos* still means *ratio*; and *logismos*, *cogitatio*; and *logizomai cogito* or *reputo*. But, he adds, the meaning of *sermo* approximates the denotation of *logos* as *ratio* better than *verbum* does. *Sermo* is derived etymologically from *serare* (to sow, beget), whence *disserare* (to speak). *Verbum*, grammarians think, originated semantically in the vibration of air, as in the sound from *boare* (to cry aloud, roar).[99] Erasmus catches "Augustine" testifying against himself by accepting the etymology of *verbum* as the *vibration* of the air or the ear.[100] By implication, then, the etymology of *verbum* does not include the thought that the word signifies, but only designates the rude physiological vibration. The major premise of the syllogism is refuted by grammar. *Verbum* is not a tacit concept, as the Scotist asserted, but like *sermo* a vocal expression. *Sermo* may apply therefore to the Son of God. If one wishes to refer to the tacit concept, the term *sermo mentis* is even preferable to *verbum mentis* because it approximates *ratio*.

And so, Erasmus concludes the argument of his apology, "there is nothing that does not work for my behalf."[101] He had striven to be inoffensive towards all, admonishing, complying, and pacifying both his learned and unlearned adversaries.[102] Had not Jerome forcefully mocked the Africans for overthrowing a bishop who recited to the populace an unusual translation of his?[103] Erasmus claims the same right to self-defense. Insisting that he has not altered the gospel any more than a man exchanging garments,[104] he now waited for his enemies to acknowledge the cause of good letters for the progress of Christian people.

A modern scholar, in command of a treasury of philological research, can only approve Erasmus' choice of *sermo* rather than *verbum* for the translation of the Johannine prologue. *Logos* means speech: a continuous statement, narrative, oration; verbal expression or utterance; a particular utterance or saying; expression, utterance, speech regarded formally. Both the New Testament and patristic literature in Greek preserve these meanings. Even in the classical lexicon, where other meanings were in ascendency, *logos* signified a phrase, complex term, sentence, or complete statement, in opposition to a discrete word (*verbum*). It was a continuous statement such as a fable,

legend, story, or speech delivered in court or assembly. Rarely meaning a single word, *logos* could never signify grammatically a vocable (*epos*, *lexis*, *onoma*, *rhema*).[105]

As Erasmus acknowledges, *oratio* is the Latin counterpart of this denotation of *logos*.[106] But its incongruity of gender prevents him from attributing that feminine noun to Christ,[107] and so Erasmus resorts to *sermo*. Of this Latin equivalent of *logos*, Varro had written: "*Sermo* 'conversation,' I think, is from *series* 'succession' . . . for *sermo* 'conversation' cannot be where one man is alone, but where his speech [*oratio*] is joined with another."[108] *Sermo* signifies a literary conversation, discourse, disputation, or discussion that is more informal and unpretending than *oratio*. *Sermo* signifies ordinary speech, speaking, talking, and the language of conversation, as opposed to *contentio*. Literarily it is used of satiric verses in a conversational style, as in Horace. *Sermo* is also common talk, synonymous with report or rumor, and extends in that meaning to slander and calumny.[109] During the fourth century *sermo* became the Christian term for preaching, including catechesis and exegesis.[110] Erasmus admits that the sense of familiar colloquy that *sermo* bears does not represent the force of *logos* as oratorical discourse.[111] But evidently this drawback did not outweigh the sexual disadvantage of *oratio*. At least he could be content with knowing that *sermo* means the speech of a nation, an application of no mean importance for a Renaissance humanist. And the colloquial sense of *sermo* included Christ's discursive partners in a fellowship that *oratio* did not explicate.

Erasmus' appropriation of *sermo* emphasized the speaking activity of the *Logos* as the Father's revelation to the forum of creation. While the restrictive format of annotation did not permit Erasmus to stray beyond grammatical justification and patristic quotation, he disclosed *sermo* with fully theological conviction in his *Paraphrasis in evangelium Joannis* of 1523. He revives that once-familiar motif of people huddled in shadows waiting for the glorious revelation in Christ of the God of mysteries, which suffused Johannine letters and braced Greek patristic literature from Ignatius of Antioch to Origen.[112] Erasmus introduces the prologue to his lay audience with a discourse on the impenetrability of God to human reason, capped with the gospel announcement: "No one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Not to scrutinize divine mysteries, but to hold fast to this certain revelation preserved in scripture, is the definition of Christian philosophy, writes Erasmus.[113] Thus the compulsion of faith finds its perfect intellectual comple-ment for him in the humanist program of textual edition and commentary, because the revelation of God, hence the meaning of humans, is to be discerned singularly in this pronouncement, this *sermo*.

Without a glancing reference to Anselm's ontological argument, Erasmus states that sacred letters proclaim God as "that highest mind, than which nothing can be thought either greater or better." "Thus," he continues, "they call his only Son, his speech [*sermo*]." The Son is not the Father, but reflects him in a kind of likeness, a likeness between generator and generated that perfectly surpasses human similitude. But what, Erasmus poses, expresses the concealed image of the mind more fully and more evidently than uncounterfeited speech? "For speech [*oratio*] is truly the mirror of

the spirit, which cannot be discerned with corporeal eyes." Erasmus forwards the argument that rhetors since Isocrates had promoted: if a person wishes to make his will known to others, he has no surer or quicker recourse than speech fetched from the recesses of his mind. Through the receptive ears of the listener, by some occult energy, the spirit of the speaker is translated into the spirit of the hearer. "Nor is any other thing among mortals more efficacious for stirring every affection of spirits than speech [*oratio*]," Erasmus decides.[114]

Now Christ is called the Son (*filius*), Erasmus explains, because although eternally one with God he may be distinguished by property of person. "He is called the Speech [*sermo*]," additionally, "because through him God, who in his own nature cannot be comprehended by any reasoning, wished to become known to us." Through this eternally promulgated *sermo* God established the universal staging of the world, populating it with angelic intelligences and with the human race, a mean between spirit and beast. As omnipotent Lord he wished to publish his commands, and so he spoke creation into existence. Creatures would read his message in the admirable text of creation, and thus God by this strategem would "insinuate himself into our affections." In time God spoke again to humans more solidly and familiarly in his Son Jesus Christ, twice born, now from the Virgin Mary, true human from true human.[115]

Erasmus cautions his reader that this speech transcends the human experience of discourse, and he buttresses his caution with reminders about the eternity and incorporality of divine *sermo* that echo patristic citations he had included in the *Apologia de "In principio erat sermo."*[116] There he had quoted the speculations of Hilary, "Ambrose," Jerome, Anselm, and Remigius on the application of *sermo* to Christ. This *sermo* eternally springs from the eternal mind of the Father, and as divine eloquence differs from the organic vocalization of human speech. It is a voluntary operation, a virtue of God's nature, "the providence of the thoughts of God from the intention of the heart." And echoing the poetic personification of Yahweh's *dābār* that extends into the oral traditions of the Hebrew people, *sermo* is the principle through which God created everything.[117] In the paraphrase on John, Erasmus catalogues heresies about the nature of this *sermo* and his relationship with the Father, painstakingly stating and repeating variously the orthodox doctrine of the eternal gene*ratio*n of the Son.[118] His paraphrase on John 1:1–3 then circles back to that luminary revelation that dispels the tenebrous peril of humans. "What therefore the sun is to material things, this divine speech [*sermo*] who is Jesus Christ is to mortal minds, which through sin having fallen down in a swoon into death's deepest shades, he zealously sought to aid by his ineffable charity." For people used to live in ignorance, Erasmus adds, but now they have the light of eternal truth.[119]

What ancient christology has competed for more scholarly attention than the *logos* doctrine? To articulate their faith in Christ as God's revelation, *ho Logos*, the versatile Fathers borrowed from the Hebrew theology of *dābār*, from the inventive Philo, from the Stoic philosophers, and of course from the inspired New Testament. But although Erasmus was well schooled in the plastic *logos* doctrine of antiquity, his own

interpretation indicates no precise antecedent. By the year 1505 he claimed to have read most of Origen, whom he judged a quarry of original ideas and a master of the principles of theological science.[120] Yet Origen's celebrated theory subordinates interpretation of *logos* as speech and designates *logos* as reason. It is "that which removes in us every irrational part and constitutes us truly capable of reason." Modern scholarship asserts that Origen "rarely conceives the relation of the Father and the Son on the model of the relationship between the understanding and its verbal expression,"[121] exactly the model that Erasmus thought so vital. The opinion of some scholars that he is influenced by the Alexandrian *logos* theology, especially Origen's,[122] ought to be abandoned then. In only two texts, both in the commentary on John's Gospel, does Origen interpret the title *logos* as speech, and then only as a condescension to earlier tradition: "Now it is possible," he writes,

> that the Son may also be the *Logos* because he reveals the secrets of his Father, who is intellect in a fashion analogous to the Son called speech. For just as in us speech is the messenger of the intentions of the intellect, in like manner the speech of God, because he knows the Father whom no creature can approach without a guide, reveals him whom he knows, the Father.[123]

This argument approximates Erasmus', but it is not characteristic of Origen; it is Origen merely reciting the opinion of his predecessors.

Erasmus' specification of the *Logos* as the revealing discourse of the Father is more related to Johannine literature and to the theology of the second-century Fathers than to the later celebrated theories of Origen or Athanasius. Ignatius of Antioch wrote, for example, that God is disclosed through his Son who is his speech sprung from silence,[124] and Justin Martyr claimed that the Son is titled speech because he transmits to humans the message of the Father.[125] What distinguishes Erasmus' apology for *sermo*, the definition of the *Logos* as the *total oration* of the Father, suggests but one seminal text, however. In his polemic *Contra haereses*, which Erasmus edited in 1526, Irenaeus teaches that "this father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through his word that is his Son, through him reveals and publicizes everything that he reveals."[126] Except for the discrepancy *verbum*, which the Latin translation of the no-longer extant Greek manuscript offers, the argument coincides with Erasmus'. His apology for *sermo* is thus aligned with pristine theology, with the doctrine of Irenaeus whom posterity has venerated as the first Christian theologian. Erasmus restores the verse John 1:1 *ad fontes*.

The face of Christ that Erasmus delineates in his writings is as protean as the apostolic witness of the New Testament, which accommodated divine revelation to human myopia: now this profile, now that. But its prominent features can be drawn into a litany which resounds the ancient chant of faith in the revelation of God: Christ the envoy, Christ the teacher, Christ the visage, Christ the discourse. He is the revelation of the hidden God. In his paraphrase on that *comma Joanneum* (1 John 5:7) that provoked such inflated controversy, Erasmus defines succinctly the Persons

of the Trinity in their economic roles. "The Father is the author [*auctor*], the Son is the courier [*nuntius*], the Spirit is the prompter [*suggestor*]."[127] A Trinity of humanists all: writing, publishing, advising. The evangelical proclamation of Christ as the teacher of wisdom and bearer of good news: *to euaggelion Iesou Christou*. Ancient Christian iconography depicted Jesus, book in hand, a master of disciples; and the early figures of him in bas-relief were copies of statues of classical orators.[128] Erasmus' textual portraiture of Christ is not one falsely adapted to humanist interest in pedagogy; rather, he adopted pedagogy as the excellent vocation because it was the role that God himself had assumed, teaching in flesh and voice the lessons of wisdom. A courier from on high, not an angel but a man, is God's own Speech figured into human discourse. Christ declaims oratorically in the forum of creation, teaching, delighting, and persuading all to know the perfect mind of the Father fully and evidently in uncounterfeited Speech.

This interpretation diverged from the Vulgate's *verbum*, the single word grammatically abstracted from the context of discourse and audience. The justice of Erasmus' critical analysis of *verbum* may be verified by consulting modern lexicons. *Verbum* means one word; to gain the sense of speech (*logos*) it must be pluralized, as in *verba facere* and other idiomatic expressions. In the singular form its meaning may be extended to a *sententia*, but this usage is ante-classical; the widest range of speech that *verbum* properly embraces is a proverb. In grammatical parlance *verbum* is also a verb. The Greek counterpart of *verbum* is not *logos*, but *lexis*,[129] precisely a vocable that *logos* can never signify grammatically.[130] Erasmus studied well.

Jerome wrote no commentary on John that might explain his choice of *verbum*, which Erasmus thought so astonishing. Nor does his homily on the prologue discuss this semantic issue.[131] Yet in Latin patristic literature pre-dating his redaction of the Vulgate, the most ancient sources report *sermo*. Both Tertullian and Cyprian employ *sermo* in every direct citation of these opening verses of the prologue.[132] There is also the valuable witness of Tertullian that this was the *customary* reading.[133] In the modern theory of dual sources, North African and European, for the Old Latin Bible,[134] Tertullian and Cyprian may only witness conclusively to the former tradition. No European patristic writings in Latin contemporaneous with Tertullian survive. *Sermo* remains the earliest extant translation of *logos* in John 1:1 and the reading in common circulation.

The first instance of *verbum* in the Johannine prologue appears to occur in the trinitarian tract of Novatian, a contemporary of Cyprian. Twice he records *verbum*, but once *sermo*.[135] Hilary cites the opening verses of the prologue nine times, and in each case the word is *verbum*.[136] By the fourth century *verbum* has gained universal preference in the West. Eusebius Vercellensis' treatise on the Trinity reports *verbum* in every quotation of the prologue.[137] His witness is relevant not only because he may have transmitted the oldest European version of the gospels, preserved in the codex Vercellensis (a),[138] but also because he prefixes his quotation with "as it is written."[139] Isaac Judaeus, writing his exposition on the catholic faith at about the same time, also quotes *verbum* in the Johannine prologue, prefixed with "thus it is said."[140] Zeno

Veronensis reports *verbum*;[141] so does Maximus.[142] The prestigious Ambrose quotes *verbum* in eighteen different citations of the prologue, twice prefixed with "I read" and "he read."[143] Meanwhile, the African author Lactantius quotes *verbum* as the translation for *logos* in John 1:1 in the context of his own demonstration that *logos* means *sermo* or *ratio*.[144] Arnobius preserves no fragment of the text,[145] while Marius Victorinus persists in preserving the Greek noun *logos* throughout his Latin hymns on the Trinity.[146]

As Erasmus demonstrated, Jerome's contemporary, Augustine, knew of two manuscript traditions, one that transcribed "In principio erat sermo" and the other "In principio erat verbum."[147] Was Augustine, a native of North Africa, privileged to codices of that regional tradition that Jerome never examined? Perhaps Jerome was ignorant of the alternate translation *sermo*. Without transmitting an explanation, he chose *verbum*. He could not have anticipated that this translation would strike popularity and eventually win at the Council of Trent over contending vulgates, including Erasmus' editions. When the conciliar fathers authorized Jerome's translation, they also instructed that *alterations* be made.[148] The reintroduction of *sermo* to the Johannine prologue was not among the emendations. And so the Latin Church has read "In principio erat verbum" since.

In defense of his edition Erasmus reminded his challengers that the ancient Church had maintained faith without the Vulgate. To the charge of his faltering friend Maarten Bartholomeuszoon van Dorp that the Vulgate had been adopted for ancient conciliar decrees and therefore must be preserved, Erasmus retorted, "You write like one of our ordinary divines, who habitually attribute anything that has slipped somehow into current usage to the authority of the church. Pray produce me one synod in which this version has been approved."[149] But pressure would force him in the fourth edition of 1527 to reprint the Vulgate adjacent to the text of his own translation.[150] Erasmus' hope that *verbum* would be supplanted has only been realized with an ironic suppression of *sermo* also. The emergence of vernacular translations during the Protestant Reformation and in the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council has virtually eliminated the public or private reading of either Latin text.

Whether the translation of *verbum* for *logos* originated in lexical chance, or whether it gained for theologians some polemical advantage, is impossible to establish and difficult to assess. Belief in the sufficiency of Christ's mediation in the divine economy was reflected in trinitarian definitions of the distinction of the Son from the Father. There appears in Latin theology a confusion of the doctrine of revelation (*logos*, *sermo*) with the doctrine of the only-begotten (*monogenes*, *unigenitus*), so that one Son has been conceptualized as one Word. Tertullian was the first to claim that the Persons of the Trinity are numerically distinct, although inseparable, and thus "capable of being counted."[151] But it was Augustine who, in interpreting John 1:1, equated one Son with one Word.[152] He essayed to disclose to the inquiring mind of the believer a Son who was the unique, singular *generation* of the Father. Preoccupied with distinguishing God's Persons against the modalistic claims of Sabellius and others, Augustine's

argument lapsed into a theological reckoning of three-in-one; the problematic he had inherited, of course, from his adversaries. Whereas Augustine might have argued cogently and grammatically that the one Son was one Oration, the Son became for him one Word, the singular and undivided utterance of the Father. An interpreter has even read in Augustine's conversion an attachment to the single Word in deliberate repudiation of his career as a rhetor, a salesman of many words.[153] Although his seminal treatise *De trinitate* engendered a psychology of divine relationships, it never developed a phenomenology of the Son as copious discourse (*logos*), the full oration of the Father. Despite his own modesty about his speculations, his partial perspective on the mystery was wholly adopted and it limited speculation for centuries.

Anselm of Canterbury, who fathered scholastic method, was still explaining in the eleventh century that "this expression [of the Spirit God] does not consist of more words than one, but is one Word." The unity and indivisibility of the supreme Spirit dictate that his expression must be consubstantial with his nature. "For, if it is so consubstantial with the supreme nature that they are not two spirits, but one; assuredly, just as the latter is supremely simple, so is the former. It therefore does not consist of more words than one, but is one Word, through which all things were created."[154] Anselm did not recognize the inconsistency[155] in terming the divine *logos*, *locutio*, and then claiming that this consisted of one, single *verbum*. Thomas Aquinas canonized the confusion by arguing that because God understands himself and all creation by one act, only one Word is begotten. Aquinas' doctrine of *verbum* does express relationship and includes the Son as the Father's revelatory conversation with all creatures.[156] His term *verbum* cannot do so, however.

Patristic and medieval faith in the sufficiency of Christ was formulated also in the theory of the *verbum abbreviatum*. Frequently occurring in apologetic writings directed against the "perfidy" of the Jews, is the argument that Jesus is an abridged word. The many words of the Hebrew authors have yielded to the one Word, Christ, in whom the entire scripture uniquely converges. Theologians appealed to the verse, "An abbreviated word God spoke upon the earth." This term *verbum abbreviatum* equally denoted the immense Second Person who became concentrated in the Virgin's womb.[157] Here was another example of how theological concern to emphasize the singularity of Jesus exploited *verbum*, word, to the diminishment of the doctrine of *sermo*, conversation.

Verbum: this semantic indiscretion of the early Latin Church, undetected for centuries, is Erasmus' contention with the Vulgate translation of John 1:1 and its scholastic defendants. If the choice of *verbum* was not intended originally to support the christological and trinitarian speculations sketched above, it served those ends eventually. Laboring in the example of Lorenzo Valla, Erasmus believed passionately that only the appropriately correct word could flower into true theology; semantic error must necessarily generate theological error. Thus while he refrained from pronouncing *verbum* unorthodox, Erasmus was nevertheless convinced that this trans-lation of *logos* eclipsed the ancient faith in a Christ who is the Father's eloquent discourse, leaving only a corona of truth visible to the trained eye. *Verbum* or *sermo*?

The implications for theological method are substantial, for Erasmus held the *Logos* the paradigm of human language, whose most eloquent expression was true theological discourse. A range of modern literature underscores the vital relationship of model and method in the humanities and sciences. This fact did not escape Renaissance thinkers either, least of all Erasmus. The archetypal word must be rendered faithfully, or the human enterprise fails. If theology is the verbal imitation of the divine *Logos*, then it matters profoundly to know whether this paradigm is one single word or a complete *oration*.

Erasmus did not deny that there was only one personal Son of the Father. But he did conceive of the Son as an eloquent speech rather than as a single word. Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas might have objected that *sermo*, a composite of many words, jeopardized faith in the simplicity of the Father's utterance. Either one could choose *verbum* for this trinitarian reason, safeguarding the simplicity of the Father's generative act, and distend grammar to serve theology. Or one could employ the grammatically precise *sermo*, faithfully rendering the biblical text, but restrict its theological application. Which compromise was better? Was Erasmus even aware of the theological dilemma? His apologies for *sermo* only record that he opted for the second alternative. He might have retorted that the unity of the Second Person would not have been compromised by *sermo* any more than the unity of an oration is compromised by its composition from many words. He might have added characteristically that theological language only approximates God's reality. The fact is that he promoted scripture as the text to which Christian theology must correspond, and he expended his life in ensuring the precision of that text. "The theologian derives his name from divine oracles, not from human opinions," he judged. Apologetic arithmetic was speculation. To argue whether there might be five words in God rather than one would be like imagining the *Logos* incarnate in a beetle rather than inhominized. Erasmus lampoons this silliness often and admonishes reverence before the mystery of God. What humans may know of God is already disclosed in scripture and in the Church's daily reading of her text. "It is sufficient for us to believe, to hold, and to adore what has been written."[158] Not to scrutinize divine mysteries but to scrutinize the text is the theologian's task. And that text says *logos* not *lexis*.

Notes

1   The first Greek and Latin edition of the New Testament was printed in Basel by Johann Froben in 1516, with Erasmus as editor and translator. Erasmus' edition of the Greek text of the Johannine prologue was twice preceded, in 1504 and 1514. Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration,* 2nd revd. edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 96, n. 1.

2   *Erasmi epistolae*, ed. P. S. Allen et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906–47), III, 499 (abbreviated *EE*).

3   *Annotationum in Evangelium Joannis*, in *Opera omnia*, ed. Johannes Clericus (Leiden, 1703–6), 1:2, *LB*, VI, 336A, 335A–B (abbreviated *LB*).

4   *EE*, III, 265. Cf. II, 370–2.

5   *Apologia de in principio erat sermo*, *LB*, IX, 111F; cf. 111D, 113A, 112D. See also my *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), pp. 6–8.

6   *Apologia*, 112B, 113B, 114B. The charge of sedition refers to the attempt to win the political support of the Mayor of London (ibid, 112B–C) and to incite the populace (ibid, 112F–113A, 114A–B, 120E, 121A, 12IE–122A, 122C–D, 122E); cf. *Annotationum*, *LB*, 336B. Erasmus may have also had in mind the scholastic performance at the court banquet before the king and queen of England. See n. 5 above.

7   For the editions, see *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*, p. 153, n. 40. There is but a single, sketchy article, C. A. L. Jarrott, "Erasmus' *In principio erat sermo*: A Controversial Translation," SP, LXI (1964), 35–40. For its mistranslation and misinterpretation, see *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*, p. 6 n. 40, p. 19 n. 144, p. 20 n. 152, p. 167 n. 144, p. 169 n. 152, p. 178 n. 2.

8   *Apologia*, 120F. See *EE*, IV, 311; III, 263–4.

9   *Apologia*, 111A–114B; 120E–122F.

10 *Apologia*, 113B, 113D–E, 114A.

11 Ibid, 113E; *Annotationum*, 335A.

12 Ibid, 113E. *Apologia*, 113E.

13 *Annotationum*, 335C.

14 *Apologia*, 113F.

15 Ibid, 114A. See also *EE*, IV, 158.

16 *Annotationum*, *LB*, VI, 335A.

17 Ibid, 335B.

18 *Apologia*, *LB*, IX, 121D.

19 Ibid, 122D.

20 *Annotationum*, 335C.

21 Ibid.

22 *Apologia*, 114A.

23 *EE*, II, 255. Trans. R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson, *The Correspondence of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), III, 307.

24 *EE*, II, 325. Trans. Francis M. Nichols, *The Epistles of Erasmus* (New York: Longman, Green, 1901–18), pp. 11, 328.

25 The entire *Apologia* is a refutation of this charge, but see especially 122C, and also *Annotationum*, 336A.

26 *Apologia*, 114A, 115A, 115C, 121D.

27 *Annotationum*, 336D.

28 *De copia*, *LB*, I, 3B. Trans. Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1963), p. 11. Ibid, 3A. Trans. ibid. Ibid, 60–D. Trans. ibid, 16.

29 Ibid, 8D–9C.

30 *Apologia*, 3c.113C. *Annotationum*, *LB*, 335B.

31 *De copia*, 9A. Trans. King and Rix, p. 20. See also Margaret Mann Phillips, "Erasmus and the Art of Writing," in *Scrinium Erasmianum*, ed. J. Coppens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), I, 343.

32 E.g., *Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam*, in *Ausgewalte Werke*, ed. Hugo Holborn with Annemarie Holborn (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1964), p. 186.

33 *Apologia*, 114A. *Annotationum*, 335C. For amplification, see my *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*, pp. 33–5.

34 *Apologia*, 114A. *Annotationum*, 335C.

35 *Apologia*, 114B, 113D.

36 Ibid, 112E, 113D, 114B, 121D, 122E. *Annotationum*, 335E.

37 *Apologia,* 114B. *Annotationum*, *LB*, 336B; 335E.

38 *Apologia*, 122D.

39   For consensus, see James K. McConica, "Erasmus and the Grammar of Consent," *Scrinium Erasmianum*, ed. Coppens, II, 76–99.

40   *Ratio*, ed. Holborn, p. 208.

41   Petrarch, *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, in *Operum* (Basel: Henrichus Petri, n.d.), I, 2.

42   *De ratione studii*, ed. Jean-Claude Margolin, in *Opera omnia* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1969–), I–2, 115.

43   *Apologia*, 114B.

44   Ibid, 111F–112B. See n. 46. Ibid, 112D.

45   Ibid, 111F–112A. Cf. *EE*, IV, 310.

46   *Apologia*, *LB*, IX, 113E.

47   *EE*, IV, 311.

48   By this date Erasmus had edited Athanasius, Basil, Cyprian, and Jerome. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, ed. F. Vander Haegen, 2nd series (Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1961), pp. 11, 13, 23, 29.

49   *Apologia*, 114C.

50   Ibid, 114D.

51   Ibid, 115A.

52   Ibid, 113D, 114B, I21D, 121E. *Annotationum*, 335E.

53   *Apologia*, 114C. Cf. *Annotationum*, 335C. Cyprian, *Adversus Iudeos ad Quirinum* 2.6.

54   *Apologia*, 114C.

55   Ibid, 114D. Cyprian, *Adversus Iudeos ad Quirinum*. Psalms 44:2; Romans 9:28; Revelation 9:11–13.

56   *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*, ed. Josef Hofer and Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Herder, 1957–65), II, 381.

57   *Apologia*, 115A. Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean* 5.3.

58   Perhaps *De carne Christi* 19.2; cf. *De oratione* 1.1.

59   Ibid, 115B–C. *Annotationum*, 335D. Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus* 118.

60   Ibid, 115C.

61   Ibid, 115D–F. Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium*; *De trinitate* 1.12; *Ennarationes in Psalmos* 147.22.

62   Ibid, 116E–117C. Hilary, *De trinitate* 2.

63   Ibid, 117C–E. Ambrose, *De fide orthodoxa contra Arianos* 2. *Hexameron* 4. Modern scholarship attributes the authorship of *De fide orthodoxa contra Arianos* to Gregory, Bishop of Elvira.

64   Ibid, 117E–F. Jerome, *Commentariorum in epistola ad Ephesus* 9.1.

65   Ibid, 117F–118A. Cf. *Annotationum*, *LB*, 3365A. Lactantius, *De Christinae religionis institutio* 4. 8, 9.

66   Ibid, 118A–B. Cf. *Annotationum*, 336A. Prudentius, *Carmina*, ed. Maurice P. Cunningham (Turnholt: Brepols, 1966), p. 29.

67   Ibid, 118C–D.

68   Ibid, 118E–F. Remigius of Auxerre, *Expositio in Epistolam ad Hebraeos*, in *Commentarius in Epistolas S. Pauli*, *Patrologia latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1844), CXXVI, 849C, 849D, 850C, 851B.

69   Ibid, 118B–C.

70   Ibid, 116A–B. Thomas Aquinas, *In Epistolam ad Hebraos* in *Opera omnia* (New York: Musurgia, 1949), XIII, 705.

71   Ibid, 116B.

72   Ibid, 116C. Nicolas of Lyra, *Biblia sacra cum glossa ordinaria*, ed. Strabo Fuldensis (Paris: Franciscus Fervardentium, 1590), VI, 835–6.

73   Ibid, 116C. Hugh of St. Cher, *Opera omnia in universum vetus, et novum testamentum* (Venice: Nicolaus Pezzana, 1732), VII, 246A–D. He also cites John 17:18 and Wisdom 18:15, the same passages that Erasmus argues.

74   Ibid, 116C. The text to which Erasmus refers is in the interlinear Gloss, edited by Nicolas of Lyra, *Biblia sacra cum glossa ordinaria*, VI, 835–6.

75   Ibid, 116C.

76 Ibid. *Glossa ordinaria*, *PL*, CXIV, 651A; CXIII, 118C–D, mistakenly attributed to Walafrid Strabo. It is the work of Anselm of Laon and others.

77 Ibid, 118C–D.

78 Ibid, 118C–DE.118D–E.

79 See n. 67.68.

80 *Apologia*, 118F.

81 Ibid, 116A.

82 *Annotationum*, 336A.

83 See n. 81.

84 See n. 73.70.

85 See n. 72.

86 See n. 73.

87 See n. 74.

88 *Apologia*, 116C–D. Hugh of St. Cher, *Opera omnia*, III, 116u.

89 Ibid, 116C. Nicolas of Lyra, *Biblia sacra cum glossa ordinaria*, ed. Strabo, in the interlinear Gloss, III, 1960.

90 Ibid, 121D–E. Italics mine. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Iulianum* 2.10.

91 *EE*, VIII, xlv.

92 *Apologia*, 119A–B.

93 Ibid, 113C, 119B, 119C.

94 Ibid, 119C.

95 *Apologia*, 117F.

96 Ibid, 119D–E–120B. Augustine, *De trinitate* 4.20; the supposititious *De cognitione verae vitae* 14/4; and *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus*, no citation.

97 Augustine, *De trinitate* 15.11. Trans. Stephen MckKenna (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1963), p. 477. Cf. *In Ioannis Evangelium tractatus* 1.8. *Apologia*, 120B. The correct citation is Durand of Saint Pourçain, *In Petri Lombardi Sententias IIII.theologicas commentariorum libri IIII*, Bk. 1, dist. xxvii, q. ii.

98 Ibid, 120B.

99 Ibid, 120C–D. Cf. Quintilian, *Institutio oratorio* 1.6; and also Varro's etymology, n. 108 below.

100 *Apologia*, 120D. Pseudo-Augustine, *Principia dialecticae*, *PL*, XXXII, 412.

101 *Apologia*, *LB*, IX, 120E.

102 *Annotationum*, 336B–C.

103 Ibid, 336C. *EE*, III, 227–8.

104 *Annotationum*, 336B.

105 See my *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*, p. 170, n. 158.

106 *Apologia*, 14A.114A. *Annotationum*, *LB*, 335C.

107 See n. 35.

108 Varro, *De lingua latina* 6. 14; trans. Ronald G. Kent (London: William Heinemann, 1951), I, 230–2.

109 See my *Eramus on Language and Method in Theology*, pp. 170–1, n. 162.

110 Christine Mohrmann, "*Praedicare-tractare-sermo*," *in Études sur le latin des chrétiens* (Rome: Storia e letteratura, 1958–65), II, 71.

111 See original, n. 104.57.

112 For an introductory bibliography, see Marguerite Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe incarné* (Paris: Seuil, 1958), pp. 31–68; see also pp. 73–97.

113 *Paraphrasis in evangelium Joannis*, *LB*, VII, 497A, 497C–D.

114 Ibid, 498F–499B.

115 Ibid, 500A, 500B, 499B. Augustine, *De fide et symbolo* 3.3.

116 Ibid, 499C.

117   *Apologia*, 116E–118E.

118   The errors that Erasmus singles out are that God's Speech is posterior to God who speaks it; that the Speech came into being when born in the flesh of the Virgin Mary; that Jesus Christ was nothing other than mere man, or that he was produced among other creatures. *Paraphrasis in evangelium Joannis*, 499E–F. He expounds the orthodox doctrine in 499C and 499F–500C.

119   Ibid, 500D.

120   *EE*, I, 405.

121   Harl, *Origène*, p. 124.

122   E.-W. Kohls, *Die Theologie des Erasmus* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt, 1966), 1, 98; Ándré Godin, "Erasme et le modèle origènien de la prédication," *Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia*, ed. Margolin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), II, 807–20, especially p. 810. Cf. "De Vitrier à Origène," ibid, 47–57, 177.

123   Origen, *Commentarius in evangelium Joannis*, 1.38. For the inversion of *logos* and *huios*, see *Origene et la fonction rivelatrice du Verbe Incarni*, p. 125, n. 17.

124   *Epistolae* 8.2.

125   *Dialogus contra Tryphon Iudaeum* 28. Cf. the same argument applied to the title *angelos*, ibid, 61.

126   In the context of the Son as the Father's unique revelation, see Iraneus, *Contra haereses* 2.6.3.

127   *Paraphrasis in epistolam d. Joannis primam*, *LB*, VII, 115D.

128   See, for example, the figure of Christ in fresco from the cemetery of Domitilla, reproduced in Louis Bréhier, *L'Art chrétien* (Paris: Renouard, 1928), p. 39, fig. 12; and the figure in bas-relief, p. 51, with commentary on p. 50.

129   "*Verbum*," *Latin Dictionary*, ed. Lewis and Short, p. 1972; "*verbum*," *Totius Latinitatis Lexicon*, ed. Forcellini, p. 618.

130   See *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*, p. 170, n. 158.

131   Jerome, *Homilia in Ioannem Evangelistam*, in *PLS*, II, 183–8.

132   Tertullian, *Adversus Hermogenem* 20.4; *Adversus Praxean* 7.8, 8.4, 12.6, 13.3, 16.1, 19.6, 21.1.

133   Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean* 5.3. See n. 57.

134   For MSS, see *Vetus Latina*, ed. Bonifatius Fischer; vol. I, *Verzeichnis der Sigel* (Freiburg: Herder, 1949). For a survey of the most important, see Metzger, *Text of the Near Testament*, pp. 72–5.

135   Novatian, *De trinitate* 13.1, 15.7, 21.17.

136   Hilary, *De trinitate* 1.10, 2.12, 23; 12.9, 56; *De synodis, seu de fide orientalium* 56, 24, 29.26, 69.2; *Tractatus in psalmum CXXII*, 7.

137   Eusebius Vercellensis, *De trinitate* 3.47, 5.20, 5.22.

138   Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, p. 73.

139   Eusebius Vercellensis, *De trinitate* 5.22.

140   Isaac Judaeus, *Expositio fidei catholica*, ed. A. Hoste (Turnholt: Brepols, 1957), p. 347.

141   Zeno Veronensis, *Tractatus* 11, 8, "*De nativitate Domini*," ed. B. Löfstedt (Turnholt: Brepols, 1971), p. 176.

142   Maximus, *Sermo* 39a, 51, extr.; 64, 110, extr.

143   Ambrose, *Hexameron* 1.5; *De paradiso*; *De Isaac vel anima* 5/5; *De interpellatione Iob et David* 1.9, 4.4; *Expositio psalmi CXVII* 14.23; *De fide* 1, 8, 19, 8, 2.2, 5.1, 9; *De spiritu sancto* 1, 2; *Epistulae* 1.15, 11. *Tractatus in evangelio secundum Lucam* 1.13, 2.40, 10.118.

144   Lactantius, *De vera sapientia et religio* 4.8, 9.

145   Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*.

146   Marius Victorinus, *De trinitate hymni*, *PL*, VIII, 1141, 1142, 1144.

147   See n. 59.

148   *Concilium Tridentinum*, 2nd edn., ed. Societas Goerresiana (Freiburg: Herder, 1961), V, 91–2. For revision, see Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, trans. Ernest Graf (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957), pp. 92–8.

149   *EE*, II, 110, trans. Mynors and Thomson, III, 135. Cf. *EE*, II, 321–9.

150   Metzger, *Text of the New Testament*, p. 102. The posthumous edition of 1555 discarded the Vulgate again.

151   Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean* 2.

152   Augustine, *De trinitate* 6.2.

153   Kenneth Burke, *The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 114.

154   Anselm, *Monologion* 30. Trans. S. N. Deane, *Saint Anselm: Basic Writings* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1965), p. 91. Cf. *Epistola de incarnatione verbi* 10.

155   The inconsistency applies with respect to classical grammar. Post-Augustan Latin uses *locutio* by transference to mean an utterance or a word.

156   Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, 1, q. XXXIV, art. 1, 23. Trans. Anton C. Pegis, *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1944), I, 337.

157   Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: Les quatre sens de l'Écriture* (Paris: Aubier, 1959–64), III, 187–97. He cites Romans 9:28 without reference.

158   Cf. original, n. 166; 113; with *Ratio*, ed. Holborn, p. 300.

5

Continental Poetics

Arthur F. Kinney

In man the highest law and government are at the disposal of will. To the will, reason and judgment are assigned as counsellors, and the emotions are its torches. Moreover, the emotions of the mind are enflamed by the sparks of speech. So, too, the reason is impelled and moved by speech. Hence it comes to pass that, in the whole kingdom of the activities of man, speech holds in its possession a mighty strength which it continually manifests.

<div align="right">

Juan Luis Vives

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The duty and office of Rhetoric is to apply Reason to Imagination for the better moving of the will.

<div align="right">

Sir Francis Bacon

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Rhetorical man is trained not to discover reality but to manipulate it.

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Richard Lanham[1]

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The Renaissance discovery of rhetoric as the basis of poetics can be located rather precisely: with Petrarch's unearthing of Cicero's *Pro Archia poeta* in Liege in 1333 and, twelve years later, a manuscript of Cicero's *Epistulae ad Atticum*, *Ad Quintam fratrem*, and the *Ad Brutum* (6–18) in Verona. This was only the beginning, however, of a series of discoveries of antique Greek and Roman texts on which Renaissance scholars, teachers, and poets would unleash their renewal of a rhetorically based Western civilization. Petrarch was followed by Salutati (1331–1406), who unearthed Cicero's *Epistola ad familiares*, and his protégé, Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459), who found Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* and many other works central to the revival of the ancients. But it is Petrarch (1304–74), the first early modern poet to be rewarded with a laurel wreath, who remains central; today, as then, he is held up as the epitome of the humanist scholar and student.

This legacy for centuries to come began early. In a letter to Luca da Penna, the papal secretary, written in the last year of his life, Petrarch recounts how he fell in love with

Cicero as a young boy, while his classmates were struggling instead with Prosper and Aesop; he could not tell, though, whether this early inspiration came from instinct or from the encouragement of his father. His subsequent activity he recalls in an earlier letter to Boccaccio in 1359:

> I have read and reread Virgil, Horace, Livy, Cicero, not once but a thousand times, not hastily but in repose, and I have pondered them with all the powers of my mind. I ate in the morning what I would digest in the evening; I swallowed as a boy what I would ruminate upon as a man. These writings I have so thoroughly absorbed and fixed, not only in my memory but in my very marrow, these have become so much a part of myself, that even though I should never read them again they would cling in my spirit, deep-rooted in its inmost recesses. (Bishop 1966: 182–3)

An earlier letter still, this time from the scholar and poet Petrarch to Lapo de Castiglionchio, a Florentine professor of law, on April 1, 1352, shows that his writing – imaginary and expository both – was the direct consequence of classical and rhetorical treatises which at first awakened him, then taught him, before he came to possess them. Cicero, as an example, came to be a living presence for him.

> Cicero and I spent ten tranquil, leisurely days together; and I think he enjoyed his stay and liked my company. I can breathe here, as I can nowhere else outside of Italy. Virtuous purpose has a great merit; it can banish the desire for solitude and afford an escape from boring company. It can bring an unwonted peace amid the city's hordes, and in the vacant groves it can assemble a crowd of illustrious companions and noble thoughts. Cicero was accompanied by many eminent, superior men. Not to mention the Greeks, there were Brutus, Atticus, and Herenius, whom Cicero has made famous. There was that most learned of all men, Varro, with whom Cicero liked to stroll in the academic groves. There were Cotta, Velleius, and Lucilius Balba, with whom Cicero made keen examinations of the nature of the gods. There were Nigidius and Cratippus, with whom he sought out the secrets of nature, the origin, and the essence of the world. There was his brother, Quintus Cicero, with whom he discussed divination and law. And his son Marcus Cicero, who had not yet turned to the bad. With him he dealt with the Offices, and what is the discordance between the useful and the good. There were those very eloquent men, Sulpitius, Crassus, and Antonius, with whom he explored the secrets of oratory. And old Cato the Censor, whose honorable old age he proposed as an example. With Lucius Torquatus, Marcus Cato of Utica, and Marcus Piso he disputed learnedly on the aims of the good life. The orator Hortensius was there, and Epicurus; against the first he advanced the claims of his philosophy, against the second the condemnation of pleasure. With Laelius and Scipio he defined true friendship and the proper form of the republic. And not to prolong this endlessly, foreign kings mingled there with Roman citizens, and with them Cicero expounded his views on matters of the highest moment, with truly divine utterances. And, my friend, to touch on the subject matter of your own book, Milo was defended, Lateranus reprehended, Sulla excused, and Pompey praised. (Bishop 1966: 109–10)

For Petrarch, Cicero held the key to all aspects of civilization.

However extraordinary this letter may now seem to us, it is a reliable measure of the infectious high spirits of the new humanist scholars of the Trecento and Quattrocento, whose prodigious scholarship and industry rescued, reintroduced, and made central those classical texts that, dealing with all aspects of life, grounded society in the practices of rhetoric. In the Trecento, for instance, Coluccio Salutati, chancellor of Florence from 1375 to 1406, argued that moral philosophy and rhetoric were indivisible, "not only because both are concerned with the practical realm of human affairs," Victoria Kahn writes, "but because it is in language that this moral dimension is most fully realized: language raises man above the animals and enables him to create a consensus and community and language allows for the persuasion of the will to action. Accordingly, the poet and the orator do not perform a merely aesthetic function; rather, the aesthetic dimension is the precondition of the political." Textual meaning and expression are inseparable, that is, and the very use of language defines, conveys, and persuades the reader to particular thoughts and actions. "Unlike the reading of an abstract argument, reading poetry or history involves an '*applicatio mentis*' . . . a pleasurable activity, exercise, or praxis, which educates us in the very act of reading at the same time that it moves us to the application of prudence in human affairs" (Kahn 1985: 39–40).

In the Quattrocento, Giovanni Pontano, following Salutati, wrote that literary and rhetorical texts alike educate readers by providing examples of wise past behavior and because such examples invoke and require the skill of readers to exercise judgment and discrimination in reading as it requires the exercise of judgment and discrimination in the composition.

> Thus, in the *De principe*, Pontano insists on the contribution of the activity of reading to the rhetorical force of virtuous examples . . . and in his dialogue *Actius* he argues that the portrayal of counsel and debate in historical works will serve to elucidate the truth, while reported speeches will not only provide moral precepts but also make the reader more diligent in examining and reflecting on other passages. Contrary to the notion that epideictic as the rhetoric of aesthetic display is the form of rhetoric most suited to writing . . . Pontano suggests that writing transforms the auditor's aesthetic appreciation of epideictic into the reader's active participation in a process of deliberation, deliberation that is itself analogous and conducive to action. (Kahn 1985: 40)

Rhetoric and poetic thus blend as both the composition and reception of the text turn into a process, happening anew over time.

Cinquecento Rhetoric

Interest, energy, and commitment invested in the recovery of rhetorically based texts continued at an accelerated pace throughout the sixteenth century. Writing to his friend Francesco Vettori from his farm outside Florence on December 10, 1513, Machiavelli seems an exacting disciple of his master, Petrarch:

Leaving the wood, I go to a spring, and from there to my bird-snare. I have a book with me, either Dante or [Petrarch] or one of the lesser poets like Tibullus, Ovid, and the like: I read about their amorous passions and about their loves, I remember my own, and I revel for a moment in this thought. I then move on up the road to the inn, I speak with those who pass, and I ask them for news of their area; I learn many things and note the different and diverse tastes and ways of thinking of men. When evening comes, I return to my home, and I go into my study; and on the threshold, I take off my everyday clothes, which are covered with mud and mire, and I put on regal and curial robes; and dressed in a more appropriate manner I enter into the ancient courts of ancient men and am welcomed by them kindly, and there I taste the food that alone is mine, and for which I was born; and there I am not ashamed to speak to them, to ask them the reasons for their actions; and they, in their humanity, answer me; and for four hours I feel no boredom, I dismiss every affliction, I no longer fear poverty nor do I tremble at the thought of death: I become completely part of them.[2]

Petrarch had written to Vergil praising his near-Christian virtue and to Cicero about his surprise at Cicero's messy involvement in the world of politics, so real were his sources to him, and so rhetorical, but Machiavelli supposes his ancient teachers actually present in the room with him; and he talks to them. What occurs as a consequence is an open dialogue which had been silent with the earlier readers of antique texts – a passing of ideas and comments between them, back and forth – so that a shared horizon of instruction, acknowledgment, and expectation constructs new meanings. Ideas from past texts and past authorities are recalled, excerpted, re-arranged, and re-emergent through a conversation that recalls classical dialectic.

Machiavelli and his contemporaries were encouraged in such rhetorically creative activity by the numerous translations of classical works that the Cinquecento added to the accomplishment of the previous centuries: texts of Cicero's *Letters* and treatises (1536–7), Plato's *Lysis* and Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (1551), Demetrius' *De Elocutione* (1562), Cicero's *Philippics* (1563), Aesop (1564), Catullus, Horace, and Terence; and commentaries on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1548), *Poetics* (1560), *Politics* (1576), and *Nicomachean Ethics* (1584) and on Cicero's *Orator* (1552), *De Oratore*, (1587), and *Tusculan Disputations;* and a splendid folio edition of Livy (1555). Nor was Italy an isolated case. In France, for instance, Guillaume Budé translated into Latin three treatises of Plutarch (1502–5); Jean Calvin's earliest work was a commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia* (1532); Jacques Amyot translated Heliodorus (1547) with an important theoretical preface, *Daphnis and Chloe* (1559), and Plutarch's *Lives* and *Moralia*; Denys Lambin (Dionysius Lambinus) translated into Latin Aristotle's *Ethics* (1558) and *Politics* (1567), Horace (1561), Lucretius (1564), and the whole of Cicero (1566); Louis LeRoy translated Demosthenes' *Olynthiacs* and *Philippics*, Plato's *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, and some treatises of Isocrates and Xenophon; the printer Robert Estienne published the *editiones princeps* of Eusebius (1544–6), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1546–7), Dio Cassius (1548), and Appian (1551); and his son Henri produced before his death fifty-eight Latin and seventy-four Greek authors as well as the great Stephanus edition of Plato

(1578) and the *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae* (1572). In Spain, Nunez de Guzman produced editions of Seneca (1536) and of Pliny's *Natural History*, and Sepúlveda translated Aristotle's *Politics* into Latin (1548) (Kinney 1989: 10). At the same time, various rhetorical handbooks were appearing throughout Europe, such as the collections of *facetiae* (Bowen 1986): drawing on J. J. Murphy's bibliography, Brian Vickers estimates that possibly 2,000 books of rhetoric were also published between 1400 and 1700. He reckons each of these books had editions of 250 to 1,000 copies, "and if each copy was read by anything from one reader to the dozens using a school text, then there must have been several million Europeans with a working knowledge of rhetoric. These included many of the kings, princes, and their counselors; popes, bishops, ordinary clergymen (whether Catholic, Jesuit, Protestant, Calvinist), all the professors, schoolteachers, lawyers, historians; all the poets and dramatists, including the women, who were otherwise not granted much education" (Vickers 1988: 256).

For it was rhetoric, Gorgias' *psychagogia*, that ravished the soul. It was rhetoric that, for Petrarch, formed the foundation for all the newly revived classical texts:

> Everyone who has become thoroughly familiar with our Latin authors knows that they stamp and drive deep into the heart the sharpest and most ardent stings of speech, by which the lazy are startled, the ailing are kindled, and the sleepy aroused, the sick healed, and the prostrate raised, and those who stick to the ground lifted up to the highest thoughts and to honest desire. (Quoted in Rhodes 1992: 26)

In the Quattrocento, it was Lorenzo Valla (1407–57), a philologist and a lecturer in rhetoric at the University of Pavia, who claimed rhetoric's superiority: "philosophy is like a soldier or lower officer at the orders of Oratory his commander and ... his queen" (quoted in Rhodes 1992: 27).

The study of classical texts was considerably aided by schools established by Continental humanist scholars. Ficino's Academy in Florence, begun in 1462, and the later Filelleni (Philhellenes) in Venice inspired many others in Italy and in France. By 1530 Budé persuaded François I to found the *Lecteurs royaux* (later the Collège de France) in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and mathematics; similar trilingual colleges were founded elsewhere at about the same time, including Corpus Christi College in Oxford and Busleiden's college at Louvain. As the Cinquecento drew to a close, such schools were flourishing nearly everywhere, renewing the cultural heritage through a classical curriculum that centered on grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The schools emphasized the unbounded capacities of man and his ability to learn, taking as prescriptive the words of the antique rhetor Seneca:

> The gods are not disdainful or envious; they open the doors to you; they lend a hand as you climb. Do you marvel that man goes to the gods? God comes to men; nay, he comes nearer – he comes into men. No mind that has not God, is good. Divine seeds are scattered throughout our mortal bodies; if a good husbandman receives them, they spring up in the likeness of their source and of a parity with those from which they

came. If, however, the husbandman be bad, like a barren or marshy soil, he kills the seeds, and causes tares to grow up instead of wheat. (Quoted in Kinney 1989: 11)

The job of the schools, then, was to cultivate their students, to fashion them after their classical exemplars in ancient Greece and Rome. They did this by focusing on the *ars disserendi*, or the arts of speaking correctly, speaking well, and arguing well. These verbal studies drew on man's natural propensities, training him to speak persuasively, to learn the texts of the past, and to live in the present the lives of productive citizens. The emphasis was on verbal reasoning – Aristotelian *pisteis*, or modes of persuasion – which were found in the treatises of Cicero and the rhetorial instructions of Quintilian. Cicero was central because his work promoted the rhetor as active citizen and effective lawmaker; he combined speech and activity, precept and practice, and he knew how to persuade others to equally virtuous and serviceable ends. As he puts it in Book I of *De Oratore*, a seminal text of the Cinquecento humanists,

> Then at last must our Oratory be conducted out of this sheltered training-ground at home, right into action, into the dust and uproar, into the camp and the fighting-line of public debate; she must face putting everything to the proof and test the strength of her talent, and her secluded preparation must be brought forth into the daylight of reality. We must also read the poets, acquaint ourselves with histories, study and peruse the masters and authors in every excellent art, and by way of practice praise, expound, emend, criticize, and confute them; we must argue every question on both sides, and bring out on every topic whatever points can be deemed plausible; besides this we must become learned in the common law and familiar with the statutes, and must contemplate all the olden time, and investigate the ways of the senate, political philosophy, the rights of allies, the treatises and conventions, and the policy of empire, and lastly we have to cull, from all the forms of pleasantry, a certain charm of humor, with which to give a sprinkle of salt, as it were, to all of our discourse. (Quoted in Kinney 1989: 12–13)

Quintilian underscored such ideas in his *Institutes*, a redaction of Ciceronian rhetoric aimed not at lawyers, as Cicero so often was, but at educators.

But in the course of the Cinquecento the emphasis changed. Central to the new development was a treatise entitled *De Dialectica Inventione* by the Dutch scholar Rudolph Agricola (1444–85). Agricola had studied in Erfurt, Louvain, Cologne, and Paris before leaving for Italy around 1468 to study law; he began the *Dialectica Inventione* there; but finished it a decade later, after returning to Germany. Speech is taught, according to Agricola, for exposition (the declamation) and argumentation (the disputation), but in both these forms the underlying arrangement of ideas and language is derived from probable reasoning. Rhetoricians should work from what is well known to what is less well known, from what is universally accepted to what is more debatable. To mount a persuasive argument as the speech develops, the rhetor should define the seat or basis of his argument. This seat (or *locus* or place) is the basis for building an argument invented through reasoning – inductive, deductive,

syllogistic. There are twenty-four classical places, such as definition, genus, species, property, whole, and part; and in Book II Agricola teaches that the best argument is likewise classically ordered in four parts: exordium (an inviting beginning), narration (the statement of the argument), confirmation (assembled points of persuasion), and peroration (conclusion). Together, the seats of argument (Book I) and the ordering of the argument (Book II) help to insure the most convincing case possible; Book III adds issues of style and what he calls *affectus* – that which impels the mind, that which invokes emotions, and that which employs ornamentation such as amplification or copia. A number of leading humanists of the Cinquecento – Erasmus, Melanchthon, Vives – were deeply influenced by Agricola's work, as were poets. The work of Ronsard and DuBellay is couched in techniques of persuasion, while Erasmus' *Encomium Moriae*, or *Praise of Folly*, is a declamation that is inherently dialectical as Folly's argument twists and turns in upon itself; the storytelling of Marguerite of Navarre's *Heptámeron* and the courtly conversations of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* are openly so. Rabelais' sprawling, untitled novel is thick with the ornamentation of copia. Yet all of these works – major poetic achivements of the Cinquecento – rely not only on a deep (and abiding) sense of rhetoric but also on just the kind of dialectic fostered by Agricola. In the Cinquecento, Continental rhetoric clearly *becomes* Continental poetics.

Imitatio

Continental rhetoric and poetic merge at the point of conceptualization and in practice, both of them grounded in acts of imitation, or the use of models in speaking and writing. Such practices started for the novice with the earliest study, that of grammar. One key source for such a practice was found in the *Epistolae* of Pliny. He tells Fuscus:

> You desire my sentiments concerning the method of study you should pursue, in that retirement which you have long enjoyed. It is a very advantageous practice (and what many recommend) to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. By this sort of exercise one acquires noble and proper expressions, variety of figures, and a forcible turn of exposition. Besides, to imitate the most approved authors, gives one aptitude to invent after their manner, and at the same time, things which you might have overlooked in reading cannot escape you in translating; and this method will open your understanding and improve your judgment.
>
> It may not be amiss when you have read only so much of an author at once, as to carry in your head his subject and argument, to turn, as it were, to his rival, and write something on the same topic; then compare your performance and his, and minutely examine in what points either you or he most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you shall find that in some things you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. (Quoted in Kinney 1989: 15)

Imitatio, then, was not merely a matter of emulation; it was also a matter of comparison and even rivalry. It is not merely a matter of copying, but one of improving, combining, transforming, and hence *creating*.

Imitatio need not depend on a single source-text, either, but might instead rely on several prototypes. Pliny himself writes to Arrianus that he learned to write best by combining Demosthenes, Calvus, and Cicero. And what Pliny acknowledges, Cicero proclaims. At one point Cicero refers to the painter Zeuxis, considered in his time the best of all artists, says Cicero, because he chose many models so as to paint a composite of what was the best in each. His own art, then, was the best of all, more nearly approaching the ideal. This, according to Cicero, was the way in which all rhetoricians, artists, and poets should proceed. In *De Inventione* Cicero elaborates on this principle.

> In a similar fashion when the inclination arose in my mind to write a textbook of rhetoric, I did not set before myself some one model which I thought necessary to reproduce in all details, of whatever sort they might be, but after collecting all the works on the subject I excerpted what seemed the most suitable precepts from each, and so culled the flower of many minds. For each of the writers who are worthy of fame and reputation seemed to say something better than anyone else, but not to attain pre-eminence in all points. It seemed folly, therefore, either to refuse to follow the good ideas of any author, merely because I was offended by some fault in his work, or to follow the mistakes of a writer who had attracted me by some correct precept. And it is also true of other pursuits that if men would choose the most appropriate contributions from many sources rather than devote themselves unreservedly to one leader only, they would offend less by arrogance, they would not be so obstinate in wrong courses, and would suffer somewhat less from ignorance. And if my knowledge of the art of rhetoric had equalled his knowledge of painting, perhaps this work of mine might be more famous in its class than he is in painting. For I had a larger number of models to choose from than he had. (Quoted in Kinney 1989: 16)

Supporting testimony to this wise use of *imitatio* can be found in the Praefatio of the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius, a book of instructions in rhetoric as poetic written for his son and later widely adopted by the humanists of the Cinquecento.

> We ought in some sort to imitate the bees; and just as they, in their wanderings to and fro, sip the flowers, then arrange their spoil and distribute it among the combs, and transform the various juices to a single flavor by in some way mixing with them a property of their own being, so I too shall put into writing all that I have acquired in the varied course of my reading, to reduce it thereby to order and to give it coherence. For not only does arrangement help the memory, but the actual process of arrangement, accompanied by a kind of mental fermentation which serves to season the whole, blends the diverse extracts to make a single flavor; with the result that, even if the sources are evident, what we get in the end is still something clearly different from those known sources. (Quoted in Kinney 1989: 17)

The use of multiple sources as the basis for creating a new speech or a new poem meant that the rhetorician or poet would not slavishly copy any one model. That result is severely parodied by Erasmus in his comic colloquy entitled *Ciceronianus*, a debate not on whether Cicero should be imitated, but, rather, how he should be imitated. The first speaker, Nosoponus, argues for exacting imitation, using no word not in Cicero himself, advocating what Kathy Eden calls "a rigid, legalistic, literal imitation." "More zealous, by his own confession, in the pursuit of Ciceronianism than sainthood, he practices a devotion to his apostle, Cicero, that qualifies as idolatry," she adds. "Surrounded by icons of the Roman orator, Nosoponus meditates continuously not on Scripture but on Cicero's extant works, learning them word for word and by heart" (Eden 1997: 67–8). He has, in fact, made a long list of all the words in Cicero's extant writings and makes certain he does not deviate from his *index verborum*: one misstep, he says, will ruin the whole composition and render it totally ineffective. In contrast with such absurdity, Bulephorus argues that the better rhetorician and poet is one who reads a whole work and captures its spirit and significance – its *mens* – rather than settle for the literality of its lexicon. He further claims that if Cicero were alive during the Cinquecento, his writing would be utterly different because it would derive from a different set of circumstances. Just as Apelles would not paint sixteenth-century Germans the way in which he painted the ancient Greeks, so Cicero, Bulephorus insists, would write differently if he were their live (rather than their dead) contemporary. In thus correcting – and condemning – Nosoponus, Bulephorus follows the dictates of Quintilian, who in Book X of his *Institutio Oratoria* advises the imitator to read and meditate on an entire work before using it as a model. The imitator, says Quintilian, ought not to make abstractions or to slavishly copy, but, rather, to use the model both as instruction and as a base from which to diverge. *Imitatio* thus blends precept and performance: both are necessary and it is the blending that limns the creativity. "There is nothing harder than to produce an exact likeness," he says, "and nature herself has so far failed in this endeavor that there is always some difference which enables us to distinguish even the things which seem most like and most equal to one another" (quoted in Cave 1979: 38).

Indeed, it is this very assimilation of many models that transforms them, producing *something new*. It is this new product, new work of art, that is what the artist *creates*, what is itself art, a work where the multiple models have become sufficiently absorbed as to coagulate into something different so that each singular model recedes and only the newly forged composite remains. In *Il Libro del Cortegiano* of Castiglione, Bembo will argue that this transformation will lead to nothing short of a mystical experience. Oisille, in Marguerite's *Heptámeron*, will argue that such acts of imitation, properly conceived, lead to a reformation of the soul and spirit. And Don Quijote, in his frenzied composite of Roldán and Amadis de Gaula, will create a new sense of knight-errantry, which, however foolish or mad it may appear, nevertheless becomes effective just *because* of that newness, so that a still-later transformation, into the Knight of the Woeful Countenance, when he takes on his shoulders all the

wrongdoings of the world, transforms his madness into a Christlike divergence from a world of selfishness and deceit. But as these more poetic works indicate, the successful *art* of *imitatio* is not merely a newly created composite but one which, in diverging from its models, nevertheless retains residual traces of them so that its creativity, and its meaning, rest in the recognition of such transformations. The *significatio*, that is, lies precisely in charting what and where the divergence is (and, consequently, how and why it is undertaken). Folly's tumbling catalogue in the *Encomium Moriae* of Erasmus does not hide her sources. Even more tellingly, the frozen words in Rabelais signify long before they become unfrozen and resume their past sounds.

In fact, when Aristotle's *Poetics* was rediscovered in the Cinquecento, *mimesis* reconceived as *imitatio* was a primary concern of critics. Daniello argued that the poet, unlike the historian, could mingle fancy or fiction with fact because his imitations did not need to be limited to what was – what could be seen – but to what ought to be – what could be conceived. Francisco Robortelli, in his extensive *Aristotelis de arte poetica explicationes* (1548), agreed that rhetoricians and poets could invent material so long as it supported the imitation of reality, and he cites as evidence the case studies of Xenophon's ideal portrait of Cyrus and Cicero's ideal portrait of the orator. Logical inferences from nature were thus not only permissible; they were also the kind of persuasive significations that characterized humanist poetics. Fracastoro argued that the poet should not be restricted to essential truths in imitating his sense of reality but adorn it in formal, ethical, and aesthetic beauty restricted only by his sense of decorum. Torquato Tasso, in his *Discorsi dell'Arte Poetica e del Poema Eroico*, his heroic poetics that attempted to seek some middle ground between Christian truth and poetic license, claimed that poetry should be characterized by novelty and surprise and create a sense of wonder, like the unseen chimeras advocated by Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defense of Poesie*: "Longinus," A. J. Krailsheimer notes, "being added to Horace and Aristotle."[3] The Spanish humanists upheld the Italians. In his *De ratione dicendi* of 1532, Juan Luis Vives studied the nature of language and the properties of words – which he saw as public, not private, property – and suggested that original usage, what he called adaptation, is what secured attention and insured new meaning. Juan Huarte's *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias* (1575) began with Galenic physiology to locate and describe the humors of the rhetor's and poet's mind. He found that the brain was hot, moist, and dry, dividing the brain's functions into three parts. Cold and dry in combination produced understanding; heat alone activated the imagination; and moisture was responsible for memory. "From a good imagination," he writes, "spring all the Arts and Sciences, which consist in figure, correspondence, harmonie, and proportion: such are Poetrie, Eloquence, Musicke, and the skill of preaching: the practice of Phisicke, the Mathematicals, Astrologie, and the governing of a Commonwealth, the art of Warfare, Paynting, drawing, writing, reading" (quoted by Abbott in Murphy 1983: 99). A century later, Baltasar Gracián would write in his *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (1649) that the secret of forceful writing was a troping wit:

> The clergyman will admire the nourishing conceits of St. Ambrose; the humanist the
> peppery ones of Martial. Here the philosopher will find Seneca's prudent sayings, the
> historian the rancorous ones of Tacitus, the orator, Pliny's keenness, and the poet,
> the brilliance of Ausonius. For whoever teaches is indebted everywhere. I took my
> examples from the languages in which I found them, for if Latin vaunts the eminent
> Florus, so too Italian has the bold Tasso, Spanish the cultivated Góngora and Portuguese
> the tender Camoens. If I frequent the Spanish it is because wit is prevalent with them,
> just as erudition is with the French, eloquence with the Italian and originality with the
> Greeks. (Quoted by Abbott in Murphy 1983: 101)

For Gracián, poetry was grounded in metaphor.

But for Minturno, in his *Arte Poetica* of 1564, rhetorical figures and tropes, the
speaker's (or poet's) *ethos*, and Aristotelian *pathos* combined to raise poetry to the
highest plane of comprehension: poetry would not only instruct and delight,
following Horace's dictates; it would also produce *admiratio*. It would awaken wonder.
Near the close of the Cinquecento, Francesco Patrizi, in his *Della poetica* of 1586,
popularly known as the *Deca ammirabile*, codified Minturno's sense of the marvelous,
the wonderful. There are two sorts: one is in the quality of the poem, arising from the
divine enthusiasm of the poet who rightly combines the credible and the incredible to
produce the admirable (*mirabile*); the other is what is produced in the auditor or
reader, the extrinsic end of poetry, *la maraviglia*. As Patrizi has it,

> not every poem will cause every mind to marvel, but they will be more marvelous to
> some than to others according to the aforementioned distinctions of subjects and of
> listeners. But nevertheless the poet must always, as his proper function and as his proper
> end, strive to make marvelous every subject that he takes into his hands, no matter how
> the readers, who are not all alike, may take it. (Quoted by Kinney 1989: 43)

This understanding of *imitatio* in the Cinquecento, progressing from a sense of
modeling work on classical texts, through a sense of adding fiction, to an increasing
concern for the marvelous, can be charted in the parallel development of Continental
humanist fiction: it progresses from the wit and wordplay of Erasmus in the *Encomium
Moriae*, through the fictional additions to Castiglione's Urbino, to the marvels of the
giants Don Quixote sees where Sancho Panza can find only windmills.

French humanists, too, developed the practice of *imitatio* into a basis for poetics.
Joachim de Bellay, in his *Défense et illustration de la langue francaise* (1549), proposed
that true poets are born but that they nevertheless need to be educated in the classics
of the ancient world in order to attain more perfect poetry. Six years later, Jacques
Pelletier du Mans, in his *Art Poétique*, wrote (like Tasso) that it was the poet's
responsibility in imitating old things to compound them with something new,
something beautiful, something novel. Pierre de Ronsard discusses *imitatio*, too, in
his *Abbregé de l'art poetique francois* as well as in the 1572 preface to the incomplete epic
La Franciade. Ronsard advocates inspiring images woven into the fabric of imitation
since they serve moral edification, for him the purpose of art, but he eschews fantastic

imagery. For Ronsard, moral imagery does not permit the unnatural nor the marvelous. Vanquelin de la Fresnaye in his own *Art poétique* likewise limits imagery to that which is moral. He prefers scriptural themes in poetry, adding that if the Greeks had been Christian they would have concentrated on the life and death of Christ. Vauquelin was a humanist scholar, but the position he charts is shared, in the Cinquecento, by the fiction of Marguerite of Navarre. Her *Heptámeron*, modeled on the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, is nevertheless a poetic work meant to instruct her readers in the ways of piety.

Rhetorical *Technē* and Poetics

The line between a developing rhetoric and a developing poetic in the Continental Renaissance was perilously thin. Both depended on "thynges likely," and both employed situations that were probable and persuasive. That is, they were persuasive because they were probable, and they were probable because they were persuasive, since they were based in logic of presentation and verisimilitude of detail. Just as law cases, as first developed by Cicero, developed out of rhetoric, so did Renaissance works of poetics, since it was Ciceronian rhetoric that dominated the grammar schoolrooms. The rhetorical *technē* that served both rhetoric and poetic, for instance, included *prosopopoeia*, or the impersonation of historical persons, and *prosopographia*, the recreation of place. In *The Arcadian Rhetorike* of 1588, the English critic Abraham Fraunce defines the first of these terms: "*Prosopopoeia* is a fayning of any person, when in our speech we represent the person of anie, and make it speake as though he were there present," and adds, pointedly, "an excellent [rhetorical] figure much used of Poets, wherein wee must diligentlie take heed" (sig. G2). The humanist grammar school found its models for teaching *prosopoeia* in the *suasoria* of Seneca the Elder. In the first of seven such speeches Alexander debates whether to sail the ocean and the speaker must *imagine himself* one of the sailors, or else imagine himself Alexander wishing to go on the voyage, *or else* imagine himself Alexander's mother wishing to prevent his departure. In other exercises, the student was asked to take the part of Sparta at Thermopylae urging his companions to stand and fight the Persians or else urging them to retreat; in yet a third exercise, the speaker took the part of Agamemnon telling Calchas why he refuses to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia. Such speeches invited the rhetorician to act as if he were a poet. In developing such impersonations or *personae*, students were also asked to follow the ideas in Book 2 of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, with its discussions of *ethos* and *pathos* as other ways to manipulate language so as to creatively manipulate responses. Aristotle defined *ethos* as the character which the speaker creates or fabricates for himself, his voice; he defined *pathos* as the role the speaker assists (or creates) for his audience. Both employ *logos*, or a stylized speech resulting from the colorful choice of language with its overtones and undertones; both come close to or actually employ *eikos* or images to cause the portraits or issues to have a verisimilar force of indelibility. It is clear that Continental humanist poets

understood these techniques, or *technē*, particular means, because Erasmus displays them in his personation of Folly and Rabelais shows them in his imaging of giants.

These *technē* were employed in orations or declamations taught in the schools and used as organizational bases for poems, stories, and drama (seen especially in the works of Calderon and Lope de Vega). But students of rhetoric were also schooled in disputations or debates which rotated around three axes of thought: *an sit* (did it happen?), *quid sit* (how did it happen?), and *quale sit* (how do we interpret the act?): as with the *technē* of declamations, such rules, drawn originally from Aristotle, are meant to create situations that are persuasive because they are probable. But students were asked to take one side or the other – or even both – so that they were always required to use language as flexible and variable in its meanings and its effects. Again examples – or classical models for *imitatio* – were found in Seneca the Elder, Seneca Rhetor, this time in his examples of *controversiae*. Here are two such instances:

> A girl who has been raped may choose either marriage to her ravisher without a dowry or his death. On a single night a man rapes two girls. One demands his death, the other marriage. Speeches for and against the man.
>
> A man disinherits his son; the disinherited son goes to a prostitute and acknowledges a son by her. He falls ill and sends for his father; when the father arrives, he entrusts his son to the old man and dies. After his death the father adopts the boy. He is accused of insanity by the other son. (Quoted by Kinney 1989: 25)

James J. Murphy has traced such rhetorical problems back to the very beginnings of rhetoric at around 476 BCE by Corax, a resident of Syracuse, who sued his pupil Tisias when the student attempted to depart without paying for his lessons. Murphy summarizes the arguments on both sides:

> *Corax:* You must pay me if you win the case, because that would prove the worth of my lessons. If you lose the case you must pay me also, for the court will force you to do so. In either case you pay.
> *Tisias:* I will pay nothing, because if I lose the case it would prove that your instruction was worthless. If I win, however, the court will absolve me from paying. In either case I will not pay.

Murphy wryly notes: "Tradition holds that the court postponed decision indefinitely."[4] Such a dialectical means of arriving at interpretations and judgments – an education in rhetorical logomachy, or contention, teaching antilogy, or the ability to argue either side of a question with equal skill, conviction, and success – is seen in the dialogues of Plato in which Socrates debates with various acquaintances; but it is true, too, of most fictional conversations in the works of Cinquecento writers (and implied conversations in many of the poets). "In showing that the same arguments can be used on both sides of a question [what came to be identified as *in utramque partem*], and that the same text can be interpreted in different ways," Victoria Kahn tells us, "these authors also address themselves to the contrary interpretations that their own texts are

capable of eliciting." Speeches presented as facts, impersonations, or records are, rather than true accounts, *hypotheses* or *propositions* urged upon an audience.

Arguments of this kind, Kahn continues, may "call our attention to the fact that within the realm of rhetoric (that is, of language) every figure is 'potentially reversible' [the phrase is drawn from the work of Jonathan Culler]: each can be read as serious or ironic [as in the fiction of Erasmus and Rabelais and some of the poetry of Ronsard and some of the drama of Lope], as simply contradictory or profoundly paradoxical [as in the work of Marguerite of Navarre, Calderon, or the *sprezzatura* of Castiglione], as undecidable or the occasion for a decision [as in the fiction of Rabelais or the epic of Ariosto]. The humanist emphasis on the act of reading can itself be interpreted *in utramque partem* as conducive to action or as a substitute for it" (Kahn 1985: 22). Such a thin line between rhetoric and poetic – or perhaps there is in the end no line separating them at all – was a joyous discovery for Erasmus: "What especially delights me is a rhetorical poem and a poetical oration, in which you can see the poetry in the prose and the rhetorical expression in the poetry" (quoted in Kinney 1989: 29). Clearly one of the joys shared by the Continental humanists was the way in which the recovery of classical rhetoric – in the works of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian – fostered a humanist poetics. *Making* could be *making up*.

A Poetics of Triangulation

In rhetorical exercises of argument or dialectic – the schoolroom disputations – that provide opposing views, or when a work of poetics is based in the conversations of characters or an implied debate between what is said and what may be inferred, or a multiplicity of possibilities harbored in images and metaphors – the final meaning rests on the interpretation or understanding of a third position – that of the audience (the reader or the listener), establishing an art of triangulation. Opposing views are adjudicated by the audience, which may prefer one argument to another, or be torn between both, or reject both, or locate still another meaning not proposed. The interpretation of the audience, on which not only the *meaning* of a work of art rests, but its very *efficacy* or *significance* rests as well, is precisely the issue which Philip Melanchthon raises in his *Elementorum rhetorices duo libri* of 1531. In this work he is concerned primarily with what Kathy Eden defines as "the complementarity between composition and interpretation, between rhetorical production and literary reception" (Eden 1997: 79). Melanchthon is not so much interested in this work in correctly speaking as in prudently comprehending and evaluating what is said, and in the course of the *Elementorum rhetorices* he argues for a contextual rather than a literal sense of what is proposed. He is not so much interested in the *verba*, the language, what is said, as he is in what he terms the *hexis*, the mind-set of the author or speaker and the cultural matrices out of which he writes or speaks. He advocates looking not at individual parts but rather at the whole work and how they constitute it. Both the author and the audience must consider what he terms the status of the work:

> No part of the art (of rhetoric) is more necessary than the precepts dealing with the status of the case (*de statibus*), in respect of which, this is first and foremost: in relation to every problem (*negocio*) or controversial question (*controversia*) we consider what the status is, that is, what is the chief subject of inquiry (*principalis quaestio*), the proposition that contains the gist of the matter (*summam negocii*) toward which all arguments are aimed, in other words, the main conclusion. No matter of debate can be comprehended, nothing can be explained, stated or grasped in an orderly fashion, except some proposition be formulated which includes the sum total of the case (*summam causae*). (Quoted in Eden 1997: 83–4)

The controversy of the presentation may be resolved by dialectic or by proof, but there also may be ambiguity grounded in figures of speech – such as tropes – and such matters rest on the perception and analysis of the audience. Circumstances may aid in clarification, according to Melanchthon, such as those circumstances comprehended by asking the traditional seven questions – who, what, where, by whose help, why, how, and when – but obscurity and absurdity must also be confronted. "As a manual for the writers, then, the *Elements* advocates a method of literary production based on Ciceronian imitation," Eden sums. "As a manual for the reader, the *Elements* also relies on Cicero and Quintilian, and not only on their *status*-theory but on their treatment of *interpretatio scripti* as well" (Eden 1997: 88–9).

"Think how much enters the mind through these channels of the ears," Salutati writes. The ears, like the eyes, receive speeches and poems both. But the use to which they are put, and the effects that they have – often with rhetoric and poetic sharing purposes, means, consequences – is up to the audience. Salutati recognized the art of triangulation early on: the whole passage reads: "Think how much enters the mind through these channels of the ears; it is scarcely credible how much they profit the health of the soul – if you hear correctly, and if you harvest the good and reject the bad, as if separating the wheat from the tares" (quoted by Struever 1970: 50). Continental poetics is a humanist poetics as Continental rhetoric also is; and, the practice and product of humanists, its beginning and its end rest in the trust and respect which the humanists fostered in the capacity of being human.

Notes

1　The first two epigraphs are quoted from Vickers (1988: 277); the third is from Richard A. Lanham, *The Motives of Eloquence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 4.

2　Quoted by Anthony Grafton, "The Humanist as Reader," in A *History of Reading in the West*, ed. Gugliemo Cavello and Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochane (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), p. 180.

3　A. J. Krailsheimer (ed.), *The Continental Renaissance, 1500–1600* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), p. 40.

4　James J. Murphy, "The Origins and Early Development of Rhetoric," in *A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric*, ed. Murphy (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1983), p. 7.

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"His tail at commandment": George Puttenham and the Carnivalization of Rhetoric

Wayne A. Rebhorn

The third book of George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* is devoted primarily to the part of rhetoric called *elocutio*, adornment or style. In the sixth chapter, which treats the various levels of style, Puttenham warns against using affected and "puffed up" words in the high style, for such words

> cannot be better resembled than to these midsummer pageants in London, where to make the people wonder are set forth great and ugly giants marching as if they were alive and armed at all points, but within they are stuffed full of brown paper and tow, which the shrewd boys underpeering do guilefully discover and turn to a great derision. (165)[1]

This passage is remarkable for its apparent hostility to carnival. It faults the use of affected and exaggerated words by comparing them to the grotesque giants who often appeared in pageants on St. John's Day (June 21), satirizing those giants by stressing how little they contain, just as puffed up words have "more countenance than matter" (165). Distancing himself from "the people," whom he indicts here for their gullibility, their susceptibility to feel a naive type of "wonder" in response to such shows, Puttenham evinces what would appear to be a non-traditional or "modern" sensibility marked by skepticism and distance from the rituals and ceremonies of the past. Carnival here seems mere show, surface without substance, easily exposed to ridicule even by boys. But it is not just the boys who are exposing carnival to ridicule here. Puttenham appears to play exactly the same role himself as he satirizes both pretentious words used in the high style and the pretensions of carnival.

Puttenham's expression of hostility toward carnival is consistent with the scorn he expresses, with a few exceptions, for the popular poetry of the Middle Ages. Typically dismissing it as "minstrelsy" (28), he finds its roots in the rhyming verse that began

to appear during the declining days of the Roman Empire (27), although he also traces it back to the "idle" monks of Charlemagne's era, who wrote similar verse in a time of "barbarous rudeness" (28). Puttenham's aim in his *Arte* is to define rules and provide models for English poetry that, while respecting the properties of the vernacular, would allow his countrymen to achieve the level of excellence attained by the ancients. He thus feels the would-be poet should not imitate the bad practices of "old rhyming writers," such as Gower, who "lived in a barbarous age" (95). More important, the poet should keep his distance from anything that might evoke the minstrel's habitual haunts, the tavern and the marketplace. At one point he is warned to avoid sexual innuendoes, "lest of a Poet he become a buffoon or railing companion" (261). Finally, Puttenham discredits popular poetry by associating it with carnival festivities, as he condemns one of the practices of "common rhymers":

> the over-busy and too speedy return of one manner of tune . . . [doth] too much annoy and as it were glut the ear, unless it be in small and popular musics sung by these *cantabanqui* upon benches and barrels' heads where they have none other audience than boys or country fellows that pass by them in the street, or else by blind harpers or such like tavern minstrels that give a fit of mirth for a groat.

Puttenham goes on to describe how these poets sing "old romances or historical rhymes, made purposely for recreation of the common people at Christmas dinners and bride-ales, and in taverns and alehouses and such other places of base resort,"[2] concluding that such things are more appropriate for "buffoons or vices in plays" (96–7),[3] and as such are barely tolerable. Finally, he scorns such regularly scripted carnival festivities as "Christmas dinners and bride-ales" as well as the more informal festive activities that occur in the tavern or marketplace where *cantabanqui*, that is, street singers, performed.

The keywords I use, "carnival" and "carnivalesque," require a bit of clarification. Both terms come from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, especially his *Rabelais and His World* (1968), a study which has been criticized for various limitations (Screech 1979: 1–14), but which has also been praised for its focus on the body as a complex symbol of the social and political order (Stallybrass and White 1986) and for anticipating the anthropological notion of "symbolic inversion," that is, an act or utterance that "inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or in some fashion presents an alternative to commonly held cultural codes, values and norms" (Babcock 1978: 14). Broadly defined, "carnival" is shorthand for specific festivities, including carnival itself, and also other holidays such as May Day and Midsummer's Eve; fairs, wakes, and processions; comic shows and mummery; comic and satirical verbal compositions; parodies and farces; oaths, tricks, and jokes; and folk humor (Burke 1978: 178–204). The word also identifies the way of looking at the world which lies behind these phenomena and which expresses itself in what Bakhtin calls "carnival laughter," a laughter which both degrades and revives, mocks and renews (Stallybrass and White 1986: 8). At the risk of simplifying a complex concept that is not entirely stable in Bakhtin's texts, carnival

appears to have three main features. First, its fundamental activity is what he calls "uncrowning" or "degradation," that is, "the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract . . . to the sphere of the earth and body" (Bakhtin 1968: 19–20). This process is ambivalent, for, if it brings down, it also means sowing, procreation, growth, and rebirth (Bakhtin 1968: 21). Second, the main actors of carnival are figures who live on the margins of the normal social world – the rogue, the fool, and the clown – figures who play a central role in menippean satire and in the carnivalized version of the novel that develops during and after the Renaissance (Bakhtin 1981: 158–67; 1984: 157–8). Finally, carnival's style is what Bakhtin calls grotesque realism, a style focused on the grotesque body whose protuberances (nose, phallus) and openings (mouth, genitals, anus) are its most prominent features. Those bodily features are correlated with the ambiguous degradation of carnival, which involves destruction, decay, and death as well as sexuality, procreation, birth, and growth. Those features are on the boundary between the individual and the world and are sites where interactions between the two take place. The result is that the "grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world. It is not a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits" (Bakhtin 1968: 26).

The grotesque body of carnival is opposed by Bakhtin to what he calls the "classical" body. The classical body is associated with high official culture, and its canons are seen as informing the languages of philosophy, politics, law, and religion by means of which social and political elites define and defend themselves. By contrast with the body of grotesque realism, the classical body is "a strictly completed, finished product . . . isolated, alone, fenced off from other bodies" (Bakhtin 1968: 29). Bakhtin treats the two bodies, the classical and the grotesque, as well as the cultures they represent, as something like a timeless pair of opposites, but he also views them in historical terms. He argues that carnival laughter and the grotesque body "emerged from the depths of folk culture" and fructified the high culture of the Renaissance, achieving a new dimension of self-consciousness in the process, and resulting in the masterpieces of Boccaccio, Rabelais, Cervantes, and Shakespeare (Bakhtin 1968: 72–3). At the same time, however, the Renaissance was reviving from antiquity the notion of the classical body and all that it entailed, and this notion gradually achieved cultural dominance in the seventeenth century. As a result, the grotesque body of carnival was marginalized, dispatched into "low" genres such as comedy, satire, and the novel, while the elite classes simultaneously stopped participating in carnival and other folk festivities.

Puttenham's rejection of carnival and the carnivalesque seems matched in his work with an embracing of Bakhtin's "classical" body, a body that is "alien to hyperbolization" (Bakhtin 1968: 322). Of course, Puttenham is not the only rhetorician who reflects this preference; generally, writers on rhetoric in the Renaissance were committed to a classicizing program that could hardly escape a built-in bias in favor of the classical body (Rebhorn 1995: 212–21; 2000: 3–24). This bias appears most dramatically in those sections of their works where they are literally concerned with

the body, namely, where they discuss *actio* or delivery. Thomas Wilson is typical in prescribing rules for the orator's body:

> The head to be holden upright, the forehead without frowning, the brows without bending, the nose without blowing, the eyes quick and pleasant, the lips not laid out, the teeth without grinning, the arms not much cast abroad but comely set out, as time and cause shall best require. (Wilson 1994: 221)

This body is clearly classical: its attributes are "normal" (the head upright and the forehead clear), and it is both self-contained and complete (the nose is not being blown, and the mouth does not gape open showing the teeth). Moreover, although orators must move their limbs in making gestures, Wilson insists that those movements be harmonious so that the entire body appear to be "stirring altogether, with a seemly moderation" (221). Similarly, Puttenham devotes two long chapters of his *Arte* to the question of decorous behavior, and although he limits himself primarily to discussing speech, his conception of decorum is presented in bodily terms as a matter of avoiding deformities and disproportions. Using a telling analogy, he says a speech is "a membered body" that will not be pleasing unless it has its "due measures and symmetry" (268). Indeed, he says the English equivalent of decorum is "seemliness, that is to say, for his good shape and utter appearance well pleasing the eye; we call it also comeliness for the delight it bringeth coming towards us" (269).

As we will see, however, in his book Puttenham does not simply reject carnival in favor of the classical body and the elite culture it defines. Indeed, if he sometimes seems opposed to traditional folk festivity and committed to the classical ideal, his text also turns out to be deeply invested in the carnivalesque. That investment will appear with particular clarity when we examine his differences from one of the major subtexts beneath his work, Joannes Susenbrotus' handbook of rhetorical figures, his *Epitome troporum ac schematum* (*An Epitome of Tropes and Schemes*), which provides much of the material for Puttenham's discussion of poetical ornamentation. Born the son of a weaver, Joannes Susenbrotus (1485–1542) was educated at the University of Vienna, a center of humanistic studies after 1501, and from about 1508 to the end of his life, taught Latin and Greek in various schools and universities throughout the German-speaking parts of Europe. In addition to the *Epitome*, he published works on Latin grammar and an edition of neo-Latin poetry. Although he was a fervent Catholic, his religion plays only a small role in the *Epitome*, and that fact as well as its thoroughness and clarity of organization may explain why it was an enormous success in largely Protestant Northern Europe, going through some two dozen editions in the first century after its initial publication in 1541. By comparing it with Puttenham's *Arte*, we will see that the latter is far more engaged with the body, in particular with a sexualized and procreative body, than Susenbrotus' work is. The *Arte* also aims to degrade the high in a way the *Epitome* never does, and it directly embraces the carnivalesque figures of the rogue and the clown. In short, we will see that if the

rhetorician Susenbrotus virtually eliminates carnival from his text, Puttenham's *Arte* works in the opposite direction by carnivalizing rhetoric.

How do we know that Susenbrotus is, in fact, the source of Puttenham's discussion of figures of speech? First, there is the sheer weight of the numbers. Of the 121 figures identified by name in the *Arte*, all but six of them are in the *Epitome*, nor can the full list be found in any other classical or Renaissance rhetorical handbook. Moreover, although Puttenham often alters the order he finds in Susenbrotus, he groups the figures just as his predecessor did. For instance, where Susenbrotus divides tropes into those involving individual words and those involving larger units of discourse, Puttenham similarly devotes an entire chapter to "sensable figures" (tropes) in "single words" and a second chapter to "sensable figures" in "whole clauses or speeches" (188, 196). Again, what Puttenham calls sententious figures are simply the second and largest subdivision of the schemes in Susenbrotus. Within these various divisions and subdivisions, Puttenham usually rearranges the order of the individual figures in Susenbrotus. However, even in the chapter on sententious figures, which really scrambles Susenbrotus' arrangement, Puttenham still begins with the same six figures as Susenbrotus does, and he ends with four of Susenbrotus' last five. Finally, Puttenham's indebtedness is revealed by his retention of many of the examples and sometimes the very words he found in the *Epitome*. For instance, for *asyndeton*, both men have Julius Caesar's "I came, I saw, I conquered," and for *antiphrasis* both use the example of calling a dwarf a giant. Even more revealing is an example Puttenham provides for *sententia*: "Nothing sticks faster by us as appears, / Than that which we learn in our tender years" (243) – a poetical recasting of Susenbrotus' "Nothing sticks more tenaciously than what we learn as boys" (91). The general closeness between Puttenham and Susenbrotus suggests that when the former sat down to write about figures of speech, he must have done so with the *Epitome* open on the table before him.

When one reads Puttenham's *Arte* against Susenbrotus' *Epitome*, what emerges is just how carnivalesque Puttenham's work is. By contrast, Susenbrotus' *Epitome* exudes moral and religious earnestness, as when he finishes his prefatory epistle to his students with this pious request: "Farewell, and call upon God for me in your little prayers" (3). Sometimes his examples for the figures offer secular moral advice, as when he writes: "The soul of one whose entire hope is in money is far removed from wisdom" (54). More often, his advice is religious, as when he blames the conquests the Turks have made in Europe on the sinfulness of Christians (51), or talks about the uncertainty of life on earth (79–80). In addition, although the majority of Susenbrotus' examples come from the classics, perhaps a third are biblical in origin or religious in character. Consider, for instance, what he says about *paradiastole*. He defines the figure as occurring "when we palliate our own or another's faults by some flattering explanation, as the perverse Silenuses (*praeposteri . . . Sileni*) in our time are accustomed to do" (45). Having turned the definition into a moral condemnation, Susenbrotus then gives a series of examples, ending with one from the Bible (2 Corinthians 11:14): "For Satan himself is transfigured into an angel of light" (46). Susenbrotus' moral and religious seriousness is related to the very limited play he

gives to the body, the senses, and pleasure in his treatise. Only very occasionally, for example, does he recommend a particular figure because of its beauty or charm or the pleasure it affords, and even then he often hedges his bets. For example, when discussing *chronographia*, a figure that involves a description colored by the circumstance of time, he declares that it may sometimes be "used merely for the sake of giving delight," but then adds the important qualifier that it should not "be employed entirely without purpose" (85). As the earnest Susenbrotus says in another passage: "work itself is pleasure" (79).

In this context it should not be surprising that Susenbrotus is hostile to carnival. In the prefatory letter, he explains how he composed his treatise during that holiday in a bout of solitary labor made all the more solitary by a sickness which prevented him from attending "even those more liberal, public, and indeed honest banquets of honorable men and elders that are still received among us amid these Bacchanalian customs" (2). Although Susenbrotus does seem to accept carnival here, he really just tolerates it, and only so long as it involves the "honest banquets of honorable men." His hostility to the traditional festivity and to the erotic release it often entails shows through, however, as he then explains how this was a time "when the unbridled youth of this most degenerate generation ran up and down throughout the entire city, bewitched as though maddened by the gadfly of Isis or agitated by the furies of hell, and devoted themselves enthusiastically to rites more abandoned – I might even say impious – than those of pagans" (2). Not surprisingly, there is no place for the grotesque body anywhere in Susenbrotus' treatise.

Although moral and religious instruction is not a matter of indifference to Puttenham, one hardly comes away from reading the *Arte* with a sense that that instruction was as important to him as it was to Susenbrotus. Not only are there many fewer didactic examples in the *Arte*, but there are no biblical ones at all. Moreover, the majority of the poems Puttenham supplies as examples involve courtly love: poems of praise for the beauty of one's beloved, poems about her hard-heartedness, poems about the lover's woeful state. To see the real difference between Susenbrotus and Puttenham, consider what they do in connection with the figure of exclamation. The former illustrates it with a host of remarks by Cicero, St. Paul, St. Bernard, Matthew, and Vergil (60–1). By contrast, Puttenham cites the words of Chaucer's Cressida, a poem of complaint by Gascoigne, and Wyatt's version of a love sonnet by Petrarch (221–2). In short, although Puttenham can be moralistic and religious at times, he more often focuses on the pleasures and pains of love, thus giving emotion and the body a consistent place in his work.

If Puttenham, like Susenbrotus, has a serious purpose in his treatise, he is serious about pleasure and the eroticized body more than morality and religion. Whereas Susenbrotus only occasionally notes that a figure is beautiful or produces pleasure, Puttenham uses those words – plus variants on terms such as "comely" and "delight" – dozens of times. His stress on beauty and pleasure is reinforced by his conception of figures of speech as ornaments or clothing covering the bare body of an utterance. As he says at the start of Book 3, poetry cannot "show itself either gallant or gorgeous, if

any limb be left naked and bare and not clad in his kindly clothes and colors," which, if they are well handled, will "yield it much…beauty and commendation" (150). Puttenham personifies poetry here and genders it as female, a gendering that is underscored by his comparing poetry to "these great Madams of honor" who put on "courtly habiliments" to make themselves "more amiable in every man's eye" (149–50). Moreover, the actual physical and sensual attractiveness of women is often at issue in Puttenham's text in the courtly love poems he gives as examples for figures. Most revelatory of the gap between Susenbrotus and Puttenham on this score is what they do with the figure called *exargasia* or *expolitio*, that is, the polishing or embellishing of speech. Susenbrotus treats it as just another figure of amplification, whereas Puttenham separates it from all the others, proclaims it the "principal figure of our poetical ornament," dubs it "the Gorgeous" (254), and makes it the subject of an entire chapter, which he places in the position of honor at the end of his discussion of the figures.

Puttenham is also more insistent than Susenbrotus that figures of speech provide pleasure for the audience. When discussing the shortening or lengthening of words, for instance, he says that sometimes such changes are made "for pleasure to give a better sound" (174). Similarly, he declares that metaphors are often used "for pleasure and ornament of our speech" (189) and that nicknames are "spoken of pleasure" (229). At the start of Book 3, Puttenham also hints at the erotic attraction of figurative language when he proclaims that he is teaching the poet how to fashion his "language and style, to such purpose as it may *delight and allure* as well the mind as the ear of the hearers" (149, my emphasis). Finally, at the end of Book 3, Puttenham sums things up, claiming that he has now taught the poet how to utter his ideas "with pleasure and delight" (312).

Bakhtin sees the body in carnival as erotic and procreative, and Puttenham's identification of poetry as female and his frequent citations of love poetry evoke precisely that body in his text. In fact, he goes out of his way to stress the sexualized, procreative body when he discusses the epithalamion, or marriage poem, or what he calls "ballads at the bedding of the bride" (65). This chapter is particularly long because he decides to explain how this poetic genre functions in actuality, a move he largely refrains from making with other genres. Thus, he explains how the first part of an epithalamion is normally sung by musicians in a room full of people next to the bedroom of the bride and groom. This song is "loud and shrill," explains Puttenham, "to the intent there might no noise be heard out of the bed chamber by the screeching and outcry of the young damsel feeling the first forces of her stiff and rigorous young man" (66). Puttenham then describes in detail the customs observed on that wedding night, alluding to the couple's sexual activities and noting how the musicians would sing another song around midnight "to refresh the faint and wearied bodies and spirits" of the couple and to encourage them to breed "barns [children]" (66).

Puttenham evokes the sexualized body of carnival even more forcefully when he illustrates *enigma* with the following riddle recited by an old woman who worked in his mother's nursery: "I have a thing and rough it is, / And in the midst a hole, I-wis

[I know]. / There came a young man with his gin [cunning, tool], / And he put it a handful in" (198–9). Lest we miss the bawdy meaning here, Puttenham says that although the old woman "would tell us that were children how it was meant by a furred glove . . . [s]ome other naughty body would peradventure have construed it not half so mannerly" (199). Clearly, not only is the sexualized body on display here, but the sex it is having is rough and tumble, vigorous, fun. Moreover, as he clarifies the meaning of the riddle, Puttenham himself slyly identifies with the "naughty body," becoming himself a kind of carnival clown.

Puttenham's investment in the eroticized body of carnival stands out in relief when one compares his treatment of the rhetorical figure *cacemphaton* with Susenbrotus'. Quintilian (8.3.44) defines *cacemphaton* as the use of language with "an obscene sense," illustrates it with various double entendres, and clearly disapproves of it. Although Susenbrotus does not have a category for figures one should avoid, he surprisingly retains *cacemphaton*, placing it among the grammatical schemes. However, when he defines it, he says it is merely a "rude and awkward composition of words" (36). By contrast, Puttenham knows exactly what *cacemphaton* means, and following Quintilian's lead, he places it in his chapter on "deformities in speech and writing" (256), declaring that the "courtly maker" should shun it, "lest of a Poet he become a buffoon or railing companion" (261). However, Puttenham is more ambivalent about the figure than such a statement suggests, for he also says that "when we use such words as may be drawn to a foul and unshamefast sense," they are "in some cases tolerable, and chiefly to the intent to move laughter and to make sport, or to give it [our speech] some pretty, strange grace" (260–1). He then supplies the example of "one that would say to a young woman, 'I pray you let me jape with you,' which indeed is no more but 'Let me sport with you'" (260–1). Thus, whereas Susenbrotus' text remains chaste, Puttenham's reveals a complicated interest in the erotic which, in this case, serves to violate normal social rules of decorum and thus bring "ladies," and everyone and everything else, down to earth, or, as Bakhtin would put it, down to the "material bodily lower stratum" (Bakhtin 1968: 360). Puttenham's self-division here is also apparent in the earlier passage concerning the old woman's riddle, a passage he concludes thus: "The riddle is pretty but it holds too much of the *cacemphaton*, or foul speech, and may be drawn to a reprobate sense" (199). Of course, if Puttenham had really wanted to keep his readers from becoming buffoons by using such figures, he could have simply omitted the riddle altogether. Instead, by doing just the opposite, he draws obscene possibilities to their attention, once again playing the carnival clown, deliberately violating the very boundaries of decency he himself has taken the trouble to specify.

Pleasure, sexuality, and one of the key orifices of the body – from the viewpoint of carnival – all come together in another passage in Puttenham's book which is also a charged expression of the author's complicated connection to the real social and political world in which he lived. This passage occurs in the first book of the *Arte* when Puttenham is describing how well poets used to be treated in times past. This brings him to recall

that noble woman, twice French queen, Lady Anne of Brittany, wife first to king Charles VIII and after to Louis XII, who passing one day from her lodging toward the king's side, saw in a gallery Master Alain Chartier, the king's secretary, an excellent maker or Poet, leaning on a table's end asleep, and stooped down to kiss him, saying thus in all their hearings, "We may not of princely courtesy pass by and not honor with our kiss the mouth from whence so many sweet ditties and golden poems have issued." (35)[4]

The key body-part in this passage is the poet's mouth which, in true carnival fashion, serves as a place of exchange between the inner world of the poet and the world around him. The things exchanged in this instance are the "sweet ditties and golden poems" the poet has sung and the kiss conferred upon him by the queen. That kiss may be read in a variety of ways: as an erotic reward and a sign perhaps of an even greater one to come; as symbolic nourishment (the queen's sweets in exchange for the "sweet ditties" the poet composed); and as a more tangible, monetary benefit (the queen's gold for Chartier's "golden poems"). Although the anecdote is historical, its recounting contains a strong element of fantasy: the queen plays the role of a benevolent fairy godmother who of her own accord comes to nourish the sleeping child-hero. Read in terms of the patron–client relationship that obtained in the court society in which Puttenham lived, Anne is Elizabeth I as her courtiers and subjects wanted her to be: she gives them marvelous rewards for their achievements without their having to beg. Looked at in terms of the carnivalesque, not only is this passage about the body as a locus of sensual gratification as well as about the fluid relationship between individual and world as mediated by the mouth, but it also involves a real, though limited, degradation or uncrowning, in that the queen must literally descend – stoop – in order to kiss the poet's mouth.

Degradation is precisely the intended goal of at least one particular subset of "sensable figures" in Puttenham's treatise. These include *sarcasmus*, or "the bitter taunt"; *asteismus*, or "the merry scoff"; *micterismus*, or "the fleering frump" ("sneering, derisive speech"); *antiphrasis*, or "the broad flout"; and *charientismus*, or "the privy nip" (200–1). Although Puttenham takes all of these terms from Susenbrotus, a comparison of the two writers reveals just how much Puttenham emphasizes their capacity to degrade. First, while Susenbrotus notes that some of them do express derision, he downplays that element. *Asteismus*, for instance, is defined as a "jest about something absurd that comes from far off and is quite unexpected" (16). By contrast, Puttenham not only Englishes the Greek as "the merry scoff," but also includes the idea of mockery in the definition, saying that we are using *asteismus* "when we speak by manner of pleasantry, or merry *scoff*, that is by a kind of *mock*, whereof the sense is far-fetched" (200, my emphasis). Even more revealing of the gap between the two men is their treatment of *antiphrasis*. Susenbrotus says that it occurs when "a word or idea is understood through its contrary . . . as if someone should call a dwarf a giant (*Atlantem*)" (16–17). By contrast, for Puttenham, it occurs "when we deride by plain and flat contradiction, as he that saw a dwarf go in the street said to his companion that walked with him: 'See yonder giant'" (201). In this case, Puttenham borrows his

example, as he does his definition of the figure, from Susenbrotus, but he has clearly changed both to insist on the derision involved, indeed to dramatize that derision in the exchange he imagines between two unidentified speakers gleefully mocking another. Finally, whereas Susenbrotus' examples of derisive, mocking, and ironic statements largely come from the classics, thus keeping them at a safe distance from the social world in which his pupils and readers lived, Puttenham's examples primarily concern things said by his contemporaries.

It must be acknowledged that Puttenham's examples of degrading statements are almost all attributed to rulers and noblemen. Typical is the remark offered as an example of *sarcasmus* and credited to the Emperor Charles V. Having defeated and captured John Frederick, the Duke of Saxony, "a man of monstrous bigness and corpulence," Charles quipped to his followers, "I have gone a-hunting many times, yet never took I such a swine before" (200). Puttenham's strategy here seems clear: by putting such words in the mouths of the great, he deflects potential charges that he is making such techniques available to those lower down in the social hierarchy. But, of course, the truth is that that is precisely what Puttenham is doing in writing his book. For despite its identification of Elizabeth as its primary audience and its continual gestures of deference to members of the ruling class, the real audience of the *Arte* would have included would-be courtiers and commoners who could use its teaching for their own purposes. As if to underscore this possibility, Puttenham changes the class of the speakers as he goes from example to example, gradually working his way down the social hierarchy. Thus, after illustrating *ironia*, *sarcasmus*, and *asteismus* by citing the quips of princes and noblemen, the one example he offers for *micterismus* involves a socially unplaced "he," who, responding to a similarly unplaced "one whose words he believed not," says sarcastically, "No doubt, Sir, of that" (201). Finally, although the example Puttenham supplies to illustrate the last figure in this series, *charientismus*, also uses socially unmarked pronouns, in this case it seems clear that the speaker who makes the derisive remark is not a king or a prince but a social inferior who uses the resources of rhetoric to defend himself by uncrowning a social superior. As Puttenham calls *charientismus* "the privy nip" and defines it as occurring "when ye give a mock under smooth and lowly words" (201), he implies that the figure is the weapon of the weak against the strong. This interpretation is confirmed by the example he supplies in which an unplaced "he" hears "one call him all to naught and say, 'Thou art sure to be hanged ere thou die.'" The "he" then replies with the ironic quip: "Sir, I know your mastership speaks but in jest" (201). Although the exact nature of the derision contained in this last comment remains obscure, as is the exact social placement of the two speakers, what is nevertheless clear is that by this point we have moved well away from examples of derisive comments used by superiors to put inferiors in their place. As a result, the figures' potential use for the carnivalesque degrading of those on high is unmistakable.

Ironically, Puttenham's work comes closest to carnival when it is trying to move farthest away from it, namely in the chapter devoted to the teaching of decorum. Once again he recounts an anecdote that involves the body and one of its key orifices,

although here the degradation involved, unlike the stooping of Anne to kiss Alain Chartier, is far more dramatic. This anecdote is introduced to show how sometimes speeches that savor of scurrility can be made to appear decorous. It concerns one Sir Andrew Flamock, the standard-bearer of Henry VIII, "a merry and conceited man and apt to scoff," who was

> waiting one day at the king's heels when he entered the park at Greenwich. The king blew his horn. Flamock, having his belly full, and his tail at commandment, gave out a rap nothing faintly, that the king turned him about and said, "How now, sirrah?" Flamock, not well knowing how to excuse his unmannerly act, "If it please you, Sir," quoth he, "your Majesty blew one blast for the keeper, and I another for his man." (274–5)

Sir Andrew makes a brilliant recovery here, provokes the king's laughing pardon, and receives Puttenham's praise for the "decency," or decorousness, of his remark, "for it was the cleanliest excuse he could make, and a merry implicative in terms nothing odious, and therefore a sporting satisfaction to the king's mind" (275). Although Sir Andrew worries about the "unmannerly" nature of his act, clearly more is at stake here than some general violation of social decorum. His "rap" is a carnivalesque parody of the king's blowing of his horn, and it turns the social and political order topsy-turvy by bringing the high down low, specifically by bringing the king's airy "blast," associated with the mouth and head, the upper part of the body, down to the level of the material bodily lower stratum, the level of the belly and the anus. It mocks the king by saying that he is not just a wind-bag, but a malodorous one as well. The king "gets the message," responding to Sir Andrew's act in a way that leaves no uncertainty that he senses the affront in it, for not only does he express his indignation with his "How now, sirrah?" but also Puttenham's subsequent comment that Sir Andrew's final statement was "a merry implicative in terms nothing odious" suggests that his "rap" had implications for Henry that were not merry and were certainly hateful. In other words, he suggests that Henry takes it all personally. However, Sir Andrew recovers brilliantly from what appears his certain disgrace for something like a minor form of *lèse-majesté*. Perhaps picking up on the king's attempt to reassert the "proper" social hierarchy by addressing his standard-bearer as "sirrah," a term which was reserved for social inferiors, Sir Andrew calls him "Sir," and then resurrects the social hierarchy by identifying the king's "blast" with the upper-class keeper of the palace and Sir Andrew's "rap" with the keeper's "man," that is, his servant. High and low are once again where they belong, and the king can laugh off the carnivalesque degradation involved as Sir Andrew saves himself by humbling himself, playing the carnival clown in an act of self-degradation.

Or is that really the meaning of this very charged story? Even though Puttenham stresses that its "moral" is to be found in Sir Andrew's graceful and decorous recovery from almost sure disgrace, the story also allows us to see – or hear – Sir Andrew bringing Henry down to earth, and if at the end he helps Henry to his feet again,

we cannot forget that we have indeed witnessed the king come tumbling down. Significantly, Puttenham says not only that Sir Andrew had "his belly full," but also that he had "his tail at commandment." If his breaking of wind were merely the result of his having eaten too much, then his act would seem a fairly pale, passive kind of parody at best. But since he has "his tail at commandment" and can break wind at will, his "rap" must be read as a conscious mockery of Henry's "blast," no matter what Sir Andrew said afterward. Thus, this element of calculated maliciousness is also part of the "meaning" of the anecdote, and it allows Puttenham – who also has his tail, symbolically speaking, at commandment – to join Sir Andrew, at least for a moment, in breaking wind and directing his carnivalesque mockery at the great while appreciating the cleverness with which Sir Andrew, more carnival rogue than fool or clown, gets away with it. The point is that Sir Andrew did not have to make the subversive "rap" in the first place – nor did Puttenham have to rehearse the story – and then have to contain it by means of a clever rhetorical move. Moreover, once he has told the story, all the rhetoric in the world cannot prevent us from detecting the telltale odor associated with Henry that is, as it were, left behind.[5]

There is one final way in which Puttenham's *Arte* reveals his investment in the carnivalesque: its central identification of the courtier-poet and of rhetoric itself as deception and masquerade. As we noted, Bakhtin sees deceivers, whom he refers to as rogues, along with fools and clowns, as being typical actors of carnival. The folkloric figure of the trickster actually combines all three types in himself, and thus seems even closer to the character of the courtier-poet as Puttenham conceives him – and to Puttenham himself, as he plays just such a part in his text. His identification of the courtier-poet as a trickster appears most clearly in the next-to-last chapter of the *Arte*, which speaks about how that figure must know how "cunningly…to dissemble" his art, lest, having just become a courtier, he "be disgraded [degraded], and with scorn sent back again to the shop" (305). Puttenham spends the next several pages, first identifying this art with the ability to wear different costumes, and then, at much greater length, reviewing the ways in which the courtier-poet must "dissemble his conceits [thoughts] as well as his countenances, so as he never speak as he thinks, or think as he speaks, and that in any matter of importance his words and his meaning very seldom meet…whereby the better to win his purposes and good advantages" (305). In this passage Puttenham also identifies the figure of *allegoria*, which he placed first among the tropes in an earlier chapter, as being not just the "figure of fair semblant [seeming]," but as equivalent to the courtier-poet himself (305).

Puttenham's identification of the courtier-poet with allegory suggests that that character's use of figures of speech is central to his self-definition, figures that are, significantly, characterized as matters of deception in the *Arte*. As we have observed, Puttenham thinks of them as linguistic decoration or clothing (149–50), a notion which certainly opens up the possibility that they could be used for deceit. More tendentiously, Puttenham declares that figures in general are

abuses or rather trespasses in speech, because they pass the ordinary limits of common
utterance, and be occupied of purpose to deceive the ear and also the mind, drawing it
from plainness and simplicity to a certain doubleness, whereby our talk is the more
guileful and abusing. (166)

Consider, by contrast, Susenbrotus' much less problematic definition: "a figure is a
certain mode in which one turns (*deflectitur*) from a correct (*recti*) and simple manner of
speech with a certain excellence in the words (*aliqua dicendi virtute*)" (6). Although the
seeds of Puttenham's conception can be discerned here in the notion that figures
involve a turning away from a correct manner, Susenbrotus wants to remove any hint
of a moral problem by referring to the effect as involving a certain excellence, literally
a "virtue," in one's words. Moreover, unlike Puttenham, Susenbrotus defines allegory
unproblematically as a figure that occurs when "something is proposed by one's words
and something else in one's meaning" (12). For Puttenham, figures are all about
dissembling, guile, and what he suggestively calls "abuse." Not surprisingly, whereas
Susenbrotus says that the figure *catachresis*, which in Latin is called *abusio* ("false
naming"), is "the adaptation of a term close in meaning to something that lacks a
name" (11), Puttenham stresses the Latin term, labeling *catechresis* "the figure of
abuse," and explaining how, when we lack a word for something, "we take another
neither natural nor proper and do apply it untruly to the thing we would express"
(190).

Puttenham's identification of figures of speech as duplicitous is most fully revealed
by what he says about allegory, which he pronounces "the chief ringleader and captain
of all the other figures" (197). Although in his penultimate chapter he calls it "the
figure of fair semblant" (305), earlier he calls it, more suggestively, the "Figure of *false*
semblant," which we employ "as well when we lie as when we tell truth" (197, my
emphasis). The ambiguity of Puttenham's labeling in these two instances reflects his
larger ambivalence about the courtier-poet, whom he presents as both teacher-civilizer
and trickster. For instance, in the penultimate chapter he spends several pages
detailing the ways in which the courtier-poet must use his art in order to dissemble
and protect himself through lies. But then he makes a sudden about-face, declaring
that the dissembling he has been discussing is what he has observed in *foreign* courts
and that such deceits "we allow not now in our English maker, because we have given
him the name of an honest man, and not of an hypocrite." Puttenham concludes that
the courtier-poet may "be a dissembler only in the subtleties of his art," that is, the
writing of poetry (308). However, although Puttenham may wish his readers to take
this last statement as canceling out what came before it, there is no way it can do that.
The result is that we are left with ambivalence, a sense that Puttenham is betwixt and
between things when he considers the dissembling art of the courtier-poet – and the
state of being betwixt and between is, of course, precisely what characterizes the
experience of carnival.

What are we to make of the insistent carnivalization going on in Puttenham's *Arte*?
One answer to this question is to see it as a transitional text that looks forward to the

hegemony of the classical body in the seventeenth century, while looking backward to the folk festivities of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. Bakhtin actually documents this transition in chapter 1 of *Rabelais and His World*, describing how folk festivities were gradually marginalized in the late Renaissance and how the elite came to define themselves and their culture in terms of the classical body. As we have seen, Puttenham's *Arte* may reject carnival in places and insist on a classical notion of decorum, but it is also powerfully invested in the carnivalesque. Indeed, it is precisely in the section of the book devoted to the classical ideal of decorum that Puttenham places the memorable anecdote of Flamock and the fart, thus parodying the ideal he otherwise appears to embrace.

We can also read what is happening in the *Arte* in another way, as a profound response on Puttenham's part to the nature of rhetoric itself as it developed in antiquity and the Renaissance. In both periods writers on the subject consistently stress the importance of decorum, to be sure, but from the start the discourse of rhetoric also contains significant carnivalesque elements. Those elements appear, for instance, when rhetoricians discuss the part of their art called *inventio*, or the finding out of material for their speeches. Revealingly, rhetorical invention is implicitly gendered as female, in fact as a grotesquely large, maternal body that is inherently messy and disorderly and needs to be kept under control by another part of rhetoric called *dispositio*, or "arrangement" (Parker 1987: 8–35). This fat body is by definition sexual and procreative, and these aspects of it were given prominence during the Renaissance because of the emphasis in the study of rhetoric that was placed on the acquisition of copiousness, a trend that led to the publication of one of the most influential treatises of the age, Erasmus' *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (*On the Double Copiousness of Words and Things*), whose first edition appeared in 1512. In other words, the commitment to copiousness shared by Renaissance rhetoricians pushed their art in the direction of carnival. And so did their conception of tropes, which from antiquity on were defined as figures that involved changes or transformations in the meanings of words. The key trope was, of course, metaphor, and the very term evokes carnival, since it means nothing less than a "crossing of borders or boundaries" and thus implies a transgression of normal laws and rules (Parker 1987: 36–7). Finally, rhetoric is identified from the start with a skeptical epistemology, a belief that the rhetor works with probabilities rather than absolute truth. Not surprisingly, rhetoric was also attacked from the start, most memorably by Plato in the *Gorgias*, as lies, as offering only shabby, deceitful cookery when human beings need the deep healing of real medicine. Thus, although rhetoricians repeatedly argued that their art was the very source of civilization, as Cicero does at the start of his *De inventione* – and Puttenham does in the third chapter of his book – the good rhetor was dogged at every turn by his evil twin, the duplicitous, subversive, destructive orator. In the worst construction of this character, he was rejected as the enemy of social and political order; in the best, he appeared a kind of clown, a mountebank and a streetcorner entertainer – in other words, a figure out of carnival.

What we have seen in Puttenham's *Arte* is that all these elements of carnival which are attached to the discourse of rhetoric in antiquity and the Renaissance are reproduced there as well. In fact, Puttenham differs from his contemporaries by going out of his way to emphasize them. He evokes the erotic, procreative body of carnival and keeps it constantly in sight. He not only presents tropes as crossing boundaries, but also emphasizes their moral ambiguity by referring to them as "trespasses." And he repeatedly emphasizes the tricky nature of the art he teaches and of the courtier-poet who will put it into practice. Moreover, Puttenham intensifies the carnivalization of his treatise on a number of occasions by recounting stories that foreground that most typical of carnival activities, the uncrowning or degrading of authority. Although he seems as committed as rhetoricians before him to ideals of decorum, moderation, and the classical body, his text consistently reveals an equal, if not more powerful, commitment to carnival, a commitment that may even be found in the anecdote with which we began this essay, the anecdote about the "shrewd boys" who expose the giants marching in midsummer pageants to the derision of bystanders. Although we interpreted this anecdote as a burlesque of carnival, there is another way to read it. For the legendary first inhabitants of England were supposedly giants, and those figures were also used traditionally to represent the British people (Bristol 1985: 66). In other words, they could be read as positive images of power and authority. The action of the shrewd boys thus need not be equated with the disenchanted skepticism of some "modern" mentality mocking traditional carnival displays, but rather with the active uncrowning of authority that is an ingredient in carnival itself. The shrewd boys can be read, in other words, as part of carnival, as clowns or tricksters who operate from within and are part of the show. Insofar as Puttenham identifies with those boys in writing the passage, then, he may not be demonstrating some sort of "classical" mentality that views carnival spectacles askance, but participating at that very moment in carnival himself. Having "his tail at commandment," he plays the carnival clown here just as he does at other moments in his book, breaking wind at the high and mighty in order to bring them down to earth, and thereby revealing the carnivalesque potential of the book he has written and the art it teaches.

Notes

1 I have modernized all Renaissance English texts cited in order to make them more accessible for modern readers.
2 The bride-ale was the wedding feast at the start of which, when the bride and groom had returned from the church, they and the wedding party were presented with warm, sweet, spiced ale.
3 In late medieval morality plays allegorical figures identified as various vices appeared to tempt the protagonist, an "everyman" figure, into evil, while, like the jester or buffoon, they entertained him – and the audience – with bawdy, irreverent humor, and physical comedy. By the sixteenth century, one of their number had taken on the generic name of "the Vice."

4   According to Jean Bouchet's *Les Annales d'Aquitaine* (1644), the poet was not kissed by Anne of Brittany, but by Margaret of Scotland, daughter of James I, who married the French Dauphin, later Louis XI, in 1436.

5   I am grateful to my colleague Frank Whigham for sharing with me his unpublished essay "Insult and Intimacy," whose reading of this episode converges in many ways with my own.

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Rhetorical Selfhood in Erasmus and Milton

Thomas O. Sloane

In mid-Lent 374 the scholarly Saint Jerome, who delighted in reading ancient authors, had a dream in which he was hauled before a divine tribunal and asked what he was. "A Christian," Jerome replied. "You lie," the judge responded. "You are a Ciceronian, not a Christian. For your heart is where your treasure is." In his dream Jerome was then flogged, after which he repented and acknowledged that to read "worldly books" is indeed to deny Christ.

Eleven centuries later the story was still being told – widely told, according to Erasmus, even by people "who have never read a word that Jerome has written."[1] But then, in Erasmus' day, "worldly books" had become increasingly prominent as well as, for some people, increasingly problematic. Renaissance humanists, like Erasmus, were eagerly publishing countless "worldly books" revived from antiquity. And once more the attractiveness of these profane works raised the scriptural question about what one is, or where one's heart is. Does studying pagan writers like Cicero or admiring "worldly books" amount to denying Christ? And another question lurked close behind: just what does it mean to follow Christ, to be Christlike?

One Renaissance way of dealing with the pleasures of reading the pagan classics, which worked for a while, was to allegorize them. Petrarch showed the way by arguing that classical poetry could be viewed as actually adumbrating Christian truths and morals. Erasmus seemed not only to follow that lead but also to go even farther, beyond allegory and into syncretism. Toward that apparent end he penned one of his most infamous lines: "Saint Socrates, pray for us!" (Thompson 1965: 68). The line is uttered by Eusebius in Erasmus' *The Godly Feast* (1522), a colloquy chiefly among five (fictive) learned men whose dramatized conversation contains several justifications for reading ancient literature: "whatever is devout and contributes to good morals should not be called profane," Eusebius argues, admitting that whenever he reads Cicero he sometimes kisses the book and blesses "that pure heart, divinely inspired as it was" (Thompson 1965: 65). In view of the Churchly suspicion of pagan writings, Eusebius has to speak *sotto voce*. But the writer of the colloquy obviously

chose not to. Indeed, in composing and then publishing this dialogue, Erasmus, the first and greatest humanist of Northern Europe, pursued one of his favorite rhetorical tactics, a provocative sallying forth against probable opposition, close to what today we would call an in-your-face kind of outrage – albeit often committed, as in this dialogue, indirectly, by fictive characters.

Another way of dealing with the pagan classics was to disparage them as sources of wisdom. Not necessarily to ban them, as some Churchly voices urged, but to recognize their limitations. This would appear to be the way chosen by John Milton, one of the last great humanists of Northern Europe. In Milton's *Paradise Regained* (1671) it is Christ himself who claims that the wisdom which pervades ancient writing may indeed be wisdom but it is inferior to that gained by studying scripture.[2] Therein, the Petrarchan/Erasmian apology for pagan culture bows to the urgency of Christian *humilitas* and its recognition that God alone is the source of all wisdom, as set forth in scripture.

Actually, both ways branch from similar worries about the potentially irreligious influence of the revived classics, their almost unrestrained worldliness. Both Erasmus and Milton had expressed dismay over the cultural paganism in Italy where the revival began, a country each had visited as young men. Though it seems curious that Erasmus at the outset of Northern European humanism seems to praise and even flaunt the very paganism which Milton at the close of that humanism seems to disparage, from a rhetorical perspective their moves appear tactical and arise not only from differences in their times but also from equally complex and functional differences in the nature of their writerly selves.

In rhetorical terms, the issue centers on *ethos*, the means whereby a speaker or writer projects a self-image. It is well known that absorption with rhetoric – an art about which pagans like Cicero had the most to say – is one of the hallmarks of Renaissance humanism. *Ethos*, identity or selfhood, is a major tenet of rhetoric. And character was in turn a major theme of the Renaissance itself, a period in which highly individualized personalities placed their stamp on the intellectual and artistic wonders of the age. The Renaissance was a time, moreover, when self-fashioning became possible, when background and lineage became somewhat less functional or praiseworthy than the identity one was able to forge for oneself (Greenblatt 1980). Self-fashioning as well as *ethos* caught the imagination of readers – through short prose pieces called "characters," through the newly printed "Characters" of Theophrastes, through the revived *Rhetoric* of Aristotle, with its description of various characters the orator might find in his audience. As these latter examples indicate, *ethos* in particular had a practical, communicative application.

Rhetorically, *ethos* is "character as it emerges in language" (Baumlin 2001: 263). Ancients taught that, in order to achieve eloquence and persuasiveness, one must reveal an attractive character in, through, and often behind his words – attractive, that is, to the particular audience whose approval he seeks. The writer/speaker must therefore have a sense of various character types and know which of these to assume in order to appeal to this or that audience in this or that situation. *Decorum* (also called

aptus and *accommodatus*) is the relevant rhetorical principle here, and it means that one must consider carefully how one may accommodate oneself to a range of speaker–audience relationships. Obviously, a certain variability or changeableness is invited by the practice. But the general limits of an orator's choices for *ethos* were to be set through the shaping of his own good character through education, especially the classical humanist education aimed at developing the *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, as Quintilian put it, "the good man skilled in speaking." In a Christian culture, of course, Christ becomes the role model of the good man. But this acknowledgment hardly solves the problem. It links it, rather, with ongoing problematics in the interpretation of Christ's character – which differed markedly for Erasmus and Milton.

Like the Christian humanists they were, both Erasmus and Milton saw good and evil, truth and error, even at times Christian and pagan, as inexorably mixed in this world. But for Erasmus, Christ in the final account will "draw" (*traho*) all unto himself. Erasmus puts the argument in the mouth of one of his most interesting speakers, the pugnacious Batt in *The Antibarbarians* (1520), a dialogue in which Erasmus himself makes a rare appearance in order to give approving attention to Batt's argument. When Christ returns, he will draw all things to his service, Batt says, echoing John 12:32. Therewith he places a seal on yet another defense of the pagan classics, through arguing God's omnipresence and plan. Milton pursues a somewhat different argument in his printed prose oration *Areopagitica* (1644), in defending freedom of the press: truth came into the world "with her divine Master," but now the body of Christ like the body of Osiris has been hewn into a thousand pieces and scattered to the four winds, and it is our task to restore that body, searching throughout a world in which truth must be sorted out from its mixture with error. Thus, defending access to knowledge for two different audiences over a century apart, Erasmus and Milton aimed their arguments at, respectively, an eschatological inevitability and an ongoing critical burden, each allied with differing emphases on the nature of truth and its "divine Master."

A seventeenth-century writer, John Aubrey, once echoed lively praise for Erasmus' argumentative skills: as a rhetor, Erasmus "was like a Badger, that never bitt but he made his teeth meet" (Dick 1957: 103). This, however, is only part of the story, the part that takes stock of Erasmus' penchant for shocking his readers, or "going for the throat" (Schoeck 1993). Those skills aside, Erasmus always sought to accommodate his opposition – as if he never lost sight of that lesson in *traho* about breadth or, for that matter, the correlative lesson in rhetorical *decorum*, which for Erasmus were profoundly *Christian* lessons: in this world, Christ accommodated himself to various situations even to the point of dissimulation (*varietas christi*), but always his final goal was peace and harmony (Hoffmann 1994: 217). Milton's argumentative tactics and manner differed radically. They were less accommodating and far less based on the principles of traditional rhetoric. Andrew Marvell claimed in a poetic tribute published not long after the appearance of *Paradise Lost* that Milton's rhetorical power lay in his prophetic voice, a Tiresias-like reward for his loss of sight. The poet's blind eyes

gazing no longer on this world – Aubrey suggests in his brief life of Milton – were focused inward on the forms of memory, born of his "excellent Method of thinking and disposing" (Dick 1957: 202). Although those forms, by virtue of being natural, would theoretically lie within us as well as within the poet, nonetheless both views of Milton, Marvell's and Aubrey's, take us more than a few steps beyond the bounds of ancient doctrine about how public discourse is created, how it finds its audience and achieves its aims.

Something of these rhetorical differences between Erasmus and Milton is suggested in their responses to Jerome's dream. Written for two different audiences and wrapped within two different intentions, the responses appear nonetheless characteristic. When Erasmus recounts the widely told dream in his 1516 life of Jerome, he reveals his own *traho*-like breadth of vision. He shifts the emphasis from Jerome's punishment and repentance, even from Jerome's apparent vow never to read pagan authors again, and places it on the activity which defines the very selfhood of this great scholar-saint: he emphasizes Jerome's work as a textual critic of sacred writing. Thereby he puts into broad and utilitarian perspective the saint's understandable and surely forgivable fascination with classical eloquence (Jardine 1993: 66–7). By contrast, Milton in *Areopagitica* gives much shorter shrift to the matter: it was not Christ but the Devil who judged and whipped Jerome. It had to be the Devil, Milton believes, since the judgment was so "partial." Why, for example, whip him for reading "grave *Cicero*" and not for reading "scurrill *Plautus*" whom Jerome had also been studying? This is assertive reasoning, and the speaker appears to be highly discriminating, focused, and above all confident of his judgment and of our approval.

Erasmus

As noted earlier, the ideal pattern of *ethos*, of rhetorical selfhood, was the same for Erasmus as it was for Milton: Christ. But this role, this Christ to be imitated, differed markedly in their conceptions. And, consequently, so did their argumentation, tactics, and manner.

For Erasmus, Christ is not simply our inevitable end but an active principle of life, one to be found in interactions with people – challenging ideas, inverting the status quo, urging reconsideration, scorning unthinking dogma. In his *Ratio verae theologiae* (*Method of True Theology*, 1518), Erasmus calls Christ "Proteus," thus characterizing him in terms of the classical model of changeableness and versatility. In addition, in his translation of John 1:1 (1516), Erasmus called Christ not "the Word" (*verbum*) as Jerome did, but "the Speech" (*sermo*), as if Christ were either a dynamic orator or a participant with us in an ongoing conversation. The Word, or *logos*, that existed in the beginning was therefore rhetorical, not an icon or an abstract thought but a copious and variable speech act (see chapter 4, this volume). In light of this venturesome idea, it may not be too far-fetched to consider Erasmus' notorious *Praise of Folly* (1511) as a curious and somewhat ironic *imitatio christi* – to see it, that is, as one of Erasmus' most

sustained depictions of rhetorical selfhood, a model, offered in characteristically ironic fashion, of Christlike *ethos* here in female persona.

Such a consideration at the very least makes sense of a catalogue Erasmus offered of his own work in 1524, in which he placed his *Praise of Folly* among writings (such as the *Enchiridion*, or *Handbook of the Christian Soldier*) which contribute to the building of character. In the *Praise of Folly,* a monologue which shocked many of Erasmus' contemporaries (to say nothing for the moment of the Church's response), he dramatizes his voice as a singular and unusually learned woman named *Stultitia*, or Folly. From one perspective she is the perverse counterpart of the vastly more serious, mythological, and traditionally female creature *Sapientia*, or Wisdom. From another, perhaps nearer perspective, she is the "Christian fool," a figure equally honored by tradition. Here she embodies the wisdom of earthy common sense as opposed to the lofty thinking of dogmatic Christianity. The latter characterizes her audience, for Folly addresses an exclusive group of learned theologians – male, of course – and delivers a classical oration, an encomium, in praise of herself. Her twists and turns, her Protean *ethos*, and her unepitomizable speech are amusing, satirical, and more than a little disturbing in assaulting her audience's staid and abstract icons of wisdom and virtue. If her audience finds her Christianity arguable, it is unlikely that Erasmus' own audience would.

Indeed, Erasmus' own audience would recognize that her actions are in many ways not unlike the argumentative actions Erasmus himself employs when he speaks through his own character, frequently no less perverse and ironic, though he is generally more moderate and somewhat less abrupt. For example, speaking in his own voice in his adage *Nosce teipsum* (*Know Yourself*, 1515), he begins in a straightforward way, but then after several twists and turns he ends with Menander's observation that certainly it's advisable to "know yourself," but it would really be much more advisable and instructive to "know other people." In another work, his *Ratio* (1518), he argues that a way to know yourself as well as to know other people is through, of all things, disputation. Whereas theologians used disputation to examine knowledge, to search for truth, and to banish falsehood, Erasmus puts a thoroughly humanist spin on the procedure. The purpose of disputation, even for the clergy, he argues, is neither discovering theological truth nor winning a victory but developing a rhetorically effective *ethos*. In the hands of a traditional and skillful rhetorician like Erasmus, standard wisdom is always at risk.

The character of Folly – to return to that comic masterpiece – is therefore something of a transparent mask for the author. Erasmus slyly gave this Latin work a Greek title, *Moriae encomion*, punning on the name of his good friend, the English nobleman and barrister Thomas More. In his dedicatory epistle to More, he asserts that his purpose is, as always, to teach his readers, who, he believes, will attend to a comic discourse more agreeably than if he had cast his ideas in solemn tones. After all, as Folly herself says, only fools are licensed to utter the truth without giving offense. The masquerade invites the reader to meet the author at a remove from the discourse itself, a distance from which the twists, turns, and ambiguities may be viewed and

their sly wisdom perceived. But, as always when irony is the chief strategy, the distance between author and work, between Erasmus and Folly, is not easy to gauge, particularly for dogmatic readers, like those in Folly's audience who eventually succeeded in placing this work, along with the entire Erasmian corpus, on the Church's Index.

Who is the author one might meet when ironic distance is bridged? Erasmus saw himself as having a certain public identity in European Christendom. Though he usually called himself "Erasmus of Rotterdam," he was in an important sense a cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world, particularly the world of scholarship in Northern Europe. Lisa Jardine (1993) has argued that the best way of characterizing Erasmus' self-fashioned identity – that *ethos* which pervades his writings and his portraits, too – is as "a man of letters." Erasmus would have us picture him speaking, as he imagines Jerome speaking, from his study, with the world of scholarship at his fingertips. It is an image which continues to come to mind, whether we think of Erasmus in the woodcut by Dürer or in the portraits by Holbein or Metsys, in poses Erasmus himself desired or planned. This Erasmian public image became culturally significant in his own day (Thornton 1997). Milton, for example, in his youthful Prolusion VI, calls Erasmus not a monk, or a clergyman, or even a papist (all of which he was), but "a writer of no mean rank" – and he goes on to call his *Praise of Folly* "a most ingenious book."

The Christlike mode of argumentation associated with this writerly *ethos* is essentially pedagogical, as if this man of letters were seeking to bring us in touch not simply with a wealth of learning but with wisdom and its protocols. When operating at an ironical remove, Erasmus can be sharply confrontational and even at times purposefully outrageous, often allowing dramatized speakers, such as Eusebius (in *The Godly Feast*) or Folly, to assume prodigiously unconventional positions with which he at least partially agrees. The point is to get us to think by making us aware of the many and variable paths to wisdom, or to truth itself – the Erasmian *via diversa.* Even when not operating at an ironical remove, when he speaks in his own person, his rationale usually becomes patent. In *De copia verborum ac rerum* (*On the Abundance of Speech and Thought*, 1512) he advises students to write in a way that encourages readers to explore and find out things for themselves – more than that, virtually to revel in variety. In his textbook on writing letters (1522) he would have young pupils approach the ancient schoolroom question of whether a man should marry by considering at once both sides of the question (the rhetorical *argumentum in utramque partem*) – even when doing so verged on the increasingly troublesome matter of religious celibacy, about which certain theologians believed there could be *no* question. To cite a more directly confrontational example, Erasmus, again speaking in his own person, debated in writing Martin Luther on the subject of free will (1524). At one point in answering Luther's argument opposing free will, Erasmus ventured an extraordinary, some might consider it an insulting, move on his opponent: he handed Luther a host of examples that would have been better ones to use in his case than the ones he, Luther, in fact employed. No wonder Luther called him not a badger but an eel and a Proteus – here meaning not Christlike but artful dodging.

Moreover, in confronting Luther, Erasmus' own admitted role was that of reluctant debater: he pleaded that he was virtually forced into the debate (an *ethos* tactic that Antonius recommends in Cicero's *De oratore*), whereas he would much prefer playing in the "fair field of the muses." Accordingly, the rhetorical genre he employed against Luther was not forensic, the appropriate genre for debate, but epideictic, the most literary of the three classical kinds of oratory (see chapter 20, this volume; Boyle 1983). The tactic was unsuccessful in confronting Luther. It was nonetheless ped-agogical and Erasmian in bringing to the debate a breadth of vision. Too, it was grounded in pagan rhetoric, and it nearly allowed Erasmus his own preferred *ethos*.

Consider again that problem of what to do about those "worldly books," that pagan otherness. The problem can be cast in pedagogical terms, as a question faced by any humanist teacher in this period: how may one use this revived literature in the classroom, if only to teach Latin and Greek, without absorbing what appears to be a pagan voluptuousness and unchastity? In at least two instances, Erasmus provided a characteristically simple answer with plenty of room for breadth and diversity: we need to keep our eyes on the purposes of our undertaking.

The first instance concerns the founding of a school in London, around 1510, by one of Erasmus' professed admirers, John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. The school was to be centered on the revival of humanist learning. (In the following century John Milton became one of the school's most famous graduates.) Colet's statutes attempted to address the temper of the times through a major proviso: the boys were to be taught Greek and Latin only through "suych auctours that hathe with wisdom joyned the pure chaste eloquence"; they were to be taught, that is, "littera-ture" not "blotterature" (Clark 1948: 101). But in going so far as to ban all mention of sex in the classroom, the statutes seem primarily to reflect Colet's own *ethos*: he was at once a lover of classical learning and a notorious prude. (Erasmus offered a contra-rian substantiation of the latter point in his letter to Jodocus Jonas, June 13, 1521, in which he argues that if the Dean was a prude it was only because he recognized in himself such strong tendencies in the other direction.) Having become friends with Erasmus during the latter's first stay in England, Colet asked the great humanist to write an educational book for use in his school. Erasmus accordingly decided to publish an authorized edition of a book he had left unfinished in Italy and which was then in danger of becoming pirated: the *De copia* mentioned earlier. The book was destined to become one of the most famous and widely reprinted rhetorics not only in Colet's England but throughout Northern Europe.

Appearing in print within two years after the school was founded, the *De copia* confronts its reader with an abundance of pagan allusions, a few of which are sexual (one within a sentence or two of its opening), and a highly explicit discussion of obscenity. All classical certainly, and all to a thoroughly Erasmian purpose, in this case a double purpose. When placed in the context of Dean Colet's prudery, the *De copia* becomes an imaginative if unsubtle assault on the school's dominant paradigm, all in an innocent quest for rhetorical skills. From antiquity rhetoricians used textbooks to teach students about copiousness of *verba* and *res*, words and matter, as important tools

in the greater art of rhetoric. But the further Erasmian lesson seems to be that one cannot achieve abundance of any sort, whether in vocabulary or thought, by following a narrow, arid path or by walking into one of the world's great libraries knowing that some works have been proscribed. Although Erasmus' textbook proved to be one of the great works in the humanist tradition, Colet delayed payment – for a reason that, a modern historian has suggested, may be all too obvious (Gleason 1989: 230–1).

The second instance centers on another educational book published within a year of the school's founding and stimulated by correspondence with Dean Colet, *De ratione studii* (*On the Method of Study*, 1511). In this book Erasmus treats more directly, and in an equally characteristic way, the question of using classical authors in teaching the young. His advice, reduced to its simplest terms, is this: don't read the printed page flatly as if every word were monolithic and uttered some unchallengeable truth. Read, rather, critically and in context. Pay attention to who said what to whom with what purpose. Read, that is, rhetorically. The advice is the very keynote of the Erasmian hermeneutic, in which a concentration on the *decorum* of divine rhetoric becomes, among other things, a means of resolving the apparent contradictions in scripture as well as a way of sidestepping worries about its literary quality (Aldridge 1966; Hoffmann 1994). It is, moreover, the advice Erasmus gave his critics when they chastised him for his writings that seemed irreverent, like the *Praise of Folly*. Read my works in context, he said, try to understand the speaker–audience relationship, and above all appreciate authorial intention. Do that, he says in *De ratione studii*, and you can even use Vergil's *Second Eclogue* with young students; emphasize the importance of a friendship based on close affinities and likenesses and not only will you clarify the mistakenness of Corydon's affections for Alexis, but you will also put into broad perspective the poem's ostensibly empathic view of Corydon's homosexual yearning.

Breadth, diversity, irony, *decorum* (aptness, accommodation), and versatility – these reflect the Erasmian *ethos*. They are the means whereby this Man of Letters tried to follow his divine exemplar, the Protean *Sermo*. They also provide his major links with the contrarian impulses of traditional rhetoric (Sloane 1997) .

Between the times of Erasmus and Milton a host of changes swept through the culture of Northern Europe. Erasmus' *via diversa*, with its propensity for contrarianism, irony, pro-con reasoning, and critical thinking, its drive to be intellectually inclusive, and its authorial stance that could seem at times slippery or improperly vague – these conflicted with the increasingly hard line being drawn by religious and political leaders of the period. Early in the English Renaissance these leaders had brought to stern judgment Erasmus' friend, Thomas More. Erasmus, too, toward the end of his life was forced to abandon much of his preferred stance, and to choose and exclude. Then, late in the English Renaissance, the continued rise of Puritanism began strongly to affect the revival of classical learning. The Puritans, among the first to translate the classics into English, also ended the translation movement well before Milton's day once they became convinced that the classics had little moral value. All these developments both anticipate Milton and at the same time underscore the somewhat anomalous nature of his genius.

Milton

Puritan, humanist, revolutionary, activist, recluse – each term applies to Milton with almost equal force, although there is a certain consistency underlying these conflicting identities. Again, so far as *ethos* and its allied argumentative modes are concerned, a comparison with Erasmus could be instructive. The comparison will, perhaps, shed light in retrospect on Erasmus' frequent ironical remove and rhetorical versatility, while clarifying the rather different relation Milton had to his own work.

First and foremost, Milton was a poet, in a way and to a degree that Erasmus was not. Although Erasmus claimed that his preferred mode of combat was imaginative literature and although he was the author of many poems, he did not see himself as a poet in quite the way Milton did. Milton had spent a good part of his youth and a considerable part of his father's fortune in preparing himself to become not simply a poet but England's greatest epic poet. Not surprisingly, one of his most significant statements about character – offered in his maturity – was in terms of the practice of poetry: Quintilian's *vir bonus*, the good man skilled in speaking, should inform the poem, Milton said, and become its pattern (*Apology*, 1642). The poet, in short, is always *in* the poem – or in the prose tract, for that matter. It is *there* that we meet the authorial *ethos*.

Another difference, one noted in their varying responses to Jerome's dream: Erasmus would have us keep our eyes on breadth and inclusiveness, Milton would have us be more sharply discriminating. To accomplish the latter, one has to be more than a little confident of one's access to truth. Thus, as Marvell had suggested, not simply Poet but Prophet seems apt. At first glance, Erasmus' preferred self-image – the solitary scholar in his study with a wealth of classical learning at his finger tips, producing discourse that addresses contemporary issues – would seem to apply with equal force to the astonishingly learned and politically engaged Milton. There are times when Milton in fact sounds like a civic humanist, with his insistence that education should not simply "repair the ruins of our first parents" but prepare us for statesmanship ("On Education," 1644) or with his insistence that only that virtue is solid which has been given public trial (*Areopagitica*, 1644). Practicing what he preached, Milton became a prominent activist, involved in the major upheavals of his time. Indeed, his writerly and poetic engagement with social, religious, and political issues would seem to go well beyond Erasmus' and fulfill an essentially rhetorical role.

Yet, like a star (as Wordsworth said in *London 1802*), Milton dwelt apart. Therein lies the center of his anomalous nature: engaged, but solitary and contemplative. Even as a political activist, Milton explicated "contemporary ideas through a very private mode of thought" (Geisst 1984), a process equally prominent in his poetry, at times explicitly so. This mode of thought grows out of complex religious beliefs, for which terms could be proliferated; for example, Mortalism (the soul as well as the body await the Resurrection); Thnectopsychism (the theological fusion of the material and formal

"causes" of logic); Subordinationism (God is greater than Christ, who in turn is greater than the Holy Spirit, of one substance but different in essence). Above all, Milton was a Monist: God, he claimed in a key argument, created the universe not *ex nihilo* but out of himself (*Christian Doctrine* I: ch. VII). There is thus a certain substantive wholeness or oneness which pervades life. Many of these qualities, particularly those stressing wholeness or inclusiveness, would seem to echo Erasmianism. But within their learned modes of thought there are yet other qualities where the two clearly part company. Milton, above all, was more the rationalist; more than Erasmus he believed in the possibility of regenerate reason in fallen man. Such rationalism was the source of his strong belief in the importance of individual liberty, in man's natural reason operating almost Ciceronian-like free of coercion – and invariably in solitude – whether in politics, religion, or poetry. Reason, Milton said in *Areopagitica*, "is but choosing" – a statement which, while suggesting Miltonic struggle and effort, also sharply characterizes his humanism, his habit of mind, his hermeneutic, his typical mode of argument, and in the very confidence of its assertion, his *ethos*. Eloquence itself, Milton insisted, does not arise solely from traditional rhetoric but springs primarily from "regenerate reason" in the service of "the serious and hearty love of truth" (*Apology*).

There is a certain coincidence of these beliefs with that revised system of thinking and composing known as Ramism. When Milton was a student in Colet's School, Ramism had long replaced Erasmianism. In later life Milton overtly used Ramism to organize his thoughts in such prose writings as *De Doctrina Christiana* and *Ars Logicae*, itself a recension and humanist liberalizing of Ramist logic. If by remarking that blind Milton kept his inward eyes on the forms of memory, his "excellent Method of thinking and disposing," Aubrey was alluding to Ramist Method, he brings to the fore a certain belief about rhetorical composition: one apprehends truth not so much through logic as through intuition, the secular correlative of Milton's "inward Oracle" (*Paradise Regained*, 1.463). But, whether secular or religious, Miltonic truth/wisdom was of a specific kind and its apprehension remained a most solitary enterprise. For Milton, "the prime and thumping value in every situation" was invariably obedience to God, "but the roadway of obedience is an internal one, not available to external confirmation or disconfirmation" (Fish 2001: 3–4). Miltonic reason is thus curiously independent of discourse.

To a rhetorician, Milton's *Paradise Regained* (1671) is another *imitatio christi*, in this case a veritable pattern of the ideal quest for rhetorical selfhood since it centers on Christ's own search for *ethos*. The poem focuses on Jesus at his most solitary, the close of his forty-day wandering in the wilderness just before he began his public ministry. In the opening lines, Milton calls attention to his own selfhood as the poet who had earlier sung of our lost paradise and who will now sing about deeds that are "Above Heroic, though in secret done" (1.15). Wracked with various temptations, Jesus discovers or realizes the means whereby he may not simply vanquish all temptation but fulfill his public destiny. For some readers, Christ in the poem appears to achieve a progression from belief to certainty – from initially believing in his own divinity to

a climactic moment when he is certain of it. For others, Christ learns how to act on his beliefs, how clearly to vanquish temptation by confronting what he is not. In either case he acquires rhetorical selfhood.

What he is not is the other main character in the dialogue, Satan, who also (like us) seeks to find out just who this Jesus is. Milton seems to allow Satan a kind of external reality, although as suggested there is an important Miltonic sense in which Satan is within the hero, and thus Christ may in effect be holding a dialogue with himself – an interpretation that more nearly accords with the solitary search for truth. When Jesus entered the wild desert, fed with "holiest Meditations," the poet says he "Into himself descended" (2.110–13). He triumphs over Satan once it becomes possible for him, or for us, to see the latter "plain" (4.193), that is, as an other, apart from his own selfhood.

Throughout the poem, Satan is a wily debater, but he fails to engage Jesus in disputation. In fact, in a rhetorically significant way, disputation emerges as one of the several temptations thrust before Christ, which themselves range from satisfying physical appetites to acquiring wisdom through the pagan classics, all clustered around the three scriptural ones (turning stones into bread, achieving fame and glory, and casting himself from a tower: Luke 4:1–13). Disputation is rhetorically significant in this poem because its uses and procedures would be familiar to many of Milton's readers, for whom disputation served as the major form of academic examination, whether in the study of law, theology (where Erasmus believed it was useful in learning about *ethos*), or medicine. That Milton was himself highly skilled in disputation is well shown in his writings, his "Prolusions" for example, or his poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, which are themselves superb lyric illustrations of pro-con reasoning, the classical *argumentum in utramque partem*. A lingering educational practice from the Middle Ages, disputation even had a certain popularity as public entertainment. With these experiences in the background, Milton's readers would likely have had a vivid sense, not only of Satan's disputatious tricks and wiles, but also of Christ's skills in meeting them without himself being drawn in or victimized by them on his way to realizing a selfhood that is beyond the reach of disputation, dialectic, and traditional rhetoric.

Satan chastises Jesus for not being public enough. He knows that Jesus is given to contemplation. At the same time he knows that as a child Jesus was also given to "profound dispute," as when he wandered away from his mother to dispute with the rabbis in the temple (4.210–20). So, like a good debater, he seeks to engage Jesus through definition: what does it mean to be called the Son of God? It bears no single sense, Satan says, monistically, for he too can be called a Son of God. "And if I was, I am; relation stands; / All men are Sons of God" (4.519–20). As Milton's readers would know, definition and division are two moves, usually the first two, in any disputation. Here the moves come late, just before the final temptation and after Christ's firm recognition of his adversary.

But Christ simply refuses to be drawn in. When at the conclusion of the poem he is taken by Satan to the highest pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem and challenged to

take his "stand" – physically as well as disputationally – Christ defeats his opponent by uttering a truth ostensibly grown firmer in facing this adversary: that God is within him and therefore that Satan – who may also be within him – is guilty of one of the gravest of all sins, tempting God.

The utterance of that certainty, which allows Christ to defeat Satan, answers the ongoing question about Milton's apparently perplexing dismissal, earlier in this poem, of the pagan classics. Satan offers these to Christ, who dismisses them simply because they are in and of themselves inadequate. Documents may offer knowledge, but they offer no true wisdom unless the reader brings to his reading "A spirit and judgment equal or superior," for one may be "Deep verst in books and shallow in himself" (4.321–7). Jesus says to Satan that one can think what one likes about his probable knowledge of the pagan classics: "Think not but that I know these things; or think / I know them not; not therefore am I short / Of knowing what I ought" (4.286–8). All that's necessary for true wisdom is the "Light from above" (4.289), that Light whose presence within him Jesus seems to grow increasingly certain or aware of. It is overwhelmingly apparent, of course, that the *poet* knows the classics, knowledge of which he has skillfully placed within Satan's mouth and within his own as narrator. He has, moreover, used something like *anagnorisis*, recognition, a feature of classical epic and dramatic forms, to structure this work: just before the "worldly books" temptation (and before the adversary's demand for definition), Christ, who had initially known that his companion was Satan, sees him as truly an other, as unmixed or "plain" evil (4.193). But it is not until the very last temptation and the failure of his final trick that *Satan* begins to sense the presence of God within his opponent, a recognition of a different order but one that causes him to fall in utter defeat.

In the hands of Erasmus, this mixture – a poem that seems to dismiss the classics while showing a deep knowledge of them and using a structural tactic from classical poetry – could prove deeply ironic. Note, for example, Folly's admission that she doesn't know rhetoric – it is a "masculine" subject – although she skillfully and explicitly employs it, including several of its technical terms. Or note Erasmus' suggestion in *De copia* (Method 10) that one could use Greek tactics in shaping an argument intended to prove why someone should not learn Greek. As I have attempted to argue, irony, particularly the frequent ironical remove of the author from his work, is a major difference between these two writers. It distinguishes their public roles as Man of Letters on the one hand and Poet (or Poet/Prophet) on the other; we join the latter in the poem and the irony we experience is usually of the dramatic sort. In what I have tried to view as their most extended studies of *ethos*, Erasmus places Folly before a hostile audience and invites us to join him outside the fray at an ironical remove, whereas Milton has Christ confront an adversary most likely within himself, and because we know the outcome the irony is all dramatic and keeps us within the poem, as companions of the narrator.

Rhetoricians have always, implicitly at least, recognized a distinction between *ethos* and self – implicitly because *ethos* is traditionally something one constructs out of the available versions of the self in order to appear attractive to one's audience. Tensions

between *ethos* and self have historically been cause for some anxiety. For example, they are perhaps the springboard of Cicero's enduring *Tusculan Disputations*, in which the self grapples with abiding moral issues – doing so in a way that is nonetheless thoroughly rhetorical in protocol if not in situation. There is another tradition, however, one extending from the Church Fathers – St. Augustine in particular – down through Montaigne, Descartes, Sir Thomas Browne, and Francis Bacon to Milton's day, and evolving in a way that is defiantly non-rhetorical, for it turns from the public view ("know other people") to revel in a private self. And in Milton's case that private self has become uniquely, even defiantly, individual, with its own hermeneutical requirements. *Paradise Regained* is thought to be Milton's favorite poem among his work. When seen as a dramatic search for *ethos* the poem, considering not only the self involved but also Milton's work generally, becomes instructive both about the nature of the selfhood discovered and about the manner and means of the search itself – through deeds "Above Heroic, though in secret done" (1.15).

Let us return to the poem, recalling the solitariness theme iterated throughout and positing again the view that the "wilderness" through which Jesus wanders for forty days and forty nights is a wilderness within. The days spent in this wilderness, facing the conflicts within one's mind through temptations of riches, power, and wisdom, seem to end with a gradual progression in the firmness of Jesus' own certainty. Consider the extent to which Satan, too, is within. When Satan's temptations are viewed as assaults on Jesus' growing certainty, Satan's identity becomes the spirit of denial within Christ. It is, finally, temptation itself which Christ vanquishes. Having thus in effect vanquished the last impulse toward denial, the Son is ready to begin on his great public mission of saving mankind. In thereby achieving his *ethos*, his rhetorical selfhood, Christ has also achieved that "paradise within" which Michael had promised and described for Adam, beyond all riches, power, and wisdom, and "happier farr" than the paradise Adam lost (*Paradise Lost* 12.575–87), a veritable "*Eden* rais'd in the waste wilderness" (*Paradise Regained* 1.7).

Equally prominent in the poem is the selfhood of the poet, who, as noted, introduces the poem by promising to set before us deeds that have been left unrecorded through the ages. If they had been so left, one must wonder how the poet learned of them. The temptations in the wilderness are of course recorded in Luke and Matthew, but the full action, the speeches, the deeds themselves, are apparently apprehensible only through a certain hermeneutic, only through grasping those gospel letters by means of the "spirit and judgment" which give them life. As we know from Milton's own doctrine, the poet himself is (or must become) the pattern of the poem. And we also learn from Milton's writings that this particular poet experienced a certain anxiety about the publication of his selfhood. If books are living things, as Milton argues in *Areopagitica*, can they not appear to their authors as unrecognizable as Sin appears to his father Satan in *Paradise Lost*? And can their return not be equally horrible? Appearing in public is, in sum, a vexation for those who are profoundly private, and the vexation is the motivating center of *Paradise Regained*. Jesus after his baptism contemplates how he may best begin his work and "which way

first / Publish his God-like office now mature" (1.188), a problem surely analogous to the poet's. For some readers, the convergence of the poet and the life of this poem's hero might initially appear all but inescapable: like Jesus, Milton had early developed skills in disputation; like Jesus, he too had contemplated a life full of heroic acts (in Milton's case a poetry full of his own country's history); and each resolved to bend his greatest efforts in teaching "the erring Soul" who is not "misdoing, but unaware" (1.224–5). Nonetheless, in this masterfully constructed poem, most efforts to grasp Jesus' complex nature – let alone the poet's – will fail, purposefully so. In its ineffableness, Jesus' nature exemplifies the iconoclastic Puritan or, better, the Miltonic lesson that no understanding is available through image alone or without the Spirit, the Light, and judgment that make understanding possible – or, for that matter, that make the poem possible.

When Satan finally places Christ upon the pinnacle, urges him to take his "stand" there, and invites him to cast himself down – safely so if he is indeed the Son of God, for it is written that God will send angels to lift him up – Christ utterly defeats the Tempter with one simple answer: it is also written, he says, that you shall not tempt the Lord thy God (4.551–61). Does this mean, as some critics have argued, that the answer represents Christ's realization of himself as part of the Godhead, whom Satan is tempting? Or does it mean that Christ, in refusing to tempt God as Satan proposes, is performing an act of perfect obedience? The answer, I believe, is both. In the first, Christ has realized his selfhood; in the second, he has rediscovered the prime value in every situation, obedience to God, which is in turn the very means whereby he may begin his public mission.

Discriminating, focused, increasingly confident, Christ's selfhood nonetheless continues to remain a mystery, not reducible to simple questions and answers, but resistant and impermeable as a "rock" in a violent sea (2.228; 4.18; 4.533). Proteus is not characteristic of this nature. In fact, in chapter V of *De Doctrina Christiana* Milton uses a line from Horace's epistles to dismiss the very idea. Nonetheless, Christ's *ethos* is a selfhood that intrigues while it perplexes Satan, who finally falls "smitten with amazement" (4.562). It surely intrigues and perplexes us – and, true to Puritan/ Miltonic protocol, challenges the reach of our understanding in our struggle to proceed beyond the sensual and imagistic, or iconographic. So too does Milton's own selfhood, his *ethos*, whose conflicted nature is, perhaps, the sum of the forces in this poem. He represents himself only as the poet who earlier gave us *Paradise Lost* and who here chooses to give us a narrative wherein Christ – this "glorious Eremite" (1.8) – finds his own rhetorical selfhood in the wilderness through vanquishing temptation and who then simply and quietly returns "unobserv'd . . . to his Mother's house private" (4.638–9). A paradise has been found within, apart from the public – that "herd confused," Christ calls it, and "miscellaneous rabble" (3.48–9). It would seem that for both hero and poet an intensely private and solitary self has superseded not only the classically rhetorical *ethos* but also most considerations of *decorum*. Even in his prose tracts, as one writer has noted, Milton never adapts his rhetoric to the world; rather, he requires the world to adapt to his rhetoric (Stavely 1975: 49), a rhetoric that

is based on a certain stable and uniform "conception of God in relation to which the facts and challenges of the world will be given shape" (Fish 2001: 556). Thus Milton would have us face the *via diversa* with wariness, and he transforms Christ's rhetorical, accommodating nature (the Erasmian *varietas christi*) into a secluded, rock-like, and inwardly reflecting solitude, an *ethos* that appears less charismatic than awesome.

Conclusion

Like most humanists, early and late, Erasmus and Milton had much to say about rhetoric. At times the two sound not at all dissimilar, as when Milton acknowledges that "in the teaching of men diversely temper'd different ways are to be try'd" (*Apology*), or when Erasmus advises the Christian preacher to take as his role model Christ, whom he calls not Proteus in this instance but Prophet (*Ecclesiastes*, 1535). However, these and similar theoretical observations lie in remarks scattered throughout their writings, hardly any of which are aimed at reconstructing rhetorical theory. (The *De copia* is not, nor was it intended to be, a complete rhetoric.) Further, the Erasmian rhetorical hermeneutic would caution us that even scattered theoretical remarks should not be detached from the discourse in which they appear, for doing so can unfairly separate them from an overriding authorial intention. At any rate, in learning about an art as commodious, time-bound, and instrumental as rhetoric, case studies of actual practice remain our best means of instruction. When one concentrates on an age that grapples with certain ongoing intellectual issues, such as those associated with the revival of the classic "worldly books," comparisons become possible.

Those observations summarize my own protocol. They also impel a final disclaimer, a *prolepsis* more nearly. The present chapter has done little more than trace a vast subject, and in its haste has frequently sidestepped the Erasmian hermeneutic. Nor has sufficient attention been paid to the development and growth of ideas, whether about Christology or about *ethos*, in each writer's career. But, as Milton says concerning his brief remarks on education, for future use "light and direction may be enough." Provided, Erasmus might want to add, they have in fact been provided.

Notes

1   See Jardine (1993: 66). Unless otherwise noted, Erasmian citations are from the *Collected Works* (1974–).
2   Milton citations are from Milton (1971) and Milton (1953–82).

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Rhetoric, Rights, and Contract Theory in the Early Modern Period

Victoria Kahn

What does rhetoric have to do with the early modern theory of the political contract? Nothing, judging from the usual treatments of this contract by historians and political theorists. Yet a very different picture emerges if one approaches the foundational texts of contract theory with some knowledge of the classical and humanist rhetorical tradition. In this essay I focus on Hugo Grotius' *De jure belli ac pacis* (1625).[1] Now read as a classic of international law, Grotius' work is by most accounts the first important example of the new theory of natural rights and the political contract. In this text, political association is predicated on the individual contracting to transfer his natural rights to a sovereign. In explaining why individuals enter into society and why they then should and do keep their political contracts, Grotius draws not only on Roman law (the usual view), but also on Roman rhetoric to articulate a theory of social relations that is deeply informed by a rhetorical worldview.

The stakes of such a rereading of contract theory are high. First, although little read today, Grotius was one of the most influential political and legal theorists from the early modern period through the Enlightenment. Grotius' readers included not only Hobbes and Milton, but also Vattel, Barbeyrac, and Rousseau (Gough 1957; Tuck 1979, 1993). Second, Grotius was a formative influence on Locke and the liberal tradition of contract theory, whose best-known modern proponent is John Rawls. Recovering the rhetorical dimension of contract theory has the potential to reshape our understanding, not only of an important strain of early modern political theory, but also of the potential of contract theory today. Early modern discussions of rights, the social contract, and the political contract, I suggest, provide us with a positive account of the constructive power of language as well as a negative account of the limits of state power. Along with the legalistic version of contract found in Justinian and Roman law, which grounds the possibility of contracting in the negative liberty

associated with the right to alienate one's property, we find a version of contract which emphasizes the creative role of speech acts and the constitutive power of language in shaping new rights and obligations.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a new conception of natural rights and the political contract emerged in response to the legitimation crisis brought about by the Reformation, the consolidation of nation-states, and the outbreak of religious wars. These wars dramatically illustrated the dangers of religious enthusiasm, the potential violence of acting on one's conscience, and the manifold exceptions to the moral law that promises should be kept. All of a sudden it became necessary to rethink the basis of political association, political obligation, and the respective duties to God and sovereign. Aiming to provide a non-confessional basis of social harmony and political order, continental writers such as Grotius argued for a political contract predicated on natural law and natural rights. Whereas medieval theories of contractual association conceived of contract in corporatist terms – as a contract between the sovereign and the people as a whole – early modern accounts stressed the consent of the individual to a social and political contract. In contrast to older Aristotelian, Stoic, and canon law conceptions of natural law as the moral law or the objective law of reason, they elaborated a minimalist conception of natural law centered on sociability, self-interest, and the subjective right of self-preservation (see Gierke 1934).

In the minds of its proponents, this "minima moralia" offered a new, artificial method for generating political association. Whereas older doctrines of natural law were predicated on the belief in a natural moral order dictated by God, these newer doctrines drew nearer to "the developing scientific view of the world as totally neutral with respect to value" (Schneewind 1987: 130). God was still the creator of the world, but man was the proximate creator of value by virtue of his voluntary social and political arrangements. Chief among these was the contract to transfer one's rights to the sovereign and to establish government.

It is generally agreed that in developing this minimalist and individualist theory of natural rights and the political contract, early modern writers drew on several important elements of Roman law. First, Roman law conceived of the individual as a possessor of rights. This notion of the private ownership (*dominium*) of rights implied that they could be voluntarily transferred, not only to another private citizen but also to the state. Second, Roman law advanced the principle of the *lex regia*, the notion that the power of the sovereign had its origin in the people. The *lex regia* referred to the maxim from Justinian's *Institutes* (book 1, section 2), according to which "A pronouncement of the emperor also has legislative force because, by the Regal Act relating to his sovereign power, the people conferred on him its whole sovereignty and authority [*quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem, cum lege regia, quae de imperio eius lata est, populus ei et in eum omne suum imperium et potestatem concessit*]." The crucial issue for medieval and early modern politics was whether this "transfer" of rights produced the irrevocable contract of absolutism (*quod principi placuit*) or the revocable contract of constitutionalism (*populus ei concessit*).

While not denying the influence of Roman law, I want to argue that early modern writers would have encountered the building blocks of contract theory in Cicero's moral and rhetorical treatises even before they encountered them in treatises on Roman law. This is not simply because Cicero's works were central to the grammar school and university curriculum in Renaissance Europe, but also because Cicero's rhetorical worldview fundamentally shaped Renaissance humanist ethics and politics. Cicero was not only a conduit of Roman law (Schofield 1999); his rhetorical theory of sociability also conveyed a particular understanding of natural law and natural rights to those early modern writers who were attempting to articulate a contractual theory of political obligation.

In his rhetorical works Cicero explicitly invited his readers to think about the relationship between language and society in contractual terms. Although he devoted the greater part of his rhetorical treatises to detailing the tropes, figures, and topics of argument needed by the forensic orator, Cicero also made hugely influential claims about the power of rhetoric to found and sustain human societies. At times, Cicero located the origin of society in natural sociability and Stoic natural law, with rhetoric as its handmaiden. At other times, Cicero argued that the power of rhetoric rather than sociability, convention rather than nature, formed the basis of social and political organization. In both accounts, the orator is described as persuading individuals to enter into a social contract of association (the term is *societas*, a business partnership) or as inducing voluntary subjection to a single political authority.

In Cicero's founding myth of society in *De inventione*, rhetoric has the power to calm the passions and to institute conventional social and political relations. In a passage much quoted in the early modern period, Cicero describes how, before society, men existed in a proto-Hobbesian state of nature, where

> they did nothing by the guidance of reason, but relied chiefly on physical strength; there was as yet no ordered system of religious worship nor of social duties; no one had seen legitimate marriage nor had anyone looked upon children whom he knew to be his own; nor had they learned the advantages of an equitable code of law. And so through their ignorance and error, blind and unreasoning passion satisfied itself by misuse of bodily strength, which is a very dangerous servant.

"At this juncture," Cicero tells us, "a man – great and wise I am sure – became aware of the power latent in man and the wide field offered by his mind for great achievements if one could develop this power and improve it by instruction." He captured the attention of others through the power of "reason and eloquence," and "transformed them from wild savages into a kind and gentle folk." "Mute, voiceless wisdom" alone, Cicero insists, was inadequate to this task. Without eloquence, it would have been impossible first to bring individuals into society and then to cause them to "learn to keep faith and observe justice and become accustomed to obey others voluntarily [*ut fidem colere et iustitiam retinere discerent et aliis parere sua voluntate*] and believe not only that they must work for the common good but even sacrifice life

itself" (*De inventione* 1.1.2–1.2.3). Here, as in a similar passage in *De oratore* (1.8.33–4), rhetoric is responsible for bringing dispersed individuals together in one place, establishing communities, and "giv[ing] shape to laws, tribunals, and civil rights." This is Cicero's version of the original social contract, one that also involves voluntary subjection of individuals to the new social order.

If we now turn to texts in which Cicero puts forward a Stoic account of man's natural sociability, we see that even here Cicero's account of nature is inflected by a voluntary contract of association. In *De officiis*, the most influential Latin work of moral philosophy in the early modern period, Cicero tells us that nature is the source of the principles of community among men, who are joined together *naturali quadam societate* (1.16.50), "in a certein naturall felowship," as one sixteenth-century translation has it (O'Gorman 1990: 71). *Societas* – the Latin term for a legal partnership – is Cicero's metaphor for this distinctively human community, this willed but natural association. In Cicero's *De legibus*, Atticus agrees with the argument that "nature is the source of justice," observing that "all men are bound together by a certain natural feeling of kindliness and good-will, and also by a partnership of justice," a *societas iuris* (1.13.35). In *De re publica* (a text known to the early modern period via Lactanctius and Augustine), Scipio defines a republic as *res populi*, the property of the people, and argues that

> a people is not any collection [*coetus*] of human beings brought together in any sort of way, but an assemblage [*coetus*] of people in large numbers associated in an agreement with respect to justice and a partnership for the common good [*iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus*]. The first cause of such an association is not so much the weakness of the individual as a certain social spirit [*naturalis . . . quasi congregatio*] which nature has implanted in man. (1.24.39)

This social spirit gives rise to a "consensus" or *societas* – a partnership joined together by the bond of justice (3.13.43: *vinculum iuris*).

Whether Cicero begins with a Hobbesian state of nature or with natural sociability, a precondition of the bond of justice is the bond or *societas* of language. Language is seen as both a precondition of obligation and itself a source of obligation. In *De inventione* Cicero famously celebrates the power of language to create different forms of association: "many cities have been founded, . . . the flames of a multitude of wars have been extinguished, and . . . the strongest alliances and most sacred friendships have been formed not only by the use of reason but also more easily by the help of eloquence" (1.1). And in *De officiis* he describes language itself as a common bond or form of association: "nature, likewise by the power of reason associates man with man in the common bonds of speech and life [*orationis et . . . vitae societatem*]" (1.4.12). In accounting for the natural "principles of fellowship and society," Cicero states "the bond of connection is reason and speech," and this bond in turn gives rise to the more particular bonds of "people, tribe, and tongue," of marriage, friendship, and the state (1.16.50–1.18.54).

Language is a condition of society for Cicero, not only because it allows individuals to communicate but also because it allows them to make promises. In book 1 of *De officiis* Cicero asserts: "The foundation of justice . . . is good faith – that is, truth and fidelity to promises and agreements" (1.7.23). In a fuller analysis, he associates the morally right or *honestum* with "the conservation of organized society, with the rendering to every man his due, and with the faithful discharge of obligations assumed [*rerum contractarum fide*]" (1.5.15). Just as private citizens must keep their promises to individuals, so must they keep faith in matters of political concern. As an example of the latter, Cicero is particularly drawn to the figure of Regulus, the Roman general and hero of the Punic wars, who kept "the oath sworn to his enemies" in order better to serve his country, even though he lost his life in the process (3.26.99–101; see 3.29.107 and 1.13.39).

Although Cicero discusses faithfulness as a virtue dictated by the law of nature or by sociability as a fact of human nature, he also presents faithfulness as something created in and by language. In *De re publica* Laelius asserts: "True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting . . . We cannot be freed from its obligations by senate or people, and we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it" (3.23.33). Yet in *De officiis* Cicero questions the immediate accessibility of the law of nature: we possess "no substantial, life-like image of true Law and genuine Justice; a mere outline sketch [*umbra et imaginibus*] is all that we enjoy." The fact that we perceive only a "shadow" or "image" of natural law bears on our understanding of what is involved in keeping our promises. "How precious are these [words]: 'As between honest people there ought to be honest dealing and no deception'!" But even here there are problems, Cicero implies, for he goes on to ask "who are 'honest people,' and what is 'honest dealing' – these are serious questions" (17.69–70). Sometimes, Cicero tells us, this problem can be solved by a single arbitrator. But he also suggests that language may produce the good men it presupposes. In the course of the discussion of Regulus' oath, it emerges that people do not keep oaths out of fear of divine retribution but rather out of an awareness that keeping oaths itself creates justice:

> an oath is an assurance backed by religious sanctity [*affirmatio religiosa*]; and a solemn promise given, as before God as one's witness [*quasi deo teste*], is to be sacredly kept. For the question no longer concerns the wrath of the gods (for there is no such thing) but the obligations of justice and good faith. (3.29.104)

In other words, the oath is not only a sign of fidelity, but also its cause. The oath or verbal promise is the guarantor of the faith which it presupposes: "For our ancestors were of the opinion that no bond was more effective in guaranteeing good faith than an oath" (3.31.111). Thus when Cicero tells us that the keeping of promises is the foundation of justice, he implies not only that we have a natural obligation to keep our promises but also that justice itself may be the product of our verbal agreements.

As the preceding has shown, Cicero offered two accounts of contractual social and political association to his early modern readers. In *De officiis* and in some passages in the rhetorical treatises, Cicero put forward a Stoic view of man's natural sociability and natural disposition to form political associations. In the rhetorical treatises Cicero also painted a picture of men wandering in a state of nature until they were brought together by the powerful eloquence of a single individual. In the first case, the contract of society is a natural result of human sociability. In the second case, this contract is the product of artificial agreement. In presenting these accounts, Cicero alternately described the gift of speech as reflecting human rationality or bringing it into being. The first account was predicated on natural law as the source of right reason, while the second implied the conventional establishment of rights and the artificial imposition of political order. Both of these contractualist arguments appear in early modern discussions of political rights and obligations such as Grotius' *De jure belli ac pacis*; together, they responded to contemporary anxieties about the grounds of association and political obligation, given the irrational dogmatism of those fomenting religious and civil wars.

We can begin to get a sense of the discursive occasion and motive for early modern contract theory by turning to the Prolegomena of Grotius' *De jure belli ac pacis*. Here Grotius explained his reasons for writing:

> Fully convinced . . . that there is a common law among nations, which is valid alike for war and in war, I have had many and weighty reasons for undertaking to write upon this subject. Throughout the Christian world I observed a lack of restraint in relation to war, such as even barbarous races should be ashamed of; I observed that men rush to arms for slight causes, or no cause at all, and that when arms have once been taken up there is no longer any respect for law, divine or human. (para. 28)

As though to emphasize the rhetorical occasion of conflict Grotius made "controversiae," controversies, the first word of chapter 1. To the early modern reader "controversiae" would have conjured up not only contemporary religious and political controversies but also rhetorical exercises on both sides of a question (as in the elder Seneca's *Controversiae*), thereby emphasizing the inextricability of discursive and political conflict. Grotius then went on to argue from common linguistic usage that war has come to mean "not a contest but a condition," just as Hobbes would claim in chapter 13 of *Leviathan*. It was in response to this condition that Grotius turned to natural law. Natural law offered a point of convergence or agreement for the otherwise competing interests of individuals or nations, a lowest common denominator. An important part of this new minimalism was the focus on subjective rights. In Grotius and others, natural rights were a subset of natural law. Whereas natural law referred to an objective order, natural right referred to subjective faculties and powers – such as the freedom to defend oneself and one's property. Along with natural sociability, the natural right of self-preservation seemed to provide a particularly compelling motive for political obligation. According to this argument, individuals

have natural rights of self-preservation and dominion which they consent to transfer to the sovereign in exchange for protection, security, and what Hobbes called "commodious living." This exchange of protection for obedience was the essence of the political contract.

This minimalist account of natural rights in turn focused attention on the human realm of conventional agreements, the realm of the secondary law of nature. While the principles of primary natural law are by definition unchanging, the precise form they take as a result of individual choices and in the law of nations may vary. In reality, human beings have a great deal of discretion in implementing their own social and political arrangements, and promises and contracts are the vehicles by which they do so. Hence the very large place given in *De jure belli* not to Aristotelian and neo-scholastic virtues, but to what we might call the social and linguistic mechanisms of obligation, including verbal and written promises, oaths, contracts, vows, treaties, and professions of political allegiance and obedience.

As with other contracts, the obvious question raised by the notion of the political contract was why do individuals remain bound by it when the sovereign appears to act contrary to their interests? Why should and do they keep their promises? As we have seen, from antiquity onwards one answer to this question was that we are morally obliged to do so by the divine and natural law that "promises must be kept" (*pacta servanda sunt*), as well as by the implicit sanction of divine punishment. But in the seventeenth century this answer was very often supplemented by another, which involved an analysis of the mechanism of promising and of the social conventions – the social contract – of language. Beginning with the assumption that language is a distinctively human capacity which is essential for the founding of society, Grotius gradually articulated the insight that language itself entails certain obligations. On the basis of this normative view of language, he then argued that a linguistic contract – a contract about the meaning and right use of language – is the precondition of all other contracts.

Like Cicero, Grotius sometimes confidently asserts that man has "an impelling desire for society, for the gratification of which he alone among animals possesses a special instrument, speech [*sermonem*]" (Prolegomena, para. 7). He spells out the implications of this view in his discussion of good faith in book 3. Here Grotius goes so far as to criticize Cicero's opinion that promises could be broken in exceptional cases (3.19.2.1; cf. Cicero, *De officiis* 3.24.92–3.25.95). Although lying might be permitted in wartime, promises have a special status as a sign of our rationality: "From the association of reason and speech arises that binding force of a promise with which we are dealing" (3.19.1.3).

At other times, Grotius gives greater emphasis to the indispensable role language played in *eliciting* our capacity for reason and sociability. Here Grotius draws on, among others, Cicero's account of the linguistic origin and preservation of society in *De inventione*. In this text, as we have seen, the eloquence of one man was necessary both to transform irrational "wild savages into a kind and gentle folk" and – once society had been established – to induce "those who had great physical strength to

submit to justice without violence." Moreover, in Cicero's analysis, eloquence also has a role to play in regulating violence itself. In a passage that could describe Grotius' own ambitions, Cicero tells us that, after "eloquence came into being and advanced to greater development . . . in the greatest undertakings of peace and war [*in rebus pacis et belli*] it served the highest interests of mankind" (*De inventione* 1.2.3). Grotius proposes a similar role for eloquence with regard to his savage and irrational contemporaries. As we have seen, in the Prolegomena to *De jure belli* Grotius makes it clear that the goal of his ambitious treatise is to subdue irrational force – to subdue war itself – to the constraints of rational discourse. Moreover, in the second paragraph of the Prolegomena, Grotius singles out Cicero as an important precursor: "Cicero justly characterized as of surpassing worth a knowledge of treaties of alliance, conventions, and understandings of peoples, kings, and foreign nations; a knowledge, in short, of the whole law of war and peace [*in omni denique belli jure & pacis*]."

Although Grotius points to speech as evidence of natural reason and sociability – and thus of a natural obligation to keep one's promises – he also argues that a political contract is necessary because a natural disposition to sociability is not enough to ensure peaceful and faithful interaction. In *De jure belli*, reflection on political obligation is always shadowed by skepticism, by the conviction of sin, or by its secular equivalent – the recognition that humans are naturally prone to breach of promise. Thus it is a short step from Grotius' observations on the distinctively linguistic nature of human society to the insight that a linguistic contract logically precedes the social or political contract. Because political and other contracts are forged in language, part of what is involved in making a contract is making language itself dependable or calculable. A contract in language is inevitably also a contract about the use of language – one that proscribes deceit, equivocation and, in most cases, coercion. The possibility of binding signification then becomes the precondition of binding oneself politically, the precondition of the irrevocable transfer of rights.

Grotius makes the connection between right linguistic usage and right government at various points in *De jure belli*. The centerpiece of his argument appears in book 2, chapter 16, "On Interpretation." This chapter is obviously indebted to earlier humanist legal scholars who, in their effort to codify the norms of interpretation, gave increased attention to the rules for the interpretation of Roman law found in *Digest* 50.16, *de verborum significatione*. Like his humanist predecessors, Grotius is anxious to discover ways of constraining subjective intention, including criteria regarding the "objective" or socially determined meaning of words (Kelley 1984, 1990; Maclean 1992). Even more than his predecessors, Grotius is acutely aware of the political implications of his attention to the norms of interpretation. In particular, he tries to articulate a middle ground between tyranny and anarchy by arguing that the meaning of an individual's consent to a contract, including a political contract, is constrained by the social contract of language.

Thus, to the fundamental question regarding political obligation, "Must we mean what we say?," Grotius answers a resounding yes:

> If we consider only the one who has promised, he is under obligation to perform, of his own free will, that to which he wished to bind himself. "In good faith what you meant, not what you said, is to be considered," says Cicero. But because internal acts are not of themselves perceivable, and some degree of certainty must be established, lest there should fail to be any binding obligation, in case every one could free himself by inventing whatever meaning he might wish, natural reason itself demands that the one to whom the promise has been made should have the right to compel the promisor to do what the correct interpretation suggests. For otherwise the matter would have no outcome, a condition in which morals is held to be impossible. (2.16.1.1)

In this passage Grotius both acknowledges and appears to depart from the widespread medieval view that internal acts are perceivable by God and morally binding for that reason. Instead, he imagines a world in which morals are secured in the realm of interpersonal communication. Confronting the ever present possibility of deception and equivocation, he asserts a public standard of meaning and accountability: words should be understood "according to current usage" (2.16.2: *populari ex usu*). That is, while appealing to the independent authority of natural reason, Grotius also locates that authority in common linguistic practice – in the hope that language itself might provide the ethical and interpretive guidelines which are "not of themselves perceivable," and for which there is no more obvious foundation.

As the preceding has already suggested, to focus on the obligations that language creates is not only to consider the relation of intention to the social contract of meaning. It is also, necessarily, to take up the question of performance. In his *Introduction to the Jurisprudence of Holland*, Grotius asserts:

> The duty of keeping faith arises from speech or anything that resembles speech. Speech is given to man alone amongst animals for the better furtherance of their common interest in order to make known what is hidden in the mind; the fitness whereof consists in the correspondence of the sign with the thing signified, which is called "truth." But since truth considered in itself implies nothing further than the correspondence of the language with the mind at the actual moment when the language is used, and since man's will is from its nature changeable, means had to be found to fix that will for time to come, and such means are called "promise." (Tuck 1979: 69–70)

Because our will is changeable, Grotius argues, we need to invent ways to bind ourselves, to bind our intention to perform, and this self-binding takes the form of a promise or contract. Here language appears as a condition of mortgaging the will. Language is what allows us to sustain the fiction of an identical will – and of conscience – through time. As he often does, Grotius is not so much working forward from the natural moral law as working backward from language. For language to make sense, promises have to be possible. It may not be too much to say that the power of the will to bind itself is a consequence of language – of language conceived of as the rational bond of society and as the tropological power to transfer one's rights. In the Prolegomena to *De jure belli* Grotius famously claims that even if we were to

imagine (*etiamsi daremus*) that God did not exist, we would still be bound by the dictates of natural law (para. 11). In light of the arguments we have surveyed, we can now recast Grotius' formulation: *etiamsi daremus*, even if we were to imagine that God did not exist, language would still permit the transfer of rights and would still dictate certain rational obligations. As Grotius says in the passage from *The Jurisprudence of Holland*, our intentions are themselves bound by language, not the other way around.

Of course, Grotius was not naive about the force of the linguistic contract. In "On Interpretation" and elsewhere in *De jure belli* he makes it clear that this force is normative rather than actual: conventions of meaning cannot preclude deception; instead, they provide the norm for the enforcement of promises. What is important for our purposes is that Grotius attributes a constructive, even constitutive, role to language in creating the norms of social and political interaction.

In *Natural Law and Human Dignity* (1986) the twentieth-century Marxist scholar Ernst Bloch argued that early modern theories of natural rights and political contract are characterized by "the belief in the power of logical *construction*," the belief that we can only know what we have made or constructed ourselves. In a similar vein, P. S. Atiyah has argued that the innovation of at least some early modern theories of political contract is not "the idea of a relationship involving mutual rights and duties," but rather the idea that contract creates and sustains this relationship by means of the free choice of individuals (Atiyah 1979: 41). The question is how this construction or creation should be understood. Commenting on Hobbes' scientific method, Bloch observed, "This is an essential trait of modern bourgeois thought since its inception: It knows only that which has been rationally produced, and it must be able to be reconstructed logically from its elements and foundations... Here mathematics provided the model" (Bloch 1986: 55). There is certainly plenty of evidence that Hobbes thought of his political theory in this way and, in the Prolegomena to *De jure belli*, Grotius, too, claimed scientific precision for his analysis of natural rights (para. 58). But the preceding analysis of the Ciceronian dimension of *De jure belli* suggests an alternative interpretation of the power of construction, one that focuses on the constitutive power of language – on the rhetorical dimension of the social and political contract. What distinguishes the early modern from the medieval period is not so much the idea of natural rights or the political contract, both of which had a prior life in medieval philosophy, but the idea that such rights might be created and sustained by our linguistic agreement, without any other foundation. This argument anticipates some of the most interesting contractualist arguments about rights in our post-foundationalist world.

Although a full treatment of the implications of early modern contract theory for modern debates cannot be undertaken here, it is clear that Grotius challenges the modern consensus that defines the liberal subject of contract (both then and now) in terms of a pre-social, essentialist version of the self; of ahistorical individual rights; and of ahistorical, universally valid natural laws. In the alternative genealogy I am suggesting, Grotius looks forward to modern attempts to define the liberal self as already embedded in culture and language, as constituted through an ongoing series

of interpersonal relations (Kymlicka 1989; Taylor 1992). It also looks forward to efforts to locate rights somewhere between positivism and the metaphysics of natural law, in the in-between space of conversation (Fiss 1999).

The contemporary relevance of the early modern focus on the discursive dimension of rights is suggested by Thomas Haskell's (1987) article on "The Curious Persistence of Rights Talk in the 'Age of Interpretation.'" Haskell argues (against Leo Strauss on the one hand, and Nietzsche on the other) that it is still possible to talk about rights, even once one has accepted the historicist critique of positivism. Whereas Strauss and Nietzsche agreed that rights needed a metaphysical foundation in natural law (which for Strauss was at least desirable and for Nietzsche impossible), Haskell suggests that we think about rights as conventions:

> Rights need not be either eternal or universal, but if they are to do us any good, they must be rooted deeply enough in the human condition to win the loyalty of more than a few generations (and ideally, more than a few cultures). Conventions possess the requisite durability. (Haskell 1987: 1004–5)

Haskell concedes that "rights as rational conventions will lack some of the qualities that have traditionally been claimed for rights . . . Far from being fixed once and for all in a constitution or a bill of rights, the definition of rights will be a perpetual object of contention between rival groups with strong vested interests, both ideal and material, in one interpretation or another" (Haskell 1987: 1005).[2]

Although Haskell makes a compelling case for the continued significance of rights talk in the absence of metaphysical foundations, he devotes little attention to language. Here, it is useful to turn to the work of Claude Lefort and Jürgen Habermas. For Lefort, the very idea of human rights implies the disentangling of the notion of right from that of power, and this in turn means that "the source of right" is "the human utterance of right" (Lefort 1988: 37).

> Modern democracy invites us to replace the notion of a regime governed by laws, of a legitimate power, by the notion of a regime founded upon *the legitimacy of a debate as to what is legitimate and what is illegitimate* – a debate which is necessarily without any guarantor and without any end. The inspiration behind both the rights of man and the spread of rights in our day bears witness to that debate. (Lefort 1988: 39)

To rephrase Lefort in Grotius' terms, rhetorical *controversiae* may profitably substitute for physical conflict; in fact, it is only when speech replaces violence that rights can appear. A similar argument is put forward by Jürgen Habermas in an article on "Multiculturalism and the Liberal State." Habermas criticizes what he calls "the liberal assumption that human rights are prior to popular sovereignty." "The addressees of law," he argues, "must be in a position to see themselves at the same time as authors of those laws to which they are subject." And this means "it must be up to the citizens themselves to debate and deliberate in public, and to have parliaments

democratically decide, on the kinds of rights they regard as necessary for the protection of both private liberties and public participation" (Habermas 1995: 851). If this notion of democratic deliberation is a far cry from Grotius' discussion of rights, the insight that rights are created in and by language is not.

As I've argued, Grotius' attempt to think of language as both the result of a contract and as the enabling condition of any individual contract is one part of this alternative genealogy. In placing the linguistic contract at the center of his account of political obligation, Grotius stresses the mutual dependence of the "sovereign subject" who freely enters into a contract and the social and linguistic conventions that enable the subject to communicate, that is, to make sense. This analysis of the way in which language both enables and constrains the individual speaking subject might ultimately lead one to reject the metaphor of the contract, with its attendant voluntarism and its talk of individual rights, as inappropriate. In the terms of one modern critic, we could then say that Grotius ultimately helps us see that "the contract of language is not one that is freely entered into by autonomous and sovereign speakers"; "no speaker has the right to recede from the contract . . . except at the price of ceasing to be a speaker at all." But rather than equate this irrevocable linguistic contract with political repression and social control, we might instead want to hold onto the Grotian model of the linguistic contract as an emblem of "the negotiated character of social knowledge," and thus the ever present possibility of renegotiating of social and political relations through rights talk (Prendergast 1986: 37, 41). For this reason, modern critics and defenders of liberalism would do well to look again at the early modern period, which offers us a richer and more contested legacy of rights talk than the usual histories of liberalism would suggest.

<div align="center">NOTES</div>

1   I cite book, chapter, section, and (when there is one) subsection. In the following pages, the term *social contract* refers to the contract individuals enter into with each other to form society; the *political contract* is the contract between those members of society and the sovereign. The two are usually analytically distinct in seventeenth-century discussions of political obligation, with the language of contract being used most often to refer to the political contract.

2   Interestingly, although Haskell stresses interpretation and gestures ironically towards "literocentrism," he does not accord much weight to language itself. Yet in a final, appreciative analysis of Thomas Kuhn's work on the interpretive conventions of scientific communities, he quotes Kuhn on language itself as the basis of any objectivity we have (Haskell 1987: 1010–11)

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9

The Philosophy of Rhetoric in Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*

Joel C. Weinsheimer

My view of this question is, as it happens, very simple . . . It is not in the nature of man to attain a science [*epistēmē*] by the possession of which we can know positively what we should do or what we should say.

Isocrates, *Antidosis*

In recent years George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776)[1] has been so often and thoroughly contextualized in the history of rhetoric, the history of logic, and the history of ideas that I can plead some excuse for treating it here in a different way. Rather than situating *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* historically, I propose to treat it as philosophy. By that I mean taking seriously its truth-claim and thinking through some of the fundamental questions it raises in order to say something, not just about Campbell and his book, but about the philosophy of rhetoric.

By employing the title *Philosophy of Rhetoric* Campbell meant to emphasize that his work occupies the third among the three levels of rhetorical knowledge. The first level is that of the orator himself, who (though no philosopher) is not entirely without knowledge, since he knows how to speak well. Second, as distinct from the rhetor's largely intuitive know-how, the rhetorician possesses reflective knowledge, including the taxonomy of rhetorical kinds and devices as well as rules for deploying them to best effect. Finally, a third-level knowledge distinguishes the philosopher from both the rhetorician and the rhetor. This too is reflective knowledge, but the philosopher knows not just the rhetorical rules *per se*; he also knows the principles that explain why they work.

For Campbell, the specific philosophical principles that explain the functioning of rhetorical rules are those of human nature – which, since Locke and Hume, had meant the principles of psychology. Nothing is more characteristic of Campbell's philosophy than his appeal to empiricist epistemology, and yet this dependence also explains in large part why *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* has rarely received much attention as philosophy.[2] In the general rush to identify Campbell's sources, no one has made

a serious claim for his philosophical originality; and insofar as Campbell's empirical epistemology merely reiterates that of his predecessors, it does not repay our attention.

Campbell's claim to our interest, then, must rest not on the philosophy *per se* but on its conjunction with rhetoric. And it is in just this respect, namely the way in which his views cannot be comprehended within the Locke–Hume tradition, that Campbell's philosophy of rhetoric is of more than historical interest.

Campbell offers us two touchstone definitions of rhetoric: first, it is "the grand art of communication, not of ideas only, but of sentiments, passions, dispositions, and purposes" (lxxiii); second, rhetoric is the "art or talent by which the discourse is adapted to its end" (1).[3] Most evident in the generality of these definitions is Campbell's centrifugal impulse toward broadening and indeed universalizing the province of rhetoric.[4] By expanding its end beyond persuading to include informing as well, and by including the transmission of not only ideas but also emotions and desires, Campbell makes rhetoric all-inclusive, spanning the entire gamut of linguistic communication. No longer limited to a special *use* of language (say, the persuasive), nor to a special *kind* of language (say, the ornate), the sphere of rhetoric expands under Campbell's touch to become coextensive with the sphere of language.

Whatever the advantages of emancipating rhetoric from its confines as a special and occasional art (and we will return to them in conclusion), the disadvantages are many. Campbell's definition of rhetoric as the "art of communication," for example, sounds relatively innocuous and vague, but the word *communication* resonates with the special associations it had accrued from philosophy of language during the preceding century. Locke, for example, recommended that his readers "distinguish between the method of acquiring knowledge, and of communicating it; between the method of raising any science, and that of teaching it to others" (Locke 1959, II: 4.7.11). In this respect, he follows the *Port-Royal Logic*, which distinguished two kinds of method: "one for discovering truth...and the other for explaining it to others."[5] Adopting this distinction between inquiry and instruction, Campbell himself asserted in his *Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence* that "to know is one thing, and to be capable of communicating it another."[6] The consequence is that language and rhetoric both are relegated to a strictly secondary and contingent position.

This thesis – that knowing is prior to and independent of saying – means that knowing is an essentially private act. In the process of cognition as such, humans are intrinsically mute and insular beings, and the human way of knowing is correspondingly solitary. The secondariness of language (and of the social compact, the locus of which is language) is a corollary of the epistemological individualism fundamental to philosophy of knowledge from Descartes to Kant. Its basic tenet is that a single mind can, and in fact must, know alone. By contrast to a dialogical epistemology for which knowing means (*inter alia*) being able to say what one knows, eighteenth-century epistemological individualism is essentially monological.

Campbell's second definition of rhetoric, "the art by which discourse is adapted to its end," is equally monological. From this definition it follows that rhetoric is a

means to an end, namely affecting one's hearers, and the art of rhetoric consists in maximizing the efficacy of means to ends. As practice of rhetoric is utilitarian, so the second-level art of rhetoric is tactical in character. By universalizing rhetoric, Campbell's monological philosophy of rhetoric subjectivizes language. "Discourse adapted to its end" is language at the service of consciousness and will. Conceived as an instrument at the disposal of the speaking subject, rhetoric can hardly escape the stigma of being intrinsically self-interested and manipulative.[7] The ends it serves are manifold (informing, pleasing, motivating, etc.) but, generally speaking, Campbell argues, they all involve various kinds of effect on the audience. "It is not," he writes, "ultimately the justness either of the thought or of the expression which is the aim of the orator; but it is the effect to be produced in the hearers" (215). Such an assertion betrays its monological, individualist roots in two ways. Most conspicuously, Campbell describes the end of rhetoric as an effect. Monological rhetoric elicits effects, not replies. Second, the effect on the hearers is monological in being unilateral: effective speaking does not view itself as affected reciprocally by the audience.

Such rhetoric, then, consists in a one-way transaction whereby the speaking subject causes, by verbal means consciously adapted to their ends, desired effects in the hearing object.

Campbell's instrumental conception of expression parallels his utilitarian conception of rhetoric, except that it is still more individualist, since "expression," as Campbell defines it, is expression-of, not expression-to. Monological rhetoric, that is, need not be defined as communication, since the process "by which the discourse is adapted to its end" (1), of fitting expression to sense, can be entirely mute and inward. As monological rhetoric anticipates no reply, this fit too is unilateral insofar as sense is prior to and unaffected by the choice of means for expressing it. Campbell's image is perfectly familiar: rhetoric, the art of adapting discourse to sense, consists in selecting words for a pregiven idea from a pregiven pool. The philosophy of language implicit in this image reflects the commonsense notion, not only that knowing precedes saying, but also that there are lots of ways of saying something. Some expressions are more, some less exact, and the task is to find the ones that are more so.

Finding proper words constitutes what Campbell calls "grammatical truth." As "logical truth" consists in the correspondence of "sentiment to the nature of things," so grammatical truth "consisteth in the conformity of the expression to the sentiment" (214).[8] That is, grammatical truth or perspicuity consists in the coincidence of what is said and what is meant.

What could be objected against conceiving rhetoric in this way: as finding the right (grammatically true) words for one's ideas? This is the question whether language can be rightly understood as a means and rhetoric as communication. To answer this question we need to recall the three levels of rhetoric with which we began: that of the rhetor, the rhetorician, and the philosopher of rhetoric. Insofar as Campbell expands the province of rhetoric to comprehend language and speech generally, the three rhetorical levels correspond to the knowledge of the speaker, the

grammarian, and the philosopher of language. All of these levels involve knowledge, Campbell insists, even the first.

> Though in all the arts, the first rough drafts, or imperfect attempts, that are made, precede every thing that can be termed criticism, they do not precede every thing that can be termed knowledge ... This knowledge must of necessity precede even those rudest and earliest essays ... Something must be known, before any thing in this way, with a view to an end, can be undertaken to be done. (lxxvi)

Mere talk, speech untutored by the rhetorician, involves what might be called precritical knowledge. Does it also involve using language instrumentally, "with a view to an end"? On the one hand, Campbell expands the sphere of rhetoric to coincide with that of all language. On the other, he conceives of rhetorical practice in terms of cause–effect and means–end relations. Thus, identifying rhetoric with language requires him to think of not only oratory but also language generally as a "means" of communication, a "use" of language. If it turns out that not all language can be understood instrumentally, then either rhetoric must be confined only to language that is "used" or, if it is broadly identified with all language, then rhetoric can no longer be conceived solely in terms of utility. The question Campbell raises, then, is this: how does the precritical knowledge implicit in artless speech relate to the epistemic knowledge characteristic of the rhetorician and philosopher of rhetoric?

Campbell wants to claim that all three are continuous, for practical know-how is knowledge too. Not all knowledge is of the same kind, however, and practical knowledge does not belong to the highest kind. "The imperfect and indigested state in which knowledge must always be found in the mind that is self-taught," he writes, "deserves not to be dignified with the title of Science" (lxxvi). Thus the earliest attempts have no claim to be called art, for "All art is founded in science." In this emphatic maxim, with which Campbell opens his book, he presents the art of rhetoric, like all art, in a technological way – namely, as the application of science – and science he conceives as theoretical knowledge. Campbell's technological philosophy of art is a function of his epistemic philosophy of knowledge.

The premise underlying his technological vision is that epistemic or theoretical knowledge is higher than practical knowledge. Rhetorical practice not governed by science must be "awkward," just as the practical knowledge that precedes theoretical or scientific knowledge must be "imperfect and indigested." We have seen above that in Campbell's monological philosophy of rhetoric, knowing is prior to saying. Now we can add that, for his epistemology, knowing is prior to doing as well. The theoretical knowledge of the rhetorician and philosopher of rhetoric precedes and enables artful practice, for that practice (technologically conceived) is applied theory. Or in Campbell's words, "All art is founded in science."[9] Understood on this technological model, science consists of general laws and principles that enable prediction and control; art is nature controlled by science. Correlatively, rhetorical

science consists in the rules and principles of language; rhetorical art is natural language self-consciously governed by them.

Campbell does not employ the technological model wholly without reservation, however, and in fact the ways he suggests of superseding it are the focus of his interest for us. Even if rhetorical science is logically prior to the art it governs, Campbell is enough of an empiricist to insist that the science of rhetoric is itself dependent on artless practice. No less than any other empirical science, rhetorical knowledge is founded wholly upon experience and derives all its authority from it. The difficulty that this derivation presents to Campbell's technological view of art becomes most apparent in his treatment of logic and grammar, the two subsciences of which rhetoric is composed. We recall that "it is by the sense that rhetoric holds of logic, and by the expression that she holds of grammar" (32). Significantly, Campbell's most surprising and influential arguments about these two explicitly reject the notion that logical and grammatical practice is improved by the application of rules and laws. That is, as we will see, he himself undermines the fundamental premise of his scientistic and technological view of rhetoric.

With respect to logic, Campbell argues, "The method of proving by syllogism, appears . . . both unnatural and prolix. The rules laid down for distinguishing the conclusive from the inconclusive forms of argument, are at once cumbersome to the memory, and unnecessary in practice. No person, one may venture to pronounce, will ever be made a reasoner, who stands in need of them" (62). In the headlong rout of scholasticism, it comes to seem that the logical rules of validity, so laboriously raised to theoretical explicitness over the centuries, not only do not govern practice; they are "unnecessary" to it – unnecessary in the sense of being already obvious and immanent, and so unnecessary to import, as it were, from without. Likewise, the rules of grammar have no authority over grammatical usage.[10] Quite the contrary, Campbell warns, "it ought to be remembered, that use well established must give law to grammar, and not grammar to use" (392). Thus, "to the tribunal of use, as to the supreme authority . . . we are entitled to appeal from the laws and the decisions of grammarians; and this order of subordination ought never, on any account, to be reversed" (141).

The main point to be emphasized here is that if usage serves as the authority of last resort, then grammatical practice supersedes every possible codification of it, that is, all purely theoretical knowledge of it. The criterion of good usage is not a rule, an abstraction extrinsic to usage; it is usage itself. The standard of grammar is not theoretical; it is grammatical practice. This hardly means that in grammar anything goes, which is patently not the case. The point is not that grammatical use obeys no law; it is autonomous, its own law; and it obeys none separable from itself. Practices such as grammar, which are subject to immanent critique alone, are not lawless, though their laws are indivisible from the application of them. More exactly, autono-mous practice cannot be described in terms of application – the application of a universal law to the concrete instance. If such application is the defining characteristic

of technology, we can say that precritical linguistic practice is not implicit or imperfect technology; it is no technology – and no worse off for that.

If neither logic nor grammar, the two constituent parts of rhetoric, can be theorized technologically, in terms of abstract universals, the question arises whether the same pertains to rhetoric itself. Aligning himself with the tradition of Aristotle rather than Isocrates, Campbell very much wants to show that the art of rhetoric has formulable rules and so can claim the dignity of being a science. "In almost every art, even as used by mere practitioners," he asserts, "there are certain rules ... which must be carefully followed" (lxx). The notion of art as "following rules" makes it seem that in rhetoric, as in any other art, first the rules exist – at least implicitly – and the rest "follows." And if the rules precede practice, they can be abstracted from it and made explicit – that is, made into a science. For Campbell and the epistemological tradition, all genuine knowing consists of knowing rules, and following even implicit rules counts as knowing them. So Campbell is willing to admit that practice involves knowledge – though until the rules are formulated, it is dim knowledge, "imperfect and un-digested." Campbell's negative valuation of practical knowledge results from his taking science as normative for all knowledge, and science is understood epistemic-ally: as the kind of knowledge that is abstractable from practice.

Yet we have seen that, even for Campbell, logic and grammar represent a kind of knowledge that is not susceptible of abstract theorization and is nevertheless not inferior to theoretic knowledge. This non-scientific cognition can be called practical knowledge so long as we keep in mind that what distinguishes it is not the absence of norms but their immanence to practice, just as the distinctive quality of theoretic knowledge is the duality of the two. If, like logic and grammar, rhetoric too belongs to the sphere of practical knowledge, then Campbell is not compelled to make the impossible choice between forcing rhetoric into the natural-scientific model of knowledge or disparaging it as at best unscientific. If there is another kind of knowledge – the practical – then either some non-sciences have a claim to cognitive dignity or else there are real sciences – moral sciences, perhaps, or human sciences – which do not conform to the epistemic model.[11]

Campbell in fact goes a good way toward displacing the rule-based model of rhetoric because he continually calls into question the sufficiency of rhetorical rules to rhetorical practice. Underlying their insufficiency one fundamental reason stands out: rhetoric is always concrete practice insofar as addressed (to a concrete audience) and occasioned (by a concrete situation). Concerned wholly with audience, chapters 7 and 8 of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* are paired together as their titles indicate: "Of the Consideration which the Speaker ought to have of the Hearers as Men in general" and "Of the consideration which the Speaker sought to have of the Hearers, as such Men in particular." Writing about men in general, Campbell, the epistemologist in the Locke–Hume tradition, is in his stride. By his definition, philosophy of rhetoric consists in explaining rhetorical rules by reference to the principles of human nature, that of "men in general." But whereas chapter 7, devoted to generalizations about a generic audience, occupies some twenty-five pages, its companion piece occupies only

one. When it comes to dealing with rhetoric proper, concrete discourse addressed to "men in particular," the epistemologist is at a loss. Campbell the philosopher has virtually nothing to say about particular audiences – the audiences specific to rhetoric – for the simple reason that philosophical generalizations, broad rules, epistemic generalizations, are designed precisely to obviate consideration of the particular and the concrete – the province of rhetoric.

Thus he closes his empty chapter – the chapter on the audience of rhetoric as such – as follows: "As the characters of audiences may be infinitely diversified . . . the influence they ought to have respectively upon the speaker must be obvious to a person of discernment" (96). Even if this dismissive gesture is designed to mask the chapter's vacuity, it nevertheless raises questions concerning audience influence and rhetorical discernment that repay our attention. Once a speaker begins thinking about addressing a particular audience and adapting himself to it, then it becomes clear that along with the speaker's effect on the audience, the audience is likewise exercising an influence on the speaker. At the point of particularity, the point of rhetoric as concrete practice, we can no longer view rhetorical effect as unilateral, for the rhetorical situation becomes at the very least a tissue of reciprocal effects. Just as important, the particularities of the audience problematize the technological view of rhetoric as well. At the point of particularity, where general rules suited to generic audiences leave off and the rhetorical technologist is consequently at a loss, the "person of discernment" steps in. Neither lawless nor merely obedient to abstract rhetorical laws, discernment consists in seeing the law immanent in the concrete particular. To the discerning speaker it is evident from the situation itself what needs to be said and done. When it comes to the particular, practical knowledge can claim superiority to epistemic science.

The discernment necessary for the discourse in general is no less needed at the level of the sentence:

> Rhetoricians have generally prescribed that a period should not consist of more than four members. For my own part, as members of sentences differ exceedingly both in length and in structure from one another, I do not see how any general rule can be established to ascertain their number . . . The only rule which will never fail, is to beware of both prolixity and of intricacy; and the only competent judges in the case are good sense and a good ear. (372)

If so – if rules and principles can never obviate the need for good judgment, and if rhetoricians and philosophers of rhetoric can therefore never supply all the rhetor's needs – then perhaps it is not entirely the case that "all art is founded on science." Practice cannot be wholly theorized because it always involves an element of non-theoretic knowledge – whether it is called discernment, judgment, or good sense. For this reason, rhetorical practice cannot be exhaustively described in terms of epistemic knowledge and its application in technology. In brief, there can be no epistemology of rhetoric, as long as *epistēmē* retains the meaning it has had since Plato.

It follows that the science of rhetoric can be found only in concrete examples of it. Campbell the epistemologist grudgingly concedes that "by the mere influence of example on the one hand, and imitation on the other, some progress may be made in an art, without the knowledge of the principles from which it sprung" (lxix). Yet if there is a different, uncodifiable kind of knowledge, it cannot be learned from precepts and principles: practical knowledge can only be learned by example. If knowing the formal rules of logic, as Campbell the rhetorician argues, is not what makes a good logician, then "true logic . . . is best studied not in a scholastic system, but in the writings of the most judicious and best reasoners on the various subjects supplied by history, science and philosophy."[12] So also, we recall, for Campbell it is usage that gives the law to grammar, not grammar to usage. Good usage can therefore be learned only by imitating "whatever modes of speech are authorized as good by the writings of . . . celebrated authors" (145). Rhetoric, like all knowledge irreducible to rule, must be learned by example and imitation.

Campbell the epistemologist raises the usual charge against imitation: it precludes innovation and creativity. "Improvements . . . are not to be expected from those who have acquired all their dexterity from imitation and habit"; what they produce is "commonly no more than a mere copy" (lxix). Those who know only the particular example, and not the general principle underlying it, can do no more than duplicate it. Of course, those who learn only to follow the rule can only produce more instances of it. What they cannot learn is how and when to break the rule. The notion of a grace beyond the reach of art is fundamental to anything claiming to be rhetorical knowledge. In Campbell's view as in our own, rhetoric is not merely perspicuous expression that achieves clarity by obeying the laws prescribed by common usage. Eloquence must have force as well, and striking expressions are typically uncommon and unconventional. For this reason, neither parroting the particular nor following codified usage can account for the highest rhetorical achievements. However unqualified Campbell's assertions, he is quite aware that rhetorical art neither is or should be governed by the rules of epistemic science. "To render the artificial or conventional arrangement, as it were, sacred and inviolable, by representing every deviation . . . as a trespass against the laws of composition in the language, is one of the most effectual ways of stinting the powers of elocution, and even of damping the vigour both of imagination and of passion" (365). No laws are inviolable, for some violations are always justified.

In the violations endemic to metaphor, for example, Campbell finds what is always "an apparent, if it cannot be called a real impropriety" (294). Yet he hardly recommends avoiding all metaphors because he recognizes that deviation from accepted usage is essential to eloquence, and so there must be such a thing as rhetorically appropriate deviation. Since no rule can teach deviation as anything but improper, however, the question arises where, if not from the rulebook, the aspiring orator is to learn it. Campbell's answer is this: "Sometimes indeed it is necessary, in order to set an eminent object in the most conspicuous light, to depart a little from the ordinary mode of composition as well as of arrangement." The following [from Zechariah 1:5] is

an example in this way: "Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" (364). Knowing whether, when, and how much to depart from the prescriptions of usage constitutes the very creativity essential to eloquence, and far from precluding creativity, imitating is the only way of learning it. The judgment capable of discerning proper impropriety, as it were, can be sharpened only by example.

Wittingly and unwittingly, Campbell shows that rhetorical knowledge is indivisible from concrete example; it is practical knowledge, and that comes only from practice itself. This means, ultimately, from other people's practice. Rhetoric can only be learned dialogically, from one's predecessors. Perhaps we should have anticipated this conclusion, for it is implicit in Campbell's expansion of rhetoric to coincide with the sphere of all language. Learning to speak is no epistemic process. As Campbell is fully aware, "The knowledge of all the rules, both of derivation . . . and of construction, nay, and of all the words in the language, is not the knowledge of the language" (190). What constitutes "knowledge of the language," then, if it is not to be found in dictionaries and grammar books? And what is rhetorical knowledge, if identified with it?

We take our clue from Campbell's assertion, repeated in various contexts and various ways, that the knowledge in question does not mean knowing all the rules of grammar and diction. Knowledge of the language is not just epistemic and theoretical, then. Language is most itself in the concrete, in the speech act, in dialogue and conversation – which means in practice. Knowing language is, simply, knowing how to speak, and this is practical knowledge in the sense that it need not involve any theoretical knowledge of definitions and grammar at all. More than knowing-that, it consists in knowing-how. Knowledge of the language does not mean knowing all the rules; it means instead knowing how to apply them. This involves discernment, which includes knowing when not to apply a rule, or when to break it, or when to apply it to something so new that the rule itself is altered by the very application of it. The point is not just that every speaker doesn't need to be a grammarian, but that every grammarian who can speak knows more than just rules. Knowing how to apply is in principle creative, and so is never just a matter of applying rules. Knowledge of language is not knowledge of some definable thing, for language is not an entity but a power to create.

Knowing how to use a word never just means knowing its definition. A speaker who cannot use a word metaphorically, according to any previous definition or convention of usage, does not know how to use it. For that very reason it is inexact to talk about "using" words, as if they were tools in a tool box – given, predefined, just waiting to be employed and returned unaltered. The instrumentalist view of speaking must be discarded. Language is not a "means of communication" because, in speaking, choosing one's means is the same as choosing what one means. In fact, it is much closer to the ordinary experience of speaking to say that it involves no choosing at all, no reflection on verbal means as separate from non-verbal ends.

On this new, more hermeneutical view, the philosopher's task is not to explain second-level knowledge, namely why the rhetorician's rules work, but to

explain first-level knowledge, namely why the rules, however useful, are always limited and never ultimately sufficient to rhetorical practice. If the art of rhetoric cannot be understood in a technological way, in terms of rules and their application, a philosophy of rhetoric devoted to first-level knowledge stands epistemology on its head by refusing to reduce rhetorical practice to theory. It refuses to admit the primacy of *epistēmē* and thus consign rhetoric to the secondary place of communicating what is already known. Moreover, if rhetoric cannot be explained in an instrumental way as the "art by which the discourse is adapted to its end," then philosophy of rhetoric will need to explain rhetoric as something other than the mongrel creature painted by epistemology, monstrously compounded of end and means, what and how, sense and expression, logic and grammar. A unified philosophy of rhetoric as one and whole will explain with Campbell against Campbell why it is not the case that "to know is one thing, and to be capable of communicating it another."

NOTES

1 Cited below from Lloyd F. Bitzer's second edition (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988).

2 In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 7, I. A. Richards affirms, "[Whatley's] claim – that Rhetoric must go deep, must take a broad philosophical view of the principles of the Art – is the climax of his Introduction; and yet in the treatise that follows nothing of the sort is attempted, nor is it in any other treatise that I know of." Richards' sweeping denigration is clearly meant to include Campbell.

3 In Campbell's *Cura Prima* this second, instrumentalist definition had pride of place. See Dennis R. Bormann, "George Campbell's *Cura Prima* on Eloquence – 1758," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 74 (1988), 35–51.

4 W. S. Howell makes this point in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric*, p. 579.

5 Cited in Vincent M. Bevilacqua, "Philosophical Origins," p. 5n.

6 Reprinted in *Preacher and Pastor*, ed. Edwards A. Park (Andover: Allen, Morrill and Wardwell, 1845), p. 354.

7 "The custom of classifying speeches in terms of the purpose of the speaker rather than the function of the judge [hearer] stems ultimately from Campbell," writes Douglas Ehninger in "Campbell, Blair, and Whately Revisited," *Southern Speech Journal*, 28: 3 (1963), 181.

8 On the former, see C. W. Edney, "George Campbell's Theory of Logical Truth," *Speech Monographs*, 15 (1948), 19–32.

9 In "All Art is Founded in Science," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 13: 1 (1983), 14, Lloyd Bitzer contends that this maxim "led to [Campbell's] central error, which was the (often forced) reduction of rhetorical terms and principles to psychological terms and principles." My contention is that the error is still more basic, namely the reduction to science of what is no science.

10 For a detailed treatment, see Thomas Frank, "Linguistic Theory and the Doctrine of Usage," *Lingua e stile*, 20 (1985), 199–216.

11 In his pioneering article, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," *Central States Speech Journal*, 18: 1 (1967), 9–17, Robert L. Scott concludes, "In human affairs, then, rhetoric . . . is a way of knowing; it is epistemic" (p. 16). I follow Scott's lead in insisting on the cognitive function of rhetoric, but my point is that *epistēmē*, strictly understood, is not the highest or the sole ideal of cognition. That is, not all real knowledge – and, in particular, not all rhetorical knowledge – is epistemic. See also

Scott's "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic: Ten Years Later," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27: 4 (1976), 258–66. There (p. 261) Scott alludes to the new conception of rhetoric which follows from Gadamer's hermeneutic subversion of epistemology in *Truth and Method*. See my *Gadamer's Hermeneutics: A Reading of Truth and Method* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985) and *Philosophical Hermeneutics and Literary Theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

12 *Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence*, in *Preacher and Pastor*, p. 359.

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10

The Rhetorical Legacy of Kenneth Burke

Herbert W. Simons

> What are they worrying about? Didn't we explain that we have no warlike intentions?
> Kenneth Burke

Over the course of an incredibly long and productive career, Kenneth Burke (1897–1993) examined the ways of that most complex of all species: the "symbol-using, symbol mis-using animal" (Burke 1966). His trackings of terminologies – of the ways we humans use and are used by them – took him from language and literature through all of "human relations" to philosophy, religion, and words about words. His genius consisted in virtuoso readings, critical pathfindings, and theoretical breakthroughs, but his own words about words display a "stable instability" (Leff 1989).

More "convolutionist" than revolutionist, Burke was as apt to treat a pun seriously as a piety mockingly. Worse yet, to many readers, he seemed to delight in what he himself called "gratuitous asides," "benign casuistries," "felicitous distortions," "perspectives by incongruity." For Burke's critics, these alleged misuses of language and logic are proof positive of the ultimate vacuousness of his philosophy. But for many of his defenders, Burke's comedic style – his puns and twists and extensions and asides – are indispensable components of an ironic, often self-ironic, comedic method.[1] His lifelong friend Malcolm Cowley's explanation, not entirely inconsistent with the other two, was that the man simply couldn't help it (Jay 1988). He was an inveterate paradoxer, complexifier, tryer-oner of yet another metaphor-driven way of adding things up.

"Burkology"

Categorizing Burke – "naming his number" – has never been easy, and surely wasn't for Burke himself. These days he is often cast as a critical theorist – a "pre-postmodernist"

(e.g., Crusius 1999) – but in May of 1916 he told Cowley that he was "certain to take up exclusively the study of music" (quoted in Selzer 1996: 185). That same year, his first publication – a free-verse poem – appeared in a magazine, and many others followed in its wake. Not without cause did Marianne Moore assert that he was "to begin with, a poet" (Burke 1968a: bookjacket). On meeting Thomas Mann at Ohio State, he was inspired to translate Mann's *Death in Venice*. W. H. Auden would say of the published Modern Library translation, "This is it" (quoted in Yagoda 1980: 67). Two years later, having transferred from Ohio State to Columbia, Burke gave up college entirely for the life of the Greenwich Village literary bohemian. There he would be schooled informally by some of the next college generation's required reading, but at the price of suspending, and ultimately forfeiting, a credentialed academic career. In the midst of the Great Depression came a period of intense political activism, during which he would complain to Cowley of his need to "translate English into English" (quoted in Wolin 2001: 79). The reference was to the seeming inability of his "fellow travelers" among American communist writers to recognize that Marxist "science" needed rhetorical adaptation to its American audiences (Lentricchia 1983).[2] Beginning in the 1940s there is yet another shift: less ideology, more methodology; a concerted effort at system-building for a writer temperamentally inclined toward system-undoing, including his own.

The one "permanence" amid all this change was Burke's dedication to making a difference as a writer, but the writing transgressed the usual disciplinary boundaries. On the occasion of Burke's receipt of the National Medal for Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1981, Richard Kostelanetz (1981: 11) wrote that while he had no difficulty classifying *Counter-Statement* (1931), *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941), and *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966) as literary criticism, the six other non-fictional works in the Burke corpus, *Permanence and Change* (1935), *Attitudes Toward History* (1937), *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961), and *Dramatism and Development* (1972), were "something else . . . sociology a bit, the theory of language a bit less, the contemplation of life a bit more." These last books, he said, "are so diffuse, so unsystematic that they are not 'philosophy' in any formal sense but something thoroughly idiosyncratic: Burkology."[3]

While Burke's distinct blend of theory and social commentary ranged over a dizzying array of subject matters – among them anthropology, linguistics, religion, oratory, fiction, history, economics, philosophy, and politics – it would be a mistake to think of any of his writings as purely disciplinary contributions, for he invariably brought to each object of his scrutiny an overarching interdisciplinary framework, and he consistently took from his engagements with the texts of a given field ideas that might help fertilize another.

Burke's initial focus was upon the aesthetics of imaginative works, but by the 1930s and 1940s he had greatly extended his reach with rhetorical, dramatistic, and dialectical conceptions of language as symbolic action that circumscribed all life and literature within their domains. For Burke, language was a repository of possibilities for thinking about and expressing an idea. By one's choice of language one

could conceal or reveal, magnify or minimize, simplify or complexify, elevate or degrade, link or divide. In language, then, there are "resources of ambiguity" which communicators of every kind will seek to exploit.[4] But language also "thinks for us": it shapes our experiences of the world, our communication of those experiences, and their subsequent validation by others. Said Burke, the most important and most accessible *facts* about human beings are not to be found in what they do, or in their biologies and chemistries (as some maintain), but in their language, and in what they *say* about what they do (Burke 1966). Building on the classical trivium – rhetoric, by which to glimpse non-obvious meanings, methods, and motives; grammar, by which to discern structures and transformations; and dialectic, by which to reach ever higher without loss of conceptual baggage – Burke's own dialectic took him to the highest reaches of "logology," the study of words about words, wherein vocabularies are seen as having "entelechial" potentialities for development and transformation, and wherein correspondences, say, between theological and secular conceptions of creation, sacrifice, conversion, salvation, are studies "in their sheer formality" as observations about language *per se*.[5]

Burke's influence on contemporary rhetorical theory and criticism is not entirely separable from his theories of dramatism, dialectics, and logology, and neither can it be divorced from his politics, his aesthetics, his metaphysics, and his comedic method. Indeed, the breadth of his rhetorical perspective – his ability to read rhetoric into the larger historical currents of intellectual conversation and to infuse rhetorical theory with them – may be his greatest rhetorical legacy. This essay charts Kenneth Burke's influence on rhetoric's "globalization" (Gaonkar 1997). It is in the context of the globalization movement that we can best appreciate his more specific contributions.

Burke and Rhetoric's Globalization

Rhetoric's "globalization" can best be understood as a project or intellectual movement, at the center of which is a proposed disciplinary reframing: from the study of rhetoric as a delimited object of study – as circumscribed by the classical tradition – to rhetoric as a perspective or set of perspectives on virtually all human acts and artifacts. Given impetus by the cataclysmic events of the 1960s, it gained legitimacy at the NEH-sponsored Wingspread and Pheasant Run conferences on the future of rhetorical studies (Bitzer and Black 1971). No longer would rhetorical study be confined to the civic arena, or to platform address or composition. Street protests would be fair game, even the violence-prone ghetto riots of the period. So too were the hip-swiveling gyrations of the latest rock stars. In fact, as some among the old guard still lament, virtually nothing was now off limits. The rhetoric of the vaginal orgasm? Why not?

It is easy to trivialize the globalization project as a knee-jerk response to the worst excesses of the 1960s. It is also easy to ridicule globalization as a kind of intellectual

imperialism, or as yet another example of the law of the hammer, an ill-advised extension of rhetorical theory beyond what it was initially set up to accomplish, and beyond what it is able to do (Gross and Keith 1997). But Burke's perspectivism[6] was not so much a declaration that all communication is rhetorical as it was an invitation to explore pragmatically the possibilities – the implicit entelechial potential – of viewing communicative acts and artifacts in this way. Call it if you will the *rhetorical hypothesis* – that there is potential profit in pursuing rhetorical lines of inquiry to their farthest limits.

Burke was by no means alone in the 1960s in promoting a greatly expanded, perspectival approach to rhetoric. Wayne Booth was a kindred spirit; so too were Hugh Dalziel Duncan, Richard McKeon, and Harold Zyskind. All presented papers at Wingspread (Bitzer and Black 1971). In fact, Burke was not invited to either conference. Still, his impact was pronounced and long overdue. Burke's writings have had a major influence on what Richard Rorty referred to as the "rhetorical turn" in the human sciences (Simons 1995). This, broadly speaking, has been an effort to recast the human sciences in rhetorical terms, paralleling critiques of traditional philosophy's longstanding commitments to objectivism and to one or another foundationalist presupposition (Nelson, Megill, and McCloskey 1987; Simons 1989, 1990; Smith 1997). The term is something of an ironic entitlement, inviting images of scholars as flatterers and deceivers, con artists and propagandists, and raising all manner of embarrassing questions about relationships between science and ideology, scholarship and political practice. Never mind, then, that the term "rhetoric" is often used neutrally and even eulogistically as the study of how one ought to persuade; its very link to persuasion is a step down from images of "proof," "demonstration," "verification," and "falsification" that have been the watchwords of objectivism. And, while traditionalists might be heartened to learn that the project to reconceive the human sciences has a reconstructive aspect – that it is not all criticism and deconstruction – still, our traditionalist might legitimately conclude that while the news from the rhetoric front is somewhat mixed, it is generally bad.

Dilip Gaonkar (1990) has argued that Burke helped ensure a future for the "rhetorical turn" in the human sciences by giving it a past. Still, that was by no means his only contribution to rhetoric's globalization. His exemplary readings of the rhetorical in the literary have become touchstones for others to follow (Blakesley 2001). His musings on power, hierarchy, and rhetoric provided clues to the constitutive functions of rhetoric (e.g., Charland 2001; McGee 1975) and placed him squarely in the Marxist/Gramscian tradition of ideology-critique (Lentricchia 1983). His analysis of "Hitler's 'Battle'" (Burke 1973) was yet another touchstone, and one among his many contributions to understanding the rhetoric of social movements. His *Rhetoric of Religion* (1961), together with other of his later writings on language, power, and identity (e.g., Burke 1966), has excited the rhetorical imaginations of postmodern theorists (McLemee 2001).

There is no "right" way to enter the Burke corpus on rhetoric. I will begin with the "Traditional Principles" essay in *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and, in the spirit of Burke, I'll

start with a specific example, which is what he was apt to do. The example is of four lines from Gray's *Elegy*:

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

In *Attitudes Toward History* (1937) Burke had entertained the possibility that such "Poetic Categories" as epic and tragedy, comedy and burlesque, pastoral and the elegy, could usefully be understood as "frames of acceptance" and "frames of rejection" that evolved as strategic responses to audience and situation. But what did this seemingly innocent elegy have to do with rhetoric?

Following William Empson, Burke's interest here is in the subtle ways of mystification, as found in the conventions of love poetry and what Burke (1969b: 124) calls the "mimetics of social inferiority." Poor Gray is not an aristocrat but a commoner. The lines allude, as Empson notes, to society's neglect of such talents as Gray's. Burke builds on Empson's observation that there are "latent political ideas" implicit in the poem's expression of melancholic resignation. But then, "considering the 'poetic' lines rhetorically," one might (Burke did!) add an additional possibility: that by his expression of resignation (in the person of the unseen flower), the poet was making "a bid for preferment." "The sentiments expressed are thus a character reference, describing a person doubly reliable, since he doesn't protest even when neglected" (Burke 1969b: 125). Isn't there a possibility that the person of the poet might be "plucked" after all? "In an imaginative way the poem answers such questions as a personnel director would record in his files" (Burke 1969b: 125).

Thus does Burke discover rhetorical motives alongside the political and the imaginative.

"Traditional Principles of Rhetoric" is a long essay, sandwiched between a discourse on "The Range of Rhetoric" and a somewhat disordered treatment of Order. Gaonkar (1990) characterized the essay as a "rescue operation," an attempt at extending rhetoric's reach and reclaiming its history without at the same time depriving it of its "mereness," its lack of epistemic or substantive grounding, its status as a Derridean supplement. Other contemporary writers, says Gaonkar, have found rhetoric's formal emptiness intolerable, but in seeking to provide it with a grounding, they have denied it its unique potential as a critical perspective on other disciplines. Gaonkar singles out Burke as one who has not sought to remake rhetoric into something more respectable. To the contrary, his rescue operation involves a "return of the repressed," a confrontation with rhetoric's dark, unheralded, sophistic side, as reflected in the writings of the early Sophists, as well as of those such as Marx and Machiavelli, Ovid and Carlyle, whom Burke was at pains to include as part of rhetoric's intellectual history.

Without considering Gaonkar's intriguing case in detail, I think it can be said that Burke's reconceptualization of rhetoric's nature and scope, as well as his reconstitution of its history, are far more compatible with current thinking about the human sciences, including postmodern philosophy, than is the traditional view. The reconceptualization takes rhetoric well beyond the artificial confines imposed upon it by neo-Aristotelians who have sought to tame it, Platonists who haughtily dismissed it, and post-Enlightenment scholars who generally managed to ignore it or emasculate it. Said Burke in his Preface to the *Rhetoric of Motives* (1969b: xiii):

> In part, we would but *rediscover* rhetorical elements that had become obscured when rhetoric as a term fell into disuse, and other specialized disciplines such as aesthetics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and sociology came to the fore (so that aesthetics sought to outlaw rhetoric, while the other sciences we have mentioned took over, each in its own terms, the rich rhetorical elements that aesthetics would ban).

Burke's consideration of rhetoric's nature and scope in the "Traditional Principles" essay begins traditionally enough with a view of Greco-Roman conceptions of rhetoric. There is, he notes, the dominant view of rhetoric as an art of persuasion for the civic arena, the counterpart, as Aristotle put it, of dialectic, which is dependent on ethics and politics for its judgments. But even as Burke presents this traditional view, one begins to discern problems with its demarcation criteria that will resurface with renewed importance in the non-traditional texts that he examines later in the essay. There is rhetoric as persuasion, but there is also rhetoric as invention, the principles of which may guide inquiry and judgment – and not just on matters of civic concern. There is the sense of rhetoric as persuasion to action, but there is also persuasion to attitude, implying a freedom of choice for the audience that might admit of poetic devices as part of rhetoric's arsenal of techniques. Similarly, there is the sense of rhetoric as designed to bend another (*flectere*) but also to move, form, or mold another's opinions (*movere*). There is rhetoric as matter and manner, substance and form (in Cicero's terms, wisdom married to eloquence), but there is rhetoric as technique only. There is rhetoric as rational reason-giving but there is rhetorical appeal to emotion or sentiment, in place of reason. There is rhetoric as "the competitive use of the cooperative," but there is also advantage-seeking through rhetoric for the sake of the other and oneself.

In surveying rhetoric's traditional range of meanings, Burke seemed to delight in its ambiguities, its dialectical potential for merger with or division from such other key concepts in Western thought as reality and appearance, reason and unreason, compulsion and choice, style and substance. Rhetoric is thus positioned as a central philosophical concept, raising for us many of the same questions as the Sophists considered two thousand years ago. "Perhaps we should make clear," said Burke (1969b: 61–2):

> We do not offer this list as a set of ingredients all or most of which must be present at once, as the test for the presence of the rhetorical motive. Rather, we are considering a wide range of meanings already associated with rhetoric, in ancient texts; and we are saying that one or another of these meanings may be uppermost in some particular usage. But though these meanings are often not consistent with one another, or are even flatly at odds, we do believe that they can all be derived from "persuasion" as the "Edenic" term from which they have all "Babylonically" split, while "persuasion" in turn involves communication by the signs of consubstantiality, the appeal of identification.

Characteristic of Burke's approach to rhetoric is his treatment of Karl Marx and Jeremy Bentham in the "Traditional Principles" essay. Of *A Rhetoric of Motives* Burke had written that it would "help us take delight in the Human Barnyard, with its addiction to the Scramble, an area that would cause us great unhappiness were we not able to transcend it by appreciation, classifying and tracing back to their origins in Edenic simplicity those linguistic modes of suasion that often seem little better than malice and the lie" (Burke 1969b: 442). As rhetorical critic, Burke's own "hermeneutic of suspicion" (he called it "linguistic skepticism," or, after Nietzsche, "the Art of mistrust") was by no means reserved for the more obvious Scramblers in the Human Barnyard; it was brought to bear in equal measure on the discourse of the Academy, and especially to those, such as Marx and Bentham, who purported to have privileged ways of knowing or communicating.

Typically, however, Burke has been a reclother rather than an unclother; his analyses demystify but do not debunk. This is part and parcel of his comedic method, discussed earlier. While the objects of his analyses are often reclothed in comic dress, he purports to being less interested in pronouncing a favorable or unfavorable judgment on a given work than in learning from it. This works well enough except when there is a need to express warrantable outrage.[7]

As with Marx and Bentham, Burke repeatedly gleans ideas for rhetorical theory in his "Traditional Principles" essay from unlikely contributors, managing to cast them not only as rhetoricians (theorists of persuasion), but also as rhetors (persuaders) in their own right. Of both Marx and Bentham, Burke writes that while rhetorical theory has traditionally presented itself as a science of speaking well on issues of civic concern, their "polemic emphasis might rather have led them to define rhetoric (or those aspects of it upon which they centered their attention) as: the knack of speaking ill in civic matters" (Burke 1969b: 101). Marx's major contribution to rhetorical theory, Burke argues, was to expose the workings of ideology (by which he meant capitalist ideology), and this he did quite well, little realizing, apparently, that the general principles of mystification that he articulated might apply equally well to Marxism itself.

But, of course, Marx's debunking project required that he present his own analysis as "science" – hence, *above* ideology – an objective ground against which capitalist ideology as figure could be seen for what it was. Bentham, like Marx, emerges as a

rhetor in disguise and as a rhetorician despite himself – able to see other writings as rhetorical, but not his own, yet hardly to be dismissed for so ubiquitous a failing. Says Burke, Bentham's major contribution was to show how interests, attitudes, sentiments, and the like are revealed in the most innocent-seeming terms and expressions. Bentham called these "fallacies," "prejudices," and "allegorical idols," and he sought in their place to formulate a scientifically neutral vocabulary of interests. But while Bentham was unable to do so, and indeed could not possibly have done so, he thereby wound up providing far better evidence of the rhetorical imperative than he would have had that been his intention.[8]

Central to Burke's own theory of rhetoric is the concept of identification, understood broadly to include appeals – both conscious and unconscious – to common ground and selective namings of a thing's ostensible properties.[9] The Freudian unconscious was, for Burke, one of several forms of unconsciousness. Just as individuals repress, so do entire societies remain blissfully unaware of the forms of mystification by which, as Marx put it, the ideas of the ruling class become the ruling ideas. As a social critic, writing out of his experience of two world wars and a depression, Burke was particularly attuned to forms of "misidentification" (i.e., "the knack of speaking ill"), including seemingly innocent or unintended forms of deception that lie outside rhetoric's traditional purview of concern. Hence his incorporation of Marx and Bentham into the "Traditional Principles" essay, as well as a host of other figures not ordinarily accorded the status of rhetoricians. These include Carlyle on the tactical uses of clothing, Ovid on sexual gamesmanship, Empson on pastoral poetry as a social strategy, Diderot on courtly pantomimes, Rochefoucauld on hypocrisies, De Gourmont on the dissociation of ideas, Pascal on "directing the intention," and Machiavelli on administrative rhetoric. Burke writes:

> Particularly when we come upon such aspects of persuasion as are found in "mystification," courtship, and the "magic" of class relationships, the reader will see why the classical notion of clear persuasive intent is not an accurate fit, for describing the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another. (Burke 1969b: xiv)

The concept of identification informs not just Burke's writings on political rhetoric, but also his method of dialectics. Beginning as he does with the dialectical pair of being and appearance that was of such pivotal concern to the Sophists, Burke's writings on dialectical merger (a kind of identification between ideas) and division should be of special interest to rhetoricians of scholarly discourse (Burke 1969a). Burkeian dialectics is to ideas as dramatism is to action, and in Appendix D to *A Grammar of Motives*, Burke offers ideas on how to "construct" a dialectic: that is, on how to advance consideration of an issue. Entitled "Four Master Tropes," the essay explores parallels between forms of thought and figures of speech.

Suppose, for example, that you are a first-year instructor and new at the business of formulating a philosophy of pedagogy. Begin, says Burke, with a metaphor-driven

perspective, a way of seeing, and take it to the end of the line. Your initial *metaphor* might be that of a Bentham-like neutrality that eschews bias of any kind. Without difficulty you should be able to come up with exemplars of pedagogic neutrality, a highly factual lecture that you once attended or leadership of a seemingly evenhanded discussion. These *synecdochic* representations should advance consideration of the issue by enabling you to move back and forth between the specific and the general, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic. See how far you can take your case for pedagogic neutrality. But take care that you don't reduce teaching to what it is not, e.g., to the movements of a calculating machine as it spews out sums. This kind of reduction, Burke says (controversially), is akin to *metonymy.* It is especially troubling when action is reduced to mere motion.

On entertaining your initial perspective – in this case, a Bentham-like pedagogic neutrality – you may discover, as Burke did, the ways it may *be* promotive of the instructor's interests in the guise of *appearing* objective. Having recognized its limitations, juxtapose it against opposing perspectives – other "partial truths," as he calls them. Consider now, in the spirit of Marx, a radical alternative: that a professor's job is to profess, and in so doing to "liberate" students from their false consciousness. You will likely discover on exploring the implications of that perspective that it too has its limitations. Then see if you can find a dialectical perspective on perspectives – a meta-perspective – that honors the "sub-certainties" of each (and other pedagogic alternatives as well), perhaps reconciling them in such a way that what once seemed "apart from" now seems "a part of." You might, for example, invite discussion by your students of the very dilemma you are confronting as a teacher, presenting them with a suitably difficult *synecdochal* case. I call this "teaching the pedagogies" (Simons 1994). Operating dialectically in this way should help advance consideration of the question. But keep in mind that the new, *ironic* perspective is itself but one way of seeing, itself limited for that reason, itself in need of a comic corrective. The method of dialectic is thus never-ending, and, indeed, Burke's own theories have the quality of taking you to the top of a mountain, only to have you and him come tumbling down. Nothing is stable in Burke, nothing foundational. But the trip up the mountain and the view from the top are nearly always worth the fall.

Conclusion: Toward a Reconstructive Rhetoric

Elsewhere, I have argued for a reconstructive rhetoric, one that builds on, but moves beyond, deconstructionist critiques of traditional philosophy in ways that answer to the need for reasoned and reasonable judgments on issues for which there can be no formal or final proof (Simons 1990, 1995, forthcoming). How, if language "uses us," can we justifiably reclaim a sense of human agency? How, in the face of limits on our ability to know, and to know that we know, can we adjudicate between competing reality claims, and competing ways of rendering them? How, if the human sciences are not simply an extension of the physical sciences, can we best reconfigure social

thought? How can we choose between competing values (e.g., freedom vs. equality, national security vs. civil liberties) in the face of changing exigencies? How can we structure these and other conversations so that they are most likely to lead to wise and prudential judgments? And having arrived at these judgments, how can we convince others – objectivists included – to join with us?

Questions of this sort are the province of rhetorical reconstruction. Absent foundations, a reconstructive rhetoric will of necessity be unstable, self-questioning, reflexive – always in process of reconstituting itself in light of new historical saliencies and new habits of conviction. Its "truths," if there be any, will be situated, contextual, contingent, perspectival – true for particular purposes; true under a given set of circumstances; true assuming the validity of taken-for-granted premises. And it will continually be engaged in a politics of competing pluralisms, a parliament of voices about which voices to privilege, and about how to construct, array, compare, and assess the objects of its scrutiny, including the multiple and competing rationalities about rationality with which it must contend.

I have argued in this essay that the breadth of Burke's rhetorical perspective, together with his distinctive ability to mine its potential across a wide array of disciplines, has been his greatest rhetorical contribution. But in choosing the "Traditional Principles" essay as my primary text, I have, consistent with Gaonkar's reading of it, featured Burke's more deconstructive, sophistic side. What now of the reconstructive potential of Burkeian rhetoric? What positive contributions can it make?

I think one "answer" is to be found in a merger of rhetoric with Burkeian dialectics, as in the foregoing example. The reconstructive potential of Burkeian rhetoric and dialectic has been commented upon by a number of writers. Hernadi (1987) singled out Burke as one who managed to be ironically self-reflexive without at the same time being self-deconstructive. I interpret Hernadi as suggesting that the various poststructuralist efforts at deconstructing foundationalism, objectivism, realism, and the like have trapped the deconstructionists themselves in the vortex of their own ironic reversals. Part of the attraction of Kenneth Burke's brand of "new sophistic" is that it offers a humanistic alternative to an unreflexive objectivism and a self-debilitating nihilism, one that builds dialectically on an ironic recognition of our inherent limitations. Hernadi's view is echoed by Henderson (1998: 153). Unlike de Man, who is "not dialectical enough," Burkeian rhetoric makes room for discovery. Lentricchia (1983: 33) offers a similar contrast. Burke offers "a liberating discourse – a dialectical rhetoric, not a simple negating language of rupture but a shrewd, self-conscious rhetoric that conserves as it negates." There is, then, in Burke's "dialectical rhetoric" a reconstructive potential: both an awareness of human limitations and the possibility of a "recovered" or "transcendent" self, capable of acting effectively upon the world, as inquirer, interpreter, critic, activist. Said Crusius (1999: 64), by way of summation:

> He shows us that we can relinquish the Cartesian subject without giving up the
> individual or the moral agent. We can retain a modest faith in reason while facing up

squarely to the deeply irrational and nonrational sources of human motivation. We can also move beyond the negative use of rhetoric to deconstruct Philosophy to a constructive rhetoric of philosophy and philosophy of rhetoric.

Thus rhetoric need not be just a hired gun (Wess 1996) and, if these writers are correct, rhetorical analysis need not be confined to deconstruction. What emerges even from the "Traditional Principles" essay are the possibilities for a pragmatic, democratic rhetoric, one that is not confined to the public sphere but extends to other communities of discourse, such as the human sciences. Rhetoric deals in matters of judgment rather than certainty, but some judgments are better than others. Rhetoric cannot vouchsafe its judgments by appeal to an Archimedean court of last resort, but it can test them dialectically against competing perspectives in an orderly "parliament of voices." Operating as it does in the Region of the Scramble, rhetoric is advantage-seeking, but not necessarily at the expense of others. Rhetoric often mystifies, but rhetorical criticism can help demystify. Rhetoric is responsive to situation, but humans can also be *makers* of scenes. Burke certainly was, in every sense of that term.

This essay has featured Burke's role in the "globalization" of rhetoric. That ambitious project awaits new "companions" to Burke, a next generation that can take Burke's suggestive leads and follow them to the end of the line. Needed is clarification of terms in a field whose scope has been greatly expanded – i.e., better *management* of ambiguity. Needed are critical case studies from across the human sciences that are at once theory-guided and capable of yielding further theoretical development. Needed too is systematic comparison and contrast of the stories these studies tell us. This, I should emphasize, is *not* a call for a scientizing of rhetoric (or dialectical rhetoric) in Burke's sense of that term. Nor is it a plea for quantification or for a reigning in of Burkeian irony. It is also a call for better utilization of the rhetorical legacy Burke has left us.

The recently published Oxford *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* (Sloane 2001) contains no separate entries for individual rhetoricians, but its index provides a measure of Burke's rhetorical legacy. Under "Kenneth Burke" we find: "on ambiguity, on audience, on composition, on contingency and probability, on criticism, on decorum, on deliberation, on dialectic, on ethos, on exhortation, on identification in rhetoric, impact on modern rhetoric, inference, *logos*, metaphor, metonymy, modern rhetoric, paradox of substance, perspective by incongruity, on *phronēsis*, politics, politics and rhetoric, secular piety, style, synecdoche." Save for five ancient Greeks and Romans – Aristotle, Cicero, Gorgias, Plato, and Quintilian – no other rhetorician, living or dead, comes close to receiving that number of indexical citations.

But should we conclude from this counting procedure that Burke is "The Man" – that he is modernity's and postmodernity's primary source of rhetorical insights? I think not.

"B'jeez," I can hear him saying. "Haven't youz'n {a singularly Burkeian contraction] gone back to those post-Enlightenment thinkers I wrote about in that 'Traditional Principles' essay? Nietzsche, Freud, Marx, and the rest were the real critical

pathfinders; I was just their 'translator.' And if you're looking for a modern-day Machiavelli, how about that Karl Rowe fella? He's the best of the snake oil salesmen, so learn from him. That's the way to go."

<h2 align="center">Notes</h2>

1   A useful introduction to Burke's comedic approach and to Burke himself is by way of his aphorisms (Rueckert 1982). Many are to be found among the "Flowerishes" that appear as unmarked pages in his *Collected Poems: 1915–1967* (Burke 1968a). We humans are foolish, he consistently suggests, himself included. "We avoid being stupid in other ways by being stupid in ways of our own." "Even humility can go to one's head." "Though he despised mankind, he dearly loved an audience." "Why does a chicken cross the road to get to the other side?" Said William Rueckert (1982: 2–3):

> The aphorisms bear a lot of analysis and they tell us a lot about Burke. They all contain a kind of perspectival wisdom. They are cautionary. They reflect a mind that cannot help but perceive ironically, seeing around corners to crooked vision, seeing through to the ends of things where they reverse, and become something else (god as goal and goad), perceiving that, whether we like it or not, our ideas perfect themselves and we are "rotten with perfection"... Irony, reversal, laughter, end-of-the-lining, seeing around corners, seeing the backsides and insides of things while looking at the surfaces and outsides, and thinking of the low (say the urinary, fecal and sexual Demonic Trinity) as one looks and contemplates the high (say the Father, Son and Holy Ghost of the Divine Trinity) – this double, triple, multiple penetrating vision is one of the central characteristics of Burke from the beginning.

2   Lentricchia views Burke as a model of cultural activism, a counter-hegemonic instrument of social change. The Burke that he chooses to highlight is a leftist, a Marxist of sorts, but one who is steeped in American pragmatism. Lentricchia sees Burke's entire career as exemplary, but he focuses, appropriately enough, on Burke's activist period of the 1920s and 1930s, and in particular on a highly controversial address by Burke, entitled "Revolutionary Symbolism in America," which Burke delivered in 1935 to the communist-led American Writers' Congress. Here Burke made direct application of his own theorizing about rhetoric in proposing what to many of his more orthodox Marxist allies was absolute heresy: first, "that we take 'the people' rather than 'the worker' as our basic symbol of exhortation and allegiance"; second, "that the imaginative writer seek to propagandize his cause by surrounding it with as full a texture as he can manage, thus thinking of propaganda not as an oversimplified, literal, explicit writing of lawyer's briefs, but as a process of broadly and generally associating his political alignment with cultural awareness in the large" (Simons and Melia 1989: 93). Lentricchia's essay, together with the 1935 address and the negative commentary on it by those in attendance, are all assembled in Simons and Melia (1989). Although Burke was deeply wounded at the time by the reproach of his comrades-in-words, he told Melia and me afterwards he wouldn't change a single word.

3   Coinage of the term *Burkology* is Hyman's – to which Burke replied in a poem that this was one subject he consistently flunked. Hyman (1955) had defined it as an attempt "to do no less than to integrate all man's knowledge into a workable, critical frame."

4   Burkeian dramatism is concerned with account-givings of all sorts, whether practical, poetic, or philosophical. It alerts us to the "strategic spots at which ambiguities necessarily arise" in the imputation of motives (Burke 1969a: xviii) Drama involves conflict, purpose, reflection, choice – hence the need to focus on human *action* (e.g., winks), as opposed to mere *motion* (e.g., the typical blink). "Act" in turn implies scene, agent, agency, and purpose – the other terms of his dramatistic

pentad (Burke 1969a). A fully rounded analysis of the rhetoric of any given wink (or of the wink as a rhetorical form) would require consideration of all five pentadic elements, including its possibilities for linguistic transformation. "Distinctions," says Burke, "arise out of a great central moltenness, where all is merged. They might have been thrown from a liquid center to the surface where they have congealed . . . From the central moltenness, where all the [pentadic] elements are fused into one togetherness, there are thrown forth, in separate crusts, such distinctions as between freedom and necessity, activity and passiveness, cooperation and competition, cause and effect, mechanism and teleology" (Burke 1969a: xix)

5   The notion of entelechial potential in Burke is a metaphorical take on Aristotelian biology, with its notion of telos or purpose. Just as an acorn has the telos or entelechial potential to become an oak, so do ideas contain the seeds of their own transformation. Follow the logical or poetic implications of even the noblest idea and you are likely to find it becoming "rotten with perfection." This is nicely illustrated in "Cat's Cradle," a song written by Burke's grandson, Harry Chapin. It is a song, says Stan Lindsay (1998), *about* entelechial potential, about a father who has made the idea of career more important than family. But one need not make moral judgments in doing entelechial analysis. Indeed, the potential for linguistic transformation is rooted in the idea of "substance." Says Burke, while "substance" is generally used to refer to what something "is" – its essence or intrinsic nature – the word refers etymologically to something outside the thing, something extrinsic to it, and therefore that which it is not, but by which we *understand* it; namely, that which stands *under* it, its *sub-stance* (Burke 1969b). Burke's *paradox of substance* underscores the importance of context in relation to text, helps us see context (and contexts of contexts) as a kind of text, and prefigures poststructuralism's dictum that there may be nothing outside the text.

6   Perspectivism (or perspectivalism) generally denotes a kind of relativism in which "truths" are ungrounded, partial, limited, a function (at least in part) of one's epistemic framework or way of seeing (Smith 1997). But it is important to add that Burke was not committed to any one perspective on a matter, believing, rather, that insight could be gained by viewing it from multiple perspectives. Likewise, Burke's "principle of recalcitrance" held that some things were indisputably real, and in that sense not a matter of perspective. Does Burke's perspectivism square with his realism? Trevor Melia (Simons and Melia 1989: 57) makes the case eloquently:

The symbol-using *animal* is entirely subject to the forces that control nature and, as such, is *a part of* the scene. Such is man's genus. But, according to Burke, man is differentiated – *is apart from* the scene – in his unprecedented symbol-using abilities. Such is man's genius. Our genius drives us to produce "science," to name the scene from which we arose, and even to so endow that scene with the spirit of our own genius that *things* can become, for us, the signs of *words*.

7   The issue of warrantable outrage came to a head at the conference on "The Legacy of Kenneth Burke" in 1984 (Simons and Melia 1989) and then resurfaced in the July 1986 issue of the Kenneth Burke Society Newsletter. I argued that Burke's comedic method de-authorizes its direct expression. Burke had admonished us to give up our pretensions to superiority over others, pairing our virtue against their madness or badness. Humane enlightenment, said Burke (1961: 41), "can go no further than in picturing people not as *vicious*, but as *mistaken*. When you add that people are *necessarily* mistaken, that *all* people are exposed to situations in which they must act as fools, that *every* insight contains its own special kind of blindness, you complete the comic circle, returning again to the lesson of humility that underlies great tragedy."

I like these sentiments of Burke's. I see his call for humility as the great antidote to an energizing but often dangerous form of melodramatic storytelling (or criticism) in which all good rests with one side, all evil with the other. Comedy, said Burke, offers the maximum in "forensic complexity." No hand of fate, no *deus ex machina*, to intervene – just people with their ego needs and foibles getting life terribly mixed up. But how do you warrantably generate outrage in others if the people whose

actions you object to are foolish rather than vicious? And if you don't generate outrage, how can you mobilize people for action against Evil and in behalf of the Good? The answer, it would appear, is that you can't. Melodrama appeals for that very reason. The conundrum wasn't resolved in the Burke Society Newsletter and continues to be debated. A possible clue to its partial resolution consists in distinguishing between the initial impulse to outrage (usually in need of a comic corrective) and impassioned critique following upon comedic self-examination.

8 Burke's general position on the "biases" inherent in language choice is expressed most memorably in a little gem of an essay entitled "Terministic Screens" (Burke 1966). Every such selection, he asserts, necessarily *deflects* as it *reflects*. To which it might be added that every *injection* of Burke requires a corresponding *rejection* of objectivism.

9 Debates flare up periodically on the Burke Society discussion listserv (KB@Purdue.edu) as to "the precise meaning" of identification in the Burke scheme of things. It is precisely the wrong question to ask. A highly abbreviated chart of meanings and examples, applicable to post-9/11 rhetoric, might include the following:

1 Appeal to shared beliefs, values, or attitudes (e.g., "We stand for freedom").
2 Appeal to shared memberships (e.g., "Fellow Americans").
3 Shared opposition (e.g., "Axis of Evil").
4 "Mine enemy's enemy is my friend" (e.g., the Northern Alliance, as against the Taliban).
5 Flattery (e.g., "Our brave fighting men and women").
6 Encouraging opposition to a group by identifying things we hate with things they like (e.g., "Did you know that the North Koreans eat raw fish heads?").
7 Embodying an object of mimetic identification (e.g., being photographed with firemen on the scene at the Trade Towers in the wake of their collapse).
8 Identifying hypothetically or conditionally; taking the perspective of the other (e.g., "If you want to be re-elected, you should . . . ").
9 Selective naming (e.g., Bush is a Texan).
10 Finding any common "substance" from which X and Y derive shared meaning (e.g., "We Americans and Israelis who have witnessed the dark face of terrorism").

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Part II
Rhetoric's Favorite Places

In Part Two we delineate the larger dimensions of rhetoric by featuring many of its central concepts and showing by example how these concepts have appeared in or illuminate important texts. Wendy Olmsted introduces the section by explaining and demonstrating just what deliberation in practical matters entails by engaging their challenges and difficulties in Cicero's *De officiis* and Machiavelli's *Prince*. Against one scholar who argues that Cicero adjusts virtue to expediency, and against another who claims that Cicero's philosophy determines his judgment ethically whereas Machiavelli is concerned with success in politics, Olmsted shows that neither *De officiis* nor the *Prince* is best read as political theory separate from the specific indeterminates of its respective practical circumstances. Cicero's terms, *virtue* and *expedience*, form a range within which the prudent leader deliberates about possible actions, making them pragmatic *and* ethical. And although Machiavelli's rhetoric cuts against customary virtue, he adapts Cicero's topoi to find possibilities for political agency outside the sphere where civic virtue operates to control fortune. The *Prince* redefines Cicero's topoi to formulate a *virtù* that shapes fortune directly, rather than enlisting the cooperation of others in practical matters as Cicero's virtue does.

In a similar way, David Smigelskis articulates practical thinking as distinguishable from dialectic and determinate problem-solving, exemplifying prudence in a reading of the *Federalist Papers*. He links deliberating to imaginative narrative rehearsals, to "if–then" formulations, and to the logical capacities of recognition and construction of implicative relations. These intellectual functions pertain not only to possibilities, but also to what is, in fact, realistic, while the topical resources are reusable in different situations. So, for example, the *Federalist Papers* identify continuing problems of "safety" and "prosperity," arguing that the Union is most able to deal with these challenges. The *Papers* also distinguish "power" from "force," power being a capacity of acting in circumstances of one's own making, whereas force addresses itself to fixed circumstances outside one's control. In this way Smigelskis lucidly

instantiates in his reading how our own abilities for invention are cultivated by mindful attention to such inventive texts.

Eugene Garver continues Smigelskis' concern with deliberative argument into a study of the relations between ethos and argument in Plato's *Phaedo*. In a *tour de force*, Garver demonstrates that crucial Socratic arguments become intelligible and cogent only by way of their relationship to ethos, in this way supporting Aristotle's claim for the centrality of ethos in deliberation and persuasion. Socrates' appeal to ethos is all the more remarkable in that the *Phaedo* insists that in discourse, as in life, we should seek truth rather than persuasion. Indeed, Socrates does not seek to persuade others but, in searching for wisdom in the face of death, he finds that ethos, not logos or argument alone, "constitutes who we are and who is judged after death."

In an analysis of rhetorical pathos extending beyond Aristotle to Kenneth Burke and to Jonathan Lear's interpretation of psychoanalysis, James Kastely argues for the intimate link between the persuasiveness of emotions and Aristotle's rhetorical way "of conceiving human reasoning as a complex process of determining what is significant in a situation for a particular audience." The artistic rhetor explores emotions within a situation, allowing audiences to use their emotions "as one criterion with which to assess a speech." In this way an audience assumes the active role of judge rather than passively submitting to emotional manipulation.

Kathy Eden also extends and illuminates both Plato's ethical arguments and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* by using the latter's concepts of analogy, fable, and paradox to interpret Plato's understanding of teaching and learning in the *Republic*. Although "Socrates belittles poetry's ability to teach anything worth knowing," and although he "excludes rhetoric from the discussion," Eden demonstrates "the deep rhetorical (and poetic) affiliations" of Socrates' strategies. Taking up analogy, which Aristotle emphasizes as a very effective instrument of pedagogy, Plato constructs an analogy between the city and the soul and between the Sun and the Good, as well as between the parts of the "divided line." The latter analogy leads the interlocutors, and perhaps Socrates, to descend to particulars, a "coming down that also organizes the Aristotelian parable of fictional story as Plato uses it in the stories of Gyges' ring and the cave." The Aristotelian paradox, which "characterizes whatever is contrary to opinion," also informs Plato's treatment of the physical education of men and women along with his startling ideas about the family and about philosophy's role in politics.

The essay by Gary Saul Morson completes the shift in this section, begun in Eden's essay, towards showing and stylistically instantiating the mutual support between invention and style as the ancients articulated it. Aphorism, dictum, maxim, witticism, and related neglected "small" genres (sometimes writ large: to wit, "*War and Peace* is the longest aphorism in the world") come under Morson's own aphoristic pressure until their rhetorical secrets and mysteries and riddles get solved, dissolved, or unfolded for our surprise. By means of a kind of ascetic humor and insight, this essay reinvents styles of thinking about style by reinventing various styles of thinking, following not only the dictum (to try our hand at it), "All good rhetoricians are

good aphorists," but the aphorism, "A good aphorism is close to the rhetorician's heart."

And speaking of humor, Thomas Conley reverses Morson's minimalism by show-casing how the background copia of belief, knowledge, and feeling presupposed by jokes illuminates a similar copia in rhetorical argumentation. What the aphorism (like the joke and the argument) leaves unsaid *can* be left unsaid, Conley suggests, precisely because it is widely shared and known (though we may not consciously know it). Not so much overthrowing Aristotle as explaining how fully contextualized any notion of argumentation (like jokes) must be, Conley does for the background of argument what Morson does for style: he revitalizes it.

Such contextualization (of genres, of arguments, of rhetorical analogies) is itself given historical and intellectual context in John Schaeffer's study of *sensus communis*. Drawing from thinkers such as Walter Ong, who distinguished an oral from a literate "noetic" (or disposition of knowledge), Schaeffer traces the permutations of the concept as *sensus communis* in philosophical and rhetorical theories. He notes that Kant, for example, distinguishes a non-cognitive *sensus communis* from common conceptual understanding, and that *sensus communis* is further restricted from applica-tion in the moral realm, a departure from its uses in most of the rhetorical tradition. "To this extent Kant departs from Vico and Shaftesbury who, coming from a rhetorical tradition, were quite comfortable uniting emotion and moral judgment. For Shaftesbury, the *sensus communis* underwrote aesthetic taste and moral judgment; for Vico, *sensus communis* was the ground of both the 'standard of judgment' and the 'standard of eloquence'."

Schaeffer's discussion clarifies previous essays and prepares the way for Anthony Cascardi's discussion of aesthetic judgment as rhetorical – or rather, as potentially rhetorical – in Kant's third *Critique*. Noting Kant's pronounced anti-rhetorical bent, Cascardi nevertheless provocatively argues that "the Kantian *sensus communis* would be nothing more than a middle term in between the Aristotelian enthymeme and the Althusserian theory of ideology were it not for the fact that Kant acknowledges the affective/imaginary basis on which aesthetic judgments rely. But in saying this, Kant also reveals his connection to the rhetorical tradition he attempts to disown." In a fascinating and fitting conclusion to this second part of our book, Cascardi uncovers the lurking rhetoric in so notorious an anti-rhetorical philosopher as Kant, and in so doing suggests that rhetoric and philosophy, while they may often work apart, nevertheless come to judgment together.

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Topics (and deliberation)

Exemplifying Deliberation: Cicero's *De Officiis* and Machiavelli's *Prince*

Wendy Olmsted

De officiis and *The Prince* serve as admirable models of deliberation because they engage both specific practical issues and larger intellectual currents of their times. Unlike many abstract discussions of rhetoric in our own time, these texts use rhetorical topoi and arguments to teach their readers how to deliberate about particular ethical and political dilemmas. Indeed, the *Prince* actually reconsiders and adapts the terms and arguments of *De officiis* to very different historical circumstances, showing how ambiguous rhetorical topoi lend themselves to redefinition in new times and places.[1] While many scholars of the *Prince* have observed parallels between the two, few have examined the implications of these parallels, and even they tend to emphasize the general agreements or disagreements of the two writers. They debate about such general questions as whether the useful (*utilitas*, *utile*) serves as the norm of virtue or integrity (*honestum*, *honestas*), whether a successful public life requires virtue, and whether a ruler endangers himself and his state by using fear. In a provocative article, Marsha Colish (1978: 81–97) argues that Machiavelli's prudential approach resonates with Cicero's text because Cicero adjusts his "major virtue, justice, to expediency" (p. 87). She rightly differentiates Cicero from Machiavelli on the grounds that Cicero pursues common advantage (*utilitas rei publicae*), whereas Machiavelli omits the "*topos* of civic virtue from the *Prince*" (p. 92). J. J. Barlow (1999: 627–45) provides counter-arguments to Colish's approach, stressing the areas of disagreement between Cicero and Machiavelli's idea about how to live "a successful life in politics" (p. 630). According to Barlow, Cicero considers benefits useful because they engender gratitude, whereas Machiavelli "regards this as naive" (p. 633), and Cicero identifies fear with hatred, whereas Machiavelli believes that "being feared and not being hated can go together very well" (Machiavelli 1985: XVII, 67; Barlow 1999: 633).

Although these articles contribute to our understanding of the two texts (because each text, as part of its rhetorical strategy, offers quite categorical counsel at times), I want to argue that both scholars focus on likenesses and differences in Cicero's and Machiavelli's opinions rather than on the way the texts cultivate the reader's practical aptitude for applying terms and maxims to the once durable Roman republic, on the one hand, and the unstable politics of Renaissance Italy, on the other. Whether Cicero served as "an ethical idea against which [Machiavelli] could formulate his own, more pragmatic position" (Colish 1978: 82), and whether the two share an emphasis on expediency, are general issues less important to my argument than how their inventions of topoi and arguments promote deliberative inquiry into such questions as the circumstances under which one ought to rely on arms or laws.

To understand these texts as deliberative, then, we need to observe the ways in which they address contingent issues. Responding to Plato's charge in the *Gorgias* (Plato 1961: 449) that rhetoric lacks a class of objects about which it can be concerned, Aristotle was the first to discriminate the field of rhetoric as that of the contingent and elevate it to a form of "prudential wisdom," what Kenneth Burke in our time has called "equipment for living in an inexact world" (Leff 1999: 52–64; Gaonkar 2001: 151, 152–3). Dilip Gaonkar has shown that contingency in Aristotle's sense has two main features. First, "the contingent is posited simultaneously as the opposite of the necessary (or necessarily true) and in conjunction with the 'probable'." The probable here refers not to mathematical or statistical criteria but to "things that normally...happen." Second, Aristotle locates contingency in things that present alternative practical possibilities within our power. "For it is about our actions we deliberate and inquire, and all our actions have a contingent character" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1357.23–7; Gaonkar 2001: 153). If there were not at least two possible actions in which to engage, we would not deliberate.

It follows from the contingent characteristics of rhetoric that topoi and arguments are drawn from probabilities and from what people believe, not always from the necessary. Cicero shows his awareness of this difference when he distinguishes between the study of perfect (*perfectus*) duties (*officium*) and common (*communis*) duties (*officium*). The former are right in themselves, but the latter comprise "duty for the performance of which an *adequate* reason (*ratio probabilis*) may be rendered" (Cicero 1997: I. 9, 11; emphasis added). By identifying duties as common and supported by probable reasons, Cicero brings them within the scope of deliberation. He does not wish to prove that virtue (or integrity) is expedient or that expediency is virtue (I. 6), but to consider actions that are not obviously either virtuous or expedient.

Cicero indicates his interest in "things that are for the most part capable of being other than they are" (Aristotle 1991: 42) when he divides his deliberation into three questions: "whether the contemplated act is virtuous (*honestumne*) or shameful (*turpe*)"; whether the action . . . is or is not conducive to comfort and happiness" (i.e., expedient [*utile*]); and what to do when "that which seems to be expedient (*utile*) seems to conflict with that which is virtuous or honorable [*honesto*]" (Cicero 1997: I. 9). This last question offers the greatest challenge because the guiding topoi of "honor,"

"integrity," or "virtue" (*honestas*) and "expediency" (*utilitas*) pull in two directions: "the result is that the mind is distracted in its inquiry and brings to it the irresolution that is born of deliberation."

Practical wisdom and deliberation are also of enormous importance for the virtues because Cicero (1993: I. 35, II. 3, 29, 45, III. 4, 83) is writing to his son in a time of political uncertainty, when he suggests that there is no longer a constitutional government (*res publica*) (I. 35). Yet, his hope for a return seems not to have died, for he calls upon his son to exhibit civic virtue (II. 44, III. 6; Cicero 1993: xiii). The difficult times call for keen practical wisdom.

Cicero also considers the relations of integrity or virtue to expediency by taking up particular issues of action. The efficacy of his terms depends on their remaining in tension, providing two points of view. Having argued that keeping faith is basic to justice, for example, Cicero argues that duties alter with circumstances (Colish 1978: 85). "Occasions often arise, when those duties which seem most becoming to the just man and to the 'good man' . . . undergo a change and take on a contrary aspect" (I. 31). What is just in one situation (fulfilling one's promise to appear in court) may turn out to be unjust if it harms someone or if it is disadvantageous (*inutile*) to the person who made the promise. If someone has promised to appear as an advocate in court, but his son falls seriously ill, he does not violate his duty by staying away from court. By deliberating about the action of going to court under the two principles of justice, namely that one should not harm another and that common interests should be served, one clarifies priorities.

Against Colish's argument (1978: 87–8) that Cicero "reformulate[s] the *honestum* itself as a mode of the *utile*," however, I propose that the meanings of the two terms shift as Cicero considers examples without obscuring their particular distinctness; in effect, his main terms (virtue, expedience) form a range within which the prudent leader can inquire. They discriminate manipulation and cunning from practical wisdom linked with virtue. Having commented that "things are in a bad way, when that which should be obtained by merit is attempted by money," Cicero (1997: II. 22) nevertheless acknowledges that "since recourse to this kind of support is sometimes indispensable, I shall explain how it should be employed." Taken by itself this statement seems to advocate sheer opportunism, but later it turns out that liberality is a virtue that requires deliberate judgment lest it miss its mark.

Problems of expediency and virtue define the field of deliberative rhetoric. One finds in Aristotle's treatment of rhetoric analogous tensions to those of *De officiis*. Aristotle argues that deliberative rhetoric has the expedient (*to sympheron*) and the inexpedient (*to blaberon*) as its end, and when he lists the topoi of deliberation, he mentions happiness as including many possible activities of living, including well-doing (I. iii. 5ff., 1358b, I. vff., 1360b). The rhetorician seeks, not the best life in itself, but happiness as an activity achievable by action in particular circumstances (*to sumpheron*). We translate Aristotle's *to sympheron* and Cicero's *utilitas* as "expedient" in the *OED*'s second sense, namely "conducive to advantage generally," or "fit, proper, suitable to the circumstances," but not in the third sense, i.e., "'useful' or 'politic' as

opposed to 'just' or 'right'." Cicero (1997: I. 155) *limits* his concept of the useful to what is advantageous to mankind (*ad hominum utilitatem*), eschewing a general debate about whether the "supreme good" can be measured by one's "own interests" (I. 5, 6). Yet persons need to deliberate about actions where a duty is unclear, because doing the good (i.e., seeking truth) may cause one to neglect duties toward others and doing one's duties toward others may degenerate into the self-serving.

Cicero uses his topoi, then, to teach Marcus and other readers to deliberate about actions where a duty is not clear initially. *Honestas* and *utilitas*, the terms that permit the articulation of duties, are topics in a broadly Aristotelian and Ciceronian sense. Aristotle lists such topics as the good or bad, fair or foul, just or unjust from which rhetorical arguments may be drawn (*Rhetoric* II. xviii. 1396b). He also alludes to common features, the possible and impossible, the more and less, that define the field of deliberation (Aristotle 1975: I. iii. 1359a). So Cicero (1997: I. 10) considers not only whether an action is morally right (*honestumne*) or wrong (*turpe*), but also the further issue, "when a choice of two morally right courses is offered, which one is morally better; and likewise, when a choice of two expedients is offered, which one is more expedient." Deliberative judgments are not always clear-cut; they are capable of comparison and degree.

Aristotle also provides topoi of enthymematic arguments from division and from antecedent and consequent. Thus, "topos" refers both to an element of an argument and propositions derived from a form of argument that teases out the meaning of a subject (*Rhetoric* II. xxii. 1396b). Cicero (1968: II. 47–8) formulates a notion of common topics "as arguments which can be transferred to many cases." So in the law courts one can argue that "it is right to put confidence in suspicions, and on the other hand, it is not right" (48). Topoi are flexible, commonly understood, and usable in many cases.

As I have been arguing, the topoi of virtue and expediency direct Cicero's deliberations about action, and later I will show how Machiavelli transfers Cicero's topics to different cases as well as reformulating them. Whereas Cicero uses the terms virtue (*honestas*, *honestum*) and expediency (*utilitas*, *utile*), referring to fortune as what the leader confronts with the aid of his fellow men (Cicero 1997: II. 19), Machiavelli considers virtue and expediency, *virtù* (ability) and *fortuna*. Cicero (I. 7) begins by excluding the "doctrine of the supreme good" from his inquiry and focusing on the question of the practical precepts to which everyday shared life may be conformed (I. 7). However, even the pursuit of a supreme good (truth for its own sake) has its practical aspect. One must not treat the unknown as known and accept it too easily, but, on the other hand, we must not devote too much time and study to obscure, difficult, and useless matters (I. 18). Every virtue raises particular issues of prudence and expediency, yet none, Cicero argues, should be reduced to mere expediency. Does this adjudication work or is Cicero actually emphasizing virtue or expediency at the expense of its partner? Additionally, does wisdom supersede the other virtues, even though Cicero (I. 160) claims that the demands of human society take precedence over other demands?

At times Cicero appeals to honor or virtue (*honestas*) as a philosophical principle rather than as a topos to be understood jointly with expediency. His analysis yields little tolerance for inconstancy or trickery, and he rejects deception unequivocally, a position Machiavelli reverses. These principles lead some readers to consider Cicero's treatment of politics as a philosophical ethics, which they then contrast with Machiavelli's apparently unadulterated pragmatism (Colish 1978: 82, 84). Barlow (1999: 641), for example, argues that Cicero "contradicts himself in covertly introducing philosophy as an authority for political life," erring "in deriving duties from a conflation of rationality and sociability." Barlow thinks that the "distinct rational and social virtues ultimately collapse into a single standard" of reason (and, hence, of philosophy).

Yet, whereas Barlow argues that Cicero's philosophy determines his judgments independent of the political sphere, I claim that reason plays a special role insofar as it considers the *interconnections* between virtue and expediency. After the search for truth, Cicero emphasizes the principle (*ratio*) by which human society and community of life are held together (Cicero 1997: I. 14). *Ratio* means reason, or reckoning, but it also means relation and connection. One exercises the faculty of reasoning in determining the principles of justice and beneficence, and the two virtues also adjudicate a right relation between one person and another. Thus, deliberative reason permits adjudication between virtue (i.e., wisdom) and expediency. For example, having established the precepts of justice, that one person ought not to harm another, "unless provoked by wrong," and that men should use "common possessions for the common interests, private property for their own" (I. 20), Cicero analyzes the weaknesses that cause men to violate justice. The precepts of justice meet resistance when those who have great spirit desire wealth "with a view to power and influence and the means of bestowing favors" (I. 25); that is, when they seek expedient means for benefiting themselves and the state. Though such desire is good when it serves the individual and the state, men easily forget the limits set by justice. They easily become caught up in competition at the expense of fellowship, as Gaius Caesar's rash actions demonstrate. Cicero seeks a balance, and a check to the excesses of those who undermined the Republic: "I do not mean to find fault with the accumulation of property, provided it hurts nobody, but unjust acquisition of it is always to be avoided" (I. 25). Integrity (*honestas*) serves as a check to the ungoverned, shortsighted pursuit of the expedient; but Cicero does not abandon his concern with expediency, because one cannot judge whether an action is really virtuous without taking into account its actual effects.

Because the desire for glory and power may give rise to abuses, reason needs to adjudicate between purportedly liberal actions that succeed and those that fail to live up to their name (I. 42ff.). In order for liberality to be a virtue, it must not harm others, it must not impoverish the giver, it must be given with an eye to the benefits that one has received, and it must be distributed according to the worth of the recipient. A liberality that harms the receiver or impoverishes the giver violates justice and undermines itself. Thus, virtue or honor require attention to expediency or practicality. Though it may sound as if Cicero advocates a cynical expediency in

adjusting gifts to the worth, standing, or character (*pro dignitate*) of a person and to the gifts the person has given, Cicero has in mind a regard for human society, not a fixed calculus to measure reciprocal giving (I. 50; Dyck 1996: 182; Saller 16–17 in Dyck 1996: 182). Liberality is a political virtue. Liberality requires justice and wisdom as well, for the topics of virtue are interrelated and influence one another.

Because the virtues of wisdom, justice, and beneficence depend upon a regard for fellowship (*societas*), we should not be surprised that magnanimity, the virtue that accompanies superlative achievement (Cicero 1997: I. 61), becomes barbarous and repellent when severed from the common good. Cicero asserts "no one has attained to true glory who has gained a reputation for courage by treachery and cunning," for nothing can have virtue or integrity (*honestum*) that lacks justice (I. 62). Machiavelli will come to test this idea against the shocking performances of Cesare Borgia and Agathocles; but Cicero focuses on the difficulty of aspiring to be the ruler *without* violating justice, asserting that "the greater the difficulty, the greater the glory" (I. 64) (whereas it is easy to be a briber or agitator who seeks position without achievement). Cicero seeks a distinctively political preeminence that has public welfare as its aim, and he coordinates his terms to teach his son how to approximate that ideal in his choices. One might think that such glory can be found most appropriately in warfare; but Cicero argues that "there have been many instances of achievement in peace more important and no less renowned than in war," giving the prize to Solon over Themistocles (I. 74). In a maxim that Machiavelli later reverses, he argues that "arms are of little value in the field unless there is wise counsel at home" (I. 76). Again, though, Cicero seeks a balance and an unexpected reemphasis, not an overthrow of the belief that military glory feeds magnanimity. His long view of politics, which prizes the durability of the polity against the audacious single action, makes legislative action preeminent in many situations.

Interestingly, expediency helps to set a limit to war as well as to peace. Commenting that diplomacy *may* be more valuable than courage, Cicero cautions his reader not to use "diplomacy for the sake of avoiding war" rather than for the sake of public benefit (*utilitatis*) (I. 80). On the other hand, courage serves as the condition for the virtue of forethought in war and peace: "for it takes a brave and constant spirit not to be perturbed in harsh circumstances" (I. 80, my translation). It achieves security and independence so that the leader may deliberate (I. 81). In contrast, Machiavelli rejects constancy as a desideratum, while Cicero argues that without this resolution one becomes a prey to circumstance. Cicero regards constancy as both virtuous and useful.

Cicero offers Marcus a deliberative exercise in reasoning practically that appeals to expediency to defend the value of honor or integrity (*honestas*) (Colish 1978: 87). However, the appeal to expediency does not imply that virtue can be reduced to expediency. According to Aristotle (1975: I. vi) deliberative rhetoric always addresses the expedient (*to sumpheron*), or what is useful or profitable. It addresses the topics of well-doing, wealth, friends, and happiness. Cicero also uses the terms virtue or honor (*honestas*) and expediency (*utilitas*) to discover whether particular actions facilitate agency in two respects: that the leader exercises wise control over circumstances rather

than reacting to them (i.e., that he has virtue) and that the action benefits himself and the polity (i.e., that it is efficacious). Whatever is virtuous is also truly expedient; shrewdness and craft are not enough. Book II aims to persuade Marcus that they are not. "Only by honest counsel and just deeds … may they achieve what they desire" (Cicero 1997: II. 10).

Cicero does not aim to produce a generalized theory of political agency, but to teach Marcus how to deliberate in the context of a constitutional government that has recently been lost, but which Cicero hopes may return. In a republic, after the gods, "men can be most helpful (*utiles*) to men" (II. 11). When Cicero considers the recent destruction of armies, the loss of generals, and the hatred of the people, and, on the other hand, "the successes, the civil and military honors and the victories," he argues that "though all these contain an element of chance, still they cannot be brought about, whether for good or for ill, without the influence and the cooperation of our fellow-men" (II. 20). Accordingly, Book II focuses on the problem of how to engage the cooperation of others. The answer lies in the "peculiar function of virtue to win (*conciliare*) the hearts of men and to attach them to one's own service (*ad usus suos*)" (II. 17). How is this accomplished?

For Cicero, as for Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, trust links men to the leader. Some scholars follow Machiavelli in labeling Cicero as idealistic (not realistic), but Cicero argues practically that "the power of goodwill is … great, and that of fear … feeble" (II. 29). Cicero prudently provides evidence that love proves stronger than fear by citing the violent deaths of tyrants such as Caesar, Alexander of Pherae, and Phalaris. Good will, on the other hand, is obtained by beneficent acts, and the ruler's good sense and justice lead others to have faith in him (II. 32–3). Cicero follows Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which argues that an effective speaker needs to show good will (*eunoia*), prudence (*phronēsis*), and virtue (*aretē*), if they want their audiences to believe him. Without a belief in the speaker's good will, an audience cannot trust the advice they receive. If she does not demonstrate her prudence, the audience will not believe her capable of giving good advice, and if she does not demonstrate her virtue, the audience will not believe that she can be trusted to do right by them. Cicero argues in more affective terms that beneficence produces love in others (II. 32), focusing on action more than on eloquent speeches. But even a person's reputation for being good attracts the love of the people.

Machiavelli, of course, introduces a fissure between appearing to have good will, prudence, and virtue and actually having them; but the difference between his project and the Aristotelian and Ciceronian projects diminishes when we recognize that Machiavelli attacks conventional virtue, substituting his own mode of agency (*virtù*) in its place. He never goes so far as to argue that the prince may obtain power through the sheer pretense of ability and prudence, even though Cicero goes further to assert that nothing wins lasting glory more than striving "to be what you wish to be thought to be … For if anyone thinks that he can win lasting glory by pretense, by empty show, by hypocritical talk and looks, he is very much mistaken" (II. 43). For Cicero, people will have confidence in us if they think we have practical wisdom and

justice, and admire us if they think we are magnanimous. Each virtue has its proper affective and ethical effect; a leader's lack of prudence, for example, must eventually come to light when he gives advice.

The strong links that Cicero forges between virtue and advantage make his argument pragmatic *and* ethical. He advocates the cultivation of the people's good will, admiration, and confidence as more efficacious for achieving influence than fear or money because they are linked directly to the ruler's own capabilities and virtues (II. 21ff.). Later arguments make clear that helping others defend themselves in court and to achieve advancement produces greater advantages than gifts of money do because "the more people they assist, the more helpers they will have in works of kindness" (II. 53). Liberality with respect to money is less useful because "the more people one has helped with gifts of money, the fewer one can help" (II. 52). Gifts of money do not really increase one's power. Beneficence and gratitude, on the other hand, are virtues (not mere means to produce advantage) because they cultivate the givers' and receivers' capacities for leadership rather than simply establishing a *quid pro quo*.

Having articulated his topics of integrity and advantage and having used them to deliberate about which actions are virtuous or advantageous, Cicero uses argument by example in Book III to raise hard cases for the deliberative approach he advocates. He considers cases where the apparently virtuous course conflicts with the seemingly expedient. These cases offer the greatest scope for deliberation because they produce doubt and require more thought. The process of deliberation itself proves challenging because it is "unlawful . . . to weigh true morality against conflicting expediency" (III. 17):

> for it is most immoral to think more highly of the apparently expedient than of the morally right, or even to set these over against each other and to hesitate to choose between them. (III. 18)

Only doubts about the character of an action ought to give rise to deliberation.

In spite of the emphasis on deliberating about actions (II. 10), Barlow (1999: 641) suggests that Cicero introduces "philosophy as an authority for political life." His rules seem to be fixed guidelines that decide cases in advance: "nature's laws . . . forbid us to increase our means, wealth, and resources by despoiling others" and each person ought "to make the interest of each individual and of the whole body politic identical" (Cicero 1997: III. 26). This philosophical ethics appears to preclude prudence. However, Cicero takes his term for rule, *formula* ("rule of procedure"), from Roman law where it guides the determination of relevant facts (Cicero 1993: 107 n.3). In doing so, he states his preference for an approach that uses the precepts "whatever is virtuous is expedient" and "nothing is expedient that is not virtuous" to illuminate difficult cases. He chooses the Stoic approach over the Peripatetic system that Marcus has been taught because it strengthens his own emphasis on expediency. Peripatetics believe that the virtuous ought always to be preferred to the expedient,

whereas Cicero links the two to produce the sphere of the practical. Cicero's use of Panaetius' principles and his appeals to philosophy can be understood as rhetorically adjusted to Marcus' background and education.

Nevertheless, because of the generality of Cicero's rules and maxims, it is tempting to interpret him as promulgating idealistic (i.e., unrealistic) philosophical principles, and tempting also to contrast his maxims with Machiavelli's counter-maxims. Cicero speaks vehemently against

> the error of men who are not strictly upright to seize upon something that seems to be expedient and straightway to dissociate that from the question of moral right: To this error the assassin's dagger, the poisoned cup, the forged wills owe their origin. (III. 36)

Machiavelli (1992: 42) states, on the contrary, that "any man who tries to be good all the time is bound to come to ruin among the great number who are not good." Hence "a prince who wants to keep his authority must learn how not to be good, and use that knowledge, or refrain from using it, as necessity requires." Machiavelli apparently privileges the expedient (i.e., the necessary) over the virtuous. His rhetoric cuts against custom and religion, including the humanist interpretations of Cicero's *De officiis*, dramatizing the almost shocking single-mindedness he advocates for the prince. Yet, when we understand how the two texts use commonplaces to deliberate about difficult cases and to enhance the ruler's agency in these circumstances, they can be seen to share a prudential method.

Machiavelli's text belongs to the humanistic genre of advice to princes; like *De officiis* it is addressed in particular to a single potential ruler (Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino), though it recommends a course of action in addition to educating him in prudence (Ascoli 1993: 219ff.). It is "'performative' in the sense of attempting to effect significant change through the rhetorically persuasive deployment of language, by convincing the Medici" to employ Machiavelli as an adviser and to use the *Prince* as a plan for restoring "stability and a certain autonomy to Italy under the guidance of a new, secular prince" (Ascoli 1993: 220). *The Prince* "refuses to cloak his advice in the pieties of Scholastic or Christian humanist idealism," but uses a deliberative method, while it redefines the ethos appropriate to the ruler (Kahn 1993: 195). Rather than focusing on Italian humanist readings of *De officiis*, however, I will (with the exception of one or two points) consider *The Prince*'s rewritings of Cicero's commonplaces as prudential innovations that spur deliberation in readers.

Both texts use commonplaces to explore cases in order to penetrate the "specious appearance" of expediency or good (Cicero 1997: III. 40–1). Cicero's commonplace that the good of one is the same as the good of all leads him initially to prohibit a good man's robbing the tyrant Phalaris of his clothes to benefit himself; but this does not prevent him later from condoning robbing or even killing Phalaris because "we have no ties of fellowship with a tyrant" (III. 32). Likewise, he judges that Brutus' deposing his colleague Collatinus may seem unjust, but in truth, Cicero argues, he was following the policy of the leaders of Rome to remove Superbus' relations in the

interests of the country (III. 40). In a quite similar way, Machiavelli seeks truth beneath appearances. According to John Najemy (1993: 188), "Machiavelli is uncompromising in his insistence that imagination and truth can indeed be differentiated, and that *he* will speak on the basis of truth alone." Machiavelli asserts his discourse will occur by "leaving behind, therefore, things imagined about princes, and speaking of those that are true." In political rule, "something resembling virtue, if you follow it, may be your ruin, while something else resembling vice will lead, if you follow it, to your security and well-being" (Machiavelli 1992: 43). And in just this way Cicero argues with regard to Brutus. The difference lies less in their method than in the ways they deploy topoi to define the area of efficacious action. Cicero cares about the advantage of the ruler as related to what is expedient for the polity, whereas Machiavelli considers what is expedient for a new prince's efforts to acquire and maintain power in unstable circumstances.

However, I am less interested in similarities and differences between the positions or conclusions of *De officiis* and *The Prince* than in how each deploys related sets of opposed topics to examine particular cases from two sides. Extending Cicero's characterization of topoi "as arguments which can be transferred to many cases" beyond his context of the law courts (Cicero 1968: II. 47–8), I propose that *The Prince* takes up, adapts, and sometimes reverses, central topics that shape the arguments of *De officiis*. These topics serve as sources of rhetorical invention, tools that readers may similarly adapt in prudently assessing new circumstances.

Readers must be thoughtful because, for many issues, judgment cannot be fully determined by the text; rather, as Machiavelli asserts with regard to good will, "the prince can earn the good will of his subjects in many ways, but as they vary according to circumstances, I can give no fixed rules and will say nothing of them. One conclusion only can be drawn: the prince must have the people well disposed toward him; otherwise in times of adversity there is no hope" (Machiavelli 1992: 29). Because circumstances vary, princes must use their own prudence; they may learn prudence by reading and imitating, but imitation requires invention in order to be adequate to circumstances (see Kahn 1993: 211ff.). Machiavelli's practice with respect to Ciceronian topoi exemplifies a prudent, flexible use of a text. At the same time, Machiavelli also provides clear limits for his reader: good will is essential to the prince in adversity.

My necessarily condensed analysis of *The Prince* derives from the notion that the text itself works as a "typology of innovators and their relations with *fortuna*" (Pocock 1975: 158). To go a step further, it follows Eugene Garver's claim (1987: 28) that "the prince becomes an innovator by following Machiavelli's innovative argument," adducing this innovation by way of Cicero's topics. Machiavelli adapts and reverses these topics to discover possibilities of the prince's political agency outside the constitutional sphere where civic virtue operates to control *fortuna* (Pocock 1975: 157).

Machiavelli discovers (in the rhetorical sense of *inventio*) the opportunity for *virtù* by running through a "rattle of antitheses," until he finds a situation where the prince

has acquired territories by the exercise of *virtù* over *fortuna* (Machiavelli 1992: 158). The acquisition of hereditary monarchies does not require *virtù* because they are not much subject to *fortuna*; free republics do not provide opportunities for princely *virtù* because people will not surrender their freedom. Only in new principalities does rule depend on the prince's ability (*virtù*) to acquire and stabilize power. Thus, Machiavelli's handbook adapts itself to the distinct problems and opportunities of the new prince, namely how to increase his *virtù* so that it controls *fortuna* rather than merely reacting to it. In order to address this problem, *The Prince* uses the topoi and maxims through which *De officiis* endeavors to increase the agency of the republican ruler, but redefines them to articulate a *virtù* that encounters fortune directly rather than commanding the cooperation of others in order to reach success (though Machiavelli confronts this latter challenge in the second part of his argument).

De officiis meets the problem of fortune and success, understood as "civil and military honors, and . . . victories" (II. 20), by advising the ruler to enlist the resources and support of others. The task of Book II, then, lies in gaining control over men's cooperative responses through the prudent use of advice, help in promoting careers, liberality, and respect for private and public property. All of these actions require the virtue (*honestas*) articulated in Book I, one that promotes independence from and control over circumstances. Machiavelli (1992: 16), on the other hand, establishes a direct relation between *virtù* and *fortuna* in the case of the new prince: "a new prince taking charge of a completely new kingdom will have more or less trouble in holding onto it, as he himself is more or less capable [*virtuoso*]." Though new princedoms are the most difficult to achieve, "the less one trusts to chance, the better one's hope of holding on." Using the rhetorical common topics of more and less, Machiavelli establishes a sphere for action for the new prince. As Pocock (1975: 167) formulates it so well, "The more the individual relies upon his *virtù* the less he need rely upon his *fortuna* and – since *fortuna* is by definition unreliable – the safer he is." Greater dangers offer more opportunities to talented princes for learning how to overcome obstacles (Machiavelli 1992: 58). By working with the rhetorical proportions of more and less, the aspiring prince maximizes his control over circumstances.

In articulating *virtù*, *The Prince* also creates problematizing relationships between commonplaces and examples; otherwise his reader would learn by slavishly imitating examples rather than improving his power to use maxims and topoi to deliberate about them (see Kahn 1993: 207ff., 211ff. on imitation). But "*virtù* is not a general rule of behavior that can be applied to a specific situation but is rather, like prudence, a faculty of deliberation about particulars" (Kahn 1993: 206). Without arguing that Machiavelli directly derived this strategy from *De officiis*, I will note that Cicero, like Machiavelli, also brings his precepts in line with hard cases to force his reader to give up their customary beliefs. For example, having stated the maxim that *The Prince* reverses, namely that "no cruelty can be expedient, for cruelty is most abhorrent to human nature" (III. 46), Cicero criticizes the destruction of Corinth and the wrong that Athenians did in "decreeing that the Aeginetans, whose strength lay in their navy, should have their thumbs cut off." Though mutilating the Aeginetans may have

seemed expedient because their navy was a menace, Cicero believes the cruelty abhorrent. Perhaps it exceeded what safety warranted. In Book I, however, Cicero modulates his criticism of the destruction of Corinth, writing that he would prefer they had been spared because they were not savage in warfare, but that he believes "they [Cicero's respected elders] had some special reason for what they did – its convenient situation, probably – and feared that its very location might some day furnish a temptation to renew the war" (I. 35; see Dyck 1996: 139ff. for further considerations). Apparently, concern about safety provides some warrant for cruel treatment. Cicero's citation of the stoning of Cyrsilus as a splendid example of where the apparent expediency of the polity (*publicae utilitatis species*) has been set aside for the sake of honor (*honestas*) also raises questions. The Athenians stoned Cyrsilus because they intended to abandon their city, take to their ships, and fight for their freedom against the nearly overwhelming power of the Persian invasion, but Cyrsilus "proposed that they should stay at home and open the gates of their city to Xerxes" (III. 48). The people stoned him because his proposition was reprehensible even though it seemed expedient. (In time the plan of evacuating the city led to the Greek victory at Salamis, so the plan actually turned out to be more expedient than Cyrsilus' proposal.)

When Cicero refers then to integrity or virtue, he does not mean what we or Renaissance Christian humanists might have found virtuous. Virtue, as he says, is expedient. Even Regulus' refusal to break his oath to the Carthaginians and his choice to return to death by torture at the hands of the Carthaginians, though they bespeak character (*honestas*), also display relentless courage. The possible consequences of such courage emerge from Cicero's next example, in which the Senate refuses to ransom 8,000 Romans held by Hannibal: "The senate voted not to redeem them, in order that our soldiers might have the lesson planted in their hearts that they must either conquer or die. When Hannibal heard this news . . . he lost heart completely" (III. 114). Thus, character displays its own kind of efficient power.

Like Cicero, Machiavelli offers examples whose consideration generates new insights that may qualify the original commonplace. As Eugene Garver (1987: 32) puts it, "Machiavelli's challenge is to explicate *virtù* in such a way that it becomes an ethics of principles without degenerating into an ethics of results" – a challenge that also faced Cicero. *The Prince* teaches that *virtù* is neither a matter of luck nor of success by offering the example of Cesare Borgia. Initially, Machiavelli (1992: 19) uses Cesare Borgia to show how one who acquires rule by fortune loses it "in the same way." However, the story of Borgia's rise to power eventually shows that one who receives a principality through good fortune may consolidate his power, founding it on a new basis in *virtù*. Borgia kills the families of the "noblemen he had ruined," "enlists all the gentry of Rome . . . to keep the pope in check," and makes the College of Cardinals subservient to him (Machiavelli 1992: 22). By the end of the analysis, Machiavelli (1992: 23) offers him "as a model for all those who rise to power by means of the fortune and arms of others," even though he does not succeed because of Alexander's death. Lest the reader jump to the conclusion that *virtù* consists of cruelty, *The Prince*

then introduces the puzzling example of Agathocles, whose crimes seem equivalent to those of Borgia but who does not receive glory, for Machiavelli can "scarcely attribute to either fortune or virtue [*virtù*] a conquest which he owed to neither" (Kahn 1993: 202ff.; Machiavelli 1992: 25). Though he attributes Agathocles' early rise through the ranks of the army to both *virtù* and cruelty, he refuses the name *virtù* to his murdering the senators and the wealthy people later, for it is not *virtù* to "betray his friend, to be devoid of truth, pity, or religion." Thus, though Machiavelli begins by praising Borgia's *virtù*, shocking his readers with his narrative of Borgia's dramatic expedient of displaying the body of Orco, in two pieces, to persuade the people that he himself rejected cruelty, Machiavelli sets limits on cruelty in chapter VIII, recommending that cruelty should be used well but not badly to reach power. His examples of Agathocles leads to the insight that *virtù*, not excessive cruelty, maintains power once it has been acquired (Garver 1987: 32–3).

Whereas Cicero states principles in defense of virtue and then modifies them in light of expediency, Machiavelli defends expediency apart from virtue, reversing Cicero's emphasis to shock his reader by first renouncing conventional virtue and then bringing back something like virtue in his analysis of how to maintain a state, once it has been acquired. Having taken up the Roman and Ciceronian precept that "the foundations on which all states rest . . . are good laws and good arms," Machiavelli immediately reverses the Ciceronian emphasis on the priority (or equality) of laws to arms by asserting "since there cannot be good laws where there are not good arms, and where there are good arms there are bound to be good laws, I shall set aside the topic of laws and talk about arms" (Machiavelli 1992: 34). "A prince . . . should have no other object, no other thought, no other subject of study, than war" (Machiavelli 1992: 40). Having shown that possessing one's own arms (rather than relying on mercenaries or the arms of others) is crucial to *virtù* (or ability), and having apparently rejected the Ciceronian emphasis on counsel and law, Machiavelli advises aspiring princes to hunt and read history in order to exercise their minds in prudence (the virtue of practical wisdom). Likewise, having defined himself against humanism by asserting "the prince who wants to keep his authority must learn how not to be good . . . as necessity requires," thus making expediency prior to virtue, he acknowledges that the prince ought to have as many good qualities as possible, especially if he can be shrewd enough to avoid vices that will lose him the state. Yet, when he recommends that princes limit giving (here following a Ciceronian topos that confines liberality to what is within one's means and is advantageous to giver and receiver), Machiavelli comments that the prince "will be acting liberally toward all those people from whom he takes nothing" to fund his gifts, thus redefining virtue (Machiavelli 1992: 44). A mercy that allows civil disturbances proves less merciful than cruelty to a few that produces peace. In his recommendations with regard to virtue vs. vice, liberality vs. stinginess, cruelty vs. clemency, love vs. fear, keeping one's word vs. not keeping one's word, and integrity vs. craftiness, Machiavelli skillfully takes up topoi that Cicero used to teach Marcus about republican rule in Rome and alters them to fit a situation where there is no political stability because

"new states are always in danger" (Machiavelli 1992: 45). In his deployment of maxims and examples, Machiavelli executes activities of deliberation, of appropriating language, that the Medicis may learn.

Like Cicero, he uses oppositional topoi to form a ground for deliberation *in utramque partem*. These topoi prove not to be mutually exclusive, any more than integrity and expediency are for Cicero. Raising the question of whether "it is better to be loved than feared" (Machiavelli 1992: 46), Machiavelli argues that both are good, that if one must choose, "to be feared is much safer than to be loved," reversing Cicero's argument that fear never lasts and that it leads to the tyrant's death. Yet Cicero himself acknowledges that those who exercise command by force may need to be severe (II. 24). Indeed, for him insanity lies in using fear in a free city, though he argues that even despots tend to be killed when they produce fear in their people. Love, however, is particularly good for securing "influence and hold[ing] it fast" in a republic (II. 23). Moreover, as Cicero's analysis advances, love shades into good will or esteem and is supplemented by admiration (the opposite of the contempt people feel for those who have no virtue, that is, "no ability, no spirit, no energy" (II. 36)). Machiavelli likewise recommends that the prince avoid contempt by appearing "changeable, trifling, effeminate, cowardly, or indecisive . . . and make sure that his actions bespeak greatness, courage, seriousness of purpose, and strength," all of which are virtues. Granted, he emphasizes the *appearance* of these virtues, but he also goes on to say "a man with such a reputation is hard to consider against, hard to assail, as long as everyone knows he is a man of character and respected by his own people" (Machiavelli 1992: 50). Thus, again, he shifts from his original emphasis on using fear and manipulating appearance to finding a role for greatness and respect. Additionally, once a prince's power has been established, the good will of the people becomes the best protection against conspiracy (Machiavelli 1992: 51). Indeed, it seems that the *virtù* of Marcus Aurelius makes him "an object of reverence to all," he was "never hated or despised," and he retained his power, unlike Pertinax and Alexander, who were also lovers of justice. However, in the very next paragraph, Machiavelli argues that "hatred may be earned by doing good just as much as by doing evil," a seemingly contradictory statement until his examples show that, by doing apparently good deeds that are supposed to earn the support of the people, the army, or the nobility, and by adapting himself to their humors, the ruler shows weakness rather than strength. Once again "good" here means apparently good. So Alexander, who seemed good, was so swayed by his mother that people had contempt for him and the army killed him.

Severus, on the other hand, was "cruel and rapacious," and was harsh to the people, but he displayed such *virtù* that, "by keeping the soldiers friendly to him, and oppressing the people, he was able to reign in prosperity all his life long: his talents (*virtù*) made him so remarkable, in the eyes of the people as well as the soldiery, that the former remained awestruck and appeased, the latter astonished and abashed" (Machiavelli 1992: 54). Severus succeeds because of this *ethos*, his ability to strike awe in his soldiers' hearts and to astonish his people by his *virtù*. The relations

between character, virtue, and admiration is similar to that displayed in *De officiis*, but the specific content has been changed to fit despotic rule. The examples of Caracalla, Commodus, and Maximin also show the danger of incurring the people's hatred. Like Cicero, Machiavelli recommends that princes not offend their subjects by taking their property and killing them *en masse*. In the end, though, neither Marcus nor Severus serves as a model to be followed; rather, the "new prince, coming to power in a new state . . . should take from Severus those elements of his conduct that are necessary to found his state, and from Marcus those that are useful and creditable in preserving a state already stabilized and secure" (Machiavelli 1992: 57), using the deliberative skills that Machiavelli seeks to teach.

Though we can find Ciceronian topoi and emphases in many of the terms that Machiavelli uses, they disagree about the importance of integrity and craftiness, especially lying. Initially, Machiavelli seems to adopt Cicero's distinction between the human and the beastly. Cicero argues "there are two ways of settling a dispute: the first by discussion; second, by physical force; and since the former is characteristic of a man, the latter of a brute, we must resort to force only in case we may not avail ourselves of discussion" (I. 34). Cicero makes what seems a firm distinction, only to accept force when it is necessary. Machiavelli similarly asserts "there are two ways of fighting, one with laws and the other with force. The first is properly a human method, the second belongs to beasts. But as the first method does not always suffice, you sometimes have to turn to the second" (Machiavelli 1992: 47). However, Cicero stresses codes of warfare in his subsequent analysis, whereas Machiavelli passes on to praise deceit. Here they part company, for Cicero rejects the fox whereas Machiavelli writes "you must be a great liar and hypocrite" (Machiavelli 1992: 48). Machiavelli's support of lying develops into a full-blown account of how to manipulate appearances and of the need for theatricality; but Cicero, though he acknowledges that orators win favor by advocating both truth and apparent truth in court, rejects trickery as cowardly. His rejection can be illuminated by Julian Pitt-Rivers' (1968: 16) comment that those who lie and play the charlatan remain permanent strangers within a social group. The trickster falls outside the bonds of society, becoming like the tyrant in Book III who can be robbed or killed with impunity. For "we have no ties of fellowship with a tyrant . . . and it is not opposed to Nature to rob, if one can, a man whom it is morally right to kill" (*De officiis* 32). For Cicero, to speak truth is to maintain one's freedom, courage, independence, and social bonds with others. In *De amicitia* he strongly rejects flattery and dishonest speech in favor of open, sharp speech when a friend does not act virtuously (88–99). For Machiavelli, the aspiring prince always lives outside society; his ambition is to found a state and, in doing so, he treats those who oppose him as enemies.

In addition, Machiavelli, in spite of his care in the chapter on advice to help the prince protect his independence, makes him subservient to fortune in Chapters XX and XXV. For the new prince "has to have a mind ready to shift as the winds of fortune and the varying circumstances of life may dictate," not departing from good if possible, but willing to shift to evil should necessity warrant it. Likewise in XXV, "a

prince will be fortunate who adjusts his behavior to the temper of the times, and on the other hand will be unfortunate when his behavior is not well attuned to the times" (Machiavelli 1992: 68). The moments when *virtù* can make *fortuna* into opportunity are rare; only when extreme instability and danger can be taken advantage of by an exceptional leader will opportunity arise for the new state.

Thus, neither *De officiis* nor *The Prince* can best be read as political theory separate from the specific indeterminacies of its respective practical circumstances. Cicero and Machiavelli teach deliberation by constructing, adapting, and reinterpreting terms, commonplaces, and examples in light of the distinct problems and opportunities they face in teaching Marcus and the Medici. Their "theories," insofar as one can attribute theories to them, emerge only in the practices of the texts, and in the practices toward which the texts aim. These practices are deliberative because they engage the multiple, sometimes recalcitrant contingencies of human action in circumstances that are only partly amenable to change.[2]

Notes

1   Colish (1978: 85) offers a list of these topoi. She goes further to argue that *De officiis* provided Machiavelli "with a way of defining his ethical terminology and a structural framework for the analysis of the ethics of public life" (p. 82).
2   I am indebted to the insightful and careful comments of Walter Jost, Eugene Garver, and William Olmsted. My errors, of course, remain my own.

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Cultivating Deliberating: Mindfully Resourceful Innovation In and Through the *Federalist Papers*

David J. Smigelskis

Deliberating is what people engage in when they need to figure out what to do. To try to do something is to try to make some change in the world. What one tries to do is expected to have consequences. Choice among possible acts or courses of action (policies) is most often a decision about which of the various sets of consequences of different possible acts or policies we are most willing to live with. Deliberating thus involves imaginative rehearsals of what would most likely happen if each of various actions were to be done. Deliberating is one kind of inquiry we engage in, but it should be distinguished from others. Figuring out, for example, what to believe or how something works is not the same as what is involved in the arc of figuring out what to do, doing it, and living with the consequences. Deliberating is meant to be practical. To separate deliberating from the broad arc of human life that includes acting and living with its consequences would not allow one to make sense of what we do, and why, in deliberating. To think that there is one correct result of deliberating is to ignore the fact that, if there were indeed an obvious "correct" thing to do, we would just do it, and to ignore as well that deliberating is in service of choices we must make and live with. We may at times be faulted for the inadequacies of our deliberating because it is unnecessarily limited in one way or another. But that is very different from saying what the *result* of the deliberations should have been, since such results are ultimately a matter of who we are and who we wish to become and are not reducible to the material, however sophisticated, used in deliberating.

To go much beyond this, to ask how we deliberate, may be puzzling to many since all (or anyway most) of us *already* deliberate. Such a question might well seem analytic

or academic in the worst senses of those words. But some questions of significant practical consequence are how (if at all) can we become *better* at deliberating, and how can we engage in it in a relatively organized way?

One dimension of deliberating is telling stories in imaginative rehearsals. Cultivating such imaginative "narrative" capacities is very much to the point, as is the supply of the kinds of plots that stories may have. Another dimension is putting material together in other ways, most obviously in "if-then" formulations. Cultivating the "logical" capacities of recognition and construction of various implicative and inferential relations is, consequently, also pertinent. But our construction of stories, implications, and inferences cannot be about possibilities alone. To be practical they must be "realistic," able to be done by us, both in the sense that they violate no physical laws of our world and are otherwise within our powers. Our stories, implications, and inferences must be informed by the further realistic dimension of data of various kinds that allow us to make distinctions among the impossible, the possible, and the possible-for-us. The richer our narratival, logical, and realistic capacities are, the potentially less frustrating will be our attempts to figure out what to do in ways we will be happy to live with. To be less at the mercy of basic incapacities can have significant consequences for what we may become and for what may become of us. It is not surprising that, since antiquity, there has been so much talk, sometimes rather heated, about these dimensions of deliberating, and that there have been disputes over the formulation and relative importance of each of the dimensions. But it also seems true that the best we can say is that we may perhaps become *less* incapacitated, since we can always become better at any of these dimensions.

Many have talked about resources useful in carrying out these aspects of deliberating and about how our ability to do things – our powers – can be shaped through them. These resources have been (and sometimes still are) called topics (*topoi*) and commonplaces (*communes loci*), in part depending on one's affinity for Greek or Roman inspiration. At their best, these are resources which are potentially usable in different situations, providing some direction and content to our functionings and powers without determining them. They are ways of locating oneself in a relatively indeterminate situation that give us some places to stand initially. But because they too should be relatively indeterminate, they allow and require us to move around (to "discourse" if you will, discourse from *discursus*, which until the second century CE only meant "running around"). Otherwise the imaginative rehearsals and the acts and policies that follow them would not be possible or plausible. Topics are relatively empty sources which we try to fill out more completely in specific situations, but which can and should again be made relatively empty to be usable in different circumstances and thus be common, and sharable, among situations and deliberators.

Such resources can become vacuous in at least two ways. They may be conceived or understood in such generality that it is at best difficult to see any connection to possible concrete situations. Such a move to the general is understandable as an

attempt to ensure the potential productiveness of such resources in as many situations as possible. On the other hand, they may become filled up by becoming rules to be followed mechanically, or commonplaces in the sense of clichés, hence *over*determined as resources. Such a move to the particular is also understandable as an attempt to give aids to practitioners who are at any moment fumbling, at a loss. Yet we must continually try to find some middle ground between these two ultimately impractical temptations. Unfortunately, all of this becomes even more complicated because such resources may not merely inform and transform our abilities, they can themselves be transformed through what we do. They are not merely "used" in a situation but potentially transformed through such use. Any attempt to articulate resources in some final way would do an injustice to the fact that what we do has consequences – including our getting better at what we do.

Can any of this be done in a relatively organized way? Often we seem to be provided with what appear to be laundry lists of topical resources. They may be grouped together under various headings and we may be offered various mnemonic aids to keep track of them. But can we use them in an organized way in the sense of their being mutually supportive and corrective of each other? Further, can one "argue" for this organization? If so, how? We attempt to be as organized as possible in our specific deliberations, actions, and policies; can we be equally organized on a second-order level of articulation of resources?

One way in which these questions become manageable is if, at least in this context, resources are thought of as themselves questions to be asked, as problems in need of solutions, rather than simply as possible "material" to be used, however flexibly. Questions may be interrelatable in ways that many other sorts of resources may not, and questions also have the advantage of not being conceived as filled up answers or self-standing "truths." "Considerations" is another word for topics, one that covers the many kinds of resources, questions, and areas already mentioned. Considerations may well be a more appropriate term for the things we do and the resources we make use of when deliberating. Topics and commonplaces were used in antiquity not merely in contexts of deliberation but also in contexts of memory. One such use was to associate often-literal places with what one was to recollect and then simply deliver to an audience. Considerations as a term seems consistently future-directed in a way that "place" is not.

The *Federalist Papers* provide an occasion to test and extend what I have said. Publius repeatedly uses the term deliberation to talk about the entire process, as well as the more discrete moments, of making the Constitution – writing, ratifying, and then living under it and by means of it. Many other terms associated with deliberating are also used. For example, in the first paragraph of Paper 1, the question "whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice" is offered as the main consideration, the readers having already been told that "you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America." Further, while the term consideration is used throughout, illustrations of its many senses can be found in Paper 1.

Papers 1–51 may be seen as a vast prologue to the discussion of specific clauses of the Constitution, a discussion which follows in Papers 52 to the end. This prologue seems to split relatively naturally into Papers 1–2 as a general introduction, and then into the basic four parts of Papers 3–14, 15–22, 23–36, and 37–51. This splitting follows the outline provided in Paper 1, and the transitions are fairly explicitly noted at the start of each part.

In the first substantive section of this "prologue" (Papers 3–14), it is argued that there are continuing problem areas of "safety" and "prosperity," problems which are real no matter what is decided about the Constitution or Union. Publius finds these problems difficult to state precisely and with finality. Indeed, if it were possible to so state them, doing so would be an injustice to the fact that they are seen as *continuing* problems and problem areas. Furthermore, it is argued that the Union alone is most capable of handling these difficulties.

In part two (Papers 15–22), it is argued that, for a Union to be an effective Union, it must have and exercise "power," which is to be distinguished from "force." One important way in which this claim is made more specific is by the argument that the Union must operate on individuals directly, not on or through other governmental entities. These arguments derive from and give substance to the previous arguments in part one. The distinction between power and force is that of degree of control one has both in determining what the situation is or is to become, and in acting appropriately in the situation. Power is a name for relative control of situations and for the capacity to act, insofar as it is possible, in circumstances of one's own making. By contrast, force is a name for a response, determined by something external to oneself, to fixed circumstances that one also does not control. The thrust of this distinction between power and force is that the Union, if it is to be a real Union, must have the capacity to determine what the specific problems are in the various continuing problem areas, and to act appropriately, in an unhampered way, to solve them.

One way to appreciate the thrust of this distinction is to consider that a Union is contrasted with league or alliance. Leagues and alliances make sense if various entities come together to act in a concerted way under specific and precisely determined conditions to achieve a specific and precisely determined end. But such leagues and alliances are not plausible in a situation of the relatively indeterminate and continuing problem areas of part one with which the Union will be confronted. The arguments of part two are a way of clarifying what it means to be a Union capable of handling such problem situations and areas.

This clarification is, however, only a first step. Rejection of the notion of league or alliance is a negative move, and the notion of power presented in part two is an (admittedly vague) positive move, a term for how one can or will act. Consequently, parts three and four (of the "prologue") are concerned respectively with the extent and distribution of power, although these senses of power are somewhat different from, though relatable to, the sense of power in part two (where it is distinguished from force). To clarify further the arguments of part two, then, different considerations must be faced and different problems and senses of powers more explicitly clarified.

Part three (Papers 23–36) deals with the extent of power. Power here is multiple powers; they are the means to be able to act (in the positive sense of power in part two). One can talk about these powers as being both limited and unlimited. It is claimed in Paper 23 that power as means can be thought of in three ways, ways which do in fact structure the arguments of part three as a whole. The ways are (a) the objects or ends of power, (b) its quantity, and (c) those upon whom it operates. Its objects or ends are the solution of problems in the continuing problem areas of part one, namely safety and prosperity – hence these powers must be unrestricted, and the means (the powers of part three) must be proportional to the ends (the problems of part one). Because the ends cannot be completely or definitely stated, the means must be unlimited.

However, consideration of (b) power's quantity and (c) those on whom it operates constitutes potential negative and external limitations on the exercise of the means. Its quantity is primarily determinable by comparison and contrast with similar powers of state governments. (The power of taxation, for example, is not peculiar to the proposed Union, so that some kind of working arrangement between the Union and the state governments is necessary in order not to do violence to either.) Those upon whom the powers operate are the people of the proposed Union as an undifferentiated group. If there is a misuse of these powers on the part of the Union, the people have the capacity to reject the Constitution or Union as a whole, or to use state or other governments as avenues of redress against the misuse.

I called these potential limitations on the powers of part three negative and external. Questions of the *extent* of such powers (part three), moreover, are different from questions of the *distribution* and *organization* of powers (part four). In part four, the limits are internal to the operations of the government. Moreover, it is only by means of such governmental machinery that positive action with respect to specific policy is possible. Of course, state governments and the people play important roles within the government understood in terms of the organization and distribution of powers. But their roles are not restricted to this. More importantly, the different roles should not be confused. The external and negative roles spoken of in part three are not directly relevant to the exercise of powers spoken of there. At best, the recognition of the possibility of these roles being exercised will generate prudence on the part of those who exercise them. Otherwise, the exercise of these powers will defeat itself by being so totally unacceptable that the very possibility of exercising the powers by anyone in any way will be taken away. The limits or controls exercised by the state governments and the people with respect to powers as means to ends must be negative and external, because the best they can be are standing threats to dissolve the powers. But since these powers are necessary to achieve the ends – that is, the solution of various problems that generated the need for a Union in the first place – the dissolution of these powers will in effect dissolve the Union. Consequently, these negative and external roles are not part of the governmental process and, as such, cannot be thought of as roles internal to the operation of the Union. Moreover, they cannot be thought of as effective limitations against misuse in normal situations since they are fundamentally threats to dissolve the Union.

The arguments of part three lead somewhat naturally to those of part four (Papers 37–51) that are primarily about the organization and distribution of powers, again in the plural. There are three powers, legislative, executive, and judicial, and three types of problems considered in the clarification of them. The first is how one thinks of them as three general functionings. The basic argument here turns on problems of policy in a constitutional government. Government must make policies (laws) about what to do (thus the legislative functioning). Because of the extent of the governmental authority (that is, because it must not only make laws applying to people throughout the country but also must make a variety of types of laws), the laws must be general policies that must be enforced and adapted to the variety of circumstances within the proposed Union (thus the executive functioning). But the nature of the policies and their execution should at minimum not undermine the Constitution that makes them possible, and, perhaps more positively, should be in accordance with the Constitution (thus the judicial functioning). The statement of these functionings should not be confused with or reduced to the branches or departments of government which go by the same names: any one department may be involved in all three functions.

The second argument consequently involves how to think of the three departments in such a way that their three functionings are fulfilled in an appropriate fashion. It is argued that these powers must be at one and the same time "separate" and "connected and blended," and that the interconnection is what permits one to think of them as separate. What this means is that "separation" and "balancing" are ideas that make sense only when one talks about departments, for any one department may act with respect to any of the three functionings. If this were not the case, one department would not be able to check or balance what was done by another department, since their functional concerns would not overlap or be relevant to each other. There can be checking by departments only insofar as there is a sharing of functionings to begin with.

The third argument is how one relates the first two considerations, functions and departments, to those who are governed. This becomes the question of how the governed can constitute the government. This is primarily a problem of selection of agents, and the selection attempts to strike a balance between the expression of the will of the state governments and the people at large and the selection of the otherwise best and least prejudiced agents. The many discussions of the multiple kinds of "filtered" representation are relevant here.

One way to summarize the discussion of the entire "prologue," as well as each of its parts, is to say that it is an argument for limited government with full recognition that fixed and concrete limits are impossible to achieve and would even be counterproductive in terms of why we engage in governing. The second half of Paper 44, for example, about the formulation of the necessary and proper clause and possible alternatives to it, is but one explicit example of Publius' recognition of the difficulties involved not merely in the articulation of power(s) but in their exercise as well. The powers of part one, however relatively empty and in need of being filled up in

particular circumstances, and in that sense unlimited, are limited in the sense that there are many other powers (purposes) which governing can serve and which we choose not to serve. Power in part two, though again difficult to delimit in detail, is limited by the realities of the world as it is but can also be contrasted, for example, to the quite legitimate power of league or alliance, alternative terms for engagement in treaties which are expected to be an important, though not the overarching, functioning of this government. Powers in part three, as means to the purposes of part one and thus in one sense necessarily unlimited, are in practice expected to be moderated not merely by adherence to the chosen ends of part one but also by the fact that these powers, such as taxation and military resources, are shared by other institutions, some explicitly part of the Constitutional framework, among which these powers can operate. Finally, powers in part four are not in one sense delimited. The functionings of governing are not, for example, reducible in a one-to-one fashion to departments of government. But it is expected that the exercise of these functionings will be delimited by the checks and balances of the interaction of the departments with each other as well as the various periodical selection of agents who will in practice do the functioning. In each of the four sets of considerations, we in one sense choose to limit ourselves. The articulation of any one power or set of powers is and in many ways must be unlimited. Yet there are many things that we, individually and collectively as well as in and outside any one context of governing, do which are presumed to be valuable. Being interested in and respectful of this multiplicity constitutes self-limitation in the exercise of the powers discussed.

In addition, however, power in each of the parts is mutually supportive and delimiting of the others. It is possible to say that it is powers in the sense of part four which are the locus of statements and decisions about the specific problems of safety and prosperity, the possibility of power as ability to control, and the specific use of powers as means. After all, it is people who will determine the ends, the means, and the possibility of acting at all. But each of the powers in the other three parts are delimited enough to be capable of limiting the possibilities of thought and action open to the actors of part four. If one were to consider simply the functions, departments, and agents of part four, one would have no basis or way to start to think about what policies to enact, the means or instrumentalities by which they could be carried out, or whether they should be carried out at all. Minimally, then, some consideration of the questions or problems of each of the four parts is needed if one is to act at all. But the seemingly rather sparse delimitations of each of the parts become less so insofar as they provide more substantial direction to thought and action than the generic questions of Why do it?, Can it be done?, How do it? and Who will do it? (What should be done? as well as Where? and When? must here be absent, since it is answers to the first four questions which put us into a position to explore the specific possibilities relevant to these latter three.)

Furthermore, the possibility and methods of change are built into the Constitution, which can be and has been explicitly amended; in other words, something can be done in an orderly fashion about perceived structural inadequacies. Thus not merely are the

powers in each of the four parts, individually and collectively, kept sparsely delimited in recognition of the need to deal with specific circumstances and to articulate problems and work out solutions in new situations, but there is also the possibility of new problems being recognized and dealt with. Most of the time this has occurred without Constitutional amendment. One illustration of this, as well as of some other matters, is how the problems of part one have continued to be worked out and added to. Most commentary of the last fifty years has featured Paper 10, on faction, as the main Paper of that section, if not of the *Papers* as a whole. Paper 10 is often treated as a self-sufficient document, a particularly curious move given the purposes at hand and the argument as presented so far. But some further consideration here of the problem of faction may not be out of place, for it is an explicit recognition of a threat to much of what I have been presenting.

Early in Paper 10, faction is defined as (1) a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, (2) who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest (3) adverse to the rights of other citizens or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. Part one of the definition seems to imply that numbers are not a basic consideration of what constitutes a faction; part two talks of the motives of faction, not its effects; and part three leaves us with the puzzle of how rights of citizens and permanent and aggregate interests are to be determined. Part one makes clear that the permanent and aggregate interests are not to be defined numerically as simply the majority. It might appear that Paper 10 seems to say that majority factions are the real problem, since minority ones can be simply voted down, but among other considerations this remark would not respect the complex and subtle means of filtered representation and interrelation of the three departments of government which we get in section four of the papers as a whole. The question would still be a majority or minority of "whom" and "where," and perhaps most importantly "about what." But the main argument seems to be that the causes of faction cannot be controlled, that is, the motives (part two of the definition) cannot be controlled. Yet it then remains unclear why one defines factions in terms of motives.

As it happens, however, the *effects* of faction can potentially be controlled. Or, to put it more precisely, factions may be prevented from coming into existence in the sense that they may or will have no effect. The basis for this is an argument solely in terms of geographic and demographic size. Leaving aside whether new facts such as whether changes in the scope and modes of communication undermine this argument for us today, the basis of prevention in terms of size seems paradoxical, since it would seem to destroy the very possibility of majorities and perhaps lead to the enormous number of splinter groups that one finds in many parliamentary governments.

Many have tried to deal with the problem of faction by thinking in terms of numbers or by trying to state definitely and for all time what the permanent and aggregate interests are. But what if we think of faction as a grouping of people whose concerns fail to be relevant to the issues the Union ought to be concerned with, or which attempts to make the faction's concerns prior to and more important than those of the Union? I submit that this is a more accurate account when Paper 10 is read in

context. Recall that Papers 3 through 9 deal with problems of safety and are part of the presentation of the continuing problem areas which call the Union into existence and are its *raision d'être* as a *Union* rather than an alliance or league. The statement of the problem areas is done through two interrelated topical distinctions, "internal–external" and "whole–part." Papers 3–5 are concerned with dangers from foreign states (external dangers), while 6–9 deal with disturbances of tranquility among or within the states (internal dangers). Papers 3 and 4 consider the Union as a potential whole (as opposed to its parts, the states) in relation to other wholes (foreign powers) that may have their own subordinate parts. Yet though the wholes of Papers 3 and 4 are, as wholes, different from their parts (or more than a sum of their parts), they are themselves parts in another sense. They are parts of the international community, which is itself a whole with parts, among which is the Union itself. In Paper 5 there is a discussion of situations in which disunity among states might invite dangers from other sovereign powers. It is also therefore necessary to think of the whole, the Union, as having parts, which parts may have consequences in and for the international community in addition to those of the Union. In Papers 6 through 8, moreover, the whole, the Union, is once again considered as having parts. The discussion is of the general and particular causes and consequences of interstate wars or conflicts. The states thus become wholes with respect to each other, notwithstanding the fact that they are in another sense parts of the Union. In Paper 9 there is a consideration of intrastate disturbances, and consequently a state is a whole with respect to its parts.

The peculiarity of Paper 10, then, when seen against the background of Papers 3 through 9, is that faction is a part or whole that *cuts across* all the other senses of part and whole just enumerated. (There is a parallel, though not as complete, discussion in Papers 11 through 13 regarding prosperity.) All the parts and wholes in 3 through 9 are governmental entities; but faction is not such an entity. It is defined by its motives, left unspecified, motives which, by implication, are passions or interests about some specific issue. Yet the Constitution should (indeed must in most foreseeable circumstances) be more than that. This "more than" signifies the interrelated and necessarily relatively ambiguous problems considered in each of the four parts of the argument which I have sketched, and, in particular, the problem areas of Papers 3 through 9 and 11 through 13. Furthermore, it is no accident that the issues that concern a faction are left unspecified, since they would be *any* issues irrelevant to or claimed to be more important than the ever-emerging issues in the continuing problem areas of safety and prosperity. And note that talk of balancing factions, though a staple of contemporary political science, has no basis in *Federalist* 10 or any other part of the *Federalist*. Balancing in the *Federalist* is something considered intra-governmentally, or, less often, inter-governmentally.

In short, factions are not a threat simply as a function of numbers. When it is mentioned that a minority could be voted down, what may be implied is that the faction will not be allowed to determine issues in the way I have been suggesting it might. Nonetheless, factions of any kind are a threat, since even a few people could successfully frame issues in such a way that discussion of plausible possibilities

becomes confused in part because conducted by people who literally have no resources for or interest in thinking about other matters.

Still, the hope for the prevention of factions does not destroy the possibility of majorities. Rather, it presumes that there will be a consensus on the problem areas as problem areas that are the occasion for this Constitutional government. In addition, majorities can certainly come into existence through the governmental machinery, and it is primarily through this machinery that any community in the circumstances of 1787 can come into existence and recognize itself. The fear is that this machinery can be easily taken over by some group for purposes less important than those of safety and prosperity or in some way disruptive of what this community wishes to be. If that were to happen, the reasons for the existence of the Union are defeated. To say this is to say no more than that the concerns of, for example, part four of the argument must in part be determined by those of part one.

Permanent and aggregate interests of the community are in one sense the relatively delimited problem areas of safety and prosperity (as presented above). These are what we can and should be interested in as members of this community. The presentation is exhaustive insofar as it considers or allows one to consider the various possibilities in an orderly fashion. The "internal–external" and "whole–part" distinctions are so used together that all possible categories are covered. These distinctions are examples of more specific and delimited resources that can direct our thought and action and are nice examples of what seems to have traditionally been meant by topics or common-places. A reading of the individual papers will allow one to see these resources in use in the particular argumentations of part one. However, in another way, all of the concerns of the four parts are the permanent and aggregate interests of the community insofar as it is necessary to consider, to be interested in them all if this enterprise is going to work.

Some might object that I have featured one phrase of part three of the definition of faction and neglected the other about "adverse to the rights of other citizens." These days much of our talk, constitutional and otherwise, is in terms of rights. What then are such rights? Simply, they are those necessary to a working of the Constitutional structure, some of which may be apparent at the time of the *Federalist* and some not. Something like, for example, the considerations of the first amendment are necessary to the operation of this structure. Publius argues in the last papers of the *Federalist* that many such rights are already specified in the Constitution and that the explicit enumeration of such rights in a Bill of Rights will prove useless in times of crisis, or imply that the rights stated are the only rights. But most state ratifying conventions only provisionally ratified the Constitution and stated their hesitations in lengthy declarations of ratification. Publius, as now part of the government, was the main actor in the drafting and passage of the amendments we now call the Bill of Rights and which most saw as making the ratification less provisional. In this sense Publius "moved" from the particular argumentations of the *Federalist Papers* soon after they were written – though one should not neglect the qualifications of the ninth and tenth amendments as articulating many of the concerns explicitly worried over in the

second part of Paper 44, in the last few Papers, and implicitly exemplified throughout all of the Papers. If nothing else, all this should qualify any temptation to treat everything that is said and done in the *Federalist* as final.

   The preceding paragraphs do justice, I believe, to the basic argument of the *Federalist*. I hope they exemplify various possibilities about the articulation and use of resources, that is, of topical considerations. But in another, historical way, all of this has been worked out more extensively than even such a reading of the *Federalist Papers* (and such moves as the first ten amendments) would suggest. That is, certain questions became important in the decade following ratification of the Constitution and are not dealt with in the *Federalist Papers*. For example, there seems to be much elbowroom about what are "good" policies about the somewhat delimited senses of safety and prosperity which are explored. How then distinguish between and among "reasonable" policy differences and just goofy stuff of the sort that presumably generated the concern in Paper 10 with faction? To give another example, the differences among those who wished to align themselves with France or with Britain at the time became intense; each group could reasonably claim that it was properly concerned with the somewhat delimited senses of safety and prosperity. The difference was over what kinds of specific policies and possible consequences we were more willing to live with. Are policy differences threats in the way factions are? Another major concern which emerged was this: Can the main purposes of the national government, here articulated as certain kinds of continuing and somewhat indeterminate problems of safety and prosperity, be amended in an orderly way? If so, how? To try to write such matters into the Constitution would be to fill it up in ways that would undermine its value as resource. They were not written in by the framers and it is not an accident that one needs the elaborate prologue of the *Federalist Papers* to clarify, even at the relatively indeterminate level of other resources, what is and what is not meant to be a self-interpreting document. Struggles in the first decade of the existence of the Constitution made clear that some issues, perhaps connected to safety and prosperity but not delimited through the presenta-tion of the internal–external, whole–part possibilities already mentioned, were issues of what were the general purposes the Constitutional machinery could properly serve.

   Once again, Publius saw the problems and invented a solution, or at least the start of a solution, which first came into real existence in the election of 1800. The solution is political parties, especially a two (or rarely three) party system. Parties are not an explicit part of the "Constitution," but it is hard to think of "our" Constitutional history without them. They allow for the recognition of and institutionalize differ-ences of policy without all differences becoming factional, though factional concerns still are and should be very real ones. Such a system means that, in contrast to the party systems of most parliamentary democracies, there is a need to build coalitions *prior* to an election rather than after it. In addition, and as a consequence, party "platforms," "places" where people can stand and which even have "planks," them-selves usually as relatively indeterminate as any of the other resources already

discussed, can be voted on with significant consequence in practice. It is commonly acknowledged that there have been at least five or six "critical" national elections that have ratified significant shifts in our common purposes. The critical elections were not those in which there was a platform significantly different from the status quo that "won," but those elections after a regime had an opportunity to show what the consequences of such a shift would be and the shift was then still adhered to in the next election cycle. The people as a whole, using the mechanisms of election and party platforms, have "amended" the original purposes as stated in the *Federalist* without explicitly amending the Constitution. Sometimes people moralize about the political inadequacies and possibly evil nature of whomever or whatever, but many rarely think of trying to articulate what could be a plausible and coherent political platform or agenda. Most politicians would dearly love to possess a better platform. Moralizing is easy. Inventing a good political agenda is very hard.

Each of the other three parts has been extended in ways that continue what is done in the *Federalist*. There has been a recognition of problems either similar in kind or in some way relatable to those discussed in the Papers. Solutions often emerge which go even further in solving the original concerns expressed there. Only a few further examples are possible here.

Part three recognizes that there are other governmental entities which share certain powers as means, such as taxation, and that this should encourage moderation by all. However, tax legislation has through various devices – exemption, lower or higher rates, and so on – long encouraged or discouraged various enterprises, including other institutions, distinct from governmental entities, which act in one way or another, at least to some degree, on behalf of permanent and aggregate interests of the community. These institutions can be "business" or other (for profit or not for profit, as the distinction is sometimes made). These institutions, sometimes called "voluntary organizations," do much of what we want done for and by us as a community. They delimit in many ways what is possible and plausible for governments to do while achieving purposes we think laudable. This occurs in significant part through the actions of the government, though perhaps primarily obliquely through the setting of tax policy. Thus the somewhat rather negative role of actors other than the federal government, emphasized in part three of the *Federalist*, is still in place with a further emphasis on the positive aims which these institutions simultaneously achieve. One example of such an institution, apposite here given the extended concern with safety in the Papers, is the National Safety Council, a "non-profit, non-governmental, international public service organization." It is involved with more than self-regulation of industry (for example, injuries in and around the household) and is more than a simple "pressure" group, though part of its acknowledged mission is "advocacy leadership." But perhaps the most important fact is that the national government has not taken the many responsibilities of the NSC on itself and has encouraged in many ways, one of which was a national Congressional charter in 1953, its existence and perhaps even its flourishing. This is but one example of a recognition by government that participation in public life is not limited to being in government

or even to the selection of governmental agents. (Of course, "businesses" can also be ways of participating in public life.)

We today are all well aware that the three departments of government discussed in part four continue their "turf" battles. But we are also aware, even without inspecting the details of the daily Federal Register, that most of the Federal policies that govern our lives are made by Federal agencies. It does not seem possible to generalize in a productive way about these agencies or easily "place" them in the tripartite system of part four. But even their name is a reminder that there is a continuing extended problem of the selection and use of agents, not merely individually but also institutionally. Publius is at pains to remind readers continually of the republican, representative character of this government. Thus it is not surprising the selection of agents has such a prominent place within the concerns of the *Federalist* or that it continues to be so important.

A sign and symptom of the relatively new character of this type of enterprise, particularly the selection of agents, is Madison's invention, around 1780 when he was a member of the Continental Congress, of the noun "responsibility." By the time of the *Federalist* it had become relatively common usage and is used throughout the Papers. For example, at the start of the fifth paragraph of Paper 63 Publius says: "Responsibility, in order to be reasonable, must be limited to objects within the power of the responsible party, and in order to be effectual, must relate to operations of that power, of which a ready and proper judgment can be formed by the constituents." That is, selection of agents must simultaneously and interactively consider the "objects" in both the sense of matter as well as of objective – what the job should be concerned with – and also who should select the agent and judge the performance of the job done. Of course, what can be expected must be within the realm of the circumstantially possible. This double-barreled term has become second nature to us. But it was an innovation not merely in practice but also in theory, which normally kept separate "imputation" and "accountability" and normally claimed that one or the other was the fundamental or the only relevant consideration.

The entire four-part prologue expects us to think in this relatively new way and provides resources to allow us to do it and do it better. This is also true of each of the parts. The lack, for example, of any simple relation between the three functionings and the three departments of this government require us to adjust constantly what are plausible expectations about the "for what" and "to whom" aspects of responsibility. It also requires a constant negotiation about the powers and limits of agency of all the parties involved. (Are the faculty or administrators in charge of a university? The question as framed presupposes there is some simple thing to be in charge of. Most often the areas of relative priority, of different responsibilities, are at any one time negotiated with a recognition that both parties are to be respected in practical consequence as agents.) Further, we often select agents in terms of their ability to deliberate, evidence for which is sometimes provided in electoral debates or other fora. The Papers taken as a whole can be read as helping us understand and get practice in what it is to deliberate "responsibly." (It may be of more than antiquarian interest to

note that the origin of the term responsibility is in the political sphere and is concerned with positive functionings.)

Such an emphasis still offends many throughout the world, since they contend that someone should have the clear final say about such matters and that the lack of finality and localization seems to undermine the notion of sovereignty, which is still thought to be the basic political notion. In addition, much work went into and must still go into the constitution of what was, in 1787, a new community. Most people in the world are encouraged to think of themselves as part of a community in terms of passive characteristics, whether it be first language learnt, a religion in which one was reared, "blood," or some "shared" moment of supposed cultural achievement in the relatively distant past. Nationalisms, old or new, of the last two hundred years have for the most part depended on people just "being" something, rather than on their doing something. Paper 2 talks, whether correctly or not, of a common shared language, religion, blood, and recent history of revolution. These are said to be fortunate circumstances. But that is put aside and never brought up again. What we must "do," not tied to these passive characteristics, is what the rest of the Papers are about.

Thus people at large as well as people in smaller groups are to deliberate in a continuing way not merely about the original ratification of the Constitution but also about all the matters discussed above (and of course many others). Not merely must we all live with the consequences, but, importantly, we are better able to deliberate and act because of the resources and considerations that have been consequences of our deliberations and actions. Our deliberations have not merely resulted in actions and policies, they have also been about the conditions and resources of them, and about the very ability to deliberate and deliberate better. We have more resources and considerations to think about, with, and through, as a consequence of what we have done and continue to do. However, this fact is no less strange than trying to make a Constitution in the first place, since a Constitution itself is primarily a set of resources and considerations which allows for acts and policies as appropriate to circumstances. It is a set of policies about the making of policies, which themselves can, on occasion, bend back and have significant consequences for the second order set of policies. (The difference between these "orders" is similar to and exemplified by the difference between the Constitution and statutes, a distinction most make easily.) In this sense what we have, in the constituting of a Constitution, is an ongoing articulation of an "art of rhetoric" particularly relevant to, as well as an exemplification of, communal deliberating. One might even be tempted to call it an *entechnos methodos* (a mindfully resourceful way of organized doing and making) if one happened to speak Attic Greek.

The difficulties of finding, in canonic or "traditional" arts of rhetoric, an appropriate middle ground in the articulation of topics, commonplaces, are also present in the ongoing articulation of a Constitution. Furthermore, separating deliberating from acting and living with the consequences of that acting would do an injustice not merely to first order functioning, and even to an understanding of what we do when

we deliberate, but also to the enrichment of the second order resources and consider-
ations which allow both the first and second order functionings to be done in a better,
more organized way. Power in these contexts refers not merely to some naked or
maximally generalized ability but also to those resources and considerations, which
can in certain contexts even be "institutions," which make any "ability" what it is.
Instead of talking simply about "being able," it would probably be better conceptu-
ally and practically to talk about "being mindfully resourceful."

What then of narratival, logical, and realistic "capacities" mentioned earlier? The
communal deliberating I have been discussing is obviously parasitic on such abilities,
however, and thus in some ways cannot be, by itself, a complete art of rhetoric.
But these capacities are also able to be informed by resources and can bend back
on themselves through acting and living with consequences. In addition, it is
probably the case that they can all be enriched by being exercised in and given
more direction through an engagement in the more relatively delimited resources that
making, remaking, and living under and through a Constitution, involves.

What I have tried to do in this essay is acknowledge that the *Federalist Papers* do
not merely articulate resources in an organized way but also exemplify these resources
through using them in particular circumstances. I have not made much of this latter
exemplification by the Papers. In the available space it seemed better to clarify that
the enterprise of the *Federalist Papers* was and should be an ongoing one through
material invented only *after* they were written. That was meant to be as much an
exemplification and use of the basic resources of the Papers as any use Publius made of
them. Most "uses" of the Papers have been uses of what are best thought of as the
particular arguments made therein presented usually as a few "quotable" sentences,
rather than a concern with, in any number of possible ways, the articulation of
resources. To use a distinction sometimes made over millennia in rhetorical circles,
most uses have been of (what can be called) the "argumentations" rather than the
"argument" that articulates, in an interrelated way, the resources which are used in the
argumentations. But then there are many ways of exploring the manner of Publius'
argumentations which are worthy ones. For example, Publius features "interests,"
seemingly for him a general term for what we would label as certain types of
emotions, and he seems to distinguish and explore complicated relations among
long-term and immediate, as well as common and personal, interests. A case could
be made that these distinctions and rhetorical moves are similar in kind to and
harmonious with what has been said and done here, and that they can further make
clear the need to consider consequences in various interrelated ways when engaging in
concrete deliberating.

The hermeneutically more sensitive may suspect that the *Federalist Papers*, even in
these remarks about argumentation, have here been improperly treated as something
more (or perhaps less) than a "text." Given typical treatments of texts, the suspicion is
valid. To treat documents that are instances not merely of deliberating but also of
providing a model of, and resources for, getting better at it in an organized way would
be to freeze the enterprise in and for which the *Federalist Papers* were meant to, and

still do, have a continuing relevance. The Constitution and its "circumstances," in ways quite consistent with the *Federalist Papers*, are a vast practical fact, "facts" etymologically being things done and made. It would be to treat the *Federalist Papers* and like documents as statements of specific "truths" or as "textbooks" rather than as resources one can use mindfully.

Someone, when asked once when the Dark Ages had been, replied: "Anytime living literature is treated as a textbook, anytime a document is looked at merely for what it says and not also for what it does and enables us to do."

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

The *Federalist Papers* have gone through countless editions and reprintings. For the purposes at hand any full edition will serve. Location and use of terms can now be easily accomplished by using the "find all" command in any decent text editor or word processor. A number of ascii text versions are available online. One of the easiest to locate is part of the Project Gutenberg Etext archives.

Those who have hesitations about how to make political parties better, about how party platforms can set an agenda, about the roles of non-governmental institutions, and the problems involved in the selection of agents, may wish to look at E. E. Schattschneider's *The Semisovereign People,* first published in 1960 but since reprinted a number of times by different publishers.

Those unfamiliar with the National Safety Council can find the quoted material and much else at http://www.nsc.org/ and http://www.nsc.org/gen/informa.htm.

13
Ethos

Socrates Talks Himself Out of His Body: Ethical Argument and Personal Immortality in the *Phaedo*

Eugene Garver

Plato's *Phaedo* might seem the most anti-rhetorical work of a most anti-rhetorical writer. Socrates insists, here as elsewhere, that only reason should count, in discourse and in life. We should aim at truth, not persuasion. That anti-rhetorical stance is reinforced by the subject of the *Phaedo*. If anything should be decided by reason alone, it's the immortality of the soul. If there ever was a question where the opinions of the audience were irrelevant and likely to be corrupted by wishful thinking, self-deception, and other passions, it's the immortality of the soul.

The *Phaedo* contains a series of four abstract, theoretical proofs of the immortality of the soul, self-contained and set off from the rest of the discussion, which involve the particular emotions, hopes, and fears of Socrates and his interlocutors, and culminating in a myth and, finally, Socrates' death. The proofs seem to fulfill Socrates' anti-rhetorical ambitions by making discourse about immortality as purely logical as possible. Even the myth at the end of the dialogue is self-contained; it doesn't build on any of the proofs and there seems to be no reason why it could not have been offered at any point in the discussion. The self-contained nature of the proofs mirrors the self-contained nature of the soul that Socrates will argue is immortal.

The *Phaedo* is more anti-rhetorical than Plato's other dialogues, even those where he attacks and condemns rhetoric. Here alone Socrates is not interested in persuading others. "I shall not be eager to make what I say seem true to my hearers, except as a secondary matter, but shall be very eager to make myself believe it" (91a8–9). The anti-rhetorical nature of the *Phaedo* comes from Socrates' lack of interest, in his final hours, in persuading anyone else.

In spite of all this, however, Plato needs rhetoric and, more specifically, ethical arguments to address the central Socratic problem. Socratic anti-rhetoric tries to

reduce *ethos* to logos – we are what we know – but the four proofs fail to be rationally self-contained for the same reason that neither Socrates' immortal soul nor the philosophic life he defends can be purely rational. Throughout the dialogues, Socrates makes strong *ethical* claims based on professedly insecure *epistemic* backing. He repeatedly disavows knowledge, yet he confidently asserts the rightness of his actions. There would be no problem in squaring cognitive ignorance and ethical confidence were it not for Socrates' further claim that good action depends on knowledge, as *ethos* depends on logos.

This uncomfortable relation between the intellectual and the moral structures the *Phaedo*. Socrates doesn't live the best and most moral life by helping others and harming no one. His indifference to the suffering of others is indicated at the start of the *Phaedo* when he sends away his wife because of her tearful mourning. Reasoning, not helping, defines Socrates' life. However, while the good life is the life of thought, of pure logos, people in Socrates' final myth are rewarded and punished after death for their ethical, not their intellectual, achievements. How rationally one lives in this life has moral consequences, but it is those consequences, not the rationality itself, that are judged after death. The apparent inconsistency between the life of reason and the moral life manifests itself here in the *Phaedo* in the relations among immortality, individuality, and rationality of the soul.

Personal immortality is a Platonic scandal. Individuals stand in the world of becoming, of change, appearance, and opinion, but the immortals inhabit the un-changeable realm of being and knowledge. Individual immortality incoherently imputes to the soul one property (individuality) from the realm of becoming and another property (immortality) from being. The categorical distinctions between being and becoming and between knowledge and opinion organize Socrates' discussions. The live movement of Plato's philosophy, as opposed to the lifeless abstractions of Platonism, consists in his simultaneously relying on and fighting against this absolute distinction. For example, "the forms" are introduced at 65d as something uncontroversial and not as a weighty metaphysical premise: "Don't we say that there is such a thing as justice itself?" (see also 78d–e). This isn't the Platonic "theory of the forms," but an argumentative structure.

Because individual immortality imputes to the soul individuality from the realm of becoming and immortality from being, such immortality, if it exists, cannot be the immortality of either a person's reason or emotions. There is nothing individual about reason. Emotions, conversely, are *so* tied to the body that they couldn't survive disembodiment, and hence are equally inadequate to identity. Reason is pure being, emotion pure becoming. Individual immortality must be the immortality of something with personal identity. By contrast, *ethos* has the right relation of soul to embodiment. It is not complete independence, as the rational soul hopes to flee from the body in order to know better (65d). Ethical consequences are individual and permanent. What we do, unlike what we know and what we suffer, becomes part of who we are. To see *ethos* in action, therefore, we will have to look beneath the *Phaedo*'s anti-rhetorical surface.

That reason and emotion have no room for personal identity casts doubt on the two-world picture of a real world of ideas and a sensible world of becoming. If there's more to the soul than reason and emotion, then Socrates' contrast between a dialectic of ideas and a rhetoric of emotions loses its validity too. Either personal individuality and immortality, or the two-world picture, must go; but Plato cannot give up either without a fight. Personal immortality is possible only if the distinction between being and becoming is paradoxically both absolute – so that we can be immortal and not "somewhat immortal" – and bridgeable. Personal identity and immortality, if they exist, will have to bridge the two worlds ethically. This is the intellectual drama of Socrates' last hours.

Here, then, is a short précis of the four chief arguments of the dialogue. Soul is defined either as the principle of life or as the faculty of knowing. The difference between soul and body can be a difference in degree or in kind. There are four possible combinations, and four arguments. The first proof, commonly called the "cyclical argument," argues that the two contrary states of life and death are connected by two contrary processes, birth and dying. Since living things come to be from the non-living, the non-living must come from the living and return to life. Soul here is the principle of life. The second, the "argument from recollection," starts from the fact that we know things we could not have learned in this life. It follows that we must know them before birth and therefore must have been knowers, and so existent, before birth. The third argument, the "argument from affinity," is, like the second, about souls as knowers, but it makes immortality into a matter of degree. Since soul is more pure and unchanging and incorruptible than the body, it stands to being as body does to becoming. Lastly, the "final argument" reasons that soul is as necessarily alive as fire is necessarily hot, and necessary properties permanently adhere to their subjects, so that the soul must be permanently alive. This argument then returns to the subject of the first argument, soul as principle of life, but promises – either by itself or in conjunction with the final myth – individual immortality.

The four arguments can then be arranged in a two-by-two matrix.

Cyclical argument (69c–72d): soul as principle of life Body and soul different in kind	Recollection argument (72e–77d): soul as knower Body and soul different in kind
Affinity argument (77e–80b): soul as knower Body and soul different in degree	Final argument (102a–107b): soul as principle of life Body and soul different in degree

In the cyclical argument, death is separation of body and soul. Soul is simply what makes a body alive. Immortality is the permanent possibility of embodiment. The soul never enters a realm of being, stability, and necessity. Its immortality is eternal reincarnation and becoming. There is nothing unique to souls in this argument; it applies to plants and animals and to anything born and generated (70d–e). Cebes tries

to help Socrates by supplementing it with the argument from recollection. That argument proves the preexistence of the soul but not its survival, so Socrates proposes to combine the first two arguments, even though the cyclical argument proves the immortality of the soul as principle of life while the argument from recollection concerns soul as knower (77c). Logically, for two arguments to be combined, they must have the same subject. Are the ethical standards for combining arguments stronger or weaker?

Simmias and Cebes, instead of complaining about invalidity or the impropriety of combining arguments in which soul means different things, provide an image for the paradox that Socrates' arguments are logically sound but still unpersuasive: "Perhaps there is a child within us, who has such fears [that the soul will dissolve at death like a puff of smoke]. Let us try to persuade him, not to fear death as if it were a hobgoblin" (77e).

In other words, fear prevents Simmias and Cebes from accepting the argument. One response might be to tell them to grow up. We shouldn't take irrational fears into account in determining whether the soul is immortal. And indeed, if reason and emotion were the only alternatives, then Socrates would be compelled by his commitment to reason to infer that personal immortality is an illusion and a foolish aspiration, rooted in our hopes and fears, not in reason. But, for a very good reason, Socrates does not dismiss the childish fear. The first pair of proofs isn't just emotionally unsatisfying, for, if we have now proven that the soul is immortal, we have done so in a way that says nothing about the philosophic life. Those who live better will be no more immortal than wicked men. If the soul as such is immortal, then all souls are equally immortal. The flaw in the first pair of proofs isn't emotional or logical, but ethical. The whole point of proving the immortality of the soul is to vindicate Socrates' life. "You demand a proof that our soul is indestructible and immortal, if the philosopher, who is confident in the face of death . . . is not to find his confidence senseless and foolish" (95a; see 114d). The purely logical nature of the first two proofs offers no room for the differential treatment of ethically different souls, and no reason to live the philosophical life. Because these two arguments are not ethical, there is nothing individual about the souls whose immortality they demonstrate. The argument from affinity, the third argument, tries to speak to that difficulty.

The middle two proofs, the arguments from recollection and affinity, show that if individual and mortal knowers can recollect and know forms, such knowing is an act of self-transcendence. People would then become immortal by being knowers. But *becoming* immortal is an oxymoron: either the soul is immortal or it isn't. If we think that immortality is a necessary property of souls, as the first two arguments have it, then individuality is impossible. If there is individual immortality, then souls *become* immortal. The immortality of a soul will then be a contingent, not a necessary, proposition. "Becoming immortal" expresses the predicament that the distinction between being and becoming must be both absolute and traversable. While ideas generate replicas in the world of appearance, such as equal sticks and large people, knowers are the only particulars that can cross the border in the other direction and

enter the world of ideas. With the exception of knowers, the commerce between being and becoming goes only in one direction. The argument from affinity puts in logical form the narrative Socrates earlier offered about how he lived and prepared for death.

And yet the argument from affinity is also inadequate, because there is no reason to think that knowers don't lose individuality as they become immortal. Souls become individually immortal when our actions in this life have consequences that extend beyond it. If living in the prison of the body had *no* consequences for the soul, as a blueprint is unaffected by being embodied in a building, then immortality would be upheld, but not individuality. One instance of a form, one beautiful object, is not, *qua* form, different from another. Knowers aren't individuated by their contact with the knowable realm of being. The philosopher then seeks immortality through abandoning the individuality that is associated with the realm of becoming. The child within is right to be afraid.

Immortality is not continuity of bodily identity, then, nor of memory or knowledge; instead, it is moral continuity. Socrates says that we carry the acquired characteristics of our education and nurture (*paideias kai trophês*) with us to the afterlife (107d). Individual immortality is fundamentally a moral idea, not to be nailed down by logical methods. It is a demand of justice. Therefore, in spite of all the dramatic stress on the four proofs, personal immortality cannot be demonstrated logically. Only ethical agents have individuality. Metaphysically, individual immortality is impossible. Ethically, it is necessary. If the logical proofs fail, does not the philosophical life fail with it?

Socrates insists that we become immortal by leading as rational a life as possible. But our immortality consists in our bearing the consequences of our actions. Here is a place where a rhetorical peculiarity of the *Phaedo* becomes useful, because it is above all an exercise in self-persuasion. "I shall not be eager to make what I say seem true to my hearers, except as a secondary matter, but shall be very eager to make myself believe it" (91a8–9). This self-persuasion must be a persuasion by reason alone – hence the emphasis on the four proofs. The trouble is that self-persuasion must be an ethical, not a purely logical, act.

Socrates is speaking in the last hours of his life. He hasn't yet convinced many people that the philosophical life will bring the immortality all seek, and it isn't likely that he will suddenly succeed. Is trying to convince himself, especially if the means of convincing himself is running through this series of logical arguments, a lowering of ambitions? If he can convince himself, why should that be good enough? Especially if the immortality of the soul is a subject on which self-deception is likely, shouldn't Socrates have higher standards than convincing himself?

Self-persuasion and self-confidence are different from persuasion in general in the same way that knowing oneself differs from other sorts of knowledge. Self-knowledge isn't just knowledge in general with the self as object. My knowledge of the truths of geometry may not differ from yours, but my self-knowledge could be individualized, depending on the content of the self. In self-knowledge, if not in knowledge in general, there is the prospect of individual immortality.

And if self-knowledge is the foundation of all knowing, so self-confidence is the foundation of all persuasion, a truth the professional rhetoricians in Plato's dialogues seem not to know. Knowing and trusting oneself are both achievements. The self isn't something easy to know: all you have to do is look within, and our inner states are directly accessible and incorrigible. The self is a hard thing to know. Similarly, self-confidence is a difficult ethical state. It is hard to trust oneself. Maybe if Socrates can convince himself, that will be good enough.

Self-confidence is an ethical, not simply an emotional, condition. Exhortation and being of good cheer won't do the job. Rhetoric consists of those speech acts in which what we say makes things come true, and yet saying doesn't make it so. Self-confidence seems easy, but most people aren't up to it when it comes to facing death. Becoming immortal through reasoning is the ultimate speech act. We can't become immortal by declaring that since I ought to be immortal, therefore I am. How can Socrates argue with himself so that he has self-confidence? How can Socrates *deserve* to be self-confident? Are self-confident souls, ignorant yet searching for wisdom, more immortal than others? Leading the philosophical life is putting oneself in a position where one can trust oneself.

Socrates gives little credit to the people with ordinary or vulgar virtue, who do no harm and help others. These people have an imitation of true virtue that only looks good from a distance, a virtue only fit for slaves (69b). Instead of acting on knowledge, they exchange pleasures for pains, albeit prudently. Therefore, when they arrive in the underworld uninitiated and unsanctified, they will wallow in the mire (69c). Their lack of knowledge catches up with them in the afterlife. They are minor characters in Socrates' story, because he introduces his audience to a point of view from which their differences from bad people are insignificant. While alive they stand between vice and philosophic virtue in the way that the *Theaetetus* puts true belief between false belief and knowledge. That is, vulgar virtue looks good in comparison to vice, but its only real difference from vice is that it gets things right that vices gets wrong. Vulgar virtue isn't a different psychic condition from vice, just as true belief isn't a different psychic condition from false belief. Even if the conduct of the vulgar virtuous man is indistinguishable from that of the philosopher, their souls are different. In the same way, even if the content of true belief and knowledge is the same, the souls of knowers and true believers are different. Judging by appearances, there's a great distance between true and false belief, between vulgar virtue and vice. Judged by the standards of being, there is not. Neither ordinary virtue nor true belief provides access to being. We do ourselves harm by concentrating on the difference between ordinary virtue and vice.

The vulgar virtuous man isn't as good as he appears. His appearance of virtue is stripped away after separation from the body. His good moral actions do not become part of his identity as they do for the philosopher, and therefore he is inept when disembodied. People of ordinary virtue are reincarnated as "political and gentle species such as bees, or wasps, or ants, or humans again" (82b). After death he loses the appearance of virtue, and then he can't recognize himself, and so wanders lost.

"The orderly and wise soul follows its guide and understands its circumstances; but the soul that is desirous of the body…flits about it, and in the visible world for a long time, and after much resistance and many sufferings is led away violently and with difficulty" (108a–b). People who live tied to the body – whether they are good or bad by ordinary standards – are lost once separated from their bodies. The final myth shows the philosopher with a far better reward than the person of ordinary, non-philosophical virtue, namely disembodiment and permanent entry into the unchanging realm of being.

Socrates begins to integrate logos and *ethos* by finding an argument that has room for individual immortality. The argument from affinity allows for differential treatment of good and bad souls (81a), by making the difference between body and soul, and between being and becoming, into matters of degree. Once more, Socrates is trying to eat his cake and have it too: for the soul's knowing eternal objects to prove that it is eternal, he needs the difference between body and soul to be a difference of kind. But he needs the difference to be one of degree to make room for individual differences and for becoming immortal. He needs soul as principle of life for individuality and soul as a knower for immortality.

The objections that Simmias and Cebes raise to the argument from affinity understand very well this innovation of Socrates', the connection of individual immortality with becoming immortal. Socrates says that an adequate reply depends on knowing "the cause of generation and decay" (95e). That is, we can understand how individual souls become immortal by understanding how being causes changes in becoming. Fully understanding generation and decay would allow us to know whether souls are immortal, but Socrates doesn't possess such knowledge.

How eternal principles might cause variable effects in the world of becoming is a problem for science – the causes of generation and decay. Early in his life he had hopes that Anaxagoras would show him how mind caused all things by arranging them for the best (97c). The *Timaeus* is a myth that shows how reason persuades necessity. I read it as Socrates following through on what Anaxagoras was unable to deliver. Deeper trouble comes for border violations in the other direction, from becoming to being. Souls are the only entity that might move that way.

The crucial step in connecting logos and *ethos*, general immortality and individual fate, comes not in any of the four arguments but in Socrates' autobiography and the moral he draws from his experience with Anaxagoras' book. In response to Simmias and Cebes' objections, he narrates his hearing Anaxagoras say that mind arranges and causes all things. Socrates, before reading the book, interpreted this to mean that the intelligence of the cosmos "arranges everything as it is best for it to be. So if anyone wishes to find the cause of the generation or destruction or existence of a particular thing, he must find out what sort of existence, or passive state of any kind, or activity, is best for it" (97c).

The book disappointed him. Mind causes everything for the best seemed an overall piety unconnected with particular causal accounts which remained within the realm of becoming. But Socrates stuck to his interpretation instead of the text that couldn't

bear that meaning. The soul is immortal if it is best for it to be immortal. Now we can see why the *Phaedo* must be both as anti-rhetorical and as rhetorical as it is. For Plato, *ethos* and logos are not only modes of argument but also faces of the universe. A good argumentative *ethos* is an imitation of the mind of the universe.

If we understand why something is so by seeing why it is for the best, then the connection between theoretical proofs of the immortality of the soul and the practical justification of the philosophic life will be tighter than implied by the argument from affinity. The need for individuality and individual immortality, and the need for justice, comes not from the nature of the soul but from how its embodiment fits in with the goodness and intelligence of the cosmos. Instead of soul either as principle of life or as knowledge – the meanings of soul in Socrates' four arguments – it is only for the soul as moral agent that individuality and justice fall within the scope of what is best. The overarching principle that what is is for the best redefines the initial two meanings of soul and immortality. Knowledge is redefined as self-knowledge, and life as moral agency, and self-knowledge and moral agency are connected. The ethical progress of the *Phaedo* consists in this redefinition, which permits Socrates coherently to combine the categorical distinction between being and becoming with the differences of degree necessary for personal immortality. This is an impressive rhetorical achievement. What individuality souls have is limited to the moral consequences of their embodiment. It may not be best for souls to be embodied – we will have to ask what is gained by which sorts of souls. It may not be best for embodied souls to be immortal. Bad people would gain if there were no immortality and no postmortem consequences of their lives. It is best for embodied souls to be philosophers. While all souls are immortal, the better you are, the better is the kind of immortality you wish for, and get, and the better that immortality is for you. The bad strive for immortality by clinging to this life, while the philosophers strive for it by preparing for death. Simmias and Cebes, and maybe Plato's readers, are within the reach of Socrates' argument, but the bad are beyond it.

If the resources for argument were exhausted by the four proofs in the *Phaedo*, then there could be no rational treatment of the ethical problem of personal immortality. But if individual immortality is an ethical question, then the rational response is not a theoretical proof of the immortality of the soul but a practical determination, guided by reason, of how to live. The issue is not whether the soul is immortal, but the more specific and practical one of how *I* can become immortal. Dramatically and ethically, the four self-contained proofs are not attempts at knowing whether the soul is immortal; they are part of the life of becoming immortal. The soul purifies itself and becomes self-confident by reasoning through and past these proofs.

Individual souls, we've seen, violate the distinction between the realm of ideas and the realm of sensible, transient objects in two ways. People become immortal by being knowers and also by carrying the moral consequences of their actions along after death. Correspondingly, there are two distinct reasons why it is best for the soul to be immortal. First, we can know best when we are detached from our body. Second, it is just for souls to be rewarded and punished for what they have done while embodied.

These two reasons are very different. The first suggests that we should never have been in a body in the first place. The philosophic life both gets ready for death and hopes to be dead soon. Being embodied isn't good for souls, at least when the good of the soul is knowledge.

Epistemically, it is never best for a soul to be embodied. Ethically, it is good for to be embodied, except for philosophers too good to need embodiment. The body is not automatically a hindrance to moral improvement, as it is to knowledge. Ethically, my afterlife could be better, as well as worse, because of what I do when embodied. My next incarnation might be better than this one. I am rewarded for how I act in this life.

We can see the difference between these two by noticing the ethical progress between the two distinct things that Socrates names as the greatest of evils in the dialogue. The ambiguities in soul and immortality could be put down to the looseness of ordinary language and the contradictory nature of appearances, but it is Socrates himself who calls one thing and then another the greatest evil that can happen to someone.

The first, which he presents following the argument from affinity, is judging the true and the false by pleasure and pain. "No man's soul can feel intense pleasure or pain in anything without also at the same time believing that the chief object of these his emotions is transparently clear and utterly real, though in fact it is not" (83c5–8). The people of ordinary virtue are subject to this evil. If this were simply an intellectual flaw, he could have said that error comes from judging the true and the false by sensation. The bodily prison induces perspectivism in us. But when we judge the true and the false by pleasure and pain, we commit a moral error. We are complicit in our own imprisonment (83a), in contrast to the blueprint that is unaffected by whether the building it represents is built or not. This evil is universal among non-philosophers. If we can be complicit in our own imprisonment, there's at least the chance that we can be agents in our own self-transcendence and in becoming immortal.

The ethical dangers of embodied experience become more pronounced in the second thing called the greatest of evils, the disillusionment which starts from trusting people and arguments, finding none of them perfect, and concluding that they are all worthless (REF). Experience can drag us down into misology and misanthropy. Misology and misanthropy judge reason by appearances, making becoming the master of being.

So far misology and misanthropy don't sound much different from Socrates' earlier nomination of the rule of pleasure and pain as the greatest evil. They too measure everything by oneself and reduce being to becoming. The first measures the true and the false by how much pleasure and pain things give us; misology and misanthropy come to a general conclusion about the value of people and arguments through experience with particular people and arguments. There are, though, important differences between the two nominees, differences that are clues to the ethical progress the dialogue makes.

It is irrational to choose to be ruled by the body. It is blameworthy to be guided by the emotions. We can avoid such evil by strengthening reason and weakening the

passions, disconnecting soul from body. But the greatest evil of misanthropy and misology is a specifically ethical failing. It is not as widely distributed as the first greatest evil, which accounts for the narrow audiences of the *Phaedo.* If everyone is liable to the first greatest evil, then the best rhetorical strategy is to confront someone like Callicles or Thrasymachus who avowedly thinks that everyone should judge the true and false by pleasure and pain. Misology and misanthropy are ethically wrong conclusions to draw from a logically reasonable induction. There are ethical, not logical or emotional, grounds for saying that it is evil to draw the inference. In confronting the evil of misology and misanthropy, Socrates leads the philosophical life by confronting people like Simmias and Cebes whose love for argument makes them especially vulnerable.

Misology is the wisdom of those with eristic experience who come to the sadder but wiser conclusion that they are the wisest of men because "they alone have discovered that there is nothing sound or sure in anything, whether argument or anything else, but all things go up and down" (90c), a parody of Socrates' own induction in the *Apology* that since he finds no one wiser than him, he is the wisest of men because he is aware of his own ignorance. Given the evidence, they come to the reasonable conclusion that there is no being, only becoming. Contentious arguers want their position to be true because it is theirs. They want others to believe in the appearances they create. They want saying to make it so. "They are eager to make their own views seem true to their hearers."

Ethically, the difference between the two greatest evils is the difference between the libertine, who neglects reason in favor of pleasure, and the Sophist, who rejects reason in favor of competitive *thumos* (*Rhetoric* 1389a9–13). For all the Sophists we meet in the dialogues, we never encounter this genealogy of sophistic. The first greatest evil ties the soul to the body and so tries to make the soul immortal in a bad sense in which eternal life is an endless continuation of this life, a quest for satisfactions in things that are not satisfying (cf. 82a–b). Individuality is the individuality of a first-person perspective on pleasures and pains. Judging by pleasure and pain is a rejection of being for becoming. In contrast, the person who turns reason into a competitive weapon has the individuality of ambition and assertion. Individuality in the form of self-assertion comes from loss of faith in being.

The philosopher has a different, specifically rational, sort of individuality – individuality that comes from the rational part of the soul rather than the appetites or the *thumos.* This is the rationality not of following an argument but of living the philosophical life. Thus Socrates tells Phaedo that he should cut off his hair in mourning "if our argument dies and we cannot bring it to life again. If I were you and the argument escaped me, I would take an oath, like the Argives, not to let my hair grow until I had renewed the fight and won a victory over the argument of Simmias and Cebes" (89b–c).

Within the second thing called the greatest evil, there are important ethical differences between misology and misanthropy, although Socrates introduces the great evil of misology by analogy to misanthropy. Skepticism about practical reason

is not the same as skepticism about people, just as it is never epistemically good for souls to be embodied although being embodied can ethically be for the best. The *Phaedo* is throughout about the relation between belief in truths and belief in people. Belief, *pistis*, applies to both propositions and people. Belief has two kinds of objects. We believe *in* people, and we believe *that* propositions are true. Belief in propositions remains within the world of becoming, in contrast to knowledge of being. But what about belief in people, and especially belief in oneself, the self-persuasion Socrates says he's aiming at? Is belief in people a similar second best to knowledge of humanity? Can self-trust be a means of transcendence as self-knowledge is? Ultimately, Socrates reconnects misology and misanthropy as he shows that to have faith in oneself is to have faith in argument. More specifically, Socrates has faith in himself because he has faith in normative explanations, accounts that show why something is for the best. His self-confidence is not an emotion but the faith that the world is structured in a way that will let us infer from what ought to be to what is.

The misanthrope begins by trusting people, "considering the person to be in every way true and sound and worthy of one's conviction [*piston*], and then, a little later, discover him to be wicked and unworthy of one's conviction [*apiston*], and again with another" (89d). And the misologist too starts from *pistis* and ends believing nothing. It might be logically sound to infer that there are no people or arguments worth trusting, but it is ethically disastrous. What we should logically infer and what we should ethically infer are different. Logos and *ethos* come apart. Socrates will need to draw them together to reconcile the intellectual and the moral life.

That logical and ethical demands run in opposite directions sets a problem for self-confidence. In the world of embodied souls and changing appearances, things are not evidently arranged for the best. Therefore people ethically, not logically, desire an afterlife to put things right. The best, most logically secure, reason to think that souls are immortal is that they are bearers of knowledge, and the objects of knowledge are immortal. But the best reason to think that *my* soul is immortal – a reason we don't find in any of the four arguments – is that it has to survive death in order to be the subject of punishment and reward.

Since he cannot demonstrate the immortality of the soul through understanding the causes of generation and decay, he resorts to a "second sailing" (99d; cf. 85c–d). We assume the existence of absolute beauty, goodness, greatness, and the rest (100b). We assume that something is beautiful because of absolute beauty. Far from a metaphysically freighted theory of ideas, this assumption, Socrates says, is the "safest" answer, as opposed to more "sophisticated" causes he doesn't understand (100c–d). A proof of individual immortality will require an account of growth and decay, but it cannot rely on the benevolence of the universe. The final argument consists in making the logical and ethical progress beyond the safe answer, which he then calls safe and stupid (*asphalê* and *amathê*), to a more refined account (*kompsoteran*) (105c). Like the cyclical argument, but for better reason, the final argument places individual immortality in a wider context of change. It attempts to confront individual immortality through discovering a whole series of intermediate objects which are

means of crossing the border between being and becoming. These intermediaries are both sensible, like fire, and intelligible, objects, like two. Soul is an intermediate between life, an eternal form, and concrete living things. The intermediates other than soul will account for growth and decay without Anaxagorean appeals to what is best.

Knowers are the only individuals who can become immortal, but Socrates demonstrates this limited border crossing by a proliferation of intermediate objects, placing the paradox of becoming immortal in a wider, and not specifically practical, context. The final argument is not an argument from soul as knower but from soul as principle of life, and so returns to the subject of the first and weakest argument, the cyclical argument. The final argument, unable to use the true causes of generation and destruction to show why things are for the best, shows how the gap between being and becoming can be bridged. Making the soul as principle of life into a legitimate subject for immortality is part of the ethical progress of the dialogue. But the continuity and immortality of moral agency is still not explicit. The second sailing seems incomplete. The final argument may be the best we can do, but it isn't good enough and needs a myth to supplement it.

The final myth shows that even after death, only the philosopher will know that his soul is immortal, and therefore only he will become disembodied, pure soul, pure being. Socrates' interlocutors are eager to be shown that the soul is immortal, and happy to learn that the philosophic life is the best life, but they would not expect to learn that only the philosopher truly becomes immortal. Earlier I said that rhetoric consists of those speech acts in which what we say makes things come true, and yet saying doesn't make it so. Here you can't be immortal without recognizing that you are. Being immortal depends on knowing that one is immortal, which in turn depends on knowing who one is. Only someone who identifies his soul with his knowing can know himself. Since everyone wants to be immortal, everyone assumes that they know what immortality is and what's good about it. The moral progress in the dialogue dislodges that assumption by narrowing the audience of his arguments to people for whom immortality is good. The narrow audiences of Socrates' arguments parallels the narrowness of people for whom immortality is for the best.

As Socrates and his companions become better, the meanings of the key terms, immortality and soul, improve. Only the philosopher prepares for death when embodied. Once disembodied, only the philosopher can know that he's immortal because his immortality alone signifies that the soul stays within being instead of reentering becoming through reincarnation. Only a disembodied knower can really know himself because only for him is there no difference between appearance and reality. Embodied philosophers searching for knowledge and disembodied non-knowers, such as the ordinary virtuous people, are in different ways unable to be transparent to themselves. They can't truly have self-confidence or self-knowledge.

But that smooth connection that Socrates is looking for between what is and what ought to be takes place only in the afterlife, which is why we hear about it in a myth. While we are embodied, things are not how they should be. Philosophers should flee

this life but not commit suicide, even if being disembodied is for the best (62a). The prohibition against suicide is the only stable ethical truth within the world of contradictory appearances. Philosophers should flee this life not only because they will know better when disembodied, but because how things are and how they ought to be are more smoothly aligned when we are not embodied. The disembodied life is a morally superior life. When permanently disembodied, all souls will have what is best for them. Philosophers will live in a moral world good enough not to need a second sailing.

True self-knowledge is then possible only in the sort of afterlife Socrates describes. For the same reasons, true rhetoric is only possible there too. Rhetorical arguments are about agency. We deliberate about what we can do. We accuse others of causing harms, advocate punishment, and praise and blame people. All such rhetorical argument then requires knowledge of causation, of the causes of generation and decay. I can only know which results I'm responsible for if I have been stripped of the contradictory appearances that are part of becoming. After death, non-philosophers have no rhetoric of the causes of generation and decay to guide them and so they get lost.

If the soul is immortal, then there are eternal objects that are not forms. According to the final argument, souls are not the only such objects. Fire is a sensible object with a necessary property. Two is an intelligible and eternal object, but not a form but an instance of the form "even." It is because souls are knowers and moral agents that their border transgressions are significant in a way that two and fire are not. While in the final argument life might be eternal and living things lie in the realm of becoming, souls cannot be placed in either world, while there is no difficulty placing fire or two. Souls embodied as the souls of particular living things are problematic because, if they are immortal and unchanging, they should be unaffected by their time in a body, as the form of a building is unaffected by being built, and is unaffected when the building falls down – the harmony objection. Souls as immortal are equally problematic residents of the realm of being because while eternal they are not unchangeable.

The life of searching for wisdom is paradoxical because knowledge of and by changing things is problematic. Knowledge is supposed to be only about being, not becoming. If anything changing were knowable, then our knowing the eternal wouldn't make us eternal. If knowledge were of things other than forms, then there wouldn't be the strict correlation between cognitive faculty and object that the argument from affinity relies on to prove the immortality of the soul. While knowledge of particulars may be a general problem for Platonic metaphysics and epistemology, it becomes ethically troublesome in the *Phaedo*. Individual souls will be immortal if and only if knowledge of individuals is possible. If knowledge is *by* individuals, it must be *of* individuals, and conversely. The philosopher knows himself. The only individuals that are knowable are souls. Individual souls are knowable because, and insofar as, individual souls are knowers. Only by fleeing the body can someone be a knower. Only a knower can know himself and so recognize the consequences of his actions. Therefore, only by fleeing the body can someone not

flee from the consequences of his actions. That is the connection between the philosophic life and its ethical reward.

The ethical progress of the *Phaedo* consists in having better arguments. But better arguments do not mean more nearly logically valid arguments but arguments that can be better understood and assented to by better people. Earlier in the dialogue, Socrates illegitimately added together two arguments, the cyclical argument based on soul as principle of life and the argument from recollection based on soul as knower. The final argument and the final myth successfully synthesize these two sides of soul by making the principle of life the principle of the moral life, and making living morally depend on living philosophically.

But, because this is a second sailing, Socrates needs both an argument and a myth to complete his ethical project of preparing for death. The immortality of the soul is not proved as the conclusion of a grand deduction from what is cosmically best. The myth, then, is designed to overcome the deficiencies in the final argument that come from its being a second sailing. The myth will help us to believe that the philosophical life is the best life. Like the rest of the discussion, the myth is not for everyone. This myth is not consolation for those who aren't up to the rigors of philosophical argument, in the way that Protagoras offers to tell a myth because it is more entertaining. This myth fortifies the convictions of those who have become self-confident through such argument. The philosopher alone realizes that it is only by fleeing the body can someone *not* flee from the consequences of his actions. Therefore only the philosopher can embrace a myth in which the afterlife offers no external punishments and rewards but only the direct consequences of how one has lived one's life. Such self-confidence is the best we can do while embodied, even though it falls short of the self-knowledge unembodied philosophers will have. If we really knew the causes of generation and decay, the final argument and final myth – proof of the immortality of the soul and an account of individual fates – would be integrated. But we will only know such things when we are fully immortal.

The final argument is an attempt to overcome the impossibility of knowing individuals and knowing by individuals. Earlier I worried about the oxymoron of someone *becoming* immortal. If individuals become knowable or knowers, they can become eternal, not as the form of life is eternal but as souls can be. When an individual soul comes to know that it is immortal soul, it recognizes the preexistent truth of the immortality of the soul. Self-knowledge allows souls to cross the border into being. All souls are immortal; those who recognize their own nature as knowers are self-consciously immortal and so can become disembodied. The philosopher contingently becomes the subject of a necessary truth by becoming aware of it. The self-knowledge of an embodied philosopher takes the form of self-confidence.

The search for wisdom is the desire for self-knowledge. Only knowers can transcend becoming and become immortal. Placed in the context of Plato's other dialogues, we can now see that the lack of *eros* in the *Phaedo* is striking. In the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, and in places in the *Gorgias* and the *Laws*, love is offered as a means of self-transcendence. Love gives intimations of immortality, from the desire that the lover

stay unchanging as he is, an eternal becoming, up to the immortality of self-transcendence at the top of the *Symposium*'s ladder of loves. But love's loss of self-control makes it a poor candidate for *individual* immortality. The philosophical life of searching for wisdom as a preparation for death and immortality would be far less plausible and attractive if love were offered in the *Phaedo* as an alternative means of self-transcendence.

As I mentioned, self-knowledge and self-confidence are not just knowledge and faith with the self as an object. Self-knowledge is the only kind of knowledge and self-confidence the only kind of belief that leads to immortality. Knowledge of the equal and the just will not lead to the immortality the philosopher seeks. Nothing in this world can be fully equal or just, and therefore nothing in this world is fully knowable. If one pair of sticks falls short of being equal, that deficiency cannot be remedied by making them more equal. No matter how equal, they will still appear unequal (74b). Because they have appearances that do not represent the reality, they are not fully equal, and so not fully real or knowable. An action can be as just as possible, yet will fall short of true justice because it could appear unjust. Rhetoric as an art of deception and imitation exploits these contradictory appearances, from which only self-persuasion can be exempt. The final myth is our example of such rhetoric. Socrates talks to himself, and the others are better off overhearing than they would if he were speaking to them. We are in the same position today.

Only self-knowledge permits the transcendence and eternal disembodiment not available to knowing other objects. Knowers are the only concrete objects that can be real and knowable. Knowers are individuated if they know themselves. The desire to know oneself manifested in Socrates' self-confidence is the desire to be transparent to oneself. Only the disembodied philosopher can be transparent to himself. The embodied philosopher has to settle for self-confidence. But that is enough to attain immortality because the desire for transparency is the power to accept the consequences of one's actions. Faith in oneself is the connection between the search for wisdom and the moral life.

14
Pathos

Rhetoric and Emotion

James L. Kastely

> One of the basic elements of the world, according to Freud, is an emotion. Love runs through human nature, and it is through the transactions of love as incarnated in humans that individual persons come to be. (Lear 1998: 186)

In *De Oratore*, Cicero has Crassus argue for the importance of engaging an audience's emotion if a speech is to be persuasive:

> Who indeed does not know that the orator's virtue is pre-eminently manifested either in rousing men's hearts to anger, hatred, or indignation, or in recalling them from these same passions to mildness and mercy? Wherefore the speaker will not be able to achieve what he wants by his words, unless he has gained profound insight into the characters of men, and the whole range of human nature, and those motives whereby our souls are spurred on or turned back. (Cicero 1942: 41)

Crassus seems to consider the use of emotion as theoretically unproblematic, as primarily a matter of strategic necessity. But not everyone agrees with Cicero that persuading an audience through appeals grounded in or buttressed by emotion is desirable. In fact, philosophers such as Kant believe that action should be guided by reason and insist the power of emotion to move audiences needs to be controlled because, uncontrolled, it endangers ethical autonomy and opens human lives to determination by forces outside of rationality. Much of the history of rhetoric can be written as a coming to terms with this possibility of emotion's displacing reason. Some rhetors, like Gorgias, are untroubled by this apparent danger and simply embrace the power of emotion; others, like Cicero, acknowledge a potential problem and seek to show how emotion can cooperate with or serve reason. In either case, there is an assumption that reason and emotion are distinct. There is, however, a third alternative. Starting with Socrates' recovery of Eros in *Phaedrus* and continuing in the work of some contemporary interpreters of Freud, a more promising defense can be

mounted, one arguing that any account of thought seeking to do justice to the complexity of the human mind needs to challenge the original dichotomy that analytically separated reason from emotion. In place of this dichotomy, reason is seen as developing out of a subject's emotions. This defense shifts the concern away from the usurpation of reason's authority by emotion to the way in which emotion can become a source of self-knowledge for the subject and to the role of emotion in constituting subjects who can be citizens.

That discourse has the power to move people through its action on an audience's emotion is an ancient and foundational insight for rhetoric. It can be traced back at least to Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen*: "Speech is a powerful lord, which by means of the finest and most invisible body effects the divinest works: it can stop fear and banish grief and create joy and nurture pity" (Gorgias 1972: 52). According to Gorgias, the power of rhetoric resides in its ability to engage and transform emotions, and this power is so pronounced as to be invincible. If Paris' speech persuaded Helen to flee with him, then she is guiltless because no one can resist the blandishments of rhetoric. In undermining any determination to resist its influence, persuasion turns out to be no different than physical force – both compel. The compulsion produced by rhetoric arises from neither the rigor nor the merit of its arguments, for Gorgias claims the arguments employed by rhetoric are necessarily false, either trading on emotional manipulation or playing with appearance. Rather, because rhetoric privileges *pathos* over *logos*, it possesses an agency unfettered by any concern other than effectiveness. This unlimited agency is what Gorgias celebrates and advertises as the glory of rhetoric.

If Gorgias endorses such unconstrained agency as good, others have not been so sure. Kant, for one, distrusts emotion and equates a life governed by feelings to a form of slavery:

> Since Virtue is based on inner freedom it contains a positive command to a human being, namely to bring all his capacities and inclinations under his (reason's) control and so to rule over himself, which goes beyond forbidding him to let himself be governed by his feelings and inclinations (the duty of *apathy*); for unless reason holds the reins of government in its own hands, his feelings and inclinations play the master over him. (Kant 1996: 536)

Put simply: if the nature of an emotion is to move someone, and if emotions cannot be governed by a rational will, then action is not possible. Although not alone in his suspicion of emotion, Kant is particularly instructive. Responding to the threat posed by emotion, he proposes a norm that banishes it from practical judgments, thus keeping reason pure and uncontaminated by the influence of emotion. Not surprisingly, Kant has little use for rhetoric, since it employs emotion to affect the judgment of its audience, and he regards it as little more than a simulacrum of logic (Kant 1996: 532).

If one wants to go beyond a Gorgian celebration of emotion and defend rhetoric and the place of emotion within a fuller conception of deliberation or judgment, then one

must question Kant's account of reason as a practice that can be described in terms of principles and inferences whose integrity is guaranteed by their abstraction from the multitude of personal factors that impinge on a particular judgment. Bernard Williams' criticism of the inadequacy of Kant's understanding of moral judgment is helpful here. Williams argues:

> The idea that people decide to adopt moral principles seems to me a myth, a psychological shadow thrown by a logical distinction; and if someone did claim to have done this, I think one would be justified in doubting either the truth of what he said or the reality of those moral principles. We see a man's genuine convictions as coming from somewhere deeper in him than that; and, deeper in him, he – that is, the deciding "he" – may see them as coming from outside him. So it is with the emotions. (Williams 1973: 227)

Williams points to two concerns central to the role emotions play in practical reasoning. First, our deepest convictions are not simply or primarily products of logical thought. Rather, they arise out of our having lived particular lives and are inescapably tied to those lives. Second, these principles do not feel as if they were deliberately adopted; instead, they feel as if they are givens for us. They are part of the fabric of our lives, and we feel their authority in our emotional responses. The fact that these values are not easily altered by a reasoned discourse suggests the depth at which the emotions operate and argues that they are rooted in sources anterior to reason.

If who one loves, fears, loathes, envies, or pities is not simply the product of accident but reflects a person's values and perceptions, then emotions in some way enact a person's attitudes toward the world. An emotion, in its appropriateness or inappropriateness, is a response that can reveal those fundamental commitments that provide an orientation for a practical life. When seen as an integral component within the practice of judgment, emotion can come to be something other than the tyrannical force that Gorgias celebrates and that Kant sought to outlaw. Instead, emotion can be a source of knowledge, enabling both discrimination and action, and any account of thought that hopes to be adequate to the complexity of the human mind needs to go beyond an understanding of reason as a transpersonal or formal mode of inference and incorporate emotion in an appropriate way.

The structure of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is, in effect, an argument for the inadequacy of *logos*. Were inferential reasoning all that was needed to produce effective arguments, the *Rhetoric* should have ended with the close of Book 1. But the problem of ending the *Rhetoric* at that point is that an account equating reasoning solely with inferential thought does not adequately address the ways in which audiences actually assess and commit to arguments. As Michel Meyer notes, rhetoric cannot be collapsed into logic because logic

> is apodictic; it is a science of certain conclusions because they flow from principles deemed to be absolutely true. The second [rhetoric], far from being a "science of principles" is a theory of consequences. (Meyer 2000: 95)

Rhetoric's interest in consequences takes it beyond a concern only with the preservation of the rigor of inferential form and requires it to deal with the way that human reasoning renders particular situations determinate for purposes of action or judgment. If an audience concedes the rightness of an argument but is not moved to act on the basis of that argument, then the argument fails as an effort in rhetoric. For an argument to work rhetorically, it must engage an audience in such a way that they are moved to act (even if that action is only to make a certain judgment), and to do this, it must speak to their ethical and emotional investment in a particular situation. This concern with particularity leads Aristotelian rhetoric to conceive of human reasoning as a complex process of determining what is significant in a situation for a particular audience.

Because audiences bring particular histories and interests with them, *ethos* and *pathos* cannot be merely supplementary modes of persuasion but rather are essential for the making of practical and aesthetic judgments. They are *pisteis* (modes of persuasion) in themselves, and Aristotle's understanding of their roles in argument has far-reaching consequences. Jeffrey Walker makes these consequences explicit:

> By attempting to include an account of *pathos* in his theory of rhetoric, Aristotle implicitly if unintentionally commits that theory to a recognition that all practical reasoning is pathetic reasoning, that all enthymemes are enthymemes of *pathos*, and that an art of enthymematic rhetoric meant to guide such reasoning is inescapably a psychagogic art of *pharmakon* for emotional *katharsis*. (Walker 2000: 91)

Given this understanding of rhetoric, emotions are neither obstacles to an uncorrupted reasoning nor instances of irrationality that need to be brought under the control of reason. Rather, they form part of a complex liminal mode of human response that plays a crucial role in how we understand and act in the world.

If in Book 1 of the *Rhetoric* Aristotle is critical of earlier mechanical accounts that reduced the role of emotion in rhetoric to the manipulation of the judge's feelings (Aristotle 1991: 3–4), it is not because he is opposed to such practices as ethically disreputable but because these earlier rhetorical theorists and practitioners did not understand the artistic function of emotion. The force, complexity, and purpose of rhetoric had escaped them. Aristotle's theoretical advance over his predecessors comes from his understanding that rhetoric is "a certain kind of offshoot [*paraphuses*] of dialectic and of ethical studies (which it is just to call politics)" (Aristotle 1991: 39). Given rhetoric's heterogeneous nature, its task cannot be just to discover arguments whose logical structures are sound but must be to invent complex logical, ethical, and emotional judgments that can be effective with particular audiences.

Because rhetoric is concerned with the audience in its particularity, Aristotle begins Book 2 by emphasizing that rhetoric's concern is with judgment:

> Since rhetoric is concerned with making a judgment (people judge what is said in deliberation, and judicial proceedings are also a judgment), it is necessary not only to

look to argument, that it may be demonstrative and persuasive but also [for the speaker] to construct a view of himself as a certain kind of person and to prepare the judge. (Aristotle 1991: 120)

The difference between inartistic manipulation and a disciplined, legitimate, and necessary practice within the polis resides in this purpose of guiding audiences to make judgments in situations not made determinate by law or policy. In a responsible and effective rhetoric, the argument has to be not only sound but also responsive to the reality with which the audience must deal and be reflective of its values. When rhetors compose their speeches, they need to focus on character and emotion because these influence the determination of the judgment to be internalized by the audience. As the audience internalizes that judgment, it closes a particular situation by rendering it determinate.

If an audience is to credit the reasoning of a speech, it must trust the practical wisdom, the virtue, and the good will of the speaker. Speakers who appear deficient in any of these three qualities will rightly raise an audience's suspicion and undermine their own credibility. But the importance of the emotions goes even deeper. For an audience's emotional orientation in a situation plays a critical role in determining how an audience sees and understands a particular situation. For Aristotle, emotions are important because they help determine how the world appears:

> For things do not seem the same to those who are friendly and those who are hostile, not the [same] to the angry and calm but either altogether different or different in importance; to one who is friendly, the person about whom he passes judgment seems not to do wrong or only in a small way; to one who is hostile, the opposite; and to a person feeling strong desire and being hopeful, if something in the future is a source of pleasure, it appears that it will come to pass and will be good; but to an unemotional person and one in a disagreeable state of mind, the opposite. (Aristotle 1991: 120)

How reality is understood – what is taken to be reality – is deeply entangled in how an audience feels about reality. A situation looks one way to a person who is angry and another way to a person who is afraid, or jealous, or calm, or filled with hate. Depending on how an audience feels, a certain action may appear as a threat or as behavior that should be pitied, or as some other challenge.

To understand the operation of a particular emotion, Aristotle locates three concerns: "for example, in speaking of anger, what is their *state of mind* when people are angry and against *whom* are they usually angry, and for what sort of *reasons*" (Aristotle 1991: 121; italics in original). Thus, emotions are intentional, directed toward an object, and, as Eugene Garver (1994: 126) points out, the intentional object of an emotion is a person and not a proposition. The emotions that interest Aristotle's rhetor are those that structure the relations between people. So when an Aristotelian rhetoric explores the possible emotions within a situation, it is exploring how people should feel towards others in that situation. And in exploring these

feelings, a rhetor can discover, clarify, and possibly change individual and communal values and understandings. In turn, an audience can judge the appropriateness of a rhetor's proffered judgment by testing it against their feelings. An emotion's appropriateness or inappropriateness becomes a key place for an audience to engage and ultimately assess an argument (Garver 1994: 137). And if the test of an emotion's appropriateness in a given situation is not conclusive in itself, it can nonetheless become a significant factor in an audience arriving at a final decision.

The epistemic value of an emotion's appropriateness allows Aristotle to discover a role for emotion in a rhetoric that is artistic. An inartistic use of emotion arises from an ignorance of the role that emotions play as a substantive resource with which to investigate the situation that confronts the audience and the rhetor. An inartistic rhetoric seeks to impose a set of feelings on an audience, remaking the audience in the image desired by the rhetor for his or her own purposes. Through this imposition of emotion, the rhetor warps the audience, for the audience is no longer using their values to judge appearance nor assessing the appropriateness of their response; instead, they are moved by those emotions imposed by the rhetor. In substituting the rhetor's values and feelings for those of the audience, rhetoric's function of guiding audiences is lost. In conceiving of its audience as passive and infinitely malleable, a manipulative rhetoric seeks preemptively to compel them to occupy a passive role. In precluding the audience from becoming a judge; the inartistic rhetor replaces the act of judgment with its mere semblance.

In contrast, when an audience uses their emotions as one criterion with which to assess a speech, they assume the role of judge. An audience that takes on the role of judge becomes active and is not as easily subject to manipulation as it would be were it a mere passive spectator. And it is only by exercising the role of judge that an audience can perform its function of determining what it should do or think in a particular situation. The integrity of rhetoric as a practice requires an audience to become active and to internalize deliberatively the complex structure of reasoning that a rhetor has embodied in the speech.

Garver rightly emphasizes that the emotions dealt with by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* are civic emotions (Garver 1994: 108). The fourteen emotions that Aristotle discusses in Book 2 of the *Rhetoric* involve the ways that people stand toward other people. What citizens must do as citizens is to deliberate in particular situations and determine what is most useful, just, or noble for the city. For while the laws and customs of a city embody its values, their interpretation in a particular situation is not given in advance. The situation may appear differently to different citizens, or citizens may disagree which laws apply or whether a particular set of circumstances, in fact, represents an action or event that a particular law meant to cover. Even more to the point, when a polis is confronted with a need to act in a particular case, its citizens must make a complex deliberation in which they determine where the best interests of the city lie. To make such decisions, they need to interpret the situation before them. This involves determining their stance toward each other and toward other city-states. If they feel envy, for example, they act one way; if jealousy or anger, another way. The

emotions reveal the dynamics in a relationship between two parties, and thus play a crucial role in shaping the way that citizens understand themselves and others. Prior to a rhetor engaging an audience, the members of that audience may have different feelings, or conflicting feelings, or confused feelings about a particular proposed action; or the members of an audience may feel a certain way about a proposed action and not know why they feel that way. By making the appropriateness of the emotion to the situation evident, the rhetor can enable an audience to share a common feeling and achieve, at least temporarily, an effective identity.

Since Aristotle seeks to make a rhetoric that is effective for a polis, he is not particularly interested in the ways that emotions can become a source of revelation about a private life. He does not explore the ways in which speech may be essential to the individual for completing the understanding that an emotion begins and seeks to express. But contemporary theoreticians of rhetoric have argued for the relevance of rhetoric to the shape of a private life. Kenneth Burke, for example, sought to broaden the reach of rhetorical analysis by suggesting that rhetoric provides a model for the dodges and subterfuges of the individual psyche:

> Classical rhetoric stresses the element of explicit design in rhetorical enterprise. But one can systematically extend the range of rhetoric, if one studies the persuasiveness of false or inadequate terms which may not be deliberately imposed on us from without by some skillful speaker, but which we impose on ourselves, in varying degrees of deliberateness and unawareness, through motives indeterminately self-protective and/or suicidal. (Burke 1952: 35)

Burke was one of the first rhetorical theorists to see the important parallels between the work of psychoanalysis and the operations of rhetoric. Without abandoning rhetoric's traditional concern with persuasion, Burke enlarged the area properly studied by rhetoric by making identification the key rhetorical act. He argued that an expanded conception of rhetoric could help us understand the negotiations and tensions within the individual psyche.

To see human subjectivity as a site of rhetorical negotiation suggests that emotion may play an even greater role in structuring the way that we think than is suggested by Aristotle's defense of emotion's legitimacy within rhetoric. Or as Sartre puts the question: what does emotion have "to teach us about a being, one of whose characteristics is exactly that of being moved"? And "what must consciousness be for emotion to be possible, perhaps even to be necessary" (Sartre 1948: 15)? Sartre proposes an answer by defining an emotion as "a certain way of apprehending the world" (Sartre 1948: 52). This apprehension is not passive but rather registers that our understanding of the world is not fully adequate and needs to be remade. The capacity of the world to surprise and challenge us creates dissonance between the norms and beliefs under which we would make sense of the world and reality that confronts us. For Sartre, the body registers this dissonance in our feelings of joy when we are surprised or anger when we are disappointed or spite when we are frustrated or sorrow when we

experience loss. In its operation, emotion is magical, for it transforms the world, bestowing new qualities on objects. To use his example: grapes that cannot be reached become sour. The sourness is not the conclusion of an argument but a reassessment of a world whose reality ceased to conform to our desires. The logic of this reassessment is outside of conscious reasoning and is registered by the fact that emotions are experienced as being undergone (Sartre 1948: 73). You cannot will or consciously compel yourself to have an emotion, for such feeling will present itself as forced and as different in kind from those feelings that arise of themselves. To the extent that emotions cannot be produced at will, they have the possibility of becoming interesting evidence for what we really believe. But, of course, this revelation is rarely straightforward, and as Michel Meyer notes: "Passion is what is beneath *logos*. Logos can capture passion only by respecting the problematological difference which gives all meaning to the process of taking charge of the problem for ourselves, and which passion expresses in a range of irreducible ways" (Meyer 2000: 235). The irreducibility of expressed passion into *logos* means that the logic of emotions (what Meyer calls affective reasoning) is always metaphorical. It comes to us as a kind of discourse that needs to be interpreted.

Jonathan Lear argues that to interpret an emotion involves more than simply translating a figurative discourse into a conceptual discourse. Rather, the interpretation of an emotion is simultaneously the completion of its effort at expressing its idea. For Lear, one of the central purposes of psychoanalysis is to guide analysands to a more complicated and hence healthier understanding of the drives that underlie and, to some degree, fuel neuroses:

> It is not enough for an analytic interpretation to be accurate. An accurate description of unconscious motivation will fail as an interpretation if the material that it describes is so far from the analysand's awareness that the concepts, for him, remain empty. It will also fail if it is delivered in such a way – whether in timing, wording, or tone – to provoke the analysand's resistance. A good enough interpretation must, to its core, manifest a loving acknowledgment of the drives. The drives respond by filling the interpretation with life and meaning for the analysand. The analysand is able to take over the interpretation, and the interpretation itself becomes a sublimated expression of the drives it was trying to understand. (Lear 1998: 213)

It is striking how much an act of therapeutic interpretation structurally parallels an act of persuasion. Like an act of persuasion, an analytic interpretation must go beyond simply being right; it must become effective for the analysand, and that means that the interpretation must have emotional resonance for the analysand. Structurally, the analysand stands in a position with respect to a therapist that is analogous to that of audience and rhetor. The audience can only take over the understandings offered by a speech if they speak seriously to the audience's interests. The analysand must become active in a way similar to an audience becoming a judge in assessing a piece of rhetoric. In both analytic interpretation and persuasion, a discourse grounded in

reason is insufficient; there needs to be genuine investment by the parties hearing the discourse in the understanding it offers. Such understanding, in turn, is deeply contingent, depending on time, wording, or tone. In this, it parallels the traditional rhetorical concern with *kairos*, with understanding the rightness of the moment. Finally, when analysands take over an interpretation, that taking over changes them – they see the world differently. That is the goal of persuasion: to allow an audience to see the world differently.

Lear's account of analytic interpretation opens up the possibility of understanding why emotion is such an important component in rhetoric and why emotion is necessary if reason is to change a person's understanding. And his account allows us to pose a fundamental question: why does an audience need what a rhetor offers? Assuming for a moment that one is dealing with a reasonably intelligent audience, it is fair to ask what rhetoric contributes to its process of making a decision. Is it, as Aristotle suggests, that rhetoric brings discipline to a practice that occurs naturally and hence makes the practice more likely to succeed? Or is the difficulty of making a good judgment less a consequence of the absence of explicit method and rooted deeper in the fundamental ways that subjects perceive the world and themselves?

The beginnings of an answer emerge from Freud's insight upon which Lear builds: we do not stand in a position of knowledge toward who we are. In part, this is so because the "I" is not a determinate object but an emerging subject; in part, because we have no easy access to the concerns that are often at the heart of our actions and understanding. We are ignorant not so much because we lack knowledge but because we continue to engage in archaic reasoning, which is a manner of thinking that works according to a logic only partially comprehensible to what we normally call reasoning.

In seeing the mind as something that emerges from more primitive and archaic mental states, Lear puts forward a notion of thought very different from that of Kant's:

> By failing to recognize archaic mind, Kant misdescribed the boundaries of who we are. And it is crucial to the process of individuation that I incorporate this other mindedness as part of myself. That is the deeper significance of Freud's injunction, *where it was, there I shall become*. (Lear 1998: 193–4; italics in original)

Lear challenges a tightly drawn distinction between mind and body and instead claims that some bodily responses are, in fact, acts of mind. For him, mind develops out of body and never severs the connection to become completely autonomous. Indeed, only by incorporating something as basic as our fundamental drives is the mind able to develop into a more complex and rational structure. Lear argues that it is impossible to separate emotion from thought, for the existence of emotion makes the thinking that we call reasoning possible. Kant's account fails because it does not understand this complexity, nor does it understand the ways in which reason is tied to a particular developmental history.

For Lear, mature reasoning develops out of archaic thought. It is the nature of thought to seek expression, and archaic thinking is important because it seeks expression but often in forms that we do not initially recognize. In part, we fail to recognize archaic thought as reason because it operates out of a manner of association different in kind from a logic governed by concepts, but our failure also arises because we do not understand that in archaic thought the process of reasoning has not completed itself. Archaic thought becomes available to us only in the form of an analytic interpretation that both completes the thought and, to some degree, continues to disguise the thought that it completes:

> A person's subjectivity is powerful not merely because it is striving for expression but also because it may be expressed archaically. Archaic mental functioning knows no firm boundary between mind and body. Although fantasies may be expressed in images, they also occur in paralyses, vomiting, skin irritations, spasms, ulcers, etc.; and even by being dramatically acted out by the person whose fantasy it is. (Lear 1998: 37)

To understand what archaic thought is trying to express requires a person to translate this language of a text made from elements as various as the actions of a body and the dreams, fantasies, and evasions of a subject into a conceptual language that permits a more successful or better organized expression of the impulse that was archaically acted out. An analytic interpretation is important because it completes the expression begun in archaic reasoning. As one interprets the acts of the archaic mind, that subject comes to understand better what is driving him or her. This continual act of attempting to understand these archaic thoughts becomes the way in which the mind grows. Lear argues that this process is a conversion of energy into structure, as the impulses that begin in archaic thinking lead to more complex explanations in which the mind puts concepts in the place of impulses.

Lear draws on Aristotle's account of the emotions to explain why mind must be understood in terms of a developing structure in which thought and feeling are united:

> An emotion, for Aristotle, is a structure that makes a claim for its own rationality. Although emotions may (or may not) be expressed in bodily responses, in subjective experiences such as feelings and awareness of bodily response, in fantasies of all sorts, the emotion has not reached full development until it is able to express an explanation and justification of its occurrence. (Lear 1998: 50)

Emotions are responses to the world that carry with them beliefs about the world and perceptions as to its present state. Anger, fear, joy, and the rest of the emotions enact attitudes provoked by the perceived nature of a particular situation. Thus, Lear labels them "orientations," and he claims "emotions are, by their nature, attempts at rational orientation toward the world. Even an archaic expression of emotion is an archaic attempt at rationality" (Lear 1998: 51). As attempts at rational orientation,

emotions carry with them a claim for their appropriateness. Emotions do not simply represent internal states or bodily impulses; they are tied to the external world. Anger doesn't just arrive all of a sudden from nowhere. To understand what is at issue, one can ask a Wittgensteinian question: what would it be like for anger to arise without any preceding event or condition? Would we recognize such behavior as manifesting anger if the feeling just spontaneously arose and equally spontaneously disappeared later? Wouldn't we feel unnerved by such an outburst? The best we could say is that we do not understand what it could mean when someone who underwent such an outburst claimed that it was anger. We would want to say that emotions do not just arise spontaneously, for it is the nature of an emotion that it is a response. Of course, this is not to say that emotions cannot defy a surface rationality or that a person may experience an emotion and not know how to categorize it. For if the assumption of the rationality of emotion is one of the basic tenets that make psychoanalysis possible, then another equally important tenet is that we are often ignorant of the appropriateness or rationality of our emotions. As Lear (1998: 4) puts it: "a person is, by his nature, out of touch with his own subjectivity." The occurrence of the emotion, then, can set the person an interpretive task: to understand what the emotion is attempting to express and then to try to recover the sense of appropriateness guiding that expression.

The impulse of an emotion toward rational expression also suggests two new openings for rhetoric. First, an emotion's implied rationality creates a text that can be interpreted, and thus the emotion can become an index to a person's subjectivity. Second, since subjects cannot access this archaic reasoning through introspection, a different method of inquiry is necessary. A method is needed that can offer the subject an interpretation that discloses the impulses at the base of key emotions. When rhetoric invents or discovers the *logos* appropriate to the *pathos* of a situation, it helps guide an audience to a decision by offering concepts that allow an audience to have a more fully organized idea of what their feelings sought to express. Through their interpretations, rhetors create conditions for conversations that can become a means to explore emotion. As audiences respond critically to rhetorical discourse, they can discover aspects of their history and become aware of concerns that are central to them but nonetheless unavailable until they are incorporated into a discursive structure by a rhetor. In this way, rhetoric becomes a public method of obtaining communal self-knowledge. To the extent that the emotion is not yet fully conceptualized, rhetoric becomes a cooperative method for allowing a person to interpret archaic thought embodied and expressed as a feeling and for assisting a person in developing a more complex and, hopefully, satisfactory understanding of a situation. In its contribution to this interpretation of the significance of an emotion, rhetoric helps subjects evolve into more aware and more fully integrated individuals.

What makes these two activities of exploring one's subjectivity and of assisting in the development of that subjectivity rhetorical is that rational argument alone is insufficient to allow either of these activities to achieve its respective end. Rather, the judgment made by the person needs to unite emotion and thought:

> The problem with a prematurely uttered, but accurate interpretation is that the person who hears it is not in a position to understand what is being said. The question now arises as to what is involved in seeing the archaic production as an instance of an oedipal emotion. The developmental account thus provides a shift of focus. Instead of asking "what in addition to knowledge is required?" we now ask "what is required in order to have knowledge?" A necessary condition for knowledge is understanding, and understanding is a richer and deeper notion than we might initially have expected. (Lear 1998: 118–19)

The structure of an interpretation of an emotion is analogous to the structure of a rhetorical judgment. Both are situational and depend on analyst or rhetor tailoring discourse so that that person or audience can hear it. The analyst and rhetor must take into consideration the timing of the speech and also the ethical and emotional make-up of the hearers or audience. There is a complexity to these types of discursive action that requires the successful speaker to attend to the audience in the fullness of its particularity.

Because it provides a sufficiently complicated model of human intelligence, psychoanalysis can allow us to theorize the role of emotion in rhetoric. Rather than beginning from a model of rationality that posits the autonomy of reasoning, psychoanalysis argues that an increasingly rational autonomy is a product of the successful integration of thought and feeling, as the ideas striving for expression in archaic thought are brought to a more complete and satisfying expression by being voiced in a discourse that is organized conceptually. Because subjects cannot perform this integration and complication by themselves, they need artistic guidance that offers an appropriate discourse at the appropriate time. The art of interpretation at the center of psychoanalytic practice involves the same practice of invention as rhetoric, and the practice of psychoanalysis suggests that rhetoric offers its audience a discourse supporting the audience's ongoing task of self-invention. Like psychoanalysis, rhetoric provides cooperative guidance for the audience's project of discovering or constituting its identity.

Lear's reading of Freud offers additional insights crucial to a redefinition of rhetoric. The first involves the role of love as the key emotion in the formation of human subjectivity. In developing the centrality of love for the growth of subjectivity Lear begins from Freud's insight that the newborn infant does not distinguish between an internal and external world. Only after infants begin to recognize the existence of something that is external to them and not immediately or necessarily responsive to their wishes do they begin to develop as subjects. Out of an original situation of immediate and undifferentiated gratification, two entities emerge: the subject as a locus of needs and desires, and the external world as a supplier of material to meet the infant's needs and as an emerging object of the infant's desire. Since both the infant's subjectivity and understanding of the external world arise from an original undifferentiated situation, subjectivity and world mirror or reflect each other. One's subjectivity owes much to the quality of the external world that one

experiences – both in the way that that world meets needs and in the way that it frustrates the satisfaction of those needs.

At the core of this shared and undifferentiated situation is an impulse that inheres as an essential element in the world as we come to understand it and be shaped by it. Plato called this impulse Eros; Freud calls it love. Love is the fundamental shaping force in the world:

> The world does not exist because it is actually loved – or invested with libido – but it is a condition of there being a world that it is lovable by beings like us. This is more than a psychological condition of there being a world *for us*. There is no content to the idea of a world that is not a possible world for us. And a world that is not lovable (by beings like us) is not a possible world. (Lear 1998: 142)

So our universe is one that is made possible by an emotion. What permits development and differentiation in this universe is the activity of love as it seeks more complex and differentiated discriminations. Both the subjects that we become and the stage upon which we act develop out of this elemental emotion.

For Lear, "Love is not just a feeling or a discharge of energy, but an emotional orientation to the world. That orientation demands that the world present itself to us as worthy of love" (Lear 1998: 153). In a sense this is a retelling of Socrates' myth in his great speech in the *Phaedrus*. We only really come to life in the presence of an Other who embodies an image of the god in whose train we follow. The erotic charge of that relationship gives the world a point and inaugurates philosophic discourse. When one has the good fortune to encounter a beloved, one feels oneself come to life. In the meetings and conversations that follow, the soul grows and achieves an identity of which it was incapable by itself. This growth leads to a fuller and more complete life. Lear imagines psychological development as analogous to the growth of Socrates' lover and beloved:

> As the infant grows into a child, an adolescent and an adult, his world will, in healthy circumstances, tend to expand and deepen. But it would seem that for the expansion to take place, the world itself must maintain a certain responsiveness to and reflection of the emerging person. It must respond to his emerging curiosity and interests, and, in so responding, reflect them. We seem then to need a concept of a *good-enough world*. (Lear 1998: 154; italics in original)

To develop into increasingly complex individuals, subjects need to interact with a world that provides loving support yet that inevitably frustrates desire. Human subjectivity takes shape in the continual play of support, frustration, and integrative response to frustration. Emotions, in their roles as responsive orientations to the world, develop out of these interactions of subject and world, and serve as the impetus for subjects discovering or inventing more complex interpretations as they seek to understand the world that they inhabit.

Depending upon whether subjects learn to accept and integrate their emotions and the instinctual drives that, in part, propel them or whether they deny and repress those emotions determines whether they develop as healthy individuals who can creatively deal with the situations they encounter or whether they become rigid and inflexible beings doomed to repeat a history from which they will not let themselves escape. Such is the double-edged situation of identity formation. The possibility of growth implies the equal possibility of regression. For the individual to develop as an increasingly individuated and autonomous subject, the world must offer the right mixture of support and frustration. It must, to use Lear's words, be a good enough world. It must be a world that offers and requires that one learn how to respond in an ongoing process of adjustment to situations that are both independent of a subject's will but not totally indifferent to it. The world must permit individual subjects to recognize their places in it. Frustration can then become a stimulus to growth as subjects seek fuller explanations for why they feel as they do, which, in turn, allow them to understand better who they are.

But failure is a genuine and persistent threat in this process: it is possible for the development simply to stop or regress. If identities develop and refine themselves in a process of interpretive self-understanding, identification can take a different course that leads not to individuation but to the loss of independent identity. Such loss is the counter-movement of regression:

> Love's nature is to pull us toward ever more complex unities, but the fact that love is love means that there is an ever-present tendency to regress toward undifferentiated unity. And identification is the mode of regression. This may initially seem strange since it is through identification that the I comes to be and develops. But precisely because the I develops by ever more complex identifications, the I can regress by reverting to an archaic form of identification. (Lear 1998: 199)

When the world proves not supportive but hostile, and the individual subject lacks the encouragement through a healthy and reasonable frustration to grow, the subject can simply refuse to discriminate between a self and a powerful or threatening other. When this happens, the subject abandons the project of attempting to interpret or understand the world and seeks to merge with rather than differentiate from a powerful authority. In the process, subjects operate less and less as individuals who accept and value their subjectivity and instead become fused with larger group which is moved by a set of feelings that so fill that world that there is no room for differentiation. Freud sees this loss of individuation manifesting itself in the creation of a mass in which individuals give over any sense of difference in order to participate in the life of a group that receives its identity from the dictates of a powerful leader (Freud 1955: 117–28).

The ever present danger of regression makes the ongoing private drama of the subject's self-constitution political. Aristotle's emphasis on a rhetoric that seeks to constitute its audience as active judges can be taken as showing one way in which an

artful rhetoric can help an audience resist the pull of regression. With its emphasis on locating the best available means of persuasion in any given situation, an Aristotelian rhetoric seeks to understand its subjects in their full particularity. Because of its methodological commitment to an ever more rigorous discrimination of how a situation should appear to an audience, such a rhetoric recognizes the importance of exploring the emotions appropriate to audiences in particular situations. To the extent that rhetors seek to understand the audience's particular emotions and to construct a speech, they incorporate those emotions into the structure of the judgment offered to the audience. Through this process, the rhetors encourage the growth of individuation. An artful rhetoric helps subjects become individuals capable of citizenship and of resisting the impulse to regress into slaves.

The subsequent political challenge is how to bring together these individuated subjectivities into an effective and respectful political unity. But to put the question this way is already to misunderstand the challenge. The rhetor's place is not to bring people together to form a unity; rather, the rhetor needs to speak or write in such a way that conditions are created in which the individual subjects, as they make their judgments, can constitute themselves as a unity as and hence constitute themselves as a community. Again, the parallels to psychoanalysis are instructive. An analyst cannot present an already formulated interpretation to an analysand if that interpretation is truly to be owned by the analysand. What the analyst can do is create conditions that allow an analysand to be receptive to new and alternative interpretations and then, through a process of mutual exploration, cooperate with the analysands as they work through the issues for themselves. By this process, they are led to a new interpretation. The rhetor needs to occupy a similar role. He or she needs to seize the moment when it presents itself and then put forward the interpretations that the rhetor believes represents the best course for that group given their history, values, resources, and present circumstances. The responsibility of the audience is to decide. In their decision they invent their identity. In this ideal form an artistic rhetoric makes possible the conditions that allow for citizens to make complex political decisions as these citizens become judges who integrate their interests and differences into a more complex understanding that becomes the basis both for action and for a new political identity.

Emotion plays a central role in the formation of political identity not because, as Gorgias claimed, speech is a powerful lord that can bend audiences to his will, for such audiences would become the masses that Freud saw as a consequence of regression. Rather, if, following Freud, Lear and the Socrates of the great palinode, love represents a creative energy that plays a crucial role in shaping both worlds and souls, then rhetoric is necessary because it promotes the growth of individuals who can become active citizens capable of complex discriminations. Rhetoric, as an art that explores emotions as responses, discloses the animating concerns of subjects seeking to respond to worlds formed by "a dialectic of love and loss" (Lear 1998: 160). As an art that helps guide subjects to fuller and more complex interpretations of these worlds, rhetoric supports audiences as they develop their identities. In its concern with

emotions, rhetoric becomes one means whereby *logos* itself grows in its capacity for complex and integrative thinking. The dichotomy between emotion and reason is replaced by a developmental model of mind that sees reason growing out of a loving response to the world. And rather than being understood as an inferential process abstracted from the particularity of human lives, reason becomes an ever increasing ability to be adequate to the worlds that subjects encounter. In this vision of rhetoric, reason and emotion are aligned as dialectical partners whose interchange can lead to increasingly sophisticated understandings of the worlds we inherit and of the subjects that we can become. The goal of this rhetoric is not to use emotion to manipulate an audience, making it a slave to the rhetor, but to guide the members of an audience as they engage in their ongoing task of exploring their subjectivity and inventing themselves as subjects adequate to the worlds in which they live and to which they must respond.

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Analogies, Parables, Paradoxes

Get On Down: Plato's Rhetoric of Education in the *Republic*

Kathy Eden

I admit that my title is somewhat questionable. One of the most obvious questions it raises is: does Plato ever practice or preach a rhetoric of education, to which many readers of the dialogues would immediately answer "no" on the grounds that Plato outspokenly holds teaching, the task of the philosopher, in the highest regard, while he holds persuading, the task of the rhetorician, in the lowest. In a dialogue named for one of the most flamboyant rhetoricians of his time, the *Gorgias*, Plato has Socrates delineate the differences between the two activities. The one, persuasion, is merely a knack for flattering the senses and sensibilities of its audience. It differs from teaching, Socrates insists, just as cooking differs from medicine. Teaching, in contrast, is a skill acquired by long study for explaining what is true about the world and our experience of it.

This fundamental distinction between teaching and persuading also informs the argument of Plato's other dialogue about rhetoric, the *Phaedrus*. Here Socrates exposes the rhetorician's ignorance concerning the subjects he treats, including the souls of the audience he would persuade. A true art of rhetoric, Socrates counters, must be grounded in a dialectical understanding of the souls or *psychai* of its audience – what we call psychology – as well as of the subjects under discussion. This dialectical understanding in turn requires knowing how the parts of any subject discussed relate both to each other and to the subject as a whole. And this kind of understanding as it pertains to the soul is arguably the subject – or at least one subject – of the *Republic*.

In the *Republic*, however, it is the poets and not the rhetoricians who come under the most direct censure. In widely read sections of books 3 and 10, Socrates belittles poetry's ability to teach anything worth knowing. Intent on trashing the poets, Plato virtually excludes rhetoric from the discussion. Although rhetorical training, like poetry, would figure prominently in the curriculum of the well-educated Athenian of Plato's day – and no doubt figured prominently in his own

education – it has no place whatever in the educational reform Socrates advocates for his ideal city.

Set in high relief by Socrates' dialectical method, the vivid opposition between teaching and persuading, with its corresponding opposition between philosophy and rhetoric (and poetry), obscures the deep rhetorical (and poetic) affiliations of the various strategies that Socrates uses to muster his arguments, including his arguments *for* education and *against* rhetoric. In this essay I will consider three of these rhetorical strategies: the analogy, the parable, and the paradox; and I want to consider them for what they can disclose not so much about persuasion, the aim of the art of rhetoric, as about Plato's understanding in the *Republic* of teaching and learning, the aims of education. For Plato focuses no small part of the conversation on what the leaders of the ideal city must know. If this grandest of philosophical dialogues motivates its interlocutors to learn about justice, in other words, its author may have another, more basic agenda in mind, that of teaching us not only about what to learn but also, even more importantly, about how we learn.

Someone who learned a great deal from Plato's teaching about how to teach and how to learn was his student, Aristotle. Like Plato, Aristotle thought deeply about education as it relates both to politics and psychology. The entire last book of his *Politics* takes up this topic in its political context, while his manual on the art of rhetoric addresses here and there throughout its pages the psychology of education. On more than one of these pages Aristotle singles out the analogy, in Greek *analogia*, as an especially effective instrument of pedagogy. Responsible for the structure of the best metaphors, analogy, Aristotle explains, establishes a relation between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the unfamiliar, in this way providing new knowledge (*Rhetoric* 3.10.2; 3.11.6). This analogical structure accounts for the value of metaphors to philosophers as well as to other prose writers (3.2.8–9; 3.10.7; 3.11.5; cf. *Poetics* 21.11–14).[1] To illustrate this value, Aristotle features some of Plato's analogical metaphors, such as the well-known and often recycled "ship of state." Like Aristotle's other illustrative examples in the *Rhetoric*, this one comes from the *Republic* (*Rhetoric* 3.4.3; *Republic* 488A–a489A).

Throughout this dialogue, in fact, Plato has Socrates debate his points and disarm his opponents by means of bold, sometimes unforgettable, rhetorical analogies.[2] One that informs the entire argument is the analogy between the city and the soul, the polis and the psyche. To understand psychology, and especially the psychology of someone who is just, Socrates turns his listener's attention to politics. Because a just soul is smaller and thus harder to see than a just city, Socrates recommends "first find[ing] out what sort of thing justice is in a city and afterwards look[ing] for it in the individual, observing the ways in which the smaller is similar to the larger" (369A). He recommends, that is, proceeding from the larger to the smaller, the more familiar to the less familiar, the visible to the invisible, the known to the unknown. But Socrates does more than merely use analogies to advance understanding; he also deploys them to explain his own analogical method. On this occasion, he clarifies the

process recommended by comparing it to reading larger letters in place of smaller ones (368D):

> Therefore, since we aren't clever people, we should adopt the method of investigation that we'd use if, lacking keen eyesight, we were told to read small letters from a distance and then noticed that the same letters existed elsewhere in a larger size and on a larger surface. We'd consider it a godsend, I think, to be allowed to read the larger ones first and then to examine the smaller ones, to see whether they really are the same.

Later, Socrates examines this same procedure, thinking analogically, by way of a second analogy fundamental to the argument, that between the sun and the Good.

Struggling to explain the aim of all inquiry, the ultimate objective of the most elevated kind of knowing, namely knowing the Good, Socrates moves from what is familiar to his listeners' experience to what is unfamiliar. He compares the sun, whose light at once causes the phenomenal or sensible world and causes itself to be seen, with the Good, which, he reasons analogically, both causes the noumenal or intelligible world and causes itself to be known. If one aspect of the complex relation between the sun and the Good is analogical, however, the other, equally important, is causal. To explain this causal relation, Socrates relies once more on analogy. For the Good is the cause of the sun, he argues, in the same way as the parent is the cause of the child (508BC):

> Let's say, then, that this is what I called the offspring of the good, which the good begot as its analogue [*analogon*]. What the good itself is in the intelligible realm, in relation to understanding and intelligible things, the sun is in the visible realm, in relation to sight and visible things.

The Good, in other words, is the first principle or cause of not only the intelligible world but also, in causing the sun as its analogue, of the sensible world – or in sum, of all that is.

Socrates' explanation of this complex relation between the sun and the Good has two important consequences for understanding. One is that all inquiry, like the ultimate inquiry into the Good, which is the Cause of everything, is an inquiry into causality. Understanding, Platonically speaking, is an understanding of causes – why something is what it is. This is what Plato means by "giving an account." Among the things that Aristotle learns from Plato is this very assumption. So Aristotle in the *Posterior Analytics*, for instance, defines true knowledge – the knowledge of the philosopher as opposed to that of the Sophist – as a knowledge of causes (71b9–13). The other consequence is that analogical reasoning figures prominently in our coming to understand how we understand – an assumption that Aristotle also inherits, as we have already seen.

This prominence of analogical reasoning shows up as well in the so-called "divided line."[3] Related causally as well as analogically, the Good and the sun preside over the

two unequal parts of the line, which itself establishes an analogy or ratio between the higher and lower kinds of knowing. "Thus there are four such conditions in the soul," Socrates explains (511DE; cf. 509D):

> corresponding to the four subsections of our line: Understanding [*noēsin*] for the highest, thought [*dianoian*] for the second, belief [*pistin*] for the third and imagining [*eikasian*] for the last. Arrange them in a ratio [*ana logon*] and consider that each shares in clarity to the degree that the subsection it is set over shares in truth.

In other words, the two portions above the divided line, *noēsis* and *dianoia*, are in the same proportion to one another as not only the two below the line, *pistis* and *eikasia*, but also as the entire portion above the line is to that below. Elsewhere (533E–534A), Socrates refers to the two "conditions" above the line as *noēsis*, the two below as *doxa*.

Socrates also explains that dialectical thinking, through a process that includes coming down – in Greek, *katabainein* – from accepted hypotheses to conclusions (510C–511D), works like analogy in moving from the known to the unknown.[4] This "coming down" allows us to learn about learning as well as about everything else; it also allows us to teach. So Socrates descends the divided line, which, as *eikōn* or image, is the product of the lowest portion, in order to teach his interlocutors about its uppermost portion. With its help, moreover, he explains *noēsis* by analogy with *dianoia*, the portion immediately below it. In this lower portion above the line, the realm of *dianoia*, the geometer's reasoning from first principles about abstractions, such as triangularity, by means of particular triangles, clarifies the higher process of understanding that, unlike geometry, uses no imaginary devises, such as the triangle, at all. Without the help of analogical reasoning, Socrates' interlocutors, and maybe even Socrates himself, would have no understanding of this highest form of understanding.

Fundamental to the structure of the analogy, this descending or "coming down" also structures the parable or fictional story, the second of our three rhetorical instruments of education under discussion. Again in his manual on rhetoric, Aristotle distinguishes those stories we make or invent from those we find in history; and he considers two kinds of invented stories: *logoi* and *parabolai* (cf. *Republic* 376E). The *logos* is a fable-like narrative on the model of Aesop (*Rhetoric* 2.20.5); the *parabolē* is illustrated once again by Plato's Socrates – this time by the Socratic strategy of arguing a controversial case by comparison with a clear one: the meritocracy of magistrates, for instance, from that of athletes. If the city would never consider awarding first prize to anyone but the fastest runner, goes the argument, why grant the running of the city itself to any but the best public administrator? Because both parable and logos depend on analogical structure, both, like metaphor, belong to philosophical as well as rhetorical training (*Rhetoric* 2.20.7):

> Fables [*logoi*] are suitable in deliberative oratory and have this advantage, that while it is difficult to find similar historical incidents that have actually happened, it is rather easy

with fables. They should be made in the same way as comparisons [*parabolas*], provided one can see the likenesses [*to homoion*], which is rather easy from philosophical studies.

For Aristotle, philosophical training is the key to making good stories because the philosopher appreciates the likenesses or analogies between this and that. Good stories in turn are the key to good teaching. And good stories, like good analogies, depend on the process of "getting down." In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle recommends that the story-teller set the scene as vividly as possible by "getting down" to the dirty details (2.8.15; 2.19.27; 3.10.7; 3.11.2–3). For it is particularity, relegated to the lowest portions of Plato's line, that engages an audience (*De anima* 3.11, 434a16–21).[5]

Despite Socrates' railings against the storytelling of the poets, Plato's *Republic* consistently deploys this process of "getting down," beginning with its opening word – *katebēn*, "I went down." For Socrates' journey down to the Peiraeus, providing the occasion for his conversation with friends about justice, is not only one of the invented stories so approved by Aristotle, but one punctuated by several other invented stories about "getting down," including the story of Gyges' ring, the parable of the cave, and the myth of Er. Each one of these, like the larger narrative that includes them, is produced by descending the divided line; each one emerges from the realm of imagining or *eikasia* in order to make some unintelligible insight accessible – in other words, in order to teach. For this reason, Glaucon has Gyges descend the chasm that holds the magic ring that renders its wearer invisible and therefore invulnerable to punishment. With this story, Glaucon hopes to render fully palpable for his listeners the consequentialist view of justice – the role of reward and punishment in right action.

For this same reason, Socrates encourages his listeners to imagine a cave-like dwelling that sustains the shadowy world of sensible experience. Like Gyges, Socrates' philosopher also must go down into the cave, even though in this case his eyes have already adjusted to the light and will suffer from returning to darkness (516E; 519CD; 520B). For only by "getting down" can the philosopher educate the cave-dwellers about the false shadows they so readily accept as real. Analogous to the philosopher's physical descent – his return to the cave – Socrates' storytelling, a "getting down" of another kind, is analogous to Plato's own. As careful readers, we learn from the analogy as well as from the story. We also recognize the analogy between analogical argument and storytelling.

From the beginning, moreover, Plato makes it very clear that this is a story about learning (514A). As the story unfolds, Plato has Socrates also make clear that the subject matter is controversial. "Education isn't what some people declare it to be," Socrates asserts (518BD):

namely, putting knowledge into souls that lack it, like putting sight into blind eyes . . . the power to learn is present in everyone's soul and . . . the instrument with which each learns is like an eye that cannot be turned around from darkness to light without turning the whole body . . . education is the craft concerned with doing this

very thing, this turning around, and with how the soul can most easily and effectively be made to do it. It isn't the craft of putting sight into the soul. Education takes for granted that sight is there but that it isn't turned the right way or looking where it ought to look, and it tries to redirect it appropriately.

To educate is to turn around. But without some "getting down," there is no "turning around." Unless the teacher both understands and accommodates how her students learn, she will not succeed in educating them, in turning them around. Why else would Plato have presented his own philosophy in narrative form, if not at least in part as an accommodation to his audience, whose interest is engaged by lively debate and intriguing tales? For education, like persuasion, as Polemarchus reminds us at the beginning of the *Republic,* demands attention. "But could you persuade us," he challenges Socrates (327C), "if we won't listen?"

Although a willing listener, Glaucon finds the parable of the cave-dwellers a strange one (*atopos*). Stories, like analogies, as we have seen, negotiate the familiar and the strange or unfamiliar. On this particular occasion, Socrates corrects Glaucon's faulty assessment of unfamiliarity (515A). The cave-dwellers, he assures Glaucon, are really just like him – and no doubt, just like us, Plato's readers, who also depend on vivid sensory experience and the stories created from them. Arguably the strangest story of all those in the *Republic* is the last one, the so-called myth (*apologos*, *mythos*) of Er (614B). Here is yet another tale of "getting down" (614D) – this time souls from the heavenly chasm, with their own stories to tell of the wonders they have experienced. Strange as their stories and Er's own story are, however, they provoke less resistance from Socrates' friends than the three paradoxes that underlie his plan for social reform.

A third rhetorical instrument, one more often identified with sophistry than philosophy, paradox, in Greek *paradoxa*, characterizes whatever is contrary to opinion or *doxa*, which, as we have already seen, rules the entire region below the divided line. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle aligns paradox with metaphor, stressing especially their shared capacity to teach (*Rhetoric* 3.11.6):

> Urbanities in most cases come through metaphor and from an added surprise; for it becomes clearer [to the listener] that he learned something different from what he believed, and his mind seems to say, "How true, and I was wrong." . . . Good riddles are pleasing for the same reason; for there is learning, and they are spoken in metaphor . . . But this occurs when there is a paradox.

Useful as instruments of instruction because of the wonder or surprise they engender, paradoxes also work to undermine the arguments of one's opponent. Among the ways to accomplish this, Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 2.23.16) recommends in his manual for the rhetorician exposing the disjunction between an opponent's public and private views on such topics as justice – a recommendation that Aristotle would have seen put into practice in the debates between Socrates and his various opponents in the *Republic*. In

his treatise on sophistic argumentation (*On Sophistical Refutations* 12), moreover, Aristotle refers specifically to Socrates' exploitation of paradox, including the paradoxical relation between law and nature and between injuring another and being injured oneself . In addition to these Platonic paradoxes noted by Aristotle, Socrates also deploys three other paradoxes that, by his own admission, threaten to overtake him – a threat he compares metaphorically, or, in other words, by way of analogy, to three engulfing waves.

The first concerns the common training, mental and physical, of men and women. Addressing the most unsettling feature of this reform, Socrates concedes that coeducational wrestling, especially given the Athenian custom of exercising naked, offends contemporary sensibilities; it is contrary to the prevailing *doxa*. Imagine, says Socrates, elderly women, undressed, pumping iron (452AB). But the offense, he insists, is against custom only and not against nature (456C), invoking the very topic that Aristotle reminds us lends itself to paradoxical argumentation.

Like the first paradox, the second also concerns a commonality – this time men having women and children in common (457CD). Bigger than the first, the second wave calls for the eradication of the family, contravening both nature and custom. Indeed, it is hard to imagine anything more contrary, even more repugnant, to popular opinion. And yet, Socrates forewarns, the third and last paradox is the most unsettling of all (472AB):

> This is a sudden attack that you've made on my argument, and you show no sympathy for my delay. Perhaps you don't realize that, just as I've barely escaped from the first two waves of objections, you're bringing the third – the biggest and most difficult one – down upon me. When you see and hear it, you'll suddenly be completely sympathetic, and recognize that it was, after all, appropriate for me to hesitate and be afraid to state and look into so paradoxical a view [*paradoxon logon*].

Advertised as more alarming than the earlier two, this third and last paradox resembles them in featuring a crucial commonality – in this case, the commonality between philosophy and politics.[6] "Until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize," Socrates warns (473CD),

> until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, cities will have no rest from evils . . . It's because I saw how very paradoxical [*para doxan*] this statement would be that I hesitated to make it for so long, for it's hard to face up to the fact that there can be no happiness, either public or private, in any other city.

Despite Socrates' warning, however, the integration of politics and philosophy very probably alarmed Plato's audience – if not Socrates' (cf. 473E–474A) – less than the dissolution of family and private property. Discussions about the role of philosophy in the life of the polis, far from unheard of, may even have been commonplace among

Athenian intellectuals of Plato's day. Isocrates, Plato's near contemporary, ruminates in similar terms on the philosophical character of the ideal politician (e.g., *Antidosis* 174–5, 266, 271);[7] and Aristotle, commenting on Plato's political theory in the second book of the *Politics*, criticizes only the first two wave-like reforms of the *Republic* (cf. *Politics* 1274b9–13), without mentioning the third. There is something paradoxical, in other words, about the ordering of the three Socratic conditions for the effective leadership of the ideal city. Plato puzzles us with Socrates' claim about their increasing strangeness.

Our puzzlement, however, furthers Plato's agenda. For we learn, Socrates admits elsewhere in the dialogue, from precisely those things that unsettle our expectations – that strike us as strange (523B–525A). For lack of a better term, Socrates calls these puzzles "summoners" – *ta ekbainonta* – because they provoke the soul to grasp at understanding; and he explains that we are especially provoked by subjects, like oneness, that confound perception by appearing contradictory (524E–525A):

> If the one is adequately seen itself by itself or is so perceived by any of the other senses, then, as we were saying in the case of fingers, it wouldn't draw the soul towards being. But if something opposite to it is always seen at the same time, so that nothing is apparently any more one than the opposite of one, then something would be needed to judge the matter. The soul would then be puzzled, would look for an answer, would stir up its understanding, and would ask what the one itself is. And so this would be among the subjects that lead the soul and turn it around toward the study of that which is.

If, as we have already seen, turning students around requires some "getting down," the most effective means of "condescension" is the kind that puzzles, perplexes, and provokes. Surely the topic that preoccupies Socrates and his friends – the nature of justice – fits this description. Not unlike oneness itself, in fact, justice promotes both unity and multiplicity in the soul. For it is the virtue that allows the soul to function as an integrated whole by ensuring the functioning of the various parts (443CE):

> One who is just does not allow any part of himself to do the work of another part or allow the various classes within him to meddle with each other. He regulates well what is really his own and rules himself. He puts himself in order, is his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts of himself like three limiting notes in a musical scale – high, low, and middle. He binds together those parts and any others there may be in between, and from having been many things he becomes entirely one, moderate and harmonious.

Like the soul, which is confusingly one and many (436AB), justice too summons us, awakens our need to solve the puzzle and figure out what it is; it summons us to understand. And so does Socrates' paradoxical ordering of the three paradoxes. Why, we are provoked to wonder, does Plato have Socrates characterize philosophical leadership as more upsetting to his audience than the community of women and children? Is he once again, only this time paradoxically, ushering them – and

us – from the familiar to the unfamiliar? Or is he perhaps reversing course and, against our expectations and so again paradoxically, moving from the less to the more familiar?

Certainly the argument here is puzzling. On the one hand, no one, not even Socrates, would dispute the extreme difficulties facing the eradication of family and private property – the two deepest sources of the Greek notion of belonging. These feelings, above all, would be familiar to Plato's audience. Indeed, family and property define familiarity itself – what the Greeks refer to as *oikeion*. On the other hand, Socrates insists that the defamiliarizing attendant on this particular reform pales before the social and psychological alienation that plagues the soul attempting to integrate political and philosophical impulses. By so insisting, he forces us to consider that his conceptions of both philosophy and politics differ from our own. Could our recognition of this difference be Plato's point?

However Plato has Socrates characterize the psychology of the philosophical politician or the political philosopher, his characterization must begin by arresting our attention and confounding our expectations. It must unsettle our settled opinions or *doxai* and thereby estrange us from any complacent acceptance of what it means to live a politically active philosophical life. Without this estrangement, there is no hope of discovery and deeper understanding. Of course, discovering just what Plato means by such a life is like discovering what he means by the Good, which, although left undefined, is associated throughout the dialogue with the aim of all education. Both may be beyond our capacity at the present time. But turning our minds toward the question, like turning our bodies toward the light in Socrates' analogically rich definition of education, certainly is not.

To effect this turning, as we have seen, the successful teacher gets down. Platonically speaking, this "getting down" entails the skillful use of some of the rhetorician's most powerful tools: analogies, parables, and paradoxes. In the *Republic*, however, Plato arguably has Socrates use these rhetorical devices to philosophical ends, that is, to turn us towards a deeper understanding of our own capacity to turn around; he has Socrates use them to educate us about how we become educated. To this end – the philosophical end of self-reflection – the Socrates of the *Republic* challenges the rhetorician with his own weapons; he analogizes analogical thinking, embeds one story of getting down within another, and puts a paradoxical spin on his use of paradox.

NOTES

1   On metaphor see Jordan (1974), Eden (1986: 71–2), and Moran (1996).
2   For Plato on analogy see Robinson (1953: 202–22).
3   On the line see Robinson (1953: 180–201) and Annas (1981: 242–71).
4   On the use of hypothesis see Robinson (1953: 146–79) and Trimpi (1983: 25–79).
5   On the rhetorical power of particularity see Eden (1986: 74–84).

6   On the third wave see Howland (1998: 633–57).
7   On the Isocratic, like the Platonic, concern with a political philosophy see Nehamas (1990: 4).

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16
Aphoristic Style

The Rhetoric of the Aphorism

Gary Saul Morson

I Quotations

1. We know many terms for short expressions: proverbs, maxims, slogans, hypotheses, thoughts, witticisms, dicta, epigrams, aphorisms, and others. None of these terms has a clear, agreed-upon definition that would differentiate it from the others; and some may be used either broadly to refer to the whole class of short expressions or specifically to refer to a particular type. Thus a maxim may be a type of aphorism or vice versa.

2. The broadest term is perhaps "quotation," since it is obvious that anything can be quoted. Yet this term is ambiguous, since a book of "quotations" includes only certain types of material, and not everything that in principle could be quoted.

    A quotation (in the sense of a memorable expression that might appear in a book of "quotations") must be short. One does not search a book of "quotations" for the text of *War and Peace*.

    A "quotation" must be *quotable*. It must be worth remembering apart from its context. It must be understandable in a few words and so is expected to be compressed and lapidary. Usually, it must be possible for someone to know it, or almost know it, by heart.

3. We may regard aphorisms, maxims, witticisms, and other short forms as particular genres of "quotation," and "quotation" as the general term for memorable short expressions. In much the same way, we use the terms "novel" and "romance" to distinguish specific types of "literature," and "literature" as a subset of all writing.

    As "quotation" *can* also mean anything quoted, so "literature" can be used to mean all writing; each term is a homonym.

4. Memorable short expressions – quotations – are often best known in their anthologized form, not as they appear in the original source. Indeed, sometimes there is no original source: Bartlett (1980) lists such quotations as "attributed."

Under "Louis XIV" we find: "'I almost had to wait.' Attributed remark when a coach he had ordered arrived just in time."

5. Cited expressions *become* quotations, they are not automatically so. Becoming a quotation is a change in status: and when a set of words achieves that status, we typically remember it in its quoted form, which takes on a life of its own. The quoted version, as it appears in anthologies or used in speeches, may differ slightly from any documentable source, and yet be no less authoritative. Indeed, if we are interested in the words *as* a quotation, the anthology may be more authoritative.

    The source then becomes something like the notebooks to a novel, interesting but not the finished thing. And that is odd because, after all, we attribute the words to a given speaker, as if he had said exactly those words.

    As a set of words becomes a quotation, it is typically polished and made more "quotable."

6. In their once popular book, *They Never Said It*, Paul Boller and John George list quotations (or, as they would have it, misquotations) that differ from the "real" source. Winston Churchill is usually quoted as having said: "I have nothing to offer but blood, sweat, and tears," but in his address to the House of Commons on May 13, 1940, he really said: "I have nothing to offer but blood and toil, sweat and tears." Boller and George comment:

    > He [Churchill] liked the words so much, in fact, that he used them again on several crucial occasions during the war. But the public soon revised the Churchillian phrase, partly because the words, "toil" and "sweat" seemed redundant and partly because the word order sounded a bit awkward. Before long, Churchill was being quoted as having said, "blood, sweat, and tears," and the words became famous throughout the world. Today, anyone quoting the original statement would be charged with garbling the quote. (Boller and George 1989: 13)

    What Boller and George describe is the process of becoming a quotation: the "public" remakes the words while still attributing them to Churchill, and so he comes to have "said" something more quotable. Once the phrase became a quotation, "famous throughout the world," it is the phrase from the original speech that sounds mistaken. The anthologized and repeated version has become authoritative – not in the sense that Churchill said it (in that sense the speech is still authoritative) but in the sense that the revised form is *the quotation*.

    The possibility of such double authority testifies to the double meaning of the word and to the process that turns a quotation into a "quotation."

7. And what if, in one of his later speeches, Churchill had at last said "blood, sweat, and tears"? He would then not be repeating himself but quoting the quotation attributed to "Churchill."

8. The anthology in part makes the quotation, but it never claims to, or the quotation would not be a quotation (the words of another).

9. Boller and George react with high dudgeon to all such "miscitings," however minor, and see in them the mark of ill intent. But the changes that turn words into a quotation require no ill intent; indeed, they require no intent at all. No one in the public meant to harm, or even deliberately to revise, Churchill's speech. Rather, the process of citing creates a quotable version. Intent and care would be needed to avoid such quotability, not to achieve it.

10. We may construct a continuum of relations between the source and the quotation. The two may be verbally identical, as is often the case; or the cited version may round out the original (as in the example from Churchill); or the words may have no recoverable source (as with Louis XIV); or they may be entirely apocryphal, yet always quoted *as* the words of so-and-so.

11. The "accurate" quotation is a limiting case.

12. "Famous last words" tend to the apocryphal. They are, for obvious reasons, always of more or less questionable verifiability. Yet they live as a genre of their own. Does it really matter whether Lord Palmerston's last words were "Die! That's the last thing I shall do!"; or Oscar Wilde's, "Either this wallpaper goes, or I do"? Yes, for the biographer, but no, if we are interested in the quotation.[1]

13. "All happy families are alike, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." This constantly cited line from *Anna Karenina*, having achieved the status of a quotation, lives a life far beyond the book. It has come to acquire meanings different from those in the novel.

    As it becomes a quotation, a cited line must, so to speak, learn to stand on its own, without the support of context.

    If the source of a quotation is very well known, then the cited words may live two lives. It may be known both as a quotation (pious intonations of "to thine own self be true") and in the very different sense the same words have in the context of the play. The right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

II Genres

1. Anthologizers of short expressions need some principle for presenting them: no one offers a 300-page undifferentiated list.

    The most common methods of presentation are by author (Bartlett 1980) or topic (*The Penguin Dictionary of Quotations*). The frequently used term "dictionary" indicates that the authors or topics are given in alphabetical order: the entire collection is acknowledged to be arbitrary.[2]

2. Genre is rarely if ever used as the principle of presentation: so that witticisms are separated from aphorisms, maxims, and proverbs. Collectors of "aphorisms" (a term often used to refer to quotations in the broad sense) do not exclude expressions on the ground that they are really maxims, not aphorisms: the

anthologizer typically adopts as capacious a definition as possible so as to include any desired quotation.

3. If we are to understand short expressions in relation to each other, and see how their different kinds of rhetoric work, we must differentiate them. We must identify their genre. Then we may guess how to read them, how they develop the rhetoric of earlier utterances of the same type, and how, beyond what they explicitly say, they instantiate a particular kind of wisdom.

4. Mikhail Bakhtin classified genres according to their view of experience. Each genre manifests a "form-shaping ideology." That is, it expresses a philosophical position, or rather a sense of experience that is beyond paraphrase but seems to invite certain philosophical positions. Seeking expression, the form-shaping ideology develops suitable forms as ways of crystallizing its energy. These crystallizations are available for later use, as model or source. Each work, so to speak, implicitly remembers its genre.

   Thus the terms "novel," "adventure story," or "romance" in Bakhtin's classification each refer to a specific way of looking at human action, initiative, and selfhood. Each narrative genre sees human beings differently, and so each implies a different morality. That morality may never be explicitly stated, but is given in the very way the narrative allows events to happen.[3]

5. Genres may enter into dialogue. The wisdom so painfully achieved in a realist novel may be a sort of folly to be overcome in a utopia, and vice versa.

   A culture's or period's genres taken together constitute its collective wisdom. The birth of new genres reflects the discovery of new ways of seeing and understanding.

6. The advantage of this classification is that it allows us to study ideas and their interaction more readily. The witticism voices a sense of life fundamentally different from that of the dictum or aphorism, which is why the rhetoric of each is also different.

7. Of course, it would be possible to pick a different principle of classification: any system of genres is to be judged by how well it fulfills its purposes, and purposes may differ.

8. Classification is often uncertain. Sometimes a work, whether long or short, may be read in more than one way, because it may be classed in more than one genre, each with its characteristic tone, meanings, and implicit rules of interpretation.

   I have elsewhere referred to "boundary works" – those that, for one reason or another, have been seen as belonging to contradictory genres, whether by authorial design (Thomas More's *Utopia*) or by the vicissitudes of literary history (see Morson 1981).

   How one reads the work depends on the genre in which one chooses to class it.

   Disputes about meanings are sometimes concealed disputes about genre.

9. Genre is not unambiguously present in the work itself. To be sure, some works include specific enough generic signals, although over time those signals may

become obscure: Bakhtin shrewdly observes that many works of antiquity may have been written as parodies of what we take them to be. Other works seem to be genuinely ambiguous in terms of genre. And some, over time, may switch genres more than once.

10. Short works are more likely to be generically ambiguous than long ones, for there is much less opportunity to signal a genre.

    Thus anthologies sometimes suggest genre (how we are to take the expression) by a brief phrase preceding or following it.

11. Instead of saying that a given short expression is an aphorism or a maxim, one often wants to say: if one reads it as an aphorism, its rhetoric and meaning is one thing and if one takes it as a maxim, they are something else.

12. Sometimes generic ambiguity generates contradiction and sometimes merely compatible differences. We may want to say: you completely misread that expression if you take it as a dictum, because it is really an aphorism. But one may also want to say that choice of genre has led to nothing more than a different emphasis or focus.

    Take it as a maxim, and it is meant to guide our behavior; as an aphorism, and it invites reflection on the very basis of behavior. (Precisely this alternative is typically present with La Rochefoucauld.)

13. Because short forms each express a view of experience, they may be expanded into longer forms. Some longer works are all witticism, like *The Importance of Being Earnest*; such works may even seem to exist to feature as many witticisms as possible and allow each to build on the others. Other works seem to be an aphorism turned into a narrative, like Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*.

    It sometimes helps in understanding a long work to identify the short form that it develops.

    Long works indebted to a short genre typically feature many examples not only of the genre itself but also of its rivals, that is, the short genres felt to express the contrary view of experience. The work may, in effect, stage a debate (as happens in *Rasselas*).

14. Intergeneric dialogues may help us understand short forms no less than long forms. As we understand novels better by seeing how they parody romances, so we may understand aphorisms by seeing how they react to witticisms.

    The author of a novel may seek to discredit a particular character or view of experience by associating it with a despised short form. Dickens' characters with no heart may speak in dicta.

15. I focus below on the relation of the aphorism to the dictum, but consider briefly its relation to the witticism.

    The witticism expresses the adequacy of mind to all situations. Mind overcomes and fixes the contingencies of the moment. No matter how surprising or perplexing the world may be, the wit can turn it into an occasion for cleverness and the display of superior mental powers.

That is why so many witticisms require narrating the occasion in which they were uttered, as aphorisms and dicta do not. So we may hear: "When Mark Twain in his travels abroad learned of rumors that he had died . . . " or: "After offering a challenge that he could talk on any subject, Oscar Wilde . . . "

If one must come up with a clever answer on the spot – as in the rapid-fire exchange of insults – the display of wit may be all the greater. Thus stories about some wits (Dorothy Parker) may feature a duel of witticisms.

Witticisms feature a mind that is wholly *present* to a situation. The wit reacts with amazing agility to the situation's evolving complexity. Witticisms are therefore much less effective when they seem to have been prepared in advance and when the speaker seems to be looking for an occasion to utter them.

A witticism can be discredited by showing (as is sometimes the case) that it could be generated by formula; for then it would not display presence of mind meeting an unforeseen situation.

16. By contrast, the aphorism presupposes the *in*adequacy of reason or mind to the most important questions. It is fundamentally at odds with the witticism's faith in mind and its interest in the particular situation, rather than ultimate issues.

When a novel expresses an aphoristic consciousness, a hero may achieve wisdom by learning the shallowness of wit. In *War and Peace*, Prince Andrei at last discovers that the wit Speransky, whom he has long admired, has nothing more to offer than cleverness: his mots, once so impressive as a display of mind, now seem like recitations from a joke book. Andrei realizes that it has obviously never occurred to Speransky, as it did so easily to Prince Andrei, that everything he thought might be utter nonsense. That suspicion of one's deepest convictions is characteristic of the aphorism.

Andrei instead comes to learn the elusive wisdom of Kutuzov, who recognizes the limits of intelligence and understands that the greatest wisdom may be hinted at but not expressed. On his deathbed, Andrei speaks in aphorisms that reflect the wisdom of the book, its aphoristic consciousness.

17. *War and Peace* is the longest aphorism in the world.

III Riddles

1. Let us consider a model aphorism:

> The Lord whose oracle is at Delphi neither speaks nor conceals, but gives a sign.
> (Heraclitus, in Cohen, Curd, and Reeve 1995: 28)

Apollo, the Lord at Delphi, answers a question with a mystery. The sign given by the god is, like Heraclitus' aphorism, anything but transparent. In its very brevity it is capable of multiple interpretations. And each of these interpretations beckons further: each seems to invite another, and so the sign is a door to

an endless maze. Truth is not revealed, because no step is final and no interpretation exhaustive. Anyone who thinks that meaning is clear, that one can simply guess the meaning the way one may solve a puzzle, is proven wrong. Think of all the Greek stories about a thinker whose pride leads him to conclude he has solved the mystery. Then the god's sign turns out to be not a puzzle but a trap.

The god neither affirms nor denies (as other versions give the line). Rather, he points. But he points not to a goal, but to a horizon that continually recedes as we approach it.

The impossibility of full enlightenment may lead to a feeling of despair, as if we were in the position of Sisyphus; or it may lead to the numinous sense of mysteries without end. Then we feel: even though we do not reach the goal, the quest is not futile because at each step we acquire greater wisdom.

2.   The world does not give itself away. In aphoristic consciousness, searching for knowledge is like consulting the oracle: each mystery begets another.

Heraclitus: "nature loves to hide" (Cohen, Curd, and Reeve 1995: 28).

3.   *Oedipus the King*. The riddle differs from the aphorism because the riddle has an answer. The answer to a riddle solves it, but the interpretation of an aphorism deepens its mystery. The world of the riddler is a different world from that of the aphorist, for the riddler lives outside of mystery.

Oedipus defeats the Sphinx by solving the riddle that perplexed all others and whose answer is man. He is a man of action guided by reason and, as the king, he can put his plans into effect. "You are a man of experience, the kind whose plans result in effective action" (Sophocles 1973: 357).

Oedipus and Jocasta express contempt for the sense of mystery. Jocasta explains that the prophecy that Laius' son would kill him proved false, and she concludes "There is no human being born that is endowed with prophetic power" (Sophocles 1973: 370). The vagueness of mysterious sayings counts against them: "If God seeks or needs anything, he will make it clear to us himself" (Sophocles 1973: 370).

One sense of the world is: When the gods speak, they speak clearly, and the world is accessible to reason. Oedipus takes pride that mind and will, his great possessions, are adequate to the world: "I came, know-nothing Oedipus, I stopped the Sphinx, I answered the riddle with my own intelligence – the birds had nothing to teach me" (Sophocles 1973: 364).

Tieresias expresses the opposite sense of the world, that reason cannot reach the fundamental mysteries. We are blind to them, and so blindness (of Tieresias, the man with real insight) and self-blinding (when Oedipus discovers what reason alone has not allowed him to see) become central images of the play. Oedipus observes, Tieresias divines.

It is not just what Tieresias says that irritates Oedipus, but also how he says it: obscurities and vague sayings do not help someone prepared to plan and act.

Tieresias: This present day will give you birth and death.
Oedipus: Everything you say is the same – riddles, obscurities.

> *Tieresias:*   Aren't you the best man alive at guessing riddles?
> *Oedipus:*   Insult me, go on – but that you will find is what makes me great.
> (Sophocles 1973: 365)

The irony is that in solving the riddle of who killed Laius Oedipus will reveal that the world is governed not by reason but by unfathomable mysteries, which defy the human sense of purpose and justice. So the chorus concludes with a version of an ancient aphorism: "Therefore we must call no man happy while he waits to see his last day, not until he has passed the border of life and death without suffering pain."

Two paradoxes govern the play: reason reasons its way to truths beyond the grasp of reason. And action for a purpose defeats the purpose.

The chorus's final words point to a world of mystery we can never fully probe. The play reveals, but does not explain it. Beyond what we can govern and fathom lies the unfathomable and governable, so that even Oedipus, the king and reasoner, is trapped by mysteries beyond human ken. And if that is true for him, then we can call no man happy while he is still alive.

The play culminates in an aphorism because it is about the difference between aphorism and riddle.

4. If life were a riddle, everything could be solved.

    But it is not. It is a mystery.

IV Dicta

1. The aphorism is, in most respects, the opposite of the dictum. Representative dicta:[4]

> (a) Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off their subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and law. Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light. (Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislatio*n, opening paragraph)

> (b) The greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation. (Bentham)

> (c) The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. (Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto)

(d) It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary it is their social existence which determines their consciousness. (Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*)

(e) Even though there may be a deceiver of some sort, very powerful and very tricky, who bends all his efforts to keep me perpetually deceived, there can be no slightest doubt that I exist, since he deceives me; and let him deceive me as much as he will, he can never make me nothing as long as I think that I am thinking. Thus, after having thought well on this matter, and after examining all things with care, I must finally conclude and maintain that this proposition: I am, I exist, is necessarily true every time I pronounce it or conceive it in my mind. (Descartes, *Meditations*, 82)

(f) Finally, as the same precepts which we have when awake may come to us when asleep without their being true, I decided to suppose that nothing that had ever entered my mind was more real than the illusions of my dreams. But I soon noticed that while I thus wished to think everything false, it was necessarily true that I who thought so was something. Since this truth, I think, therefore I am, was so firm and assured that all the most extravagant suppositions of the skeptics were unable to shake it, I judged that I could safely accept it as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking. (Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Part IV)

(g) As the individual concept of each person includes once for all everything which can ever happen to him, in it can be seen, *a priori*, the evidences or the reasons for the reality of each event, and why one happened sooner rather than later. (Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, proposition XIII)

(h) God does nothing which is not orderly, and it is not even possible to conceive of events which are not regular. (Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, proposition VI)

2.   Dicta claim to have solved a problem that aphorisms would treat as unsolvable.
       Dicta see no mystery. They resemble the solution to a riddle – a riddle of immense importance that has perplexed humanity but is now at last solved. The dictum announces the discovery and specifies its nature.
       The mystery is at last over: this is the sense of the dictum.
       Men have always searched for the principles of human behavior, and have offered explanations of immense complexity and mind-numbing vagueness, but the answer is disarmingly simple (a).
       We have looked since the time of the ancients for the way to organize society, and here it is (b).
       The fundamental law of history has hitherto escaped all investigation, but it can now be succinctly stated. So can the origins of human ideas (c and d).
       Men have striven to base human knowledge on an absolutely firm principle, one that can withstand all critical assault, but they have been unable to do so until the present (e and f).
       Endless confusion has beset investigations of the world, but the essentially rational principles that govern it may be succinctly stated (g and h).

3. The rhetoric of the dicta tends to *totality*. Bentham assures us in his opening paragraph that pleasure and pain "govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think." This principle explains *everything* about us. For Marx and Engels, class struggle explains all societies at all times. Dicta insist that they are all-embracing, that no significant problems remain unsolved or, at least, unsolvable.

4. Dicta close all loopholes. (Aphorisms cultivate loopholes.)

5. Dicta tolerate no exceptions. Leibniz insisted that there could be no case where the principle of sufficient reason does not apply, and therefore thought that fundamental problems in physics as well as in metaphysics could be solved by it. That is how he arrived at the notions that space cannot be absolute, as Newton described it (a view we now accept) and that, in spite of Pascal's and Torricelli's experiments, vacuums could not exist.

    Unable to prove the stability of the solar system, Newton hypothesized that God occasionally intervened to set things right. For Leibniz, this view had to be wrong precisely because it allowed for exceptions to absolute regularity. Was God an inferior watchmaker who could not make the world right the first time?

    Rules of thumb (like Clausewitz's recommendations for battle), general precepts (like Aristotle's on ethics or rhetoric), and loose regulating principles (as Darwin describes natural selection) all admit of exceptions. One cannot use them, as Leibniz does in the case of the vacuum, to know in advance, regardless of evidence, what must be the case. But dicta resemble mathematical theorems: if one were to say "by and large" the angles of a triangle equal a straight angle, one would demonstrate only that one does not understand what a mathematical theorem is. There can be no exception to Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason or Bentham's principle of utility.

    We are a world away from the rhetoric of Aristotle, with his constant qualification: "on the whole and for the most part."

6. Dicta are certain. As their explanatory force extends to all cases, so the confidence to be reposed in them is unlimited. There can be no legitimate opposition: "Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light."

7. A rhetorical move often used in dicta: they are not only certain, but literally indubitable. Any attempt to refute them necessarily confirms them; to doubt them is to prove them. For Leibniz, not only are all events regular, but also "it is not even possible to conceive of events which are not regular." If you try to conceive of an irregular event, you will certainly fail and at last see why you *had* to fail. Bentham maintains not only that pleasure and pain account for all behavior, but also that "every effort we can make to throw off their subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it." Descartes bases his certainty on the fact that even doubting one's existence demonstrates it.

    One *cannot* doubt. Genuine counter-examples cannot even be coherently raised. (Of course, this argument may invite the charge of tautology.)

8. Dicta aspire to absolute clarity. They eschew metaphor, which is, if present, restricted to mere illustration and kept under rather strict control (Bentham's image of the throne). One would entirely misread Marx and Engels to ask whether by "class struggle" they perhaps mean, let us say, generational conflict or division within the self or…The dictum means what it says.

    Implicit in the genre is the demand for an ideal language that, like mathematics, eliminates ambiguity.

9. Dicta typically present their truths as axiomatic, as the certain starting point for future investigation. Begin here, and all will follow. Bentham offers the "foundation" for morals and legislation, Leibniz a basic principle for understanding the universe (sufficient reason).

10. Often, the dictum provides the basis for the best possible action, to "rear the fabric of felicity." The dictum is implicitly and often utopian, and utopian tracts and fiction incline to dicta.

    Dicta proclaim knowledge and demand power. They belong to rulers or those who would rule.

    A dictum *demands* we attend to it.

11. In contrast to the aphorism, which tends to curl back on itself, dicta avoid self-reference of the sort that might generate paradox and doubt. One is not invited to ask whether the inclination to believe Bentham derives not from the evidence but from the pleasure of believing, or whether Marx's own social existence has generated his putative laws. The aphorism ever invites this turn, but the dictum regards it as trivial or has not even dreamed of it.

    The Cretan liar paradox and its relatives are foreign to the dictum, but common in the aphorism.

12. A special speech source lies behind the dictum. Though a specific person announces it, it does not speak his truth, but the Truth. No irony is cast upon it by its discovery at a particular moment of time: it is no mere expression of seventeenth-century or Victorian sensibility.

    The dictum is insulated from personality and from history.

    Therefore dicta often cultivate the language of mathematical or logical proof (Descartes, Leibniz). Or they may present themselves as a science: the sort of assertion Elie Halévy (1955: 6) called "moral Newtonianism" (Bentham, Marx). Or they may claim Revelation from beyond: the word of God. In the frequent comparison of Marx to a Hebrew prophet we sense that his rhetoric, if not his argument, seems to claim a source beyond the merely human.

13. No matter how sweeping a discovery, nor how far-reaching its implications, the discoverer need not use the language of dicta. Darwin, for instance, assiduously avoids it. In *The Origin of Species*, the key ideas typically occur only after countless examples, qualifications, and possible objections; they are allowed to follow from the preponderance of available evidence but not from any absolute principle.

Darwin writes in what might be called *reluctant utterances*. He has waited twenty-two years to publish this work, while always seeking more evidence that might challenge or refine his conclusions.

Even when general principles are offered, they are phrased in this hesitant way, which makes it very difficult to draw brief, quotable lines from the *Origin*. Generalities are typically embedded, not foregrounded. Nothing could be further from the tone of the Communist Manifesto.

Darwin's language is not that of the prophet, but of the patient and plodding physician, arriving at last at a plausible diagnosis, which is always subject to revision. Darwin avoids the language of the sudden, blinding discovery, even though, from our perspective, no book could be more justified in using it.

Darwin presents his conclusion as the result of a slow *evolution*. Knowledge has been achieved the way species have evolved – by small and slow steps, to compromise solutions that are anything but perfect. Nature, and Darwin, take no leaps. From the book's opening paragraph to its closing one, *the origin of conclusions imitates the origin of species*.

Unlike the truth of a dictum, neither the animals we know nor the conclusions we have just read are fixed. The process is not over; there is no final truth; and knowledge, like the world it describes, must ever be tentative.

14. Insofar as it is possible to extract quotable lines from Darwin's reluctant utterances, they mark their provisionality. We may call these *hypotheses*, to emphasize their purely tentative and reluctant character.

Hypotheses, just because they are so reluctant, and so typically embedded in qualifying context, appear in anthologies more rarely than dicta. They seem to require their context. Their brevity, when at last it has become necessary to formulate a concise principle, seems to run counter to their very nature.

V Aphorisms

1. To the aphorisms already cited, add the following:[5]

> (a)
> The way that can be spoken of
> Is not the constant way.
> The name that can be named
> Is not the constant name . . .
> Mystery upon mystery
> The gateway of the manifold secrets.
> (Lao Tzu, I)
>
> (b)
> What cannot be seen is called evanescent;
> What cannot be heard is called rarefied;

> What cannot be touched is called minute.
> These three cannot be fathomed . . .
> Dimly visible, it cannot be named
> And returns to that which is without substance.
> This is called the shape that has no shape.
> The image that is without substance.
> This is called indistinct and shadowy.
> (Lao Tzu, XIV)

(c) Is it possible to perceive as a shape what has no shape? (Ippolit Terentiev, in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*)

(d) *How* things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself *in* the world. (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 6.432)

(e) There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical. (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 6.522)

(f) The heart has its reasons, which reason knows nothing of. (Pascal, *Pensées*)

(g) To ridicule philosophy is to philosophize truly. (Pascal, *Pensées*)

(h) Self-love is cleverer than the cleverest man in the world. (La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*)

2. Despite their variety in tone, form, and language, these aphorisms all share a sense that what it is most valuable to grasp lies beyond our reach. The essence of things, the way to live, the true philosophy, and our deepest self all lie occluded, beyond a barrier, which we can see only dimly beyond. Whatever we do see only invites further probing.

    Mystery upon mystery, the gateway of the manifold secrets: language, reason, the mind, and introspection all fail, though not utterly. There is no sure method.

    Each tool we use to explore also partly deforms what it would touch, so we must try many and see what results. A sort of uncertainty principle reigns. Language points beyond itself, but we are never quite free of its entanglements.

    The aphorism senses the world as dim, though not absolutely opaque. The way to the truth is translucent.

    We grope endlessly through obscurities.

3. One does not speak an aphorism, one voices it. It seems to come partly from outside oneself. The dark god of light speaks through us as he speaks through the Delphic oracle. In many cases, the speaker, like the Pythoness, does not quite seem to grasp the significance of what he says.

    The wisdom appears to someone who senses it as exceeding his understanding and perhaps as doing him no good. Oedipus assumes that wisdom can be used: this is why he is a man of action. But the deepest truths are too mysterious to act

upon. Tieresias' aphorism: "Wisdom is a dreadful thing when it brings no profit to its possessor. I knew this well, but forgot" (Sophocles 1973: 362).

An aphorism is not so much proclaimed, as posed. Oedipus learns: the wisdom was there, but it hid itself. It is now partly visible, but ultimately still obscure.

4. In the dictum, by contrast, everything is present in the statement itself. The dictum is complete and contains no obscurity. We can apply it, take it as the key to many things: but we do not go beyond it.

    The dictum is a conclusion, the aphorism a beginning.

5. An aphorism's source sometimes seems to partake of mystery. We know almost nothing of Lao Tzu (Old Master, a name that is not his true name), who is shrouded in mystery. Pascal's thoughts are traditionally the product of his "night of fire," in which he was seized by a truth beyond himself. Wittgenstein intimates that his basic ideas have come to him outside of rational discourse, so that they cannot be communicated except to someone who has experienced the same truths. The *Tractatus* begins: "Perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has himself had the thoughts that are expressed in it."

6. Not everyone can grasp the aphorism, and it is not intended for everyone. The audience of the dictum is universal, of the aphorism highly limited.

7. We sense it to be fitting that aphorisms often come as fragments. The full intelligence is not there, only hinted at.

    Pascal left us only jottings, which have been assembled in several different ways by others. It is hard to find two editions of the *Pensées* that adopt the same ordering, and so the thoughts seem to shed different light on each other. Lao Tzu's "poems" are not wholes: their division into eighty-one parts (a mystical Chinese number) seems a later editorial decision, and even the succession of lines in a poem sometimes reflects a stringing together of assertions on a given theme, not a progression within a single thought. If Heraclitus wrote a complete work, which has survived only in fragments, the fragmentary quality of his sayings seems essential to them. They gesture beyond themselves, and seem to include the white space that follows them.

8. We also sense it to be fitting that collections of aphorisms are often made by others. Pascal did not assemble the *Pensées*, nor Heraclitus his fragments, nor Lao Tzu the *Tao Te Ching*. It is as if the author were constantly engaged in interminable probing, or lost in the mystery, and so could not return for a complete statement, which therefore had to be assembled, with no great authority, by others.

9. Rhetoric

    The dictum is spoken by a clear God in the language of science, mathematics, or Revelation.

    The aphorism is spoken by a dark God in the incomplete language of mystery.

    The hypothesis is spoken by a fallible human in the tentative language of intelligent guesswork.

10. Because it is about what cannot be known, the rhetoric of the aphorism is often negative: the way that can be spoken of is not the true way; "pure and perfect sorrow is as impossible as pure and perfect joy" (Tolstoy 1968: 1286).

11. In Lao Tzu, the ultimate principle lies beyond words, beyond mind, beyond the world. It precedes the division into Something and Nothing, and so neither language nor silence is adequate to express it. All attempts to name it must fail because it comes before the world that gave birth to all names.

     The *Tao Te Ching* demonstrates a constant attempt to name what cannot be named. Any name we give the Way is not the true name. Yet knowledge of the Way is infinitely valuable. The entire book therefore offers a myriad inadequate names: the Way is the uncarved block, the valley, the shapeless; it is the evanescent and the rarefied, the minute and the broad, the female and the baby; it acts out of emptiness, like a bellows, but produces all things. Each name reveals something though none is correct. And so the author tries out opposites, and the first chapter, like some later ones, proceeds by juxtaposing antithetical formulations. A. C. Graham explains: "The approach of *Lao Tzu* is to lay out couplets which, juxtaposed as parallel, imply both that there is and that there is not a constant Way with a constant name, and then try out the two alternatives in turn. Call the Way nameless, and it is put back to the time before there were things distinguished by names; name it, and it becomes itself a thing out of which all others have grown" (Graham 1989: 220).

     The way to the Way is a constant trying out. The sage is "Tentative, as if fording a river in winter / Hesitant as if in fear of his neighbors" (poem XV). Remarkably enough, the book is composed of assertions following different or contradictory assertions, each one, despite its definitive tone, succeeded by another. The Way becomes clearer in its very indistinctness, but each characterization is used up as soon as offered.

     This language could not be further from that of the dictum, with its confident assertion that its words precisely describe what is most important and its principled avoidance of metaphor.

     The Way is seen through paradoxes. "Hence the greatest cutting / Does not sever" (poem XXVIII). Cutting cannot sever, nor distinction characterize, the Way, because it is completely undifferentiated. Any attempt to know it must, in giving it specific characteristics, distort it.

12. A trope that recurs in aphorisms: the methods we use to find what we most want prevent us from seeing it. Let us call this the *paradox of method*. In La Rochefoucauld, self prevents self-knowledge; and for all the strategy we may use to outwit the deceiver, the deceiver is one step ahead: "Self-love is cleverer than the cleverest man in the world."

     In Lao Tzu, in Dostoevsky, and in other aphorists there is something about the very fact that we are *in* the world that makes it impossible to understand truths beyond it; and our existence in time prevents us from grasping the world where "there is time no longer."

Or: our picturing mechanism cannot work in describing the most important things, which are pictureless, since they are what makes the picturable possible.

We ascribe a fixed essence to what is essentially fluid or we paint a picture to fit what has no image. Can anything that is specified be adequate to pure potential, can there be an image of imagelessness?

> Dimly visible, it cannot be named
> And returns to that which is without substance.
> This is called the shape that has no shape,
> The image that is without substance. (Poem XIV)

"Can anything that has no shape appear as a shape?" (example *c*).

13. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* concludes with a famous sequence of aphorisms. Propositions yield to aphorisms as Wittgenstein turns to problems of value and "the meaning of life" – all that is most important – and contends that these lie beyond the reach of any propositions. For propositions describe what is in the world, a factual state of affairs, but value lies outside the world:

> 6.41 The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen: *in* it no value exists – and if it did, it would have no value.
> If there is any value that does have value, it must lie outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case. For all that happens and is the case is accidental.
> What makes it non-accidental cannot lie *within* the world, since if it did it would itself be accidental.
> It must lie outside the world.

Like the beautiful, the good lies outside what can be said:

> 6.42 So too it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics.
> Propositions can express nothing that is higher.

We sense immediately why Wittgenstein chooses the aphorism to gesture to the transcendental and all that is "higher." There can be no propositions of ethics, but there can be aphorisms, which neither affirm not conceal, but give a sign.

14. Karl Kraus, whose aphorisms Wittgenstein admired, observed: "An aphorism never coincides with the truth: it is either a half-truth or one-and-a-half truths" (Kraus 1990: 67). We can imagine Wittgenstein considering his concluding aphorisms as half-truths because they seem to say what cannot be said and one-and-a-half truths because they gesture to all that is most valuable. They point to "the mystical."

> 6.5 When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words.

> The *riddle* does not exist.
> If a question can be framed at all, it is also *possible* to answer it.

Riddles are questions with an answer. But the ethical and aesthetic, the realm of value, are not riddles. They are not even questions. The aphoristic truth is that, though they exist, they cannot be arrived at by a chain of reasons. But they may be glimpsed, or rather they may show themselves.

> 6.522 There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical.

15.   The best-known lines of the *Tractatus* are its last two aphorisms, which reflect on its own method. What these lines say may be taken to apply to the aphorism as a genre.

> 6.54 My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them – as steps – to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
>   He must transcend these propositions and then he will see the world aright.
>   7. What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.

The aphorism is suffused with the sense that it is at bottom nonsense because it is trying to go further than one can go. Part of the aphoristic sense of the world is a feeling that one's firmest beliefs might be utter nonsense (Prince Andrei).

The aphorism senses its senselessness. The aphorism cannot be *read* like a dictum: what it wants to show is not in it, but beyond it. It gives a sign. We see that it is not in the sign itself that meaning lies, though we need the sign to intimate meanings. Signs are used up, transcended, climbed up like a ladder we must then throw away.

When we reach an understanding, it is one that cannot be put into words even if words have been part of the process by which we reach it. We sense it as a different kind of silence.

16.   Section 7 of the *Tractatus* is only one sentence long. But though it appears to be the shortest section, it also intimates that it is, in another sense, the longest, because we understand that not it, but the silence following it, is the ending; and that silence does not cease.

17.   The dictum must be complete or it is nothing.
      The aphorism is never over.

Notes

1   See Green (1997) for a comprehensive collection of supposed "famous last words."
2   *The Macmillan Dictionary of Quotations* combines topics and authors in alphabetical order; Bartlett (1980) reduces arbitrariness by listing authors not in alphabetical but in chronological order and so allowing for the tracing of allusions.

3   For a summary of Bakhtin's many and diverse comments on genre, see Morson and Emerson (1990: 271–305).

4   These dicta come from the following sources: (a) from Bentham 1996: 1; (e) from Descartes 1960: 92 ("Meditations"); (f) from Descartes 1960: 24 ("Discourse on Method"); (g) from Leibniz 1989: 19; (h) from Leibniz 1989: 10; the remainder from the entries under the authors in Bartlett 1980.

5   These aphorisms come from the following sources: (a) and (b) from Lao Tzu 1963 (poems I and XIV); (c) from Dostoevsky 1962: 389 (amended for accuracy); (d) and (e) from Wittgenstein 1961 (sections 6.432 and 6.522); (h) from La Rochefoucauld 1959: 33; and the remainder from Bartlett 1980.

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17

Argumentation

What Jokes Can Tell Us About Arguments

Thomas Conley

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I want to let my readers know right at the outset that the editors of this volume did not pay me for my contribution to it. When I've finished with my remarks, everyone will see that they got their money's worth. Jokes and arguments? I've got to be kidding, right? On the contrary, I'm quite serious, and I will try to point out several respects in which attending to what jokes have to tell us – or maybe better, remind us – about arguments can enrich our understanding of the invention, analysis, and judgment of arguments. I have been complaining for some years that even so-called rhetoricians seem more interested in detecting fallacies than in invention, and so I will spend a little more time on invention than on analysis and judgment.[1]

That preoccupation with fallacies – that is, with judgment – comes out very clearly in the most common responses I have seen to the work of Chaim Perelman. Perelman teaches us that, unlike demonstration (proof), arguments cannot be reduced to or understood as closed systems. The starting points and arguments invented by a speaker, their amplitude and arrangement, cannot be determined *a priori*, for such determinations are necessarily made in terms of situation and audience (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1959: 17–19; 1969: 13ff.). But Perelman's critics and self-proclaimed disciples alike persist in trying to translate his insights into topical invention into terms of logic, maybe even in trying to enlist him to the ranks of informal logicians by "Toulminizing" him – transforming Perelman's "loci" into something like Toulmin's "inference warrants" (Toulmin 1958) – which was something Perelman complained about in the last paper he published in the United States, where he goes so far as to say that logic has no place whatsoever in argumentation.[2] By doing this, opponents and proponents alike fail to do justice to the richness of Perelman's notion of argumentation and fail to do justice to the complexities of arguments themselves.

When I was in the early stages of putting this chapter together, I wondered whether I could develop a converse theme: what argumentation can tell us about jokes. Whatever that is, argumentation probably can't tell us much about, for

instance, Henny Youngman's famous "So this hooker comes up to me as I'm walking through Penn Station, and she says, 'For fifty bucks, I'll do anything.' 'So paint my house!'"; or "What happens when you feed a man lots of Rogain and Viagra? He starts to look like Don King." But that's not the real problem. The real problem is with the term "argument." If that is not understood, and if just how complicated (and resistant to formal analysis) arguments are is not appreciated, then trying to use it to illuminate jokes would not be very promising. Perhaps, if we could agree on a very broad definition – Cicero's "something probable worked up to create confidence" (*probabile inventum ad faciendam fidem*) would do – we might be able to make some headway in an exploration of what arguments can teach us about jokes.[3]

But I am saying here that in some peculiar and significant ways, arguments are like jokes and that the comparison can shed some light on how arguments work. To begin with, one has to be very careful about appropriateness as regards subject matters and the audience you're telling a joke to. One has to gauge one's joke carefully to what the audience already knows and thinks and values to avoid leaving them cold – or even turning them against you. This is obvious about jokes, and is true of arguments, too, as Perelman goes to great lengths to show in Part Two of the *Traité de l'argumentation* (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1959: 87–248; 1969: 67–183). Jokes depend on deeply shared knowledge – commonplaces – both of particulars and of stereotypes, as in the following:

> A priest, a minister, and a rabbi were debating the question of when life begins.
> "At conception, of course," says the priest.
> "No, no," says the minister. "Life begins at birth. And what do you say, rabbi?"
> The rabbi replies, "When does life begin? Life begins when the kids leave home and the dog dies."

Just think of the enormous store of "pre-knowledge" involved in appreciating this joke – even, I dare say, of pretty complicated theological and scientific questions. Of course, telling this to an audience of young children might – certainly would – elicit a very different response. So composing a joke or repeating it involves the same sort of detailed inquiry into audience beliefs and values and situational constraints as argumentation does – and, I might add, as logic must not.

One needs to be careful, too, not to tell jokes that are inordinately long – don't worry, I won't give an example. Just try to remember hearing one of those long jokes that ends with a stupid pun, or one of the so-called "Shaggy Dog Stories." How does one determine what is inordinate? Look to your audience. It is just the same with arguments. How long you should go on and how many details you include and how much elaboration you should introduce is a matter of whom you are talking to, and under what circumstances. I suppose one could suggest that the importance of the subject matter might also be a consideration, as in "more important warrants more extensive treatment, less less"; but there is no such thing as *intrinsic* importance, and so we are inclined, once again, to look to the audience and situation.

Writing a joke – or even just retelling one – requires a delicate balance between the expected and the unexpected, both of them considered in terms both of conventional expectations and expectations generated by the joke itself. So in the "When does life begin?" example, it would not do to have the punch-line delivered by the minister, for it is conventionally the rabbi who gives the laugh line. And even if it is not actually conventional, remember that the joke begins, "A priest, a minister, and a rabbi . . ." (Compare, by the way: "There are three kinds of people in the world, those who understand math and those who don't.") What makes the "When does life begin?" joke particularly funny, however, is not the order of speakers. It is the shift from biology and the moral issues surrounding the first two parts to what used to be called home economics and the issue of what makes life pleasant – from the sublime, as it were, to the ridiculous; or maybe the other way around. Notice also that the joke is an excellent example of the strategy of dissociation Perelman finds so useful and interesting in argumentation – and which cannot be expressed in logical terms without becoming a capital "F" fallacy (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1959: 550–609; 1969: 411–50).

People who make arguments, especially extended arguments (not just three-sentence "syllogisms" – there are, after all, "arguments" and there are "*arguments*") will also, if they are prudent, stay within the conventional boundaries while bringing up information or details or connections their audiences hadn't made – else why bother? – and could probably not have been able to predict. In this connection, we begin to see that some jokes work like some metaphors, and I will argue later that at one level jokes, metaphors, and arguments all work the same way.

But let us return to the matter of "pre-knowledge." One way of putting it would be to propose that extended arguments – rhetorical arguments, if you will – even when they are composed and arranged around a complete, three-proposition syllogism are, like all jokes, radically enthymematic. That is, there is always a huge body of unstated information ("evidence") that provides the key to the plausibility of the argument and to the degree of audience adherence it succeeds in obtaining or intensifying. What made the "When does life begin?" joke funny is not its "conclusion" ("When the kids leave home and the dog dies") but all the lore behind it that is unstated. The same is true of, say, "What's the difference between a striker and a puppy? A puppy will eventually stop whining" or "What's the difference between St. Patrick's Day and Martin Luther King Day? On Martin Luther King Day, you don't see everyone running around wearing buttons that say 'Kiss me. I'm African-American'."[4] Likewise, what made Dale Bumpers' argument in the Clinton impeachment proceedings work – that's the speech I lifted my opening lines from, as many will probably recall – was not so much what he said as what he didn't say because he didn't have to.[5] By the same token, my "striker" joke probably went past those of you who don't know it was about soccer players and their reputations or don't know the names of any strikers, even ones who don't complain.

This is one reason why it does not do to reduce an argument to some unambiguous complete or incomplete syllogism. As a matter of fact, even an "unambiguous"

"complete" syllogism is, in an important respect, enthymematic. Boethius understood this, I think, when he saw that syllogisms depend for their probatory force on "maxims" that are left unstated; but he took that observation to the wrong conclusion.[6]

Another reason it is a mistake to imagine that one truly "gets" an argument by reducing it to some implicit core syllogism (and is justified in rejecting the argument if there is no core syllogism) is that doing so erects a false dichotomy between form and content, between manifest and latent, between surface and "deep" structure. Rewriting an argument in syllogistic form or uncovering its underlying inferential schema is equivalent to explaining a joke. And we all know what happens when you do that. The joke is no longer funny. Similarly, reducing Bumpers' speech to "The President should not be impeached – even if he did do what they say – because his actions do not rise to the level of impeachment the Founding Fathers had in mind": to do that robs it of its persuasiveness, not just its eloquence. There is nothing persuasive about that complex proposition, since it is precisely the thesis Bumpers needed to defend. It is the very proposition at issue. A proper unpacking of that speech would consist of a step-by-step exegesis, in time, along the lines of a philological commentary – i.e., a rhetorical analysis, not a "logical" analysis. That way, one might in one's analysis come close to the equivalent of the "You had to be there" we are told when we don't "get" a joke or find it particularly funny. With the analysis of arguments, too, you have to "be there."

This brings us to another point. The philosopher Ted Cohen makes an interesting observation in his book on jokes that bears on our subject (Cohen 1999). Cohen points out that telling jokes is a transaction that can "work" only when the teller and the listener share an implicit acknowledgment of a shared background, a background of awareness that teller and listener are already in possession of and bring to the joke. This implicit acknowledgment is the foundation, he says, of a kind of intimacy that develops when one's joke succeeds. This is what we mean when we say that when a joke falls flat, the teller may assume that the listener doesn't share the teller's "sense of humor." What I think Cohen is talking about here is very close to what Kenneth Burke (1969) calls "identification." Burke devotes an entire section of his book, "The Traditional Principles of Rhetoric" (pp. 49–180), to an explication of how "persuasive" discourse has at its core not division – as in speaker vs. audience – but *commune*ication, so to speak. "You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *identifying* your ways with his" (Burke 1969: 55).

Now, what about judgment? That is the critical step one takes after analysis. If I am right about the pointlessness of reducing arguments to implicit syllogisms, then it would not make much sense to judge an argument by checking the validity of the syllogism one has, in actuality, just made up. It does not make much sense to criticize an argument – or a poem, or a novel – by criticizing your rewrite of it, does it? But quite aside from that, judging an argument involves far more than checking for valid inferences or successful discovery or recovery of relevant premises. To show you what

I mean, let me tell one more joke – a joke that, by the way, can be seen as an argument – or at least as argumentative. And I think it sums up a lot of what I've been saying about invention, analysis, and judgment.

> The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit planned, finally, to take a vacation, and were sitting around trying to decide where to go. "Mesopotamia," the Father volunteered. "It's a beautiful place, there between the Tigris and Euphrates. I haven't been there since I kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden."
>
>   "No, no," said the Son. "I think we should go to Bethlehem. I was too young to appreciate it when I left, and I'd like to see what it is like. After all, it is my place of birth."
>
>   They both look to the Holy Spirit. "What do you say?" they asked in unison.
> "Rome," the Holy Spirit replies. "I've never been there."

Clearly, in order to begin to "get" this joke, you need to be familiar with the doctrine of the Trinity, in its conventional Father–Son–Holy Spirit form (which is in only one passage in scripture, Matthew 28:19) and with the stories told in Genesis and Matthew or Luke (none of which is mentioned in the telling). It also helps to know where the Tigris and Euphrates are. There may be some readers of this chapter who don't know those things, and so didn't laugh. Notice, too, the set-up at the beginning. You know this will be a three-step joke with the Holy Spirit getting the punch-line. This joke has what Kenneth Burke called rhetorical form: the arousal of expectations and their fulfillment.[7] The form and the content are inseparable, too, which you can see once you start fooling around with the order or attribution of lines: it would not make sense to have the Son being nostalgic for Mesopotamia. The joke's premise, taken out of context, is, however, far from being theologically correct, as it posits not only the three persons of the Godhead being in need of a vacation but also disagreeing with one another. The three Persons of the Trinity seem more like Homeric (or perhaps Lucianic) gods than the God referred to in the Nicene Creed. But let us consider all that just an instance of light-hearted anthropomorphism. The punch-line is another matter, however. This is not a joke that could be characterized as pro-Roman Catholic or pro-pope, as the Catholic Church has long held itself and its pope to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, the ultimate source of the Church's authority and the pope's infallibility. It is, pretty clearly, a Protestant joke.

Whether it is a good joke is a complicated matter. Do you have to agree with what the Holy Spirit says to think it funny? If you are a devout Roman Catholic, you might think it not very funny and in rather bad taste if a Protestant, knowing that you are Catholic, told you this joke. On the other hand, if one Catholic told it to another Catholic, both might laugh, but more because of the incongruities in it – especially the incongruous Holy Spirit saying he'd never been to Rome. If a Catholic told it to a Protestant, the Protestant would laugh both because of the incongruities and because he never thought the Holy Spirit had ever been in Rome. If a Protestant told it to

another Protestant, the joke would not only be funny; it would be an implicit way of rejecting the authority of the Catholic Church and, more, of the pope himself. That's what the Reformation was all about. And that, if you keep in mind the strife the Reformation brought to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, makes it a darker sort of humor altogether. In short, whether or not it is a good joke – indeed, just what the joke is – is a deeply situational matter embracing the teller, the audience, their shared beliefs and values, and the propriety of the joke: the very things that figure into deciding when an argument is a good one or not.

Let me push this a little further. Suppose we made up a counter-joke with the Father and Son saying just what they do in the version I told, but the Holy Spirit saying, "Well, I certainly hope we don't go to Rome because I've been there for almost 2,000 years." Not funny. Under any circumstances, I'd guess. Why not? Is there some "formal" reason that is independent of situations? I think that here, too, we are dealing with situation, if we bear in mind that the teller of a joke arouses expectations in the hearer based on incongruities, and then, in this version of the joke, violates them. The Father and the Son tell us where they want to go; the Holy Spirit, in this version, where he does *not* want to go and never says where he does want to go, leaving the hearer unsatisfied given the expectations aroused by the first two parts of the joke. Under those circumstances, the last line falls flat. There is no incongruity there, even if you don't believe what he says. More than that, the Holy Spirit's response invites the question, "Where then *would* you like to go?" This is not asked, however; and even if it were, it is hard to imagine what answer the Holy Spirit could give that would (1) be funny (or as funny) and (2) preserve the argumentative edge of the original joke. By removing that edge, moreover, one ruins the joke, just as, conversely, by violating the expectations of the hearer, one ruins the argument in the joke. Needless to say, it is not much of a counter-joke in any event.

So I guess there may be some quasi-formal grounds for judging a joke, after all. But notice that they are "formal" in terms of audience expectations and of how the joke is structured by the teller. These are "situational" factors, again. But there is more to it than that. We ought to recall what we said before about Burke's "identification" and Cohen's "intimacy." If the joke were told by a Protestant to a devout Catholic, we would be seeing a misplaced presumption, and so also a sort of social gaffe. The joke would probably not work because the Catholic didn't share the Protestant's "sense of humor"; and the Catholic's failure to appreciate the joke, much less laugh at it, might be perfectly valid. On the other hand, one can imagine a principle of "identification" that would enable the Catholic to transcend partisan theology and appreciate the joke for what it was intended to do (get a laugh) and for the skill that went into its composition. It is just this sort of variable "identifications" that make it possible to admire Donne's "Death be not Proud," a poem giving little consolation to one who does not believe in an afterlife but which still can be recognized for the masterpiece it is.

But enough about what jokes can teach us about arguments at this large, "formal" level of expectations and decorum. Once we see how "intimacy" and "identification"

operate at the formal and substantive level, we can see also how jokes can illuminate what Burke calls "minor forms": tropes and figures.[8] And if we can see that, we may be able to appreciate the place of style in arguments and perhaps to understand more clearly why reductive rewrites – even if they are as generously loose as Toulmin's examples of "inference warrants" in *The Uses of Argument* – are unproductive, if not downright misguided.

Let me give a few examples of figures and tropes that involve what Burke (1969: 58) has called "collective expectancy," which implies active audience participation. First,

> [Xerxes speaking] My men have become women, my women men. (Herodotus, *Histories* 8.88)

There is a chiasmus here (A–B–B'–A'), but I want to use this as an example of zeugma, dropping out a word (usually a verb) from one of two parallel clauses. Clearly, we have to fill in "have become" in the latter clause. Another is from Herodotus 1.8:

> A woman takes off her claim to respect along with her garments.

The parallelism here is not as obvious, either in the English or in the Greek; but clearly we are to understand "takes off" as going also with "garments," and we need to be able to follow the subtle shift of meaning of "takes off" here. This shift is not marked by anything else in the sentence. Also not marked or "given" is the moral disapproval expressed by the speaker (as well as, I think one could argue, Herodotus himself). That disapproval is, however, something a dedicated nudist might not share. Nevertheless, the nudist still has to "fill in" before disagreeing with the sentiment. And by the way, as exotic as "zeugma" sounds, we use it all the time. There are several examples in this chapter, in fact.

Antithesis, too, can invite "collective expectancy." Take, for example:

> This law, then, gentlemen, was not written, but born.
> [*est igitur haec, iudices, non scripta, sed nata lex*]
> (Cicero, *Pro Milone* 4.10.30f.)

There is a hint of zeugma here, but it is the particular contrast that Cicero is stressing. Notice that if we stop at "not written," we know what the law *is not* but not what it *is*. The contrast is not one of mere negation, and so Cicero has to tell us what it is, namely, "born," which is what we have had to wait to learn. The Latin sets up even more complex expectations. To what does *haec* refer? And we have to wait until the end of the sentence to find out just what is *non scripta, sed nata* – one of the stylistic possibilities in Latin that is not available to decent English. If the nature of the opposition between "written" and "born," an understanding of which we have to bring to the sentence, is not clear, Cicero goes on to amplify on it: "It is a law which

we have not learned, received from others or read, but which we have grasped, absorbed, and articulated from nature itself." So the contrast is manifold and value-laden, and we are complicit in the judgment that "natural" is superior to "artificial," "real" to "apparent," and so on. The antithesis, in short, is remarkably rich and multi-layered.[9]

I do not know whether to call my third example a figure or a trope or neither: "the negative pregnant." This is usually understood as a mode of evasion or as an instance of what the Jesuits used to call a "mental reservation." A good example comes to mind from the television series *Cheers*. One of the regular patrons of that famous pub, Norm, brings a potential client there. She says, "What a lovely place! Do you come here often?" "What do you mean by 'often'?," says Norm. "Oh, two or three times a week." "No, not that often," he assures her. Of course, what we know is that Norm spends a fair amount of time in Cheers every day of the week. So what he says is, at one level, literally true; but at the other it is a "mental reservation" – and we, the viewers, know that, and laugh.

"The negative pregnant" is close to what is perhaps the most obvious example of what I am talking about, irony. Wayne Booth has put it better than I could hope to. Irony, when perceived and appreciated,

> completes a more astonishing communal achievement than most accounts have recognized. Its complexities are, after all, shared; the whole thing cannot work unless both parties to the exchange have confidence that they are moving together in identical patterns . . . [E]ven the most simple-minded irony, when it succeeds, reveals in both participants a kind of meeting with other minds that contradicts a great deal that gets said about who we are and whether we can know each other.[10]

The same, I think, can be said about jokes; and the same should be said about arguments addressed to audiences. As Ross Perot became famous for saying, "Think about it." And think about the "complexities" behind that allusion.

I have tried, in situating "argument" in the murky intersections of verbal humor, rhetorical form, metaphor, and irony, to convey some sense of the extent to which "argument" resists formalistic reductions. While such a prismatic approach might expose me to charges of relativism – and a sound argument might be made there – I think it nevertheless reminds us of facets of argument that cannot be ignored without turning it into something it is not. Formalistic reductions render invisible the centrality of identification and the essentially "addressed" property of argument. And let us not forget that if invention and judgment must take into account situation, "intimacy," and "filling in" – which inevitably vary from one case to the next – that hardly means that *in principle* all arguments are equally valid or "good." What we are talking about here is, I would submit, real life.

I don't suppose I've suggested anything very profound here, unless it is that we should toss out the whole tradition that goes back to Aristotle's *Analytics* and that was revised by Descartes, radicalized by Russell, and inculcated into the heads of us all.

That tradition values rewrites over the original discourse, the latent over the manifest, and is one that calls for rigor and mathematical elegance above all else. There are perhaps times and places where such things are important. But people who hold those things in such high regard when it comes to inventing, analyzing, and judging arguments, in my view, just don't get it.

Excursus

Well, then, what can one do with all this? Clearly, an extended example might be in order to what jokes can teach us about arguments. In what follows, I make no claims to exhaustiveness, for that would result, as my editors and I agreed, in something of a philological monstrosity.

On August 9, 1588, Queen Elizabeth addressed the following speech to the troops gathered at Tilbury (some 30 miles or so east of London) to oppose the threatened land invasion that was to accompany the actions of the Spanish Armada at sea. Here is the speech, in its entirety:

> My loving people: we have been persuaded by some that are careful of
> our safety to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes
> for fear of treachery. But I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust
> my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear! I have always so
> behaved myself that under God I have placed my chief strength in the   5
> loyal hearts and good will of my subjects. And therefore I am come
> amongst you, as you see at this time, not for my recreation and disport;
> but being resolved in the midst of the heat of battle to live or die
> amongst you all; to lay down for my God and for my Kingdom and for
> my people my honor and my blood even in the dust.   10
> I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have
> the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think
> foul scorn that Parma or Spain or any prince of Europe should dare to
> invade the borders of my realm; to which, rather than any dishonor
> should grow by me, I myself will take up arms; I myself will be your general,
>   judge, and   15
> rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field.
> I know already, for your forwardness you have desired rewards and crowns;
>   and I do assure
> you on the word of a prince they shall be duly
> paid you.
> In the meantime, my lieutenant-general shall be in my stead, than   20
> whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject, not doubting
>   but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the
> camp, and your valor in the field, we shall shortly have a famous
> victory over these enemies of my God, of my Kingdom, and of my
> people.   25

I suppose the first question some might raise is, "Where's the *argument*? There's no "therefore" that leads to a conclusion, and no "because" to back one up. But we want to remember that arguments, as Perelman forcefully points out, are not meant just to gain adherence to a thesis but also try to increase adherence to a position already agreed to by an audience.

As to the audience, it helps to know that Elizabeth was not addressing a disciplined and professional formation of troops, but a rag-tag bunch of armed men who were either "recruited" by press gangs, "most of them [as a contemporary writer put it] either old, lame, diseased, boys, or common rogues"; or yeomen (small landholders) who were too poor to buy their way out of service. So, on the one hand, while Elizabeth could count on their dislike for foreigners – especially for foreign invaders – and on a baseline sort of loyalty, she had to do something to make those things explicit. Moreover, since her government had a bad reputation for not paying out promised allowances, she needed to assure the troops that they would be paid – the "crowns" (line 17) are, of course, hard currency.

We don't begin to "get" this speech, in other words, unless we have some "prior knowledge" of the circumstances in which it was given – including, as well, I might add, the identity of "Parma" or of "Spain" (the notorious Duke of Parma whose powerful army was assembled just across the Channel, waiting to attack the English coast; and Philip II, the King of Spain, which had long been England's bitter enemy) or even what the Armada was. Elizabeth, of course, doesn't have to fill these matters in since her troops already knew all that.

But Elizabeth doesn't simply say, "I, the Queen, do hereby order you to repel the enemy." What she does is, in a word, to ingratiate her audience, assuring them of her confidence in the "loyal hearts and good will" of "my faithful and loving people." And notice how frequently she refers to "my subjects" and "my people." Repetition is one of her main devices, in fact. One stylistic feature that might strike a modern reader as awkward or unnecessary is the high frequency of "redundant" doublets: "faithful and loving," "strength and safeguard," "weak and feeble," "heart and stomach," and so on. But notice that the two terms in each are far from being simple synonyms. In one sense, they reinforce by repeating, but they also serve to focus attention and convey a sense of precision: "of a weak, nay, a feeble woman," as it were.

Another stylistic feature that stands out is her use of "triplets": "your general, judge and rewarder," "Parma or Spain or any prince," above all, "my God and . . . my Kingdom, and . . . my people," which comes in twice – and which, by the way, is a hierarchical ordering consistent with contemporary political thinking. "Triplets" are highly conventional markers of a particular – in this case, "regal" – style.

There is another thing Elizabeth does in this speech that is absolutely brilliant (another piece of background: she was an accomplished Latinist). I refer to her manipulation of pronouns, which is probably not something that strikes a reader immediately. To begin with, the "we" in line 1 is, obviously, the imperial "we," as in "We are not amused," said the queen; and "our" and "we" in lines 1 and 2 are in accord with the first "we." But then Elizabeth gets "personal," as indicated by the series of

"I" statements (lines 3ff.). The "my" statements in lines 8–10 are interesting. They are not all simple possessive "my's" ("my honor and my blood" are indeed possessive), for "my God" and "my Kingdom" are also the God and Kingdom of "my people," which should probably be understood in the sense of "my darling," which is (one hopes) not really a claim of ownership.

Elizabeth continues in lines 11ff. to be personal, and she stresses "I myself" as she declares her solidarity with the troops; but in line 18 she shifts back to the "imperial" "we." In line 23, however, at the end, "we" is no longer the imperial "we" but a *collective* "we," followed by the God–Kingdom–People triplet. What Elizabeth does, then, is to begin in her role as queen, offer her personal pledge to the troops, and end by asserting *community*. There is the "intimacy" I spoke of before.

One thing this speech lacks is a "set-up" – there is no technical exordium. While it might be argued that a speech as short as this has no need for a set-up, I believe the set-up was built into the occasion. If we can take contemporary depictions of Elizabeth's appearance at Tilbury at face value, the occasion was quite a spectacle.[11] That she should appear at all was, to begin with, unusual and quite special. That she arrived accompanied by an unarmed small entourage, mounted on a huge white gelding, dressed in a white velvet gown and an embossed silver cuirass, and bearing a silver scepter made her "entrance" electrifying. All eyes, surely, would be on her; and what the troops saw was not a middle-aged thin woman with hennaed hair, but something out of mythology or revelation. And, indeed, her speech was enormously successful, followed by wild cheering from her audience. Situation, in short, is everything – and if not everything, then close to it. In other words, you had to be there.

Notes

The original version of this chapter was prepared for a conference presentation I never actually made. I have tried, however, to preserve as much of the flavor of that version as is editorially permissible. One felicitous result of my revisions is that several very bad jokes have been cast away as un-recyclable.

1　For my complaints, see, for example, "The Beauty of Lists: *Copia* and Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 22 (1985), pp. 96–103; "The Virtues of Controversy: *In Memoriam* Richard P. McKeon," *Quartely Journal of Speech* 71 (1985), pp. 470–5; "What Qualifies as a 'topos' in Contemporary Research?," in *Topik und Rhetorik: Ein interdisziplinäres Symposium* , ed. T. Schirren and G. Ueding (Tübingen, 2000), pp. 579–85.

2　See his "The New Rhetoric and the Rhetoricians: Remembrances and Comments," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984), pp. 188–96.

3　The Ciceronian definition appears in *Partitiones oratoriae* 5. I should add that *probabile* here does not mean "probable" in the ordinary sense of the term, but something closer to "that which will gain the approbation of the audience," for whatever reason.

4　Since I suspect some readers might find this joke in bad taste, I should explain that an African-American friend told it to me when I related the astonishment of a German colleague at seeing students of all races walking around wearing "Kiss Me, I'm Irish" buttons.

5 A transcript of Bumpers' speech was published in the *New York Times*, January 22, 1999, pp. A17–18. Unfortunately, it is too long to quote here, but I think it brings out nicely several of the points I am trying to make in the present chapter.

6 Boethius' attempts to ground rhetorical arguments on dialectical ones led him to his doctrine of *maximae propositiones* ("maximal propositions"), which he elaborates in *De differentiis topicis* IV, available in an excellent translation and commentary by Eleanore Stump (Ithaca, NY/London, 1978). The "wrong conclusion" was that no argument could be judged a good argument whose major premise could not be expressed as a maximal proposition; and that both invention and judgment are essentially "centripetal" and therefore reductive. Although he mentions Boethius only in passing, O. Bird illustrates nicely the role of "maximal propositions" in his "The Rediscovery of the Topics: Professor Toulmin's Inference Warrants," *Mind* 70 (1961), pp. 534–9.

7 See Burke's *Counterstatement* (Berkeley/London, 1968), "Psychology and Form," pp. 29–44.

8 See *Counterstatement*, pp. 127–35. Burke shows the connection between "identification" and the use of figures at *Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley/London, 1969) pp. 58–9. Figures and tropes are not, of course, merely ornamental, but subtly argumentative.

9 Not all antitheses are of the "not–but" sort, of course. Some of them may overlap with another tropic turn of phrase, *paraprosdokian*, a violation of expectations. "On his feet he wore . . . blisters" is Aristotle's example. Consider also the more patently "argumentative" "Capitalism means the oppression of one group of men by another; with communism, it's the other way around."

10 *Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago/London, 1974), p. 13.

11 A list of contemporary descriptions can be found in Garrett Mattingly's still immensely valuable *The Armada* (Boston, 1959), pp. 422–3. There is a good reproduction of a contemporary painting showing Elizabeth's arrival at Tilbury in Peter Kemp's *The Campaign of the Spanish Armada* (Oxford, 1988), p. 124.

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Further Reading

Informative background material regarding most of the technical terms used here ("enthymeme," "example," indeed, "argumentation") can be found in the articles in *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, ed. T. O. Sloane (Oxford, 2001). These entries should, of course, be treated warily, if only because encyclopedia articles by nature suggest consensus where often there is none. On "enthymemes," for instance, see my "The Enthymeme in Perspective," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984), pp. 168–87. The best introduction to Kenneth Burke, whose fingerprints are all over the ideas behind this chapter, is R. Wolin's *The Rhetorical Imagination of Kenneth Burke* (Columbia, SC, 2001).

18
Commonplaces

Sensus Communis

John D. Schaeffer

The term *sensus communis* has a history of over twenty-five centuries during which time it has accrued many meanings, both rhetorical and philosophical, of which "common sense" (the literal translation of the Latin) is only one, and even that one has itself acquired many meanings. *Sensus communis* can have three different meanings:

1   In its simplest rhetorical sense, the *sensus communis* took on the meaning of *communis opinio*, the whole set of unstated assumptions, prejudices, and values that an orator can take for granted when addressing an audience. These are non-reflective judgments and values learned but not judged. In fact, some writers on *sensus communis* refer to these as "prejudices."
2   In its philosophical sense, the term has come to signify a faculty of the mind or imagination. In this meaning, the mind instinctively separates and retains sense impressions before any reflection can occur.
3   In a composite of these two meanings, *sensus communis* can mean the faculty that perceives, before reflection, relations or connections between objects and sense perceptions or between individual cases or events. In this composite sense, *sensus communis* is the basis of practical judgment (*phronēsis*).

What these three meanings share is that each conceives of *sensus communis* as post-sensory but pre- (or non-) rational. At certain points in their history, rhetoric and philosophy have claimed two or all three meanings; at other times each has denied the signification given by the other. Thus it is one of the most complex rhetorical concepts and one of the most complex philosophical concepts – and the complexities frequently overlap. The best chance for understanding these complexities is to trace the genealogy of the term, following its meanings as they divide and reunite in rhetoric and philosophy.

Tracing that genealogy will be clearer in the light of an insight provided by Walter J. Ong. Ong developed a view of the history of rhetoric according to what he called

"sense analogues for intellect" (Ong 1977: 121). By this term he meant the way thinking is represented metaphorically as seeing or hearing, or even as tasting or feeling. According to Ong, rhetoric began with oral/aural analogues for thinking, but the emergence of literacy and especially print gradually introduced a visual analogue for thinking into rhetorical theory. The history of *sensus communis* is a case in point because the first meaning of the term, a common fund of values and opinions, is particularly amenable to an oral/aural analogue for intellect, while the second meaning, a faculty of judgment and memory, participates in the visual analogue. The third meaning, the perception of relations, attempts to reconcile or synthesize these meanings, and the difference in their sensory analogues causes difficulties in the making of the attempt.

Sensus Communis in Antiquity

Like most histories of Western ideas, this story begins in Greece, but in conditions that have only recently come to light. The condition was that of an oral society. Studies by T. B. L. Webster (1973) and J. W. Roberts (1984) have described the intensely oral milieu of Athens in the fifth century BCE. Public speaking was the primary mode of conducting most business. In the Athenian democracy almost every government action was decided during the course of public debate. No festival or celebration was complete without a speech praising the values of the city or pitying or condemning those of others. Ability to speak effectively at best guaranteed access to the public life of the city; at the very least it was essential to defend oneself against victimization or exploitation at the hand, or voices, of others.

Ong has described predominantly oral societies as having an "oral noetic" (Ong 1977: 96); that is, an economy of knowledge based on spoken rather than written words. Ong describes knowledge in an oral society as (1) additive rather than subordinative; (2) aggregative rather than analytic; (3) copious; (4) conservative; (5) close to the human life world; (6) conservative or traditionalist; (7) agonistically toned; and (8) situational rather than abstract (Ong 1982: 37–57). Most importantly, however, oral societies depended upon memory to preserve knowledge and even language. In the absence of easily accessible written texts, a community depended upon constant repetition by skilled speakers to maintain its fund of knowledge and words. This basic fund of shared knowledge was the primal form of *sensus communis*.

Into this orally controlled world entered the Sophists, who originated the teaching of rhetoric in the Greek-speaking world. Contrary to the pejorative connotations of "sophistry," many Sophists wished to teach an effective, efficient method of public speaking. The early Sophists were the heirs of the rhapsodes, declaimers of poetry, and they adopted the techniques of oral poetry to the various occasions of public speaking. Sophists had their students memorize phrases, figures of speech, or even whole orations that they could then adopt to a particular occasion and on either side of an issue. They trained their students to argue from probability to conviction, that is, to

invoke the fund of community values in support of a probable position in order to win assent to it. Thus the Sophists' idea of rhetoric conformed to Ong's description of an oral society: it was dedicated to public life; it assumed an agonistic, conflict-oriented, society; it emphasized memorization. The thrust of such an education was conservative, assuming that citizens were social beings and that to succeed in the life of the polis meant assenting to and participating in the moral consensus that formed and sustained the polis. As Werner Jaeger pointed out, the "good man" for the Sophists was one who conformed to the polis' mores and could appeal to them to foment his own ends and advance his own status (Jaeger 1965: 286–91). That body of mores and public values, *endoxa* in Greek, was a form of the *sensus communis*, even though the Sophists never used that term.

Socrates and his disciple Plato challenged the oral noetic that the Sophists utilized and reinforced. Instead of manipulating the *endoxa* for social and personal benefits, Socrates challenged it at the risk of social alienation and personal isolation. Many of Plato's dialogues begin with Socrates asking someone: "What do you mean by . . . ?" Socrates interrogated the unreflective assumptions of his society's mores by regarding language itself as an object of reflection. In Plato's hands, Socratic method challenged the oral mode of culture and its attendant *sensus communis*. Socrates insisted on reflection rather than inspiration, on private interviews rather than public performance, and on dialectical interrogation rather than debate within shared values. In his *Protagoras*, *Sophist*, and *Phaedrus*, Plato lays out philosophy's case against *endoxa*, common opinion, that the Sophists emphasized and did not challenge. Plato opposed it to *epistēmē*, truth that resulted from a dialectical interrogation of terms – and people.

The term *sensus communis* enters Western philosophy with Aristotle. His term *koine dynamis* can be translated literally as "common sense." Aristotle uses this term, in the second sense listed above, in his *De anima* (*On the soul*) where it means the faculty of the soul that separates and organizes the perceptions of the other senses and impresses them on the memory. In his *Judgment of Sense*, David Summers points out that Aristotle conceives of the operation of the *koine dynamis* vis-à-vis the memory in predominantly visual terms (Summers 1987: 81–5). Aristotle's *koine dynamis* begins the philosophical lineage of *sensus communis* that defines it as a faculty, and one that operates on a visual, not oral, model. Aristotle, however, also addressed *endoxa* in its rhetorical sense, that is, opinions and values that were held in common by all or most. It was this meaning that Aristotle used in his *Topica* when he discussed the art of deriving arguments that were probable but not demonstrable.

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was by far the most influential text in the Western rhetorical tradition, and it is worthwhile to see how it encapsulates the tension between the oral tradition of the Sophists and the visual mentality of Aristotle's mentor, Plato. Aristotle regarded rhetoric with suspicion: "But we must not forget that such things [rhetorical techniques] are, every one of them, extraneous to a speech. They are for an audience, an audience that is weak enough to accept utterances beside the point" (1414b). The "point" is that argument that can be structured dialectically: "What is more true and preferable is by nature always easier to prove, and more convincing"

(1355a). Aristotle assumes a "natural" correlation between proof and truth and further between truth and conviction: what is true will be convincing – naturally.

By opinion (*endoxa*) Aristotle means any belief or proposition that could be otherwise. What the audience knows, then, are things that could be otherwise. In the *Topica* Aristotle further defines the common opinion as what is "accepted by everyone or by the majority or by the wise – that is, by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and reputable among them" (100b, 20–3). This common opinion is the source of probable arguments, but it itself can only be verified by perception or demonstration which in most cases is impossible. Hence, for Aristotle, rhetoric, and all reasoning about probability, inhabits a space between truth and falsehood.

Aristotle attempts to distinguish *endoxa* from imagination (*phantasia*) but without complete success. The imagination holds the impressions made by the senses as they were distinguished by the *koine dynamis*. Opinion is a kind of judgment about the relation of the particular to the universal, and in fact judgments of this kind are what Aristotle calls probable syllogisms. Summers points out that a strong indication that Aristotle saw *koine dynamis* and *endoxa* as related is the fact that Aristotle's list of the common sensibles – movement, rest, shape, magnitude, number, and unity – coincides at many points with Aristotle's ten categories: substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, action, and passion (81). The former, in the *De anima*, are the sensations that the common sense abstracts from the specific sensations. The latter, in the *Topics*, are sources of predications. Hence the groundwork is laid for a synthesis of *endoxa* and *koine dynamis* that will explain common opinion and values in terms of perceptions and judgments.

Aristotle does not appear to have identified the common opinion as a cultural product, something produced by education or experience, although it obviously was. Roman rhetoric, however, did produce an educational system that consciously aimed to produce both a linguistic and ethical *sensus communis* through rigorous training in Latin and Greek literature. Stanley Bonner's (1977) work on Roman education details how young boys were required to perform prodigious feats of memory and extemporaneous speaking in two languages: Greek and Latin. The teacher drilled his students in oral recitation, emphasizing correct pronunciation and meter. At the same time the students continually copied or constructed *sententiae*, short, pithy sayings or proverbs that were memorized in large numbers. These *sententiae* resembled the legal formulas in which plaintiffs in Roman courts were required to state their cases. This exercise thus had a practical value as well as developing powers of acuity and terseness. The Roman art of rhetoric found its most complete explication in Quintilian's *Institutiones oratoriae*, though it is doubtful that many Roman students ever experienced the whole program. It reemerged as an ideal curriculum after its rediscovery in the early fifteenth century.

This curriculum, based on Greek and Roman literature and proverb lore, created an educational and cultural background that all educated Romans shared. That background included not only the literary language and the literature but also the values contained in them: piety, honesty, fortitude, etc. The literary canon and the attendant

sententiae thus became a fund of shared values and shared expressions, a literary and linguistic *sensus communis* from which the orator could draw.

Sensus Communis in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

In his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*, Thomas Aquinas translates the term *koine dynamis* as *sensus communis*, the faculty that discriminates between sense perceptions. This faculty has to be a sense, he says, since it deals with sensations, yet there cannot be such a discriminating sense for each physical sense, for then "it would be as if distinct human beings were sensing" (Aquinas 1999: 312). Thus Thomas concludes that there must be a *sensus communis* from which other senses derive their power to sense and that discriminates between senses (e.g., taste from color) while remaining one faculty itself. This faculty judges among sensations. Renaissance aesthetics follows this epistemological tradition of *sensus communis*. Summers points out how Leonardo da Vinci posited a *senso comune* that received and judged sense impressions, calling it "the seat of judgment." He went so far as to try to locate the *senso comune* in his anatomical sketches of the brain (Summers 1987: 75, 71–3). Summers analyzes extensively the role of the epistemological tradition of *sensus communis* in the Renaissance Neoplatonists. At the same time, however, rhetoric and its attendant emphasis on probability and the common opinion reasserted its hegemony in Western Europe.

The recovery of the full text of Quintilian's *Institutiones oratoriae* in 1416, along with the recovery of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and other classical rhetorical texts, transformed European education at the primary and secondary levels. European schooling came under the sway of the humanists and returned to the curriculum championed by Quintilian and others. Humanist schools featured memorization and recitation of passages of Latin literature, oral and written composition, and careful grammatical analysis of dictated texts. Most of an average class day was spent in giving or listening to recitations, yet, while rhetoric was still oriented toward oral performance, the common opinion from which and to which eloquence was derived and directed was now a body of texts. The apogee of humanist textuality was reached with Erasmus' *Adagia* (1508), which listed and commented upon 3,500 Greek and Latin proverbs. The common opinions of antiquity were now collected, bound, and for sale.

Early Renaissance rhetoric came to identify the common opinion more and more with classical literary texts, at least to the extent that the classical canon became the locus of examples and arguments for and against a whole stock of common themes. Humanist rhetoric trained orators/writers to filter their ideas through this literary tradition, one that, it was assumed, had continuing relevance to practical life. At the same time, humanist rhetoric developed standards of elegance and forms of argument that allowed for a kind of critical practice. The classical canon served as a touchstone for literary judgment, but the common opinion became more and more distant from any kind of popular base. Instead, humanism assumed the universal validity of the

topics, themes, styles, and values of the classical canon. It might not be too much of an exaggeration to say that the common sense of humanist rhetoric was the sense of a community educated in reading the texts of classical antiquity.

Later humanism tended to reject even the classical canon as a viable ground for persuasive discourse. Two movements in particular shifted the whole focus of persuasion from the common opinion to what we would now call objectivity. The first was Ramism. In the middle of the sixteenth century, Peter Ramus (1515–72) published a series of works on rhetoric and logic (which he called dialectic) that aimed to simplify the teaching of both. Ramus simply collapsed the distinction between probable and demonstrative arguments; both became the province of dialectic, and rhetoric was left with only style, memorization, and delivery. Ramus' dialectical approach made all discourse "logical" in that it proceeded from the most general to the more specific propositions by a process of division. This logical organization precluded any considerations of audience. Any thesis could be developed by drawing it through the topics that no longer functioned as sources of invention but as categories for a series of predications. Furthermore, the starting point of the argument was chosen intuitively, that is, the first predication was simply assumed by the speaker or writer without reference to an audience. The common opinion was rendered irrelevant.

The second, and more deadly, blow to rhetoric and the common opinion was struck by Descartes (1596–1650). In 1628 he published his *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* in which he laid out a method of thinking, claiming that, just as in mathematics, thought should begin with the most simple and proceed to the more complex. This method differs from Ramus', which began, not with the most simple, but with the most general, proposition. Descartes then delineates a procedure by which the mind can move from simple to more complex ideas by distinguishing and classifying them. This procedure alone, he claims, can lead to scientific knowledge, knowledge whose objective truth is on a par with that of mathematics. In following this procedure, Descartes says, the mind is only following its "good sense" (*bon sens*), a faculty that performs the work of directing the mind.

In the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* Descartes takes occasion to caution against "sophism" or flights of fancy, but in his *Discourse on Method* (1637) he launches a frontal assault on rhetoric and all its works. Descartes throws down the gauntlet in its opening pages: "Those who have the strongest power of reasoning, and who most skillfully arrange their thoughts in order to render them clear and intelligible, have the best power of persuasion" (Descartes 1983: 110). The *Discourse* describes in brief the procedures of methodic doubt and geometric reasoning that were systematically explained in the *Rules*. More importantly, however, the *Discourse* contrasts the operations of good sense with those of rhetoric. Most telling was the rejection of all probability as false: "I thought it was necessary for me . . . to reject as absolutely false everything to which I could imagine the least ground of doubt" (Descartes 1983: 127). With this statement Descartes wiped away all argument from probability and dismissed out of hand the common opinion as any basis for truthful argument. Descartes, in effect, privatized rationality, defining it in analytical, rather than

synthetic, terms. Good sense, a critical faculty that judged propositions and was the possession of an individual, had replaced a common sense shared by a society or a language that grounded probable propositions.

The Eighteenth Century

While Cartesianism and Empiricism gradually became the regnant intellectual methods during the Enlightenment period, humanists mounted a spirited counter-attack against the hegemony of both. These thinkers objected to the unsuitability of rationalism or empiricism as guides for conducting human affairs. This movement has been termed the Counter-Enlightenment, and some of its members rehabilitated rhetoric, probability, and a shared common sense as better guides to practical living than skeptical philosophy could provide. Some philosophers, on the other hand, rehabilitated *sensus communis* as an epistemological principle that could answer the charge of skepticism leveled at Enlightenment philosophy.

The most significant member of the Counter-Enlightenment is Giambattista Vico (1668–1744). During his career, Vico drew on his reading of Greek philosophy, his profound knowledge of Roman history and law, and his experience as a teacher of rhetoric and as a practicing orator, to formulate the most ambitious synthesis of the three kinds of *sensus communis*, a synthesis worth tracing in some detail.

Vico first set out to defend the tradition of humanist rhetoric against Cartesian rationalism. His strategy was to make *sensus communis* the source of both rhetorical invention and literary judgment. In his *On the Study Methods of our Time* (1710) Vico says: "Common sense, besides being the standard of practical judgment, is also the guiding standard of eloquence" (Vico 1990: 13). Vico tried to synthesize *sensus communis* as a body of opinion formed by a literary canon with *sensus communis* as a faculty. At this stage of Vico's thought the *sensus communis* was to be a synthetic faculty that both creates and judges. It focuses experience and knowledge on a case at hand, resulting in either arguments or figures of speech.

In the latter part of his career, Vico concentrated on *sensus communis* as the possession of a community. Vico's thinking about *sensus communis* was shaped by a philosophical principle that he articulated in his *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians* (1710). Here he claimed that the truth of a thing can only be known if one has (or can) make the thing. Hence humans can know mathematical truth because they make mathematics, but since humans did not make the physical world they cannot know the truth about it; only God, who made the world, can know physics as true. Vico called this idea the *verum-factum* principle. Closely allied to this principle was another one that Vico articulated in his *Il diritto universale* (2000): the *verum-certum* principle. The certain (*certum*) is those things that the human mind has discovered or ratified. Hence the human mind can acquire certitude about physics but not truth about it. Similarly, when a community or state makes a decision about a point of law, the law becomes more certain, but not more true.

Vico refers to *sensus communis* many times in the *New Science*, refining its meaning each time. First he says it "makes human choice certain with respect to needs and utilities" (Vico 1944: 141). Vico means that *sensus communis* ratifies value judgments about practical priorities. Next Vico says that *sensus communis* is "judgment without reflection, shared by an entire class, an entire people, an entire nation, or the entire human race" (142). Vico pointedly does not predicate *sensus communis* of an individual. It is a shared, unselfconscious judgment about practical needs around which a community has formed a consensus grounded in their original choices. Vico further claims that these judgments beget uniform ideas in every community, and that this uniformity must have "a common ground of truth" (144). Vico adds that Divine Providence must have taught this common ground to the nations so that they might "certify" the customs and laws found in every human community, concluding that the nations reach this certainty by recognizing the "underlying agreements," that is, the necessary social bonds, that must order social life if it is to be social (145).

Vico's account of *sensus communis* to this point focuses on it as a judging faculty, but one that is predicated of communities, not individuals. In the next sections of the *New Science*, he speculates about how *sensus communis* serves as an organizing sense and how its judgments enter the language and institutions of nations. Vico (1944: 330) posits that all language begins with metaphor and that the first metaphors were drawn from the human body, e.g., the brow of a hill. The primal metaphor, however, is God. Vico claims that the first humans, hearing thunder, imagined the sky to be the body of a huge god whose rumblings and shouts expressed anger at them for their unrestrained sexuality. Shaking with fear, the first humans fled to caves where they founded families (377). Next they became preoccupied with interpreting the signs and words of this vast, angry deity. This practice of divination, according to Vico, gave divine ratification to the decisions of the community and was the origin of language (379). This latter point is crucial. Vico's myth makes the origin of the *sensus communis* identical with the origin of language. Language itself contains, at its most primordial level, the fundamental values that create the community.

At this stage, Vico has created a single myth of origins for the two functions he ascribed to *sensus communis* in the *Study Methods*: a ground of judgment and a standard of eloquent language. There remains for Vico to account for how *sensus communis* serves as a controlling sense for all sense impressions. He accomplishes this by pointing out that the thunder of the sky god not only originates language but also families and religion. Vico then posits that the basic components of *sensus communis* at the community level are three necessary human institutions: religion, marriage, and burial of the dead. No human community exists without these institutions, and these institutions generate most of the values and assumptions that are embodied in law: property, inheritance, self-defense, and so on. Vico indicates how *sensus communis* serves as a *koine dynamis* when he points out that, when the first humans seized upon the predication "sky is God," they first had to "become aware of the sky," that is, they had to abstract the sky and its thunder from all the other sense impressions with

which they were being bombarded. Hence the metaphor "sky is god" also was the beginning of the human ability to discriminate between sense impressions.

In this elaborate account of human origins, Vico synthesizes *sensus communis* as the judgments of the community, the power of discriminating between sense impressions, the origin of language and institutions, and the home of community values and assumptions. Vico tried to explain how *sensus communis* came to mean all the things it did: a faculty of judgment, a body of cultural knowledge, the basis for *phronēsis*. Vico's idea of *sensus communis* is the most comprehensive that the eighteenth century produced.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), is the other major figure of the Counter-Enlightenment who concerned himself with *sensus communis*. In 1709 Shaftesbury published a short treatise, *Sensus Communis, an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour*, that was later included in the 1711 edition of the *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. In it he proposes irony as the test of truth, that is, irony is a way of legitimating truth claims. The ability to engage in, and receive, raillery and ridicule is Shaftesbury's test of "good humour." He takes *sensus communis* to mean a commonality of feeling, literally "common sensing," that undergirds and permits civil debate. Shaftesbury retains for it a power of judgment that is both aesthetic and ethical.

Shaftesbury explicitly relates *sensus communis* to moral sentiment, the philosophical concept for which he is best known: "A public spirit can come only from a social feeling or sense of partnership with human kind. Now there are none so far from being partners in this sense, or sharers in this common affection, as they who scarcely know an equal, nor consider themselves as subject to any law of fellowship or community. And thus morality and good government go together" (Shaftesbury 1999: 50)

For Shaftesbury, *sensus communis* is a natural affection, a sense of community that has become self-conscious. To account for this natural affection, Shaftesbury gives an account of human origins that features natural sociability. He says the first humans formed social groups based on affection, and then they noticed the utility of such groups for self-preservation and self-enjoyment. This sociability becomes self-conscious when the group or clan realizes that their sociability is a good thing, and thus they have a feeling *for* it. Thus the community experiences a feeling for a feeling, that is, a desire (a feeling) for the feeling of community. Whereas tribes or clans may form themselves out of natural affection, larger units like nations or cities form themselves not from the sensible affection but "In idea: according to the general view or notion of a state or commonwealth" (52). In other words, the larger units of society depend upon the idea of the feeling of *sensus communis* rather than the feeling itself.

After discussing how *sensus communis* manifests itself in social units, Shaftesbury considers its manifestation in the individual. He begins by describing it negatively; the opposite of *sensus communis* is the spirit of faction. Individuals who possess *sensus communis* are the least likely to join parties. Here one sees the relation of Shaftesbury's *sensus communis* to irony, which, permitted by the *sensus communis*, inhibits partisanship

and promotes detachment and cool judgment. It is the opposite of enthusiasm. But then how does one come to possess this quality?

When describing the man with *sensus communis*, Shaftesbury calls him a man of "good breeding" (60). He says he is "incapable of doing a rude or brutal action. He never deliberates in this case . . . He acts from nature, in manner necessarily, and with out reflection" (60). Shaftesbury then turns from the man of good breeding to the man of no breeding, "the common honest man" who "gives no other answer to the thought of villainy, than that he can't possibly find in his heart to set about it, or conquer the natural aversion he has to it. And this is natural and just" (61). Here the common man possesses *sensus communis*. Shaftesbury never reconciles the conflict between *sensus communis* as the result of breeding and *sensus communis* as a natural attribute of the "common" man. Shaftesbury does, however, describe the sort of breeding that produces *sensus communis*. Shaftesbury describes the possessors of *sensus communis* as "gentlemen of fashion," that is, "those to whom natural good genius, or the force of a good education, has given a sense of what is naturally graceful and becoming" (62). Once again Shaftesbury asserts the paradox that some men must be educated into naturalness, that is, "fashioned," and "fashion" implies certain standards with which one's behavior is congruous, whether the congruity is natural or learned. Those standards, Shaftesbury argues, are ultimately standards of taste.

Shaftesbury argues that the principle of taste regulates the choice of pleasure but that it must also regulate conduct. If it does not, then the individual is confronted with a contradiction: pleasure pleases when behavior accords with principles, or to put it negatively, pleasures cannot be pleasant when conduct is not "pleasing." Thus, for Shaftesbury, *sensus communis* is that principle of taste, founded in harmony and reason, shared by gentlemen of fashion that provides clear guidance to aesthetic judgment and ethical choices. It is a rational standard according to which questions of taste and self-interest are resolved with spontaneous clarity. At the conclusion of the work Shaftesbury summarizes his conception of *sensus communis*: "Some moral and philosophical truths there are withal, so evident in themselves, that it would be easier to imagine half mankind to have run mad and joined precisely in one and the same species of folly, than to admit anything as truth which should be advanced against such natural knowledge, fundamental reason and common sense" (68).

Whatever the impact of education, fashion, or natural genius, *sensus communis* comes down to a decision to follow good taste as an ideal, a feeling worth feeling, and to regulate one's behavior by it. In other words, one makes the shared standards of good conduct one's own, and one embraces the fellow feeling on which they, and the pleasures of society, are grounded.

Shaftesbury's idea of *sensus communis* stimulated the work of Thomas Reid (1710–96) and the Common Sense School in Scotland. Reid developed his idea of common sense as a response to the *esse est percipi* (to be is to be perceived) of George Berkeley and the skepticism of David Hume. In his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785) Reid asserted that the English word "sense" always implied judgment and that common sense is reason judging of things that are self-evident (Reid 1969:

567). He says elsewhere: "Common sense is that degree of judgment which is common to men with whom we can converse and transact business" (557). In a broader sense, Reid claims that common sense is the ability to determine truth in matters that are evident without ratiocination. In short, common sense operates from first principles so fundamental that "if someone reasons to a conclusion that contradicts common sense, 'a man of common sense may fairly reject the conclusion without being able to show the error of the reasoning that led to it'" (Lehrer 1989: 153).

Reid set himself against what he called "the ideal system," meaning the philosophical position, originating in Descartes and Locke, that "assumed that what is before the mind must always be either a sensation, an idea of a sensation, or some operations of the mind, an idea of reflection" (Lehrer 1989: 77). Reid believed that this epistemology led by force to radical skepticism; Berkeley and Hume had simply followed "the ideal system" to its logical conclusion. Reid's reply to the ideal system, and to skepticism, was to assert that human beings have a natural constitution that provides conceptions of things beyond the ideal system as well as judgments and beliefs about them (Lehrer 1989: 78). Reid's common sense was grounded in first principles that, contra Descartes, could not be doubted because to doubt them would render the intellect incapable of operating. In fact, to believe the contrary of common sense, according to Reid, is lunacy, and, in a jab at his contemporaries, he adds that "when a man suffers himself to be argued out of the principles of common sense, we may call this *metaphysical* lunacy" (*Inquiry* 215–16; emphasis in original).

To a certain extent Reid shares with Vico a conviction that some faculty or power must be prior to reason. For Vico, it is the imagination that, by discriminating and associating sense impressions, gives rise to *sensus communis*. For Reid, common sense is "the faculties of the mind and the first principles which yield original conception and irresistible conviction {that} have been assumed to be trustworthy" (Lehrer 1989: 80). Reid develops his idea of common sense in careful analyses of sensation and perception. It is a thoroughly synchronic account of a mental faculty, as opposed to Vico's diachronic account of historically conditioned meanings in which all members of a language and social community share.

While Vico and Shaftesbury treated *sensus communis* in terms of shared meanings, and Reid treated it as a pre-rational faculty of judgment, Immanuel Kant also used the term in its second sense, a faculty of judgment, but one restricted to aesthetic judgment. In his *Critique of Judgment* Kant calls taste "a kind of *sensus communis*" (Kant 1987: 159). He says: "They [judgments of taste] must have a subjective principle, which determines only by feeling rather than by concepts, though nonetheless with universal validity, what is liked or disliked. Such a principle, however, could only be regarded as a *common sense*" (87; emphasis in original).

Kant immediately distinguishes this meaning of *sensus communis* from common understanding, which he says operates not by feeling but by concepts, albeit obscure ones. Kant then defines *sensus communis* as "the idea of a sense *shared* [by all of us], i.e., a power to judge that in reflecting takes account (*a priori*), in our thought, of everyone else's way of presenting [something], in order *as it were* to compare our own

judgment with human reason in general and thus escape the illusion that arises from the ease of mistaking subjective and private conditions for objective ones" (160). Kant seems to mean that the judgments of taste are referred *a priori* to how the rest of mankind would judge the object under consideration so that "subjective and personal conditions would not exert a prejudicial influence upon [taste's] judgment" (151). In describing how this comparison is made, Kant says: "We compare our judgment not so much with the actual as rather with the merely possible judgments of others, and [thus] put ourselves in the position of everyone else merely by abstracting from the limitations that [may] happen to attach to our own judging and this in turn we accomplish by . . . paying attention solely to the formal features of our presentation or of our presentational state" (160). *Sensus communis*, then, is a standard of judgment that is employed to de-privatize, as it were, judgments of taste, to make them universalizable, if not universal.

While in the *Critique of Judgment* Kant defends *sensus communis* as an aesthetic standard, in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1999) he rejects it as a viable standard for moral judgment. He does so, first, because *sensus communis* invokes feelings of pleasure and pain, feelings that ought to have no role in moral judgment. To this extent Kant departs from Vico and Shaftesbury who, coming from a rhetorical tradition, were quite comfortable uniting emotion and moral judgment. For Shaftesbury, the *sensus communis* underwrote aesthetic taste and moral judgment; for Vico, *sensus communis* was the ground of both the "standard of judgment" and the "standard of eloquence." More importantly, however, Kant rejects *sensus communis* as a standard for moral behavior because, in aesthetic judgment, *sensus communis* looks to the consensus of judgment of other people, whereas Kant insists that moral judgment must be submitted to reason and the categorical imperative. How other people perceive or judge has no role in this process. At the risk of over-generalization, it can be said that Kant dissolved the synthesis of aesthetics and morality that was worked out by the eighteenth-century inheritors of the rhetorical tradition. While Kant thought of the *sensus communis* as the ground of aesthetic judgment, he did not think of it as a necessary condition of moral judgment.

The Nineteenth Century

The philosopher who developed the most cogent idea of *sensus communis* in the nineteenth century was the American C. S. Peirce. Peirce developed his idea of *sensus communis* within the context of his own work as a practicing scientist and logician. He saw the ideas of Reid and the Common Sense School as too static. While he agreed that *sensus communis* was a kind of instinct, he felt that instincts change and develop throughout history. As such, they are not subject to criticism or self-conscious reflection; instead, they are habitual but vague. In modifying Reid's concept of *sensus communis*, Peirce comes closer to Vico's, articulating *sensus communis* as both a faculty and a moral standard with a history. Like Vico, he associated *sensus communis* with the

power of invention, although he called this power "abduction." Abduction differs from induction in that the latter permits us to infer the probability of a hypothesis, while the latter is "the logic by which the hypothesis itself is formulated" (Krois 1981: 64). This is clearly analogous to Vico's claim that *sensus communis* enables the mind to form arguments. Peirce attributes the power of invention to instinct; Vico attributes it to *ingenium*. Each enables the mind to perceive novel relationships between dissimilar things, but *ingenium* is a power of the imagination, while Peirce's idea of instinct is simply the instantaneous rejection of hypotheses that do not seem reasonable (Krois 1981: 65).

The second way that Peirce resembles Vico is that both relate *sensus communis* to practical or moral beliefs. Here again Peirce appeals to instinct, but in this case he posits it not of the individual mind but of the species as a whole. Instinct is what leads the human race to make right guesses in matters of values and morals, and these values and morals constitute the practical and moral contents of *sensus communis*. As we saw above, Vico similarly defines *sensus communis* as "needs and utilities" that are "made certain," that is, ratified by the choice of the community in the face of necessity. Hence Peirce and Vico agree that *sensus communis* is both a consensus of beliefs and values and a faculty for forming hypotheses. Vico and Peirce differ, however, with regard to the status of the beliefs and values. Vico traces these values backward into history, ultimately tracing them to a myth of human origins. Peirce, on the contrary, projects them forward into a scientific future. He argues that science, at least hypothetically, can resolve every issue with certitude at some time in the future. When that happens there will be a consensus of belief, based on scientific reason, about a particular case. This consensus will be a *sensus communis* in an absolute sense, and anyone who disagrees with it will be in error. Peirce's idea of *sensus communis* in this sense leaves no room for disengagement. "Individualism and falsity are one and the same" (5.402n2).

Near the end of his life, Peirce took another step closer to Vico. His concern with semiotics led him to think about the relationship of signs to social norms, that is, to how signs require interpretation by other signs and can have significant social consequences. Peirce called the study of the relationship of signs to interpretation and results "speculative rhetoric" (Krois 1981: 70). Peirce did not live to pursue his investigation of the relation of signs to social norms, but it is intriguing that that he even conceived this relationship as rhetorical.

Sensus Communis in the Twentieth Century

In general, one may say that in the twentieth century *sensus communis* survives as a philosophical term more successfully than as a rhetorical term. One of the few twentieth-century philosophers to discuss common sense was G. E. Moore. His second philosophical paper, "A Defense of Common Sense," attempts to justify the truth of propositions that assert primary sense data. In doing so, he employs a distinction between truth and certainty. He argues that to say "I am now perceiving this sense

datum, and I have in the past perceived sense data of these other kinds" is doubtlessly true, but he adds there is no way to analyze the proposition so as to make it certain (Moore 1966: 58). Once again, common sense is invoked to deal with knowledge that is post-sensory but pre-rational.

Moore's paper indicates how common sense, or its denial, triggered two of the major philosophical movements of the twentieth century: ordinary language philosophy, led by Wittgenstein, and linguistic analysis, beginning with Leibniz and championed in the twentieth century by Bertrand Russell and Rudolf Carnap. The former held that philosophy must recover the ordinary meanings and uses of language to stay connected to the life world, while the latter held that ordinary language was inadequate for philosophy and that philosophy had to construct a language that was free of the confusion that bedeviled daily speech. In each movement, *sensus communis* survives as an absence.

The twentieth-century rhetorician who reflected on *sensus communis*, though without using that term, was Richard Weaver. Weaver conceptualized the first meaning of *sensus communis* in an essay entitled "The Spaciousness of the Old Rhetoric." The "old rhetoric" to which Weaver referred was nineteenth-century rhetoric. Its spaciousness was all the "uncontested terms" that could be invoked without fear of challenge, value-laden words like "freedom," "valor," "purity," and the like. As one can see, however, Weaver thought *sensus communis*, in the first sense, had disappeared just as twentieth-century philosophers thought its second sense had disappeared. Weaver, however, a political conservative and Southern Agrarian, felt duty bound to fight for its life. But he was no populist. He spelled out his synthesis of rhetoric and dialectic, *sensus communis* and philosophical truth, in his "Plato's *Phaedrus* and the Nature of Rhetoric" (1953). There he argues that the responsible orator must first find the truth by dialectic, then re-present it to an audience to persuade them of it. Weaver held steadfastly to a Platonic notion of truth, while at the same time defending traditional social values. He is the last defender of *sensus communis* as that concept was articulated by Vico and Shaftesbury.

In the last quarter-century both philosophy and rhetoric have been occupied with finding some kind of substitute for *sensus communis*. Richard Rorty's "solidarity" comes to mind, for Rorty locates a consensus of value at the level of gross acts of cruelty (Rorty 1990: 141–68). About those at least, he says, we can all agree, but apparently not about much else. Contemporary rhetoric has turned to conceptualizing the sense of communities within communities. The loss of a *sensus communis* has opened up opportunities to investigate how values, conflicts, and persuasion function in communities that were outside the *sensus communis* as Weaver or Vico imagined it. Dozens of composition textbooks now flood the market presenting the student with views of communities: racial, ethnic, gender, occupational, and the like. At the same time, the texts try to present a variety of viewpoints on social issues: abortion, drugs, media, poverty, etc. Such texts challenge the view of *sensus communis* inherited from the eighteenth century to the extent that they do not consider the possibility of a *common* fund of values or judgments but rather a spectrum of views.

The disappearance of *sensus communis* has set the agenda for rhetoric and philosophy for the coming century. The reemergence of the Sophists as a serious subject for scholarly inquiry illustrates that rhetoric is returning to its origins in the face of a multiplicity of values and of diverse communities. Similarly, philosophy, and especially ethics, confronts serious issues in public value that seem to require a kind of public consensus. John Rawls' (1999) "public reason" is the latest attempt to fill the void left by the discrediting of *sensus communis*. It remains to be seen if any conception, rhetorical or philosophical, will succeed in filling that void.

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Judgment

Arts of Persuasion and Judgment: Rhetoric and Aesthetics

Anthony J. Cascardi

During the course of what appears to be nothing more than an excursus in the "Analytic of the Sublime," Kant proposes a distinction that proves telling for the relationship between persuasion and judgment in the third Critique and, on a larger scale, for the relationship between rhetoric and aesthetics in the formative period of modernity. Referring to the "arts of speech" ("die redenden Künste"), Kant outlines a contrast between rhetoric (*Beredsamkeit*) and poetry (*Dicht-kunst*) which is, to say the least, prejudicially weighted against rhetoric in favor of poetry:

> Beredasmkeit ist die Kunst, ein Geschäft des Verstandes als ein fries Spiel der Einbul-dingskraft zu betreiben; Dichtkunst, ein fries der Einbildungskraft als enin Geschäft des Verstandes auszuführen.
>
> Rhetoric is the art of transacting a business of the understanding as if it were a free play of the imagination; poetry that of conducting a free play of the imagin-ation as if it were a serious business of the understanding. (Kant 1986: 184; 1995: 207)

The task of the rhetorician and the task of the poet stand in inverse relationship to one another as far as the balance between "serious business" (*Geschäft*) and "play" (*Spiel*) is concerned, though not in quite the straightforward way that one might expect. For in Kant's estimation rhetoric and poetry are not just opposed but are also crossed in their purposes and means: "the orator announces a serious business, and for the purpose of entertaining his audience conducts it as if it were a mere play with ideas. The poet promises an entertaining play with ideas, and yet for the understanding there enures as much as if the promotion of its business had been his one intention" (Kant 1986: sec. 51, p. 185). Most damaging to rhetoric, perhaps, is Kant's claim that the orator's discourse yields less than what it promises to deliver; it is free (where freedom is ideal), but falsely so, since in it the freedom of the imagination, its "free play," never

leads to genuine understanding. It is a swindler's art. In Kant's words, "the orator . . . gives something which he does not promise, viz., an entertaining play of the imagination. On the other hand, there is something in which he fails to come up to his promise, and a thing, too, which is his avowed business, namely, the engagement of the understanding to some end" (Kant 1986: sec. 51, p. 185). Rhetoric is thus a form of "chatter," and it is a particularly dangerous one insofar as it advertises itself as something else, something more serious and valuable. By contrast, Kant's estimation is that poetry has accepted a more humble task, in which it handsomely succeeds: "The poet's promise . . . is a modest one, and a mere play with ideas is all he holds out to us, but he accomplishes something worthy of being made a serious business, namely, the using of play to provide food for the understanding, and the giving of life to its concepts by means of the imagination." Kant's conclusion is "the orator in reality performs less than he promises, the poet more" (Kant 1986: sec. 51, p. 185).

This section of the third Critique is uncharacteristic of Kant's aesthetic theory in at least one important respect. The *Critique of Judgment* is not centrally about specific modes of discourse; even less is it interested in making systematic distinctions among the various arts on the basis of the materials or media proper to them. Indeed, Kant's *Critique of Judgment* has the reputation of establishing a dematerialized and disembodied view of aesthetic pleasure – both for the one who experiences it and as concerns the materiality of the means by which that pleasure is produced. This reputation is not wholly unwarranted. Indeed, the question of medium plays a relatively small role in what Kant has to say in the third Critique. Rather, the *Critique of Judgment* concentrates on the problem of how to make aesthetic claims that would be at once subjective and universal, i.e., responsive to our experience of sense-based particulars *and* binding for all. These judgments may on the surface resemble other predications, as when some particular quality or attribute is predicated of an object. The phrase "*x* is red" might seem to be an accurate model for the phrase "*x* is beautiful." But it is not. Kant's notion of aesthetic judgments is that they have an underlying structure that does not involve predication in any ordinary sense at all and, moreover, that beauty and art are not qualities for which there are determinate criteria ("It is only throwing away labor to look for a principle of taste that affords a universal criterion of the beautiful by definite concepts") (Kant 1986: sec. 17, p. 75). In their deep structure, claims about beauty and sublimity are binding assertions about experiences of pleasure and pain that are also irreducibly subjective and particular. They originate in our sensuous and affective responses to particular experiences of pleasure and pain and yet they are assertions that everyone *ought* (in principle) to share.

In the section of the third Critique devoted to rhetoric and poetry, however, Kant attends to concerns that seem at first to be unrelated to the problem of judgment. He attempts a classification of the "arts of speech" based upon what he deems to be the essential characteristics of language as the medium of discourse: word (articulation), gesture (gesticulation), and tone (modulation). But Kant hardly anticipates Hegel's conviction that art is a form of embodied meaning or that it relies upon a medium in some indispensable way. He stands closer to Lessing's belief that, when it comes to

poetry in comparison to painting or sculpture, the highest art is one that does not require the physical senses at all. For Lessing, visual or verbal images presented in discourse and apprehended *in foro interno* offer a wider and freer scope than any of those that we see with our sensory eyes. To be sure, Lessing's *Laocoön* is ostensibly devoted to the idea that discourse (poetry) can be distinguished from image (painting, sculpture) in terms of a contrast between the temporality of language and the spatiality of painting. Time and space are said to constitute the respective "media" of poetry and painting. And yet Lessing's treatment of the differences between these arts is colored by the view that poetry is *also* a discourse of the image, though one that is not restrained by the concreteness that impinges on painting and sculpture.

Kant follows Lessing to the degree that his account of the material elements of speech is placed in the context of a set of questions that ultimately subordinate the status of the tangible media to the ideal of imaginative apprehension and creation. Kant places poetry on a higher plane than rhetoric because it is better suited to the work of genius, in roughly the same way that poetry prevails over painting for Lessing, i.e., because it is the domain of invention rather than of handicraft. Moreover – and this is where Kant differs notably from Lessing – the origin of poetry in the faculty of genius, which sets its own standards of truth in just the way that nature does, stands in sharp contrast to the falsity of rhetorical discourse, which falls not only below the work of the genius but beneath any standard of truth.

> The concept of fine art ... does not permit of the judgment upon the beauty of its product being derived from a rule that has a *concept* as a determining ground ... Consequently fine art cannot of its own self excogitate the rule according to which it is to effectuate its product. But since, for all that, a product can never be called art unless there is a preceding rule, it follows that nature in the individual [and by virtue of the harmony of his faculties] must give the rule to art, i.e. fine art is only possible as a product of genius." (Kant 1986: sec. 46, p. 168)

In *The Ends of Rhetoric* John Bender and David Wellbery make the convincing case that Kant's third Critique caps a long history of philosophical opposition to rhetoric (Bender and Wellbery 1990: 3–39). They argue that the *Critique of Judgment* assembles all the "accusatory motifs" characteristic of philosophy's anti-rhetorical bias: deception, excess, demagogic manipulation, etc. (Bender and Wellbery 1990: 5). The third Critique is a distinctive moment in the course of that history insofar as it salvages poetry for the enterprise of philosophy by aligning it with the work of the genius. Kant's vision of poetry as a "higher" form of speech depends on securing its affiliation with the imaginative originality of the creative genius, while his disparagement of rhetoric depends on the identification of rhetoric as discourse that persuades by deceptive means. This allows Kant to carry forward the philosophical critique of rhetoric that begins in Plato while reclaiming poetry as an ally for philosophy.

> Poetry (which owes its origin almost entirely to genius and is least willing to be led by precepts or example) holds the first rank among all the arts ... Rhetoric, so far as this is

taken to mean the art of persuasion, i.e., the art of deluding by means of a fair semblance (as *ars oratoria*), and not merely excellence of speech (eloquence and style), is a dialectic, which borrows from poetry only so much as is necessary to win over men's minds to the side of the speaker before they have weighed the matter, and to rob their verdict of its freedom. Hence it can be recommended neither for the bar nor the pulpit. For where civil laws, the right of individual persons, or the permanent instruction and determination of men's minds to a correct knowledge and a conscientious observance of their duty is at stake, then it is below the dignity of an undertaking of such moment to exhibit even a trace of the exuberance of wit and imagination, and, still more, of the art of talking men round and prejudicing them in favor of any one. For although such art is capable of being at times directed to ends intrinsically legitimate and praiseworthy, still it becomes reprehensible on account of the subjective injury done in this way to maxims and sentiments, even where objectively the action may be lawful. (Kant 1986: sec. 53, pp. 191–2)

However, it is less widely recognized that Kant's attempt to rescue poetry for philosophy while disparaging rhetoric works in tandem with the elaboration of a theory of judgment that displaces the theory of practical reasoning (*phronēsis*) on which rhetoric based its claims to legitimacy since at least Aristotle. Lacking Aristotle's theory of practical reasoning or the equivalent thereof, rhetoric was bound to appear as a deceptive art of language, with no claims on the understanding whatsoever. Poetry, on the other hand, could be presented as the paragon of discursive activity insofar as it appeals to a *higher* form of understanding than what cognition could produce. Indeed, the eclipse of practical reasoning seems to be a precondition for the elevation of poetry. Moreover, if rhetoric is *a priori* deceptive speech and if poetry is a higher form of language, then there is scarcely room for the arts of persuasion to flourish in relation to practical reasoning. But the theory of aesthetic judgment is hardly unique within Kant's *oeuvre* in this respect. On the contrary, it completes the dissociation of practical reasoning and persuasion that Kant had begun in the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* and in the second Critique. There, Kant diverted moral judgment from the domain of *phronēsis* and subsumed it under an ideal of freedom, which in turn was designed so as to conform with the systematic and universalizing ambitions of critical philosophy. In Kant's notion of aesthetic judgment, the already strained tradition of *phronēsis* came under increasing pressure to have all modes of knowledge conform to standards of universal validity.

Kant's effort in the third Critique was to bring aesthetic reflective judgments as closely as possible in line with cognitive and moral judgments, but he also wanted to fashion an art of judgment that could serve as a bridge between the domains mapped out by the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Pure Practical Reason* (viz., between the realm of "nature" and the realm of "freedom"). Aesthetic reflective judgment was the means by which Kant attempted to repair the appearance of a fissure within the sphere of "experience," which should comprise a whole in spite of its division into two realms. But his method of repairing this gap involved the claim

that aesthetic judgments are *unlike* cognitive and moral judgments in at least one important respect: they are "non-subsumptive." This means that, rather than begin with universal categories and fit particulars to them, aesthetic reflective judgments begin from particulars and proceed to find the universal categories suitable for them. In the most challenging and significant cases, this involves calling the categories of judgment into being, or recalling them, in case it is supposed that they were once in place but have somehow vanished or been eclipsed. Moreover, it is never to be supposed that once these categories are found they form a stable resource or can be systematically applied. Rather, it is the task of art to call for categories that must ever be invented anew. (Hence the conviction that modernism in the arts goes to the core of what is essential about art as such.) I will return to the matter of the "grounds" of aesthetic judgments later in this essay. For now I wish simply to note that aesthetic judgments would seem poised to take advantage of the principles that were developed throughout the tradition of practical reasoning by virtue of the fact that they ascribe primacy to particulars and work in a non-subsumptive fashion. Consider practical reasoning as regards the relationship between "universals" and the particular actions that are required in various circumstances. There is nothing about the notion of "human being" from which we can determine how to act in a particular situation, and likewise there is nothing about such notions that allows us to judge actions that have been performed. Situations are variable and so practical judgments must take the case in question as having precedence over general rules. So too with aesthetic judgments. There is nothing in the notion of "beauty" that will tell us in advance whether such an idea can justly be invoked in relation to a particular aspect of nature or a work of art. Indeed, it is wrong to think of "beauty" as a category that preexists its instantiation in the act of aesthetic judgment, which always refers to some particular case. Just as in practical reasoning, the particular aesthetic case takes precedence over the universal category; the universal is in an important respect subordinate to the particular case. And yet the Kantian hope is for aesthetic judgments to have the validity characteristic of cognitive judgments, for them to be relieved of historical variability, and for them to be made immune to the fluctuations imposed by culture, time, and place. Kant's theory of aesthetic reflective judgment is thus quite unlike Aristotle's practical reasoning, which attempts to incorporate variability into its very form. Kant begins from particulars but hopes to dispense with the contingency that is integral to the way in which practical reasoning must function in the world. The result is a negation of the process by which the world's variability itself enters into the formation of the character of the wise "judge" (cf. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, I. 3, p. 3: "each man judges well the things he knows, and of these he is a good judge. And so the man who has been educated in a subject is a good judge of that subject, and the man who has received an all-round education is a good judge in general"). Of course, it needs to be recognized that Aristotelian practical reasoning is meant to issue in action, whereas Kant's aesthetic reflective judging belongs to a domain in which purposiveness is characterized by its purposelessness. But as far as the validity and universality of aesthetic judging are concerned, Kant regards claims of taste as on a par with all other

forms of knowledge. They represent assertions that ought to be universally binding and which everyone "ought" to share.

One important prong of the Kantian subordination of rhetoric to poetry can thus be understood in terms of a contrast with the discourse of practical reasoning that goes back to Aristotle. Especially relevant to this contrast is Aristotle's view of the scope and limits of the kind of knowledge that can appropriately be expected in practical matters. Near the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle explains that it would be mistaken to hope for an equal degree of certainty in all fields of inquiry. The kind of certainty that one has a right to expect in matters of cognition is not apt to be forthcoming where human action is concerned. The two thus call for very different modes of discourse, and this serves as one of the grounds on which the divisions within philosophy can be made: "Our discussion," he says at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* "will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject matter admits of, for precision is not to be sought for alike in all discussions, any more than in all the products of the crafts" (*NE*, I. 3, p. 3). Kant echoes Aristotle's dictum in the passage from the "Preface" to the third Critique cited below, but rather than to acknowledge these differences, Kant's supervening motive is to excuse his own admitted "failure" to meet the standards of reasoning that he deems required in order to deduce the principle of aesthetic reflective judgment (i.e., standards which would be required for the deduction of *any* principle of judgment):

> I venture to hope that the difficulty of unraveling a problem so involved in its nature may serve as an excuse for a certain amount of hardly avoidable obscurity in its solution...I admit that the mode of deriving the phenomena of judgment from that principle has not all the lucidity that is rightly demanded elsewhere, where the subject is cognition by concepts. (Kant 1986: Preface, pp. 6–7)

By contrast, Aristotle is clear that the degree of certainty and completeness in any philosophical investigation will vary according to the matter to be considered. As regards reasoning in the domain of *praxis*, he argues that actions are inherently variable and that conclusions in this field can therefore only be stated "roughly and in outline":

> Fine and just actions, which political science investigates, exhibit much variety and fluctuation, so that they may be thought to exist only by convention, and not by nature. And goods exhibit a similar fluctuation because they bring harm to many people...We must be content, then, in speaking of such subjects and with such premises to indicate the truth roughly and in outline, and in speaking about such things which are only for the most part true, and with premises of the same kind, to reach conclusions that are no better...It is the mark of an educated man to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits; *it is evidently equally foolish to accept probable reasoning from a mathematician and to demand from a rhetorician demonstrative proofs.* (*NE,* I. 3, p. 3; emphasis added)

At the same time, Aristotle is clear that rhetoric serves the interests of dialectic. It is, he says famously, the "counterpart" of dialectic, meaning that it offers modes of proof and discovery in situations where cognition is not appropriate, i.e., where the knowledge we need involves the practical sense of what to do (or, in rhetoric, what to say) (Aristotle 1991: 66).

As for the power of rhetoric to pursue discovery, it is part of the discursive process by which different views about an issue may disclose what is true and what is false. Gadamer offers a particularly cogent formulation of the way in which the rhetorical powers of discovery are not limited by the constraints that bear upon the sciences, and in fact can more readily incorporate "new knowledge":

> Convincing and persuading, without being able to prove – these are obviously as much the aim and measure of understanding and interpretation as they are the aim and measure of the art of oration and persuasion. And this whole wide realm of convincing "persuasions" and generally reigning views has not been gradually narrowed by the progress of science, however great it has been; rather, this realm extends to take in every new product of scientific endeavor, claiming it for itself and bringing it within its cope. (Gadamer 1997: 63–4)

I will address the matter of rhetorical "proofs" below, in part as a way to amplify Gadamer's suggestion that rhetoric convinces and clarifies where other forms of proof are impossible. But first I want to underscore some of the further differences between Aristotle and Kant, especially as concerns the way Kant removes aesthetics from the domain of practical reasoning. Rather than model the critique of aesthetic reflective judgment along the lines of *phronēsis*, Kant chooses to fashion it along the lines of the "isolated metaphysics" of morals that he outlined both in the second Critique and in the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Kant 1969: 31). The question of aesthetic judgment moves outside the domain of rhetoric when Kant argues that his work involves an investigation of taste as a faculty that is "not undertaken with a view to the formation or culture of taste (which will pursue its course in the future, as in the past, independently of such inquiries), but . . . merely directed to its transcendental aspects" (Kant 1986: Preface, p. 6). The validity of aesthetic reflective judgments in turn requires an imperative that mirrors that of the moral law. Judgments of beauty and sublimity do not, in their ideal form, fall within the domain of persuasion because Kant wishes to place them outside the "culture of taste," hence outside the domain of the normative or the probable. He wishes judgments of taste to claim a universal validity that would be binding for all.

In respect of the "ought" that drives the commitment to universality in the *Critique of Judgment*, the Kantian model of aesthetic judgment mirrors the qualities of the Kantian moral imperative (*FMM*, p. 34). But what specifically is the nature of this "ought"? Speaking of the moral imperative, Kant characterizes it as a kind of "law" that mirrors the lawfulness of the natural world in the domain of freedom. At this juncture, the operative distinction for Kant is not so much between laws of nature and

laws of morality – for both in the end are laws – but between grounds of action that can be universalized and those that cannot. This is likewise the distinction between those moral principles that merely "advise" and those that truly "command," but hence also the distinction between those motives that can enter into the arena of persuasion and those that cannot. There is no persuading as far as moral imperatives are concerned. They are binding on us insofar as we are rational beings. But Kant's description of a principle that advises rather than commands is inherently prejudicial against persuasion insofar as that principle is reducible to a form of "self-love": "The maxim of self-love [prudence] merely advises; the law of morality commands" (Kant 1956: 37).

Moreover, Kant argues that the moral law cannot be arrived at or proved by examples, much less by induction or imitation (Kant 1969: 29, 44). Obedience to the law (to the law as such) must not be based on the obedience to any particular law. Deconstructive critics such as J. Hillis Miller have shrewdly shown that the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* is laden with examples, and especially with examples of the narrative sort. And yet the aims that Hillis Miller identifies with narrative can more properly be ascribed to the rhetorical function of discourse insofar as they attempt to span the gap between the moral law as such and the particular laws that we must obey. Narratives form a bridge between moral particulars and the universal moral law:

> Across the gap between the law as such and the immediate work in the real world of the practical reason must be cast a little fictional narrative. This narrative must be on both sides of the gulf at once, or lead from one to the other. It must be within the law as such, and it must at the same time give practical advice for the choices of the pure will in a particular case in the real work of history, society, and my immediate obligations to those around me. If the story I tell myself is a fictional narrative, it must be at the same time firmly implanted, like a bridge's abutments, on both sides of the chasm, in the law as such, which is no chimera, and in the real world where my choices and actions have real effects. (Miller 1987: 28)

But Hillis Miller's larger argument revolves around the belief that Kant's narrative examples are bound to contradict whatever law or principle they might serve to illustrate. One case he takes up is the story of a promise made by someone with the intention *not* to keep it. "What Kant actually shows," he writes, "is that the social order depends on a precarious intralinguistic and interpersonal agreement to go on meaning the same thing by words" (Miller 1987: 36). Linguistic agreements are of course "precarious"; they do not have the kind of guarantee that Kant might hope to find as a model for moral judgments. But the upshot of this claim is not the deconstructive lesson of a work whose own "rhetoric" undermines its *doxa* or a demonstration of the "unreadability" of the text (ibid), but rather the evidence that Kantian ethics seems to need a rhetorical framework even where rhetoric is denied a place in the exercise of judgment.

In classical rhetoric, the example – narrative or otherwise – furnishes a viable mode of "proof," one that Aristotle regards as a counterpart of logical induction. Narrative examples have the rhetorical force of proof in the same way that an account by a witness may help to prove a case in legal contexts. Indeed, Aristotle goes so far as to explain precisely how narrative proofs and examples should be placed within a larger argument or inquiry. When located at the beginning of a rhetorical inquiry, in advance of other forms of proof, one example may seem to call for others as a way to reinforce the grounds that make for a successful and convincing case. But, of course, the question of just how many examples are required is something that cannot be stipulated. That question has itself to do with the judgment and skill of the orator, including the orator's judgment about matters of composition that fall within the "aesthetic" domain. By contrast, when placed at the end of a discourse, a single narrative example may suffice. Here it is no longer a question of providing the material on which to build a convincing case, but rather of *adding* to arguments that have already been presented:

> When displayed at the start [examples] resemble induction, and induction is not suited to rhetoric except in a few cases, but as supplements [examples] are like witnesses, and a witness is always persuasive; so too if one puts examples first, one must give many, but as a supplement one example would suffice; for even one good witness is useful. (Aristotle 1991: 190–1)

Regardless of whether a narrative example precedes the thesis it supports or follows it, the Aristotelian notion of the rhetorical *exemplum* does not produce the kind of anxiety that is associated with the logic of the supplement in deconstructive contexts. But the deconstructive reading of Kant's third Critique seems to ignore Kant's links to the rhetorical tradition that Kant proposes to reject.

Kant clearly recognizes that there is something distinctive and unique about the imperative at work in aesthetic reflective judgments, something not reducible to the schematism of cognitive judgments. While the imperative force of aesthetic judgment is such that it should be universally binding, Kant also says that the agreements given in matters of taste are *conditional*. In what does this "conditionality" consist, and how can it possibly be reconciled with the force of the "ought" at work in aesthetic judgments? Kant's characterization is as follows:

> The judgment of taste exacts agreement from everyone; and a person who describes something as beautiful insists that everyone *ought* to give the object in question his approval and follow suit in describing it as beautiful. The *ought* in aesthetic judgments, therefore, despite an accordance with all the requisite data for passing judgment, is still only passed *conditionally*. We are suitors for agreement from everyone else, because we are fortified with a ground common to all. Further, we would be able to count on this agreement, provided we were always assured of the correct subsumption of the case under that ground as the rule of approval. (Kant 1986: sec. 19, p. 82)

Aesthetic judgments are "conditional" because judgments of taste are dependent on a common sense that must itself be presupposed, much in the way that, in making proofs, Aristotle's theory of the enthymeme appeals to something that "everyone" would commonly accept. "The judgment of taste," Kant says, "depends on our presupposing the existence of a common sense...Only under the presupposition, I repeat, of such a common sense, are we able to lay down a judgment of taste" (Kant 1986: sec. 20, p. 83).

Aristotle regards the enthymeme as an effective and important part of persuasion because it relies on beliefs that "everyone" shares.[1] Etymologically, the term "enthymeme" appears to derive from the root *thymos*, and suggests the kind of things that people would know "by heart" (Walker 1994: 46–65). The enthymeme is sometimes also referred to as a syllogism in which the major premise is missing. The major premise is "missing" in the sense of being held tacit because it can be assumed to be known by all members of an audience. Consider the syllogism: "All men are bipeds (major premise); John is a man (minor premise); therefore John is a biped." The enthymeme form of this same argument would suppress the major premise; hence, "John is a man, therefore he is a biped." Or, to take another example, consider the syllogism "Only dark-haired individuals should rule" (major premise); "John has light hair" (minor premise); "therefore he should not rule." In its enthymeme form the major premise would be eliminated; hence "John has light hair, so he should not rule."

In Aristotle's view, the ability to make sound judgments on practical matters is a privilege of members of the polis and is an especially important quality in those who would govern. But the possibility of learning the art of judgment requires that one is already a member of the polis. Likewise, the art of rational persuasion, of making rhetorical arguments on the basis of an element such as the enthymeme, requires a fund of beliefs held in common by the members of a given discourse community. There is thus a reason why someone like Cicero would imagine there to be consistency in matters of judgment (though not in matters of art, or in other forms of making). Indeed, Cicero's logic has it that there is little difference between the learned and the ignorant in matters of judging. As Hannah Arendt suggested, the consistency of judgment that Cicero sees comes from the existence of a "common sense," where the *sensus communis* is understood as the opposite of *sensus privatus*. Cultivation of the *sensus privatus* leads in extreme cases to a form of incommunicability that suggests a deep anti-sociability. Arendt goes so far as to link it with insanity, though the root of the notion of "idiocy" might be more appropriate to the case, viz., that which has separated itself from the experience that can be validated only in the presence of others (Arendt 1992: 64). What Arendt regards as most surprising is Kant's decision to develop the notion of "common sense" through a figure as apparently as "private" as that of taste. For, in its gustatory form, taste would seem to be the most private and least communicative of experiences (Korsmeyer 1999). The things one tastes (and smells) cannot, in themselves, be communicated at all. By contrast, the objects of sight, hearing, and touch are all concerned with external objects in some more patent

way. They are things that can be experienced by others and those experiences can be shared, talked about, and so on.

But Kant makes clear that the *sensus communis* is, in the end, a form of feeling or affect rather than a disposition of mind, a set of beliefs, a common set of practices, *or* a purely physical experience like that of gustatory taste. It is a *sensus communis aestheticus*. It has its basis in the pleasure (or pain) we associate with the representation of something, which remains unaccounted for within the terms of representation. Kant's task in the *Critique of Judgment* – a task hardly to be underestimated – is to demonstrate the universal validity of claims that are precipitated by these "private" feelings where the "common sense" ("common feeling") that is the basis of their validity cannot be proved or demonstrated *a priori*. When Kant says that in making aesthetic judgments we solicit the agreement of everyone else he is indicating a place that rhetoric might well occupy – the place of persuading – while neglecting (and in some instances denying) the resources and means that rhetoric had developed for this very purpose.

And yet there is a strange affinity between Kant's theory of aesthetic reflective judgment and the rhetorical enthymeme that may be worth pursuing. If the enthymeme suggests the common ground of assumptions that make arguments possible outside the strictures of the syllogism, Kant invokes the *sensus communis* as that which aesthetic judgments presuppose, i.e., as the very thing on which the universal validity of their claims relies. The possibility of seeking and granting agreement in matters of aesthetic judgment is based on the ideal of a community of sense that precedes anything that human beings may share in the realms of knowledge or praxis. Aesthetic common sense is something Kant imagines as existing prior to the moment when cognition and morality were separate. This "common sense" is a trace of the unity of experience insofar as it reminds us of a moment when knowledge was itself pleasurable and pleasure a form of knowledge. It is only because we can imagine ourselves as sharing in a common feeling that we can expect our claims about beauty and sublimity to carry universal assent.

> The discovery…that two or more empirical heterogeneous laws of nature are allied under one principle that embraces them both, is the ground of a very appreciable pleasure, often even of admiration, and such, too, as does not wear off even though we are already familiar enough with its object. It is true that we no longer notice any decided pleasure in the comprehensibility of nature, or in the unity of its divisions into genera and species, without which the empirical concepts, that afford us our knowledge of nature in its particular laws, would not be possible. Still it is certain that the pleasure appeared in due course, and only by reason of the most ordinary experience being impossible without it, has it become gradually fused with simple cognition, and no longer arrests particular attention. (Kant 1986: Introduction, VI, pp. 27–8)

This passage from the "Introduction" to the third Critique suggests that we can assume the existence of a *sensus communis* because there was once a convergence of cognition and pleasure. The dissolution of the bond between pleasure and cognition

has consequences in two directions. Just as cognition is no longer immediately pleasurable, so too pleasure does not directly offer itself as a source of, or as grounds for, knowledge. In making aesthetic judgments we must solicit the agreement of everyone about matters that refer to feelings; we must, as Kant says, act as "suitors" for their agreement on such matters ("Man wirbt um jedes andern Bestimmung"; Kant 1995: 100). But, as noted above, Kant also says that those agreements are "conditioned" (*bedingt*). Kant says little else about this conditionality, except to remark that it reflects the impossibility of predicting the accurate subsumption of any given case under some ground as the rule for its approval. It would hardly strain the text to read this conditionality thus: agreement in matters of aesthetic judgment depends upon the speculative assumption of a (prior) unity of pleasure and cognition. But this still does not guarantee those judgments in the way that the logic of subsumptive judgments works ("auf welche Bestimmung man auch rechnen könnte, wenn man nur immer sicher wäre, dass der Fall unter jenem Gruunde als Regel des Beifalls richtig subsumiert wäre"; Kant 1995: 100–1).

How then can my (subjective) feeling be aligned with the sense or feeling that is common to all? The answer points to an *aporia* in the theory of judgment that Kant himself recognizes as unresolvable: judgments of taste can command universal assent because the subject *already* shares in a common feeling. The aporetic element in Kant's thinking lies in the fact that the basis for such identification precedes the particular judgment at issue just as it is also sought in it. This is the blind spot in Kant's liberal theory of aesthetics; it is the very thing that causes him to acknowledge that the principles of aesthetic reflective judgment cannot be proved to the satisfaction of reason. The result, he says in the Preface to the *Critique of Judgment*, is a rather serious "difficulty" in the theory of aesthetic judgment. But this difficulty is also Kant's alibi (Kant 1986: Preface, pp. 6–7). Kant's admission of a "blind spot" in the logic of the *sensus communis* is thus a way of recognizing that aesthetic judgment results in the production of what Ernesto Laclau has called "tendentially empty signifiers," i.e., signifiers that ask predications of an object to stand in for affective qualities of the subject (e.g., Kant's designations "beautiful" and "sublime"). Kant maintains the incommensurability between universals and particulars by asserting that there are no criteria for judgments of beauty and, likewise, no rules for the production of works of art by the genius. Things of beauty cannot be judged one way or another in terms of their adherence to pre-established rules. But at the same time Kant expects that particulars can indeed serve to represent the universal: beauty as such and, beyond beauty, morality (cf. Kant 1986: Sec. 59, "Beauty as a Symbol of Morality").[2] When Kant says that poetry surpasses rhetoric he has in mind not only a diminished view of rhetoric but also a form of discourse (poetry) and a mode of production (genius) that would establish its own rules.

It was after Kant, with the development of the theory of ideology in Marx and Althusser, that "universal" principles such as that of common sense came under critical scrutiny in ways that help establish the links between ideology critique and the rhetorical tradition that Kant attempts to foreclose. Understood in its simplest

mode, i.e., as a form of systematic "false consciousness," the notion of ideology calls into question the possibility of viewing the social field as a site for the kind of judgments that the notion of "common sense" would seem to imply. Kant's critique of rhetoric, of course, is that it is ideological in this rudimentary sense. But the very matter that Kant wishes to invoke as enabling aesthetic reflective judgments is in turn what ideology critique finds most suspicious: the *sensus communis*. If the social field is opaque, if it is not a domain in which common sense is evenly distributed and works freely and universally (i.e., commonly), this is because some form of "persuasion" is always and everywhere at work in society. Power and influence are unevenly distributed, but this unevenness is nonetheless made to appear natural in part by dint of the unity of knowledge and affect. If we consider the mechanisms that sustain this opacity, and the mechanisms by which individuals are drawn to accept it, then we can also see that what rhetorical theory recognizes as "persuasion" occurs within ideological frameworks insofar as there must be some imaginary or affective basis for the relationship between individual social institutions that purport to articulate universal laws. But in specifying that the *sensus communis* is not the *sensus communis logicus* but the *sensus communis aestheticus*, Kant unwittingly articulates the means by which "common sense" is not merely rhetorical but ideological as well.

As developed by Althusser, ideology describes a mechanism whereby some universal category, institution, or class is able to solicit the assent of individuals by prestructuring identity in accordance with its terms. Ideology is that which defines the imaginary or affective relationship to one's conditions of existence insofar as the subject is thereby granted a share in some larger, collective identity (class, profession, gender, nation, and so on). The well-known phenomenon that Althusser calls "interpellation" refers specifically to the means by which an individual is granted his or her (particular) identity by virtue of being hailed by institutions that occupy hegemonic positions in society (church, state, medical bureaucracy, educational system, and the rest). But the subject's response to the "call" of the universal must be affective if the conditions for the reproduction of social institutions are to be explained. Recall that Althusser's goal in the essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" is not just to account for subject formation but also to explain the means by which the conditions of production are themselves reproduced (Althusser 1994). The result is an understanding of subject formation and of social adhesion that provides a critical perspective on the enthymeme and on aesthetic reflective judgments insofar as these root in common sense (*logicus* and *aestheticus*, respectively). As we have already seen, the enthymeme is a form of argument in which the major premise – universal category or class – can be omitted because it can be presupposed as commonly accepted. In the Althusserian theory of ideology, the process of subject formation depends upon the assent to general premises that are presupposed in the sense of prestructuring the field in which any particular identifications can be made. Those identifications in turn play an affirmative role, reinforcing the hegemonic institutions by which they appear to be produced.

The Kantian *sensus communis* would be nothing more than a middle term in between the Aristotelian enthymeme and the Althusserian theory of ideology were it not for the fact that Kant acknowledges the affective/imaginary basis on which aesthetic judgments rely. But in saying this, Kant also reveals his connection to the rhetorical tradition he attempts to disown. Aristotle had argued that in matters of judgment "we must have regard not only to the speech's being demonstrative and persuasive, but also to *establishing the speaker himself as of a certain type and bringing the giver of judgments into a certain condition*" (Aristotle 1991: 140). The formation of the ethos of the speaker in turn depends upon affect. The affects (emotions) are, for Aristotle, "those things by the alteration of which men differ with regard to those judgments which pain and pleasure accompany, such as anger, pity, fear and all other such and their opposites" (*Rhetoric*, p. 141). But if Kant unwittingly follows in the line of Aristotelian rhetoric (albeit with the significant differences noted above), so too Aristotle's rhetoric can be regarded as a moment in the prehistory of aesthetics. For the objective of rhetoric is judgment (either because men "*give* judgment" on political matters or because a court case "*is* a judgment"), and judgments rely not just on *logos* but on the ethos of the speaker and the pathos of the audience. The emotions that enter into Aristotelian rhetoric are an anticipatory moment in the tradition that Kant initiates for modern times insofar as they refer to what the discursive *logos* cannot independently grasp, viz., to judgments that are accompanied by the elements of pleasure and pain. Far from being part of the swindler's art or an element of ideology, Aristotle suggests that the affects have a legitimate place alongside ethos and *logos* in the twinned projects of persuasion and judgment.

Notes

1 For Aristotle, the method intrinsic to any art has to do with the mode of demonstration proper to it, and for rhetoric this is the enthymeme (*Rhetoric*, p. 68). Enthymeme is, for Aristotle, the "syllogism of rhetoric," and example is the "induction of rhetoric" (*Rhetoric*, p. 75). More important, perhaps, is the claim that the enthymeme is a syllogism of probability: it begins from a major premise that is probable rather than necessary.
2 Cf. Ernesto Laclau, "Identity and Hegemony," in Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 57.

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Part III
Rhetoric and Its Critics

Rhetoric not only offers strategies for informing invention, deliberation, interpretation, and judgment, but it also informs readers' inquiries into and judgments about literary texts. And when rhetoric is "theorized" in a loose sense of the word, giving rise (for example) to what Steven Mailloux calls Rhetorical Hermeneutics, what Walter Jost calls Ordinary Language Criticism, or what James Phelan calls Rhetorical Reader-Response Criticism,[1] their meta-level reflections are not driven by or grounded in anything other than what are meant to be persuasive arguments about the phenomena in question. To be sure, these critics have philosophical and other commitments behind them. But their critical topoi are not beholden to any *systematic* body of knowledge preceding their own inquiries. In this way they are resolutely inductive (or pragmatic, or phenomenological) thinkers.

Walter Jost, for example, argues that a reader in command of rhetorical knowledge and sensibilities is in a position to appreciate what he calls a long line of "low modernist" American artists and writers, preeminent among them Robert Frost. Rhetorically informed criticism discerns a writer's profound concern with using the resources of ordinary language and understanding to create a critical art not in league with the everyday and ordinary. Distinguishing between the epiphanic aims of high modernist literature and the "epideictic" strategies of writing and reading characteristic of low modernists, Jost suggests that a rhetorical narrative of the modern, long repressed, is now poised to return.

Other essays address the way in which rhetoric and history interrelate. These theorist-critics look at the ways in which author, text, reader, and critical context interact. Peter J. Rabinowitz considers the way these elements relate to an interpretive "frame," an agreed upon base that readers share, one that encourages them to employ one set of reading strategies rather than another. The fact that reading is guided by rules of coherence and genre does not discount the ways in which texts are open to more than one interpretive procedure. Rabinowitz demonstrates how crucial deliberation and choice are in determining an appropriate procedure by showing the

implications that a choice of frameworks has for readings of James Cain's *The Butterfly* and especially Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*.

Drawing on a theory of reader response, James Phelan engages the issue of readers and their responsibilities to authors such as Edith Wharton. Phelan argues that Wharton's "Preface" to *Ghosts* (1937) invites readers "to approach her narrative as rhetorical acts," and Phelan takes up this invitation to consider *Roman Fever*. Articulating a model of reader-response criticism through which we understand how readers make stories their own, Phelan analyzes the intricacies of the narrator's relationship to her audience as guided by the design of the text. "The author's treatment of the narrator and the authorial audience will indicate something of his or her ethical commitments. And the audience members' response to the narrative will indicate their commitments to the attitudes toward the author, the narrator, the narrative situation, and to the values expressed in the narrative." In this way Phelan's treatment of *Roman Fever* links its technique to ethical consequences.

Adam Zachary Newton also investigates reader response interactions in the work of W. G. Sebald, this time to emphasize the gaps that sometimes "separate strong poets and their audiences." Sebald's rhetoric "unsettles the footing" of the reader. In response, Newton's essay proposes a "hermeneutics of excursion and pursuit" in which Sebald's writing figures as a *topography*, "built upon topoi in the twinned senses of subject and locality." The writing "ventures horizontally," it "insistently embarks, migrates, relocates."

Finally, James Crosswhite, employing a kind of topical analysis similar to those used by Smigelskis and Olmsted in Part Two, shows that the work of Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca offers a vast repertoire for rhetorical invention. According to Crosswhite, late twentieth-century rhetoric has at least four chief characteristics: its "return as philosophy"; its development by figures largely outside of (or marginal within) traditional academic institutions; the context of its development being European military conflicts and destructiveness; and its "guiding concern with reason and argumentation." Using rhetoric as an "architectonic" method, Crosswhite then demonstrates how Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's notion of "philosophical pairs" can help unpack the "debate over the wilderness" now raging among environmentalists, foresters, indeed the entire society whose interests are at stake.

Note

1   See, for example, Steven Mailloux, *Rhetorical Power* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989) and "Articulation and Understanding: The Pragmatic Intimacy Between Rhetoric and Hermeneutics," in Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde, eds., *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 378–94; Kenneth Dauber and Walter Jost, eds., *Ordinary Language Criticism: Literary Thinking After Cavell After Wittgenstein* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2003); Walter Jost, *Rhetorical Investigations: Studies in Ordinary Language Criticism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004); and James Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1996).

Epiphany and Epideictic: The Low Modernist Lyric in Robert Frost

Walter Jost

I

It has long been a commonplace that most romantic and high modernist poetry and fiction, in line with Wordsworth's famous descriptions and enactments of those special "spots of time" in *The Prelude* (1805; Book 12, line 208), is written in what Robert Langbaum has called "the epiphanic mode" (Langbaum 1987: 35–56). In a seminal essay Langbaum has noted that literary epiphany has gathered unto itself various but more or less convergent meanings: an "intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (Pound), "one of those rare moments of awakening" in which occurs "everything in a flash" (Conrad), an "involuntary memory" in which the past is suddenly recaptured (Proust), and, in one of Joyce's several renderings, "he [Stephen Dedalus] meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phrase of the mind itself. It was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments." To William Faulkner, similarly, the modern(ist) writer seeks "to arrest for a believable moment" a particular life experience, while F. Scott Fitzgerald declared that he, Wolfe, and Hemingway each strove "to recapture the exact feel of a moment in space and time," precisely, in his view, "what Wordsworth was trying to do" (Beja 1971: 19).

This last point has been more finely adjusted by the philosopher Charles Taylor, who makes an important distinction between what Wordsworth was trying to do and what most literary high modernists wanted, the distinction, I mean, between a romantic "epiphany of being," in which some superior reality or order antedating the self is symbolically expressed or pointed to, made manifest; and the ironic, high modernist "epiphany of form" (Taylor 1989: 456–93). In the latter, semantic implications of the romantic Symbol have given way to far more plastic manifestations of

formal energies – for example, those emotional and (especially) *visual* condensations to be found in Pound's early imagism and vorticism or in Williams' dramas of desire (Perloff 1991: ch. 3) ; or the *Nichtigkeit* lurking throughout the works of Kafka, Musil, and Beckett; or again, in the American grain, rumors of order inseparable from, ingredient in, the formal architecture of the work itself, as in Stevens' "The Idea of Order at Key West."

In either case, of course – whether of being or of form – "epiphany" serves both the romantic and the modernist reactions against Enlightenment rationalism. The romantic reaction, virtually co-opting Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) in order to effect what his transcendental Categories could not, empowered individual psychology almost to the point of animism. While Kant insisted that Order and Law are noumena that man could only (indeed "must") posit *als ob* ("as if"), but can never know in themselves (Kant 1929: 257ff.), Coleridge, and at times Wordsworth, treat Kantian "manifestation" or "appearance" (*epiphansis*) of phenomena or freedom rather as a "visitation" of the Sublime occurring *within* phenomena, an inroad of Being that circumvents the limits set by philosophy in a special, emotional "spot of time." The modernist reaction, in its turn, recasts such romantic visitation as an "eruption" (so to speak) of strictly *human* powers – "epiphany" now not as an inroad of anything, nor as a transcendentally *necessary* "as if," but rather as a *willed* "as if," willed now as a "Supreme Fiction," a fashioning (and self-fashioning) accomplished in the form of the modern work of art.

It is, however, in the modern work of art that epiphany's generic claim to momentousness is at odds with its own momentariness, its historicity. In this regard a nuanced essay by Herbert Tucker (1992: 1208–21) has sought to "rehabilitate" epiphany, as Tucker puts it, that is, to prise it free from its ahistoricist essentializing by New Critics and their epigones. By resituating the epiphanic moment within larger historical, narratival, and social structures, using Browning as his example, Tucker opens up a passage into what I propose only programmatically here, namely that a much-needed *complement* to the literary notion of epiphany is currently lacking, and that it is to be found in reconsidering the theory and practice of the historical genre and dimension of rhetoric called "epideictic" (Johnson 1982; Walker 1989: 5–27) . While Tucker's reworking of epiphany seems eminently reasonable to me in illuminating a poet like Browning, his making the term almost synonymous with the historical nature of textuality itself risks underplaying poetic qualities that many high modernists (and not New Critics only) cherished: essence, the incongruity of epiphany and precipitating event, epiphany's rational unaccountability, and other characteristics discussed below. More importantly, even a historicized notion of epiphany will ultimately fail to articulate the quite different kind of "showing forth" aimed at by poets like Frost, Williams, Moore, Auden, and others (including, at times, postmodernists such as Charles Bernstein and Susan Howe).

Compared to "epiphany," the noun form of epideictic – an epideixis – sounds unpleasantly neologistic; yet the category of epideictic, however we choose to name it, can help us locate an important but neglected development in literary modernism.

The advantage of my insisting on what at first may seem an anachronistic conceptual genre resides in suggesting a distinct category better suited specifically to Robert Frost and more generally to what I have elsewhere called "low modernist" writers (Jost 2004). In other words, I am looking to enable others to plot a graduated scale between the contrary points of epiphany and epideictic – hence between high and low modernist poets and writers – one whose characteristics can be better shaded *ad hoc* to suit particular cases. In this way we can account for low modernists in the terms of their own language-games rather than impose terms from without (as high modernist writers and critics continue to do unawares).

In *Epiphany in the Modern Novel* (1971) Morris Beja offers two criteria for identifying epiphany, and in subsequent work Robert Langbaum adds four more, so that it will be these six that provide me with my own polemical point of departure. By first briefly recalling, however, some historical facts about epideictic, first as rhetorical genre and next (more importantly) as the genus of rhetoric itself, we will improve our chances of making specific contrasts between the epiphanic and the epideictic in modern literature. These contrasts will help me to identify the epideictic impulse in many lyrics of Robert Frost and others to track out analogues elsewhere. My only caveat here is that my summary judgments are intended as topical directives and exempla, not rules, protocols, or formulas, for further invention and judgment as they occur to theorists and critics facing new cases of their own.

Genre

In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, first of all, epideictic is one of the three genres of civic speech. Deliberative oratory, afforded by Aristotle five of the fifteen chapters in Book 1, exhorts and dissuades with respect to some course of future action in political matters. Forensic oratory, given six chapters in the first book of the *Rhetoric*, accuses and defends individuals regarding past actions in legal matters. And the indefinite genre of epideictic oratory, sandwiched between the other two in only a single chapter, awards praise and blame in the present with regard to some person or institution or practice, often as part of some public ceremony or ritual: Pericles' "Funeral Oration" addressed to the grieving Athenians in Thucydides, or, in the American context, Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," are obvious examples. Bracketing for a moment Aristotle's apparent slighting of epideictic, we can note that this is the oratorical genre historically closest to literature, especially to lyric poetry. "In epideictic oratory every device of literary art is appropriate, for it is a matter of combining all the factors that can promote this communion of the audience" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 51), that is, a communion in the shared values of the noble and ignoble as these appear in a public, civic context. When these contexts suffer periodic eclipse, as they did, for example, in the English Renaissance lyric, civic virtues and vices often reappear in more private contexts of seduction and love, while the public or communal function is transmuted into the *poet's* appearing as "civilized" and "appropriate" to

the situation occasioning the verse. "Decorum" then narrows from its having been a sweeping rhetorical principle among the Romans to being a self-conscious "showing" of "civil" speech and behavior, all suitably dolled up, of course, in appropriate wit and conventional styles.

This last point hints at a characteristic ingredient in all epideictic oratory and literature, namely the opportunity it affords the rhetor for self-display. Since the audience can be expected already to identify with many or most of the virtues and vices being praised or blamed, greater attention can be given to the artifice with which the orator or writer achieves his aims. The Renaissance lyric, as is known, showcases all manner of wit, metaphysical or otherwise, while it often assumes highly wrought forms, such as acrostics or typographical patterns or anagrams, or lesser extravagances, as in the sonnet, the poet doing his best to manifest *virtù* in the performance. Indeed, Frost himself often speaks in just this way about his poems: "I look at a poem as a performance. I look on the poet as a man of prowess, just like an athlete. He's a performer. And the things you can do in a poem are very various . . . Every poem is like that: some sort of achievement in performance" (Frost 1999: 890). But this same opportunity for self-display runs the risk of deliquescing into cross showmanship, false posing, hollow oracularity, empty verbiage, "mere rhetoric" – as it does in the Roman period known as the Second Sophistic, and does again in Frost's weakest poems ("cracker barrel" wisdom, clever trivia; to some high moderns the ordure of the ordinary). This remains a standing temptation to any epideictic rhetor and marks an extreme distance from epideictic's original concern with the health of the civic polity.

Genus

However, a second, larger perspective on epideictic is, in my view, more important than the historical vicissitudes of the genre. In fact, long before the Renaissance, in Cicero's *De Oratore* most notably, the debate was already well underway as to whether epideictic (*laudationes*) is properly conceived strictly as a genre on the level of deliberative and forensic at all, chiefly because its signature concerns differ from those of the other rhetorical genres in important ways. First, epideictic activity is less tied to the urgencies of concrete situations than the other two. Second, epideictic possesses a considerable indefiniteness of subject matter, functioning in many ways as a "miscellaneous" bin capable of handling *any* matter in need of amplification, a task virtually synonymous with rhetoric as such. Third, epideictic speech aims less to persuade than to impress or reinforce or acknowledge shared actions, values, and beliefs, the need for which affirmation occurs across all rhetorical situations and genres. In addition, as we have noted, epideictic normally avails itself of a far wider, "literary" range of appeals than deliberative or forensic rhetoric, seeking to amplify, evoke, and realize its subject or subject matter. Eugene Garver concludes that epideictic, even in Aristotle, is better conceived in its relation to rhetoric on the order of *genus* rather than *genre*, inasmuch as

the characteristic method of epideictic is the method of the genus as a whole – arguments concerning the more and less, maximizing and minimizing . . . The existence of epideixis [as genus] provides a mooring in goods independent of particular desires and particular situations. So it is important to our understanding of rhetoric and of its role in ethical life, even though epideictic practice [as genre] is itself not very interesting from the point of view of practical rhetoric. (Garver 1994: 70–3)

Thus we can understand why Aristotle devotes no more than one chapter directly to epideictic – because, in effect, his entire book on rhetoric is given over to it.

Something equally pervasive can be seen in Robert Frost's poetry when we approach it with, not (*pace* Tucker and Langbaum) criteria of epiphany but criteria of epideictic. How shall we locate such criteria? For invention's sake, we can follow Langbaum in explaining six criteria of epiphany, in two groupings of three characteristics each, and applying them to a short story of James Joyce; and then, by analogy and contrast, generating six criteria of epideictic and testing whether they illuminate some poems of Frost.

The first set of criteria for epiphany can be seen to pertain to the existential relationship between the precipitating outward event and the realization it brings about. Thus an epiphany is (1) a sudden change in *outward conditions* that produces a shift in *perception*, (2) a shift that is *instantaneous*, a privileged moment of insight, one which is (3) incongruous with the quality of what produced it, outstripping it in depth, importance, and value. The second set of criteria considers that precipitating event itself, the literary (grammatical and rhetorical) relationship between it and the reader's subsequent realization, and the realization itself. Thus, the precipitating event is not only incongruous with the insight consequent upon it, but (4) trivial or insignificant in itself, regarding which (5) an intellectual and emotional leap is necessary on the reader's part, a leap beyond the fragments of the text to (6) a private psychological insight to be achieved by character or reader or (more typically) both (Langbaum 1987).

Though any example is almost an arbitrary choice here, and though I happen to consider the narrator in Joyce's *Araby* (Joyce 1991: 29–36) not altogether reliable in the account of his transit from pre-epiphanic to epiphanic realization, there can be little doubt that *this* ending of a story (endings being one likely place for epiphanies) is the sort of thing we call an epiphany. At the end of the tale the narrator recalls the moment in his boyhood when, having departed a bazaar at which he arrived late in pursuit of a gift for a girl, he concludes: "Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger" (Joyce 1991: 36). Throughout the story the author has prepared us for this insight, whatever one decides it means. And certainly it is an epiphany rather than (say) a spiritual vision (for it is precipitated and sustained by the physical senses – "Gazing up into the darkness," "my eyes burned" – and not by their suspension). And it fulfills all six of the criteria for epiphany listed above. It is (1) a sudden shift in outward conditions producing a shift in perception (he is too late!) that (2) sparks a rare brief

moment of revelation and insight (from boyish *naïveté* to a more adult "vanity"), (3) the narrator's self-awareness far outrunning (incongruous with) the meretricious carnival midway in which it occurs. In addition, all of the events that culminate in this moment are (4) trivial in themselves, even to the boy, and (5) scattered in such a way that the reader must assemble the fragments of external events and internal reactions, in effect making a "leap" to his or her own experience of (6) psychological change ("anguish") and intimations of changes still to come ("driven and derided by vanity").

II

Though technically and formally a more traditional modernist poet than (say) Stevens or Pound, Frost has written epiphanic poems of great power. One of the better of these is "Iris by Night" (Frost 1999: 288), a lyric about him and a friend (the English poet Edward Thomas) wending their way "one misty evening" (line 1) through "wet fields and dripping hedges home" (line 3), when, of a sudden, "There came a moment of confusing lights" (line 4), "a scene / So watery as to seem submarine" (lines 10–11); "*then* we were vouchsafed the miracle" (line 20, emphasis added)

> That never yet to other two befell
> And I alone of us have lived to tell.
> A wonder! Bow and rainbow as it bent,
> Instead of moving with us as we went,
> (To keep the pots of gold from being found)
> It lifted from its dewy pediment
> Its two mote-swimming many-colored ends,
> And gathered them together in a ring.
> And we stood in it softly circled round
> From all division time and foe can bring
> In a relation of elected friends. (lines 21–31)

Like the epiphany in *Araby*, "Iris by Night" presents a sudden revelation, this time of requited friendship. Speaking more generally, epiphanic realization in Joyce, and again in Frost, offers intimations, at least, of different and sometimes new criteria for assessing one's psychological and spiritual states. Thus the narrator in *Araby* intuits alternative ways of understanding his plight, grounded in alternative, perhaps more realistic ways of defining "courage," "adventure," "maturity," and related concepts; while for his part Frost redefines the nature of his particular relation with Thomas.

Like the epiphanic mode, the epideictic mode of realization can also establish or reconfigure criteria and even (again, like some epiphanies) evoke something more basic than conceptual criteria, what the rhetorically minded philosopher Stanley Cavell calls (after the later Wittgenstein) the "acknowledgments" that underwrite our concepts as such (Cavell 1979, pt. 4; Wittgenstein 1969; Jost 2004: ch. 3). But

epideictic, I propose, does so in a very different way. "Showing forth" the criteria or acknowledgments of a community is not a way of gesturing to something noumenal or irrational, as in epiphanies of being or form; nor is it mouthing what everyone already believes without reflection, as often happens in the genre called epideictic. On the contrary: what we already know or acknowledge may be so "in eclipse" and dispersed as to require investigations that appear, at first sight, merely quotidian and uninteresting (and so Frost has appeared to many otherwise discerning critics enamored of the epiphanic lyric). Epideictic as genus, in other words, can outrun praise or blame of *settled* values. It can even function philosophically, transforming criteria and reconvening a community, clarifying what the community may not have known it knew, or convening a new community by virtue of what readers learn about how they might come to order themselves, however provisionally. I propose, then, that we follow Langbaum's lead in generating six criteria of the epideictic, and I suggest that many of Frost's poems, typically cast by critics in the language-game of epiphany, fare better when placed in the different language-game of *epi-deixis*.

First, then, whereas the epiphanic presents a prepared-for but nevertheless *sudden* change amid outward conditions ("Gazing up into the darkness;" "*then* we were vouchsafed the miracle"), epideictic literature practices what Pound once predicated of Joyce's *Ulysses*, namely a "circumambient peripherization," a more *gradual* but also more overt evocation of the background patterns and premises of a position, gathering the rhetorical *copia* that no single moment of insight, even if covertly persuasive, expresses in that way. The flash of a firework may be momentarily as bright as daylight, but it is not the same as sunrise, for in the latter "Light dawns gradually over the whole" (Wittgenstein 1969: § 141). To give an example, when Frost declares, in the last stanza of his well-known poem "Two Tramps in Mud Time,"

> But yield who will to their separation,
> My object in living is to unite
> My avocation and my vocation
> As my two eyes make one in sight (lines 65–8)

most critics read these lines as extrinsic to their preceding stanzas, hence as no epiphany at all, which (on my reading) is correct. They then further mark the poem as a failed *epiphanic* lyric, in sum a "just-so story" with an editorial tacked on, which, in my view, is not correct at all by far. Elsewhere, I have taken pains to show that the insight that the poet's two "I's" (the tramps' and the narrator's) devise at the end must be referred back to the competing exempla accumulating *throughout* the poem as we read (Jost 2004). In other words nothing happens suddenly at the end that hasn't been occurring from the beginning. In terms we can apply directly to Frost, Jeffrey Walker suggests

> the difference [between epideictic and epiphanic] is that an overt . . . argument [includ-
> ing argument by example] is able to make its premises explicit, or to draw the attention
> of its audience to premises that may have been overlooked (or not connected to the

issue-at-hand in *this* particular way), or to question and revise the premises the audience habitually brings into play – and thus to create new grounds for new conclusions the reader/listener would not initially grant. (Walker 1989: 15)

Second, in epideictic the "privileged moment" belonging to psychological epiphany becomes the *kairotic* opportunity of timely and appropriate thought or speech. The difference here is that the "appropriate" cannot be conceived except as relative to *all* of its attendant temporal circumstances – its occasion, audience, their aims, the constraints of time and place, relevant events and actions, and so on – not (not exclusively) as these may have been read in the original contexts of their appearance but as they become reimagined in new readings, in the fusion of past, present, and future. In a phrase: epiphanic privilege defers to epideictic propriety.

From which it follows (the third criterion) that, because the epiphanic insight stands *incongruously* against its background, it *cannot* ultimately be rationalized, it runs an *unaccountable* (unreasonable) surplus of energy or suggestion. By contrast, while epideictic is not in any way simply "accountable" in the sense of answering to a standing morality or aesthetic propriety or philosophy, it leans on old and/or provides new criteria or acknowledgments, establishing as it were the very means of accounting for meanings and actions. Though I cannot justly argue the point here, in "Two Tramps in Mud Time" the ninth stanza can be read as a timely and fitting (kairotic) accounting if and only if it is taken in the context of its preceding examples. *Then* nothing incongruous stands between its claims at the end and the exemplary actions of the poem preceding, and neither is reducible to any simple propositional meaning or fixed morality. In "Iris by Night," on the other hand, no analysis in the poem of the given circumstances instantiates or in any way "justifies" the unsought relation of friends, and whereas any wisdom attained in "Tramps" has been lifelong in coming ("The blows that a life of self-control"; line 13), in "Iris" the relation of "election" feels not only rare but, altogether unaccountably, not a part of time at all ("we stood in it softly circled round / From all division time and foe can bring").

To make these second and third criteria (appropriateness or propriety and accountability) clearer, consider Frost's brief lyrics (brief lyrics being the unlikeliest place for the epideictic), "Dust of Snow" and "Nothing Gold Can Stay." The first poem reads:

> The way a crow
> Shook down on me
> The dust of snow
> From a hemlock tree
>
> Has given my heart
> A change of mood
> And saved some part
> Of a day I had rued.

And the second reads:

> Nature's first green is gold,
> Her hardest hue to hold.
> Her early leaf's a flower;
> But only so an hour.
> Then leaf subsides to leaf.
> So Eden sank to grief,
> So dawn goes down to day.
> Nothing gold can stay.

Epiphanies? Very like epiphanies. In each a psychological change (in the first "a change of mood"; in the second, resignation to seasonal change) seems to be brought about by a brief, insignificant event ("Shook down on me / The dust of snow"; "only so an hour"), an event more or less out of proportion with the effects the reader must gather from assorted details. On the other hand, the events are not so much rare or privileged (as in epiphanic) as they are surprisingly timely and apt (epideictic, kairotic): that is, the only way to grasp just how a crow distinctively shook down the snow is *not* by participation in that event as it gets dramatized in the lyric (for it has not been dramatized *at all*), but instead by careful attention to the way Frost *himself* distinctively casts (shakes down on us) his images, meters, rhymes, and meanings, thereby giving the reader her own "change of mood," accountable in poetic and rhetorical terms (e.g., the two anapests comprising line eight read against the heavily iambic lines preceding; the speaker's implied attribution of agency to the crow inviting the reader to look for agency in the poet and poem; and so on). Or again, the only way to appreciate time's passage in "Nothing Gold Can Stay" is *not* by sharing a sudden intuition (for what sudden intuition can we point to?) but rather by complex inference from preceding exempla (leaf, Eden, day), culminating less in an "aha" experience than in an accumulating proof via argument-by-examples.

Fourth, while both epiphany and epideictic use what is at hand – trivial objects and behaviors of (say) a given day in Dublin in 1904 – the trivial in epideictic *is* significant in itself, however occluded custom and convention may have made it seem. For Joyce and others, epiphany reveals the essential quiddity or whatness of a thing, as it were the mind's drawing nearer, however briefly, to some passionate aspect of the real. In *Araby*, for example, neither the bazaar nor the girlfriend nor the gift nor the boy's arriving late is, in itself, significant; what matters is the gulf that opens up at the end between boyhood before and the that which comes after. In "Two Tramps in Mud Time," by contrast, the "unimportant wood" (line 16) on which the speaker spends the labor of his ax *is* just as meaningful as anything else in the poem, inasmuch as the narrator spends *himself* on the act of chopping wood that combines his "avocation and . . . vocation." The generalizations in the ninth stanza are not isolated maxims or summational "truths," in other words, but necessary topoi by which we retrospectively organize and interpret the preceding examples and deeds in the poem itself as a whole.

Finally, where epiphany tends to be disjunctive (the fifth criterion, a leap from fragments to whole) and psychologically private (the sixth), epideictic, though sometimes equally fragmented, requires an accumulative assemblage of materials rather than a leap across gaps. And though it will also eventuate in psychological effects on individual characters and readers, epideictic aims further than these, at *communal* realizations and changes. As Erich Auerbach has noted: "The more numerous, varied, and simple the people are who appear as subjects of such [ordinary] random moments, the more effectively must what they have in common shine forth" (Auerbach 1953: 552). By this time the contrast between the leap effected in *Araby* and the accumulation in "Two Tramps" ought to need no comment, except perhaps to concede that Frost's readerly requirement to accumulate subtle examples may well be over-subtle in this poem (rather as the ironic "The Road Less Traveled" too quickly fools admirers into complacency and critics into charges of self-complacency on the part of the poet). Unlike self-complacency, however, occasional over-subtlety in a poet is a fault that academics, at least, might be expected to sympathize with. Most important, epideictic is a communal not exclusively personal undertaking, and that community may be called into question as well as into being – not merely ratified with a stamp of approval but evoked, brought out of eclipse. Jeffrey Walker precedes me on this crucial point:

> Clearly, epideictic argument [including examples] in poetry and prose frequently will be concerned with displays or with critiques (praise or blame) of ethos and emotion, but not necessarily, and not always; it could also be concerned with basic *philosophical* issues . . . Epideictic argument belongs, in sum, to the domain of theory, and it invites its listener/spectator (*theoros*) to an act of contemplation, evaluation, and judgment. (Walker 1989: 8; emphasis added)

As a way of bringing together these various aspects of low modernist, epideictic lyric, consider one more short poem, Frost's "Leaves Compared With Flowers" (first published in 1935), which begins, almost in sing-song,

> A tree's leaves may be ever so good,
> So may its bark, so may its wood.
> But unless you put the right thing to its root
> It never will show much flower or fruit. (lines 1–4)

On a first pass we encounter nothing very serious here, barely enough in the title to hint at the need for arguing on either side of a question – leaves compared with flowers: so which are better? Quite characteristically for Frost, however, the poem soon comes to recast a meditative introspection into the form of a quasi-public debate. Not only is the reader being directly addressed here, she is required to participate in an argument by intellectually weighing alternatives. The debate gets obliquely introduced in the first two stanzas in alternating voices – the narrator's double-voicing of the commonplaces

of others (of our own) in lines 1–4, and then, in lines 5 and 6, the poet's own counter-statement:

> But I may be one who does not care
> Ever to have tree bloom or bear:
> Leaves for smooth and bark for rough,
> Leaves and bark may be tree enough. (lines 5–8)

This line of argument is then extended with further exempla:

> Some giant trees have bloom so small
> They might as well have none at all.
> Late in life I have come on fern.
> Now lichens are due to have their turn. (lines 9–12)

And then the controversy is given overt rhetorical status and sharpened to a point in the penultimate fourth quatrain:

> I bade men tell me, which in brief,
> Which is fairer, flower or leaf?
> They did not have the wit to say
> Leaves by night and flowers by day. (lines 13–16)

Frost enjoys nothing more than to invite his readers to consider some deliberative or judicial question – which, A or B, is better, fairer? – and then make the question seem to disappear by showing how inadequate mono-vocal argument on one side or the other is to such a matter ("They did not have the wit to say"), only to finish with a rhetorical flourish by reinstating the issue on a different intellectual and emotional (imaginative) plane. By the end "leaves," "bark," "petals," and "flowers" have become what rhetoricians call material or special topics (*not*, not exclusively, "images," or "Symbols"), that is, more or less specific terms whose meanings have accrued beyond whatever stable, determinate uses the poet has made of them:

> Leaves and bark, leaves and bark,
> To lean against and hear in the dark.
> Petals I may have once pursued.
> Leaves are all my darker mood. (lines 17–20)

In other words the rhetorical genre of this poem drifts, as it were, from *ersatz* deliberation and conclusive judgment on an indefinite issue (what Cicero and other rhetoricians called a "thesis," itself traditionally turning, as in Renaissance lyric and drama, on some kind of comparison) to a more inclusive if non-standard "epideictic" celebration in praise of antithetical virtues ("leaves by night and flowers by day;" or again, in "Fire and Ice," "I hold with those who favor fire" but "Ice is also great"; and

elsewhere "Nothing I should care to leave behind"). It also develops from a mislead-ingly synchronic comparison to a fuller diachronic sense of the appropriateness of all things great and small, according, that is, to their respective *circumstantiae*; and from the evocation of "wit," noted in contrary ways by Kant and Shaftesbury in the eighteenth century as an important part of the *sensus communis* by virtue of its appeal to recognizable public connections (Shaftesbury 1999 II: 43–99; Kant 2000: 96) to a notably nineteenth-century private "mood," a mood transformed at the end, however, to *include* its more moralizing and moralized, public predecessor (wit) in a uniquely twentieth-century, ironic admixture of both. In this poem, I want to suggest, our own *sensus communis* comes to be rethought, not least our sense about speech itself: a comparison of what were once called the "flowers" of rhetoric, admired as a product of wit by the learned, with Whitman's democratic "leaves of grass," ostensibly accessible to learned and unlearned alike. Neither is seen as an objective social orientation nor yet a subjective personal preference or mood; both are synthesized as a practical awareness of the value of what is often overlooked in life *and* art: the everyday, the ordinary. From this perspective the poem is an especially self-conscious, rhetorical performance – an epideictic celebration – of many of the themes and tactics historically and intellectually considered central to rhetoric.

With this in mind it is not difficult to see how "Leaves Compared With Flowers" fits a distinctly modernist sensibility, eluding the criteria of high modernist epiphany while fitting the criteria of low. It is modernist (not "premodernist" – it only appears to be so – much less anti-modernist, as many high modernist critics contend about Frost generally, as if he were a latter-day Rip Van Winkle) – modernist, I say, in more ways than I can elaborate here: its irony, its multiple perspectives, its refusal to offer controlling authorial ideology, its troping of traditional subjects and materials, its "darker mood," and so on. But it is impossible to bend or turn the poem to fit the sense of "crisis" and the response of experimentalism and visionary revelation (epiphany-by-image) endemic to high modernist authors. Hence the need for a category, like "low modernist," and a specific account of one part of its method, like "epideictic." What, then, of that part?

First, the *sudden* change in outward conditions belonging to epiphanic literature becomes, in "Leaves," a *gradual* "drift" or accumulation of exemplary events, which gives way (the second criterion) to a dawning (quiet, even humble) set of observations at the end. Third and fourth: whereas, in epiphanies, outward conditions and privileged internal insights are incongruous with each other while the precipitating event is trivial, in "Leaves" conditions and observations are wholly congruous (apt, timely) and the precipitating event (what others say) is not trivial at all. Fifth and sixth: whereas in epiphany a reader assembles *fragments* in an instant of his or her own *private* insight, in "Leaves" the reader is required to work through the *connected* exempla towards a personal but also equally *public* knowledge: above all, epideictic is copious praise or blame within a socious, or better an *amplificatio* (showing forth) designed to undo estrangement as well as undue irrationalism. Epideictic – we might

summarize the preceding – is the activity not of the anxious or enervated but the energetic, not of the alienated but the ambulant and ambitious.

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Lolita: Solipsized or Sodomized?; or, Against Abstraction – in General

Peter J. Rabinowitz

In the years after World War II, a writer in his mid-fifties, living in the US, wrote a first-person confession-novel – one with a strong vein of butterfly imagery – in which a narrator (who has died before we begin to read the novel) attempts a self-justification: he wants to defend his semi-incestuous obsession for a teenaged girl who, if not exactly his stepdaughter, is at least his wife's daughter. Once the wife's gory death removes her as an obstacle, this obsession is consummated in a hotel room. The ensuing relationship is a tortured one: the narrator often tries to get his way by threatening the girl (for instance, by threatening to send her to reform school); and their physical contact leads to little but increasing psychic strain. Eventually, the girl leaves, and the novel climaxes with an almost surrealistic shootout stemming from enmity fueled by jealousy.

From the first, critics talked about the novel's shock value. But in the author's self-justifying essay that is always printed with the novel – an essay that includes, among other things, an ironic account of his relationship to the censors and a discussion of his (paradoxically prudish) refusal to use four-letter words – he insists that he was not interested in shock *per se*. In fact, despite the sensationalism of this text, he was essentially an "art-for-art's-sake" advocate – and among other aims, he was concerned with fixing the vernacular detail of both speech and setting of the US in the 1940s. Style was at the heart of his endeavor – indeed, one of the early critics of the novel dismissed it as "a triumph of technique over substance" (Havighurst 1947: 18).

No, the novel is not *Lolita* – it's a nearly forgotten work by James Cain called *The Butterfly*, and it has never been as problematic for readers as *Lolita* has been. There has been dispute about its quality, of course, but no dispute about its meaning, and little long-term fallout from its subject matter. There are, of course, many reasons for the difference in reception. Cain's novel is, stylistically, simpler and nowhere near as interesting to read; Kady, the young woman in Cain's novel is, unlike Lolita, already

in her late teens when the novel begins. But I'd like to propose some other terms in which to think about the differences between the two texts. Specifically, I'd like to explore the ways in which genre (or reader perception of genre) influences interpretation; and I'd like to do so for two reasons. First, I believe it can help illuminate why Lolita – not only the book but also the character – has been so widely and dramatically misread. Second, I believe it can lead us to some understanding of the ethical implications of our long-lasting academic love affair with abstraction.

Let me clarify my own take on Nabokov's text. Even before *Lolita* was written, books about child abuse of various sorts were not exactly rare; yet when I look at the books that come most readily to mind, *Lolita* is unusual in the unrelenting expressions of outrage on the part of the victim. Compare Lolita, for instance, to Miles, in *Turn of the Screw*, who never complains about Peter Quint (although he does seem to raise his fist against the governess). Compare her to Liza in Dostoevsky's *Eternal Husband*, who demands to stay with her father despite his brutality, both physical and psychological – and who dies when she is taken away and placed in what, by normal middle-class standards of the time, is a vastly more healthy environment. Compare her to pianist Ruth Slenczynska – a child prodigy whose autobiography *Forbidden Childhood* was contemporaneous with Nabokov's novel. Slenczynska's father – who makes David Helfgott's father look like a resident of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood – beat her, humiliated her, and engaged in psychological abuse that's painful to read about; yet the young Ruth remained ambivalently attached to him even so.

Lolita is markedly different: after the first sexual encounter – in which, by Humbert's own testimony, Lolita completely misunderstands what is at stake – she never expresses anything but repulsion for her victimizer. She spends years trying to figure out how to escape from him, and it is no doubt for her resourcefulness and bravery that Nabokov held her in such high regard: according to Brian Boyd, Nabokov once said that "of all the thousands of characters in his work ... Lolita came second in his list of those he admired most as people. Top of the list came Pnin, another courageous victim" (Boyd 1991: 237). When I think of her, I always hear her uttering her archetypal cry, "Oh no, not again" (Nabokov 1958: 194).[1]

Yet as Elizabeth Patnoe, among others, has patiently argued, Lolita is often figured in the popular imagination as a temptress (Patnoe mentions in particular the endless references to Amy Fisher as the "Long Island Lolita") (Patnoe 1995: 82). And even critics who have actually read the book and should therefore know better describe her in similarly distorted ways. John Hollander, in his famous early review of the novel, claims that "On their first night together, Lolita turns out to be completely corrupt" – and he goes on to refer to the pair as "the lovers" and to the relationship that follows as "*their affair*" (my emphasis) (Hollander 1956: 558). Lionel Trilling refers to "a Lolita who is not innocent, and who seems to have very few emotions to be violated," and mentions, bizarrely, that Lolita "finds his restriction of her freedom a burden which is not much lightened by [Humbert's] indulgence" (Trilling 1958: 14, 13). And Richard Schickel, who believes Lolita to be "that most repugnant of all females,

a mid-twentieth-century pubescent American girl-woman," describes Humbert as follows: "Humbert, absurdly sensitive, catering ridiculously to the whims of a child, is a pathetic, almost tragic figure" (Schickel 1957: 46).[2] More recently, Roger Angell referred to her as Humbert's "trivial, complicit Juliet," noting with some disdain that, as the novel progresses, she becomes "idly whorish" (Angell 1997: 158). Similarly, Brian Boyd suggests that "we know that [Humbert] did not rape Lolita in any ordinary sense . . . Handing down to himself that sentence for rape, Humbert seems far more self-accusatory than the case warrants" (Boyd 1991: 230–1).

How is it that the novel has been read in this way? I would argue that the novel does not "ask" for such an anti-Lolita perspective, and that the problem stems from readers, not from the text. Now much of the anti-Lolita (that is, unsympathetic to the character, not unsympathetic to the novel) faction has been male, and one can easily speculate on the psychological and ideological reasons why they might find their readings to be self-affirming. But understanding *why* they might be motivated to read as they do is different from understanding *how* they have been able to read that way, and it is this latter question that I want to address here.

My argument hinges on the observation that, from the beginning, *Lolita*'s supporters tended to defend the novel from the charges of pornography by insisting on its quality as "high art" – and that "high art" remains the frame in which it is read, even now that the attacks on the novel have little to do with its purported pornography. I will be working through the consequences of this frame using a kind of rhetorical analysis that's closely allied to what Steven Mailloux calls Rhetorical Hermeneutics and to what James Phelan calls Rhetorical Reader-Response Criticism. Mailloux starts from a definition of rhetoric that includes "the analysis of a text's effects on an audience" (Mailloux 1998: 4); and Rhetorical Hermeneutics, strongly influenced by Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish, Walter Michaels, and Steven Knapp, "takes as its topic specific historical acts of interpretation with their cultural contexts" in an attempt "to move critical theory from general theories about the interpretive process to rhetorical histories of specific interpretive acts" (Mailloux 1998: 56, 61). Rhetorical Reader-Response Criticism – the history of which can be traced from Kenneth Burke's "Psychology and Form" and especially Wayne C. Booth's *Rhetoric of Fiction* on through Phelan's *Narrative as Rhetoric* – centers on "the recursive relationship between authorial agency, textual phenomena, and reader response" (Phelan 1996: 176–7). My own practice in this chapter is more author-centered than Mailloux's, but it does add critical context to Phelan's triad of author, text, and reader.[3] More specifically, I will be arguing that by looking at the critical context – the interpretive "frame," the agreed-upon base that grounds what we can see as a shared interpretive history of a text – in terms of author, text, and reader, we can recognize its rhetorical dimension, the way it encourages readers to interpret and judge the text according to one set of reading strategies rather than others. More important, we can come to recognize the ethical consequences of that rhetoric. But in order to explain, in particular, the implications of the "high art" frame for reading *Lolita*, I need to take a brief theoretical detour.

I've argued elsewhere (e.g., Rabinowitz 1997) that literary conventions lie as much in readers as in texts; that is, conventions can be seen not only as patterns made up of textual elements, but also as shared strategies for making sense of the artworks we consider. Similarly, genres can be seen not only as sets of formal features, but also from the audience's perspective, as menus of interpretive procedures for putting together literary meaning. These strategies can be loosely divided into four types.

First, we have what I've called rules of notice: learned procedures that tell us where to address our attention. Thus, for instance, the general rule that appearances of a novel's title elsewhere in the text should be taken seriously encourages readers of *The Butterfly* to pay special attention when Kady's baby turns out to have a butterfly-shaped birthmark.

Second, there are rules of signification, which allow us to draw various kinds of meaning – political, psychological, metaphorical, among others – from the details we notice. These rules, for instance, allow us to determine whether the particular shape of that birthmark is metaphoric – and, if so, what it might be a metaphor for. Likewise, rules of signification allow us to draw conclusions about the psychology of literary characters from the way that they look.

Third, there are rules of configuration, rules that permit readers to put the elements that they notice into an emerging formal pattern, and hence develop both expectation and a sense of completion. "She was sitting on the stoop when I came in from the fields, her suitcase beside her and one foot on the other knee, where she was shaking a shoe out that seemed to have sand in it. When she saw me she laughed, and I felt my face get hot" (Cain 1989: 359). Cain's opening (like the opening of Humbert's narrative proper) sets us up to expect that "she" will be central to a plot with strong erotic dimensions. In contrast, when we read the opening of Mérimée's *Carmen* ("I had always suspected that the geographers were talking nonsense when they located the site of the Battle of Munda in the territory of the Bastuli-Poeni") we are not liable to assume that it is launching a novel about the academic disputes over military history (Mérimée 1998: 1).

Finally, there are rules of coherence, which allow us to derive a generalized meaning from the completed experience of the work. Among the most important rules of coherence are rules of thematizing, or, less elegantly, "rules of aboutness," since they are procedures for determining, in the broadest sense, what a work is "really about."

Genres, from this perspective, can be seen as collections of rules that we are accustomed to lump together to unlock a number of texts that we have some prior reason to consider as a group. Thus, we can define the "classical British detective story" in terms of the procedures we use when reading it. One of these, for instance, involves reading its apparently trivial details, especially details of place and time, with a particular kind of attention, thinking of them in terms of what light they can cast on the truth of stories told by the characters rather than in terms of what metaphysical meaning they might bear. Similarly, we read the details in a way that allows us to guess the outcome; and we apply reading strategies that make the whole

text coherent in terms of consistency of action rather than in terms of philosophical illumination.

But texts do not come with the rules bound in an accompanying manual, as computer software once did. And while I would not argue that *any* rules can work well with *any* text, it is the case that any work of literature is always potentially ambiguous in the sense that it is open to more than one interpretive procedure. From this perspective, reading is always a provisional "reading as": reading *Crime and Punishment* "as" a suspense thriller is a significantly different experience from reading it as a political text or a psychological novel, each of which calls a different set of reading strategies into play. And from this perspective, more generally, defining a text as a "classical British detective story" or as "a suspense thriller" is a rhetorical act: it's not so much a description of an object as an encouragement to the reader to interpret and judge the work in a particular way when there are (as there always are) alternatives available.

Interpretation is not a linear process: the rules interact in complex and often unpredictable ways. Furthermore, one of the central sets of rules of signification in fictional texts – the ones that allow us to determine what is "true" within the world of the text – requires readers to take on several simultaneous roles whose interpenetration provides a major ingredient in the aesthetic impact of any fictional text. The three most important of these roles are what I call the actual, authorial, and narrative audiences. To explain quickly: no author can know the actual, flesh-and-blood readers who will actually read his or her book – but at the same time, no author can even begin to write without making assumptions about his or her readers' knowledge and beliefs. Authors meet this need by writing for a hypothetical audience, which I call the *authorial audience*, and readers need to be, more or less, in the position of authorial audience in order to read the text as the author intended.

But reading fiction requires another step. Like all works of representational art, fictional narratives are imitations, in the specific sense that they appear to be something that they are not. Cain's *Butterfly*, for instance, appears to be an account of the vexed relationship between a repressed and frustrated Appalachian miner, Jess Tyler, and his (perhaps) daughter Kady. One way of conceptualizing this extra dimension in fiction is to recognize that, since a novel is usually an imitation of some non-fictional form (in this case, a confessional memoir), so the narrator (whether dramatized, as he is in this case, or not) is an imitation of an author; and just as an actual author always writes for a hypothetical authorial audience, so a narrator always writes for an imitation audience that I call the *narrative audience*. The reader's experience of fiction (and this is why I stand behind the importance of the distinction between fiction and non-fiction) is thus always at least double: we can treat the work neither as what it is nor as what it appears to be, but must hold these competing (and mutually incompatible) perspectives simultaneously in our consciousness. We are not reading *The Butterfly* as a novel if we treat the events as "real" and try to hunt down the particular mine shaft in which Jess and Kady set up their moonshine operation. But at the same time, readers should not close off sympathy for the pain Jess' passion causes him simply because he's not a "real" person.[4]

Any fictional text engages both the authorial and narrative audience, but different texts ask us to balance them in different ways. Some – and Cain's best novels fit this model – create such a seductive narrative level that readers often forget they're reading fiction at all; others – such as Robbe-Grillet's *In the Labyrinth* – make such an explicit pitch to the authorial audience that it's difficult, if not impossible, to engage seriously as narrative audience. As we'll see, misjudging the authorial/narrative balance can have significant interpretive consequences.

What does all this have to do with the difference between high art and popular fiction? For years, I've been trying to articulate the way this difference can be understood if we cast it as a historically contingent generic distinction in this sense, a distinction between different strategies of reading. The differences run along two different axes.

First, nowadays, when we read a work as "popular," we apply different specific rules in each of the four categories than we would if we were reading it as serious. For instance, within the rules of signification, we read what we take to be popular art more metonymically, while we read what we take to be high art more metaphorically. Thus, while readers are apt to take the butterflies in *Lolita* metaphorically, readers of Cain's novel start out with different premises, and are liable to read *his* butterflies metonymically – specifically, as a sign of a genetic connection among family members.[5]

Second, popular and high art differ with regard to the relative importance of the four groups of rules. Thus, for instance, in the current academic climate, taking something as high art means emphasizing coherence rather than configuration, treating plot as less important, for instance, than character and especially theme; it also means taking wholes as more important than details. Having chosen to read *Lolita* as a "serious novel," one would therefore probably not describe it as Robert Gorham Davis described *The Butterfly* in his *New York Times* review, as a "piece of plot-making" (Davis 1947: 5). And one would be even more unlikely to include in a review of *Lolita* a phrase like "Anybody who wants to know what happens next will have to read the book" – as the *New Yorker* did in reviewing Cain's novel (Basso 1947: 47). Reading something as high art, on the whole, tends to involve stressing the authorial rather than the narrative audience: treating the characters as "real people," in fact, is often considered the sort of thing that only people who watch soap operas do.

Now I'd like to offer two observations that will be important in my analysis of *Lolita*.

First, as I've suggested, literary texts are not self-corrective: that is, a work will respond to more than one approach. This is not a claim about validity – simply a claim about what will work. That is, even interpretive strategies that run seriously against the authorially intended spirit of the text may nonetheless seem to "fit" it well. And since some reading strategies have, in particular social contexts, more rhetorical clout than others, texts are often distorted by dominant reading strategies. More specifically, for academic readers, metaphor is the closest thing that literary studies has to a Black Hole. Once you start to see something in metaphorical terms,

it's hard to escape back to the literal and the concrete. Indeed, even when an author is trying explicitly to get us to resist metaphorical readings, it is often hard to prevent us from falling into metaphor. The clearest example of this is what I have elsewhere called the "Cat-People Phenomenon,"[6] a term I take from Jacques Tourneur's 1942 cult classic (screenplay by DeWitt Bodeen) that was given a new lease on life a few years back by its incorporation into Puig's novel *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. In *Cat People*, the hapless American Oliver Reed falls for the exotic Irena, who comes from a small town in Serbia. Irena pleads with him to leave her alone, for she can't reciprocate his ardor: because of a curse on her native village, any passionate experience will transform her into a leopard and she will claw her lover to death. Oliver is too level headed to believe her, and insists on marrying her anyway. Like Mark Rutland in Hitchcock's *Marnie*, he believes that his charm will melt her resistance; when she fails to succumb, he falls back on middle-class custom and urges her to get psychiatric counseling.

From the perspective of reader-theory, *Cat People* reaches its climax in the conversation between Irena and her shrink, for it turns quickly into an interpretive dispute centering on the analysis of tropes: is the connection between human and cat an instance of metonymy or metaphor? Irena takes the metonymic route. She insists that she is related to the cat by temporal and causal contiguity: at one moment she is a woman; at the next, because of some event that has happened, she will be a cat. The doctor, not surprisingly for a presumed Freudian, opts for metaphor: he tries to convince her that the underlying connection is representation by similarity: the cat is not "real," but is rather a metaphorical reflection of some repressed sexual anxiety. When he tries to prove his point by raping her, she in fact turns into a cat and rips him to pieces.

Obviously, on the level of the narrative audience, this scene proves Irena's to be the "correct" reading. Yet, as actual audience, academic readers are apt to succumb to the lure of metaphor nonetheless. For the story seems more discussable *as serious literature* when read as a parable about the dangerous ambiguities of desire than when read as a fantastic story of a woman who turns into a killer cat.

Second, the high art approach to reading is, fairly consistently, more "abstract" than the pop art version.[7] In particular, when reading "serious" texts, contemporary academically trained readers tend to dance a two-step that I call the "Rule of Abstract Displacement." Indeed, it would be only slightly reckless to say that the Rule of Abstract Displacement serves as the fundamental trademark of serious reading today. The first step involves an act of metaphorical substitution: according to this rule, *serious literature is to be treated as if it were really about something else other than what it appears to be on the surface.* As Wolfgang Iser puts it, with unusual boldness, "Whenever realities are transposed into the text, they turn into signs for something else" (Iser 1993: 3). It's perfectly all right to come out of a theater and talk about *Star Wars* as if it were a saga about outer space; but you cannot come into a college classroom and talk about *Crime and Punishment* as if it were primarily about police procedure.

This metaphorical substitution leads to a second stage, an act of generalization. We may no longer speak of "universal themes," but if we play by academic rules, the "something else" that serious literature is about has a wider, not a narrower, scope. Brooks and Warren pressed this idea in their influential *Understanding Fiction*, when they presented fiction as an "image" of the "process by which significance emerges from experience" (Brooks and Warren 1959: 274). Or as Douglas Anderson put it, with specific reference to Nabokov: "Among modern writers few can match Vladimir Nabokov's personal engagement with *the more general world of thought and action* to which, according to [Hayden] White, the historian and artist must inevitably appeal" (Anderson 1996: 74; emphasis added).

How does all this tie in to interpretations of *Lolita*? By defending the novel as high art, the early supporters chose a particular way of reading. That particular approach was, in that historical context, what Steven Mailloux (1998: 47) has called a "privileged way of making sense of texts" – because it was grounded in authorities like Columbia University, *Encounter*, and the *Partisan Review*, it was an interpretive frame that carried particular intellectual prestige. As a result, their acts had a special rhetorical force that encouraged other readers to read more or less the same way – not necessarily accepting the same details of interpretation, but working with the same grounds of interpretation. And I want to follow up on that, taking off from the two observations I just made.

First, the novel itself did not force readers to rely on the Rule of Abstract Displacement. There were other ways open to read the text, ways that took the text just as "seriously," although they may not have been quite as readily apparent to academic readers, especially those working in the 1950s. Second, the abstraction implicit in the choice of this particular way of reading had ethical consequences – in fact, two sets of ethical consequences, one for what people thought the text was saying, one for what readers were actually doing when they read.

From the very beginning, in particular, the novel's advocates warded off charges of pornography using (and encouraging readers to use) the Rule of Abstract Displacement. Thus, in a often-cited early salvo, John Hollander pointed out that "certain of the book's admirers . . . beg[ged] off its sexual and literary outlandishness by remarking that the whole thing is *really* Mr. Nabokov's love affair with America" (Hollander 1956: 559). He didn't agree with that particular abstract displacement; but when he offered an alternative reading, it turned out – for all its claim to literalize the metaphor of nympholepsy – to be just as abstract and displaced: "*Lolita*, if it is anything '*really*,' is the record of Mr. Nabokov's love affair with the romantic novel" (Hollander 1956: 560). Now I don't want to claim that the particular Hollander misreadings that I've already mentioned – his reference to Lolita's corruption, to Lolita and Humbert as "the lovers," and to the abuse as "their affair" (Hollander 1956: 558) – are a *necessary* consequence of reading abstractly; but I would argue that such misreading is made easier by a prior decision to apply the Rule of Abstract Displacement, which tends to minimize the importance of the concrete realities on the narrative level.

The claim that application of the Rule of Abstract Displacement (and the subsequent focus on generalities rather than details) has led to Hollander's anti-Lolita misreading seems more plausible when we read his review in the context of Lionel Trilling's famous 1958 appreciation of the novel. Trilling, it's true, begins by insisting on the novel's concrete particularity. But he also twists the text, noting that "it is Lolita who ravishes Humbert" (Trilling 1958: 12) – ravishes, not even seduces! – and, more strangely still, insisting that Lolita "accepts his sensuality with cool acquiescence, and even responds to it physically, but she is not moved by desire, and she is frequently bored and has to be bribed into compliance" (Trilling 1958: 13).

At first, it's not clear what allowed Trilling to see it that way – cool acquiescence? – but as we move through his essay, we can see how application of the Rule of Abstract Displacement has in fact nourished these misconstruals. (As I've suggested, there's much to be said, as well, about what motivated Trilling in this direction, but that's another issue.) Let me chart out the moves schematically. He begins the process by claiming *Lolita* as a novel "about love" (Trilling 1958: 15), in particular about the kind of "passion-love" that developed in the wake of Arthurian romances. He then argues that a modern novelist can write about this "old kind of love" only by finding some contemporary analogue to the scandal evoked by adultery in older texts. Since "the breaking of the taboo about the sexual unavailability of very young girls has for us something of the force that a wife's infidelity had for Shakespeare," Nabokov has chosen Humbert's scandalous passion for Lolita as an appropriate modern equivalent: "a man in the grip of an obsessional lust and a girl of twelve make the ideal couple for a story about love written in our time" (Trilling 1958: 17). Once, of course, he has reframed the novel in this way, Lolita is no longer the complex brutalized teenager Dolly Haze, but is simply a function in a larger and more abstract scheme, a scheme familiar from many older texts. And by reading back from that abstract scheme, he can easily assert that "she remains perpetually the cruel mistress" (Trilling 1958: 17). To Trilling's readers, it is a powerful argument – made especially powerful because it rests on a reading strategy that is so highly regarded in the academic community.

Here's a third example, even more striking because the author of the article in question, Brian Walter, fully recognizes one of the key concrete facts of the novel, Dolly as "the victimized girl who rejects the fantasy identity [Humbert] would project onto her" (Walter 1995: 135). Readers of the novel may recall the scene in the car as Lolita and Humbert leave the Enchanted Hunters after their first sexual intercourse, where Lolita has had to confront, according to Humbert, the unexpected size of an adult erect penis. As a consequence, she "started complaining of pains, said she could not sit, said I had torn something inside her" (Nabokov 1958: 143). Humbert then notes that "in the gay town of Lepingville I bought her four books of comics, a box of candy, a box of sanitary pads, two cokes, a manicure set, a travel clock with a luminous dial, a ring with a real topaz, a tennis racket, roller skates with white high shoes, field glasses, a portable radio set, chewing gum, a transparent raincoat, sunglasses, some more garments – swooners, shorts, all kinds of summer frocks" (Nabokov 1958: 143–4).

Now, as readers, we are expected by Nabokov to use rules of signification to draw conclusions from that collection of objects. We can learn something of Humbert's character through the patent attempt to bribe her with presents, in particular presents calculated to increase her erotic attraction. And we can learn something of Lolita's character (or, more accurately, of Humbert's presumptions about her character) from the nature of the bribes, too. Certainly, we are expected to draw some connections between her interest in objects that enhance her personal appearance, in radios, and in comic books on the one hand, and her relation to the teen pop culture of her day on the other hand. We are also expected to draw some conclusions from the disparity between the objects that point to maturity (say, the topaz ring) and those that point to her childishness (the comic books).[8]

But what about those sanitary pads? Read as a metonymy, their meaning is both evident and chilling: whether or not Lolita ever intended to initiate sexual intercourse (and Elizabeth Patnoe has argued strongly that she did not), there is good reason to believe that she's been physically ripped up by the encounter – and the sanitary pads are a result of the brutality that, reined in only by "superhuman self-control" (Nabokov 1958: 29), lurks beneath virtually every chapter of the novel. Humbert, we recall, is proud of his knowledge of how to make Valechka "change her mind instantly" by "merely twisting . . . [her] brittle wrist (the one she had fallen upon from a bicycle)" (Nabokov 1958: 85); and it is only the fear of appearing vulgar that keeps him from beating up Valeria on the street when she tries to leave him (Nabokov 1958: 29). Indeed, one of the key reasons he tries "to keep as far away from people as possible" is to avoid having "potential witnesses" to the marks he has left on Lolita (Nabokov 1958: 166; see also 207, 229).

But even against this background, a reader committed to reading the novel according to the standards of "high art" is drawn to read the sanitary pads not as metonymy (in this case, *causally* connected to the sexual encounter) but as a metaphor. And that's precisely what Brian Walter does. Although Walter claims that Humbert has, in a sense, "murdered" Lolita, he also suggests that this violence has also *matured* her, for it is at this point that "Lolita first experiences menstruation pains, signaling her transition from childhood to maturity" (Walter 1995: 123). From here it is an easy slide to see the novel as representing "the concurrent maturation and demise of the romantic tradition it itself is child to." Then, making the typical move of Abstract Displacement[9] ("Clearly, Nabokov . . . would not design a novel only to confirm a sexual taboo. What larger goal does the author have in mind?"), Walter uses this metaphorical interpretation as part of his springboard to a reading of the novel as "Nabokov's defense of the non-conforming artist," as a dramatization of "the writer's plight in a world of unsympathetic readers" (Walter 1995: 125, 129).

In the process, Lolita's blood is safely symbolized. Or, to be a bit more fanciful, "safely solipsized," a curious phrase that Humbert uses in the famous sofa scene:

> What had begun as a delicious distension of my innermost roots became a glowing
> tingle which *now* had reached that state of absolute security, confidence and reliance not

found elsewhere in conscious life. With the deep hot sweetness thus established and well on its way to the ultimate convulsion, I felt I could slow down in order to prolong the glow. Lolita had been safely solipsized. (Nabokov 1958: 62)

The phrase seems to mean that she's been so deprived of subjecthood and agency that, for him, she only exists as an object in his own mind: as he puts it, "What I had madly possessed was not she, but my own creation ... having no will, no consciousness – indeed, no life of her own," a position consistent with his "habit and method" of "ignor[ing] Lolita's states of mind" (Nabokov 1958: 64, 289). And by a linguistic echo, that odd term "solipsized" is starkly contrasted with what he charges Quilty with doing to her: he refers to Quilty as the "semi-animated, subhuman trickster who had sodomized my darling" (Nabokov 1958: 297). Of course, what Humbert too, by legal definitions common at the times, engages in is sodomy as well: "Knowing the magic and might of her own soft mouth, she managed – during one schoolyear! – to raise the bonus price of a fancy embrace to three, or even four bucks, O Reader!" (Nabokov 1958: 186).[10] The transformation from a girl sodomized to a girl solipsized, in other words, is a textual sleight of hand, made possible by Humbert's apparent erasure of her agency.[11] Michael Wood argues that "Humbert's crime is the Jamesian one *par excellence*, the theft of another's freedom – in this case, the freedom to be the ordinary, lively, vulgar American kid we have intermittently seen" (M. Wood 1995: 42). And that lack of freedom is tied – metonymically, not metaphorically – to her lack of voice.

Voice, the act of speaking, in a very literal sense, not as some metaphor for something else, becomes central to the way the novel presents Dolores Haze. Humbert is shocked when he hears Valeria's true voice (Nabokov 1958: 30) expressing her own true views – and he's just as shocked by Lolita's voice. It's no coincidence, for instance, that what disturbs Humbert when he tries to have sex with the drugged Lolita is her speaking – and her speaking another's name. For – and this is the clear marker of his solipsizing – he'd rather not know what she is thinking if it's not what he wants her to be thinking. No wonder that, despite his initial attraction to "the little one's slangy speech" (Nabokov 1958: 43) – that is, her words without content – he does everything possible to keep her from using her voice to express herself. He's cruelly anxious not to allow her to talk to the McCrystals, even when she offers to "do anything you want" (Nabokov 1958: 159). And two of the novel's most poignant passages center around precisely that silencing. In the first of these, Humbert overhears Lolita say to Eva Rosen, "You know, what's so dreadful about dying is that you are completely on your own" – and hearing her speak makes him realize that he "simply did not know a thing about [his] darling's mind" (Nabokov 1958: 286). The second of these moments, of course, is the famous description of hearing children at play and realizing "the hopelessly poignant thing was not Lolita's absence from [his] side, but the absence of her voice from that concord" (Nabokov 1958: 310).

If silencing is what, in the novel, Humbert does to disguise sodomizing as solipsizing, what have the "serious" critics and readers done? Many of them have,

I would argue, by and large reenacted Humbert's crime. That is, the Rule of Abstract Displacement has enabled most of the critics (Linda Kauffman and Elizabeth Patnoe are significant exceptions) to silence Lolita just as Humbert does, by refusing to take her seriously as a concrete person on the narrative level. Only a reader who refuses to hear Lolita's repeated "no's" could call her a "complicit Juliet"; and this refusal solipsizes her, erasing her agency and turning her into an object to serve the critic's own needs.

In a sense, the alternative reading strategies, the ones that would encourage us to think of Dolly as a "real person," the ones that take the narrative level seriously and that avoid excessive application of rules of coherence, are generally associated with naive reading and with reading popular fiction, like Cain's *The Butterfly*. Am I suggesting that we should read Nabokov as if he were Cain? That might be an interesting exercise – but I'm not claiming it's the only, much less the best, alternative. For there are other reading strategies available, too, including one proposed by Nabokov himself. Nabokov is, obviously, not a pop artist in the manner of Cain (much less in the manner of Grace Metalious, whose *Peyton Place* shocked America at much the same time that *Lolita* did).[12] But for all his modernist art-for-art's sake veneer, his actual practice is less beholden to traditional high-art reading strategies than we often imagine it to be. For although Nabokov talks incessantly (including in the Afterword that has become part of the standard text of the novel) about the importance of "aesthetic bliss," he tends to find that bliss not in the discovery of abstract ideas (for which he has little sympathy) but rather in the appreciation of the individual details that blossom from the basic trellis of the plot. That is, aesthetic bliss comes not in ferreting out any grand overarching themes, but rather in the "special delectation" that comes from reading such paragraphs as his description of the Kasbeam barber (Nabokov 1958: 318), a passage that took him a month to compose, and that is totally gratuitous as far as the novel's thematic structure is concerned.

What I'm suggesting, then, is that we rethink our highly trained ways of reading, and consider what it might mean to read *Lolita* – and, of course, other high-art texts – with a different set of priorities, with a different balance: to resist the pull of metaphor by giving more weight to metonymic (especially causal) explanations for the facts of the text; to resist the pull of the authorial level by taking the narrative level, the characters as people, more seriously than we often do; to remember that the heart of narrative is in configuration, not in coherence.

While I don't believe that such apparently pop-inflected strategies are necessarily "more ethical" than our traditional ways of reading, I do believe that they are ethical in a different way. I started thinking in these terms when I heard a talk at Hamilton College on "ethical expertise" by Hubert L. Dreyfus in which he distinguished two ways of thinking about "being moral."[13] The first way – which he referred to, after Carol Gilligan, as the "justice perspective" – is associated with a range of thinkers from Kant through Lawrence Kohlberg and Jürgen Habermas, and is fundamentally abstract. Often deemed more masculine, it claims that the highest level of moral thinking is guided by universal principles. The second way – which, after Gilligan, he

referred to as the "care perspective" – is associated with a range of thinkers from Aristotle to Gilligan (or, at least, the Gilligan he finds in *In a Different Voice*). This way, often deemed more feminine (and, perhaps not coincidentally, more narrative), privileges more intuitive moral thinking through engagement with particulars in ways that do not require direct appeal to abstract principles. Dreyfus strongly supports the second mode of thinking, which involves "respond[ing] more appropriately to the demands of others in concrete situations" rather than "stand[ing] back from personal involvement in the situation so as to insure reciprocity and universality" (Dreyfus 1999: 18).

The first of these modes of thinking is the one that's most closely aligned with our current academic practice when it comes to reading works of art. Granted, the *kind* of abstraction involved in ethical "reasoning through universal principles" is somewhat different from the kind of abstraction involved in applying the Rule of Abstract Displacement. Yet my analysis of the way *Lolita* has been read shows us that, in many ways, the costs of such appeal to the abstract are similar: academic readers of the novel, especially men, are precisely standing back from the situation – a posture that leads, in this case, to a blame-the-victim reading by turning this victimized child into a *femme fatale*, a cruel mistress, a girl without emotions. As a consequence, I believe that Nabokov's novel in fact, is better engaged more concretely. This does not necessarily mean taking it less "seriously": indeed, as Elizabeth Patnoe has demonstrated, reading *Lolita* concretely, immediately – without the comforting shield of abstract thematizing – is a far more harrowing experience than reading it the way Trilling reads it. There's good reason to believe that that is the way Nabokov wanted us to read it. As he famously said in his Afterword, *Lolita* had "no moral in tow." But having no moral in tow is not at all the same thing as having no ethical weight. It could well mean (and I believe that it does mean) having no universal principle. As Michael Wood aptly puts it, the novel offers "no simple lesson, then, and certainly no general lesson; but plenty of practice for the moral imagination" (M. Wood 1995: 18). And, I would add, plenty of practice for moral indignation. That strikes me as more than enough for any novel to promise.

NOTES

1   See also how, in "certain moments" when, in the aftermath of a sexual encounter, lust would rise again in Humbert, she "would say with a sign to heaven" (and the verb form is significant) "oh, *no*" (Nabokov 1958: 287); see also her "what d'you think you are doing?" (Nabokov 1958: 168).

2   See also R. W. Flint, who insists that "the disease of Ruskin and Lewis Carroll [is] given free and tender rein" (Flint 1957: 19).

3   See also Michael Kearns' (1999) valuable arguments. Kearns' approach is closer in spirit to Phelan's than to Mailloux's; but he incorporates notions of context – somewhat different from Mailloux's and from mine in this essay – that he develops from speech-act theory.

4 For a fuller discussion, see my *Before Reading* (1997). See also Phelan's useful distinction between the synthetic and the mimetic in *Reading People* (1989).

5 For a detailed, if somewhat over-the-top, discussion of butterflies in *Lolita*, see Diana Butler (1984).

6 For discussion of this phenomenon with respect to Conrad, see Rabinowitz (1996).

7 Since this is a high-art, theoretical essay, it too will tend toward the abstract. Recognizing the dangers of a particular way of reading does not guarantee that one will be able to resist its rhetorical force.

8 Thanks to Michael Rabinowitz for this observation.

9 It's odd that Walter himself argues against the abstraction common in other analyses of this novel.

10 In fact, there is no reason to believe that Quilty's "filthy" requests ever went beyond asking her to have oral sex with his "beastly boys" or that Lolita herself ever submitted to his requests.

11 See also Douglas Anderson's (1996) interesting comparison of Lolita and Anne Frank; see also Whiting (1998: 842).

12 For a discussion of some provocative connections, see Ruth Pirsig Wood (1995: ch. 1).

13 For an earlier version of these ideas, see Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1990).

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Narrative as Rhetoric and Edith Wharton's *Roman Fever*: Progression, Configuration, and the Ethics of Surprise

James Phelan

When I first began to read, and then to write, ghost stories, I was conscious of a common medium between myself and my readers, of their meeting me halfway among the primeval shadows, and filling in the gaps in my narrative with sensations and divinations akin to my own.

<div align="right">Edith Wharton, "Preface" to Ghosts (1937)</div>

The arrest of attention by a vivid opening should be something more than a trick. It should mean that the narrator has so brooded on this subject that it has become his indeed, so made over and synthesized within him that, as a great draughtsman gives the essentials of a face or landscape in half a dozen strokes, the narrator can "situate" his tale in an opening passage which shall be a clue to all the detail eliminated.

The clue given, the writer has only to follow. But his grasp must be firm; he must never for an instant forget what he wants to tell, or why it seemed worth telling. And this intensity of hold on his subject presupposes, before the telling of even a short story, a great deal of thinking over.

<div align="right">Edith Wharton, "Telling a Short Story" (1925)</div>

Wharton as Rhetorician and Narrative as Rhetoric

As the first epigraph shows, Edith Wharton was a rhetorician at heart, a writer – and a reader – who prized the collaborative communication between author and audience. If we take the small liberty of reading the second epigraph according to Wharton's rhetorical principles, we meet her halfway in a message not just about narrative beginnings, brooding and intense authors, their methods, and the necessity of their

strong holds on their subjects, but also about readers and their responsibilities to such authors. To be fit collaborators, readers need to grasp, well, the intense author's grasp, to recognize the depth of the portrait sketched in those half-dozen well-placed strokes, to perceive the purpose that makes the telling worthwhile – in short, to make the story as much theirs as it is the author's. Wharton's statements invite us to approach her narratives as rhetorical acts, and in this essay I accept the invitation as it applies to one of her best-known and most highly regarded stories, *Roman Fever*. I choose to focus on this story because the existing criticism, though full of insights about its structure and its thematics, has not, it seems to me, yet plumbed the depth of Wharton's hold on her subject and the consequences of that hold for the collaborative reader.[1] Above all, we have not yet come to terms with the dynamics of the story's movement from beginning to end and with its ethics, especially the complexities generated by its surprise ending, Grace Ansley's revelation to Alida Slade that the father of Grace's daughter is not her own husband but Alida's. Before I turn to these matters, however, I need to say more about what I mean by approaching narrative as rhetoric.

The approach assumes, first, that narrative can be fruitfully understood as a rhetorical act: somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened. In fictional narrative, the rhetorical situation is doubled: the narrator tells her story to her narratee for her purposes, while the author communicates to her audience for her own purposes both that story and the narrator's telling of it. In non-fictional narrative, the extent to which the narrative act is doubled in this way will depend on the extent to which the author signals her difference from or similarity to the "I" who tells the story.

Second, the approach assumes a recursive relationship among authorial agency, textual phenomena (including intertextual relations), and reader response. In other words, for the purposes of interpreting narratives, the approach assumes that texts are designed by authors in order to affect readers in particular ways, that those designs are conveyed through the words, techniques, structures, forms, and dialogic relations of texts as well as the genres and conventions readers use to understand them, and that reader responses are a function of and, thus, a guide to how designs are created through textual and intertextual phenomena. At the same time, reader responses are also a test of the efficacy of those designs. The model of audience behind the approach's conception of reader response is the one developed by Peter J. Rabinowitz that I have modified slightly (Rabinowitz 1977; Phelan 1996: 135–53). This model identifies four main audiences: the flesh and blood reader, the authorial audience (the author's ideal reader), the narrative audience (the observer position within the narrative world that the flesh and blood reader assumes), and the narratee (the audience addressed by the narrator). The model assumes that the flesh and blood reader seeks to enter the authorial audience; hence, when I speak of what "we" readers do in response to Wharton's text, I am referring to the activities of the authorial audience.

Methodologically, this view of the recursive relationship among author, text, and reader means that the interpreter may begin the interpretive inquiry from any one of

these points on the rhetorical triangle, but the inquiry will necessarily consider how each point both influences and can be influenced by the other two. In the terms of the first epigraph, we can start with how the reader fills in the gaps or with why the author leaves certain gaps to be filled in. In considering the issue of the surprise ending of *Roman Fever*, I am starting with reader response, though clearly the response is tied both to textual phenomena (an important revelation occurs only in the last line of the narrative) and to authorial agency (Wharton has delayed the revelation until that moment).

Third, the approach assumes that the rhetorical act of storytelling entails a multi-leveled communication from author to audience, one that involves the audience's intellect, emotions, psyche, and values. Furthermore, these levels interact with each other. Our values and those set forth by the narrator and the implied author affect our judgments of characters (and sometimes narrators) and our judgments affect our emotions. The trajectory of our feelings is itself linked to the psychological and thematic effects of the narrative. In addition, the doubled communicative situation of fictional narration and even much non-fictional narration – somebody telling us that somebody is telling somebody else that something happened – is itself a *layered* ethical situation. Any character's action will reveal certain ethical commitments, and any narrator's treatment of the events will inevitably convey certain attitudes toward the subject matter and the audience, attitudes that, among other things, indicate his or her sense of responsibility to and regard for the audience. Similarly, the author's treatment of the narrator and of the authorial audience will indicate something of his or her ethical commitments. And the audience members' response to the narrative will indicate their commitments to and attitudes toward the author, the narrator, the narrative situation, and to the values expressed in the narrative.

These considerations provide a way of discussing the ethical dimension of the rhetorical communication, and its central construct is *position, a concept that combines being placed in and acting from an ethical location*. At any given point in a narrative, our ethical position results from the dynamic interaction of four ethical situations:

1 that of the characters within the story world; how they behave toward each other, including how they judge each other, is inescapably tied up with ethics;
2 that of the narrator in relation to the telling, the told, and the multiple audiences of the narration; unreliable narration, for example, constitutes a different ethical position from reliable narration; different kinds of narrative perspective (e.g., internal, external) also position the audience differently;
3 that of the implied author in relation to the narrator, the telling, the told, and the authorial audience; the implied author's choices to adopt one narrative strategy rather than another will affect the audience's ethical response to the characters; each choice will also convey the author's attitudes toward the audience;
4 that of the flesh and blood reader in relation to the set of values, beliefs, and locations operating in situations 1–3.

This approach to ethics, in other words, falls within the purview of analyzing narrative as rhetoric because it seeks to link technique with its ethical consequences.[2] The approach also recognizes that ethical reading involves a two-stage process, one which seeks to identify the invitations offered by the narrative to its authorial audience and then one which responds to those invitations. Because the fourth position is that of the flesh and blood reader rather than of the authorial audience, the approach also acknowledges that ethical response will often differ from reader to reader and that part of the ethics of doing ethical criticism is to welcome that difference – how ethical would it be for the critic to legislate the ethical response of other readers?

Furthermore, in *Roman Fever*, Wharton is working with character–character relations that, abstracted from her specific treatment of it, are at best ethically ambiguous, and such material will inevitably complicate responses of individual readers. The character–character relations are ethically ambiguous at best because both characters can be seen as seriously deficient: as a young woman, Grace knew that Alida was engaged to Delphin Slade but pursued him anyway; Alida forged a letter from Delphin in order to lure Grace into a non-existent nighttime rendezvous with him in the Colosseum in the hope that Grace would contract an illness. In the present action of the story, Alida seeks to injure Grace and establish her own power over her by telling Grace about the forgery. Grace retaliates by telling Alida that Delphin fathered her child. I shall argue, however, that as Wharton constructs her narrative out of this material, she guides her audience to determinate ethical judgments of the characters.

At the same time, Wharton's guidance itself has an ethical dimension, as we can easily see by reflecting on her choice of a surprise ending. The difference between effective and ineffective surprise endings is as much a matter of ethics as aesthetics – or, perhaps better, the difference shows the inextricable relations between aesthetics and ethics. Consider, for example, the oft-cited case of an inappropriate surprise – a story that puts the protagonist in peril and then ends with the sudden revelation that the protagonist has been dreaming. The problem with the surprise ending is aesthetic because there's been no preparation for the revelation of the dream and ethical because the author of the story has asked the audience to invest themselves in the protagonist's actions while knowing all along that those actions are merely illusions. By contrast, aesthetically and ethically appropriate surprises are ones in which (a) the author has subtly prepared the audience for the surprise; or to put this point another way, the audience can retrospectively recognize that the unforeseen ending is very much in keeping with the beginning and the middle of the narrative; and (b) the audience's emotional and other investments in the characters are rewarded – deepened, used in the service of meaningful instruction, or otherwise enhanced – rather than undermined by the surprise.

My question about the ethics of surprise in *Roman Fever* stems from the observation that Wharton's narrator begins the telling with full knowledge about the characters' secrets, but Wharton restricts the narration so that this knowledge is only alluded to but not disclosed to any audience until the characters reveal it in the climactic

moments of the story. From this perspective, Wharton has clearly and carefully manipulated the audience through her tight control of the disclosure. What are the ethics of her control? Or more generally, I am interested in two main questions that emphasize the relation between technique and ethics: (1) How does Wharton shape our overall response to the characters and their situations from beginning to end? (2) What are the ethics of that shaping, especially of the delayed disclosure that produces the surprise ending?

Progression, Configuration, and Temporality in *Roman Fever*

I begin with the concept of progression and the progression of *Roman Fever*. Progression is the term I use to talk about the double-sided dynamics of narrative movement, the logic underlying a story's unfolding from beginning through middle to end and the developing interests and responses of the authorial audience to that movement. Configuration is the activity of finding the larger pattern underlying those developing interests and responses (Rabinowitz 1997: 110–40). A story with a surprise ending is one that causes us substantially to revise our previous configuration – in other words, to reconfigure our understanding. Progressions can be generated and developed through unstable relationships involving the characters and their situations and/or through unstable relationships among authors, narrators, and audiences – matters of unequal knowledge as in mysteries or matters of different values in narratives with unreliable narrators. I call the first set of unstable relationships (involving elements of what narratologists call story) instabilities, and the second (involving elements of what narratologists call discourse) tensions. Narratives typically proceed by the introduction and complication of instabilities and/or tensions, and they reach their endpoints by resolving at least some of the instabilities and tensions (narratives that resist closure will leave more instabilities and tensions unresolved than those that seek strong closure). As we follow the movement of instabilities and tensions, we are also engaged in configuring the narrative: we use the movement of tensions and instabilities to construct a hypothesis about the overall shape and direction of the narrative.

In general terms, audiences will develop interests and responses of three kinds, each related to a particular component of the narrative: mimetic, thematic, and synthetic. Responses to the mimetic component involve an audience's interest in the characters as possible people and in the narrative world as like our own, that is, hypothetically or conceptually possible; responses to the mimetic component include our evolving judgments and emotions, our desires, hopes, expectations, satisfactions, and disappointments. Responses to the thematic component involve an interest in the ideational function of the characters and in the cultural, ideological, philosophical, or ethical issues being addressed by the narrative. Responses to the synthetic component involve an audience's interest in and attention to the characters and to the larger narrative as an artificial construct. The relationship among an audience's

interest in these different components will vary from narrative to narrative depending on the nature of its instabilities and tensions. Some narratives are dominated by mimetic interests, some by thematic, and others by synthetic, but developments in the progression can generate new relations among those interests. In most realistic narratives, for example, the audience has a tacit awareness of the synthetic while it focuses on the mimetic and the thematic components, but, as metafiction since *Don Quixote* has taught us, that tacit awareness can always be converted into something explicit. In *Roman Fever* our interests are primarily on the mimetic component of the characters and of the narrative as a whole and secondarily on the thematic component; consequently, my focus here will primarily be on the mimetic component, including our emotional and ethical responses to it.[3]

The surprise ending to the progression of Wharton's story, true to the double dynamics of progression, is a surprise both for the reader and for one of the two main characters, Alida Slade. As noted above, the surprise means that the configuration we have developed on the basis of the progression needs to be revised, needs, in other words, to be reconfigured. In one respect, Wharton and her narrator have a relation to their audiences similar to the relation Grace Ansley has with Alida Slade: they know something that their audiences do not and they save the revelation of that knowledge until the right moment. However, Wharton and Grace have significantly different motivations for their revelations. Wharton's motivation is to conclude her narrative as effectively as possible, while Grace's motivation – well, her motivation merits extended discussion, but for now suffice it to say that she wants to counter Alida's claim that Grace had nothing from Delphin Slade "but that one letter he didn't write" (Wharton 1991a: 352). The differences in Wharton's motivation and in Grace's point to the importance of the relation between two different ethical situations: that between the characters and that between Wharton and her audience. But before we can do justice to that relation, we need to look at the overall progression of the narrative and at how we're invited to configure it both before and after the ending.

The narrative in the present-time of the story traces the movement of a conversation between Alida and Grace, on the terrace of a Roman restaurant overlooking the Palatine and the Forum: the events of this narrative are moves in the conversation. However, through the careful introduction and complication of tensions and instabilities, Wharton also discloses to her audience that the moves of this conversation are related to the history of the women's relationship, especially to their experiences in Rome one winter twenty-five years ago when they were both in love with the same man, Delphin Slade. Consequently, as the narrative progresses, we become interested in configuring our understanding of the events occurring on two different temporal planes and in configuring our understanding of the relation between those sets of events. It is clear that knowing the events of the past – and, indeed, knowing what each character believes about the events of the past – is crucial for our understanding of the present-time struggles of each character with and against the other.

More specifically, Wharton builds the narrative progression on a synthesis of the tensions surrounding the events of twenty-five years ago – the narrator knows them

but the narrative and authorial audiences do not – and of the instabilities surrounding the present-time conversation. What's more, as the tensions surrounding the events of twenty-five years ago slowly get resolved, we also recognize that both Alida's and Grace's knowledge of those events has been partial. The progression is complete only at the moment when everyone's knowledge – Alida's, Grace's, and the authorial audience's – is equal. Moreover, as I shall seek to demonstrate, Grace's "I had Barbara" (352) not only makes Alida's and the audience's knowledge equal to hers but it also provides a resolution to the instabilities of the present-time conversation. Nevertheless, the same knowledge leads to different reconfigurations of both past and present for Grace, Alida, and the authorial audience.

As noted above, the narrator knows the whole story of the past but alludes to rather than reveals it to the narratee, leaving the dialogue between the characters to disclose those events. In addition, the narrator does more description of than direct commentary on the present events, though she does give us frequent inside views of Alida and, in Part I, occasional inside views of Grace. In Part II, Wharton restricts the internal focalization to Alida's consciousness. Through her control of the forward movement of the conversation with its intertwining of the present and the past, and through her selective focalization, Wharton provides the groundwork for her collaborative communication with her authorial audience, a communication that allows us to develop an understanding of Grace and Alida's relationship that goes beyond either of theirs. In other words, Wharton's major technique for maintaining the element of surprise is to control the disclosure of information in such a way that she keeps her audience actively involved in configuring the events of both the present and the past right until the very end of the narrative when we have to undertake a substantial reconfiguration. To substantiate this point, I turn now to some of the specific details of the progression: how Wharton's two-part structure guides our collaboration with her, and how we configure the relations between past and present just after Alida completes Grace's knowledge of the past and just before Grace starts to complete Alida's.

Part I of *Roman Fever* does constitute a "vivid opening" by locating the two American women in their Roman setting, but its movement is leisurely, and its main function is to set the stage for the much quicker pace and multiple twists of Part II. Part I introduces (a) some of the major tensions of unequal knowledge between the narrator and the authorial and narrative audiences and (b) a glimpse of the fundamentally unstable relation between Alida and Grace. After Alida comments that she and Grace might just as well stay on the terrace, as their daughters fly off to Tarquinia with some eligible Italian bachelors, because "after all, it's still the most beautiful view in the world," the narrator gives Grace's reply, "It always will be, to me" (343) and comments that she assented "with so slight a stress on the 'me' that Mrs. Slade, though she noticed it, wondered if it were not merely accidental, like the random underlinings of old-fashioned letter-writers" (343). The technique here shows one of Wharton's main strategies for communicating to her audience. It is the narrator who initially notes the stress that Grace puts on the word "me," but rather than having the narrator disclose the reason for that stress, Wharton maintains the tension about its

significance by shifting to Alida's focalization. That move, furthermore, invites us to infer an instability between the two women. The shift to Alida's focalization shows not only that she is as in the dark about the reason for Grace's intonation as Wharton's audience but also that Alida's particular way of being in the dark is one that does not give Grace much credit. Rather than thinking that Grace has had some experience with the view that makes it special to her, Alida opts for the explanation that Grace's stress on "me" is "random" and a sign of her being, as Alida says explicitly in her next judgment of Grace, "old-fashioned" (343).[4] In other words, Alida assumes that she is superior to Grace, that she has good reasons for condescending to her. Wharton neither endorses nor undercuts Alida's conclusion at this point, but she does expect her collaborating audience to register the instability.

The next significant moves of the progression involve the narrator's revelation of a paradox, which points to further instabilities underlying the two women's conversation, and a further revelation of their current assessments of each other. The narrator remarks that "the two ladies, who had been intimate since childhood, reflected how little they knew each other" (344). Meeting Wharton halfway on the revelation of the paradox involves recognizing that intimates who know little of each other must be rivals. At this point, however, Wharton maintains the tension about the nature of that rivalry. In turning to their mutual assessments, the narrator develops Alida's sense of superiority at some length. Alida regards Grace as a charming young woman who had grown up to be a respectable "nullit[y]" (344), a good match for her respectable nullity of a husband, Horace. Alida judges her own marriage as having been a great success, since her husband Delphin had been a brilliant man with a brilliant career and her presence at his side had won both of them much praise. Currently, however, she is feeling superfluous; her daughter Jenny, "an extremely pretty girl who made youth and prettiness seem as safe as their absence" (345), takes care of her rather than the other way around. For her part, Grace regards Alida as "brilliant but not as brilliant as she thinks" (345), and Grace believes that "on the whole [Alida] had had a sad life. Full of failures and mistakes"; indeed, Grace "had always been a little sorry for her" (345). Grace's attitude adds another tension to the developing progression: what does she know about Alida that we need to learn; why should she be sorry for Alida? The most telling comment of all is the narrator's last at the end of Part I: "So these two ladies visualized each other, each through the wrong end of her little telescope" (346).

As we enter Part II, then, Wharton has guided us not to take either character's view of the other as accurate and has especially marked the problems with Alida's view of Grace. Furthermore, Wharton has shown that the values by which Alida judges Grace and, indeed, her own life are superficial: she, in effect, applies a scale of "brilliance" to Grace and finds her wanting; she cares less about how much she, Delphin, and Jenny loved and cared for each other than about how well she looked in the eyes of Delphin's business associates and how Jenny's virtue has left little for her to do. We have seen Grace far less clearly, but we know both that there is more to her than Alida thinks and that her own view of Alida is deficient in some way. More generally, Wharton has positioned us in a complex relation to Alida because the narrator's general reticence

keeps our knowledge about the past so limited that we must rely, however provision-
ally, on what we learn through Alida's perceptions as the focal character. We move
forward, then, caught up in the tensions and instabilities, judging Alida negatively,
withholding judgment about Grace, and depending on the narrator's descriptions, the
characters' dialogue, and Alida's focalization for the disclosures that will lead to a
resolution of the tensions and instabilities.

In Part II, the dynamics of the conversation follow a clear pattern: Alida becomes
the aggressor against Grace, and Grace is initially reluctant to be drawn in to Alida's
competition but eventually replies with disclosures that she knows will hurt Alida.
Alida first goes on the offensive by, in effect, politely insulting Grace. After admitting
to Grace that her own daughter Jenny will have no chance against Barbara in any
competition for the Marchese with whom they have flown to Tarquinia,[5] Alida
remarks: "I was wondering, ever so respectfully you understand . . . , wondering how
two such exemplary characters as you and Horace had managed to produce anything
quite so dynamic" (347). Grace, however, does not rise to the bait, but "at length"
simply says, "I think you overrate Babs, my dear" (347). Although Alida silently asks
herself, "Would she never cure herself of envying [Grace]?," she can't stop baiting
Grace, excusing herself with a thought that further heightens the tension about the
past: "Perhaps she had begun too long ago" (348). Alida's behavior here even more
clearly marks her as ethically deficient, and Grace's gentle responses lead us to judge
her more positively and to sympathize with her.

As Alida pushes on to her revelation that she wrote the note that Grace thought was
from Delphin, the first set of tensions about the past begin to get resolved. Our
knowledge starts to catch up with Alida's – and so does Grace's. The immediate effect
of this partial resolution of tension, however, is to complicate the instabilities of the
conversation. Alida's revelation is, in effect, an attack on Grace, and it is one that
initially succeeds in drawing blood. After Alida explains, "Well, my dear, I know what
was in that letter because I wrote it" (350). Grace drops back into her chair, buries her
face in her hand and cries. When she speaks again, a new tension gets introduced. In
response to Alida's interpretation of Grace's tearful silence, "I horrify you," Grace starts
to explain: "I wasn't thinking of you. I was thinking – " and Wharton uses the dash to
indicate that Grace does not complete the thought but instead shifts to a new one: "it
was the only letter I ever had from him!" (350). Alida presses the attack and begins to
justify herself: "And I wrote it. Yes, I wrote it! But I was the girl he was engaged to. Did
you happen to remember that?" Grace speaks truthfully: "I'm not trying to excuse
myself . . . I remembered . . . " and then underlines Alida's accusation "And still you
went?" with another concession, "Still I went" (350).

The interaction deepens our existing emotional and ethical responses with one
twist. Alida's attack heightens her envy, hatred, and cruelty, while Grace's response
has the character of an open admission of her transgression, one that she neither
apologizes for nor defends. This admission does not change our sympathy for her, but
it reminds us of the narrator's remark at the end of Part I that Alida's view of her is not
reliable, and it underlines Grace's own remark that "The most prudent girls aren't

always prudent" (349); consequently, we need to remain open to further revelation of her character, even as we seek a resolution to the new tension about what Grace was really thinking.

Despite the success of Alida's attack, she remains jealous of Grace because she reads her strong response as a sign of how much Grace "must have loved [Delphin], to treasure the mere memory of [the letter's] ashes!" (351). But she goes on, making excuses for her revelation on the grounds that she

> had no reason to think you'd ever taken it seriously. How could I, when you were married to Horace Ansley two months afterward? As soon as you could get out of bed your mother rushed you off to Florence and married you. People were rather surprised – they wondered at its being done so quickly; but I thought I knew. I had an idea you did it out of pique – to be able to say you'd got ahead of Delphin and me . . . your marrying so soon convinced me that you'd never really cared.

Again, Grace chooses not to escalate the current conflict and assents, though we are invited to infer an edge to her remark that Alida would not catch, an edge reflecting a gap between what actually happened and Alida's understanding of it: "Yes. I suppose it would" (351).

At this juncture, then, meeting Wharton halfway involves the following configurations of the narrative: twenty-five years ago, Alida adopted the strategy of Grace's Great-aunt Harriet, who sent her younger sister, her rival for a man's love, on an errand to pick a night-blooming flower with the result that her sister contracted Roman fever and died. Although Alida claims that she only wanted Grace "out of the way" for "just a few weeks" (350), we can infer that Alida's willingness to adopt Great-aunt Harriet's strategy includes her willingness to accept its result: the death of the victim. Although we have reason to question Alida's interpretation of Grace's sudden marriage, we have no clear alternative explanation for it, especially since our limited knowledge of the past and Grace's apparent acceptance of Alida's explanation leads us to assume that Grace did go to the Colosseum and contract some illness. In the present, Alida's continued resentment of Grace's past love for Delphin and her own current unhappiness as a widow and a mother of a daughter who does not need her, lead not only to this new effort at injury but also to this assertion of her power over her rival: "I manipulated you in the past to serve my interests, and in telling you about that now, I want to hurt you again." For her part, Grace did not regard Alida's engagement to Delphin as sufficient reason not to pursue him herself, and, in the present, she has lost one of her fondest memories of his expression of love. In short, we seem to be nearing the end of a narrative in which we watch the past repeat itself through Alida's manipulative assertion of her power over Grace.

But this understanding becomes substantially revised after two significant developments in the present-time conversation. First, after Alida lingers over her past manipulation by saying, "I suppose I did it as a sort of joke . . . I remember laughing to myself all that evening at the idea that you were waiting around there in the dark,

dodging out of sight, listening for every sound trying to get in" (351–2), Grace finally changes tactics by making her first crucial revelation about the past: "But I didn't wait. He'd arranged everything. He was there. We were let in at once." Grace goes on to explain that she "answered the letter. I told him I'd be there. So he came" (352). At this point, then, more tensions about the past begin to be resolved. We begin to understand the stress in Grace's earlier statement that to *her* the view from the terrace will always be the most beautiful in the world. Furthermore, we see that Alida now has to reconfigure her understanding of the events of the past and that she is struggling to do so. Her first move is denial, "You must be raving!," and her second is despair at her own blindness: "Oh God – you answered! I never thought of your answering ... I was blind with rage" (352).

The second development comes when Grace moves to end the conversation, saying that they should go inside and that "I'm sorry for you" (352). Alida can't bear this sympathy from the rival to whom she is in the habit of condescending, and so seeks to regain the upper hand by discounting the fact of Grace's meeting with Delphin: "After all, I had everything; I had him for twenty-five years. And you had nothing but that one letter he didn't write." Grace is "again silent" but "at length" she turns toward the door of the terrace, stopping to turn and face Alida in order to retaliate with her trenchant exit line, "I had Barbara" (352). As I noted above, the line resolves the last of the tensions about the past – now Grace, Alida, and the authorial audience know the whole story – and completes the working out of instabilities by permanently changing the power relation between the two characters: Grace not only delivers the trump line in the conversation but she also announces that she has been the beneficiary of Alida's past manipulation. To appreciate the full effect of the ending we need to consider the reconfiguration it requires us to make.

Reconfiguration and Ethics

The first step in our reconfiguration is to recognize the reconfigurations that Grace and Alida themselves must make now that each has revealed her secret to the other. Since Wharton's technique has given us more access to Alida's consciousness, her reconfigurations are more apparent. She must now view Delphin, Grace, and especially herself in a new light – and all three new visions are painful to her. She must recognize that Delphin regarded their engagement so lightly that, when presented with the opportunity for the clandestine meeting with Grace, he seized it. This recognition must lead, in turn, to doubts about Delphin's love and fidelity after their marriage. Indeed, Alida must question whether she is justified in saying, "I had everything. I had him for twenty-five years" (352). Alida must also abandon her view of Grace as her inferior, since she must admit that Grace has outdone her at so many crucial turns: in the past by innocently responding to her forgery and then not so innocently sleeping with Delphin; in the present by silencing her with her secrets of greater import. Even more galling to her, Alida must admit that Grace and Delphin

have produced the more brilliant daughter. Finally, Alida must recognize that her own efforts to defeat her rival have actually wreaked far more havoc upon herself than upon Grace: her forgery did not, as she thought, lead to Grace's illness but rather to her conception of Barbara; her revealing her secret about the forgery, though it does injure Grace, prods Grace into giving her even more painful knowledge.

For her part, Grace now understands the irony that her rival inadvertently brought about the sexual encounter that gave her Barbara. Although Grace must take some satisfaction in that irony, she also pays a high price for it, as her tears over Alida's revelation reveal. What she was thinking as she cried, and what she chose not to tell Alida, is that knowing about the forgery must alter her understanding of Delphin's role in their nighttime encounter. Rather than thinking of him as its only begetter, the active agent who brought it about, she must consider whether he was only an opportunist, someone willing to take advantage of a situation that others have set up for him. This consideration, in turn, must shake her confidence that Delphin actually loved her. Without knowing that he was the author of the summons to meet in the Colosseum, Grace must wonder whether his actions that night were motivated by an interest in an easy sexual conquest, especially since their encounter did not alter his plans to marry Alida. Wharton encourages us to perceive this reconfiguration by the way Alida's forgery allows (though it does not require) the inference that Grace and Delphin's sexual encounter that night was their first: "Things cannot go on like this. I must see you alone" (349). These sentiments are appropriate for (albeit not exclusively belonging to) the domain of pre-consummated desire; note how different our inferences would be if the note read "I must see you alone 'again.'" Of course, as Alida composes the note, she is only guessing about the exact nature of the relationship, but the effect produced by the note – it gets both parties to the Colosseum – indicates that she guessed right. Consequently, though Grace's "I had Barbara" does trump Alida's claim that "you had nothing but that one letter that he didn't write" (352), it does not overturn Alida's earlier declaration that "You tried your best to get him away from me . . . But you failed; and I kept him" (351). As we have seen, Alida needs to recognize that she has been wrong to conclude the declaration by saying "That's all," but Grace now has new cause to think that the first part of the declaration is very much on target. Indeed, as we recognize Grace's reconfiguration, we also recognize that Grace's exit line – and, indeed, Barbara herself – must have another layer of meaning: she can no longer be confident that Barbara is the continuing sign of Delphin's love but only that Barbara is her consolation for having given herself to him in a vain effort to win him away from Alida. As a result, we may conclude that Grace may no longer find the view from Rome the most beautiful one in the world. In this regard, the story is one in which there are no winners.

This recognition of Grace's reconfiguration also allows us to deepen our understanding of Grace's decision to tell Alida her secrets. It is clear that Alida's persistence in asserting her superiority contributes to Grace's retaliation. But more important is that Alida's revelation has robbed Grace of her construction of the past. She becomes determined to take something from Alida as well. At first, Grace is content just to tell

Alida that she met Delphin and that, therefore, she feels sorry for her. But Alida's insistence that Grace "had nothing but the one letter that he didn't write" (352) leads her to what she knows, given Alida's earlier question about Barbara, will be the most damaging revelation.

As I have been suggesting, our reconfiguration includes all of Grace and Alida's new understandings, but it also goes beyond them to recognize that the coincidence of the resolution of tensions about the past and of the instabilities in the present also makes the story both a repetition and a completion of the past. It is a repetition because Alida's aggression against Grace in the conversation has similar unexpected results. Just as Alida's scheme to have Grace contract an illness in the Colosseum led to Grace's pregnancy, Alida's scheme to wound Grace by revealing the forgery leads to Grace's greater wounding of her through the revelation of that pregnancy. Both women have acted under the influence of a metaphoric Roman fever both in the past and in the present. The present is also a completion of the past because the competition, if not the feeling of rivalry, must now be over. It is hard to imagine that either one would want to take on the other once again, especially now that the mutual revelation of secrets means that they now know the worst of each other.

Our reconfiguration also includes our final understanding of the ethical relations between the characters. Our reconfiguration helps us recognize that Wharton has taken Grace, a character who, by the measure of conventional morality, has acted very dishonorably – pursuing her friend's fiancé to the point of sleeping with him – and presented her as more sinned against than sinning. Wharton's treatment of the present is crucial here: she uses the focalization to reveal that Alida continues to be motivated by envy, hatred, and the desire for dominance – the feelings that led to her own past dishonorable action of luring Grace into a situation in which she might become deathly ill – whereas she uses the external descriptions of Grace along with her dialogue to suggest that Grace would have been content to take her secret to her grave. Consequently, we judge Alida more harshly than we judge Grace, and find Alida's necessary reconfigurations an appropriate comeuppance, a fit punishment for her behavior toward Grace. At the same time, we also regard Grace's revised under-standing about Delphin's behavior as a kind of punishment for her past pursuit of her self-interest, and we recognize that, though she is provoked by Alida's aggression and condescension into revealing her secrets, those revelations are designed to wound. Furthermore, our new view of Grace leads us to understand that Alida's envy has not been at all irrational: Grace was a genuine threat, albeit not one that justified Alida's behavior. To repeat, there are no winners in this story, but given our emotional and ethical attachments, the fact that Grace's retaliation to Alida's attack comes from her injured pride and turns out to be more damaging than the attack itself makes the ending both appropriate and disturbing. In *Roman Fever*, Wharton has asked us to collaborate in her portrayal of a subtle and very nasty power struggle that ends up diminishing both competitors.

We are now in a position to recognize that Wharton's tight control of the disclosure of information is both aesthetically and ethically satisfying, even admirable. First, we

can see that it would be misleading to read the ethics of Wharton's surprising her audience as analogous to the ethics of Grace's surprising Alida because the nature and consequences of the disclosure are vastly different. Second, Wharton has carefully set us up for the surprise ending: the signals about Alida's underestimation of Grace, about Grace's attachment to Rome, and, indeed, about Grace's response to Alida's revelation function in retrospect as preparations for the surprise ending – even as these signals take on new significance in light of the surprise. Third, the surprise ending, in simultaneously resolving the tensions and instabilities of the progression and in leading to the reconfigurations we have just examined, deepens our involvement with the characters and their situations: the surprise opens up dimensions of the narrative that have largely been hidden until that point. These last two points can also be approached from another direction, one that reveals another dimension of Wharton's successful handling of the surprise. For the surprise to work, Wharton obviously needs to restrict our access to Grace's consciousness throughout the narrative. By making Grace's revelation so well motivated within the dramatic situation and by making it the chief means to resolve the tensions and instabilities, Wharton converts the restriction on her narration from an obstacle to an advantage.

Fourth, and most important, all these features of the surprise ending intensify our collaboration with Wharton herself; it is through them that she implicitly asks us to "fill in the gaps in [her] narrative with sensations and divinations akin to [her] own." Sharing those sensations and divinations leads us to admire her insight into the power of the past to influence the present and to the psychological and ethical dynamics of a polite power struggle. Collaborating with Wharton also means working at or near the peak of our cognitive, emotive, and ethical powers. For these reasons, we cannot help but end the narrative grateful for the opportunity to participate in Wharton's beautifully designed, powerful, and disturbing narrative.

Notes

1　The essays by Sweeney, Bauer, Mortimer, Petry, and Berkove are especially good, and White's commentary is also insightful. Sweeney emphasizes the story's dual concerns with textuality and sexuality and argues that it reflects Wharton's own anxieties about writing, including her appropriation of Henry James' *Daisy Miller*. Bauer focuses on the issue of illegitimacy in the story and places it within a larger political context. Mortimer discusses what she calls the narrative's "second story" structure, one in which a buried story gradually gets revealed and becomes more prominent towards the story's end. Petry traces the narrator's descriptions of Grace's knitting as signals about Grace's responses at key points in the narrative. Berkove is, in one sense, concerned with the ethics of the main characters, as he argues that Wharton judges both Alida and Grace very harshly and that these judgments are indicative of her traditional Christian values. White nicely relates the structure of the story to Wharton's principles as articulated in her essay on "Telling a Short Story." But none of these critics analyzes the dynamics of the surprise ending and its consequences as I propose to do here.

2　For related approaches to ethics, see Booth (1988) and Newton (1995).

3　For more on this model, see my *Reading People, Reading Plots* (1989). And for more on the thematics of *Roman Fever*, including the rivalry between women under patriarchy, illegitimacy, the anxiety of

authorship, and New World Americans returning to the center of the Old World, see the critics cited in note 1.
4   Sweeney points out that Alida's metaphor of the old-fashioned letter is itself not accidental but rather a result of her association between Grace and the letter Alida wrote twenty-five years ago.
5   I agree with Mortimer that Wharton does not encourage her audience to see the rivalry between Alida and Grace continued into the next generation. Such a rivalry does not fit with the portraits that we get of Jenny and Barbara, and Alida herself says that their daughters need not fear Rome or Roman fever.

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"Mind the Gap": W. G. Sebald and the Rhetoric of Unrest

Adam Zachary Newton

Calling him to account for sins of style, John Ruskin benignly rebuked Robert Browning in a letter dated December 2, 1855:

> Your Ellipses are quite Unconscionable; before one can get through ten lines, one has to patch you up in twenty places. Wrong or right, and if one hasn't much stuff of one's own to spare to patch with! You are worse than the worst Alpine Glacier I ever crossed. Bright, & deep enough truly, but so full of Clefts that half the journey has to be done with ladder and hatchet. However, I found some great things in you already, and I think you must be a wonderful mine, when I have time & strength to set to work properly. (DeLaura 1972: 326)

Browning's response:

> We don't read poetry the same way, by the same law; it is too clear. I cannot begin writing poetry till my imaginary reader has conceded licenses to me which you demur at altogether. I know that I don't make out my conception by my language. All poetry being a putting the infinite within the finite. You would have me paint it all plain out, which can't be, but by various artifices I try to make shift with touches and bits of outlines which *succeed* if they bear the conception from me to you. You ought, I think, to keep pace with the thought tripping from ledge to ledge of my 'glaciers,' as you call them; not stand poking your alpenstock into the holes, and demonstrating that no foot could have stood there – suppose it sprang over there? (Ruskin 1909: xxxiv)

Suppose it did spring over there: what then? Suppose one had time and energy and the correct gear: ladder, hatchet, even alpenstock? Would Browning's imagined foot that fords the clefts keep pace with Ruskin's figured tread that aims to patch them, anyway? What does "keeping pace" mean, in fact, within the necessary asymmetry of writer and reader? Inasmuch as Browning has already altered Ruskin's figure, substituting, as tenor to Ruskin's vehicle, *poetry* for the *poet* – "You ought . . . to

keep pace with the thought tripping from ledge to ledge of my 'glaciers,' as you call them" instead of "You are worse than the worst Alpine Glacier I ever crossed" – he supplies a *writer's* answer, outpacing his reader, ledge to ledge.

But, vigorous writer himself, Ruskin is no flatfoot, even if here left behind. The metaphor of the alpinist is his to begin with. Moreover, the willingness to track Browning's verse carefully line by line, as he demonstrates in the letter with "Popularity" – a poem, no less, about the chasm sometimes separating strong poets and their audience – attests to the keen desire to keep faith if not full pace. "Of their power, there can be no question," he says of the poetry in Browning's *Men and Women* (1855). And if they are "conundrums" whose "puzzlement" makes his head ache, Ruskin may be registering not only Browning's trademark difficulty but also the new terrain – the outcrop – that announces dramatic monologue's departure from the conventions of lyric poetry.

Pictured as standing obdurately, poking into holes for demonstration's sake, Ruskin appears uncomfortably like Samuel Johnson kicking stones, demurring at licenses not to be conceded Bishop Berkeley (fittingly, the poem "Popularity" begins, "Stand still, true poet that you are / I know you; let me try and draw you"). But while he may seem pedantic or intransigent, Ruskin has done more than just prosaically poke. In fact, he asks the sorts of questions of "Popularity" at all the appropriate junctures of syntax, diction, and line it can, and perhaps should, prompt – befitting a jagged or pitted surface to be frictionally felt rather than a glaciated edifice descried from a distance.

Would Ruskin, indeed, have disagreed with the assertion that all poetry is "a putting the infinite within the finite," its claims to be no more easily deflected than idealist philosophy at the level of a London kerb? He knows that there are imaginative depths ahead of him to be mined: "[t]here are truths and depths in it," he tells Browning, "far beyond anything I have read except Shakespeare." He even anticipates Browning's confutation: "so far as my mind *is* made up, I am not sure whether it is in the least right." He is simply now not as agile and indefatigable a reader as he might yet become when he sets properly to work.

Browning reproaches Ruskin for pedestrian stolidity but perhaps Ruskin's own worst sin is that he is under-equipped, under-trained . . . a little winded. These are, after all, new heights in British poetry, more forbidding in their formal procedures than the relatively descriptive sublime of, say, Shelley's "Mont Blanc." Moreover, as fellow Victorians, Browning and Ruskin scale or descend, stand or spring from within the same interpretive community of British climbers (they even belay between them a common rope of attraction to the aesthetic past).[1]

Their colloquy can, I think, be read in two directions at once. And read thus, it captures the double-edged nature of rhetorical claims, claims on readers as both interpreters of literary discourse and partners in some acute relationship with writers. In the first case, Browning's revision of Ruskin's figure allows him "to relocate meaning not *in* the poem, as an object one stands and pokes at, but *through* the poem, as a method or series of signs that one actively traverses" (Tucker 1980: 13). The "touches and bits of outline," the markers (including the ellipses) Ruskin laments

which just *are* the poem's record of itself: these are the relevant thing, Browning's *ars poetica* says, not the poet himself; one simply undertakes the journey the text has already made. Resisted, its various artifices and meanings will inevitably outpace.

In the second case, we confront the dynamic between the paths marked out by writers – the signs *they* have traversed – and the mimetic patterns readers forge in tracing them, even if such tracery amount to poles poked into holes. Have readers stopped in their tracks while the text outpaces them? Then perhaps they have just applied resistance to its forward pull at that moment; they may even wish then and there to regress, to recollect. Like a musical rest or fermata, such sojourning just *is* the notation of the trek across the text thus far.

Harold Bloom has said of Browning's authorial will-to-power, "Browning as self-interpreter has to be both welcomed and resisted, and he makes the resistance very difficult. Such resistance, though, may be Browning's greatest gift to his attentive reader" (Bloom 1979: 2). By tripping across clefts as Browning urges, readers may too quickly elide them *as* clefts, gaps (or traps) to be essayed. Minding the gap need not be synonymous with stepping over it. Need the writer be always *moving*, anyway – always just ahead of us? Can't holes be poked for the holes' sake?

My subject in this essay, however, is neither Ruskin nor Browning, but rather the late German elegist W. G. Sebald. As Sebald's readers, we are perhaps more elastic than a caricatured Ruskin (or so we might flatter ourselves) but no more indefatigable, possibly even a little less faithful. We have read our Nabokov and our Proust, and we recognize the toeholds to which they correspond in Sebald's *oeuvre*. But perhaps we only think we know what "keeping pace" in this instance means, the rhetoric unsettling our footing more than we suspect. It is just possible that our steps, too, may go wrong *or* right, that, like one of Sebald's narrators (2001c: 122), we may be confounded in the act of crossing over:

> Like a tightrope walker who has forgotten how to put one foot in front of the other, all I felt was the swaying of the precarious structure on which I stood, stricken with terror at the realization that the ends of the balancing pole gleaming far out on the edges of my field of vision were no longer my guiding lights, but malignant enticements to me to cast myself into the depths.

Or in simply "standing there":

> Minutes or even hours may have passed while I stood in that empty space beneath a ceiling which seemed to float at a vertiginous height, unable to move from the spot . . . (Sebald 2001c: 134)

Sebald's native clime was the Allgäu in Bavaria, so tropes of glacier and cleft are more than a little apt. Alpine imagery occurs in almost all of Sebald's texts. There is, for instance, the arresting image that concludes the first section of the first book to appear in English, *The Emigrants*:

I was just laying aside a Lausanne paper I'd bought in Zurich when my eye was caught by a report that said the remains of the Bernese alpine guide Johannes Naegli, missing since summer 1914, had been released by the Oberaar glacier, seventy-two years later. And so they are ever returning to us, the dead. At times they come back from the ice more than seven decades later and are found at the edge of the moraine, a few polished bones and a pair of hobnailed boots. (Sebald 1996: 23)

Or this passage, from the end of *Vertigo*:

Idly I turned the pages of an India paper edition of Samuel Pepys's diary, Everyman's Library, 1913, which I had purchased that afternoon, and read passages at random in this 1,500-page account, until drowsiness overcame me and I found myself going over the same few lines again and again without any notion what they meant. And then I dreamed that I was walking through a mountainous terrain ... which I recognized in my dream as the Alps ... From my vantage point the road continued downward, and in the distance a second range of mountains as lofty as the first one arose, which I feared I would not be able to cross. To my left there was a drop into truly vertiginous depths ... Not a tree was there to be seen, not a bush, not even a stunted shrub or tussock of grass: there was nothing but ice-grey shale. (261–2)

While the second example does indeed coordinate reading and climbing, the relevance of the trope for this essay's purposes picks up where Ruskin and Browning adventitiously left off: figuring the hermeneutics of excursion and pursuit. Perhaps more manifestly and complexly than any other recent literary undertaking, Sebald's writing proposes itself as a *topography*, a writing that traffics in *surfaces*, built upon topoi in the twinned senses of subject and locality. While the prose may indeed narrate journeys to escarpments and plateaus of one kind or another (flattening out Ruskin's metaphor ahead and beyond rather than above), the incline of the prose itself resembles less the prodigious elevations of the Romantic sublime than limit-points to the front, back, or margin.[2] It ventures horizontally.

But it is, more importantly I think, a prose that also insistently embarks, migrates, relocates:

At the end of September 1970, shortly before I took up my position in Norwich, I drove out to Hingham with Clara in search of somewhere to live. (*The Emigrants*: 3)

In August 1992, when the dog days were drawing to an end, I set off to walk the county of Suffolk, in the hope of dispelling the emptiness that takes hold of me whenever I have completed a long stint of work. (*The Rings of Saturn*: 3)

In the second half of the 1960s I traveled repeatedly from England to Belgium, partly for study purposes, partly for other reasons which were never entirely clear to me, staying sometimes for several weeks. (*Austerlitz*: 3)

Sebald's is a rhetoric of unrest. By the time the narrator has traveled repeatedly to generate the material for the story told in *Austerlitz*, Sebald's final and most novel-like

prose-work, he has done so as well across the sequence of the similarly structured texts that precede it, *Vertigo* (1999), *The Emigrants* (1996), and *The Rings of Saturn* (1998). Even the first of these begins with a transit: "In mid-May of the year 1800 Napoleon and a force of 36,000 men crossed the Great St. Bernard pass, an undertaking that had been regarded until that time as next to impossible" (3).

Likewise, as the first of several possible correlates for the "nervature of past life in one image," the final section of the prose-poem *After Nature* proposes a journey scene: "How far, in any case, must one go back to find the beginning? Perhaps to that morning of January 9th, 1905, when Grandfather and Grandmother in ringing cold drove in an open Landau from Kloster Lechfeld to Obermeitingen, to be married" (Sebald 2002: 83–4).

In *The Emigrants*, *The Rings of Saturn*, and *Austerlitz*, a narrator interposes himself from the outset (in both *Vertigo* and *After Nature*, he defers arrival to later sections). The narrative crossings belong to him, and the writing, we speculate, does not simply reenact them. Situated within his bounds yet habitually out of place, he is dislodged, too, in the act of utterance. He is, as we would say, *moved* to write.

> At all events, in retrospect I became preoccupied not only with the unaccustomed sense of freedom but also with the paralyzing horror that had come over me at various times when confronted with the traces of destruction, reaching far back into the past, that were evident even in that remote place. Perhaps it was because of this that, a year to the day after I began my tour, I was taken into hospital in Norwich in a state of almost total immobility. It was then that I began in my thoughts to write these pages. (Sebald 1998: 3)

> In October 1980 I traveled from England, where I had then been living for nearly twenty-five years in a country which was almost always under grey skies, to Vienna, hoping that a change of place would help me get over a particularly difficult period of my life. In Vienna, however, I found that the days proved inordinately long, now that they were not taken up by my customary routine of writing and gardening tasks, and I literally did not know where to turn. (Sebald 1999: 33)

> Even on arrival, as the train rolled slowly over the viaduct with its curious pointed turrets on both sides and into the dark station concourse, I had begun to feel unwell, and this sense of indisposition persisted for the whole of my visit to Belgium on that occasion. I can still remember the uncertainty of my footsteps as I walked all round the inner city . . . until at last, plagued by a headache and uneasy thoughts, I took refuge in the zoo by the Astridplein, next to the Centraal Station, waiting for the pain to subside. I sat there on a bench in the dappled shade . . . (Sebald 2001c: 3)

Such visitations unsettle; they displace the narrator to a point where he may, as the expression has it, *take leave* of his senses (immobility in Sebald often seems the direct *effect* of movement, just as bodily arrest becomes the pretext for a kind of contiguity disorder: thought as incessant border-crossing). Memory, too, in moments of repose or respite, merely resumes those earlier journeys, undertakes them once again, even though all that it conveys into the present moment of written reminiscence has already, as we say, *taken place*.

The marring of the past upon the present and the impress that memory bears like a landscape traversed: this is one of Sebald's deep subjects. Accordingly, the landscape that takes actual shape in his four major prose works is layered, sedimented by history. Post-Romantic, the ground beneath the feet of his narrators cannot be scaled or aggrandized as it might have been in an earlier, less diasporal century. It is not toured so much as it is encountered; in the language of the Hebrew Bible, this speaker can be said to *happen upon* or *collide with* a place (Genesis 28). Distressed, worn down or used up, haunted, tenanted at best (a "hotel terminus") – the Euro-center of all the books' varied peregrinations is a landscape knowingly, guiltily post-Holocaust, justly characterized as "the posthumous sublime" (Ozick 2001: 26).

And yet, with each new book, Sebald began again – to take leave and to shape such leave-taking into plot. Each book announced another vagary, their several endings marking caesurae or fermatas rather than periods, because their "master-narrative" seemed to be just the un-masterable reflex to keep taking leave, just as their émigré narrator gravitates towards "the interstices of travel . . . moments in hotel rooms, planes, parks, foyers" (Falconer 2001: 33). Thus, the end of *Austerlitz* symmetrically reverses the book's initial movement, folding arrival into the next excursion: "Sitting by the moat of the fortress of Breendonk, I read to the end of the fifteenth chapter of *Heschel's Kingdom*, and then set out on my way back to Mechelen, reaching the town as evening began to fall" (298).

The rhetoric of unrest is thus a concentrated, compulsive version of what Michel de Certeau has called "walking rhetorics," for which "the art of 'turning' phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path (*tourner un parcours*)" (de Certeau 1988: 100). It is *reiteration*, "travel[ing] repeatedly" – designed to be gone over yet again in the reading. Indeed, to understand the sameness of Sebald's project from book to book, one might construe it as a self-chastening and historicized pursuit of writing's perpetual vanishing point, in the very terms spelled out by de Certeau:

> Writing repeats this lack in each of its graphs, the relics of a walk through language. It spells out an absence that is its precondition and its goal. It proceeds by successive abandonments of occupied places, and it articulates itself on an exteriority that eludes it, on its addressee come from abroad, a visitor who is expected but never heard on the scriptural paths that the travels of a desire have traced on the page. (de Certeau 1988: 195)

However, the conclusion of *Austerlitz* really did mark a full and final stop, the unforeseen terminus of Sebald's literary *Auswandertung*. Except for a series of essays entitled *Luftkrieg and Literatur* which were being readied for translation when an automobile crash claimed the author's life in December 2001, death accomplished what the writing consciously deferred. A book, Emmanuel Levinas has said, is "interrupted discourse catching up with its own breaks, calling for other books in return"; likewise, the self may be imaged as a "further deep breathing in the breath cut short by the wind of alterity" (Levinas 1971: 181). Here, however, there would be

no new venturing, neither break nor further suspiration – no next departure. To read Sebald now is to read him memorially, towards and back from that threshold.

In the book that bears his name, Jacques Austerlitz says that time – measured, calendrical, accomplished time – is generally misconceived. It is, rather, "noncurrent ... does not progress constantly forward but moves in eddies, is marked by episodes of congestion and irruption, recurs in ever-changing form, and evolves in no one knows what direction" (Sebald 2001c: 101). Like the figure of the weavers "straining to keep their eye on the complex patterns they created," pursued by the feeling "that they have got hold of the wrong thread" (Sebald 1998: 283) at the end of *The Rings of Saturn*; or of the photographic image of the Lasithi plateau projected so long "that the glass in the slide shattered and a dark crack fissured across the screen" (Sebald 1996: 17) in the opening section of *The Emigrants*, it refers obliquely to the textual machinery at work there.

"Drift" may be a more accurate term than unrest, however, to describe the larger-scale narrative thrust of Sebald's writings, over and above the excursive signals of his own itinerary provided by the narrator from time to time. Since the tendency is at its most controlled in *Austerlitz* – of Sebald's four major books the one that most closely approximates a novel, almost wholly given over to a surrogate narrator – one may reasonably speculate whether there was any real return possible to the more divagating style of *Vertigo*, *The Emigrants*, and *The Rings of Saturn*. Perhaps with his final book, Sebald had announced a new (if final) departure.

The first few pages of *Austerlitz* offer discursive ratios of distance that echo the shift which Browning (with Ruskin's help) engineers between landmarks featuring an author and traces that figure a text. For the remainder of this essay, I want to explore this commerce of ledge and cleft. But I want to err, deliberately, on the side of cleft ... and of post-Romanticism. While the conclusion of this piece calls upon Walter Benjamin's Angel of History to make that point, I do so here by reinvoking de Certeau's speculations about users' interventions in the practices of everyday life, specifically the practice of *reading*:

> In reality, the activity of reading has ... all the characteristics of a silent production: the drift across the page, the metamorphosis of the text effected by the wandering eyes of the reader, the improvisation and expectation of meanings inferred from a few words, leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance ... A different world (the reader's) slips into the author's space. (de Certeau 1988: xxi)

The real hotel, according to this view, would be the book itself. If readers make the text habitable, they do so as they would a rented apartment, for "renters make comparable changes in an apartment they furnish with their acts and memories ... as do pedestrians, in the streets they fill with the forests of their desires and goals." Sebald, certainly, appears to have practiced the authorial version of such willed repossession. The "indefinite form," as he characterizes it, of his prose works (a composite of memoir, travel-writing, fiction, historiography, *roman d'essai*), the

device of photographs that have come to hand deployed as evidentiary supplement, the liberal borrowings from the biographies of other persons: all contribute to a highly stylized hermeneutic in the spirit of what de Certeau calls "poaching."

De Certeau's claim for reading places him well beyond the arc of Browning's artful riposte. The utility of "leaping over written spaces," that is, would seem either to surpass or run oblique to the poetic values of "springing over" them. But what of Sebald, who occupies more or less de Certeau's same post-traditional vantage? It is in fact their shared longitudinal juncture in a history of reading that prompts me to pivot the claims of the one in the direction of the other. De Certeau outpaces even Browning in asserting that readers are travelers, who, like the original wandering Jews, "move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves" (de Certeau 1988: 174). One does not merely actively traverse a text's method or series of signs, but absconds with them (like Rachel with Laban's idols).

Does this, however, describe the experience of reading a book like *Austerlitz*? Where, in other words, lie the license and the margin for Sebald's readers to read – produce, poach, rhetoricize – against the grain of the text? What if they resist the lure of the sublime, the pull of its glaciers? At one point in *Austerlitz* the protagonist confesses himself disabled in the very procedures that link him to this book's "Sebald" as well as to the narrative voice in all the others:

> If language may be regarded as an old city full of streets and squares, nooks and crannies, with some quarters dating from far back in time while others have been torn down, cleaned up and rebuilt . . . then I was like a man who has been abroad for a long time and cannot find his way through the urban sprawl anymore, no longer knows what a bus stop is for, or what a back yard is, or a street junction, an avenue or a bridge. (Sebald 2001c: 123–4)

Each of Sebald's narrators offers up similar scrupled doubt at certain strategic moments in the very midst of coursing through that old city, vouchsafing the fear "that they have got hold of the wrong thread," as in the following passage from *Vertigo*:

> Early every morning I would set out and walk without aim or purpose through the streets of the inner city, through the Leopoldstadt and the Josefstadt. Later, when I looked at the map, I saw to my astonishment that none of my journeys had taken me beyond a precisely defined sickle- or crescent-shaped area . . . If the paths I followed had been inked in, it would have seemed as though a man had kept trying out new tracks and connections over and over, only to be thwarted each time by the limitations of his reason, imagination or will-power, and obliged to turn back again. (Sebald 1999: 33–4)

Thus the rhetoric of unrest, of recapitulation, trades upon the fiction of having gone astray, of being in some deep sense *mis*placed. The vertigos and ocular maladies

periodically afflicting the inhabitants of this world when they presume to record or recount attest to Sebald's deliberate dislocation of them in their bodies as well as amidst exterior surroundings.

This may seem a kind of affective or psychological fragility, but it really is a metaphysic, spatiotemporal at the core: these speakers are somehow damaged in space and time. As such, sieves for anamnesis, they seem to serve the books' larger purpose, what *Austerlitz* calls "a kind of historical metaphysic, bringing remembered events back to life" (13). Readers may feel similarly maneuvered; in the end, the writing seems to leave them curiously stranded in an interspace *between* the post-Romantic and the postmodern – somewhere left of Browning but just this side of de Certeau. So if one is meant to do something short of drifting or poaching across these pages, how exactly are the clefts to be negotiated? How does the rhetoric of unrest unseat us from *our* place, and how might we answer it in kind?

Let us look at the opening section of *Austerlitz*. Several reviews of the book called attention to the representative character of these pages: the incremental massing of detail that fails to clarify ultimately, leaving the whole opaque and portentous. One might say that whatever has unseated both the narrator and his friend Jacques Austerlitz has left its traces on the itinerant prose as well.

In forty-four pages of unparagraphed text (at the point where Austerlitz takes over the story from "Sebald"), the text peregrinates from England to Antwerp, thence telescoping to Antwerp's inner city, the Nocturama at the zoo, the Centraal Station, now and upon construction in 1905 – an uncharacteristic footnote briefly detours to the Lucerne Station in Switzerland – venturing into the Glove Market, early modern fortifications around the city, and the fortress of Breendonk, and quickly encompasses a café in Liege, the Palace of Justice in Brussels, a billiards room in Terneuzen, the promenade at Zeebrugge, a ferry Channel-crossing, Bloomsbury in London, Harley St., and finally, the Great Eastern Hotel at Liverpool Station.

In effect, we have just been made to accompany the narrator on one of his repeated circular journeys between England and Belgium. His own stated motivation for such oscillation, we recall, has only partly to do with study purposes, otherwise owing to "other reasons which were never entirely clear"; the trips are specified as "Belgian excursions" which nonetheless take the narrator "further and further abroad." Reasons which were *never* entirely clear: does that mean that they have since been clarified? Possibly now, at this moment, in the act of written reminiscence?

One reviewer compares this mannered cloud of unknowing to the transcript of a Freudian case study: "an edited free association or recollection of a dream" in the service of a narrative style that "seems to imply that our behavior is motivated by hidden and apparently inexplicable drives that tell us more than we know about ourselves in our conscious lives" (Falconer 2001). That narrative style is a weave of "fragments," stitched together at their junctures – like the quincunx favored by Sir Thomas Browne and reproduced in *The Rings of Saturn* – to form the books' discursive plot. One may also be reminded of Walter Benjamin's notion of textual method as montage: citing without quotation marks.

Yet this is still an account of *authorial* design and patterning; and the weave of fragments in both its stitching and unstitching would seem to belong to the text alone. Is more being asked of Sebald's readers than just the tracing of his texts' design? "Glacier-ledge" in Browning does signify pretty much what Ruskin says it does: elliptical, highly compressed syntax that requires some labor to decompress: reading as patchwork. What distinguishes Sebald's prose, on the other hand, is its apparent seamlessness, all the more remarkable for a rhetoric that is all jointure, piecework, each emblem or extended description another kind of internal refugee within an artificially bounded topography.

The device of interpolated photographs serves that purpose perfectly, acting as semiotic ladder-and-hatchet over clefts suspected or yet to come. This highlights more than a difference in genre. It has something fundamental to do with the claims made by the dramatic monologue and by prose "of indefinite form" for, respectively, art as artifact or as fabricated representation. The play of fiction in Browning's poetry depends largely on its compulsive drama of speech in which lyric speakers are pitched forward into some concentrated acoustic space where they are meant to be *heard* stitching together and being unstitched by the words that come to hand. The Duke of Ferrara, Sludge the Medium, Fra Lippo Lippi are real, self-willed speakers exactly insofar as they *speak*. That is all they are, but it is a great deal: we do *listen* to them, which is one way that we "keep pace."

Drama lies elsewhere in Sebald's work. Above, I spoke of the double-edged nature of rhetorical claims, alternately focused at the level of locution and interlocution. It is easy enough to be lulled by the latter dimension in *Austerlitz* or *The Rings of Saturn*, the sinuous and subtle way it federates, entwines really, its narrators and addressees. But I agree with James Wood that the real force exercised by the prose is a function of statement rather than address, and that the more weighty relationship takes place between fact and fiction as opposed to that which coordinates partners dialogically.

> Sebald so mixes established fact with unstable invention that the two categories copulate and produce a kind of truth which lies just beyond verification: that is, fictional truth ... It is not that the facts merely *seem* fictive in Sebald's work, it is that they actually *become* fictive even though they remain true and real. (Wood 2000: 249–50)

Despite what another reviewer called Sebald's "invisible mending" of "the tear between life and the imagination" (as cited in Sebald 1996), let me say then that our participation in this drama will have less to do with checking its facticity against some extra-literary calculus than with attending directly to the process of *becoming fictive* – call it the counterpart to Browning's "putting the infinite within the finite" – in order to discern, if possible, where the cleavage in "fictional truth" takes place.

We first encounter gapping in Sebald's rhetoric, if not fully fledged crevasses, when we meet with the almost imperceptible hairline fractures in his sentences. Once noticed, the prose thenceforth appears striated across its entire surface. I am speaking

of those rhetorical markers that remind us of the cleft between the speaking "I" and its narrated counterpart (*sujet d'enonciation* and *sujet d'enoncé*, to use terms coined by Emile Benveniste), markers that in their cumulative effect, act almost like third-person interventions into first-person discourse.

The most common of them are parenthetical hesitations like "as it seemed to me," "as I have come to realize," "as I must have noticed," "as I am increasingly becoming aware," "as I remember it," through which the sentences create their own cleft, pass over it, and yet somehow double back. Perhaps the most virtuosic of these, a kind of palindrome in time, occurs in the second section of *The Emigrants*:

> Again and again, from front to back and from back to front, I leafed through the album that afternoon, and since then I have returned to it time and time again, because, as it seemed to me, and still does, as if the dead were coming back, or as if we were on the verge of joining them. (46)

In that text and *The Rings of Saturn*, one particularly notices the echo effect between studied self-interruptions like these and the structurally parallel but entirely conventional markers of direct speech which indicate that storytelling responsibilities have been delegated to supplementary speakers. "Dr. Selwyn went on in a lower tone," "said Dr. Selwyn," "(Dr. Selwyn told me)": in the absence of quotation marks, such clauses announce that a parallax of subjectivities has embedded one act of storytelling inside another.

Similar scrupulosity would explain the otherwise redundant parenthesis in an allusion to Kafka from *The Rings of Saturn*, which might be said to patch itself up with stuff of its own:

> I could not help thinking of the scene in which poor Gregor Samsa, his little legs trembling, climbs the armchair and looks out of his room, no longer remembering (so Kafka's narrative goes) the sense of liberation that gazing out the window had formerly given him. (5)

Conversely, a gesture like "(Dr. Selwyn told me)" resides oddly inside its sentence, a switchback upon a trail that, while having already been traversed, is newly unsettled. What has already taken place, in other words, feels newly undertaken.

A window on this process opens in an excerpt from *On the Natural History of Destruction* published in the *New Yorker* magazine. Since the burden of this essay is the reclamation of *factual* truth, the prose – straightforward, reportorial, unlayered – not only obediently complies, but sounds unlike the customary Sebald style. At one point, however, it briefly swerves into the territory of *Vertigo* or *Austerlitz* in a brief anecdote about the bombing of Hamburg, transcribed in the rhetoric of unrest.

> Some time ago, I was in Sheffield, where I met an elderly gentleman who, because of his Jewish origins, had been forced to leave his native Sonthofen and emigrate to

England. His wife, who came to England immediately after the war, grew up in Stralsund, on the Baltic coast ... After the Hamburg firestorm, in the summer of 1943, when she was sixteen years old, she was on duty as a volunteer helper at the Stralsund railway station when a special train came in carrying refugees, most of them still utterly beside themselves, unable to speak of what had happened, struck dumb or sobbing or weeping with despair. And several of the women on this train, *I heard on my visit to Sheffield*, actually did have dead children in their luggage, children who had suffocated in the smoke or died in some other way during the air raid. (Sebald 2002: 71; my italics)

Nothing – neither for coherence's nor cohesion's sake – obliges Sebald to reiterate the prompt about being in Sheffield. But it is precisely at this moment, for the only time in the essay, that the style begins to drift purposively, threading together multiple strands of transit, laminating plots of persons out of place. That the passage is knit together poetically by the inadvertent but still uncanny assonance of *Sontho-fen, Stralsund*, and *Sheffield* makes it stand out from the text even more. No doubt the story is true, yet it somehow sounds the note of indefinite form so familiar from Sebald's other writing, where the becoming fictive of facts that are true and real is commonplace.

To turn back to *Austerlitz* then, when the narrator says "partly for study purposes, partly for other reasons which were never entirely clear to me," the assertion can be said to destabilize along an internal fault line. It subtracts from the truth it is in the act of elucidating. In the dependent clause of the very next sentence, "On one of these Belgian excursions which, as it seemed to me, always took me further and further abroad," the qualifying insert adduces a remembered act of cognition. But it also strangely seems to guarantee, *underwrite* the assertion that follows, rather than merely restricting it. Here, sentence-level form and content are poised in parallax, no longer married as much as cleaved.

Sebald's narrators (and their surrogates) typically venture what seem like simple perceptual cues – "I recall," "I can still see," "I still remember," "as I now think I remember." They do not merely retrieve past moments, but re-present them. Like the (by themselves innocuous) parentheses, these simple subject–verb combinations re-peatedly reframing the narrative as they do, highlight form over and above content; a growing opacity encroaches upon putatively transparent textual gestures.

In *Austerlitz*, for example, just a few sentences apart, the narrator asserts "I can still remember the uncertainty of my footsteps," and, "I cannot now recall exactly what creatures I saw on the visit to the Antwerp Nocturama." Not only do the assertions balance an acknowledgment of memory's limitations against a demonstration of its dependability, but also the fusion of recollection and uncertainty in the first instance is reproduced by a subsequent accretion of detail in the second that all but reverses its thrust of flawed recall: "but there were probably bats and jerboas from Egypt and the Gobi desert, native European hedgehogs and owls, Australian possums, pine martens, dormice, lemurs ..." (4).

A page later, the narrator is even more exact when he compares the creatures in the Nocturama, which he now remembers "had included a strikingly large number of dwarf species – tiny fennec foxes, spring hares, hamsters" to railway passengers. In between, place itself takes on the property of mirrors:

> Over the years, images of the interior of the Nocturama have become confused in my mind with my memories of the *Salle des pas perdus*, as it is called in Antwerp Centraal Station. If I try to conjure up a picture of that waiting room today I immediately see the Nocturama, and if I think of the Nocturama the waiting room springs to my mind, probably because when I left the zoo that afternoon I went straight to the station. (5)

Elaborated at the sentence level, in syntax and in theme, the rhetoric of unrest in the first few pages of the book does not fail finally to resort to the emblematic – the "beyond" to which so much of Sebald's often mundane depiction points, and which hovers just above it – in the specific form of a motif that appears elsewhere in his writing:

> The only animal which has remained lingering in my memory is the raccoon. I watched it for a long time as it sat beside a little stream with a serious expression on its face, washing the same piece of apple over and over again, as if it hoped that all this washing would help it to escape the unreal world in which it had arrived, so to speak, through no fault of its own. (4)

Thus, from *The Rings of Saturn*:

> . . . on emerging into the open air again, I was saddened to see, in one of the otherwise deserted aviaries, a solitary Chinese quail, evidently in a state of dementia, running to and fro along the edge of the cage and shaking its head every time it was about to turn, as if it could not comprehend how it had got into this hopeless fix. (36)

Quail and raccoon can be taken as metaphors for Sebald and his writing alike, for in both cases, the compulsive rewashing and running to and fro describe the conditions and consequences of unrest: regress, vertigo, turbidity.

And while there is a certain humor to Sebald's gothic ("just this side of parody," says Ruth Franklin), the grain of the voice – mannered, neurasthenic, melancholy, in the nineteenth-century style of Adalbert Stifter – is meant to convey the very sound of the past into the present (Ruskin and Browning hover nearby, after all). Anachronous, spectral, the rhetoric of unrest locates itself both *behind* history and *after* it. It is anti-nostalgic, and yet it compels both homing and longing. Like Austerlitz, one is prompted to say, "It does not seem to me that we understand the laws governing the return of the past" (185).

Since space limitations (aptly enough), preclude my keeping pace at any greater length with the surface complexities of Sebald's text, I conclude by justifying the decision to specify a "*rhetoric* of unrest" in syncopation with a counter-pressure

exercised by readers themselves. Sebald's prose, as Harold Bloom has said of Browning's poetry, is aggressively rhetorical in two senses: as a formal patterning that sifts the data of the world through its own system of tropes, and as an art of persuasion that aims (Bloom prefers "plays") at transcendence – not unlike the double-edged nature of rhetorical claims proposed at the beginning of this essay.

But like Browning's poetry too, Sebald's writing solicits readers' resistance to its own formidable powers of self-interpretation. *Leaping*, *springing*, or merely *decelerating*, *pausing*, even *becoming dislocated* as the hermeneutic coefficient to the text's "becoming fictive": these are my terms of choice to describe how that writing (dis)locates its readers in the space of reading – what I earlier mapped as lying somewhere left of Browning but just this side of de Certeau – and how self-locating those readers therefore must become.

Everything narrated in Sebald has already happened, but it has also not happened, or more accurately, happens again in the act of reception. This is its rhetoric of unrest – made transitive again on the belay, through the commerce of ledge and cleft. Sebald wishes us, as Browning does Ruskin, to gain imaginative purchase on figuration, even if it is ours to begin with. The *lacrimae rerum* in this world correspond to those things that either once belonged to us that we have lost, or to which we have been made legate, without prior consent. At its most culturally exacting, Sebald's writing gives us back a visitable but no longer habitable Europe that was always already our responsibility; the repression of history is the very ground beneath our feet.

Is this not the import of the passage from *Vertigo* quoted earlier in which the reading of Samuel Pepys' *Diary*, at first devolving into somnolent repetition, prompts an internal and imaginative repositioning at oneiric heights? That passage ushers in the closing sentences of the book, which, cited without quotation marks as it were, belong to Samuel Pepys not W. G. Sebald. For the conjured Alps revealed to be a "breathless void" in fact resonate with the words the narrator has just read before dozing off, returning to him (like Sebald's ever-returning dead) "as an echo that had almost faded away." The words describe the destruction wrought by the Great Fire of London, and are presumably meant by the narrator to look ahead towards other, worse conflagrations that will sear the heart of Europe in a later century.

Some transferences, however, need to be resisted; the patterning of fragments is never arbitrary. In this instance, history seems to have already outstripped us, having been spliced too neatly. As such, the passage from *Vertigo* betokens not only a different kind of "historical metaphysic" – fatidic, self-encompassed, recurrent – but another rhetorical axis: call it the "rhetoric of fatefulness" (Sebald's own phrase).[3] At such junctures readers may well wish to "spring over," not in Browning's sense but in Walter Benjamin's, for whom fragments become dialectical images, allegory breaks the spell that locks figures into ruin and disaster, and history is read neither forwards nor backwards but at a standstill – "perpetuated but forever just occurring" (Benjamin 1977: 197).

"Allegories," Benjamin writes, "fill out and deny the void in which they are presented, just as, ultimately, the intention does not faithfully rest in the contemplation of

bones, but faithlessly *springs over* to the idea of resurrection" (Benjamin 1977: 232–3). Not to reproduce history's flow of moments but to produce their arrest instead: this would be redemption (and revelation) at the threshold, wrought by the aesthetic. For it is only *in the cleft* (Benjamin's name for it is the "time of the now"), that one "recognizes the sign of a Messianic cessation of happening, or put differently a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past" (Benjamin 1969: 263).[4]

At its most liberating, neither *diktat* nor spell, the rhetoric of unrest models an embarkation, the will to be dislodged. Yet, in its very restlessness, it calls for friction, drag, *arrest*, the text at a standstill offering something like Benjamin's notion of insurgent opportunity. To read, says de Certeau, *is to be elsewhere* (1988: 173). It may be that the Sebaldian text anticipates, even encourages, such resistance. Only its haunted narrators, in other words, can so afford to be spellbound. More is wanted from readers than merely following their lead. For a strong prosaist, one expects strenuous readers.

Browning, we recall, wanted his readers to read as if they were poets: "Suppose it sprang over there?" Indeed, he specifically holds prose to a different standard, as he explains in the codicil to his letter to Ruskin, a quotation that I have saved until now.

> In *prose* you may criticize so – because that is the absolute representation of portions of truth, what chronicling is to history – but in asking for more *ultimates* you must accept less *mediates*, nor expect that a Druid stone-circle will be traced for you with as few breaks to the eye as the North Crescent and South Crescent that go so cleverly together in many a suburb.

We seem suddenly arrived in Sebald country – the easy peregrination from Stonehenge to Twickenham. But of course, the prose of W. G. Sebald is not at all what Browning has in mind, no less removed from chronicling than from the pretense of "absolute representation." And whatever we might be asking for in it, its way-stations will always outnumber last and first things alike.

For prose like Sebald's is to history what *allegory* is to history: a mode of redemptive repair, a way of putting the infinite within the finite. And because even between *them* pace is not always kept, a needful margin is opened – the gap where recuperative possibilities open up through reading. To this degree, *mind the gap* – the minatory words Sebald's narrator hears in the Underground towards the end of his first book – stand over all his books. For the narrator, the words merely counsel safety while overstepping the cleft that divides platform from conveyance.

> I then realized that this was the station where on my frequent journeys by tube, no one had ever embarked or alighted. The train would stop, the doors open; one looked out into the deserted platform and heard the warning "mind the gap"; the doors would close again, and the train move. (259)

To us, however, those words keep returning – "as an echo that had almost faded away" – leaving us poised on a different brink.

Notes

1 In *Modern Painters* Ruskin praises Browning lavishly. Once again admitting the seeming "insolubility" of Browning's poetry, he crafts another virtuoso metaphor: "though truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal" (449).

2 Compare Herbert Tucker's vivid characterization of Browning's literary temper: "Outburst and invasion are the definitive events of the Browningesque sublime, and its characteristics are the break and the crossing. Sublimity for Browning entails not the traditional sending up, but a sending out or a sending across. As with the images of walking and rising . . . his poetry is most often horizontal in thrust, and it intensifies at moments when the negotiation of a frontier marks a new beginning" (Tucker 1980: 15).

3 Lamenting "the unfortunate tendency" of one postwar German author, Sebald writes that "a rhetoric of fatefulness sometimes intrudes" into an otherwise prosaic narrative "primarily concerned with plain facts" (Sebald 2002: 75). With the appropriate modifications, a similar criticism can be leveled against Sebald himself (and has, by Ozick at the end of her essay). For what is the conclusion of *The Emigrants*, with its conversion of seamstresses in the Polish ghetto of Łodz into the Three Fates, if not (in Sebald's own words) a "turn toward fairy tale and allegory"?

4 Theresa Kelley writes: "To think of history in this way is to 'spring over' or turn around a vision of history as *telos* and so, in Benjamin's eyes, redeem the material and allegorical truth of history. This view of allegory and history does away with the whole array of attributes traditionally assigned to allegory, among them its secret arbitrary rule over what Benjamin calls a 'realm of dead objects.' In their place is an allegory more cognizant of its necessary, transient factitiousness" (Kelley 1997: 260).

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Rhetoric in the Wilderness: The Deep Rhetoric of the Late Twentieth Century

James Crosswhite

In the hands of Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, rhetoric becomes the ethically creative reception and comprehension of reality itself. Out of the general topoi they describe, things take on their aspect as real or apparent, as means or end, plurality or unity, individual or universal. What have been conceptualized in the past as metaphysical properties or *a priori* categories come to be grasped as rhetorical achievements without in any way undoing their truth or meaning. In what follows I will explore and develop the account, in their book *The New Rhetoric*, of the topos of "philosophical pairs" in connection with a contemporary environmental controversy: the ongoing debate about wilderness. However, before examining the concrete way in which this new rhetoric functions, it is important to understand that it is representative of a resurgence of rhetoric in the late twentieth century and not merely a marginal or parochial occurrence.

The Return of Rhetoric in the Late Twentieth Century

The decline of confidence in rhetoric's ability to describe or improve the power to reason and the consequent disqualification of rhetoric as a means to settle intellectual controversies played themselves out in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By the eighteenth century Giambattista Vico could express the sense of what had been lost in a poignant and powerful way. In *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione*, Vico exposes the narrowness of contemporary education, its myopic focus on the teaching of analytical–critical attack with no corresponding or counterbalancing education in the imagination or invention of arguments. Vico makes a deeply felt case for the recovery of the topical tradition, in which the forms by which arguments could be imagined and elaborated were near the heart of the liberal educational project.

A central part of his argument can be put quite succinctly: "In our days...philosophical criticism alone is honored. The art of 'topics'...is utterly disregarded...This is harmful, since the invention of arguments is by nature prior to the judgment of their validity...so in teaching, invention should be given priority over philosophical criticism" (Vico 1990: 14). Vico is interesting for us today because his words failed to have their desired effect, at least in his time. By the nineteenth century, what marked rhetoric above all was, in the words of one historian, "the curiously irrelevant character of rhetorical education," and its gentile concerns with elocution, belletrism, and an emerging scientific psychology of communication (Conley 1990: 236). In the twentieth century, a more final end is reached as the vestiges of the rhetorical tradition begin to disappear altogether. Chaim Perelman's story about his own rhetorical education stands for this process as a whole: "While still enrolled in high school, I had the privilege of taking the last course in rhetoric offered in Belgium. In 1929, rhetoric was removed from the curriculum both in high schools and in the universities...Not surprisingly, therefore, rhetoric, in my opinion, was dead" (Perelman 1984: 188–96).

To understand the return of rhetoric in the late twentieth century, one must adjust one's focus in some specific ways. First, rhetoric returns as philosophy. This is well known and broadly acknowledged, even if the claim may at first seem controversial. In Bizzell and Herzberg's widely used anthology, *The Rhetorical Tradition*, the final section, on "Modern and Postmodern Rhetoric," includes selections from, among others, the philosophers Chaim Perelman, Stephen Toulmin, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida. In Thomas M. Conley's *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, the final chapter is titled "Philosophers Turn to Rhetoric," and includes sections on Richard McKeon, Stephen Toulmin, Chaim Perelman, and Jürgen Habermas. A look at other anthologies would show much the same. However, when these philosophers turn to rhetoric, they are turning to a rhetoric of a specifically late twentieth-century sort, a rhetoric made of late twentieth-century philosophical thinking.

Second, this return of rhetoric is primarily an intellectual event and not an institutional one. Rhetoric does not come again as a reformation of education or out of academic departments and schools which have custody of its tradition. Instead, it returns out of the crisis of philosophy and in the wake of the holocaustal destructiveness of the European wars. Rhetoric returns in part as a recovery of the tradition but in greater part as the addressing of an urgent contemporary need, an original rethinking of reason against its narrowing during the modern period. And the philosophers by way of whom rhetoric returns speak from outside of the strongholds of institutional philosophy. Chaim Perelman, born in Warsaw, the grandson of a rabbi, was trained in law and in philosophy, and wrote in French, from Belgium. Richard McKeon was an American philosopher who worked with the interdisciplinary "Ideas and Methods" committee at the University of Chicago and with UNESCO in the postwar years. Stephen Toulmin's famous *The Uses of Reason* was referred to by his British colleagues as an anti-logic book, and was met with barely restrained hostility. Jürgen Habermas worked at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research under Theodor Adorno. I will

add to this group of philosophers-out-of-the-mainstream another figure, but one who was also a quintessential German academic philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is itself a part of the return of rhetoric. Finally, the entire North American "informal logic" movement is in some essential respects a return to rhetoric, and nowhere more than in its most productive spokesperson, the Canadian philosopher Douglas Walton. Perhaps this simple list can indicate as clearly as anything else the ways in which philosophers working in very different contexts found themselves forced to recreate rhetoric as a way to address the philosophical challenges of the late twentieth century.

Third, the immediate context of this development is the violence and destructiveness of the twentieth century. Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode* appeared in German in 1960. Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument* appeared in 1958. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *La Nouvelle rhétorique* also appeared in 1958. These are all postwar works in a profound sense, written out of the milieu of the destruction of Europe, and it is worth asking whether any other three years in history have produced works with such deep significance for a philosophical rhetoric. Habermas, who belonged to the Hitler Youth as a very young man, will begin to publish shortly after this, pursuing with great passion and energy his liberal-democratic but also Marxist-influenced program of a theory of communicative reason. McKeon's postwar work with UNESCO situates him precisely in this same intellectual milieu.

Fourth, this resurgence of rhetoric is characterized by a guiding concern with reason and argumentation. The philosophical return of rhetoric is a belated response to Vico's plea, a turn toward argumentation that will take a topical rather than a logical approach and will show promise of inventive and not strictly critical-evaluative power.

The Architectonic Power of Rhetoric

Another central way in which rhetoric returns as philosophy is in the return to the notion of topical invention in argumentation, in its concern with the capacity for copiousness as an intellectual virtue, and in the relation of these to the new idea of rhetoric as architectonic. All of these, in turn, are connected with what is in important respects linked to the Ciceronian tradition of *controversia*. This reclaiming of reason by rhetoric forces rhetoric out of its limited roles as a practical oral or verbal art limited to a specific range of occasions into what we might call an architectonic and metaphilosophical role. When Richard McKeon writes that "invention extends from the construction of formal arguments to all modes of enlarging experience by reason as manifested in awareness, emotion, interest, and appreciation" (1987: 59); when Henry Johnstone writes that "rhetoric is the means, the only means I know of, for generating and maintaining consciousness" (1990: 333); when Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca say that a universal audience attends all philosophical argumentation and that an undefined universal audience attends even that attending (1969: 35);

when Gadamer writes that rhetoric is the "universal form of human communication" (1986: 17); they are all catching a view of the radical architectonic power of rhetoric.

This general vision of rhetoric's architectonic power has been treated in an especially relevant way by Stephen Toulmin. In *Human Understanding* Toulmin describes the way that reason is constituted by a variety of different rational enterprises, each with distinct purposes, each adapting to the exigencies it faces, and each producing conceptual change as it adapts. In fact, Toulmin locates the rationality of these enterprises in the procedures they have for generating conceptual change. Near the conclusion of *Human Understanding*, where he is trying again to describe these procedures, he provides a powerful description of the topical-architectonic function of rhetoric. The question at issue is how conceptual change is possible at all – i.e., how a new set of concepts overtakes an old one. If one tried to explain this process of change simply in terms of formal relations, one would fail because articulating formal relations depends on having a single set of concepts, not two conflicting ones. At this point, Toulmin brings in an analogy invented by Gilbert Ryle in which making a formal inference is compared with taking a journey along an existing road. However, justifying that inference is compared with laying out the road in the first place.

Toulmin's gloss is important: "Once we have an established network of roads in any area [i.e., a constitutive way of making inferences and producing knowledge in any enterprise/discipline/profession], the question 'Which is the right way from A to B' acquires a determinate sense":

> At the earlier stage of surveying for the road network, by contrast [i.e., during the development of an enterprise or during a time of controversy and conceptual change], no such single-valued questions arise, and all of the operative questions are comparative ones – e.g., "Which of the alternative lines for a road would give us a cheaper, faster, more direct, and/or environmentally less damaging way of linking A to B?" The tasks of constructing novel sets of concepts in any field of enquiry and refashioning existing concepts so as to go beyond the scope of currently established procedures likewise raise comparative questions, about what changes would be "better" or "worse," rather than single-valued ones, about what step is "correct" or "incorrect." (Toulmin 1972: 487)

Anyone familiar with the rhetorical tradition will hear the reinvention of topics here at the exact point at which rational enterprises are born and acquire their rationality. These underlying comparisons that Toulmin is after, and which begin to look more like ethically inflected concerns than pure theoretical interests – even though they are at the archai of rationality itself – are what the topical tradition collected and saved and passed on to human beings who wanted to acquire a greater ability to reason and resolve controversies and discover new things: comparisons by similarity – by induction, for example, or by analogy, like Ryles' own analogy here. Or by differences. Or by degree – the greater/lesser, the end/means, the scarce/abundant, the more desired/the less desired, and so on. All these were not only general descriptions of how people do in fact reason but were also much more importantly tools and sources from which

people learned to draw, invent, and create new arguments in times of controversy and change, to produce not simply single-value solutions, but a *copia* of possible solutions.

A Dialectical Rhetoric

Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca and Chaim Perelman have also developed this vision of the topical-architectonic dimensions of rhetoric. In fact, if a single representative practical example of this broad and complex convergence of late twentieth-century philosophical rhetoric can be found anywhere, it can be found in *La Nouvelle rhétorique*'s ambitious topical-architectonic discussion of "philosophical pairs" (1969: 411–59). The general way that a philosophical pair works is that what was experienced as a unity comes to be thought of as two essentially different things. The prototype of this splitting-in-two is the appearance/reality pair. "Originally," the world is experienced as a kind of indifferent appearance/reality unity. However, this experience produces certain incompatibilities. The stick that is straight cannot really be bent when placed in the water, even thought it appears to be. So some perceptions come to be understood as veridical, others as mere appearances. In order to solve practical problems, reason produces what *La Nouvelle rhétorique* calls a "dissociation."

The process of generating philosophical pairs is an essential event in the rational conceptualization of the world by human beings and even in the coming to presence of what counts as reality itself. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca analyze the rhetorical behavior of a number of such pairs in what becomes an explicit architectonic-rhetorical account of different kinds of philosophical knowledge. They mention, for example, among many others, means/end, act/person, accident/essence, relative/absolute, subjective/objective, multiplicity/unity, language/thought, individual/universal, body/soul, form/content, and they endeavor to demonstrate how different philosophical perspectives stabilize around specific systematizations of these pairs (420–3). They also insist that these pairs do not admit of any ultimate all-inclusive systematization because they are originally formed in conflicting and even opposite ways and for different and sometimes conflicting purposes (415, 420).

However, philosophical pairs do behave in fairly specific ways in argumentation, and one can produce an abundance of perspectives and positions and arguments by understanding the behavior of these pairs. Pairs divide into a "first term" (appearance) and a "second term" (reality). The second term is in its concept what is invented rhetorically. It becomes a criterion for distinguishing between what has more value from what has less (416–19). The criterion itself is usually not exact, but it can still be productive of argumentation and of action. However, the inexactness and invented character of the second term is also a vulnerability and a source of arguments that question the viability of the distinction. Once a distinction of this sort of made, it is always possible to question it, to insist on the original unity that has been divided (418).

The general response to such questioning will be that the distinction between the terms solves important problems. Supporters of philosophical distinctions will say

that they help to reveal what is valuable and guide our actions. Those who attack the dissociation on the basis of the vagueness of the criterion are left to wrestle with the original incompatibility (419 *passim*).

However, there are many kinds of arguments available to those who would oppose the dissociation. One could propose a different dissociation, a different pair that also addresses the incompatibility (419 *passim*). One could quantify the difference between the two terms, and so reject a qualitative conceptual difference between them (419). Often arguments will disclose another related or more fundamental philosophical pair whose terms are being used to justify the dissociation in question, and argumentation will have to proceed to that more fundamental pair, either as a way of attacking the distinction or justifying it (420–42).

Another move against the distinction would be to reverse the hierarchy the distinction creates, and to make the first term the criterion, the term of value (427). This move affirms the distinction, but usually changes the meanings of the terms. Or one could also redefine the interactions between the two terms. Philosophical pairs are defined in relation to one another, and their concepts interact (444ff.). This allows for argumentation about the interactions that allow the terms their mutual definings, and these arguments open up lines of discourse for those who support the distinction and those who do not. Transposing the distinction to a new sphere and applying it in unusual contexts also opens up argumentation about the value of the distinction. Additional arguments may be found by splitting the second term itself into a philosophical pair as a better way to address the incompatibility or refine the criterion of value. This is a process that could have no end (431–46).

In *La Nouvelle rhétorique* we are told that the point of this analysis "is not a question of constructing a particular philosophy, but simply of observing what happens in the various systematizations of the mind and in the different philosophies, irrespective of their tendencies" (423). This "observing what happens" (so reminiscent of Aristotle's "seeing" the various means of persuasion) is part of a larger argument designed to demonstrate the very possibility of reasoning in conditions of uncertainty (514). Yet to "watch what happens" in the dynamics of specific philosophical pairs is to *envision the various possibilities of reasoning about issues which are conceptualized in terms of those pairs*, to invent from a topos. And to know which of the possible routes of reasoning were taken, and which were not, is to understand, to get the message, to walk the path, of some specific piece of argumentation. What is critical about the late twentieth-century understanding of the architectonic power of philosophical pairs is that the paths involved are not simply "verbal," but are part of the rhetoric that McKeon was looking toward when he imagined a rhetoric that produced not simply words and arguments (McKeon 1987: 12–13). As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca put it in relation to philosophical pairs: "The fact that the process can be reduced to a schematic form does not mean that the result is, on that account, purely formal or verbal. The dissociation expresses a vision of the world" (420).

Rhetoric in the Wilderness

The wilderness debate that now rages among environmentalists and forest managers in North America – and increasingly around the globe – displays all the dynamics of *La Nouvelle rhétorique*'s philosophical pairs. The history of the idea itself shows some of these rhetorical dynamics. Roderick Nash traces the word back to Norse and Teutonic languages to a root that seems to be "will," and which yields meanings of self-willed, willful, and uncontrollable. "Wildeor," which combines "wild" with "deor" (animal), is the term for wild, sometimes fantastic, animals. The word is also linked to the Old English terms for forest, still heard in the German "Wald" (Nash 2001: 1–2). Already one can see that the concept develops to address a number of "incompatibilities." The wild is where one is not in control, and so is in danger of coming under the control of other wills. The term also allows the world to be organized into places where human beings thrive and places where wild animals thrive. The incompatibility is that the two do not thrive together in the same places. In general, the wilderness becomes a kind of term 1 (the general condition of the world) and the village or town or city or fields or commons become term 2, the term of value for human beings who long to live in relative peace and safety.

The modern history of the idea of wilderness is the story of a reversal of this hierarchy. With the renewed interest in the concept of the sublime, the development of Romanticism, and the scientific revelation of a nature of unexpected order and complexity, wilderness began to take on a new aspect. With the settlement of North America and the rapid disappearance of wilderness, the hierarchy began to be more and more decisively overturned. In the United States the writings of William Bartram, George Catlin, Henry Thoreau, John Muir, and others led the way. In 1964 the US government enacted the "Wilderness Act," protecting land from development because of its wilderness condition, now understood to be indisputably valuable. The modern incompatibility addressed by the dissociation of "wilderness" from areas dominated by human beings is very clearly the disappearance of wild places and wild animals, the rapid extinction of species, the loss of land to what the Wilderness Act calls "increasing population," "expanding settlement," and "growing mechanization" that threatens to "modify" . . . and leave no lands in their "natural conditions." One dissociates "wilderness" or "natural conditions" from settled or "modified" areas in order to take action to preserve what wild places are left.

However, in the wake of this legal triumph for a term 2 "wilderness" (a "community of life" and land that "generally appears to have been primarily affected by the forces of nature"), a debate has arisen not only between preservationists and potential developers but also among environmentalists and land managers themselves. The debate unfolds in alignment with the topography of *La Nouvelle rhétorique*. In what follows, I will examine just two stages of the "wilderness debate" that occurred over the last fifteen years or so of the twentieth century and continues into the twenty-first. Although many have tried in various ways to overturn the reversal of this hierarchy, it

was William Cronon who definitively shaped and intensified the contemporary debate in his "The Trouble with Wilderness: Getting back to the Wrong Nature" (1998).

Cronon's effort has three parts. First, he argues that wilderness cannot be known directly. Second, he argues that insofar as wilderness can be known, it gets its content from historically and culturally contingent realities, and especially from law, with its prohibition of habitation. Third, he shows how wilderness dualism is an expression of other "dangerous dualisms" that control the meaning of wilderness.

In relation to the first maneuver, *La Nouvelle rhétorique* maps certain common routes of argumentation that the very dissociation of philosophical pairs opens up. Term 2 ("nature" or "wilderness") is a "construction," and cannot be known immediately, and yet it is supposed to offer both an epistemological criterion for distinguishing the "natural" from what is modified by humans and a criterion of value – wilderness is what must be preserved (416–18). An evident counteraction to the distinction is to deny its validity, to highlight its (merely) rhetorical nature, its being a "construction."

Exactly these moves make up an important part of Cronon's (1998) argument: "'Nature' is a human idea, with a long and complicated cultural history" (20). "'Nature' is not nearly so natural as it seems. Instead, it is a profoundly human construction ... We can never know at first hand the world 'out there' – the 'nature' we seek to understand and protect" (25). "The more one knows of its peculiar history, the more one realizes that wilderness is not quite what it seems. Far from being the one place on earth that stands apart from humanity, it is quite profoundly a human creation ... It is a product of ... civilization" (69). Clearly, if nature is not natural, is not what it seems, but is a "human construction," and wilderness is a "human creation," then a philosophical distinction between wilderness and those places where human beings and their works are dominant cannot hold. The understanding of wilderness that informs the activism of wilderness preservationists is naive. There simply is no "nature" or "wilderness" of the kind they imagine.

Another available maneuver, described by *La Nouvelle rhétorique* and also made by Cronon, is to reverse the value hierarchy of the terms. This is possible even if one undermines the distinction as long as one redefines term 2. Cronon achieves this reversal by emptying "wilderness" of any traces of a positive presence, of "nature," and considering it only in terms of the provision of the 1964 Wilderness Act that describes wilderness as "a place where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." At this point, term 2 is on the verge of losing all its value and so making the distinction itself not only valueless but also somewhat vicious and destructive, certainly incapable of addressing the incompatibility and realizing the values for which it was created:

> Wilderness embodies a dualistic vision in which the human is entirely outside the natural ... The place where we are is the place where nature is not. If this is so ... then also by definition it can offer no solution to the environmental and other problems that confront us ... In its flight from history, in its siren song of escape, in its reproduction of

the dangerous dualism that sets human beings outside of nature – in all of these ways, wilderness poses a serious threat to responsible environmentalism at the end of the twentieth century. (Cronon 1998: 484–5)

The argument follows pretty closely *La Nouvelle rhétorique*'s route for attempts to overthrow philosophical pairs. Term 2 is not a value but rightly defined a kind of evil. Therefore, the attempt to use the idea of wilderness in connection with environmental problems is destructive, and the pair itself needs to be undone.

Another central kind of argumentative move made by Cronon and also highlighted by *La Nouvelle rhétorique* involves linking the pair in question to another pair or a whole set of other pairs. The link need not be exact and may involve different kinds of relations – logical, physical, moral, or analogical. Regardless of the exact relation, the value of the newly revealed pair, or of the second term of that pair, flows to the pair or to the second term of the original pair (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 426ff.).

Cronon makes one move of this sort when he uncovers implicit associations in the discourse of wilderness advocates. They associate, he says, the wilderness/civilization pair with nature/culture, health/disease, benign/malign, unfallen/fallen, out there/in here, uninhabited/inhabited. Part of Cronon's move is simply to expose and attack some of these associations. Being human is not a disease. Civilization is not simply malign. Religious and mythic terms such as fallen/unfallen do not transfer well to environmental controversies or help with environmental problems, and so on. In this way, he continues the project of emptying term 2 of its value.

However, a much more important move of this kind is made when Cronon links the primary pair to other hidden pairs, and lets the negative value of other term 2's flow into the idea of wilderness:

> The dualism at the heart of wilderness encourages its advocates to conceive of its protection as a crude conflict between the "human" and the "non-human" – or, more often, between those who value the non-human and those who do not. This in turn tempts one to ignore crucial differences *among* humans and the complex cultural and historical reasons why different peoples may feel differently about the meaning of wilderness.
>
> Why, for instance, is the "wilderness experience" so often conceived as a form of recreation best enjoyed by those whose class privileges give them the time and resources to leave their jobs behind and "get away from it all"? Why does the protection of wilderness so often seem to pit urban recreationists against rural people who actually earn their living from the land . . . ? Why in the debates about pristine natural areas are "primitive" peoples idealized, even sentimentalized, until the moment they do something unprimitive, modern, and unnatural, and thereby fall from environmental grace? What are the consequences of a wilderness ideology that devalues productive labor and the very concrete knowledge that comes from working the land with one's own hands? All of these questions imply conflicts among different groups of people, conflicts that are obscured behind the deceptive clarity of "human" vs. "non-human." (Cronon 1998: 489–90)

Here a number of related pairs are introduced and the effect is clearly to undermine the way the philosophical pair functions to determine value. The active pair is not *really* wilderness/developed land but elite/common people, wealth/relative poverty, urban/rural, non-productive activity/productive labor, people who do not work with their hands/people who do, anti-modern/modern. At other places in his essay, Cronon links wilderness dualism to the removal of Indians from their lands/justice for native peoples, fantasy of escaping history/living in history, evading responsibility/accepting responsibility, religious–spiritual view of things/historical–material view of things. All of these pairings are brought under the general ideology-critique form of "Wilderness is not what it appears to be but a cover for *x*"; however, the way in which this claim is established follows the routes laid out by the general patterns of reasoning opened up by the dissociation of philosophical pairs – the topos that architectonically shapes this field of discourse.

Again, the aim here is to take a rhetorical point of view, to be able to comprehend and generate arguments. Whether Cronon's own arguments are good ones or not – whether he has his facts right, whether he has understood his opponent's views correctly, and so on, are all important matters, but "watching what happens" so that we better understand and learn how to do it is the aim here – for reasons that will come clear toward the end.

In "Wilderness Skepticism and Wilderness Dualism," Val Plumwood (1998) labels Cronon's overall position "wilderness skepticism," and she sets out a case against it. However, Plumwood not only acknowledges the force of the attack on wilderness dualism, she also develops and strengthens it in interesting ways, following the same routes laid out by *La Nouvelle rhétorique*'s account of the general topos that Cronon, too, followed, however using new material and new arguments.

Plumwood shows how modern, Romanticism-influenced wilderness dualism is complicit with dualisms related to gender and colonialism. She develops in great detail the interactions between the idea of female virginity and the idea of wilderness. She even attacks the way historical revolutions in the idea of wilderness leave intact the gender-coding that thus seems internal to the idea itself. For example, the pre-Romantic dualisms are male/female, civilized/wild, rational/irrational, full/empty, positive value/negative value. These are transformed as wilderness comes to be valued to female/male, domestic/wild, femininity–real women/sacred virgin–sphere of male transcendence, and negative/positive, although the full/empty duality does not get reversed but continues unaffected: male is full; female is an emptiness-to-be-filled. This dualism is also partly structured by the dualisms of virgin/masculine inseminator, pristine/polluted, pure/impure. Even though a certain form of femaleness comes to be valued, real women remain on the negative side of the divide.

Plumwood goes on to describe the negative consequences these allied dualisms have on wilderness thinking and wilderness preservation and makes a case similar to one made by Cronon: if only pristine lands are valuable (if only virgins are sacred), then this has the effect of devaluing and opening up for exploitation all lands that are not pristine (devaluing real women).

In a linkage of wilderness dualism to yet another distinct pair, she sets forth the interactions between colonial dualism and wilderness dualism, which turn out also to interact with the gender dualisms. The idea of wilderness is especially active in settler nations, in which it is fairly deeply implicated in colonial projects. In these nations, wilderness is empty, a *terra nullius*, and the settlers or colonists are the ones who are to fill it with value. The dualities are self/other, essential/inessential, norm/deviant, civilized/the natural and wild. These dualities operate in connection with land, culture, animals and plants, and, of course, with people. In the early stages of colonization, native inhabitants are placed on the side of nature; they are part of the wilderness. As wilderness comes to be valued, nature sacrilized, and as native inhabitants adopt more of the colonial culture, they are moved to the side of civilization and undergo a corresponding devaluation. This reversal is played out historically in the removal of indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands in order to preserve those lands as parks, protected ecosystems, and wilderness areas. The wilderness idea and wilderness activism seem to be deeply complicit in sexist, racist, and colonial projects.

But, asks Plumwood, does this complicity exposed in the interaction of one philosophical pair with others support the wilderness skepticism advocated by Cronon? Should we abandon the idea? That would be necessary, says Plumwood, only if these metaphors and their analogues "were the only way to think about wilderness and the only foundation for managing our relationships with wilderness" (Plumwood 1998: 659). And this, she says, is not the case. So the first step in her argument is to consider what the topical analysis of *La Nouvelle rhétorique* would say she must: the de-linking of wilderness from the pairs with which it is associated in arguments for wilderness skepticism. She does this through a series of arguments of her own. The link with colonial dualisms and with the historical fact of the removal of native peoples is confronted head-on:

> There are practical ways of countering these erasures of indigenous cultures implicit in the "virgin" concept, without abandoning nature reserve or wilderness. In the Australian case, efforts are increasingly being made to recognize historical indigenous sites and uses within reserved lands, in management, publicity (where this is appropriate), and in consensual arrangements for use . . . We must deeply regret past and oppose present erasures and removals of indigenous peoples . . . But it seems to me to be a serious and potentially disastrous mistake to think that the erasure of indigenous culture and its impacts on land took place *only* in land now designated as wilderness, or that it is only or primarily the nature reserve system which now should bear the responsibility of recognizing and rectifying the consequences of indigenous land seizure. If the *terra nullius* claim provided the foundation of all land takeover in Australia and some parts of Africa, the moral responsibility for meeting the aspirations of indigenous peoples in societies where European land takeover was so based would seem to fall equally on all subsequent land uses and users. (Plumwood 1998: 664)

To further weaken this association, she shows that those who attempt to tie the idea of wilderness to colonial thinking often have romanticized and stereotyped Eurocen-

tric views of Aboriginal people as natural ecologists and that those who "channel indigenous land claims into wilderness and natural reserves" are really benefiting powerful "mining and pastoral elites" on whose land such claims might be even more forcibly made (665). That is, not only is wilderness thinking *not* associated with or grounded in the binaries of colonial thinking, but also the argument that it *is*, is itself intellectually and politically implicated in an ongoing colonial project in fairly profound ways. This is a burden-shifting argument, but it is subordinate to the overall effort to keep the wilderness idea distinct from these other pairs and so prevent wilderness skepticism.

Wilderness skeptics who want to neutralize the distinction end up reducing everything to one pole of the opposition, and she points out that Cronon is expressing this kind of skepticism when he says: "Wilderness is quite profoundly a human creation" (Plumwood 1998: 673). Plumwood charges that in the background of Cronon's argument, one glimpses some deeply questionable reasoning of this form: "because the concept of wilderness is a human construct, wilderness itself must be a human construct" (673). This reductive overstatement, she says, is not only based on a logical error, but testifies "to the growing success of the project of human insulation and self-enclosure" (673), and she charges that it is in fact not in opposition to but is a way of furthering and promoting the dualizing approach that represents "the Other, nature, as an absence or void, and . . . demotes it agency" (674). This "deconstructive ecology" comprehends nature and wilderness as "imposing no limitation or constraint . . . upon us" (675). And here she returns to the permanent possibility of arguing against those who try to abolish a dissociation. Quite simply, they have no better solution to the problem the dissociation addresses – in this case, the disappearance of species and the exploitation of all lands without limit or constraint: "Without some distinction between nature and culture, or between humans and nature, it becomes very difficult to present any defense against the total humanization of the world, or to achieve the recognition of the presence and labor of nature . . . The skeptical stance risks a dangerous reversion to a . . . version of *terra nullius*" (676). However, the traditional "binary dualism" of nature and culture will not serve well. Something different must be accomplished with the dissociation of the relevant philosophical pair, some transformation must be made, some new path of argument must be found.

Some other routes through the argumentative topology of philosophical pairs are traced in chapter 92 of *La Nouvelle rhétorique*, "The Role of Philosophical Pairs and their Transformations." Here the possibilities of elaborating new dissociations out of term 2 are discussed, and there is special attention given to the way in which means/end distinctions can further this process. These are the directions which Val Plumwood's argument takes as it nears its end. In order to save wilderness dualism, it is important not to take the nature/culture pair as an absolute metaphysical distinction but instead to look for the nature in culture and the culture in nature (Plumwood 1998: 670). One way to do this is to see that the concept of wilderness is a means and not simply an end in itself. It is a way to address a problem. At one point in her

discussion, she refers to wilderness and reserve laws as "interim protective measures" that will serve until conditions change (666). At another she speaks of wilderness reservation as "one part of an appropriate strategy of response" (677). Specific restrictions on habitation and use turn out to be restrictions on specific peoples with specific technologies and cultures in specific places and times. That is, part of the wilderness concept is *full* of contingent cultural specificity. It informs wilderness laws which stipulate restrictions on our actions in wilderness areas. But these restrictions are simply a means to something and not the thing itself: "It is not the absence of humans that we seek in our wilderness quest, as the definitions suggest . . . It is the experience of the *presence of nature*, the company of vast, multiple, and prior presences" (682). The difficulty with wilderness dualism is that wilderness becomes *defined* as the absence of humans (which is merely a contingent means to what is wild) rather than as the self-defining of a place like Prion Bay, "a wild place beyond our remaking which still tells, without our interruption, a history far older than our own, a story we go there to hear" (682). This self-defining and telling of a history, allows us, she says, a "dialogical" connection with that other set of presences that constitutes the wild.

This new dissociation between what in the wilderness idea is contingent and cultural and merely a means and what in the idea the means is leading us toward is exactly the sort of dissociation Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca discuss in their account of the transformation of philosophical pairs. They also point out that this process of new dissociations within terms 2's by using the end/means distinction is in principle interminable (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 436). One can keep dissociating new wilderness concepts into a means/end or letter/spirit or some other kind of pair to get at that part of the concept which really does lead toward the presence of wild others and that which does not. In this way, philosophical pairs become involved in a process that is very like Gadamer's account of experience and reflection, in which one gains a knowledge of one's knowledge, and so modifies one's estimation of what was previously taken as simple knowledge. As Gadamer develops the idea, in explicit contrast with Hegelian dialectic, this process has no logical end, and in fact produces over the long run someone who becomes aware of this, someone Gadamer calls a person of experience, someone who exhibits the intellectual virtues associated with wisdom, especially being radically undogmatic and open to new experience (Gadamer 1998: 355).

Rhetoric's Wisdom

This reading of a small but significant phase in the wilderness debate illuminates reasoning as a rhetorical process and gives a glimpse of the potential architectonic power of a rhetorical topos to organize fields of knowledge, whether philosophical accounts of nature/culture relations or more specific policy deliberations of the kind involved in the wilderness debate. However, not only does the topography of philosophical pairs illuminate these fields, but also the topology it describes is the very way

in which things come to presence for us – i.e., *as* nature or culture, *as* calling for one kind of response or another, *as* something which we have ourselves created or something which we have not. We experience what is in light of the dynamics of these pairs. They are the intellectual and perceptual means by which our experience of nature will take one route or another, and they are the legal means by which land itself will have one fate or another.

This reading also shows the potential of a deep rhetoric for both improving our understanding of intellectual controversy and for participating in it. If one has a map of the kinds of arguments available in a particular kind of dispute, one can "see" not only what routes have been taken by an argument but also what routes have not. This "seeing" occurs at many levels of generality and is never automatic. Just because one sees the general outlines of an argumentative region does not mean that one can suddenly imagine all the specific argumentation that might occur within it. To see any at all requires motivation, knowledge, experience, imagination, sympathy, and a host of other abilities and intellectual virtues. This is the major educational difficulty faced by those who would teach the topoi. However, the topoi can work *with* such abilities. Very clearly, knowing the untaken routes of reasoning enlarges one's interpretive perspective and increases, too, the sphere from which one might draw one's own arguments.

One final question raised by these developments in late twentieth-century rhetoric is whether, since rhetoric has returned as philosophy, it can have anything substantive to contribute to philosophical controversies. That is, does rhetoric merely show "what is happening" without itself contributing an understanding of controversy that lends support to one position rather than another? This is a pressing question in the example considered here because it seems as if William Cronon is working with some version of a deconstructive understanding of dualisms – dualisms as binaries of the kind discussed by Jacques Derrida. I want to conclude this account of late twentieth-century rhetoric by developing this question in more detail because *La Nouvelle rhétorique*'s account of philosophical pairs and Derrida's account of binaries seem to be in contention with one another about how to interpret intellectual controversy and how to conduct it.

In *Positions* (Derrida 1981: 9) Derrida tells us that the Nature/Culture binary is an "effect" of *différance*, and so properly understood ("deconstructed"), the distinction is not a simple metaphysical one but participates in a finally unconceptualizable and ungovernable play of difference. Neither term can serve as a center or foundation or criterion or value that will not in the end fall to the play of difference that makes the distinction between them possible. It is the role of a deconstructive criticism to expose and magnify the groundlessness of this distinction.

Derrida's account of *différance* is offered as a counter-concept or alternative to dialectic, especially to Hegelian dialectic: "If there were a definition of *différance*, it would be precisely the limit, the interruption, the destruction of the Hegelian relève [sublation, synthesis, *Aufhebung*] *wherever* it operates . . . [Deconstruction] is to avoid both simply neutralizing the binary oppositions of metaphysics and simply residing within the closed field of these oppositions, thereby confirming it" (40–1).

However, Derrida also acknowledges some of what *La Nouvelle rhétorique* sees as the general context for philosophical pairs – that there is a problem, controversy, argumentation, and value at stake in these hierarchical pairs, and so he emphasizes a practical imperative:

> We must traverse a phase of overturning . . . we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a vis-à-vis but with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), or has the upper hand. To deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment . . . One might proceed too quickly to a *neutralization* that *in practice* would leave the previous field untouched, leaving one no hold on the previous opposition, thereby preventing any means of *intervening* in the field effectively . . . It is not a question of a chronological phase . . . The necessity of this phase is structural; it is the necessity of an interminable analysis: the hierarchy of dual oppositions always reestablishes itself. (40–1)

This is one way to oppose the "solution" that a particular philosophical pair presents, to overturn the hierarchy. Derrida, however, is not interested in *specific* incompatibilities or in trying to resolve *specific* conflicts peacefully. He sees the violence that threatens not in the actual historical violence that could break out if argumentation fails, but in the "violence" internal to the dissociation, the "violence" of the hierarchy itself. And the exigency he has in mind is not the specific exigency of argumentation that makes use of philosophical pairs, but the eternal exigency of undoing the "violence" that is internal to metaphysical hierarchies.

In addition to this overturning of hierarchies, however, Derrida also recommends "practicing the interval" itself, that is, finding a way of writing that will somehow stay with the play of difference and both provoke overturning but also continue to disrupt and trouble even the overturned order in uses of language that neither allow the oppositions their sway nor achieve a new, more adequate concept. In contrast to the temptation of dialectical solutions, Derrida proffers "an irreducible and *generative* multiplicity" (45).

It is quite difficult not to hear "topics" calling out in "generative," and "copia" calling out in "multiplicity." It is also quite difficult not to notice here that Derrida's deployment of *différance* in this context is philosophical–theoretical and quasi-deductive, while *La Nouvelle rhétorique* finds people using philosophical pairs for their own purposes, and holds back from deploying any larger evaluative or philosophical framework. For Derrida, *différance* seems to be the primary agent, while for *La Nouvelle rhétorique* the people engaged in argumentation are the agents.

What is also notable about the Derridean position is its limited topography. One is faced with neutralizing (i.e., rejecting the distinction), with reversing, with getting trapped within, and with "practicing the interval." What is difficult to shake here, and what marks in a radical way the difference from *La Nouvelle rhétorique*, is that the description of pairs is offered in moral and nearly absolutist terms. There is "violence" in pairs themselves. Terms themselves try to gain the "upper hand" over one another.

We ourselves are in danger of getting trapped within these violent dynamics. Since we are in this dangerous situation, our discursive choices are limited to versions of fighting back against pairs or giving in to them. The new rhetoric, too, thinks of pairs – and all reasoning – against the idea of violence, but violence conceptualized primarily as physical violence, as threats of violence, and perhaps, secondarily, as the force involved in uses of language that appear to be argumentative but are not. Since the primary struggle is not against the topos itself, the topography of reasoning is much more expansive, and provides a greater variety of possible routes of reasoning.

To return to our example, then, insofar as William Cronon's "The Trouble with Wilderness" can be read as a practical application of Derridean theorizing about binaries, then his argumentation itself may be evaluated in the light of these limitations. And Cronon does seem to have a deep and overt suspicion of pairs of any sort. His primary maneuvers are to reverse and undo them, in perfect alignment with the Derridean project. Insofar as Val Plumwood's "Wilderness Skepticism and Wilderness Dualism" can be read as being alert to the more far-reaching topology of philosophical pairs, one might evaluate her argument as less limited. Her invention of an argument that uses the means/end pair to begin a "fanning" out of term 2 suggests just this kind of alertness, openness, and flexibility.

In fact, her more general rejection of the concept of simple "binary dualisms" in favor of something like dynamic rhetorical pairs seems explicitly aligned with the philosophical approach of a deep rhetoric. Thinking of the civilization/wilderness pair as a means is to think of it as a continuing attunement to what shows itself only kairotically. Knowing kairotically, practicing rhetoric as a creative reception of experience, a continuing argument with skeptics and a dialogue with the world – these bring Plumwood into a circle of thinkers that includes the philosophers who have tried to conceptualize this late twentieth-century deep rhetoric.

However, although this theoretical alignment might count as a reason for endorsing Plumwood's line of reasoning, it is, from a rhetorical point of view, no guarantee of the strength of her overall argument. A demonstrated awareness of the many argumentative routes available may often be a reason to judge one argument to be stronger than another. Almost all teachers of argumentation train their students to anticipate objections and to respond to alternative lines of reasoning. But this is only one ground for judging arguments; there are many others. In the end, *La Nouvelle rhétorique* has no theory of evaluating arguments except for its theories of different kinds of audience and its axiom that the quality of an argument is directly related to the quality of the audience that would be convinced by it. The relevant features of an audience include not only its rhetorical theories but theories of many other sorts, too, as well as the facts, values, value hierarchies, and topical hierarchies it acknowledges, and a host of other beliefs – many of them incompatible with one another when it comes to reasoning.

If Plumwood's rhetorical mindfulness plays a role here it is in the fact that her argument is before us at all, and not in its having some decisive power over our ultimate choices – but this is hardly insignificant. As Vico pointed out, judgment and

criticism of the evaluative sort come very late in the game, after a great deal has already been decided. Invention and interpretation, on the other hand, determine what is available to be evaluated at all, and the deep rhetoric of the late twentieth century not only addresses invention and interpretation explicitly, but also offers vast resources for anyone who wants not simply to reason and speak well about the choices that are currently pressing, but also to imagine choices and shapes of reason that have not yet been spoken at all.

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Part IV
All in Good Time – and Timing

In this final section leading rhetorical thinkers reconsider their own work or that of others as it has appeared over the last several decades and entertain possibilities for new work in the future. The decades past (let us say, roughly, 1960–2000) have been extremely fruitful for studies in rhetoric, and we believe that the present is a time for both reassessment of some of what has been accomplished and an expression of interest in what remains to be done.

Don Bialostosky performs an invaluable critical service in the present volume in explicitly turning Aristotle on his head by arguing that "[Mikhail] Bakhtin does not merely deconstruct Aristotelian hierarchies by making marginal Aristotelian topics central; he articulates a world of artistic practices beyond the boundaries Aristotle established with the same thoroughness with which Aristotle settled the territory within those boundaries." More specifically, Bakhtin "rehabilitates the most abjected part of Aristotle's rhetoric, delivery, and he subordinates Aristotle's most important part – invention – to arrangement, style, and delivery. He makes the parts of poetics that Aristotle refers to the arts of rhetoric and delivery – thought and intonation – crucial to discourse in general and therefore to both rhetoric and poetics, which consequently share constitutive parts in his system instead of the secondary parts in which they overlap in Aristotle's." The point is well stated: Bakhtin does not *substitute* delivery for invention but rather enfolds invention *into* delivery (much as Eden, Morson, Conley, and Cascardi do with style-as-inventional). Bialostosky provides an exciting point of departure for rethinking invention in an age of what Walter Ong has called "secondary orality."

Dedicating his essay to Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, whose "work has advanced . . . the scholarship of Erasmus . . . and the possibilities of rhetorical theology today," Stephen Webb argues that Reformation rhetoric informs the modern theologies of David Tracy, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Stanley Hauerwas, and offers vast resources for the modern church. He shows that the new importance of the laity in the Reformation led

reformers to understand the church as a rhetorical community where all persons sharpened their interpretive skills. Following the humanist impulse to "be true to the classical texts, theologians multiplied words in order to do justice to the indivisible fecundity of the one true Word of God." Webb links Erasmus' respect for grammatical rigor and eloquence to the postmodern theologian David Tracy's respect for "the possibilities and limitations of our knowledge of God" and to his regard for the criterion of consensus in communication. Tracy's fascination with Luther's idea of the hidden God also makes him sensitive to the ways that language must be twisted and fragmented as thinkers strive toward knowledge of God. Webb also emphasizes the kinship of the ironic imaginations of Luther and Reinhold Niebuhr as well as Calvin's and Stanley Hauerwas' insistence on keeping the focus on God and the communal values of the church rather than on private religious experiences.

Nancy Struever begins her essay by noting that "Martin Heidegger's definition in *Being and Time* – 'rhetoric is the first fundamental hermeneutic of the everydayness of being-with-others'" (Heidegger 1982: 178) – not only ties rhetoric to his own philosophy of time, but insists on its investigational skills, implying that rhetoric must be seen as hermeneutic, as inquiry." "The connection between rhetoric and history is particularly strong because history as a discipline of description/explanation and interpretation, one dealing with the problematic of time, is a *second* fundamental hermeneutic of the timefullness of social existence. The connections of time, memory, rhetoric, and history unfold in an account of a practice of recollection." Struever argues "the use of memoir, personal narrative, to explicate history by Giambattista Vico, Benedetto Croce, and R. G. Collingwood, is a highly motivated initiative of vital importance in defining their contributions to the theory of history." This dense, stimulating essay focuses on one of rhetoric's most central concepts: time.

In many ways Steven Mailloux's essay is a perfect complement to Bialostosky and Struever's; in his words, "Tracking rhetorical paths of thought. Articulating rhetoric and hermeneutics. Using rhetoric to practice theory by doing history. How do these phrases apply to rhetorical hermeneutics? To answer this question, I will be guided by the interpretive energies of some twentieth-century commentators on Aristotle" – among them, notably, Bakhtin and Heidegger. Mailloux's argument serves as a metonymy for the present volume:

> Rhetorical hermeneutics attempts to follow out the implications [about temporality] by historically situating specific interpretive acts in their particular cultural conversations. In this way any historical act of interpretation, say, Heidegger's reading of Aristotle or Luther's commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, is both an engagement with a past text and a contribution to its present interpretive history; as an interpretive argument attempting to persuade an audience, it is simultaneously rhetorical and hermeneutic in its character.

Like theology, history, and a hermeneutically prudent philosophy, law makes varied uses of rhetoric. For Robert Burns, the performance of a law case in court is at once a

prudential pursuit and an intellectual drama. He argues "the trial's linguistic practices, its constitutive rhetoric, are consciously structured to create an almost unbearable tension of opposites that shows forth the practical truth of a human situation. It is the burden of the trial to accomplish a practical resolution of those tensions in a highly contextual and specific way, one that actualizes the practical wisdom implicit in the common sense of the community." In an original meditation on the nature of the trial in American jurisprudence, Burns (himself a trial lawyer and a professor of law) concludes that trials demonstrate at least five rhetorical conditions: the centrality of narrative to our lives, the high level of refinement that common sense can achieve, the human ability to manage tension in the trial's use of hybrid languages, the trial as a vehicle of genuinely hermeneutical experience, and the "achievement of truth-for-practical judgment."

Charles Altieri opens up a refreshing contrary direction in marking out *contrasts*, now between (modernist) poetry and rhetoric, not by sheltering poetry from rhetorical interests altogether (as he suggests that Gerald Bruns has done in his otherwise brilliant work) but by exploring poetry's unique relations to those interests. Altieri writes, for example:

> I want to show that modernist attitudes to rhetoric involve more than critique. For if we shift from modernist theory to poetic practice, especially the practice of William Butler Yeats and Wallace Stevens, we see that despite their abiding hatred of 'rhetoric' their poetry frequently turns to the figure of the orator as a figure for the powers of idealization they project for their imaginative labors. The psychological emphases that ground their criticisms therefore also open an alternative route for attributing value to rhetorical concerns.

This is an important essay for everyone interested in the complex conflicts and relations between rhetoric and poetry (the theme also of chapter 20 in Part Three).

Finally, Wayne C. Booth, to whom this collection of essays is dedicated, explores the puzzle of why many writers, himself not least, often engage in thinking about rhetoric without using the word itself. Booth tells his own story of how he came upon the term "rhetoric" only after much struggling with the notion of "self-conscious authorial intrusions" in fiction. Assuming initially that rhetoric dealt only with relatively superficial ornamentation of the more substantial poetic work, Booth gradually came to the view "that the total 'poetic' work is in fact utterly rhetorical." Booth relates how later, as a Mormon missionary, he struggled to find common ground for rival arguments upon which persons could seek truth together, realizing only in hindsight that his journey was itself rhetorical in character. Even as he wrote *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961), he now reflects, he was at every moment in his writing and teaching thinking of ways to improve communication, a commitment clearly expressed in all of his works. In *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism* (1979), for example, he argues that the "true end of all inquiry...should be understanding...the kind of joining that can result only from a full rhetorical

probing of discourse." This has been the challenge and aim of all of the contributors to this volume. Concluding this *Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism* with Wayne's essay signals our admiration of and gratitude for his lasting contributions to the study of rhetoric.

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Bakhtin's Discourse Theory

Don Bialostosky

The work of Mikhail Bakhtin has been ambivalently appropriated for the rhetorical tradition, despite Bakhtin's recurrent disparaging remarks about rhetoric. The range and power of his general theory of discourse have attracted rhetorical theorists to his work, even as the place of rhetoric in his work has put them on the defensive. His placement of rhetoric on the monologic side of his fundamental distinction between dialogic and monologic discourse has provoked Halasek (1998) to show that rhetoric is more dialogic than Bakhtin allows, Walzer (1997) and Murphy (2001) to reaffirm its essential monologism, and Dentith (1997) to deny the distinction between dialogic and monologic discourse altogether.

This debate has addressed itself to a relatively small number of passages in which Bakhtin makes explicit pronouncements about "rhetoric" rather than to his discourse theory as a whole, where issues of concern to rhetoric arise without being named as such. And it has also answered his charges against rhetoric by mobilizing some commonplace version of the art against them, without acknowledging the variety of "rhetorics" on offer in the rhetorical tradition or situating Bakhtin among their authoritative expositors. The debate has established Bakhtin's pertinence to the rhetorical tradition, but it has not yet established his place within it or gauged the extent to which his admission to it might transform it. One inevitable and essential expositor of rhetoric in relation to whom Bakhtin's measure must be taken is Aristotle.

I have suggested elsewhere that Bakhtin structures his work on Dostoevsky's poetics against the background of Aristotle's *Poetics*. His *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* is organized as a full-scale rearrangement of Aristotle's hierarchy of parts of the tragedy – first plot, then character, thought, diction, and spectacle in that order. Bakhtin devotes chapters to developing the importance of the subordinated parts of character ("the hero"), thought ("the idea"), and diction ("discourse"). He displaces plot and plot-governed classical genres like tragedy with the multi-voiced, serio-comic, and open-ended genre of Menippean satire in which the person–idea unites

character and thought and in which dictions too are united with ideologies. His discourse theory gives primacy to the act of utterance itself, making the performative part of tragedy, spectacle, precede all others. Bakhtin does not merely deconstruct Aristotelian hierarchies by making marginal Aristotelian topics central; he articulates a world of artistic practices beyond the boundaries Aristotle established with the same thoroughness with which Aristotle settled the territory within those boundaries. Bakhtin brings into focus a "classical" tradition of anti-classical discursive practices and analyzes their principles, doubling the field covered by poetics instead of undermining its ground (Bialostosky 1989: 217).

Bakhtin's thoroughgoing rewriting of Aristotle's *Poetics* at the level of its organizing distinctions raises the question of whether Bakhtin might engage Aristotle's *Rhetoric* at the same level and expand and reconfigure the "province of rhetoric" as he does the domain of poetics. I shall argue here that he does. Bakhtin turns the hierarchy of parts in Aristotelian rhetoric on its head as he does that of poetics, and he synthesizes some parts of the art with others in ways that parallel his uniting of character with thought and thought with diction in his poetics. In his theory of discourse, he rehabilitates the most abjected part of Aristotle's rhetoric, delivery, and he subordinates Aristotle's most important part – invention – to arrangement, style, and delivery. He makes the parts of poetics that Aristotle refers to the arts of rhetoric and delivery – thought and intonation – crucial to discourse in general and therefore to both rhetoric and poetics, which consequently share constitutive parts in his system instead of the secondary parts in which they overlap in Aristotle's. To begin to think the implications of Bakhtin's overhaul of Aristotle's rhetoric will take us beyond defending some commonplace version of "rhetoric" against his deprecations to reimagining what rhetoric might be and how its parts might relate to one another in a theory of utterance rather than a theory of argument.

Aristotle's Hypocrisy

I have chosen this provocative section title to identify a crux at which Aristotle chooses to diminish, or refer elsewhere, matters of *hupokrisis* (usually translated as "delivery" or "elocution"), a concept that Bakhtin magnifies and repeatedly takes as a starting point for his accounts of discourse. The etymological matrix of this word is profoundly salient for both traditional rhetoric and for Bakhtin's dialogics, and I would like to explore it briefly before I turn to the passages in the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* where Aristotle sets it aside and puts it down. According to the standard lexicon (Liddell 1889), Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* are the only Attic sources for the two meanings translated as "delivery," one the delivery of the actor, the other that of the orator. In Ionic, however, the word and its correlative verb *hupokrinomai* have the dialogically central sense of "reply" or "answer." Both noun and verb shade over into the meaning familiar from the English "hypocrisy," that of playing a part, feigning, or

pretending. The *krisis* at the root of the word is the root of our "crisis," and it carries the rhetorically central senses of choice, decision, judgment, and the related senses of trial or dispute and the issue of trials and disputes. The verb *krino* can mean "to question," as *hupokrinomai* can mean "to answer," making such paradigmatic dialogic interchange available along with the paradigmatic situation of rhetorical debate and decision in the same word history.

That the act of distinguishing or separating is yet another meaning for *krino* makes it dialectically salient as well, and reminds us of the dialectical work Aristotle undertakes to distinguish the discursive practices and arts of discourse that he takes up in his several treatises, and of the field of shared or overlapping meanings from which he has decided to separate those practices and arts. If he proceeds as if the domains of those practices and arts are already distinct so that he can refer topics to one rather than another, we can recall that at least some of the lines that separate those arts and practices from one another have been distinguished, separated, and established by his own decisions. We may reasonably wonder, for example, whether the architectonic art of delivery or elocution was already *there* to be the receptacle of the matters Aristotle refers to it from poetics, or whether it comes into being by his fiat to receive matters for which he needs to find a place other than poetics.

The chapter of the *Poetics* in which Aristotle refers some matters to the art of delivery or elocution is also the chapter in which he refers a whole part of poetics to rhetoric. Chapter 19 is brief and the choices it makes are critical to articulating Aristotle's views with Bakhtin's, and for these reasons I quote Butcher's translation in its entirety (Aristotle 1951: 69–71):

> It remains to speak of Diction and Thought, the other parts of Tragedy having been already discussed. Concerning Thought, we may assume what is said in the Rhetoric, to which inquiry the subject more strictly belongs. Under Thought is included every effect which has to be produced by speech, the subdivisions being: proof and refutation; the excitation of the feelings, such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of importance or its opposite. Now, it is evident that the dramatic incidents must be treated from the same points of view as the dramatic speeches, when the object is to evoke the sense of pity, fear, importance, or probability. The only difference is that the incidents should speak for themselves without verbal exposition; while effects aimed at in speech should be produced by the speaker, and as a result of the speech. For what were the business of a speaker, if the Thought were revealed quite apart from what he says?
>
> Next, as regards Diction. One branch of the inquiry treats of the Modes of Utterance. But this province of knowledge belongs to the art of Delivery and to the masters of that science. It includes, for instance, what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth. To know or not to know these things involves no serious censure upon the poet's art. For who can admit the fault imputed to Homer by Protagoras – that in the words, "Sing, goddess, of the wrath," he gives a command under the idea that he utters a prayer? For to tell some one to do a thing or not to do it is, he says, a command. We may, therefore, pass this over as an inquiry that belongs to another art, not to poetry.

The two matters touched upon here are aspects of speech or speaking, but Aristotle refers the first to rhetoric and the other to an "art of Delivery" that belongs in neither poetics nor rhetoric.

The speech that bespeaks "Thought" here seems to encompass more than what Aristotle first attributes to the category of "Thought," when he earlier distinguishes it from the speech that bespeaks "Character" in chapter 6. There he restricts thought to the speech that "is required whenever a statement is proved, or it may be, a general truth enunciated," excluding it from the speech that "reveals moral purpose, showing what kind of thing a man chooses or avoids" – the speech that reveals character (Aristotle 1951: 29). In chapter 19, however, speech that enacts proof and refutation is supplemented with speech that shows "the excitation of feelings," and with speech that magnifies or minimizes importance. Evaluative speech, not just the relatively value-neutral speech of proof and the enunciation of maxims, here falls under "Thought," even though this wider scope for thought-producing speech will make it more difficult to distinguish it from character-revealing speech. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how a thought-producing speech derived from the art of rhetoric, which is defined by its orientation to advocating what to choose and what to avoid, could be separated from ethos-revealing discourse and made purely to prove or disprove or state general principles. Aristotle might have better referred "Thought" thus restricted to dialectic instead of rhetoric; moreover, one would reasonably have expected that "Thought" encompassing proof and refutation and the excitation of feelings would also encompass the projection of ethos, completing its embodiment of the three types of proof Aristotle lists in the *Rhetoric*.

The distinction between character and thought as manifestations of speech would then be called into question by the referral of "Thought" to rhetoric, and the possibility of a theory of poetics that found thought and character united in diction or speech would emerge to challenge Aristotle's subordinated sequence of character, thought, and diction. Bakhtin, as I have already shown, develops this theory of poetics in his book on Dostoevsky (Bakhtin 1984). What we can now see is that it is a poetics that posits rhetorical discourse in its conceptual, emotional, and ethical fullness as one object of poetic imitation. Such a poetics might even be said to take rhetorical discourse thus understood as paradigmatic of the impassioned defensive discourse revelatory of person–ideas that is the dominant discourse of Dostoevsky's novels. If we take seriously Aristotle's referral of the subject of thought in poetics to the inquiry of rhetoric, Bakhtin's dialogic poetics is one of the places to which that referral may lead us.

The matters that Aristotle refers from poetics to the art of delivery or elocution (*hupokrisis*) will lead us to another Bakhtinian locus, but before we follow them there, let us first again set Aristotle's account of this topic in *Poetics* XIX against what he says about it elsewhere, specifically in *Rhetoric* Book III, chapter 1. There, in the earliest extant account of delivery in the rhetorical tradition, Aristotle ambivalently acknowledges the power of this aspect of rhetoric and deprecates the influence of it. It is rare to see him take as many conflicting turns of evaluation as he does in the brief section in which he takes up this topic. In chapter 19 of the *Poetics* his deprecation of

its importance for poetics is accomplished in a dismissive rhetorical question, while his referral of the topic elsewhere is relatively neutral, but in *Rhetoric* III.1 (Aristotle 1991: 258–9) his tone vacillates: delivery "has the greatest force," but its power to win victories in political contests is due to "the sad state of governments." Consideration of it "seems a vulgar matter when rightly understood," but one should pay attention to delivery, not because it is right but because it is necessary, since true justice seeks nothing more in a speech than neither to offend nor to entertain; for to contend by means of the facts themselves is just, with the result that everything except demonstration is incidental; but nevertheless, [delivery] has great power, as has been said, because of the corruption of the audience. The subject of expression, however, has some small necessary place in all teaching; for to speak in one way rather than another does make some difference in regard to clarity, though not a great difference; but all these things are forms of outward show intended to affect an audience. As a result, nobody teaches geometry this way.

Applying the standard first of forensic rhetoric, then of teaching, then of geometry teaching to all rhetoric, these gestures would retract not just attention to delivery but to everything beyond arguments from logos in the *Rhetoric*; indeed, the turn to geometry would retract all the probabilistic arguments that Aristotle has carefully developed for the kinds of questions rhetoric ordinarily addresses. He seems to be struggling here to name a rational discourse of sufficient power and purity to dismiss definitively the inescapable but apparently scandalous irrational force of delivery, which seems even more troubling in the province of rhetoric than in that of poetics.

His account of delivery in *Rhetoric* III.1 also reveals that the art of delivery to which he confidently referred the "Modes of Utterance" in the *Poetics* "has not yet been composed." There has been some attention to it in matters of poetics, he says, but in rhetoric it is not there yet. It is interesting that Aristotle, who rarely holds back from being the first to investigate a subject or formulate the art of a practice, dismisses this one as too vulgar to be worthy of his attention. Nevertheless, he provides a brief outline of the art in *Rhetoric* III.1: "It is a matter of how the voice should be used in expressing each emotion, sometimes loud and sometimes soft and [sometimes] intermediate, and how the pitch accents [*tonoi*] should be entoned, whether as acute, or grave or circumflex, and what rhythms should be expressed in each case; for [those who study delivery] consider three things, and these are volume, change of pitch, [*harmonia*], and rhythm."

It is not immediately clear how this brief enumeration of the parts of the art of delivery is related to Aristotle's brief referral to that art in *Poetics* XIX of inquiry into the modes of utterance, "which includes, for instance, what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth." Perhaps the difference between "Sing, goddess" as command and as prayer may be a matter of intonation, and the same expression may become quite distinct types of utterance depending on its intonation. Bakhtin and his close collaborator Voloshinov were fascinated by this fact, and recurred to it as a starting point for investigating the utterance, the elemental unit of speech communication. Anecdotes regarding the adverb "Well!"

(Voloshinov 1976), "a certain widely used obscenity" (Voloshinov 1973: 103), or the noun "joy" (Bakhtin 1986: 87) allow Voloshinov and Bakhtin to trace the evaluative relation of the utterance to its "immediate social situation" (Voloshinov 1973: 104) made evident in intonation. In the next section, I will show that what emerges from these discussions of the intoned utterance is an account of discourse in general that resembles nothing more than the Aristotelian rhetorical discourse to which intonation is an afterthought and a near irrelevancy. Bakhtin, starting from a topic Aristotle pushes to the margin, theorizes all discourse in ways that resemble Aristotle's theorizing of rhetorical discourse, even as Bakhtin pushes rhetoric more narrowly conceived to the margins of his inquiry. But Bakhtin's starting point in delivery also foregrounds aspects of the rhetorical utterance that Aristotle's subject matter-centered account of rhetoric minimizes or overlooks.

Bakhtin's Rhetorical *Theory*

This section title, then, will be intoned to emphasize the third word in a way that points toward Bakhtin's *theory* of discourse as having rhetorical qualities, before (in the next section) the title will emphasize the second word in a way that would make the reader expect to hear about Bakhtin's theory of *rhetoric* as discourse.

   Much that appears in Aristotle's work as specific to rhetorical communication appears in Bakhtin as characteristic of all speech communication. This is not quite the same thing as "extending rhetoric's gaze to every act of speaking and writing" (Bizzell and Herzberg 1990: 926); it is rather to see many characteristics usually attributed to rhetoric as in fact properties that belong to discourse in general. Aristotle and the Bakhtin School identify the same participants in the speech situation, and both determine genre by the role of the addressee. Aristotle writes in chapter 3: "a speech [situation] consists of three things: a speaker and a subject on which he speaks and someone addressed, and the objective of the speech relates to the last (I mean the hearer)." In "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art," Voloshinov writes, "*Any locution actually said aloud or written down for intelligible communication is the product of the social interaction of three participants: the speaker* (author), *the listener* (reader), and *the topic* (the who or what) *of speech* (the hero)" (Voloshinov 1976: 105). Elsewhere Voloshinov adds that "the dimensions and forms" of "the outwardly actualized utterance … are determined by the particular *situation* of the utterance and its *audience*" (Voloshinov 1973: 96). Aristotle identifies two possible roles for the hearer, judge, or spectator, and three genres of rhetoric corresponding to those roles: deliberative, epideictic, and forensic rhetoric. Bakhtin sees numerous roles for the hearer in an "inexhaustible" number of spheres of social communication that produce of a "boundless" number of speech genres (Bakhtin 1986: 60): "Each speech genre in each area of speech communication has its own typical conception of the addressee, and this defines it as a genre" (Bakhtin 1986: 95). These speech genres include all types of utterance, from the military command to flirtatious drawing room banter,

from the toast to the scientific treatise, from the greeting to the multi-volume novel, including the discursive genres characteristic of Aristotle's public rhetorical forums. In addition, all the "Modes of Utterance" that Aristotle refers to the art of delivery in *Poetics* XIX (Aristotle 1951: 71) — "a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer" — are among Bakhtin's list of primary speech genres in everyday discourse.

And even the discourse of everyday and intimate settings, organizational and artistic settings, indeed *all* discourse is, like Aristotle's rhetorical discourse, situated and evaluative. Its functions resemble those of Aristotle's epideictic and deliberative rhetoric. "Discourse," Voloshinov writes, sometimes "resolves the situation, bringing it to an *evaluative conclusion* . . . [M]ore often, behavioral utterances actively continue and develop a situation, adumbrate a plan for future action, and organize that action" (Voloshinov 1976: 100). Bakhtin does not attribute to all utterances the ends of the forensic and scientific genres that Aristotle emphasizes, the ones that putatively require only value-free attention to the facts and arguments to determine the case, because Bakhtin takes all utterances to be evaluative and addressed. "Even the so-called neutral and objective styles of exposition that concentrate maximally on subject matter, and, it would seem, are free from any consideration of the other still involve a certain conception of their addressee" (Bakhtin 1986: 98), he writes, and "No utterance can be put together without value judgment" (Voloshinov 1973: 105).

By making rhetoric a counterpart of dialectic, Aristotle makes the social participants, audience orientation, and evaluative work of rhetoric seem peculiar to rhetoric and even aberrant from the relatively impersonal and value-neutral perspective of dialectical argument among philosophers. But by making all discourse involve social participants, audiences, and evaluations, the Bakhtin School includes both rhetorical and dialectical discourse within a common understanding of discourse, in which each type of discourse defines its audience, genres, and evaluations according to its function in its sphere of communication. For the Bakhtin School, rhetorical discourse exemplifies unproblematically, even paradigmatically, the common social and evaluative features of all discourse, and it is dialectical and scientific discourse that attempt, unsuccessfully, to transcend those features.

Aristotle's linking of rhetoric to dialectic also foregrounds rhetoric's reliance upon reasoning. Aristotle's account of the enthymeme or rhetorical syllogism identifies its departure from the fully elaborated and explicit syllogism of dialectic, and Aristotle devotes a large proportion of his treatise to cataloging the propositions that might be enthymematically invoked in arguments in the three rhetorical forums he focuses on. Again, the Bakhtin School generalizes this feature of rhetoric to all discourse. Voloshinov writes, *"The situation enters into the utterance as an essential constitutive part of the structure of its import.* Consequently, a behavioral utterance as a meaningful whole is composed of two parts: (1) the part realized or actualized in words and (2) the assumed part. On this basis, the behavioral utterance can be likened to an enthymeme" (Voloshinov 1976: 100). He goes on in a note to define the enthymeme

as "a form of syllogism one of whose premises is suppressed" and to conclude his discussion of the assumed part of the utterance with the claim " every utterance in the business of life is an objective social enthymeme" (Voloshinov 1976: 101). Every utterance, then, depends upon shared unstated premises and makes its point enthymematically from those premises.

Aristotle's extensive elaboration of those premises in his long lists of the topoi upon which the three kinds of rhetoric draw, his explicit listing of what audiences for deliberative, epideictic, and forensic arguments might take for granted, reveals that his rhetoric presupposes a rhetor who does not necessarily belong to the community he is addressing and tacitly share its beliefs. The artistic rhetorician appears to be an outsider who can refer to anthropological accounts like Aristotle's of the community he is addressing to understand what his auditors might believe. He can find grounds for argument elsewhere than in his own heart and mind – the *thumos* in which unstated enthymematic premises are lodged (Voloshinov 1976: 100). The Bakhtin School, on the other hand, begins its inquiry into the utterance from a situation in which two interlocutors share a common space, a common view, and common values, so that one can express their shared evaluation of their situation in an indignantly intoned adverb: "Well!" (Voloshinov 1976). The Bakhtin School's discourse theory is in the first instance grounded in a model of native speakers' use of their first language and their unanimous unconscious assimilation of their communities' tones and values, and it moves from there to encompass sophisticated and controversial genres in which less is taken for granted.

Aristotle's perspective in the *Rhetoric* is more like that of a foreign scholar trying to codify the beliefs and language of a community alien to him, a position that may explain Voloshinov's parenthetical remark: "Aristotle is a typical philologist" (Voloshinov 1973: 71), since philologists, in his account, view all language as if it were a foreign language and approach it from the outside, making explicit and formal features that for native users would remain tacit. Another way to draw this contrast, this time in terms Aristotle uses, is to recall Aristotle's remark (here in the Loeb translation): "the ignorant [are] more persuasive in the presence of crowds . . . for the educated use commonplaces and generalities, whereas the ignorant speak of what they know and of what more nearly concerns the audience" (Aristotle 1991: 289). The ignorant know what they know as native speakers know their language, and they can speak successfully to others like themselves with ease. For Aristotle, this success of the ignorant is clearly not to their credit, but it does lead him to advise his educated rhetor to adjust to his ignorant listeners and not to "argue from all possible opinions, but only from such as are definite and admitted, either by the judges or those whose judgment they approve" (Aristotle 1991: 289). Aristotle thus starts from the position of the learned and makes even the beliefs and practices of the ignorant something for the learned to learn about and simulate through artful effort, while the Bakhtin School's discourse theory seeks continuity between the everyday discursive practices of the ignorant and the sophisticated practices of the learned, among which the art of rhetoric is one well developed practice.

Bakhtin's *Rhetorical* Theory

Bakhtin proposes to consider rhetorical and literary genres "as specific types of utterances distinct from other types, but sharing with them a common *verbal* (language) nature" (Bakhtin 1986: 61). One of the earliest Bakhtin School texts, translated as both "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry" and "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art," starts from the simplest of everyday utterances to discover the common verbal nature that such utterances share with poetic works. From that earliest Bakhtin School text to Bakhtin's latest notes, there is a consistent and insistent positing of "the whole utterance as speech performance" (Medvedev/Bakhtin 1978: 132) as "the real *unit* of speech communication. For speech can exist in reality only in the form of concrete utterances of individual speaking people, speech subjects" (Bakhtin 1986: 71). This unit is bounded by the change of speaking subjects, shaped for the response of listeners or readers to whom it is addressed, and responsive to prior utterances on its topic in its sphere of communication. It takes its form as a definite speech genre, a "relatively stable typical *form . . . of construction of the whole*" (Bakhtin 1986: 78) with "relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic" features and relatively stable "types of relations between the speaker and other participants in the speech communication" (Bakhtin 1986: 64). In the "utterance as speech performance," those relations among participants are always expressed through intonation, which is always "oriented . . . with respect to the listener as ally or witness and with respect to the object of the utterance as the third, living participant whom the intonation scolds or caresses, denigrates or magnifies" (Voloshinov 1976: 104–5) and "toward others' utterances" regarding the object (Bakhtin 1986: 92). Intonation, "the verbal factor of greatest sensitivity, elasticity, and freedom" expresses "a living, forceful relation with the external world and with the social milieu – enemies, friends, allies" (Voloshinov 1976: 104–5). In particular, "it is in intonation above all that the speaker comes into contact with the listener or listeners" (Voloshinov 1976: 102). Intonation is a feature of all *viva voce* discourse, and it is inferred in written discourse from choices of words, the manner of unfolding, and the rhythm of the written work.

There is no "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Rhetoric" in the Bakhtin School corpus, but we may begin to construct one from this account of the utterance and from explicit remarks on rhetoric in a number of texts. Bakhtin (1986: 61) recognizes that

> Rhetorical genres have been studied since antiquity (and not much has been added in subsequent epochs to classical theory). At that time more attention was already being devoted to the verbal nature of these genres as utterances: for example, to such aspects as the relation to the listener and his influence on the utterance, the specific verbal finalization of the utterance (as distinct from its completeness of thought), and so forth. But here, too, [as in the classical study of literary genres], the specific features of rhetorical genres (judicial, political) still overshadowed their general linguistic nature.

This could certainly be said of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which defines rhetoric not primarily as an art of utterance in special spheres of communication but as an art of finding arguments for speeches addressed to judicial, political, and ceremonial occasions. For Aristotle, it is regrettably necessary, after treating these central questions, to pay some attention to verbal matters of delivery, style, and arrangement (I think this last is what Bakhtin means by "the specific verbal finalization of the utterance"). Aristotle concentrates his attention on enriching what *might* be said in cases of these kinds, whereas Bakhtin's theory of utterance focuses on the saying itself and the types of saying characteristic of various spheres of social communication.

A collection of relevant premises and lines of argument is not an utterance any more than a collection of possible grammatical forms is an utterance. An utterance must present its arguments in a determinate order with or without repetition, it must present them in certain words that exclude other words, and it must present them in a definite tone that bespeaks the speaker's relation to listener, topic, and precedent utterances. All of these features of the utterance have great rhetorical salience, as Aristotle acknowledges at the outset of Book III: "it is not enough to have a supply of things to say, but it is also necessary to say it in the right way, and this contributes toward the speech seeming to have a certain quality" (Aristotle 1991: 217).

The tone of delivery is not just barely relevant to "clarity," as Aristotle grudgingly allows (Aristotle 1991: 219). Any argument can be intoned to represent the topic in a way that indicates a speaker's ironic reversal of its apparent semantic force ("And Brutus is an honorable man"). An argument's tone can insult or alienate listeners or produce conviction and identification without or despite explicit argument, and it can indicate speakers' membership in the community they address or expose their foreignness. It is thus critical to the projection of the good will that is essential to an effective ethos. Tone is also essential to the arousal of emotions, for emotions depend upon impressions of the hierarchical social relations and degrees of intimacy among speaker, listener, and hero – impressions that are reflected in and projected by the tone of the utterance (see Voloshinov 1976: 110–12). It can show respect toward precedent speakers and opponents or it can reveal contempt or distrust toward them, rhetorically modifying the "inartistic" arguments made available through the testimony of witnesses as well as affecting the audience's judgment of rhetorical antagonists. Tone, indeed, *is* an argument, a minimal enthymeme in which the intoned expression calls up the unstated premises of the situation and moves the listener to share the speaker's evaluation of the subject in question (see chapter 17, this volume). A rhetorical theorist of philosophic disposition may be scandalized by such an argument, wanting explicit reasons to be declared and made available for critical examination, but auditors in a rhetorical situation will often identify aliens to their community precisely by their stating what should go without saying and will recognize compatriots by their taking just the right things for granted.

In "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art," Voloshinov identifies arrangement and style – "*the manner of the unfolding*" and the "*evaluative impetus of the epithet or*

metaphor" – along with the rhythm (Voloshinov 1976: 108) as aspects of the form of the utterance that contribute to the evaluation of content. They play, in effect, the same role as tone and make it possible for written utterances to convey an analogue of the tone conveyed in oral delivery. This should be clear enough in the aspect of style concerned with choice of words. The rhetor, like Voloshinov's poet, "selects words not from the dictionary but from the context of life where words have been steeped in and become permeated with value judgments. Thus he selects the value judgments associated with words and does so, moreover, from the standpoint of the incarnated bearers of those value judgments" (Voloshinov 1976: 107). These selections evaluate the speaker's relation to the audience, as stylistic choices reflect the relative status and degree of familiarity in that relation, and the speaker's relation to the topic or hero. Again, clarity is not the only thing at stake in these choices.

Aristotle himself in the *Rhetoric* recognizes not only clarity but also appropriateness as virtues of style, but his initial distinction in appropriateness comes from the *Poetics*, though he holds that poetic style is not appropriate to speeches. He distinguishes between flat style and ornamented or unfamiliar style that "makes language seem more elevated. His advice on this head is surprising: "To deviate {from prevailing usage] makes language seem more elevated; for people feel the same in regard to *lexis* as they do in regard to strangers compared with citizens. As a result, one should make the language unfamiliar, for people are admirers of what is far off, and what is marvelous is sweet" (Aristotle 1991: 221). The Loeb translation makes the point more strikingly but backs off from it in a footnote: "In this respect men feel the same in regard to style as in regard to foreigners and fellow-citizens. Wherefore we should give our language a 'foreign air': for men admire what is remote, and what excites admiration is pleasant." The note goes on, "'Foreign' does not really convey the idea, which is rather that of something opposed to the 'home-like,' – out-of-the-way, as if from 'abroad.' Jebb suggests 'distinctive'" (Aristotle 1926: 351). The uneasiness of the translator here calls attention to the oddity of the advice. It seems out of place at least for deliberative occasions, in which the speaker's credentials as fellow citizen would seem to be crucial and stylistic consanguinity most appropriate. Perhaps in epideictic occasions – those closest to the poetic – where admiration of the speaker is sometimes paramount, the advice might hold.

Aristotle's distinction between citizen's and stranger's style marks a socially consti-tuted stylistic line of the sort the Bakhtin School draws, but it is only one among many such distinctions grounded in social distinctions that carry with them different styles. Differences of social class, gender, profession, organizational role, and family relation within a given community all affect stylistic choices in the same way as differences between members and non-members of the community. Aristotle recognizes several additional distinctions of this kind in his elaboration of the topic of appropriateness in III.7. Differences of age, gender, citizenship, or those between "a rustic and an educated person" have stylistic implications that he links to rhetorical ethos.

The same chapter describes style in terms of tone in the expression of emotion:

> Emotion is expressed if the style, in the case of insolence (*hybris*), is that of the angry man; in the case of impious or shameful things, if it is that of one who is indignant and reluctant even to say the words; in the case of admirable things, [if they are spoken] respectfully; but if [the things] are pitiable, [if they are spoken] in a submissive manner; and similarly in other cases. (Aristotle 1991: 235)

Aristotle says he is distinguishing styles but seems to be describing tones, expressed evaluative relations between speaker and topic. The question of what stylistic choices would express these several tones remains open, but the close connection between style and tone is evident here.

Though it is easy to see the evaluative and therefore tonal implications of style, it is more difficult to see those implications of the "manner of unfolding" or arrangement. Traditional accounts of this topic enumerate the sequence of parts of the oration, usually based on the standardized forensic speech, sometimes subdivided and elaborated. Aristotle has little patience with the handbooks that standardize and multiply parts but fail to distinguish their function, and he sees only two essential functional parts, stating the subject and demonstrating it. Nevertheless, he goes on to show how other parts, the proem, narration, interrogation, and epilogue, function differently in each of his three rhetorical genres. His nuanced account deserves more attention than it has received from commentators on the *Rhetoric*, who, like recent rhetorical theorists, ignore arrangement altogether (see Fahnestock 1996, 2001).

Bakhtin and Voloshinov do not devote extensive attention to arrangement either, but their placement of rhetoric as a type of utterance opens several new ways of thinking about the topic. First of all, it helps us recognize the "parts" of the utterance as primary speech genres incorporated into the more extended and elaborate secondary genres of rhetorical argument. Greeting, introducing, narrating, declaring, and giving reasons are elementary discursive moves familiar from everyday conversation that take a regular place in rhetorical utterances. They are the building blocks of "compositional structure" that Bakhtin identifies as the most important feature of genre recognition (Bakhtin 1986: 60).

The selection and sequence of discursive moves in an utterance, rhetorical or otherwise, will depend upon the sorts of utterances that have preceded it and the sphere of communication in which it takes place. How the given case is given or what is given in it will enable and constrain how a rhetorical utterance responds to it. Aristotle is sensitive to this principle, recognizing that the accused and the accuser will bring in different matters at different times in a forensic utterance or that everyone will already know what the issue is in a deliberative utterance so that no preliminaries may be necessary. Indeed, it may not be necessary even to state the subject, Aristotle's first essential part of the oration, if all know the subject, or to state one's position on the subject, if one takes the podium as the accuser, the defender, the nominator, or the celebrator. What we call the question in some formal rhetorical settings is more than metaphorically a question; it is an institutional or socially constrained asking that invites certain kinds of answers and rules out others. The

giving of a case, however institutionally and formally, is a move in a dialogue to which the rhetorical utterance called for is a reply.

Highly standardized and formalized situations like that of the judicial speech will be most subject to the standardization of the number and sequence of parts of an utterance addressing it. This is why the forensic speech has provided the standard account of the parts of the oration that Aristotle complicates by considering the possible function of those parts in deliberative and epideictic situations. Less formalized situations may open the way for different sequencing or elaboration of parts. The utterance that has to create its situation instead of taking it as given will be much more elaborate in its preliminaries than the one that can take its given situation for granted and address it. This difference is especially crucial to the difference between *viva voce* utterances and written ones.

In addition to the utterances that give cases, the utterances of other participants in the rhetorical situation, opponents – judges, the accused, the celebrated, those who have evaluated the hero or the situation previously – are also provocations and constraints on the types of subordinate utterances that will appear in an oration and the order in which they will appear. Aristotle, too, recognizes that the orator who comes second has a different situation to respond to than the one who comes first and may organize the "parts" of the response accordingly. And since elaborate secondary speech genres like rhetorical addresses are composed of simpler primary genres, another shaping feature of the number and sequence of parts of an utterance will be other parts of that utterance itself. Internalized questions will call ordinarily for internalized answers, unless those answers can be presupposed, making the questions rhetorical, and quotations will enable interpretations or refutations, unless they can be assumed to "speak for themselves." Claims, as Aristotle recognizes, will call for demonstrations, unless, of course, they are restating what everyone knows, and digressions will need to be followed by returns to the main point, at least if the matter at hand is a serious one.

Arrangement is thus dialogically shaped and constrained, externally and internally. It is productive of tone when, like tropes and figures, it calls attention to itself by violating established expectations or by making noticeable patterns beyond what is minimally called for. Questions or exclamations or declarations can appear out of standard sequence or interrupt familiar patterns or repeat themselves. Turns away from the subject toward the speaker or the audience or the utterances of others or the hero – what have come to be called figures of thought – call attention to evaluations of all these parties to the discourse and stand out against the backdrop of the subject-centered decorum of serious genres. Speakers' dwelling upon themselves or worrying their relations to their listeners instead of getting to the point are matters of disposition that create tone. Expected parts of standard generic arrangements can be deferred, hurried, omitted, or expanded disproportionately. Delaying the introduction of expected considerations can give the impression of their evaluative importance or of their inconvenience to the case. Starting with things, returning to them, delaying them, repeating them, are all indices of evaluation that provoke us to make inferences

of tone. Even sticking to a standard pattern for standard purposes is a sign of serious and businesslike tone, just as Shandean deferral of the expected point is a sign of comic intent.

Utterances and Arguments

Rhetorical utterances, then, like utterances in general, deliver evaluations of their subjects and enact identifications with their listeners through *viva voce* intonation and through written signs of tone in style and arrangement. They are differentiated from other utterances by their public sphere of communication and their institutionalized occasions, which have stabilized genres of deliberation, adjudication, and celebration. Those genres call upon relatively stable lines of argument, a range of styles, and resources of arrangement suited to the several genres, some standardized, others open to expressive choice. Aristotelian rhetoric gives first and most extensive attention to the lines of argument available for those institutionalized occasions; Bakhtin's rhetoric attends to the signs of intonation in the enacted utterance that bespeak the speaker's or writer's evaluation of subject and relation to audience.

The two rhetorics are complementary, but I believe that Bakhtin's rhetoric is functionally prior to Aristotle's and ultimately governs it. There can be persuasion without argument, grounded in shared evaluation expressed through intonation, and the selection and disposition of arguments in rhetorical utterances must be ruled by their provocations and their anticipations of response, not by their availability alone. Rhetors possessed of a storehouse of available means of persuasion like the one Aristotle compiles will lack means of choosing and ordering them unless they can respond to the questions posed to them and select among those means with knowledge of what their auditors already know, believe, and hold dear. They cannot decide what to say just by knowing what might be said; they must also know what has just been said by others and what goes without saying for their audience. Their ethos and their ability to move their auditors' or readers' emotions will be as dependent on their knowing to whom and after whom they are speaking as their choice of arguments on the subject at hand. Without attention to the aspects of rhetorical utterance that Bakhtin emphasizes, Aristotelian rhetors would risk failure as pedants who bring too many arguments to bear or as outsiders who bring the wrong ones. Their audiences would distrust them as the proverbial pointy headed intellectuals or not laugh at their jokes or be moved by their sentiments. Entechnic argument is no substitute for enthymematic utterance that shares the unspoken beliefs and evaluations of those it aims to persuade and delivers that unspoken understanding through persuasive intonation.

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Reviving the Rhetorical Heritage of Protestant Theology

Stephen H. Webb

Ethicist James Gustafson has made a career out of warning Christians not to exaggerate. He chides preachers for not being more careful about supplying the evidence for their assertions. "How often I have returned from worship," he muses, "and wondered whether the preacher of the day really meant, except under the license of hyperbole, what she or he had said" (Gustafson 1997: 964). The overuse of the word *transform* or *transformation* in religious circles gives him the intellectual shivers. Why not say *alter* or *alteration* instead? And why do theologians use the word *only* so much, as in "only in Christ"? Gustafson acknowledges that people need to be moved by sermons, but shouldn't religious rhetoric be more careful in its claims? The best poetry, after all, is as precise as science, and hyperbolic claims, once they are deflated, only lead to disappointment and disillusionment. Gustafson summarizes his position with a piece of pointed, overly simplified (and thus exaggerated?) advice: "Don't exaggerate!"

Gustafson wants to modify the mode of religious discourse by restricting its range. Claims about the knowledge of God, he argues, should be strictly correlated to what we know about the natural world. Our language should not outrun what we actually feel. Since religious rhetoric apparently has little measurable impact on the world around us, it should be restrained in order to reflect its actual importance. An excessive celebration of love, for example, does not do justice to human experience: "One could make love the exclusive predicate of God only by vastly ballooning its meaning" (Gustafson 1975: 67). The task of theology is to qualify the precipitous nature of Christian beliefs through a process of deliberate attenuation and diminishment. Only thus can Christian claims make sense to a modern audience immersed in a pragmatic and realistic worldview.

Of course, Gustafson has a rhetoric of his own, one that reflects the objectivity and neutrality of the academy, which has been his home for a long and productive career. It is also a polemical rhetoric, correcting the mistakes of less cautious theologians with a more determined and detached estimation of the reach of theological claims. One might make the case that his nearly exclusive targeting of an academic audience

and his allergic reaction to purplish prose is itself a bit on the excessive side. Indeed, Gustafson enacts in his prose the classical theological topos of iconoclasm, which has always been a submerged but potentially explosive undercurrent in Christian history. Following the Mosaic ban on images and the story of Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, the iconoclast exercises a zealous disregard for anything ornamental or luxurious. Religious piety should be spare and lean. Such preferences are essentially aesthetic, which suggests that they defy rigorous argumentation and debate. Gustafson, then, is not just assuming the superiority of the Enlightenment canon of precision and accountability. He is performing, rather than proving, a theological point about what it means to worship God. One might even say that he is rationalizing his own prejudices about what is appropriate when it comes to talking about God.

The critique of exaggeration is not without its own history and rhetoric. Indeed, such a critique is itself a species of that which it rejects: to criticize exaggerations, one must exaggerate their distortions of and debilitating effect on what passes for our common sense of reality. This suggests that before exaggeration can be identified, a consensus view of reality must be established, which is precisely the extraordinary achievement of the Enlightenment. By taking the universal as the true, Enlightenment philosophers were able to portray any claims on behalf of particular religious traditions as immoderate and unseemly. The Enlightenment parlayed Europe's rise to worldwide political domination into a cultural and intellectual – as well as a theological – hegemony. The scientific achievements of Europe along with its disenchanted rationalization of all social systems became construed as the inevitable unfolding of the forces of reason and progress.

The Enlightenment philosophers did not have to undertake the onerous duty of policing religious discourse themselves. Instead, religious insiders who had internalized Enlightenment ideals jumped at the opportunity of regulating religious rhetoric. It was important for Christians who wanted to assimilate to the new intellectual regime of moderation and perspicuity to define themselves in opposition to the more preposterous claims of the less educated of their faith. Indeed, the Enlightenment strategy to contain religion was a not-too-distant echo of Protestantism's own recourse to iconoclasm in its reaction against the perceived excesses of Catholicism. By stripping Christianity of any evidence of aesthetic or liturgical extravagance, the Enlightenment intensified and accelerated a certain strand of Protestant logic. Even in our postmodern period, which relativizes the Enlightenment's claim to represent universal rationality, Christian rhetoric is still seen as threatening to the extent that it makes exclusive claims. The Enlightenment thus still casts its shadow, even though the glare of its beacon of rationality has begun to dim considerably. For example, while it is acceptable to paint your face for a football game or bare your soul for a television talk show, mainline Protestantism still insists on a decorum designed to offend no one. This tolerant ethos, stripped of its more particular rituals, had a long and unchallenged reign as the American civil religion. It broke up in the 1960s when it failed to bring harmony to the clamor of competing voices unleashed by the forces of pluralism. Christians who no longer had the task of sustaining the social

order that makes democracy possible were now free to express themselves with a new enthusiasm.

Indeed, the fastest growing churches in America are those that have mastered the most innovative technological advances in order to shape a message that can compete with Sunday football games and confessional television. The same extravagant rhetoric that hypes everyday products in our "supersize it" culture now fuels the growth of mega-churches as big and glamorous as shopping malls. We could not be further from Gustafson's plaintive admonition.

These changing social conditions help provide the context for the revival of rhetoric in contemporary Protestant Christian theology. When Protestantism shattered the religious unity of Europe, it wanted to fill the ensuing void with its own authoritarian rule. Nevertheless, the introduction of radically pluralistic religious views made tolerance a virtue of necessity, thereby opening the way for modernity and secularism. This is the standard view, anyway, of Protestantism's impact on Western history. The theological point that is often missed by secular historians is that the logic of Protestant theology also contributed to deepening the wedge between church and state. The social significance of Protestant theology's defiance of all epistemological foundations is immense. Protestants believed that the Word of God is its own authority, and thus, when they were being consistent, they could not appeal to authorities outside of the Holy Spirit's invigoration of scripture for consolation and support.

A theology freed from any foundation other than its own confidence in proclaiming the truth began the process of de-coupling the destinies of Europe and Christianity. The eventual result was that Christian churches were forced to devise competitive strategies for their success and survival. This was much more true in the United States, where disestablishment aligned the churches with a booming market economy, than it was in Europe, where established churches still relied on the protection of governments to insure their viability. When Protestants came to America, with its open frontier, they developed a penchant, as de Tocqueville noted, for a rhetoric that could do the expansive landscape justice. Of course, Protestantism soon became the *de jure* established religion of America, with a church on every street corner. Thus began the cycle of reformation all over again: Protestants on the margins of the mainline churches had to revert to an exaggerated rhetoric in order to capture the attention of a religiously complacent audience.

Protestantism and rhetoric go hand in hand, then. Protestantism was born out of the desire to shake up moribund religious tradition by appeals to a simpler and more intimate faith. Polemical from the start, Protestantism had to defend itself against the presumption that accompanies centuries of steady and solid tradition. By suggesting that a more trustworthy faith lies buried beneath innumerable layers of superstition, Protestantism was committed to a theological project that was essentially pedagogical in nature. The Protestant recovery of the doctrine of original sin suggested that Protestant churches could no longer assume that it was enough to be raised in a Christian country. Instead, the Word had to be proclaimed anew every Sunday, in order to break the long-ingrained habit of taking the Gospel for granted.

Nevertheless, the rhetorical nature of Protestantism did not immediately lead to an emphasis on missions. The Catholic Reformation, once called the Counter Reformation but now recognized as a reform movement with its own integrity and history, was much more aggressive about spreading the faith to new lands. Protestant churches during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were increasingly relying on state support in order to weather the spiritual and military battles of this period. Nonetheless, as with all movements that rely ultimately on persuasion over tradition, Protestantism could not rest on past successes. Even the established Protestant denominations had to undergo periodic revivals in order to maintain their standing. At its heart, Protestantism is a dynamic movement, conversionistic and expansionistic; otherwise, there is no reason for its existence.

Such analysis points to the claim that the Protestant Reformation was an event within the history of rhetoric as much as it was a development in theology. The Reformers developed their theological claims by taking polemical disputes to their logical conclusions. They also came to their theology as a way of defending their pedagogical ambitions. Indeed, Martin Luther, during his early, optimistic years, raised the expectation that the majority of the people could break through the inflated and embellished piety of the late Middle Ages to a more direct relationship to God. The Protestant leaders fought the persistence of popular superstitions among the largely illiterate peasantry by joining a theological emphasis on the Word of God – both written and spoken – with bold initiatives in public education. They wanted all believers to be equipped with skills of communication sufficient to revive the church and proclaim the Gospel. Protestantism's ability to persuade the faithful that Christianity entails a continual renewal of the faith continues to be the best measure not only of its practical success but also of its historical significance and continued theological vitality.

Of course, the call for ecclesiastical reformation long preceded the Protestant movement, and proposals for reform often focused on the need for better education for clergy and laity alike. While the Protestants were not the first to advocate better access to higher levels of education, they did significantly contribute to trends of increased schooling that began in the late medieval period. The Reformers realized that their theological movement necessitated a transformation in education as well as ecclesiology. A harsh and frequently exaggerated attack on Rome was not enough. The transference of power from the clergy to the laity required a new understanding of the church as a rhetorical community where the deepening of faith and the mastering of interpretive skills go hand in hand.

None of this would have been possible if the Protestants had not allied themselves with the pedagogical innovations that were a product of the rise of humanism. A curriculum based on the "new learning" was first developed in the fifteenth century in northern Italy, but it soon spread throughout Europe. The humanists emphasized the study of classic texts – the Latin poets, playwrights, historians, and especially Cicero, with his emphasis on rhetoric – as models of good speaking and writing. The primary pedagogical tool of the *studia humanitatis*, which dominated Western

education up to the nineteenth century, was imitation, in the forms of recitation and memorization. The goal was to cultivate moral character and promote civic responsibility.

The Protestant Reformers followed the humanists in emphasizing Latin learning for the preparation of pastors and government officials, but they also gave the new learning a distinctively theological shape. Most notably, their commitment to the liberation of the Word of God led to an affirmation of the vernacular in the liturgy and in translations of the Bible. The Protestant Reformers also took advantage of the advent of printing to mount an ambitious program for lay literacy. The publication of countless pamphlets and an enthusiasm for sermons is witness to the often-repeated observation that piety shifted from the visual and sacramental to the verbal and pedagogical. The emphasis on sermons gave many people their first opportunity to hear learned orations from men trained in university theology faculties.

Unfortunately, developments were not as orderly as this summary suggests. Protestantism ignited a rhetorical explosion that could not be contained by any theo-pedagogical system, as Luther soon found out. People began to recognize that the Word of God is the subject of a speech act – the proclamation of preaching – which culminated in the sacrament of hearing, rather than a priestly ritual whose climax, for the kneeling congregation, was the elevation of the Host for all to see. This dismantling of the "shared repertoire of symbols, prayers, and beliefs which crossed and bridged even the gulf between the literate and illiterate" (Duffy 1992: 3) could lead to confusion and demagoguery; there were times when the loudest voices were the most likely to be heard. Nevertheless, the situation was as creative as it was chaotic. Reflecting the humanist impulse to be true to the classical texts, theologians multiplied words in order to do justice to the indivisible fecundity of the one true Word of God.

Indeed, the Protestant shift from the visual to the verbal constituted a massive critique of the Aristotelian sensual hierarchy that ranked the eye above the ear. Every society regulates and manages the senses, but the Reformation was radical in the importance it gave to the perceptual practice of listening. Not until the Enlightenment's "devocalization of the universe" (Ong 1967: 72), when a God who speaks came to be seen as an offense to the hegemonic voice of reason, did Protestantism experience the profound loss of the centrality of hearing in the life of the faithful. Pietism, rather than being a distortion of the Reformation, can be interpreted as an attempt to restore the art of religious hearing. Pietistic Christian circles were characterized, as Leigh Eric Schmidt points out, by "the devotional ordinariness of hearing voices, the everyday reverberation of spoken scriptures, and the expectedness of a conversational intimacy with Jesus (as well as angels and demons)" (Schmidt 2000: vii). Today, evangelical Protestants orchestrate the most vocal attack on the tonelessness of Enlightenment spirituality by continuing to privilege the auditory over the ocular.

Of course, the story of Protestantism cannot be told simply in terms of the opposition between the visual and the verbal; every religious tradition is too complex for that. Moreover, recent studies by Collen McDannell (1998) and Peter Matheson

(2001) on the role of material objects and images in Protestantism suggest the need for caution when it comes to precise historical schemes. Even in the sixteenth century, the interaction between rhetoric and theology across the various faith communities that were inspired by the Reformation was far from uniform. Rhetoric was a tool used to reorganize theological priorities in the battle over the meaning of faith, so it cannot be analyzed as if it were an abstract discipline with its own systematic rules. The three greatest Reformers of the sixteenth century, Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin, must be studied in their own specific historical contexts in order to understand how they practiced theology as a rhetorical art.

Even though Erasmus was left behind when Luther charged ahead with theological reform, Erasmus never relinquished his position as the leader in the push for classical education based on the original texts. His battle against the scholastics began when he met the Cambridge theologian John Colet, who enlisted his aid for a biblically based education against the scholastics at Oxford. His zeal for scholarship did not make him a dry and abstract theologian. Indeed, his contemporaries, in the Ciceronian controversy, accused him of having an eclectic style that lacked the purity of the true imitators of the ancient masters. Erasmus, however, never practiced imitation for its own sake. Rather, his interest was in using Latin models as vehicles for modes of speech that would meet the particular needs of modern life. Nevertheless, while Erasmus is known today as one of the greatest scholars of the church, especially for his contributions to the recovery of the Greek New Testament, he is frequently underappreciated (or downright dismissed) as a creative thinker whose theology can still speak to us today.

The problem in the reception of his work is a misunderstanding of his concentration on philology. Erasmus used grammatical erudition, in the form of a disciplined service to the text, to replace the irreverent ambitions of the scholastics with a more modest pursuit of knowledge. He did not, however, limit grammar to the determination of the meaning of words by establishing their lexical connections and their use in clauses and sentences. Instead, learning grammar requires an immersion in the best classical authors that leads, necessarily, to correct speaking and moral development. Grammar, then, is already a part of rhetoric.

Because Erasmus worked in the humanistic tradition that laid down a smooth set of transitions from the narrow work of the scholar to the wider responsibilities of the public intellectual, he was one of those blessed theologians whose religious piety found a perfect expression in his rhetorical practice. He had a refined sense of the propriety and decorum he considered appropriate to the distinctive subject matter of God. Moderation for Erasmus was not only a hermeneutical virtue but also a way of life, and this practice of hermeneutical charity made him a target to both sides of the religious factions of the sixteenth century.

Rhetoric was more than a means of communicating the faith for Erasmus; it was also a lens through which the whole arc of God's activity could be viewed. As Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle explains in chapter 4 in this volume, Christ is the speech or "conversation" (*sermo*) of God, accommodated to our needs, and the theologian is

foremost a rhetor, inspiring others to listen anew to the divine words of a God who stoops to speak to us. As with moderation, Erasmus raises imitation, the guiding principle of rhetoric, to a higher, theological power in the *imitatio Christi*. In fact, the imitation of Christ enables the Christian to affirm life from a peaceful center that is accommodating and hospitable, and thus imitation and moderation reinforce each other. Rhetorical theology seeks the forbearance of charity more than the judgment of understanding. In another essay Boyle might go too far in indicting alternative theological methods: "The rejection of rhetoric as the proper theological method betrays a servile fear, the fear of punishment, of damnation, that error and sin provoke" (Boyle 2000: 92). But she does help explain why Erasmus was free to play the fool in his satirical works. He did not seek the dialectical certitude of the scholastics, wherein, he thought, true folly was to be found.

If there is a failure in Erasmus' rhetorical theology, it is this lack of appreciation for the excessive elements in religious language and life alike. His understanding of freedom included the largesse of charity but was disciplined by a strong sense of authority, just as the art of rhetoric must be practiced within the confines of the imitation of nature and the close attention to classical texts. This nuanced view of freedom was not the only topic that was to separate him from Luther. He also used the figure of the circle to depict the perfect harmony of Christ. Christ reconciles all the tensions of life, and it was Erasmus' attempt to convey this spirit to his contemporaries that set him apart from Luther's more confrontational style. Indeed, the obverse side to Boyle's comment above is that Erasmus continues to be a hero to all those who fear the ideological repercussions that seem to follow the blazing trails of excessive figures who push the meaning of faith in new directions.

This is not to say that Erasmus was always temperate and judicious in his arguments. His polemical attacks could betray the moderation that was at the heart of the classical virtues. His customary practice was to be affable in the pursuit of persuasion over accusation, but he could also be relentless in the wielding of irony against ecclesial abuses. Nonetheless, to borrow categories from Wayne Booth, his irony was stable rather than unstable (Booth 1974). His classicism led him to season his polemic with just the right amount of forbearance and restraint. When his elegance was translated into political activity, a certain gradualism, even a conservativism, was the result. Although Luther was politically conservative in his own way, the public performances of their social criticisms could hardly have been more different. Luther's rhetoric was as unstable as Erasmus' was stable, and his prophetic prose led to a very different theological, if not political, reaction to the failures of church authority.

Perhaps the closest theologian we have to Erasmus today is the Roman Catholic scholar David Tracy. He has the intellectual range of this Renaissance figure (which is remarkable given the greater complexity of academic disciplines today), and he also displays something of Erasmus' grammatical genius in his capacity to understand the intricate relations that obtain among theological and philosophical positions. Moreover, he shares Erasmus' insistence that grammatical rigor need not be separated from the high standards of eloquence.

It is true that Tracy's early work, best exemplified in *Blessed Rage for Order* (1975) on the transcendental foundation for the recovery and regulation of religious language, is not dissimilar to the scholastic metaphysics of the sixteenth century. In reality, however, he is in fundamental agreement with Erasmus' nuanced attitude toward both the possibility and the limitations of our knowledge of God. Tracy never tires of exploring the various paths theologians have constructed toward understanding God, and yet he is sensitive to the basic human limits that make faith extend beyond what the mind alone can grasp. His representational Christology is a good example of how he uses philosophy to make the case for Christ and yet portrays Christ as offering us more than philosophy will ever know. Christ represents the innermost possibilities for good that are the evidence of God's grace, and yet the idea of Christ could never be generated by pure reason alone. This is not very far from Erasmus' *philosophia Christi*, which is frequently caricatured as a merely moral portrait of redemption. For Erasmus and Tracy alike, Christ evokes the truth in an aesthetic appeal to our imagination, drawing together the good, the beautiful, and the true in a way that is superior to every (other) philosophical system.

There are also significant differences between these two that make their similarities all the more interesting. Most fundamentally, Tracy is a modern-day Erasmus who has crossed over the postmodern divide. Tracy plays a leading role in the revival of rhetorical theology today (see Compier1999: 19–23) precisely because he is sensitive to the ways in which religious language must be fragmented, twisted, and stretched in order to do justice to God. Tracy's rhetorical theology has a large dose of Luther's exuberance and intensity, as Tracy's recent fascination with Luther's notion of the hidden God demonstrates. It is as if Erasmus and Luther have found common ground after all.

Nevertheless, for all his postmodern proclivities, Tracy still cherishes the category of conversation – an updated version of Erasmus' criterion of consensus – over any other mode of communication, and thus he is prone to a moderate and charitable tone in all that he writes. He is always careful to appropriate figures of religious excess in a deliberate and cautious manner, ever seeking to reconcile positions that are tradition-ally opposed, so that his "analogical imagination" (Tracy 1981) is much closer to Erasmus' wide-ranging humanism than to Luther's prophetic hyperbole. This attempt to be fair to everyone, coupled with his privileging of rhetoric over ethics, accounts for Tracy's relationship to Rome. Like Erasmus, he represents a liberal or progressive Catholicism, yet he is even more cautious than Erasmus in avoiding direct battles with church authorities. Instead, he tries to show what an open and pluralistic theology might look like if it were to be embodied in the full dress of Roman liturgy and tradition. In terms of Protestantism, he shares with Erasmus a polite lack of interest in evangelical forms of faith.

There is nothing polite about Luther. In contrast to the refined Erasmus, Luther did not hesitate to use gross language when he was dealing with perceived threats to the Gospel. In his defense, it should be said that while some readers thought him uncouth and even unchristian, he thought he was simply employing the most appropriate

metaphors and images for the task at hand. And in contrast to Tracy, who never abandoned the training in Thomistic rigor that he received from the great Canadian theologian, Bernard Lonergan, Luther spent his life vehemently rejecting his own early immersion in Aristotelian logic. The university he attended in Erfurt at one point required twenty-two books for the BA examination, seventeen of which were on logic and none on rhetoric. Luther turned his back on scholastic metaphysics when he studied nominalism at an Augustinian monastery. The nominalist objection to universal terms left him with a lingering mistrust of the tendency of rationality to overstep its bounds.

Indeed, Luther's overwhelming convictions about the true source of God's grace instilled in him an accusatory spirit that would brook no disagreements. He was especially intolerant of anyone who lacked his brilliant sense of doctrinal clarity, which put him on a path of unresolvable opposition to Erasmus' sensitivity to the distinction between the certain and the merely probable. Indeed, Luther's cunning criticisms of Erasmus have succeeded to this day in portraying him as a superficial and uninspiring theologian. In Luther's mind, Erasmus' concern for consensus and moderation proved that he was hardly a theologian at all. Instead, Erasmus was a mere rhetorician, one who trusted in human words to do the work of God rather than one who was grasped by the one true Word that can never be sufficiently spoken.

For all of his verbosity, however, Luther was not a systematic theologian, and he was never able to convey a coherent understanding of the connection between God's Word and our words. He was a genius at making his own psychological tensions productive by reflecting on them in the light of the perennial mysteries of the faith. Nonetheless, as he responded to the Peasants' War, the rise of Anabaptism, and the popularity of spiritualists, he increasingly diluted the power of faith by placing religious instruction in the hands of the secular authority. His two kingdom theology failed to resolve the relationship between not only reason and faith but also ethics and rhetoric. The liberating power of his theological voice clashed with his anxious demand that political and religious order be maintained at all costs.

Such irresolution gives rise to a tension between the church and the world that fosters a deeply ironic imagination. The stubbornness of the world's rejection of the Gospel can lead the church to an attitude of sectarian defeatism or Constantinian triumph, but it can also lead to a realism that finds expression in an ironic posture. An ironic imagination can enable the church to take a long view of the world and the ways in which the ultimate victory of Christ must be accomplished through many detours and delays. Irony enables an alert eye for unintended consequences of our quest for perfection. We rarely succeed in achieving the good we set out to accomplish, and even when we do, we often end up creating unintended harms.

Nobody has better employed Luther's irony in the modern period than Reinhold Niebuhr. It has become common in recent years to criticize Niebuhr for perpetuating the very liberalism that he warned against, but such criticisms are shortsighted. Indeed, Niebuhr's ironic imagination is more effective than Luther's because it is shorn of the exaggerated sense of certainty that fuels much of Luther's polemical

attacks. While hyperbole is the figure of mystics, irony is the trope for moralists, and this explains Niebuhr's strengths and weaknesses. He was not a systematic or philosophical theologian. His focus on anthropology neglected many church doctrines, especially ecclesiology, but it is important to note that the church he was addressing had long compromised with secular culture, so that, in a way, he had to address that culture in order to reach the church. In fact, he wrote at a time before theology became so professionalized that theologians had to decide whether they wanted to write for a broad or a specialized audience. Niebuhr was less an original thinker than a creative prophet who criticized American culture by retrieving its own Christian foundations. In doing so, he imported a heavy dose of Luther into a society that was complacent about the possibilities of human achievement and control.

The legacy of Luther, however, lies less with his taste for irony than with his search for certainty. His attack on ecclesial hierarchy not only authorized the emergence of new religious voices but also created a new understanding of the significance of the individual's voice. His bold religious rhetoric authorized the individual's right to interpret the literal sense of the Bible in the place of the teaching authority of the church, with its reliance on the consensus of oral tradition. For all of his polemical flourishes, his style of argumentation was actually more forensic than rhetorical, and he preferred ordinary language in opposition to the learned prose of Erasmus. His turn to the subject, which was as influential in philosophy as it was in theology, did not depend upon the spiritual maturity of individuals but rather the perspicacity of the sacred scriptures.

Conservative political instincts made Luther panic at his own audacity, and he scrambled to replace the authority of Rome with the power of the German princes. His bold personality held together a complex mixture of radical and reactionary elements, but the Enlightenment dissolved the intimacy he established between the believer and the Bible, renewing anxiety about the status of religious authority. Under pressure from the epistemological challenges of the Enlightenment, Protestant theologians were tempted to appease this anxiety with appeals to humanistic truths and scientific methods. Such foundationalism took the form of twin extremes – a liberal quest for the authenticity of religious feeling and the fundamentalist insistence on the inerrancy of scripture. Both of these extremes could be found in Luther, but he cannot be blamed for the sterile trajectory that finds them hopelessly polarized. Nonetheless, it remains the case that his battles with Rome paved the way for an increasingly rationalized and secularized public sphere that made little room for his new language of faith.

Calvin had none of Luther's forceful passion, but his grasp of rhetoric was as confident and masterful as Erasmus'. Given his intellectual background, it should be no surprise that Calvin provides a better model for rhetorical theology than Luther. Like many young men of his time, Calvin decided to pursue a legal career, and his training immersed him in the art of classical rhetoric. He soon became more intrigued with humanistic scholarship than the technicalities of the law. His love for learning indelibly shaped the goal of his theological labor, which was the cultivation of a "wise

and eloquent piety." He is often portrayed as a dull but systematic theologian who was as disciplined in his work as he was with the morals of the citizens of Geneva. This portrait overlooks his rhetorical sophistication.

In contrast to Luther, Calvin understood that theology must be persuasive instruction before doctrinal clarity can prove profitable for the faithful. He was influenced by Cicero's insistence that the goal of every orator is to serve the public good of the polis. He thus attacked scholasticism by arguing that theology should be profitable and practical rather than self-indulgent and speculative. The goal of theology is not just to change one's mind but one's entire way of life. Calvin is not interested in theological disputes for their own sake. Instead, the discussion of doctrine should strengthen believers by leading directly to the dispositions that are proper to faith.

God, too, does not give us more information than we need. To develop his doctrine of revelation, Calvin employs a technical term, accommodation, that has a long and rich history in the rhetorical tradition. Cicero had emphasized the extent to which the rhetor must be aware of the audience and adapt to it, and Calvin, following Erasmus, extended this idea to include God's communication to humanity. God speaks to us in a way in which we can understand. The biblical narrative, then, has a pedagogical, rather than philosophical, coherence.

The same can be said of Calvin's masterwork, the *Institutes*. This triumph of the Reformation is not systematic in the modern sense of that term – there is no single unifying principle that organizes his treatment of Christian doctrine – precisely because it is so attentive to interpreting the Bible according to the contexts of different audiences and purposes. For example, the *Institutes* begins with the question of where wisdom is to be found. Should we begin with ourselves, and proceed indirectly to God, or jump right into reflection on the divine? Calvin's answer to this query is not as clear as some readers would like precisely because he is operating in a rhetorical and not philosophical mode. If his aim were analytical clarity, he could not both appeal to self-knowledge and also declare such knowledge null and void. What could be confusing conceptually, however, works rhetorically. Calvin appeals to the reader's self-knowledge only to insist that such knowledge invariably leads to knowledge of God. His qualified rejection of natural theology is thus meant to prepare in his readers the proper attitude required for raising the question of God.

One thing he was not prepared to do was to talk about his own religious history. Although Calvin had to flee France, his theology, unlike Luther's, did not reflect his radical break with his past. Perhaps this is due to the fact that he never felt the need to renounce his French education in the classical arts. His reluctance to talk about his conversion experience, however, was more than an incidental aspect of his psychological profile. It was an intentional rhetorical move; he wanted to keep the focus on God, not humanity.

In contemporary academic theology, the critique of "personal experience" is all the rage, perhaps because it is a convenient way of undermining secular society's tendency to equate religious piety with private emotions. Few theologians are as expert at brandishing this rhetorical prop as Stanley Hauerwas. Hauerwas is a great theological

performer, and much of his rhetorical power comes from his criticisms of the various ways in which the American church has become too American. He argues that being a Christian is a matter of being subsumed into the biblical narrative, so that one becomes a character in that grand story. The Christian narrative does not overlap with the American story, nor does it encourage believers to indulge in emotional states of grace.

Ironically, Hauerwas draws from his own experience more than most theologians. His voice is unmistakably individual and personal. He combines Luther's relentless hyperbole with Erasmus' charming sarcasm in a singularly Texan slang that could not be further removed from Calvin's sober manner. He shouts first and makes distinctions later. What he shares with Calvin is a socialized understanding of piety. For Calvin and Hauerwas, the church is more than a sign of what is yet to come. It is a model that reveals part of God's ultimate plan for the world. It achieves this status by becoming a world that is utterly different from the rest of fallen creation. Indeed, the world of the church is nothing less than a miniature version of the Kingdom of God. Hauerwas thus chastises American Christians for dwelling on their private religious experiences. Instead, he wants Christians to submit their individuality to the communal norms of the church. Only thus can the church be an active and even aggressive presence in the world.

Contrary to the tone of some of his rhetoric, however, the church that Hauerwas imagines is sacrificial, not triumphant. He follows Erasmus in insisting that peace is the fundamental Christian message. Indeed, Hauerwas far surpasses Erasmus in his insistence on pacifism as a prerequisite for full and faithful discipleship. For Hauerwas, the church is the sacrament of sacraments, the presence of Christ's body on earth, whose only labor is the patient expectation of the end. That end is the victory of Christ, which the church already celebrates, so that it need not do battle with the forces of this world on their own terms. The church can be pacifist and countercultural because it already knows how the story will end, and it is on the winning side.

Hauerwas appears to revel at times in the irresponsibility of his position. He argues that secular political philosophies can only hope to manage political differences through the virtue of tolerance, but that such hope is wishful thinking because political regulation is inevitably coercive. Secular political philosophies always — even if only implicitly — rationalize the dominance of nation-states. Hauerwas refuses to elaborate a political theology because he does not think that nation-states need any encouragement in their quest for power and wealth. The only politics he supports is, following the work of John Howard Yoder, the politics of the cross.

Although this politics is not philosophically based, it does have a firm foundation in the biblical narrative. As one of the fathers of narrative theology, Hauerwas portrays faith as a mostly gradual process of becoming socialized in the practices of an interpretive community. Reading the Bible and hearing the Word preached are secondary to learning how to act like a Christian. This account of conversion does not do justice to the alien power of the Word to make all things strange and to speak

to our estrangement. Hauerwas recognizes that the biblical narrative needs to be retold, so that spiritual power lies in the words that respond to the Word and not just the social practices that sustain community. But he also argues that the Bible gains its authority from the church. Consequently, it is the church's invitation of citizenship in an utterly new polis that is crucial, not the altar call of repentance by a broken and renewed self.

To put the matter sharply, Hauerwas argues that the church gains its authority from the virtues that it teaches. Moreover, those virtues are necessary for a correct response to the Bible. Only by practicing the faith can we preach and share it. This ecclesiology downplays the rhetorical power of proclamation – a proclamation which questions our capacity for right action. As distinctive as is his own theological voice, Hauerwas wants to constrain the voice of Protestant Christianity by insisting that the continuity of a narrative tradition is the foundation of the church rather than the repetition of the inexhaustible Word.

The most important aspect of that narrative tradition for Hauerwas is its emphasis on an original peace that precedes the ways of the world. All Christians can agree that peace is at the heart of God's plan for creation, but the difficulty comes with articulating how the church is to mediate that peace to others. Hauerwas can quickly translate the peace of Christ into a program of pacifism because he connects peace to the category of narrative – as something given in the Christian tradition – rather than to the category of rhetoric – as something that needs to be achieved. The church plays a pedagogical role in demonstrating the possibilities of the peaceful kingdom, but sinful humanity must be persuaded to embrace those possibilities. The question is what form that persuasion is to take.

If, as Theo Hobson (2002) has argued, it is almost impossible to draw a line between forceful acts of persuasion and literal acts of violence, then the church must recognize that its own forms of discourse cannot be free of the taint of sin. Because it aims at the ultimate good of its audience, the rhetoric of the church should strive to be non-violent, but Christian proclamation is not a gentle form of speech. We hear proclamation as both violence that condemns and truth that liberates because it is a Word that grates in our ears and makes us shudder. Of course, it is a Word that we ourselves speak, and so our rhetoric must be appropriate to its ultimately peaceful message. And we must remember that God will have the last word, which will be the same Word God has spoken throughout eternity, the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. Nonetheless, we should not judge proclamation on the basis of some abstract image of peace; instead, proclamation sets its own standards for what peace and violence might mean in the midst of a fallen world.

Moreover, the church exists in and takes advantage of a world where peace is made possible here and now only through the threat and use of violence. The Christian message of peace must be proclaimed with due appreciation for the role of the state in maintaining social order. It also must be addressed to the world in complete awareness that some forms of government do a better job than others at insuring a balance between freedom and stability. Given these considerations, the church cannot just

take an absolute stand against all forms of secular violence. It must deliberate carefully about the best ways in which its message can be translated onto the political stage.

Contrary to Hauerwas' emphasis on the church as a prototype of the peaceful kingdom, I would argue that the church is founded on the premise that just as God became incarnate in human flesh, the divine mystery can continue to be spoken in a trustworthy conversation (*sermo*). When Augustine read Cicero, he began to understand how his dreams for oratorical power and prestige had to give way to a rhetoric that was equal parts eloquence and wisdom. When the humanists of the sixteenth century discovered Cicero once again, they were impressed by the power of rhetoric to extol virtue and inspire faith, in contrast to the scholastic reliance on syllogistic disputations. The Reformers sought to replace the abstruse metaphysics of the scholastics with a study of the scriptures that was as informed as it was devout. In our own postmodern time, when philosophy has become one long meditation on its own end, there is much to be gained by a return to the rhetorical tradition of the Reformation. The church must be judged on its ability to communicate God's Word effectively.

As documented by Don H. Compier (1999), the revival of rhetoric in contemporary theology marks, to a significant extent, a return to the humanistic and catechetical emphases of the Protestant Reformers. One task of theology is to liberate the Word of God not from the entombing traditions of the church but from the academy, where an exclusive guild of scholars has buried the Bible in endless and unproductive debates about authorship, dating, and context. While Protestant preaching inherited Erasmus' emphasis on grammar, which produced, by the seventeenth century, a large number of preachers well trained in the literary arts, modern scholars simultaneously reduce the biblical text to its smallest atomic parts and then speculate about their broader context with the grandest of unfounded theories. Modern training in grammar is thus merely a platform from which biblical scholars launch their "higher" criticism of the text. Consequently, their work traces a circle that begins with questions that are increasingly narrow and unanswerable and ends with assumptions about the impossibility of narrative or historical coherence that seem increasingly metaphysical. Such scholars write for each other, not the church. Luther's voice needs to be heard again: "Where are the preachers, jurists and physicians to come from, if grammar and other rhetorical arts are not taught?" (Luther 1963: 252). The move from grammar to rhetoric – in other words, from exegesis to constructive theology, in order to give voice to the Bible – continues to be the indispensable task of Protestant theology.

Another way of putting this is to say that Protestant rhetoric needs to be as moving as it is truthful. Protestantism has proven much more adept at pronouncing the prophetic polemic against idolatry than expressing the contemplative beauty of holiness. It is true that the Christian art of theology can never be an art for its own sake. And it is also true that Protestantism represents, to some extent, a warning against the false promises of the lure of aesthetics within religion. But Protestant theology is justified only to the extent that it adds a dynamic and expansive cast to

Christian tradition. This, in turn, is only possible to the extent that Protestantism remains a tradition that is constantly reforming itself.

Protestantism has become a global phenomenon, disseminated further than its founders could ever have imagined. As Philip Jenkins (2002) has demonstrated, its future lies to the South, in Latin America and Africa, and to the East in Asia, and its current dynamism can be attributed to a Pentecostal renewal that both radicalizes and repudiates the piety of its origins. The rhetoric of this explosive expansion of Christianity still works by criticizing the established ways of Roman Catholicism and appealing to the purity of the New Testament age. Such rhetoric is also increasingly turned against the Christianity of North America and Europe, which is accused of compromising with secular humanism and various forms of neo-paganism. Protestantism flourishes when new tongues are unleashed, freeing the voice to declaim the glory of the Word. Exuberant and extravagant discourse is the result, which will always upset the conventions and customs of the status quo. Contrary to Gustafson's complaint, it could be said that Protestantism is born out of the command, "Just exaggerate!" The question is whether northern Christians can still hear such sounds being carried on southerly winds.

Note

This essay is dedicated to Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, who is the best historical theologian writing about rhetoric. Her work has advanced not only the scholarship of Erasmus but also the possibilities for a rhetorical theology today.

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Rhetoric:
Time, Memory, Memoir

Nancy S. Struever

Nam et omnia disciplina memoria constat, frustraque docemur, si quidquid audimus praeterfluat.

For our whole education depends upon memory, and we shall receive instruction all in vain if all we hear slips from us.

Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, 11.2.1

Rhetoric and Memory

Inventio, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, *pronuntiatio* (Cicero, *De inventione,* 1.7.9): these are the "parts," the capacities, of rhetoric; memory is, for Quintilian, simply the "firm perception of the soul of words and things," *firma animi rerum ac verborum perceptio*, with perception, of course, as one belonging to the continuum of faculties of the Aristotelian soul. Quintilian reinforces the simplicity by characterizing it as a storehouse, *thesaurus* (11.2.2), and disavows the existence of any special art of memory before treating a few current techniques cursorily (11.2.4). These same special arts, of course, become the site of so much late medieval and Renaissance investigation, the domain Frances Yates and Paoli Rossi have explored for us (Yates 1966; Rossi 1960).

The relation between rhetoric and memory is an intriguingly reciprocal one; *memoria* may form part of, be a capacity or skill of, the rhetorician. Rhetorical interests, while they constitute only part of the rich domain of memory as cultural practice, may motivate many of the organizational programs of memorizing. Mary Carruthers' *The Book of Memory*: *A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (1990) has the virtue of its eclecticism: memory is variously described as a dominant *praxis* of medieval culture, and as such, can include a set of techniques – preeminently

the *Rhetorica Ad Herrenium*'s architectural system; or a descriptive psychology; or an educational program. And Carruthers argues persuasively that it is also a preoccupation holding a central place in medieval ethical life, with its rich interconnections with, for example, the practice of meditation and of spirituality in general.

Rhetoric and Time

The truly central motive for rhetoric's interest in memory, however, lies in the strong, ineluctable connection of rhetoric with the problematic of time. Martin Heidegger's definition in *Being and Time* – "rhetoric is the first fundamental hermeneutic of the everydayness of being-with-others" (Heidegger 1962: 178) – not only ties rhetoric to his own philosophy of time, but insists on its investigational skills, hence implies that rhetoric must be seen as hermeneutic, as inquiry. The passage marks the central preoccupations of rhetoric as *Miteinandersein*, living with others, and *Alltäglichkeit*, everydayness as timefullness (Heidegger 1962: 138). The inevitability of being with another, the premise that man is not self-sufficient but is "there" (*da*) for another being (*Sein*) is firmly connected with the timefullness of our everyday life, its iterability, its demanding changefullness. He then proceeds to define rhetoric as the discipline of political action, a discipline that exists and functions entirely inside politics, as it construes being with one another through language, in controlling the practice of dealing with beliefs (*doxa*), cares (*Besorgen*), and passions or dispositions (*Befindlichkeiten*) (Heidegger 1924). But further, Heidegger's assertion of the central-ity of the problematic of time – and here rhetoric is a kind of precursor to his own project – can support the argument that in investigating the connection of rhetoric and memory, one gets at the deepest, most central obligations of rhetoric, both in theory and practice. Since all interaction is soaked in values, attributed, contested, or claimed, and thus is political, in rhetorical quotidian practice you are on the ground floor of political performance. Very simply, rhetorical analysis is necessary to politics because of its timefullness: everything in discursive action is iterable, to be done over and over again; the strong preoccupation of rhetoric with discursive effect, called "relativism" by the philosophers, is simply paying attention to this iterability.

Later I will argue that the connection between rhetoric and history is particularly strong because history as a discipline of description/explanation and interpretation, one dealing with the problematic of time, is a *second* fundamental hermeneutic of the timefullness of social existence. The connections of time, memory, rhetoric, and history unfold in an account of a practice of recollection. It will be my argument that the use of memoir, personal narrative, to explicate history by Giambattista Vico, Benedetto Croce, and R. G. Collingwood, is a highly motiv-ated initiative of vital importance in defining their contributions to the theory of history.

Memoir and Memory

The reciprocity noted above – memory is a rhetorical capacity, rhetoric is a memorial capacity – argues the importance of rhetoric as furnishing the skills of presentation, the articulation, and thus design, of memory, the organization of access to memory for effective use in discursive action. This is the basis for the use of the memoir genre: the memoir is the organization of past experience *by* past experience; that is, a life narrative orders a range of pertinences, instantiations of scientific or artistic or political or moral capacity. The personal narrative becomes fundamental to the unfolding of interests, all dependent on the past experience of the subject/author. The personal narrative is a very self-conscious confection, a replication of the truly important events, the events of transition, of change in life experience.

The memoir is a generic response to the vital task of designing memory and employs rhetorical values and procedures to fulfill this task. (I am using "memoir" simply as an inclusive term for the genres of recollection.) The primary constraint on the memoir is that the structure of the "life," this narrative of living through change, becomes the point of view for relating and assessing all issues of accomplishment and error. For the life of inquiry, which is the interest of this chapter, the requirement poses very specific limitations on both mode of presentation and on the topics, and succession of topics, raised. But, beyond this, I would argue that the memoir is one of the most rhetorical of genres, pervaded by rhetorical values, constrained by rhetorical modalities and techniques. Memory as rhetorical competence, as memoir, for example, is control of relevant past experience – "theirs" and "ours" – for the purpose of articulating that experience within a specific descriptive task. Because of the heavy investment in timefullness, there is a corresponding investment in the rhetorically motivated design of time.

First, and this is admittedly a rather superficial concern, we note the recurrent, intrusive modality of memoir presentation as a *captatio benevolentiae*: the reader must be engaged, "captivated," by the story of the author. It is an intermittent *captatio*, however, one that arises in, and follows from, usually quite minor actions, actions the author is eager to stipulate as significant. Even errors can be exploited as captivating, for the texture of the memoir is that of a continual lapsing into appeal for understanding. Second, and obviously the basis for this tactic of *captatio*, is the focus on the speaker/author's character, *ethos*, in Aristotle's terms, as the primary rhetorical *pistis* or proof (Aristotle 1959: 1356a).[1] The speaker's character can both originate and conclude discussion of particular strategies and initiatives. In the academic or investigative memoir, the major strategy for delineation of *ethos* is to isolate the personal development, in general to set in opposition modes of personal inquiry and the institutions, conventions, customs and so on of inquiry that form the context. Insofar as accomplishment is to be justified as unique, the solitariness and uniqueness of the life justifies it. I will argue that this topos of isolation is peculiarly strong in both Vico and Collingwood; the tactic moves the discussion deliberately away from the

physical and intellectual space of the confines of "authority." The first-person focus necessarily queries institutions, faculties, committees; the early parts of the narrative resort to tales of overcoming formations and procedures.

The pervasive rhetorical interest in time, development, change, sustains the continuous, repetitive application of the rhetorical canon of decorum. *Quod decet*, "what is apt," appropriate, rules the presentation of the past experiences that are of intrinsic interest. Further, understood as a precision of attention to shifts in persona, times, and places, "what is apt" is itself a historicist strategy, peculiarly fit to illumine developmental inquiry. The task of specifying *ethos* by appeal to decorum is not a simple one; it is not a matter of sheer timeliness, of contextualism as an account of situation. It requires a doubled arguing of the narrative: first, the assertion of the appropriateness, thus the moral value of the speaker's decisions; and next (in order to make the case for persistence in aptness of character) the definition of his new responses to new facts, breaking new ground.[2] The ordering of past experience becomes an obligation to define renewal, innovation. Thus, in the memoir, the intrication of memory as competence with decorum as principle generates an account that argues theoretical innovation.

Further, decorum as characterizing the representation of the connections of persons, times, places in the memoir illuminates the arguments and the changes in arguments. Decorum makes these arguments and changes accessible, even edifying. It is the novel, counter-intuitive presentations of individual contexts of times, places, persons that illuminate achievement or error, that mark the strategy as functional or mistaken. And decorum as principle stipulates that the memoir is not an exemplum. The life is not exemplary, it is not presented for imitation; the isolation topos defines the speaker's relation to the reader as well: the inimitable nature suggests the need for the reader's own apt, revisionary effort.

Finally, the memoir uses narrative strategies as argumentative strategies. There is a specific juncture in the career of the author to appeal to this genre; in Vico, Croce, and Collingwood, midway is seen – very self-consciously by Croce, at the age of fifty – as appropriate. At this point one recapitulates the early gains and losses and prepares for future action. The representation of stages, and of transition between stages, is crucial for a claim to "progress." Narratives of contest set up a quest for authenticity against the apparatus of authority. In addition, however, the narrative gathers in the temporal stages, collapsing and rearranging the stages in the text itself by means of anticipation and recollection, by flashback. It is a story punctuated by acts of retrospection and projection. The memoir can present a temporal manifold as well as a linear temporality. It is also discontinuous, incomplete; the author is not dead yet.[3]

History and Memoir

The memoir task is the organization of past experience by resort to past experience. The memoir as "highly rhetorical" is marked by persevering attention to design,

presentation of recollections; the memoir of an inquirer has particular motivations, for the design and presentation must be apt, appropriate for justification, not simply of the life but of the inquiry itself. It is obvious that the memoir as design of memory does work comparable to history work. The relation of a narrative of experiential development, when introduced into the task of explaining the nature of historical inquiry, supplies us with a recapitulation, a duplication of tactics, encapsulating personal experience of time in the account of historical investigational achievement. The narrative embeds the personal narrative of time, the "memory work" of the author. At no point is time, or the experience of time, not at stake.

Exemplary for the choice of memoir as genre and for the explication of modes of historical inquiry are the texts of Vico, Croce, and Collingwood. The texts, indeed, form a continuum: Croce claims that Vico is the thinker "most like himself" and refers to him frequently as source of developmental change;[4] Collingwood translated both Croce's *Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* and Croce's autobiography early in his (Collingwood's) career (1913 and 1927). The three texts, then, present a rich range of possibilities of intersection of personal development and theories of history, and do so, moreover, within an ongoing, general "idealist" historical program, with possibilities of influence and critique, remembrance and rejection.

Vico: *Vita scritta da sé medesimo* (1728)

The *New Science* is novel as both prolegomena to a research program and the research itself; the *Vita* becomes the site for the consideration of the historical task in its context, and as a personal achievement. In articulating an individual's narrative of inquiry, it gives access to that inquiry and represents it as "true to life": if personal, then authentic.

First, of course, the *Vita* is not Vico's project but a commission, a response to an invitation to join an assembly of lives of contemporary intellectuals for a periodical publication.[5] The background of Vico's type of memoir is of intrinsic interest. Marc Fumaroli has done considerable work on the genre of *mémoire* proper in seventeenth-century France. What is useful for a reading of Vico is Fumaroli's list of generic values: it is of the middle style, as opposed to the grand style, of history; it presents itself as pure and necessarily partial witness of personal truths; and the classical models are dissimilar – Caesar's *Commentaries* (*nuda historia*), and St. Augustine's *Confessions,* with its paradigmatic emphasis on introspection and accountability (Fumaroli 1994: 241, 211, 214). But Fumaroli also makes the case for Descartes' *Discourse on Method* as a defense of an intellectual life, as highly rhetorical, exemplary of a programmatic use of memory (Fumaroli 1988: 34–8). A. Battistini accepts the *Discourse* as Vichian model (indeed Fisch claims that Vico's choice of speaking of himself in the third person is a bad-tempered response to Descartes' egotistic use of the first person), but Battistini adds St. Ignatius Loyola's life, and the Jesuit genre of "Spiritual Exercises," as important in shaping the genre as exercise, a "working-out";

the *Vita* is itself a perspicuous and primary contribution to the inquiry (Note 1231–42).

The memoir's basic rhetorical obligation is Aristotelian, the justification of the ethos of the speaker. Thus the memoir of inquiry translates a list of personal strengths into innovatory investigative tactics; the life narrative integrates the elements of modesty, struggle, exchange, inspiration into an apt, "decorous" account of a coherent whole: remembrance constitutes a career.

If the memoir is the design of memory, narration is the design of the ethos of the narrator. Thus Vico will narrate, he promises, "plainly, step by step," the Vichian development in order to clarify its proper and natural causes (126/18). But this is in contrast to the meretricious *Discourse on Method*, where Descartes "craftily feigned" (*astutamente finse*) his life work simply to advance his work at the expense of others' (113/7). Vico mentions the chief influences on his early years – Vulteius, for example, prompted him to better ordering his inquiry (115/8) – but influence is intricated with genius. As a youth, Vico claims he had a mind already universal from a study of metaphysics, already invested in principles. His mind already had begun abstracting the particular conditions of equity into the general maxims of justice (116/10; 123/16); yet it was not a genius (*ingegno*) made rigid by too much metaphysics (118/11). He argues, in short, for his intellectual tact, his aptness.

But the dominant *topos* of the Vichian account is isolation: his interrupted formation, the physical solitude of a stay of "nine years" as tutor in the country (119/12; 128/20) from whence he returns as a stranger in his own land (132/23), the desk that becomes his citadel for retreat (200/85), reinforce the spiritual isolation produced by quarrels, contests, and rejections of his work by an uncomprehending elite ruled by ambition:[6] Descartes designs his theses "in order one day to reign in the cloisters too" ("per avere un giorno il regno anche tra i chiostri") (129/22); the vital contrast is between Vico's brilliant strangeness and dysfunctional establishments.

But the recollections amplify Vico's major innovations. In the *New Science*, s. 349, Vico makes his fundamental assertion of replication and reciprocity: "He who meditates this science narrates to himself this ideal human history so far as he himself made it for himself."[7] With this bold statement, Vico summarizes the notion of "idealist" history so fascinating to Croce and Collingwood, and, of course, the practice acquired as described in the *Vita*. Thus, if the *New Science* has as both topic and evidence for the history the "modifications of the mind" (*NS*: 331), the modifications must be internalized, personalized. His axiom, that truth and the "made" are reciprocal, *verum factum convertuntur*, stipulates the narrative as an account of authorial "making," a *poiēsis* in some very strong, not "literary," sense. Of non-divine ideas, "we make them all by thinking them and contain them all in ourselves" ("e tutte in conoscendo le facciamo, e tutte le contemiamo centro di noi"). Making is necessarily "making in time," and characterizes narrating as well as the narrated (*Vita*: 127/19). There can be no divarication between Vico's own narrative and the civil history he attempts. The memoir is simply the validation by recollection of his work as his own, the lived

practice of ideal human history. And the reader must find this inimitable: he cannot "imitate" Vico, he must "do" his own history.

The rhetorical use of memoir has significant consequences for the definition of inquiry (unless, of course, one "fictionalizes" like Descartes). The narrative form, of course, assumes that knowledge comes from practice, from past experience of practice. It does not repudiate formal proof, the tools of argumentation, but embeds standard arguments in the narrative of faulty, attenuating practices; it avoids the begged questions of a dominant formation's treatise genres. The highly rhetorical tactics of the life narrative, dwelling on contests and affiliations and their affects, are perfunctory with orthodox ideas, setting aside the treatise strategies.

In the narrative, the engagement with the depiction and justification of the narrator's ethos requires the canon of decorum, aptness, to be applied to his own practice, and thus it is always contextualized in its discontinuities and mistakes, its "timefullness." The practice is not exemplary, imitable, in some simple didactic fashion. The memoir indeed argues self-dependence, and thus curtails interest in dominant inquiry modes, proffering only its own, inimitable practice.

Benedetto Croce: *Contributo alla critica di me stesso* (1915)

Memory as the experience of the past belies pastness; the memoir is of inquiry present, at-hand. This is the essential insight delivered by Croce's *Contributo*, which he resolutely claims is not a memoir; that is, I suppose, in the usual sense of self-serving academic collections of facts (22/12). Again the recollections of stages, transitions of the narrative, are necessary to illumine the advances in inquiry, the rejection of the inappropriate in theorizing. And if Vico feels he advanced from philology to a "philosophical" philology, Croce's memoir of 1915 describes a progress, from his vital text of 1893, inspired by Vico, *History Subsumed Under the General Concept of Art*, to the central texts of 1902, 1905, and 1908, the *Aesthetic*, the *Logic*, and the *Philosophy of Practice*: a process in which he learns to discard his early, total involvement with antiquarian Neapolitan history.[8] He transcends, he claims, his work of accumulation of mere erudition (83/49). He discards as well much philosophy, particularly German philosophy: "I burnt my abstract moralisms and learnt that the course of history has the right to bend and break individuals" (59/34–5). While working on the philosophical texts, "it never occurred to me that the spontaneous mental impulse might be pointing out the road on which I should put my best efforts and enjoy my purest pleasures and highest consolations – should find, in a word, my calling" (44/26). Or, in short, his memory is of ignoring pure mental impulses, of unawareness of the deep affect of inquiry; what he recollects is pure incomprehension: "I was driven to philosophy by the longing to assuage my misery and to give an orientation to my moral and intellectual life" (44/26).

The ethos the recollections justify is dominated, not so much by the isolation topos we found in the Vichian *Vita*, as by claims to independence in first assimilating, then

superseding, influences from Silvio Spaventa and De Sanctis, from Labriola's Marxism, and from Hegelianism. De Sanctis is an early, and revered, model for historical-critical studies, yet Croce places before us his own improvements over De Sanctis in theoretical sharpness and systemic coherence; it is simply a matter of another (better disposed?) mind redoing the thought – "risolvere il pensiero del De Sanctis in una mente disposta in altro modo dalla sua" (80/47). Marx is used and discarded; Hegel is described as ambivalent, both living and dead, in the famous text of 1906. Croce's text makes an invidious distinction between Croce's recollection practices and the group memories, the group identities of particular schools of Marx and Hegel with their alliances and pieties rooted in a false sense of the piety as directed to the objective and transcendent.

And, again, the memory work and the history work coalesce; self-consciously "idealist" in assuming the primacy of mind in creative practices, the text itself is presented as an instrument of investigation: "strumento di lavoro."[9] It is a life narrative collapsed into investigative process. It is always important to note the simplicity, the clarity of Croce's equations of inquiry with life itself; memory, it seems, is still the Aristotelian internal sense that translates and preserves the other senses' work, recollection is simply thinking the past, thinking is simply collection of the self. In the *Contributo* the recollections are presented to give the strongest possible argument for idealism; he claims "biografia come vicenda esclusivamente di pensiero"; this work, an *autobiografia mentale*, and history itself is only history of thought – but not of texts.[10] The presentation of his development is one continuous testimony to the omnicompetence of recollection as reexperience, of his capacity to internalize and make his own the experiences of others. We do not learn by reading books, "but only by reenacting [this is Collingwood's choice of term] their mental drama in one's own person" (65): "ma col ripetere in sé medesimi, sotto lo stimolo della vita, il loro dramma mentale" – with echoes, of course, of Vico's title (38). His major work was the rejection of the transcendental – in the shape of religious belief, or Hegelian telos – but transpiring in a process of transcending earlier theory. Yet this transcending work requires remembered life experience, "the experience of that which must first have been lived in one's own person" (83); "che bisogna prima aver vissuto a sé stessi" (49). More grandly, "the problem is simply the life of thought as I have lived it" (81); "questo vita stesso, come realmente e particolarmente l'ho vissuta" (48). He achieves his concept of reality as comprising all particulars by living particularly and really; it is a personal acquisition. When he attacks "mere erudition" he points out that "my real material I have found within myself" (84); "la vera materia l'ho trovata in me stesso" (49). The strongest impression, the most powerful insights are those of self-knowing; thus whenever he read Hegel, "I seemed to be plunging into myself" (96); "d'immergermi in me stesso" (57).

From the experience of his own life process, history is defined as development of spirit: he moves, he notes approvingly, from a naturalistic logic to one of spiritual grades and development (93); "di gradi spirituali e della sviluppo" (55). Further, his logic of supersession required a belief in open-endedness, the lack of a religious or

Hegelian telos, end; he himself will be material for another's recollective reexperience, his own supercession. It is impossible to attain truth as closure (102; 60–1). "I know that I had completed nothing, closed nothing" – "io sapera che in realtá non avero né compiuto né chiuso nulla" (108/64); "since whenever we take a step, everything moves"; "perché a ogni paso nostro si muove sempre il tutto" (109/64). Roberts characterizes Croce's history as a perpetually growing, free, creative reality; he offers "mundane idealism," "radical immanence," "mundane monism" as markers of his absolute historicism (Roberts 1987: 64). But the epithets do little to clarify the memoir; rhetorically, Croce has used the *Contributo* to isolate and revalue memory as competence, practice, resource.

R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (1939)

Once again, we find the recollections presented within a narrative of stages, super-sessions, recapitulations, revisions. If Croce disavows his early antiquarian research in the history of Naples in his conversion to a very ambitious theoretical program, Collingwood claims his early, deep investment in archeological method and research as providing a "flanking attack" on Oxonian philosophical dysfunction: Oxford needed some historical scholarship; research can correct positivism.[11]

The recollections as justifications of Collingwoodian ethos, while they recall Croce's assertion of independence, intensify Vico's claim to isolation. Collingwood's overwhelming priority is to discredit Oxonian "realism"; thus chapter 6, "The Decay of Realism." His attacks on his colleagues take on a tone of truly scarifying personal bitterness; the realists are not simply inept, but meretricious: "only building card-houses out of a pack of lies" (52). "It would have been quite useless to put {my ideas} before my colleagues" (72). His *captatio benevolentiae* works by attainder; he attributes "ordinary malevolence" to the philosophers (P40).

The isolation he claims is that of a "revolutionary"; he is a revolutionary in his theory that truth belongs, not to single propositions – a notion produced by an early, false partnership between logic and grammar – but to a complex of question and answer (37). This dialogic realm is precisely the domain of history: any solution is illuminated only by its question; to specify the appropriate question for an answer – a cultural practice, a doctrine – is the goal of historical inquiry, an act of historical reconstitution (39). There is, in short, an "appropriate," apt connection of issue and outcome that a decorous history provides. History expounds whole situations (104); metaphysics is simply a history of the changes in absolute presuppositions as the sources of questions, and thus expounds beliefs held, not pure knowledge (66). And again, we notice the coalescence in the memoir text of the memory work presented and the historical work theorized. Like Croce, he regards his life work as the rapprochement of philosophy and history (77). All history is the history of thought (110); the historian must "think over for himself" his material (111). When he argues that to think about philosophies not your own, you must think

about them historically (58), he describes this process as a matter of "getting inside other people's heads, looking at the situation through their eyes," accessing their past experience, evidently (58). The hey term we have noted already in Collingwood's translation of Croce: "reenactment." This accomplishment is a highly personal one, a transaction of the self. In chapter 10, "History as Self-knowledge of the Mind," the presence of the historical past is very like the memory possessed; the historical construct is not a "free" thought but "encapsulated" (113); we reenact former transactions within complexes of question and answer; we put *our* questions, the complex is *their* part of our history; it is encapsulated, a possession internalized by the agents of later historical situations (98, 100, 112–13).

In short, we have "idealism" again, and, again, idealism accounted for in the memory work presented in the memoir. All science depends on our knowledge of past experience (87); the historian asks questions of the past, but the evidence is here. The Vichian modifications of the mind that constitute history, the Crocean history that is, essentially, only contemporary history – both are recalled in Collingwoodian reenactment. And all three recollect recollection, the highly patterned design and presentation of past experience, that energizes history *tout court*. The high stakes of memoir and history are identity, authenticity. "I must do my own work myself" (54). Every personal narrative is a recapitulation of the experience of time, every historical narrative is a recapitulation of the personal activity of recollection. The integrity of memory is its isolation, self-possession; the beneficence of memoir rhetoric lies in persuading us of the integrity.

Memorial Rhetoric

There is a mutually supportive reciprocity: memory is a capacity necessary to the rhetor; rhetoric designs and presents memories for use, effect. The inaccessible memory is lost potential, the memoir is simply one of the strongest formal initiatives for rhetorical display of human capacity. What we have focused on are not the special rhetorical arts of memory – which Quintilian maintained do not exist – but on the rhetorical qualities and constraints of large discursive structures: the strategies of design and presentation of memory. To be sure, Vico made some intriguing statements in his *Vita* about his memory techniques, and on the effect of pedagogy on memory. Geometry invigorates memory, and refines the imagination, where algebra confounds the memory and imagination goes blind (124–5/16–17). He reports that he did not follow the usual school practice of writing extracts into commonplace books – a decontextualizing tactic, indeed – but marked directly on the texts themselves, laminating them with a layer of Vico, it seems (120/13). He reports that he read the Latin authors three times; he prides himself on reading entirely without notes: that is to say, others' notes, glosses (134/25).

All this confirms our sense of Vico's notion of an active memory as competence. But of truly fundamental interest is another reciprocity, that between the program of

idealist history – where history is essentially Croce's "self-knowledge of the living mind" – and memoir strategies and results. The important point is the duplications invested in the memoir form and the historical strategies. The memoir, as organization of past experience, is austerely limited to the consciously recalled; the investigational program also limits itself to the author's experience of the past, the process of recollection and understanding. The memoir deals directly and specifically with the historian as Croce's pursuer of "conoscenza individualizzante" (Croce 1958: 31). It engages, indeed, with the reflexivity of history's timefullness and the historian's dailyness. The choice of memoir form by those engaged in projecting the novelties of an idealist historical program is over-determined. To return to Battistini's claim that the Jesuit "spiritual exercise" is a source for Vico's *Vita*, we can see that for Croce and Collingwood as well the peculiarly rhetorical exercise of writing a memoir generates theory, as a discursive effect, as well as recounts it; thus the isolation topos defines critical distinctions, and the use of decorum as contextualizing principle defines new connections. Each employment of a rhetorical modality – narrative structure, the argument from *ethos*, the principle of decorum – strengthens the case for investigations' utter dependence on memory work. And in the memoirs of the historical theorists, each employment strengthens the case for history as hegemonous investigation. But also, the pressures from the memoir form are reciprocated by the pressures from the premises and values of the idealist program. Croce, for example, argues that the autobiography of Vico is an extension of the *New Science* to the biography of the author, to the history of the individual life; and it is just as original, as it is just and true.[12]

The argument from *ethos,* the task of justification of the speaker's character is constrained by the principle of decorum, the necessary selection of the factors apt, appropriate to the time, place, persona of the inquirer's decisions, factors which mark them as "moral," characterful. This contributes to a factitious, dissonant, interrupted account, rich in qualifying detail. The accomplished memoirist produces an "edgy" account, careful and clear in depicting contests, determined to convey the affect of conflict, success, failure. Thus Vico's claim to be "elated" by the confirmation of his theories by new texts; "glad" not to have been derailed from a literary project by timidity (130–1/23–4). But beyond this, the narrative form, with its empiricist bias, its treatment of the life as "evidentiary," as a traditional historical form, produces historical results. The career of the historian–memoirist both illumines and is illumined by his narrative investments.[13] Narratives of recollections of personal acquisition and loss, of revisions and critiques of work, with its insistence on using recollections for reproposing motives, shifts in motives, or for admissions and claims of affects, trauma, only underline the idiosyncrasy of historical work. The memoir form proclaims that, indeed, all the historian has is his past experience in all its roughnesses, dislocations, discontinuities. The memoir is unable to give an account of the narrator as "transcendental subject," but only of an inquirer lodged in ephemera, making theoretical claims.

Further, the memoir as site of theoretical discussion has the benefit of avoiding the treatise-genre rules, counters its argumentative constraints, avoids the issues, external

to the memoirist's development, and relegates parallel investigative modes. The memoir does not repudiate formal proof, tools of argumentation, but does not give them the final word; it embeds argumentation in a narrative of practice, flawed, open-ended. Thus, in the Vichian narrative the issues of Cartesian metaphysics appear simply as contributions, useful or not, to the ongoing conversation of Neapolitan intellectuals. The narrative, it seems, conveys a kind of immunity to perdurable varieties of argument.

But here Louis Mink raises issues which affect the function of recollective narrative in the historical enterprise; narrative as rhetorical argument, that is. Mink, in his papers on Collingwood, makes two points about Collingwood's theory that are pertinent both to memoir and history work. First he paraphrases Collingwood's premise: what makes a fact "historical" is not its happening in the past, but our rethinking the same thought which created the situation (Mink 1987: 218). And thus, Mink claims, Vico's *verum/factum* coalescence merely states that "natural facts" are relevant only to the extent they enter the consciousness of man (263). History is not facts, but experience of facts; history is not "out there," waiting in the wings, so to speak, but mental processing. The memoir is concentrated idealist historiography. Second, Mink claims Collingwoodian narrative form is, in a strong sense, not representing evidence "out there"; narrative "shows" activity, and this has a kind of incorrigibility, immunity. Historical narrative is not evidence for history, it carries its own "ingredient conclusions" (284). Incorrigibility is, of course, not a truth-claim, but a formal claim. The memoir is a similarly autarchic effort, much beholden to its rhetorical tactics for the persuasiveness of its ingredient conclusions.

At this point it is useful to compare Mink's autarchic notion of narrative with the "poetic" definition of Verene, in his chapter on "The Idea of Autobiography"; Verene (1991) makes a case for Vichian autobiography as modern – not ancient, Socratic – self-knowledge in the form of a historical narrative, but a narrative that is both historical, as genetic account of the formation of the self, and in the form of a myth, fable (84). Also, the autobiography as narrative of his own humanity enables Vico's philosophy of history, the *New Science* as autobiography of collective humanity. Here Verene repeats the idealist emphasis on coincidence of memoir and history work (88). What is vital for Verene, however, is that the Vichian narrative, as speech, is poetry: "metaphorical in the sense of transference because in the act of autobiographical writing the self transfers its being into words and thus the reality it makes for itself in words is never what it itself is."[14] What Mink and Verene offer us is in effect a choice between a rhetoric of design and articulation of memory as interpretive, or as fundamentally transgressive, tropological. Here, I would argue, one of the useful aspects of memorial rhetoric is that it neatly avoids various rhetorical ideologies. It corrects, I believe, the accounts of Vico's rhetoric as, simply, "tropical." Vico's axiom *verum factum convertuntur* is the basis for his notion of *poiēsis*, *facere*, "making." And Vico counters the reduction of *poiēsis* to "poetry" in some literary sense; here one is tempted to gloss Verene's argument that the source of the *New Science* is in imagin-ation, with Vico's assertion that "imagination is nothing but extended or compounded

memory," "la fantasia, ch'altro non è che memoria o dilatata or composta" (*NS*: 211). Rather, Vico's interest is in broad definitions of cultural practices, "making" such as the invention of the legal fictions of Roman law, for example. And Vico's etymologies disclose the originary metaphor/root not as "transgression" but as simple-mindedness, poverty of maneuver (*NS*: 405). This is perfectly compatible with the Vichian notion of historical work as "making the narrative for oneself," that would require, on occasion, internalizing barbarism, and that is incompatible with the reduction of rhetoric to a very thin notion of creativity as metaphoric translation, transgression only. Further, the notion of rhetorical figures as "cognitively" powerful, hegemonous, as "prefiguring" entire investigative programs, is dubious insofar as it is a call upon a transcendent source or impulse, an impulse counter to Vichian notions of history transpiring in a process of modifications of the mind, temporally and spatially exactly defined.

The assumption that rhetoric is essentially or merely transgressive, tropical, is, perhaps, one of the motives for raising the issue of the "fictionalizing" memoir; we find both Ajello and Willette distressed by Croce's "fictions," his transgressions of truth, of exact spatiotemporal definitions.[15] But the attribution of fiction raises the issue of address: does the rhetorical design of memory specify an audience? What is the relation, in our three memoirs, between the inquirer's narrative of theoretical development and a public practice? If the rhetoric of memory is pervaded by the strong concern for timefullness, appropriateness, contingency, what is the projected temporal dimension of its effect? The discursive practices of the three memoirs are radically different in their accounts of inquiry recollected. Vico recounts the public effect of his new science as almost nil; his isolation and neglect are almost total; he makes few appeals for public effect. Croce intersperses in his texts aspirations to public effectiveness, but proffers a rather banal pragmatism; his "personalized" history prepares the individual for action, illumines action; the later additions to the *Contributo* are apologetic for his lack of effectiveness in politics. Collingwood offers a stirring *peroratio* in his last chapter on "Theory and Practice"; he describes a conversion experience. The Spanish Civil War and the international crisis of the 1930s forces him to give up his academic isolation; it "broke up my purpose of detached professional thinker" (167). Yet the chapter functions as simply a *peroratio*, a rhetorical cadenza, oratory displaced.

The contemporary response to these memoirs and their political effect is, in general, bafflement. Jonathan Israel argues for hypocrisy, insincerity on Vico's part: while he needs to be a Catholic Nominalist, Israel says, he was secretly a radical democratic theoretician (Israel 2001: 664–70). The *Vita* strategies undercut Israel's argument: Vico achieved, over a long period, and "at great cost," a *New Science* that, in effect, argues the futility of wishing for an untimely regime (*NS*: 338). David Roberts (1987) describes, cautiously partisan, Croce's great political difficulties of the 1920s, and again in the 1940s and 1950s; Croce's theory allowed, barely it seems, a switch from anti-liberalism to anti-Fascism. A widespread reaction to Collingwood's polemics is bewilderment at the bitterness of the personal tone.

The politics that all three memoirs possess is, in the main, academic politics; if there is a shared motive for persuasive effect, it is a redundant one, reiterating a traditional rhetorical bias. In a sense, all three memoirs use rhetorical skills and assumptions to replay the old quarrels between rhetoric and philosophy, the rhetorical opposition to the ahistorical, objectivist claims of an ill-motivated philosophy. Rhetoric, devoted to discursive effect, with a strong array of premises and values that prompt and critique discursive practice, has an entire armamorium of rhetorical weapons to employ against objectivism. Vico opposes Descartes' scientism, his philosophic commitment to the hegemony of natural philosophy (natural science) in his period. And consider Croce's pleasure in vanquishing a naturalistic logic; his historicist commitment is in part an attack on the philosophical positivist inquiry of the late nineteenth century. And Collingwood's strong rejection of the philosophical realism of Oxford is again an attempt to save historical competences and gains.[16]

Or the memory task modifies the rhetorical politics. In Heidegger's definition, rhetoric's double interest, in timefullness and in living together, in the use of language to construe community in time, founds the original Greek stipulation of rhetoric, not as an autonomous linguistic *technē*, but as functioning – entirely? – inside politics (SS1924: 51). Rhetorical interventions are based on politicality, on an ineluctable concern with discursive negotiations. Memoir, pervaded by rhetorical assumptions and techniques, pushes the author/reader relationship into negotiation. Both the author/inquirer and reader/inquirer must negotiate and express modes of practice at once responsive and tenacious.

Yet Battistini characterized Vico's *Vita* as "personalissima e inimitabile" (Note 1241). In the memoir form there are linked immunities; it assumes the incorrigibility of the narrative as non-representational (what could be our basis for questioning the personal acts of "showing"?) and posits the inimitability of the life narrated. The presupposition of memoir rhetoric is purely Heraclitean: the life depicted cannot be done over again. Vichian, Crocean, Collingwoodian accounts of discovery guard their discoveries as irrevocably theirs. The memoir-inquiry not only attempts to foreclose errors, unusable orthodoxies, but also redefines success as isolation, and this defines the reader/interlocutor, in his isolation, as capable of discovery – his own, "timefull," decorous. The isolation topos holds not only for the speaker but also for his audience; the antipathy to authority invalidates the speaker as authority.

The Vichian memoir is most enabling: it leaves us unconvinced that Vico intends his reader to fill in the blanks, interstices of his *New Science*; I am not sure he thinks it possible. But all three memoirs of the discoveries – a Collingwoodian logic of question and answer, a Crocean philosophy as methodology for history, a Vichian *verum/factum* equation – simply authenticate future discovery.

The unique task of the memoir is to convince the reader of the uniqueness of memory, historical talent. The goal of the memoir is, in brief, the justification of memory, and thus the privileging of the strategies of ordering, articulating memory. Rhetoric's (relativist?) focus on timefullness is the devotion that fuels and disseminates the practices of memory. And the devotion, this essential virtue of rhetoric with

its civic, interactive engagements and its illuminations of timely capacity, decorum, aptness, sustains inquiry in general.

Notes

1 But see the perspicuous argument on the centrality of *ethos* in the *Rhetoric* in Garver (1994).
2 In Heidegger's SS1924 lectures, when he claims that the *Zeitlichkeit* of *ethos* is *pollakis*, frequency (76), and not *Dauer*, duration (101), he offers the primary criterion of value of rhetoric, *kairos*, both as the timely and as the appropriate strategy; *to prepon*, the decorous, *decus*, deals with the radical contingency of practical life. In a very odd formulation he defines *meson*, the ethical choice of the "mean," not as arithmetically arrived at, but as *kairos* (55, 67).
3 William D. Blattner (1999) has an extensive discussion of Heidegger's switch from a consideration of linear temporality to the hypothesis of a temporal manifold; the notion of a "manifold" of time is pertinent to the discussion of memoir, as the linearity of the narrative is often interrupted, reversed, reiterated.
4 Croce (1927, 1989) are the two editions, henceforth cited with the page numbers of Collingwood's translation first, then the Galasso; thus, 75; 43–4.
5 Max Fisch and Thomas Bergin (1944). I will use this translation and the Italian version of Andrea Battistini (1990); in the second volume, Battistini's notes are invaluable (1231–1315); to be referred to as "Note." Henceforth the *Vita* will be cited with the page numbers of the Fisch–Bergin translation first, Battistini's edition second. The invitation was by G. A. Di Porcìa and it was published in *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici,* 1 (1728).
6 But see Battistini, Note 1239–40, on the "nine" years; Maria Conforti (2000: 10) argues, as does Battistini, that Vico much exaggerated his isolation.
7 Vico, *New Science* (1968). Henceforth cited as *NS*, with the paragraph number.
8 See Galasso, "Nota del Curatore" in his edition of the *Contributo*, 105–31, for comments on this switch from scholar to philosopher and the peculiar philosophical voyage of the 1990s. Useful biographical information is scattered throughout the essays in Roberts (1987).
9 Galasso, Note 129; Roberts (1987) defines idealism as simply an assumption of the primacy of mind.
10 Galasso, Note 127.
11 Collingwood (1970). Henceforth cited by page number, as here, 26.
12 Thus Croce: "*L'Autobiografia* de Vico è in somma, l'estensione dell *Scienza nuova* all biografia dell'autore, all storia della propria vita individuale; e il metodo ne è, quanto originale, altrettanto giusto e vero," cited in Verene (1991: 41).
13 Fellman (1992–3: 232) remarks that history itself, to Vico's mind, is "the image in which man recognizes himself," "l'immagine in cui l'uomo conosce se stesso." Richard Rorty (1982: 41) makes an even stronger, more specific point: "the self-image of the philosopher . . . depends almost entirely upon how he sees the history of philosophy." Thus Rorty (1982: 52) remarks the very heavy personal investment in doing the history of one's *discipline*; "the whole force of Heidegger's thought lies in his account of the history of philosophy."
14 Verene (1991: 90). But Verene also argues that the *Vita*, as speculative, not reflective, is essentially "rhetorical," as "topical"; it employs rhetorical *inventio*, finding arguments in the topoi, places; but Vico's places are images, and thus he is employing an imaginative, poetic rhetoric (84–5). Verene's theory of place-images is very close to one of the memory systems that Quintilian mentions and dismisses (Quintilian 1958: 11.2.21).

15 See Thomas Willette's (1999) very insightful article on "Croce and *Napoli nobilissima* (1892–1906)," where he comments on Ajello's historical anxieties. But the memoir strategies are much more programmatically manipulative than plain "fictionalizing."

16 Some of Collingwood's major themes are "shadowed by" rhetorical arguments; for example, Collingwood's commitment to the analysis of larger discursive structures in his logic of question and answer; his focus on "beliefs" in his definition of metaphysics as a history of absolute presuppositions; the interest in audience reaction as well as speaker intention in his analysis. But I am not claiming that Collingwood self-consciously borrows anti-philosophical weapons from the rhetorical armamorium; many of his critiques of the hegemonous "classical" philosophy are classical in origin, and carried by the rhetorical tradition, among others.

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Rhetoric in the Law

Robert P. Burns

The Law as Rhetoric: A Conclusory Unscientific Prescript

It has long been understood that the law in action is something quite different from the law on the books – so-called black letter law. It is the law in action that determines life, liberty, and property and, especially in societies where political issues become legal ones, the shape of public identity. The law in action exists in a "consciously structured hybrid" (Bahktin 1981: 365) of language practices that vary from context to context. To understand law as a system of rules is to commit Whitehead's fallacy of misplaced concreteness, mistaking an abstract aspect of reality for its full actuality. The law in action succeeds when its linguistic practices form an absorbing and meaningful context of argument and feeling that elevates deliberation and enhances judgment.

Although most civil and criminal cases are settled to avoid prolonged court battles, the sun of the planetary system of the law in action is the trial, "the central institution of law as we know it" (White 1999: 108). It is there that the fullest range of linguistic practices is in play and the fullest range of sources for persuasion is available. It is thus to the trial that we should look to get the most complete notion of the nature of law. I will argue that a trial's linguistic practices, its constitutive rhetoric, are consciously structured to create an almost unbearable tension of opposites that shows forth the practical truth of a human situation. It is the burden of the trial to accomplish a practical resolution of those tensions in a highly contextual and specific way, one that actualizes the practical wisdom implicit in the common sense of the community. Those tensions cannot be resolved *in general*, since those tensions are constitutive of our forms of life.

In a democratic society those tensions are multiplied because the "gaps between language and language, context and context, person and person" where the lawyer preparing for trial dwells (White 1999: 109) are all increased. And so the trial has been called the crucible of democracy: "The point is not that we *use* rhetoric

to obtain our ends, but that our ends are themselves inextricably situated in a rhetorical medium. Our ends are not merely pursued rhetorically, they are themselves constituted rhetorically. This is what it means to say that political ends are subject to deliberation (and not simply manipulation)" (Beiner 1983: 95). The genius of the trial is to delay jury "deliberation" until after the jury has been immersed in an absorbing rhetorical event, the trial itself. Paradoxically, the most important part of the jury's deliberation actually occurs in the interaction of a silent jury with the adversarial presentation of the attorneys. (Social scientists have consistently found that the first ballot is the best predictor of the result: Hans and Vidmar 1991: 323.) To understand that deliberation one must understand trial rhetoric.

Understanding the trial as a form of rhetoric that can achieve contact with moral sources and occasion genuine epiphanies requires us to circle between the languages and performances of the trial and the jury's cognitive operations. As we will see, at trial the jury is asked to make a practical judgment that reconciles *in action and in context* incommensurable values — moral, legal, and political. It is thus inevitably a judgment of relative importance, but one made practically and only for a single concrete situation understood through linguistic practices that drive the mind down toward the concrete and force it to dwell there in a manner discontinuous with most of what we do and say in ordinary life. The trial's constitutive rhetoric creates the conditions for genuine interpretation of a human act by undermining popular misconceptions, not by rising to a point of view above the common sense of our life-world, but by working through the implications of a very refined common sense, a sense that exists as a very taut balance among multiple and incommensurable values. Ultimately trial rhetoric allows us to do exactly what we must in modern societies, "less to create constantly new forms of life than to creatively renew actual forms by taking advantage of their internal multiplicity and tensions and their frictions with one another" (Kolb 1986: 259; cf. Burns 1999). That judgment simultaneously defines a yet indeterminate past event, the appropriate use of language (what it is "fair to say") and the moral and political identity of the participants, in the act of determining what is to be done.

Contemporary trial rhetoric thus realizes different levels of normative judgment, something that is distinctive of modern trials, events that are both forensic and deliberative, involving both the just and the expedient. For we moderns understand that we are responsible for the shape of our legal and political institutions (Luban 1994). Neither fate, nor divine right, nor science determines that shape. Our inherited institutions are a mixture of principles each of which finds its natural home in a specific sphere of social life — the family, the marketplace, the political assembly, the law court, the university, the church — but can appear in analogous ways in other spheres. (There is a place for fraternity in politics and for politics in the church.) The trial is one of the methods by which we structure and divide these spheres and work out the relative balance of principles within each sphere. In modern law, we are simultaneously determining justice in the individual case and institutional conditions

for the future achievement of justice. The trial's open texture, compared to a legally formalistic structure, is ideally suited to this kind of determination.

If the trial is the heart of the law, then the law is rhetorical, for rhetoric rules where action under uncertainty is necessary. At trial the jury confronts layers of uncertainty, of ambiguities that are resolved – determined in a strong sense – by the judgment. The consciously structured hybrid of languages and practices at trial serve as rhetorical topics, devices that serve to "show forth" or open up (Jost and Hyde 1997: 21) moral and political sources *rather* than in linking particular factual situations with legal premises in a deductive fashion (Burns 1999: 146–7). The trial concerns particulars not generalities, beginning with the perception or discovery of the multiple means for persuasion in a concrete situation. It involves urging and then determining the most compelling resolution of the tensions implicit in a concrete situation, not theoretically but practically. It moves in the realm of probabilities not certainties. It multiplies arguments that achieve the strength of a steel cable (to use Peirce's image) composed of infinitely fine wires, rather than that of a chain, which is as weak as its weakest link. The cognitive operations it calls forth are more integrative than deductive. To understand those operations, and to appreciate that they are within our power, requires us to consider carefully the significance of trial rhetoric and what it can accomplish.

Understanding law as rhetoric stands in contrast to a range of views about the nature of law that have largely eroded over the past century. Under this family of ideas, which I have called the Received View, and of which there are more or less subtle versions, the law is a system of rules that can be known "scientifically." Individual cases are decided ultimately by cognitive acts of (1) accurate, value-free fact-finding followed by (2) acts of fair categorization, judgments ultimately about the meaning of legal terms. The legal architecture of trials is designed to assure that the rule of law prevails in situations where there are disputes of fact, that the only normative sources that are deployed are those embedded in the legal rules, to achieve, in Justice Scalia's phrase, the rule of law as the law of rules. Ideally, decisions in individual cases are deductions from legal rules, though few versions of the rule of law as the law of rules would go quite so far as that. The Received View draws its strength from the command view of law rooted in the voluntarist strand of the Judaeo-Christian inheritance – moral and legal norms as divine commands. Its formalism is of a piece with bureaucratic modes of social organization, with an instrumental rationality (at war with the trial, particularly the jury trial) which places our ends outside the medium of their achievement. Its master metaphors of law understand it as a command and or an instrument to achieve the sovereign's will, perhaps as "a machine acting on the rest of the rest of the world" (White 1987: 298–300). This understanding of the trial is descriptively inadequate and likely to blind us to the trial's real power. Conversely, an understanding of the richness of trial rhetoric can manifest, "show forth," the poverty of the Received View's understanding of law.

The Rhetoric of the Trial

The structure of the trial is familiar. Both sides present their opening statements. The party with the burden of proof then presents his evidence, usually through the direct examination of witnesses and the presentation of supporting documentation. This is, at each step, interrupted by the cross-examination of the plaintiff's (in criminal cases the prosecution's) witnesses. The plaintiff then rests and the defendant presents his witnesses, once again interrupted at each step by their cross-examination. The defendant rests. Sometimes the plaintiff will be allowed what is usually a short rebuttal case. Occasionally the defendant will present a "surrebuttal" case. Finally, the plaintiff will present his closing argument, the defendant will present his, and the plaintiff will end with a rebuttal argument. In jury cases, jury instructions are read and, in Great Britain, the judge may sum up the facts.

What is not familiar are the details of this structure or its rhetorical power. "Those aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. One is unable to notice something – because it is always before one's eyes ... We fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful" (Wittgenstein 1953: 50). This straightforward sequence of linguistic practices provides an enormously rich lens through which shine all the light that the culture's common sense can bring to bear (see chapter 18, this volume). It allows an enormously large range of persuasive topics to be placed before the jury in the engrossing event within which the jury's heart and mind can go about "finding a footing" (Dreyfus 1980: 12).

How Trial Rhetoric Realizes the Moral Sources Embedded in the Jury's Forms of Life

The opening statements present God's-eye narratives of what the evidence will show. Done artfully, this will be more than a recitation of expected evidence. It will rather be a "continuous dream" (Gardner 1983: 31) that weaves all of the evidence into a coherent narrative that illustrates, *shows*, the meaning of the events that have brought the case to trial. The opening statement answers in narrative fashion the rhetorical question that lawyers often put to themselves in opening statement, "What is this case about?" or, in the language of hermeneutics, "What should this case be seen *as?*" The opening is woven around what trial lawyers call a "theme," an implicit moral argument much like the plot of a novel, based on the values implicit in the life-world of the jury, the rhetorical resources implicit in "the tacit practices, habits, cultural values, personal and social commitments, and so on that comprise our hermeneutical and rhetorical horizon of understanding: what Ludwig Wittgenstein calls *Lebensformen*, and Cavell our "mutual attunements" (Jost 2000: 103).

The story told in opening statement is itself the result of earlier conversations, those between lawyer and client, conversations that have their own rhetoric. Here the desires and perceived needs of the client are mediated by the lawyer's projection of how they may be presented in narrative form in the trial, to the extent to which "I want" can become "I am entitled to" (Pitkin 1994: 282), and the extent to which desires have to take account of – and must change in the light of – all the norms that make for a persuasive opening statement.

These opening statements are not simply comprehensive statements of past fact. Since the lawyer is ethically obliged to defer to his client's "objectives" and different factual theories of the case may have different consequences, the lawyer will be obliged, within ethical restrictions, to present that version of events that will support his client's objectives. The opening statements are, from this perspective, narrativized statements of client objectives. Facts, as presented by both lawyers, are purposes, their client's purposes. Thus the court will decide between competing purposes insofar as they can be narrativized and so presented through the lens of the community's *sensus communis*. Of course, that common sense is interested in understanding the situation in which it operates, and so "the facts" of the case and their accuracy have important moral significance; the trial is practical all the way down.

Story structure is almost always built around the sequence of legitimate social equilibrium, a disruption of that equilibrium, and its restoration. This is precisely the structure of Aristotle's commutative justice (Aristotle 1926a: 1129a–1138b, 253–323). But notice how the plaintiff's story told in opening statement must be intrinsically incomplete. When the opening statement is given, when its story is told, there has not yet been restoration, the world remains broken. Only the practical intervention of the jury can recreate a just world. The rhetoric of opening statement reminds the jury that it is not a simple "finder of fact" that has only historical or theoretical interest. Quietly and with assurance, they enact the jury's moral responsibility for the problematic situation that brings the case to court and places the jury within the unfolding drama.

But the opening statement has a competing performative function. It is a promise, a promise that the highly characterized story told in the opening will be supported by admissible evidence. However compelling the *meaning* of the events urged in the opening statement, however attractive the implicit pragmatic argument about what ought to be done or the mode of social ordering the case calls for, the opening will ultimately fail if its story turns out not to be *true,* turns out to be *only* a pretty story. The opening begins the tension between (1) the meaning of the events and so the relative importance of the norms embedded in the opening's theme and (2) the truth of the story, the extent to which it corresponds to what occurred (Bruner 1990: 44). And the mere fact that there are *two* opening statements dramatizes the inevitable gap between a story and the telling of it.

The trial's central tension begins when the plaintiff calls his first witness. The tension on the level of language is no longer between two opposed narratives but between radically different forms of narrative. On direct examination witnesses must

tell their stories in their own words (in response to non-leading questions) and in the language of perception (with a minimum of opinion and interpretation). Simple, clear language. But witnesses remember an event as a meaningful gestalt, so that even this form of testimony comes with the imprint of the witness's understanding. This creates a tension between the relatively public norms that shape the opening and the quite personal, apolitical perspectives of most witnesses: "They do not speak diplomatically and the full significance of their accounts often cannot be subsumed by the more public norms around which theories of the case are spun. By giving particularity and empirical truth their due, the trial *disciplines and clarifies* the norms and purposes embedded in the openings" (Burns 2001: 205). The combination of the relatively "political" narratives of opening and the detailed and particular narratives of direct provide the ideal medium for forging public identity. We define and clarify who we are less by providing a general definition of what injustice is for us than by saying *this*, this densely complex human situation, is what *we* call injustice. And so the form of direct testimony drives the mind downward toward concrete events and away from the easy generalizations and clichés of mass culture. And so witnesses are permitted only to recount facts, and are not forbidden the full range of speech acts. They may not make promises about future behavior or make recommendations to the tribunal as to how it should rule. These chaste narratives preserve the "forensic" character of trial rhetoric, for, to paraphrase Aristotle, narrative is the natural home of language about individual justice (Aristotle 1926b: 1414b, 424–5).

Much is revealed in the tension between opening's attempts to assimilate the case to the most important of the values of the life-world, on the one hand, and the often-resistant particularities of direct examination on the other. This tension is illuminating because both narratives are so tightly constrained. They are constrained principally by the anticipation of the devices of the adversary trial that can be deployed against them, but they are also constrained by the rules of ethics and of evidence – Plato's revenge on the Sophists. The rules of ethics place the lawyer in a tension between duties of zealous representation to the client and of candor to the tribunal, a tension between energy and constraint. The lawyers may not allude to any matter in opening of which there will not be admissible evidence. It is the law of evidence that determines what is admissible. One generative principle of evidence law requires that the evidence be relevant, that is, that it can be linked through a plausible argument with one of the norms embedded in the jury instructions, in the technical language, that it have some tendency to make the existence of any fact that is of consequence to the determination of the action more probable or less probable than it would be without the evidence. Thus the trial's rhetoric presses these very different kinds of narratives toward each other, toward the law, and toward the evidence, while each struggles within these constraints to appeal to the jury's entire sensibility.

The trial's forward momentum is achieved by the construction and deconstruction of narrative. The pretenses of direct examination – its implicit and often quite convincing claim to be "the whole truth and nothing but the truth" of a past event – can be shattered by cross-examination. The heart of cross-examination is a series of

short, clear, undeniable statements that suggest a perspective hidden by the smooth and apparently sincere surface of direct. After a convincing direct examination, the deconstructive blow of a short and effective cross-examination can be stunning. It can shock a jury into understanding that they are "on their own" in understanding the case, that they can rely only on their own insight and reflective judgment.

The cross-examiner deploys a number of rhetorical tools. He can retell the same story told on direct while showing the jury that a different selection of details, a different ordering of those details, and fair, indeed undeniable characterization of those details, yield a wholly different interpretation of the events at issue. (Cross-examiners are quite aware of the "artifice" that goes into even the most chaste narrative.) The cross-examiner can explore all those things of which the witness is ignorant, where the unknown could, once again, change the meaning of events. He can point out the ways in which the witness's "sense-data" could have been synthesized in a different way, and the way the witness saw that it was the result of some undisclosed interest or passion. He can more directly challenge the witness's credibility, showing how the witness's version of events is inconsistent, given the common-sense web of belief shared by witness, lawyer, and jury, with other undeniable facts. The witness can be challenged in a way that requires him to show relevant moral dispositions, most importantly willfulness in face of unpleasant truths, in ways that radiate out throughout the case. For our often-tacit understanding of the human psyche in action and conversation is subtle and profound (see chapter 17, this volume), occurring "before predication" (Fergusson 1949: 239). Where the witness is also a party, performance under cross-examination shows the jury what kind of person played a role in the real-world drama that led to the trial.

Cross-examination rarely tells; it shows. What is manifest is seldom said. Cross is one of the devices that allows the jury to work through *all* of the implications of its prejudgments under the discipline of the evidence. This is true whether it reveals the most willful aspects of the witness's story or his moral dispositions. Cross is an important element in the emergence at trial of a truth beyond mere storytelling, for it deconstructs narrative, and narrative is the only means we have to understand human action. It continues the process of looking *through* narrative toward a practical truth that cannot be represented like the dramatization of a story can be. And this will be, as we will observe, what the jury needs.

The case proceeds in spirals of construction, deconstruction, and partial reconstruction from witness to witness and on to closing argument. In closing argument, the lawyer will move back and forth between meaning and truth, between the importance of the values and policies implicit in the continuous dreams of opening statements, on the one hand, and the deep values implicit in the respect for the persons "on trial" that are embedded in respect for simple factual truth. By the time of closing, the simple stories of opening statement have almost always run aground on the jagged particularities of persons and memories of events that resist being "subsumed" even under the most carefully wrought theory of the case. All that the lawyer who "argues the evidence" can do in closing argument is to try to coax the jury back to imagining

the entire case through his theory and theme. For judgment cannot be compelled, it can only be wooed. The closing shows the jury that the advocate's position can be maintained within the best interpretation of the norms that inhabit the jury's life-world. The result is not logically compelled, but it can be responsibly embraced in that space of freedom between fact and norm, between respect for individual persons and politically mediated purposes.

The rhetorical methods of closing feature examples from and analogies to familiar experiences, for "the greatest weapon in the arsenal of persuasion is the analogy, the story, the simple comparison with a familiar object," since "nothing can move the jurors more convincingly than an apt comparison to something they know from their own experience is true" (Spangenberg 1977: 16). That means, in arguing the importance of circumstantial evidence, "If you go into the woods and find a turtle on a tree stump, you know he didn't get there by himself." As for the witness caught in a single, perhaps relatively unimportant lie, "If you order beef stew and the first bit of meat is rancid, you are not expected to carefully remove that bit and accept the rest" (Burns 1999: 69).

The Significance of Trial Rhetoric

So much for a compressed account of the elements of trial rhetoric, one that does not do justice to its subtlety and complexity. I want now to focus briefly on pervasive features of trial rhetoric taken as a whole and their cognitive correlates. The required, even obsessive, focus on narratives of past events elevates the importance of a non-instrumental understanding and evaluation of those events as more than an occasion for deploying the law as "an instrument of policy in the quest for empty success."[1] The trial takes place over time. If time is, as the *Timaeus* tells us, the moving image of eternity, then for a moment each and every detail of the case is present alone in a way that would not be true for a written text, and is, for a moment, the sole lens through which all of the evidence is seen. Since every detail in a well-tried case is significant, there is enacted a true normative pluralism of perspective on the events being tried. By contrast, the temporal compression of the Anglo-American trial, in contrast to continental trials that literally evolve over longer periods in response to the judge's desire for more evidence, elevates the effectiveness of thematic unities, the power of theory of the case and "theme." It overcomes the obstacle that fading memory may pose to a subtle grasp of the vast web of mutual implication, factual and moral, of all the details of the evidence. It allows lawyers to show what cannot be said directly, and encourages the jury's perception of "the cumulation of probabilities . . . too fine to avail separately, too subtle and circuitous to be convertible into syllogisms" (Newman 1930: 288). The attorneys have considerable freedom over what to make an issue of, both in the initial theory of the case, the inspired simplification that is proposed as its central meaning, and in the choice of which evidence and arguments to engage. As the trial progresses, then, each side will struggle to keep the discussion focused on its own

strongest points (and these can be either factual or normative), but dares not ignore the opponent's strengths. These strategic judgments tend to focus the parties' rhetorical energies on just the right points, the truly decisive issues.

The trial strikes a taut balance between continuous presentation and interruption with the opposing view. It respects our need, as discursive, non-intuitive knowers, to see the entire case laid out in detail, but it also provides an antidote to the ease with which we can be taken in by a good story, particularly one constructed artfully from convincing detail. It is as if we were continually being reminded, "Yes, that makes sense, that hangs together, that rings true...but not so fast. Look what I am forgetting..." The trial tries to accommodate the Sophists' and tragedians' intuition that performing stories continuously can manifest the *nomoi* in all their depth and complexity *and* Socrates' aversion to "speaking continuously" in a way that makes critique of the culture's common sense impossible.

And, of course, the trial is spoken. Witnesses speak and jurors listen. The spoken medium allows for a momentary identification with each witness. But witnesses speak from a physical distance and under somewhat formal rules. The trial thus enacts the preconditions for good judgment, sympathy, and detachment. The trial is not only spoken, but also performed, obviously by the lawyers, but also by the witnesses. The quality of the performances is measured by the kind of truthfulness appropriate for each performer. Truthfulness is the first virtue of witness testimony. But lawyers, too, are judged on their descriptions and arguments by a kind of public truthfulness, a form of fairness to the evidence and to the values embedded in ordinary language. Our common sense has extremely refined sensibilities for the detection of what rings false, *if* the speaker can be challenged and *if* the rhetorical context is sufficiently complex. The trial is not only spoken and performed, but is also, by most measures, a dramatic event. The tension of witness against witness, lawyer against witness, and lawyer against lawyer realizes and intensifies a large range of human feeling in the audience in precisely the way that it actualizes good judgment (Nussbaum 1986: 390). The trial should be, and often is, constructed so that it is a reliable lens and metaphor for the underlying events. A good case allows the lawyers to tell their stories, present their witnesses, and argue in a way that rings true.

Social science investigators employing very different methods have reached analogous conclusions. Juries bring an elevated intelligence, an actualized *sensus communis* to bear on their work. Their decisions are best understood as a product of "the discipline of the evidence" presented precisely through the rhetorical devices I have just described. Mercifully, that means that jury decisions can rarely be predicted through broad demographic classifications of either jurors or parties, and that the norms actualized by the linguistic practices of the trial are of greater significance than are the jury instructions. Juries are aware of the public dimension and public significance of their work, and deliberation seems to be of less significance than the encounter of the jurors with the intense and consciously structured hybrid of languages and practices that is the trial. The social scientists seem to agree that the trial is the thing.

What remains is to explain somewhat more systematically how trial rhetoric can reveal the practical truth of a human situation. This explanation has three aspects. The first looks at the objective side of the trial event in order to connect the forms of constrained narrative at trial with our moral and political lives. The second examines the subjective side to try to state somewhat more theoretically what takes place in the mind of the juror during trial. The third identifies those philosophical understandings of truth that are of a piece with the methods of the trial. This latter is in keeping with this entire attempt at "interpretive or hermeneutical dialectics, which convince us by the overall plausibility of the interpretation they give" (Taylor 1975: 218) or "by the mutual support of many considerations, of everything fitting together into one coherent view" (Rawls 1971: 579). Something close to the fairest position may come to prevail at trial: like any true interpretation, it has to be continuous with what it interprets.

We already have seen that narrative is central at trial, something the social scientific findings corroborate. Narrative structure is a "natural" form of understanding and of human experience, for stories are lived before they are told. By making judgments of relative importance, narrative separates the essential from the accessory. Good storytelling can unveil "epiphanies of the ordinary," can "reveal meaning without committing the error of defining it," for there are, as Wittgenstein always believed, "things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest.*" The centrality of narrative means that the "internal morality" of the trial is, like that of the novel, highly contextual. It provides an antidote to what Stuart Hampshire called an "abstract computational" morality that obscures all the interconnections of human situations. And, as we saw above, narrative is intrinsically related to the structure of commutative justice, the achievement of which each telling of the story immediately assigns to the jury.

How can the jury choose between the stories told in the openings, and among the dozens of stories often told by the witnesses? We judge a story's internal coherence and completeness, but also what we may call its "external" factual plausibility. One element, and only one element, of the jury's common sense consists of an inventory of commonsense generalizations, a web of belief into which the narratives are placed. These generalizations have the form, "Generally and for the most part . . . " (Lonergan 1957: 173–81). Common sense contains as well a somewhat more inchoate set of exceptions, that have the form, " . . . but not where . . . " The lawyers at trial will be invoking these generalizations and exceptions at trial, but even the simplest of trials, in its level of significant detail, will not be determined by anything like the mechanical application of preexisting generalizations. Even on the empirical level, *each* trial involves a genuinely new determination of factual probabilities based on what can only be called insight: "This knowledge is not provable in the scientific sense nor is it logically rigorous . . . but we cannot go beyond it, and it is a mistake to try. In this fluid world without turf or ground we cannot walk, but we can swim" (White 1985: 40). This is, of course, the medium of rhetoric.

But the stories told by both lawyers and witnesses do not call out solely for judgments of empirical probability. "It seems possible to conclude that every historical

narrative has as its latent or manifest purpose the desire to *moralize* the events of which it treats" (White 1981: 13–14). The jury will make a tentative choice between the opening statements on a moral as well as an empirical continuum. This will be the traditionally forensic aspect of the trial, the axis along which the jury must decide to assign relative praise and blame to the parties. This axis may well often be incommensurable with both the empirical axis and, as we will see shortly, the political axis. It may be that the most blameworthy conduct, the conduct that it would be most important to condemn, may be the conduct the occurrence of which we have significant doubts about. Because of the inevitably probabilistic nature of factual determinations at trial, dependent as they are on inevitably novel determinations of the appropriate extension of indeterminate empirical generalizations, including prominently those about the credibility of witnesses, moral and empirical issues may tend in genuine tension before resolution in a judgment that is both empirical and moral. Kalven and Zeisel, in their groundbreaking *The American Jury* (1966), called this the "liberation hypothesis," the notion that factual doubt could freely expand in response to perceived moral exigency.

Finally, the trial requires the resolution of political, as well as empirical and moral issues. The stories told at trial have not only a labeling function, but also a "signaling" (Pitkin 1972: 6785) function. They invite the jury to define the role they will play internal to the drama of corrective justice the case presents. And this is inevitably a public role, within public institutions, in defining the nature of the community. As Tocqueville put it in his classic statement:

> The jury teaches every man not to recoil before the responsibility of his own actions and impresses him with that manly confidence without which no political virtue can exist. It invests each citizen with a kind of magistracy; it makes them all feel the duties which they are bound to discharge towards society and the part which they take in its government. By obliging men to turn their attention to other affairs than their own, it rubs off that private selfishness which is the rust of society. (Tocqueville 1945: 295)

The public identity of jurors as "magistrates" is thus another source of trial decision-making. Decision requires an act of self-definition: "In deciding how to act well in a particular situation we draw upon an understanding of ourselves and our historical situation, *of who we are and what ends we desire, and this necessarily entails an activity of interpretation. What we are interpreting is ourselves, and the past and present social worlds that make us what we are . . .*" (Beiner 1983: 19). Because we moderns must do justice, but also maintain the institutions and public practices that are the conditions for ongoing justice, an initial choice between narratives is additionally a choice between two alternatives for public practices in response to a problematic situation. And so the jury has yet another normative axis – a political one – on which to evaluate the competing opening statements.

Because the narratives of opening statement are such constrained narratives, pulled toward each other, toward the law, and toward the evidence that is soon to follow, the

jury can begin to assess tacitly the empirical, moral, and public adequacy of the competing statements, comparing what each lawyer includes and omits, how "true" his descriptions are, and what facts and values he cannot easily integrate into his theme and theory. The constraints of the trial satisfy many of Plato's misgivings about storytelling.

Once again, the essential tension is between the full narratives of opening and the evidence that will follow. We have seen how the constraints on opening statement already impose a discipline that discourages sophistry. But the trial lawyer is not like the novelist, however realistic, who, after all, does write the words of all of his characters. Witnesses really are on their own and, when forced to testify in the language of perception, are likely to "give evidence" that does not easily fit within the most carefully crafted and morally comprehensive theory of the case. Both the personal moral perspectives of the witnesses, which will inevitably shape the testimony they give in response to non-leading questions, and their reporting of what Arendt called "brutally elementary data" (Arendt 1961: 239) will resist easy subsumption into the purposeful stories told by the lawyers. Testimony under the conditions imposed at trial is responsive to the high moral value in seeing the individual situation clearly and describing it simply and accurately, without newspeak or jargon. This aspect of trial rhetoric has *political*, as well as moral, significance: "It is only when we are confronted by the demand of action *in context of a particular set of* circumstances that we get a true understanding of what our ends really are ... Action in the particular circumstances of life is a continuing dialogue between what we think our life is about, and the particularities of moral and practical exigency" (Beiner 1983: 24). The justice that the trial achieves is inevitably a justice that is strife.

The judgment that the jury reaches at trial is a literally indescribable, simultaneous grasp of facts, norms, and possibilities for action. We have the capacity for precisely this kind of grasp and we exercise it in a large range of practical activities. The philosophical literature offers a number of accounts of this kind of determination. From within the Kantian tradition, the notion of reflective judgment describes our capacity to understand a particular situation not by subsuming it under a predetermined universal, but by considering it from different viewpoints until it is "forced into the open that it may show itself from all sides, in every possible perspective, until it is flooded and made transparent by the full light of human comprehension" (Arendt 1961: 242). The Aristotelian notion of practical wisdom or prudence stresses the mind's "intuitive" power (*nous*) to perceive directly the morally significant details of the particular situation. Finally, the hermeneutical tradition envisions our capacities to engage in a "continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structures in such a way as to bring both into view simultaneously." These are precisely the capacities that the trial's rhetoric is consciously structured to realize.

I want to go further. The consciously structured hybrid of languages and practices that is the trial derives from both the Sophists and from Plato. These languages and

practices have the power to realize the practical truth, the moral and political truth, of a human situation. There are five conditions of the possibility of such a realization, all of which are capable of sustained philosophical defense. The first is that narrative forms, suitably constrained and criticized, are in some sense congruent with the actual structure of human action, that we live stories before we tell them. Narrative, again if duly criticized, is not simply a distorting fiction. The second is that common sense is capable of very high levels of refinement in its understanding of a particular situation, so that it is not simply the plaything of overgeneralized probabilities. Under the conditions of disciplined debate, common sense is powerful "because what is true and what is just are naturally stronger than their opposites, so that if legal judgments do not turn out correctly, truth and justice are necessarily defeated by their opposites, and this deserves censure" (Aristotle: 1355a24).[2] Now, of course, this is the basis of Aristotle's "epistemological optimism" (Wardy 1996: 60) expressed in the *Rhetoric* and anticipated by Plato in the *Phaedrus*. Thus a position that is initially implausible in light of commonsense generalizations can be shown actually to be true. Common sense may deftly evaluate the additional details and descriptions that may bring an initially implausible story within the realm of what we can fairly call concrete plausibility. This is precisely the nuanced grasp that all the devices of the trial are designed to create. Though it is important to allow both sides to tell their (constrained) best stories, the victory does not simply go to the best storyteller.

Third, there exists a human capacity to grasp a truth that is manifest in the tensions created by the trial's consciously structured hybrid of languages. Charles Taylor argues persuasively that modernist authors, perhaps influenced by the notion of complementarity in physics, developed this idea most fully. Tensed language "makes something appear by juxtaposing images or, even harder to explain, by juxtaposing words. The epiphany comes from between the words or images, as it were, from the force field they set up between them, and not through a central reference which they describe" (Taylor 1989: 465–6). This capacity to grasp the truth by dwelling "between" opposed viewpoints is an aspect of our ordinary moral experience, where we are often called upon to achieve a practical resolution of really incommensurable values. Trial rhetorics do not simply play off one another. The tensions between them *reveal* something that could not be said more directly and put us in contact with what Taylor calls a "moral source."

Fourth, the trial can achieve the truth of a human situation if trial rhetoric can be the vehicle for a genuinely hermeneutical experience, if the languages and practices of the trial can illuminate the significance of a human situation so that one can say, with Gadamer, that it allows the jury to see "the truth of what is." In fact, the trial's languages do show "us something familiar, as something we knew or should have known . . . something we could not see without it; yet having seen it, we recognize it as a crucial aspect of what we always saw" (Warnke 1987: 59). By realizing the jury's common sense and achieving contact with a moral source, the trial rhetoric reaches the truth of the event being tried and realizes the moral and political identity of the jury, allowing the jury to become what they are, responsible actors in the public realm.

Fifth, trial rhetoric may allow the jury to converge on the truth of a practical situation if it allows the achievement of truth-for-practical judgment. Trial judgments will be true if "(1) there exist no institutions – and more robustly, no possible inquiry will identify institutions – that are better designed to achieve the practical purposes of the trial, and (2) those purposes are rooted in the most important human interests" (Burns 1999: 235). Trials do not take place for theoretical reasons, but to realize the purposes of a legal order. Trial rhetoric will converge on the truth of a human situation if it immerses the jury in a meaningful context that allows it to *act* in the manner most consistent with the ideals of a legal order, justly. And I believe a well-tried case can do just that.

A rhetorical and interpretive understanding of its central institution can elevate our understanding of the law and protect us from the bureaucratic spirit that has too often accompanied the "onslaught of modernity." The consciously structured hybrid of languages that is the trial provides the meaningful context in which the jury is placed. The law in action is not ultimately indeterminate and it draws on more resources than a formalistic understanding of rule application could ever provide.

NOTES

1   I take the phrase from D. A. Traversi, "Henry the Fourth, Part I," *Scrutiny* 15 (1947–8): 29; quoted in Alan Donagan, *A Theory of Morality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 240.
2   This is Wardy's (1996) translation.

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Rhetorical Hermeneutics Still Again: or, On the Track of *Phronēsis*

Steven Mailloux

Tracking rhetorical paths of thought. Articulating rhetoric and hermeneutics. Using rhetoric to practice theory by doing history. How do these phrases apply to rhetorical hermeneutics? To answer this question, I will be guided by the interpretive energies of some twentieth-century commentators on Aristotle. Interpretations of Aristotelian *phronēsis* (practical wisdom) form my beginning and end points, as I present a highly selective reception study to illustrate how rhetorical hermeneutics works in critical practice and what kinds of claims it makes in contemporary theory. The critical practice here resembles a rhetorical map quest, narrowing and expanding its focus as it zeroes in on tropes, arguments, and narratives constituting paths of thought about practical wisdom. This rhetorical hermeneutics uses receptions of Aristotelian *phronēsis* to track one particular path from a translated word to textual phrases and entire works, across time and place through philosophical systems, competing discourses, and cultural debates, back to the translated word, and then out and around again. In this way, *phronēsis* becomes both a topic for reception study (a rhetorical history of *phronēsis* as a problem) and a set of theoretical claims about practices in a range of areas such as ethics, politics, aesthetics, communication, and hermeneutics (*phronēsis* as shorthand for rhetorical pragmatism). As historical problem and as neo-pragmatist theory, the notion of practical wisdom serves as a signpost for the close relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics throughout the twentieth century. In this tracking of *phronēsis*, rhetorical hermeneutics is simultaneously explained and performed, the account of its theoretical claims serving as an extended illustration of its historical practice. Rhetorical hermeneutics uses rhetoric to practice theory by doing history.

   The classical Greek word *phronēsis* derives from *phroneo* (to think, to understand) and has been translated variously over the ages: *prudentia*, *ta'aqqul*, *la prudence*, prudence, *praktische Wissen*, practical reason or knowledge. Our reception study sets out from a succinct description in Aristotle's *On Virtues and Vices*: "It belongs to [practical]

wisdom to take counsel, to judge the goods and evils and all the things in life that are desirable and to be avoided, to use all the available goods finely, to behave rightly in society, to observe due occasions, to employ both speech and action with sagacity, to have expert knowledge of all things that are useful" (1250a). Even in this brief description we can spot several points that have characterized the interpretive pre-occupations of Aristotle's readers. *Phronēsis* involves deliberations over what is the good for humans in particular situations. It determines right action in such situations, including the timely use of appropriate speech. The practically wise person (*phronimos*) possesses experiential knowledge of all that is useful in judging and achieving the good in life.

In the more extensive analysis of *phronēsis* in Book 6 of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle gives Pericles as an example of a person considered to have practical wisdom because he is one of those who "possess a faculty of discerning what things are good for themselves and for mankind" (1140b). Not surprisingly, Aristotle also cites the famous Athenian statesman several times in *On Rhetoric*. Pericles' speeches illustrate the effective use of simile (1407a), analogy (1411a), and the interrogating question (1419a). Under deliberative rhetoric, Aristotle quotes Pericles' appeal to degrees of magnitude – the greatest part of the great is most desirable (1365a) – an example introduced by a more general discussion about how degrees of greatness and ultimately goodness are determined: "what the wise – either all or many or most or the most authoritative – would judge or have judged the greater good are necessarily so regarded, either absolutely or in terms of the practical wisdom [*phronēsis*] by which they made their judgment" (1364b). And, perhaps most important to our present concerns, Aristotle alludes to Pericles in his discussion of the persuasive appeal to ethos, the character of the speaker (1390b), linking him to Socrates as having the admirable character of stability or steadfastness compared to their descendants. In the *Rhetoric*, then, Pericles is an exemplary figure of rhetorical effectiveness both for his skillful choice of persuasive strategies and for the persuasive appeal of his own character. That is, Pericles exemplifies how closely successful rhetoric is tied to *phronēsis*: the best rhetors possess a practical wisdom that can discern the most effective means of persuasion in any specific situation, including an appeal to their own reputations as persons of practical wisdom. Aristotle builds the phronetic power of discernment into his influential definition of rhetoric as the ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion (1355b).

Early in his teaching career, Martin Heidegger offered one of the twentieth century's most singular interpretations of Aristotelian *phronēsis*. His student, Hans-Georg Gadamer, tells the story:

> What was most important for me . . . I learned from Heidegger. And it was, above all, in the first seminar in which I participated, in 1923, when Heidegger was still in Freiburg, on the Sixth Book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. At that time, "*phronēsis*," the virtue of "practical reason," that "*allo eidos gnōseōs*," that "other form of cognition," was for me truly a magical word. Certainly, it was an immediate provocation to me when

> Heidegger one day analyzed the demarcation between *technē* and *phronēsis* and then in reference to the sentence, "*phronēseōs de ouk esti lēthē*" (in practical reason there is no forgetting), explained, "This is conscience!" (Gadamer 1997: 9)

What to make of this moment in Heidegger's reception of *phronēsis*, an interpretive act that Gadamer calls a "pedagogical exaggeration"? A rhetorical hermeneutic answer tracks Heidegger's path of thought backwards and forwards from this moment, backward to Heidegger's earlier readings of Aristotle and forward to later seminars and publications, first by Heidegger and then by his students and commentators.

As an instructor (*Privatdozent*) at the University of Freiburg, Heidegger taught a series of courses on Aristotle's philosophy in the early 1920s. In 1922 he was asked to provide a "publishable manuscript" reflecting his current work so that he could be considered for an associate professorship (*Extraordinarius*) at Marburg and at Gottingen. In October of that year, Heidegger sent both universities a fifty-page typescript entitled "Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation," which was based on lecture notes from his recent Aristotle courses and intended to serve as an introduction and overview for a proposed book on "Phenomenological Interpretations [with respect] to Aristotle" (Kisiel 1993: 249). In the submitted essay, Heidegger locates his philosophical interpretation within a "hermeneutical situation" that needs to be made available as part of the interpretation itself. He characterizes a hermeneutical situation, "to which every interpretation is relative," as consisting of a visual stance, visual direction, and visual breadth. A visual direction, motivated by the stance, determines the "As-what" and the "That-with-respect-to-which" of the interpretation; and limited with the stance and direction, a visual breadth or range is that within which the interpretation's claim moves (Heidegger 1992a: 358). These ocular metaphors pervade both Heidegger's explanation of his own philosophical project in ontology and logic as well as his summarized interpretations of the Aristotelian texts he plans to discuss, especially the *Physics*, the *Metaphysics*, and the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

"Philosophy is simply the explicit interpretation of factical life," writes Heidegger. "Philosophy, in the manner of its asking questions and finding answers . . . stands within this movement of facticity" (369). Factical life is that "which daily happens, and can happen, to someone" (390). For Heidegger, "the basic sense of movement of factical life is *caring* [*Sorgen*] (*curare*)," and "the movement of caring has the character of *dealings* [*Umgang*] which factical life has with its world. The That-with-respect-to-which of care is the With-what of the dealings" (361). Heidegger lists several ways of concerned dealings with the world, examples of how the movement of concern is actualized as "tinkering about with, preparing of, producing of, guaranteeing through, making use of, utilizing for, taking possession of, holding in truthful safe-keeping, and forfeiting of" (362). The concerned dealings have their own circumspection (*Umsicht*), which "brings the With-what of the dealings . . . into the guiding fore-view" (366). Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutics of facticity attempts "to make the ever concrete interpretations of factical life (i.e., the interpretations of caring circumspection

and of concerned insight) categorially transparent in their factical unity within the temporalizing" or unfolding of life (368). Thus, we see a doubling of the visual tropes as Heidegger characterizes his project as making visible, bringing to sight, the experiential processes of concerned dealings, which, in turn, partly consist of circumspective insight, careful looking around.

But it is also at this primordial level (of Heidegger's thought and of its research object, factical life) that we come upon the importance of hermeneutic and rhetorical aspects in that research and its object. "In circumspection, the With-what of the dealings is anticipatorily grasped as . . . , oriented towards . . . , interpreted as . . . "; that is, "the world is encountered in the character of significance [*Bedeutsamkeit*]" (362; ellipses in original). Human beings don't meet an uninterpreted world and then make sense of it; rather, they live always already in a sense-filled world. Interpretation is not simply one human activity among others; interpretation is constitutive of being human. Furthermore, this hermeneutic human being-in-the-world is awash in rhetorical activity: "The circumspecting is actualized in the manner of *claiming* [*Ansprechen*] and *discussing* [*Besprechen*] the objectivity of the dealings. The world is always encountered within a determinate way of Being-claimed, of some claim [*logos*]" (362).

Turning to the specific explications he will outline, Heidegger remarks that his "basic comportment towards history, and the visual direction with respect to Aristotle, are determined by the visual stance (i.e., by the starting point and the exposition of the problem of facticity)" (373). Aristotle is crucial to Heidegger's project because philosophical research into human life must begin within the interpretive history it finds itself, and receptions of Aristotle continue to enable and constrain this research in multiple ways. In Heidegger's terms, his own hermeneutic situation depends on both "a chain of diverse interpretations" (370) preceding his Aristotelian readings and on his project's interpretive determination from within everyday life. "The philosophical hermeneutic of facticity necessarily makes its own beginning within its factical situation, and it does so within an already given particular interpretedness of factical life which first sustains the philosophical hermeneutic itself and which can never be completely eradicated" (369–70). Heidegger foregrounds Aristotle's influence again and again as he explains how we stand within a tradition of thinking about human being, a tradition dominated by the Greek–Christian interpretation of life. Heidegger only very briefly summarizes his story of Aristotle's reception within this tradition, emphasizing especially Martin Luther's role in Reformation theology.

In his distinctive reading of Book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Heidegger characterizes his interpretation as setting aside the "specifically ethical problematic" in favor of an ontological approach that makes the dianoetic or intellectual virtues "understandable as ways of having at one's disposal the possibility of actualizing the genuine *truthful safe-keeping of Being*" (377). Aristotle's list of these virtues includes *nous, epistēmē, sophia, technē,* and *phronēsis.* Heidegger's reading begins with a distinction between two different ways of concerned dealing, which correspond to different kinds of beings: beings that are what they are necessarily and always and beings that

"can also be other than what they are at the moment, the beings which are managed, handled, or produced first of all within the dealings themselves," i.e., human beings (376). *Epistēmē* (*hinsehend-besprechend-ausweisendes Bestimmen*, observing-discussing-revealing determination) and *sophia* (*eigentlich-sehendes Verstehen*, authentic-seeing understanding) are habits concerned with the necessary and unchanging; while *technē* (*verrichtend-herstellendes Verfahren*, routine-directive-productive operating) and *phronēsis* (*fursorgliches Sichumsehen {Umsicht}*, solicitous circumspecting) are concerned with the contingent and changeable (Heidegger 1992a: 377; 1989: 255).

Heidegger's translations and definitions reveal the visual tropes at work in Aristotle's thought and in his own. *Nous* is "pure beholding," which "produces *everything* as a [kind of] being-able-to-have-at-one's-disposal, and it does so like light. *Nous* in general provides sight; it provides a something." It is a beholding "without the manner of claiming something according to its 'as-what-determinations.'" But "*nous* provides every concrete [instance of] discussing with its possible About-what, which itself can never become accessible first of all in the discussing as such" (380). Heidegger interprets "*sophia* (authentic, observing understanding) and *phronēsis* (solicitous circumspection, circumspection which is concerned with one's own as well as others' well-being)" as the "authentic ways of the actualizing of *nous*" (377). Of the four intellectual virtues other than *nous*, Heidegger gives most of his interpretive attention to *phronēsis*: "*Phronēsis* brings the That-with-respect-to-which of the dealings of human life (and dealings with human life itself) and the 'How' of these dealings in their own Being into truthful safe-keeping. These dealings are praxis: the conducting [*Behandeln*] of one's own self in the How of dealings which are not productive [as in *technē*], but are rather simply *actional* [*handelnd*]" (381). Heidegger's emphasis on *phronēsis*, on solicitous circumspection, on the concerned looking around involved in praxis, opens the way not only to a renewal of Aristotelian practical philosophy but also to that philosophy's potential connection with rhetoric. This connection is reinforced in Heidegger's brief discussion of *kairos*, a perennial topic in rhetorical theory. His interpretation claims to show "how the being which is *kairos* constitutes itself in *phronēsis*. The actional and solicitous [kind of] conducting is always a concrete conducting in the How of the concerned dealings with the world." Through a "moment-of-insight [*Augenblick*]," the phronetic dealing determines an action's timeliness by apprehending the situational "How, Towards-what-end, To-what-extent, and Why." *Phronēsis* "as epitactic illumination... brings the dealings into the basic orientation of readiness-for" (381–2).

I would here like to pause to take stock of my rhetorical hermeneutic attempt to track Heidegger's rhetorical paths of thought. I hope it is becoming clear that by starting with a particular historical moment of reception (Heidegger's 1923 reading of Aristotle on *phronēsis* as reported by Gadamer), I am illustrating how the tracking of tropes, arguments, and narratives might work in a specific case, but I am also revealing something of the genealogy of rhetorical hermeneutics itself, where its theoretical claims and critical strategies might be traced. In Heidegger's introduction to his reading of Aristotle, we can already see much of the twentieth-century

philosopher's distinctive rhetoric in his path of thought: his arguments implying the practical intimacy of rhetoric and hermeneutics; the visual tropes used in describing his own philosophical research and that of Aristotle; and (more briefly) the narrative he tells about the philosophical tradition in which he finds himself. In addition (and of course less significantly), we can see the way his analysis of the philosophical tradition is a model for the kind of tracking I have in mind with rhetorical hermeneutics, especially in the way his German translations of Greek concepts highlight the metaphors through which Aristotle's thinking developed. Even in the brief story he tells about the tradition of the Greek–Christian interpretation of life that he is de(con)structing, Heidegger suggests how any rhetorical hermeneutic study of reception should proceed: "Luther's new basic religious position . . . resulted from Luther's primordially appropriated [*zugeeignet*] interpretations of Paul and of Augustine, and from his simultaneous confrontation with late-Scholastic theology" (Heidegger 1992a: 372). That is, a rhetorical hermeneutic take on reception involves both an analysis of the reading of a text (an interpretation) and a contextualizing of that reading within debates over the text (the rhetorical context). Interpretations of the past are always confrontations with arguments in the present.

Rhetorical hermeneutics attempts to follow out the implications of this last claim by historically situating specific interpretive acts in their particular cultural conversations. In this way any historical act of interpretation, say, Heidegger's reading of Aristotle or Luther's commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, is both an engagement with a past text and a contribution to its present interpretive history; as an interpretive argument attempting to persuade an audience, it is simultaneously rhetorical and hermeneutic in its character. Rhetorical hermeneutics stresses this inseparability of interpretive and rhetorical acts (Mailloux 1998: 3–19). To make such claims is to move from doing rhetorical reception histories to practicing hermeneutic theory, to move (so to speak) from the history game to the philosophy game. I have often tried to suggest that these games overlap significantly in rhetorical hermeneutics by claiming that a particular reception study of mine – such as one focused on the Concord Public Library banning *Huckleberry Finn* or one analyzing a peculiar use of the equal protection clause in *Bush v. Gore* (2000) – should *count as* a piece of hermeneutic theorizing (Mailloux 1989, 2002). The strategy in such a claim (a pedagogical exaggeration?) is to emphasize the anti-foundationalist stance of rhetorical hermeneutics, the belief that there is no set of rules or generalizable model for doing interpretation that can guide interpretation from the outside in such a way as to guarantee the production of a valid interpretation. Another way of putting this is to say that the theoretical side of rhetorical hermeneutics – call it rhetorical pragmatism – takes seriously Heidegger's reading of *phronēsis* and Gadamer's extension of that reading in his rhetorically inflected, anti-methodical hermeneutics. Too crudely put, the lesson of both is that practices of various kinds (interpretive judgments, aesthetic evaluations, ethical deliberations, political actions, and so forth) proceed through regular-but-not-rule-governed habits and choices within contexts that are not fully formalizable, backgrounds of desires, beliefs, and

practices that cannot be made entirely explicit, pieces of practical wisdom that cannot be made into a decontextualized method (see Dreyfus 1979, 1991; cf. Fish 1989).

Back to Heidegger's interpretive uses of *phronēsis* and its connections to rhetoric and hermeneutics in his paths of thought: while waiting for responses to his "Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation," Heidegger taught the 1923 Freiburg course during which he made his famous remark equating *phronēsis* with conscience. He later received his appointment at the University of Marburg and offered courses on phenomenology and Aristotelian philosophy during the winter 1923–4 semester. In summer 1924 he lectured on Aristotle's basic concepts, presenting a new interpretation of the *Rhetoric* focused on the role of *pathos* in Aristotle's analysis of humans as speaking animals. For Heidegger, pathos as affect or mood is not just one among many resources for persuasion; rather, it orients the very essence of being-in-the-world for both speaker and audience. "Through the *pathe*, the possibilities of orienting oneself to the world are essentially determined" (11 July 1924 lecture, quoted in Kisiel 1993: 298). Such claims in Heidegger's seminar help us gloss those somewhat enigmatic comments published in *Being and Time* three years later: "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* must be understood as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of being-with-one-another. Publicness as the kind of being of the they...uses mood and 'makes' it for itself. The speaker speaks to it and from it. He needs the understanding of the possibility of mood in order to arouse and direct it in the right way" (Heidegger 1996: 130).

Rhetors need understanding of mood to persuade their audiences. However, this everyday understanding is not primarily theoretical and general, but practical and specific. Rhetors must have phronetic insight into concrete situations to determine the kairotic moment for the most effective speaking. Every rhetorical situation is new, even if it resembles those of the past. Thus, there is no methodical way to completely determine beforehand the best rhetoric to use in a specific time and place. There are no pregiven "absolute norms" for finding the appropriate way of feeling and acting "'at the right time, on the right occasion, toward the right people, for the right purpose and in the right manner' [*NE* 1106b21]" (27 June 1924 lecture, quoted in Kisiel 1993: 298). Successful rhetors must use phronetic circumspection to gain insight into the relevant details of the rhetorical context.

Though Heidegger still employs the visual tropes of Aristotelian *phronēsis*, he also adds another figural dimension by including a preliminary discussion of "hearing, *akouein*, the hearing which corresponds to speaking." Calling this Aristotelian emphasis atypical for the Greeks, Heidegger describes hearing as "the most fundamental way of sensing" and remarks that "to the extent being human means speaking, in hearing I am in communication with other human beings" (15 May 1924 lecture, quoted in Smith 1998: 33). Later he adds: "Hearing is the perception of speaking and the possibility of [our] being together with one another" (30 May 1924 lecture, quoted in Smith 1998: 33). As Theodore Kisiel restates Heidegger's point, "The *Rhetoric* clearly places the listener and listening (hearkening, obeying) on the side of pathos and suggests that without it *legein* [speaking] simply could not be" (Kisiel

1993: 297). If in earlier (and later) seminars, *nous*, mindful seeing, grounds the other intellectual virtues and their associated claiming and discussing, then here pathetic listening enables these same habits, including the *phronēsis* necessary for effective speaking to others. Working out these various connections between understanding a situation and speaking within its mood, Heidegger asserts: "*Die Rhetorik ist nichts anderes als die Auslegung des konkreten Daseins, die Hermeneutik des Daseins selbst*" (30 May 1924 lecture; Heidegger 2002: 110). "Rhetoric {as understood by Aristotle} is nothing less than the interpretation of concrete Dasein, the hermeneutic of Dasein itself" (Scult 1999: 148).

Gadamer attended this 1924 summer course that gave such prominence to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. He was joined by Hannah Arendt the following semester for Heidegger's winter 1924–5 lectures on Plato's *Sophist*. In the introductory sessions focused on Book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Gadamer and Arendt heard Heidegger's most detailed and important interpretations of Aristotelian *phronēsis*, interpretations that significantly influenced their own later thinking. I will only comment on a few of Heidegger's arguments in order to move forward my tracking of the philosopher's rhetorical paths of thought.

In his preliminary remarks, Heidegger explains why he begins, not with Plato, but with Aristotle's reception of Plato. "What Aristotle said is what Plato placed at his disposal, only it is said more radically and developed more scientifically." The lectures will thus move from Aristotle back to Plato following "the old principle of hermeneutics, namely that interpretation should proceed from the clear into the obscure" (Heidegger 1997: 8). Focusing then on what Aristotle says about beings and Being, Heidegger turns immediately to the characteristic Greek expression for truth, *aletheia*, which means "to be hidden no longer, to be uncovered" (11). Heidegger emphasizes that *alētheuein*, "to be disclosing, to remove the world from concealedness and coveredness . . . appears first of all in speaking, in speaking with one another, in *legein*." This speaking "is what most basically constitutes human Dasein," human being-there. "In speaking, Dasein expresses itself – by speaking about something, about the world" (12). Moreover, speaking is "*phone*, a vocalizing which contains a *hermeneia*, i.e., which says something understandable about the world. And as this vocalizing, speaking is a mode of Being of what is alive, a mode of the *psychē* [soul]." Aristotle views "this mode of Being as *alētheuein*," and "in this way, human life in its Being, *psychē*, is speaking, interpreting, i.e., it is a carrying out of *alētheuein*" (13). Thus, at the very outset of the lectures, Heidegger places rhetoric and hermeneutics, speaking and interpreting, together as a basic grounding for his exploration of Aristotle's ontology.

Moving on to a close reading of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Heidegger again analyzes the five modes of *alētheuein*, of truth-disclosing. *Nous* is still present in the other intellectual virtues: "they are determinate modes in which *noein* [mindful seeing] can be carried out; they are *dianoein* [thinking]": "*epistēmē* and *sophia* concern that which always already was," that which will always be, that which a human "does not first produce." In contrast, "*technē* has to do with things which first have to be made and which are not yet what they will be. *Phronēsis* makes the situation accessible; and the

circumstances are always different in every action." Again: *epistēmē* and *sophia* are modes of disclosure for regarding beings who "cannot be otherwise," who "have the character of being eternal"; whereas *technē* and *phronēsis* are modes for dealing with "beings that can also be otherwise," including human beings (20).

Heidegger follows Aristotle's analysis of *phronēsis* through its comparisons with other modes of truth-disclosing. I will look here only at Heidegger's reading of chapter 5: "In the delimitation against *epistēmē*, *phronēsis* emerges as *doxa* [opinion], and in the delimitation against *technē*, as *aretē* [excellence]" (33).

Aristotle first considers which people are considered to have practical wisdom, "which human being is called a *phronimos*." Heidegger renders *NE* 1140a25ff.: "'A *phronimos* is evidently one who can deliberate well, i.e., appropriately,' who is *bouleutikos*, and specifically who can deliberate appropriately over 'that which is good (full and perfect) and which is, in addition, good *auto*, for him, the deliberator himself . . .'" (34). Any deliberation involved in *technē* relates only to the producing something, like a house; whereas phronetic deliberation always relates the thing deliberated upon to the deliberator. "In the deliberation of the *phronimos*, what he has in view is himself and his own acting" (35). Furthermore, deliberation in *phronēsis* is directed at *praxis* itself, what is to be done in a specific case, unlike *technē* and its concern for making a product (*poiēsis*). *Phronēsis* focuses on the practical activity, not simply to bring it to conclusion but in relation to the how of the action and its effect on the actor. *Phronēsis* is a mode of truth-disclosure at the service of praxis. "It is an *alētheuein* which makes an action transparent in itself," and "insofar as the transparency of a *praxis* is constitutive for this *praxis*, *phronēsis* is co-constitutive for the proper carrying out of the very action" (37).

Thus, for Aristotle *technē* and *phronēsis* significantly differ in their telos: "the object of *technē* is a *poieton* [something to be made], whereas the object of *phronēsis* is a *prakton* [something to be done]" (38). But there are other differences as well. Unlike the practical wisdom of *phronēsis*, the know-how of *technē* has various degrees. "Trial and error are proper to it. Through *technē*, one discovers whether something works or not. The more *technē* risks failure, the more secure it will be in its procedure" (37–8). Since there are degrees of technical skill, there can also be an *aretē* [excellence] for *technē*. "The ontological character of *aretē* is *teleiosis*; it constitutes the perfection of something, it brings something to completion, specifically something that has the potentiality for it, i.e., can also be without it" (37). Aristotle argues that whereas "there is an *aretē* for *technē*, a possible *teleiosis*; for *phronēsis* there is none" (*NE* 1140b21). Heidegger explains that "with *phronēsis*, unlike *technē*, there is no more or less, no 'this as well as that,' but only the seriousness of the definite decision, success or failure, either-or." With *technē* there is the possibility of failure which is constitutive of its development; but "in the case of *phronēsis* . . . every mistake is a personal shortcoming. This shortcoming with regard to oneself is not a higher possibility, not the *teleiosis* of *phronēsis*, but precisely its corruption. Other than failure the only possibility open to *phronēsis* is to genuinely hit the mark." Thus, *phronēsis* "has no *aretē* but is in itself *aretē*" (38).

What is the relation of *phronēsis* to *epistēmē*? At first it appears that *phronēsis* might be an "early stage of *epistēmē*" (scientific knowledge of necessary things) because *phronēsis* seems similar to *doxa*, which "possesses in a certain sense the character of simple knowledge; it is like a 'thematic' opinion, a view, which has no impact on any particular action." But Aristotle makes it clear that *doxa* could not be the "ground" of *phronēsis* nor could *phronēsis* be the perfection, the *aretē*, of *doxa*. The two are too radically different: far from being a passing view of things detached from any particular action, *phronēsis*, as we have already seen, has action as its telos; *doxa* "aims only at the acquisition of views and opinions," while *phronēsis* is a disclosure of truth always at the service of praxis (38–9).

And it is at this point in Heidegger's lecture that we find repeated that "pedagogical exaggeration" that Gadamer found so memorable. Heidegger notes how *alētheuein*, truth-disclosing, as it exists in *doxa* or *epistēmē* has "a peculiar character of fallenness." Heidegger speaking for Aristotle explains: "What I experience, notice, or have learned, I can forget; . . . what is disclosed can sink back into concealment. The ability to become forgotten is a specific possibility of that *alētheuein* which has the character of *theorein* [seeing, beholding]." Heidegger then creatively glosses Aristotle's claim in *NE* 1140b28ff that *phronēsis* is different in that "there is no possibility of falling into forgetting." Heidegger says:

> Certainly the explication which Aristotle gives here is very meager. But it is nevertheless clear from the context that we would not be going too far in our interpretation by saying that Aristotle has here come across the phenomenon of conscience. *Phronēsis* is nothing other than conscience set into motion, making an action transparent. Conscience cannot be forgotten. But it is quite possible that what is disclosed by conscience can be distorted and allowed to be ineffective through *hedone* [pleasure] and *lupe* [pain], through the passions. Conscience always announces itself. (39)

Heidegger again adds the acoustic to the optical in his troping of Aristotelian *phronēsis*, complementing the phronetic insight (into an action made transparent) with the aural call of phronetic conscience. "*Das Gewissen meldet sich immer wieder*" (Heidegger 1992b: 56). "Conscience announces itself again and again."

The remaining lectures on Book 6 deal primarily with detailed analyses of *sophia*, which Aristotle considers the highest mode of truth-disclosure. But before Heidegger makes the transition to his interpretation of Plato's *Sophist*, he presents some final vivid descriptions of Aristotelian *phronēsis*, visual figurations that recall some of his most important earlier arguments in drawing his listeners' attention to the human significance of practical wisdom. "*Phronēsis* is the inspection of the this here now, the inspection of the concrete momentariness of the transient situation. As *aisthēsis* [perception], it is a look of an eye in the blink of an eye, a momentary look at what is momentarily concrete, which as such can always be otherwise" (Heidegger 1997: 112–13). And finally, "in *phronēsis* the *eskaton* [outermost limit] of the deliberation shows itself in an *aisthēsis*; in a momentary glance [*Augenblick*]

I survey the concrete situation of the action, out of which and in favor of which I resolve myself" (114).

After this 1924–5 course on Aristotle and Plato, *phronēsis* as a term and the Aristotelian notion of practical wisdom as solicitous circumspection withdraw from Heidegger's path of thought, until by the 1927 publication of *Being and Time* the word *phronēsis* has disappeared completely. However, some commentators do identify significant rhetorical traces or echoes of Aristotelian *phronēsis* throughout the argument of Heidegger's book. In his masterful genetic account, Kisiel claims that Heidegger's 1921–4 readings of the *Nicomachean Ethics* provided "the manifestly pretheoretical models for the two Divisions of *Being and Time*, the *technē* of *poiēsis* for the First and the *phronēsis* of *praxis* for the Second" (Kisiel 1993: 9). And Gadamer remarks that Heidegger's 1923 "bit of spontaneous pedagogical exaggeration focused on a decisive point, by means of which Heidegger himself was preparing for his new posing of the being-question later in *Being and Time*. One thinks, in this connection, of terms like '*Gewissen-Habenwollen*' – 'the will-to-have-conscience' – in *Being and Time* sections 54ff" (Gadamer 1997: 9). There does appear to be a figural transformation of the earlier visuality of phronetic insight into the aurality of the call of conscience in the very section Gadamer cites: "Conscience gives us 'something' to understand, it *discloses* . . . A more penetrating analysis of conscience reveals it as a *call*. Calling is a mode of *discourse*. The call of conscience has the character of *summoning* Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-of-being-a-self" (Heidegger 1996: 249). Still, the glance-of-the-eye (*Augenblick*), earlier associated with *phronēsis*, does retain a certain visibility in *Being and Time*, as does a less phronetically identified circumspection (*Umsicht*) (see McNeill 1999: 93–136; Bernasconi 1989).

Despite these echoes and traces, explicitly named Aristotelian *phronēsis* disappears from the rhetorical paths of Heidegger's thought after 1927. However, it then reemerges in the thinking of Heidegger's students and later commentators. For example, Gadamer's reading of Aristotelian *phronēsis* helps him extend and transform both the hermeneutic and rhetorical dimensions of Heidegger's provocative interpretations. Analyzing Book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Heidegger emphasizes the distinction between *phronēsis* and *sophia*, practical wisdom about what is contingent and changeable versus thoughtful understanding of what is necessary and unchanging; in contrast, Gadamer takes the significant distinction to be one between *phronēsis* and *technē*, situated practical wisdom versus methodical technical skill. And while, for Heidegger, *phronēsis* is simply (but importantly) a mode of thinking with interpretive and rhetorical aspects; for Gadamer, *phronēsis* is *the* model for rhetorical hermeneutic activity as such. That is, *phronēsis* marks various places in Heidegger's early thinking where speech and understanding, discourse and interpretation, relate to each other in his more general phenomenological ontology of truth; whereas throughout Gadamer's long career *phronēsis* functions as a privileged analogy for explaining how hermeneutic application works and how it is tied to rhetoric within his philosophical hermeneutics. Heidegger's rhetorical path of thought moves through *phronēsis* to his more central preoccupations with the truth of Being; but Gadamer's thought takes *phronēsis*

along the way as a guiding analogy in his ongoing effort to revive practical philosophy as hermeneutics.

Gadamerian *phronēsis* brings us closer to contemporary anti-foundationalist, pragmatist readings of practical reason. This is not surprising, since Gadamer was responding against some of the same scientistic, objectivist, formalist directions of thought that today's critical theorizing finds itself addressing. In Gadamer's case, the issue was a technologized version of Cartesian rationalism promoted as a scientific project that could find natural laws to explain and guide all human action. In Foucauldian terms, what was problematized in European culture of the mid-twentieth century was the effort to understand and control human action on the model of scientific accounts of non-human natural phenomena. Today, the challenges of over-technologized thinking remain, of course, but within the human sciences such thinking has undergone a great deal of critical scrutiny after the so-called linguistic and hermeneutic turns. It is the residue of formalist thinking within and alongside those turns that contemporary anti-foundationalism continues to address.

There is another important difference between Heidegger's reception of Aristotelian *phronēsis* and that of Heidegger's own readers – a difference, some would say, that makes all the difference. Unlike Heidegger, Gadamer refers directly to the connection Aristotle makes between *phronēsis* and politics. When in 1924 Heidegger discusses Aristotle's key definitions of practical wisdom, he chooses the formulation in which Aristotle relates phronetic deliberation primarily to the deliberator (*NE* 1140a25; see Heidegger 1997: 34). Heidegger ignores the Aristotelian definition that explicitly connects *phronēsis* to both the deliberator *and* other people, the definition that gives the great political orator Pericles as an example of *phronimos* at *NE* 1140b8, which I quoted at the outset. Gadamer, in contrast, not only cites this passage and names Pericles in one early essay on "Praktisches Wissen" (Gadamer 1930: 240); he also specifically mentions the importance of *politike phronēsis* in *Truth and Method* (Gadamer 1989: 316, 541). In still another essay, Gadamer notes Aristotle's question: "Is politics just an expertise of certain technicians of human life and is there a way to teach virtue and to teach in the field of political decision-making – to teach in the sense of conveying a certain knowledge, the truth, to which the pupil can refer as something reliable?" And then Gadamer answers with Aristotle: "Obviously not. . . . [T]o this extent 'politics' as moral philosophy cannot be a *technē* and teach a set of rules, for to do so would overlook the function of *phronēsis* which is just the application of more or less vague ideals of virtues and attitudes to the concrete demand of the situation." Gadamer adds that such phronetic application cannot develop "by mere rules" but must be accomplished by reasoning humans themselves (Gadamer 1979: 82). This last remark ties Gadamer's comments on politics and *phronēsis* to the most important discussion of *phronēsis* in *Truth and Method*, "The Hermeneutic Relevance of Aristotle" (Gadamer 1989: 312–24). Here Gadamer uses Aristotle to explain his view of non-rule-governed, non-methodical application of universals to particulars and presents this situation-specific notion of phronetic

application as a model for his own philosophical hermeneutics and its claims for the pragmatic intimacy and theoretical interdependence of interpretation and rhetoric.

Even more than Gadamer, Hannah Arendt relied on a political notion of *phronēsis* in developing her distinctive philosophical thinking. I will only touch on a few points along her way. In the "Prologue" to her book *The Human Condition* Arendt makes clear the rhetorical and hermeneutic core of her political philosophy: "Men in the plural, that is, men insofar as they live and move and act in this world, can experience meaningfulness only because they can talk with and make sense to each other and to themselves" (Arendt 1958: 4). In her reading of Aristotle, Arendt remarks that political life (*bios politikos*) explicitly denotes "only the realm of human affairs, stressing the action, *praxis*, needed to establish and sustain it" (13). Furthermore, "to be political, to live in a *polis*, meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence. In Greek self-understanding, to force people by violence, to command rather than persuade, were prepolitical ways to deal with people characteristic of life outside the *polis*" (26–7). In the political world, phronetic judgment is paramount. Against some commentators, Arendt reserves Greek *phronēsis* for the political actor and not the philosophical thinker (226n.).

> The capacity to judge is a specifically political ability in exactly the sense denoted by Kant, namely, the ability to see things not only from one's own point of view but in the perspective of all those who happen to be present; even that judgment may be one of the fundamental abilities of man as a political being insofar as it enables him to orient himself in the public realm, in the common world . . . The Greeks called this ability *phronēsis*, or insight, and they considered it the principal virtue or excellence of the statesman in distinction from the wisdom of the philosopher. (Arendt 1968: 221)

In her singular reading of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, Arendt refined her notion of political judgment or *phronēsis*, but she no doubt also learned from the distinctions she read in Aristotle and heard from Heidegger, distinctions between *phronēsis* and *technē* on the one hand and between *praxis* and *poiēsis* on the other. For Arendt, political judgment always involves phronetic insight and can never become just a technical art. Human value resides first and foremost in the active life of political practice, not in the working activity of material making; and the active life is rhetorical through and through. As Arendt puts it,

> Speechless action would no longer be action because there would no longer be an actor, and the actor, the doer of deeds, is possible only if he is at the same time the speaker of words. The action he begins is humanly disclosed by the word, and though his deed can be perceived in its brute physical appearance without verbal accompaniment, it becomes relevant only through the spoken word in which he identifies himself as the actor, announcing what he does, has done, and intends to do. (Arendt 1958: 178–9)

Political deliberation, persuasive rhetoric, disclosing speech, phronetic judgment: these are the interlocking practices that Arendt puts at the center of her philosophical paths of thought.

There are many other roads networking the terrain of twentieth-century receptions of *phronēsis*. For rhetorical hermeneutics, the most important of these runs through neo-pragmatism and its contributions to such contemporary debates as those over anti-essentialism and anti-foundationalism and the relation of theory to politics. Richard Rorty, for instance, characterizes pragmatism as an anti-essentialist take on such philosophical topics as truth, knowledge, language, and morality. Endorsing William James's view of truth as simply "what is good in the way of belief," Rorty explains that pragmatists typically say little more about what truth *is*, about its essence, because "truth" is simply not the sort of thing that has a deep essence, some permanent, isolatable way of being itself that can be captured in a theory of truth. And pragmatists certainly don't believe that there is a foundational theory of truth that can be used in practice to determine what we should believe or do or say. "Rather, the pragmatists tell us, it is the vocabulary of practice rather than of theory, of action rather than contemplation, in which one can say something useful about truth" (Rorty 1982: 162). Such views lead Rorty to emphasize the rhetorical and interpretive aspects of epistemological activity: "For the pragmatists, the pattern of all inquiry – scientific as well as moral – is deliberation concerning the relative attractions of various concrete alternatives" (164). In the political realm as well, it is situated rhetorical activities not abstract philosophical theory that contingently grounds democratic and other forms of government. Rorty thus rejects epistemologically centered philosophy that searches "for a way in which one can avoid the need for conversation and deliberation and simply tick off the way things are" from some theory. Having traveled along the rhetorical paths traced in this essay, we should not be surprised that Rorty describes the traditional philosophical desire he rejects as "this urge to substitute *theoria* for *phronēsis*" (164).

There are still other highways and byways to follow in the receptions of *phronēsis* in contemporary philosophy, critical theory, and cultural history (see, for example, MacIntyre 1984; Bernstein 1983; Kahn 1985; Garver 1987). But I am going to stop here for the moment. I have tracked rhetorical paths in this essay to illustrate some ways rhetorical hermeneutics works as critical practice and as theoretical claims. Following these paths reveals how interpretations of *phronēsis* have historically tied rhetoric and hermeneutics closely together: situation-specific, non-rule-based praxis contingently grounds both effective language-use and successful sense-making; both rhetoric and interpretation involve practical readings of singular events and scenes; specific rhetorical and interpretive acts are, in fact, intertwined events within scenes; and both are historically and geographically situated as practices within contexts that cannot be completely formalized nor understood independent of power relations. These are some of rhetorical hermeneutics' theses regarding *phronēsis*. In fact, it is not too much of a pedagogical exaggeration to say that rhetorical hermeneutics is a

phronetic tracking of rhetorical paths of thought, treating rhetoric as both *tool* and *topic*, tracing both the rhetoric of thinking and the thinking about rhetoric.

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Rhetoric and Poetics: How to Use the Inevitable Return of the Repressed

Charles Altieri

Our instructions for this volume were to engage our respective topics from the point of view of a rhetorician. But for my topic this instruction creates significant problems. I doubt that it is possible at this historical juncture to think like a rhetorician and give an adequate theoretical account of relations between rhetoric and poetry. On the one hand, rhetoric now holds the upper hand, so that assuming the rhetorician's role makes it very difficult not to let self-congratulation shape one's thinking.[1] Conversely, poetry is now in so abject a cultural position among intellectuals that its strictures against such self-congratulation are not likely to penetrate very far into the rhetorician's self-definitions. Yet since Romanticism at least, poetics has often founded itself on constitutive oppositions to rhetoric, so there is no escaping the contrast. The best strategy then might be to make the best case I can for the uses poets made of these oppositions. Maintaining traditional oppositions is not exactly the noblest of contemporary intellectual practices, especially in cases like this one where in practice rhetoric and poetry are often intricately intertwined. But by choosing this path we at least give poetry a place to stand in the public sphere. And, more important, by defending the poet's positive assertions we can establish a framework of oppositions that then can be used in order to dramatize what happens when the poles become contaminated by their inescapable proximity to their projected antitheses. Poets' resistances to rhetoric in principle do not guarantee their finding distinctive alternatives. In fact poetry becomes most interesting in these contexts when it has to face the ways in which it must take up rhetorical projects even as it tries to free itself from what it regards as the dangers inherent in those projects.

Here my arguments for basic contrasts between the two domains will rely on modernist poetics. This certainly tilts the scales because poetics since Romanticism has been far more resistant to rhetoric than traditional poetics. Yet it is probably not unfair to argue that both traditional theory and traditional practice in fact have

to pursue similar distinctions, albeit within a cultural framework shaped by rhetorical education.[2] Taking this modernist perspective also promises two somewhat fresh orientations within the theory of rhetoric. First, this perspective can offer forceful critiques of standard rhetorical values. Sophisticated theories of rhetoric have worked hard to invent a rhetoric closely tied to hermeneutics and to pragmatism so that they can avoid the line of criticism inaugurated by Plato and carried on in various guises by most significant work in poetics. Plato was concerned with rhetoric as falsification, as means of having the appearance of propositions in fact shaped by practical designs on an audience. But his emphasis was less on the conditions of argumentation than it was on the psychology that rhetoric inculcated in those who learned to manipulate audience responses.[3] Modernist critiques of rhetoric also put such psychological criticism center stage, so they may create pressure on rhetorical theorists to take that stance seriously. More important, I want to show that modernist attitudes to rhetoric involve more than critique. For if we shift from modernist theory to poetic practice, especially the practice of William Butler Yeats and Wallace Stevens, we see that despite their abiding hatred of "rhetoric" their poetry frequently turns to the figure of the orator as a figure for the powers of idealization they project for their imaginative labors. The psychological emphases that ground their criticisms therefore also open an alternative route for attributing value to rhetorical concerns. These poets try to establish powers for eloquence that are not linked to specific social roles or images but internally establish what the speaking can confer. And that seems to me significant news for contemporary theory because our dominant rhetorics about rhetoric seem willing to forgo entirely the ideal of eloquence in their eagerness to show how rhetoric facilitates the forming of communities by helping us come to shareable judgments about actions and events.

I

So far I have spoken too much in the manner of a rhetorician. That is, I have presumed on a commonsense understanding of the key terms "rhetoric" and "poetics." On topics like these it is difficult and foolish to attempt breaking entirely from such understanding. But it is worth seeking some reflective distance, if only because we can then recognize some of the difficulties evaded by relying on common sense. Definitions of rhetoric have to find a balance between two aspects of rhetorical practice – its role in shaping deliberation and its role in fostering persuasion. And definitions of poetics have to develop a way of negotiating claims both for a distinctive kind of reference and for a distinctive investment in pleasures of language that pull away from epistemic uses of language.

Education in rhetoric is crucial for cultural life because it trains people in developing and adapting arguments that have the power to elicit agreement even among groups with quite different social agendas. Consider, for example, how Walter Jost

and Michael J. Hyde present an initial summary of their case for linking rhetoric and hermeneutics:

> Rhetoric makes its living first and foremost in the world of know-how. It discovers the materials that are needed for its work from how people are involved with the everyday concerns and contingencies of life. Here the available means of persuasion are found and people await the acknowledgment of their particular interests by those who engage them in collaborative deliberation about contestable matters. The effectiveness of rhetoric is dependent on its staying in touch with this emotionally attuned realm of praxis, of the person. For only then can it attend to, with the hope of clarifying and improving, its audiences' active relationships with things and with others. (Jost and Hyde 1997: 9; see also pp. 28–9 for their summary)

Rhetoric becomes the art of responsiveness to demands for meaning and for direction in circumstances where it is not possible to call upon essences or preestablished rules.

Notice then how timely this discipline becomes. Its emphases on indeterminate situations and audience-specific communications enable it to absorb poststructural motifs without having to submit to the critical skepticism typically built into most poststructural work. And rhetoric seems entirely compatible with the contemporary emphasis on historicity that makes the ahistorical reliance on conceptual analysis pursued by most Anglo-American philosophy seem increasingly irrelevant. Yet that very currency seems to me to allow the theory to avoid addressing the more problematic aspects of the topic that become inescapable when one dwells on rhetoric's commitments to arts of persuasion. Emphasis on the nature of arguments calls attention to the capacity rhetoric has to establish structures of mutual recognition and acknowledgment that can shape public space. The art of persuasion, in contrast, seems to me necessarily to involve how rhetoric becomes a means of pursuing individual interests, many of which are difficult to reconcile with the public good. So several problems emerge that proved as fascinating to poets as they are embarrassing to contemporary theory. There is first the basic question of why anyone should feel an obligation to subordinate the individual ends the rhetor has to any definable public or communal ends. Why not use the rhetoric of public interests for private purposes? Then there is the more complex domain of what happens to individuals when so much of their discourse has to take on the voice of the public. Those who would seduce always run the risk of being seduced by the rhetorical identifications that they seek. Finally, the need to compensate for these dangers of seduction tempts theorists to make problematic concessions. Consider, for example, what happens when Jost and Hyde find themselves having to address Emmanuel Levinas' equating "rhetoric with 'ruse, emprise, and exploitation'." Levinas worries that those trained in persuasion will not devote themselves to hearing the "primordial call of the other." So Jost and Hyde try to provide something like a vanilla version of rhetoric that is "without eloquence," and so can be seen as the most primordial rhetoric of all (Jost and Hyde 1997: 13, 31). But rhetoric without eloquence is rhetoric without any capacity to bring a sense of

affective weight to persuasion, and it is rhetoric without the capacity to reflect on how its powers reach beyond the discursive practices of reasoning. Their discipline becomes a rhetoric without rhetors, and without winners and losers – no wonder that it seems so amenable to social agreement.

Once we do develop a sense of how these dangers impinge on theory, we will be better positioned to appreciate how quarrels poetics pick with rhetoric might play a significant role in modifying our understanding of both domains. But to pursue those possibilities it is also prudent to spend a few paragraphs getting clear on how I want to use the idea of "poetics." Since nothing seems to matter for contemporary culture that does not promise an epistemic pay-off helping us make judgments about truth and falsity, it is tempting to rely on versions of poetics that emphasize its claims to provide a distinctive kind of knowledge. For example, Jost and Hyde treat poetry in Heideggerean terms as simply a more event-oriented aspect of the same emphasis on disclosure that they cultivate in talking about rhetoric:

> In its most elucidating and epiphanic moments, it is not uncommon for the assertions of rhetoric to assume a poetic nature. Heidegger tells us that "poetry, creative literature is nothing but the elementary emergence into words, the becoming uncovered of existence of existence as being in the world [of know-how]. For the others who before it were blind, the world becomes visible by what is thus spoken." (Jost and Hyde 1997: 9)

And their collection provides a much richer elaboration of how this epistemic perspective frames the relation between poetry and rhetoric in a terrific essay by Paul Ricoeur.

Ricoeur treats rhetoric as fundamentally an art of shaping arguments so that they can produce persuasion within the options posited between "the constraint of the necessary and the arbitrariness of the contingent" or "the violence hidden within purely seductive discourse" (Ricoeur 1997: 62). Therefore the rhetorician's goal is "to transfer the agreement granted to premises onto the conclusion" (62). Eloquence and the pleasure of style help facilitate that transfer. Poetics, in contrast, replaces the elaboration of arguments by an emphasis on "the invention of a fable plot" (65). Therefore, where rhetoric has to work primarily with conventional ideas and assumptions, poetics points to the breach of newness that creative imagination opens in a field. Rhetoric relies on shared premises to generate appropriate conclusions; poetry relies on invented worlds in order to make possible a sense that sharing extends to the previously un-thought. To accomplish this, poetry does not rely on argument but depends on having its audience undergo a certain kind of experience (whose archetype is Aristotelian catharsis). Because it produces actual experience, poetry can use the imaginary in order to shake up the very order of persuasion. Its aim is not "settling a controversy" but "the generating of new convictions" (66). Its weakness lies in the fact that this dependence on experience makes it impossible for such representations "to equal the concept" (65).

I cannot imagine a tighter formulation of basic differences between poetry and rhetoric. But economy has its price. Modernist writers would insist that Ricoeur's understanding of poetry is far too Aristotelian, too much a matter of plot and too little responsive to differences between composing states of mind and "generating new convictions." It is impossible to deny that poets are often uneasy about the fact that whatever persuasion they achieve by virtue of manipulating concrete experience remains inadequate with the domain of concepts. However, Ricoeur fails to see that precisely because that issue so worries poets (and other artists), they have taken considerable steps to address the problem. Poets have had to realize that so long as they offer their presentations as efforts to contribute to the epistemic domain, to the domain where concepts reign and assertions invite being tested as propositions, they are doomed to seem evasive and inadequate. So they have developed quite different ways of representing the impact they envision their work making on the world. Like Ricoeur, the modernists invoke experience, but not experience framed by plot. Rather, the relevant experiences depend directly on the energies deployed within the intentional states that the texts compose. Poets see themselves dealing not with concepts but with the modalities of consciousness that establish how concepts might eventually be given places within our grammars for adapting to the world.[4] And it is precisely to establish such modalities that poetics needs the contrast with rhetoric.

II

The rest of this essay might be considered a supplement to Ricoeur. It tries to flesh out how poets develop contrasts with rhetoric in order to negotiate the fact that their work cannot successfully invoke the authority our culture attributes to arguments and concepts. I hope to show how they formulate significant critiques and how they eventually develop a partial alternative vision of how rhetoric might conceive the roles eloquence can play in social life. In order to clarify the internal logic of the poets' critiques I will adapt an organization of topoi developed by Meyer Abrams in the first chapter of his *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1958). He proposes four basic points of stress on any poetic theory: what distinguishes the work as art, how is authorship best figured within the work, how the audience attunes itself to such distinction, and how the work develops specific means of orienting itself to the world without relying on concepts. Using these topoi will lead to some conceptual overlap, and it risks keeping the relations between the two disciplines too neatly tied into prevailing binary oppositions. But this plan promises three compensations for these risks. The division into topoi should provide a strong sense of where the various lines of contention arise. It should also help us focus on the modernist sense that to talk about rhetoric is also to talk about the psychology of rhetoricians as they seek to orient themselves in relation to each of these poles. Then, finally, if readers should find the contrasts inadequate or want to reverse the direction and seek significant complements between the disciplines, they have clear categories they can use for their arguments.

The nature of the verbal object in rhetorical and in lyric performance

> The value of a profane thing lies in what it usefully does, the value of a sacred thing lies
> in what it is: a sacred thing may also have a function but it does not have to. (W. H.
> Auden, in Ellmann and Feidelson 1965: 215)

Modernism had many ways to make the distinction Auden puts so succinctly. But
all these ways depended on establishing sharp differences between uses of language
that have overt practical ambitions and those that can be considered direct presenta-
tions of focused energies. Rhetoric demands an economy of means, poetry an excess
attention to the entire mediation process because it is there that the relevant modes
of performative presence take hold. Rhetorical acts are limited by how the originating
context is understood: rhetorical acts have causes and ends. Poetic ones can be said
to constitute their own fields of force: poets play on an initial cause and let their
working transform its valences. Consequently, in order to appreciate poetry we have to
avoid treating the utterance as an intervention in any kind of conceptual practice.[5]
Value resides in how a particular configuration of energies brings about distinctive
states of consciousness. And rather than having emotions oriented toward actions,
poetry is seen as involving affective lives in the particular ways that the verbal
energies unfold.

For the implications of these distinctions we can turn to Ezra Pound's contrast
between modes of language capable of presenting a sense of actuality and those that
are committed to working by way of description and overt evaluation by the impos-
ition of adjectival modifiers. Never one to deny his prose a striking rhetorical
formulation, Pound suggested that rhetoric be understood as the art of the "advertis-
ing agent for a new soap" (Ellmann and Feidelson 1965: 144). Where the artist and
the scientist aim at a sense of realization in the present tense, the rhetorician aims at
persuasion and so has to modulate the present with an eye toward what can shape a
desired future. This logic then produces just the opposite reading of praxis from the
one cultivated by Jost and Hyde. The modernists saw a commitment to praxis as
necessarily a demand that the medium be governed by external projects rather than by
attention to what unfolds within it and gets realized through that unfolding. Reduced
to a world of functions, the language of rhetoric is condemned to circling around what
the arts think they can make present. And rhetoric's sense of values is confined to the
producing of practical effects on specific audiences. The arts, on the other hand, are
given the capacity to explore how the very modes of mediation can be adapted to
specific qualities of experience that matter because of the life they afford in the
present. Where rhetoric is for the most part bound to uses of language that function
as the preformed curves used in making architectural plans, poetry can be presented as
seeking what T. E. Hulme projected as the verbal life of a steel spring tautly bound to
what it isolates for attention.[6]

Performative agency in rhetoric and in poetry

> We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry. Unlike the rhetoricians, who get a confident voice from remembering the crowd they have won or may win, we sing amid our uncertainty...Wordsworth, great poet though he be, is so often flat and heavy partly because his moral sense, being a discipline he had not created, a mere obedience, has no theatrical element. (Yeats 1962: 331, 334)

Ethos is a crucial concern for both rhetoric and poetics. But from the modernists' perspective, each discipline makes quite different uses of the presentation of character. Rhetoric uses character as part of its efforts to persuade an audience. Therefore the speaking voice has to be recognizable in some role that is expected to win the admiration of the audience. Rhetors are seducers: they have to enter the complex of needs and values that motivates other persons and adapt themselves to become figures of desire within that framework. Having such knowledge makes for considerable power. Yet there is also a constant danger that the seducer will be seduced in turn. Constantly presenting oneself so as to appeal to the imaginary needs of others creates the temptation to represent oneself to oneself in the same imaginary terms. That is why the modernists were so leery of all claims to public dignity, and so suspicious of private self-images that could be rendered in terms of public moralities. The pleasing of others readily becomes inseparable from having to please versions of that other within oneself as the condition of having any identity at all that one can affirm.

Faced with pervasive evidence for this emotional logic, modernist poets were tempted to invoke a simple contrast between the rhetorician's reliance on the other and the poet's efforts to bring into the present of the work of art the direct energies that express the poet's own sensibility. Then where rhetoric traps the self in social categories, poetry can be seen as the occasion where the self articulates its own desires. Indeed, Yeats' epigram suggests just such a notion. But to stop here is to ignore Yeats' somewhat strange (yet, for me, telling) contrast between the mere obedience demanded of moral roles and the theatricality required by the discipline that turns expression into art. If we are to accommodate this aspect of Yeats' thinking, we have to recast the contrast. The danger for poetry is that it will let the desire for expression be driven by the rhetorician's imaginary versions of personal identity. In order to expunge the imaginary ego – in my view the fundamental modernist impulse – poets had to envision their art as offering the possibility of subsuming all appeals to personal ethos under some more absolute version of intensity. Such intensity would not stop with images of the self but would make the art itself establish sites of self-reflection so intricate and focused that images of the self would prove only painful limitation. This is the basic rationale for Eliot's impersonality as well as for Pound's vision of Vorticism as "art before it has spread itself into flaccidity, into elaboration, and secondary applications" (Pound 1970: 88).[7] And it is also the imperative driving Yeats to make self-expression inseparable from a confrontation with one's own

opposite, the precondition for modes of self-assertion that become something like the energies of a pure ego that can only be rendered indirectly in images.

Audience in rhetoric and in poetry

> When the man who is walking has reached his goal . . . when he has reached the place, book, fruit, the object of his desire . . . this possession at once entirely annuls his whole act: the effect swallows up the cause, the end absorbs the means; and, whatever the act, only the result remains. It is the same with utilitarian language; . . . this language, when it has served its purpose, evaporates almost as it is heard; . . . my speech no longer exists: it has been completely replaced by its meaning . . . The poem, on the other hand, does not die for having lived; it is expressly designed to be born again from its ashes and to become endlessly what it has just been. (Valery 1965: 80–1)

One cannot simply equate rhetorical performance with utilitarian language. There is always the impulse toward eloquence. Yet it seemed to modern poets crucial to treat rhetoric itself as fundamentally a utilitarian practice. For the rhetorician's basic projection of audience made this an inescapable conclusion. Rhetoric differs pronouncedly from the ambitious work that modernists celebrated as "poetry" (in contrast to "verse") because it shapes its discourses in relation to quite specific audiences – specific both in role (juries, assemblies, celebrations) and in having apparently determinate values framing its investments and practices. Ambitious poetry, on the other hand, often has to set itself against the values of all the audiences with which it is familiar and hope that it can in basic ways either construct an audience or find those fit but few who can bring the work back to life from its ashes. As Wallace Stevens put it, "Suppose any man whose spirit has survived had consulted his contemporaries as to what to do or what to think, or what music to write, and so on" (Stevens 1969: 180).

One has to speak about ambitious poetry here because the issue of audience provides also an important way of appreciating why rhetoric cannot simply be treated as an external other whose limitations clarify poetry's strengths. Poetry is always haunted by rhetoric as its internal other, its temptation to attune itself to the demands and values of audiences whose satisfactions it can readily predict. How else can it establish its ambitions? So rather than deny their affinities with rhetoric on this account, poets tended to make the basic distinction in negative terms. Unlike rhetoric, poetry could envision audiences always in tension with the ones that the writers think they understand and know how to please. Even this sense of tension and of discomfort will not guarantee that resistance to one audience is not an effort to seduce another equally determined group. But the investment in discomfort holds out the hope that maintaining an indeterminacy in one's sense of audience makes it possible to cultivate new ways of seeing and feeling and judging.

When an audience can be clearly projected, one can also generate a fairly definite picture of what ends one wants to achieve. And the end in turn produces a specific set

of constraints and possibilities that largely shapes what means the rhetor uses to achieve these ends. In effect the rhetor's role is to identify with the audience, or, more precisely, to identify with how the audience is likely to identify itself. The rhetor has to appropriate the values of the audience in order to show how such identifications might be fully realized if the audience takes on what the rhetor projects. In this regard the rhetor does not so much present persuasive arguments as persuade by manifesting significant power to wield the resources for argument with which the audience most strongly identifies.

No poet can confidently assert that he or she is free of the same patterns of internalization. Yet, as I have argued, they can commit themselves to resisting such satisfactions. That is one reason why it mattered to modernists, and should matter to those of us now grappling with issues of multiculturalism, to appreciate the values of keeping one's audience as ill defined as possible.[8] Then one can also resist what we might call "presumptive predicates" about authorship. By keeping the author and audience positions indeterminate, writers have constantly to be inventing them anew. The audience becomes a kind of proleptic vision of how ideal response might be possible in relation to what the poetry can make. And the author becomes in effect a figure whose creative powers have to be read back from the modes of objective energy that the author composes. Art must stress its own objectivity precisely because its parameters are not definable by received notions of author and audience. Hence we find William Carlos Williams claiming that "prose has to do with the fact of an emotion; poetry has to do with the dynamization of emotion into a separate form" (Williams 1970: 133). And Arthur Rimbaud makes a beautiful contrast between the subjective poet bound to self-satisfaction with specific poetic roles and objective poetry that offers the promise of arriving "at the unknown by the disordering of all the senses" (Rimbaud 1965: 203).

Such contrasts with the rhetor's treatment of the audience function allow poets three related but distinctive claims about their ways of engaging social contexts. At one pole, there are numerous assertions that poetry plays significant cultural roles because its basic concern is not with any kind of direct communication shaped by engaging an audience but rather with the construction of vital singularities. These singularities matter because they continually put pressure on culture's normative frameworks and thus keep us attuned to what is capable of resisting those categorical structures.[9] At the opposite pole, poetry seems capable of idealizations not bound to practical contexts and the critical frameworks they bring to bear. Paul Valery locates the ultimate value of poetry in its capacity to find within the ephemeral sphere "an idea of some *self* miraculously superior to Myself" (Valery 1965: 85). And Wallace Stevens beautifully fleshes out what this superiority or exponential force might be in his range of speculations on the idea that "we are creatures not of a part, which is our everyday limitation, but of a whole for which, for the most part, we have as yet no language" (Stevens 1969: 189). The third set of claims tries to combine these ambitions so that singularity bears the burden of idealization. Here William Carlos

Williams provides a striking example when he imagines how a poetry resistant to rhetoric might be central to democracy:

> The imagination will not d[r]own. If it is not a dance, a song, it becomes an outcry, a protest. If it is not flamboyant, it becomes deformity; if it is not art, it becomes crime. Men and women cannot be content, any more than children, with the mere facts of a humdrum life – the imagination must adorn and exaggerate life, must give it splendor and grotesqueness, beauty and infinite depth. And the mere acceptance of these things from without is not enough – it is not enough to agree and assert when the imagination demands for satisfaction creative energy. (Williams 1970: 200)

Basic lines of relation to the actual world in rhetoric and in poetry

The nobility of rhetoric is, of course, a lifeless nobility. Pareto's epigram that history is a cemetery of aristocracies easily becomes another: that poetry is a cemetery of nobilities. For the sensitive poet, conscious of negations, nothing is more difficult than the affirmations of nobility, and yet there is nothing that he requires of himself more persistently, since in them and in their kind, alone, are to be found those sanctions that are the reasons for his being and for that occasional ecstasy, or ecstatic freedom of the mind, which is his special privilege. (Stevens 1965: 35)

Obviously the category of rhetoric's relation to the world will ultimately include aspects of every topic we have been discussing. But it is worth taking up this category as a distinctive one because it affords the best access to the poets' most comprehensive uneasiness with the rhetorical dimension of their own work. If poetry is to claim an audience and an agency that differs from rhetoric, then this difference must be visible in how it hooks into the world. And, perhaps more important, if poetry is to be significantly different from rhetoric, this must appear in how the world imposes itself on the work that the poet produces. Yet on the face of it, rhetoric seems far more effective a worldly discipline than does poetry. Rhetoric develops possibilities for sponsoring actions that make practical differences in states of affairs; it has the capacity to put the powers of discourse to work in resolving public dilemmas; and it offers means of orienting the emotions so as to give significance to the actions we pursue in relation to those dilemmas. Poetry, on the other hand, seems capable of little more than aestheticizing or memorializing situations rather than resolving them.

Poets had two ways of responding to these contrasts. They could, and did, argue that while rhetoric directly addresses states of affairs it has to do so in discursive ways that limit them to imprecise formulations and that trap them in contemporary ideologies. Poetry instead could provide non-discursive presentations that at least created the appearance that world was coming directly into speech. A good example here is the Hulmean contrast on the architect's curves that I discussed in talking about the distinctive qualities of poetry as work. The second mode of response will take more attention, in part because it reveals and negotiates probably the poet's most pressing anxieties. Poets argued that they have, or can have, a different relation to

history than do rhetoricians. Making this case required taking the opposite tack from the one that criticized rhetoric's relation to its audiences. There the danger of rhetoric was its subjecting its agency to the demands of those it would lead. Now the case is made in terms of rhetoric finding its language continually collapsing into the history it would interpret. Both poetry and rhetoric involve idealization: it cannot suffice to describe states of affairs because the agents must also indicate why certain relations to those states and directions through them are preferable to others. But for the poets, rhetoric had a more problematic relation to such idealization. When rhetors tried to represent the values that they projected as possibilities for the world, these values turned out to be inseparable from the datedness of the situations they engaged. Poets, too, had their share of images relegated to the dump along with all the other trash civilization produces. But they could use the fact that theirs was the less practically oriented discipline in order to pursue possibilities that they could manifest human powers and reflect on those manifestations in ways not quite subject to the same demise.

The clearest example of this line of reasoning takes place in Wallace Stevens' essay "The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words." Stevens links the fundamental danger of rhetoric to its greatest challenge: rhetoric has to provide a body for the sense of nobility underlying its sense of eloquence as a form of human power. Rhetoric and poetry each manifest the enormous differences between human actions that do and do not derive from the force of active yet disciplined imagination. Yet neither art has to be explicit about these differences: poetry can concentrate on realizing particular intentional states and rhetoric can be content with the effects that its eloquence produces. But if they submit to so reducing their scope, neither art can bring its own powers to full self-consciousness or provide for its society the richest possible picture of why eloquence appeals and what it calls out in those who respond to it. Only at its fullest reach can rhetoric persuade not only to do something, but also to believe that the motive for the actions enables us to represent ourselves as possessing certain powers and pursuing certain ends. And only at its fullest reach can poetry provide plausible models for its own expansive constructive activity.

Rhetoric runs into serious difficulties when it tries to bring to reflection the grounds of its own idealizations. Because rhetoricians are bound to specific audiences, they also seem bound to providing specific representations of that nobility by locating it in relation to the models of behavior comprising concrete social theaters. The eloquent person has to have some consistency with the practical person and with the discourses of motive that the society honors. But this need to find a place within these discourses also makes the rhetor's constructions especially vulnerable to what Stevens calls "the pressure of reality," "the pressure of an external event or events on the consciousness to the exclusion of any powers of contemplation" (Stevens 1965: 20). Imagine a rhetor as the composer of sculptured figures that offer the society a means of articulating its own capacities for idealization. Precisely because such work must externalize for society what it takes as praiseworthy, its projections become subject to the force of events. In its public sculpture, as in much of its rhetoric, Washington, DC

is a nineteenth-century city. And its terms of praise are so distant from vital contemporary values that it is no wonder cynicism has so free a hand. The long history of noble riders comes to a sad end in the statue of Andrew Jackson because this work reveals a sense of the American mind as "easily satisfied in its efforts to realize itself in knowing itself" (Stevens 1965: 10). Consequently the image has very little power to hold off the pressure of reality, the force exerted against that weak act of imagining by everything that in fact goes on in Washington. History seems far more powerful than those who attempt to provide images of nobility that interpret what agents might accomplish in relation to that history.

Poetry is not at all free of the same needs, and it is subject to the same pressures, to which it often succumbs. But because poetry is more closely linked to contemplation and somewhat more free of the need for specific images that seem capable of carrying its particular versions of nobility, one can find there possibilities for better engaging the pressures history imposes. Rather than staking itself on specific idealized images, poetry can attune to modernity by basing its appeal to nobility on certain qualities of self-consciousness visible only in process:

> The subject matter of poetry is not that "collection of solid, static objects extended in space" but the life that is lived in the scene that it composes; and so reality is not that external scene but the life that is lived in it . . . It is hard to think of a thing more out of time than nobility. Looked at plainly it seems false and dead and ugly . . . But as a wave is a force and not the water of which it is composed, which is never the same, so nobility is a force and not the manifestations of which it is composed, which are never the same. (Stevens 1965: 25, 35–6)

At the least, poetry has this opportunity for turning back on its own processes in order to stage that imagination in the very activity of "pressing back against the pressure of reality" (Stevens 1965: 36). And in doing that the poetry can claim for itself the ability to resist a range of easier, and far more debilitating, versions of satisfaction with ourselves and our worlds.

III

Concluding these contrasts with Stevens proves fortuitous because he also affords us significant ways to shift the focus from poetry's critique of rhetoric to poetry's offering suggestions for new positive emphases within rhetorical theory. His silence in the years after *Harmonium* helped Stevens gain considerable distance from the then-prevailing modernism, and hence from those attitudes toward rhetoric with which I have been identifying. He came to think that it would be a major mistake for poetics to expel the figure of the orator. Instead, poets had to imagine how they could recast that figure so as to identify it with the processes made self-reflexive within poetry. Then by building upon the desires elicited by and articulated

through imagining orators, Stevens projected a form of eloquence that might enable rhetoric to stand up to the modernist critiques he had been instrumental in formulating.

Most modernist critiques of rhetoric are based on the claim that poetry can pursue a privileged relation to the real – either as a means of non-discursively capturing fundamental features of experience or as a straightforward construction of events that are real in their own right. Where rhetoric is bound to persuasion and so to seducing audiences, poetry is bound only to "make it new" by giving objective presence to the imagination in the act of discovering a wide range of values. Stevens would not object to either claim; nor will I. But even if such assertions hold up, they involve serious costs that we now have to specify, then see how poetry can engage the problems involved. Modernist values cut away most links between the vitalized present and the contexts that might be informed by that present: modernism cultivates freedom of mind as an immediate condition and so risks producing an atomistic series of charged moments united only by a constant awareness that relevant connecting tissues are all too damaged to be of use. And its resistance to imaginary egos made it extremely difficult to cultivate any idealization not grounded in the specific working of the art object. There had been enough parading of expressive sincerity and moral authority that became emptier the more closely one examined the postures taken. But their efforts at purification turned out also to expel forces that might be very important, if not absolutely necessary, if poetry was to provide social formulations for what it brought to bear in its efforts to have art create its own present tense. So in my view all the major modernists eventually had to find ways of honoring the qualities of mind that go into producing imaginary identifications while also evading the inherited images that had sustained such identifications. And one basic way to do that was to return to the figure of the orator abstracted from rhetorical situations and examined for the pure reflective uses of eloquence that his or her powers over language might produce.[10]

One measure of the limits of modernism's resistance to rhetoric is the fact that the poets all had to turn to critical essays as their basic ways of explaining and justifying their practices. The art's insistence on non-discursive immediacy left it no space for clarifying its own theoretical ambitions or becoming reflective about the modes of nobility that it wants to project. And, more important, the poetry itself tended at times to turn against its own poetics in order to bring oratorical energies to bear. Obviously most of William Carlos Williams' poetry was intensely objectivist in its efforts to bring world and psyche together in moments of ecstatic realization. But there was also a second Williams who felt the need to celebrate values that for him have compelling social implications. And that Williams tries to supplement the objectivist aesthetic with pronouncedly oratorical stances that bring the future and the past into play and make the speaker's energies the poem's fundamental locus of value. Here I quote the concluding lines of his "Dedication for a Plot of Ground":

> She grubbed this earth with her own hands,
> domineered over this grass plot,
> blackguarded her oldest son
> into buying it, lived here fifteen years,
> attained a final loneliness and –
>
> If you can bring nothing to this place
> But your carcass keep out. (Williams 1986: 106)

So much depends on that "and –." For it measures the limitations of simply describing her life. This poem has to project itself into time and into speculative imagining because what matters most about the woman is not what we can see but what we have to project into her refusal to submit to what is there to be seen. And the poem has to project a voice for that speculation because Williams wants to use her refusal to give up on imagination as a way of making demands on the imaginations brought to bear by his readers. To recognize what she makes of her loneliness is also to appreciate how a society might give meaning to one another's efforts to make something of suffering. Yet even with such powerful material, this poem's relation to oratory remains an indirect one. It manifestly cannot assert what to feel; it can only let an insistence that one not not feel open a space for self-reflection.

Both what Williams attempted and what he could not realize help make clear how modernism's efforts to banish rhetoric from its objectivist structures also severely limited its ability actually to grapple with the pressure of reality. The poetry of presence could make its own real objects, but it could not do a very good job of showing how those objects might make a difference in public space. Realizing that, the poets eventually found themselves longing for aspects of the rhetorician's art that they had just finished dismissing as their means of establishing their own distinctive authority. As we realize what they realized, we could simply decide that they were in bad faith and then assume we have good reason to dismiss their entire enterprise. But I think it is more reasonable to see what we might learn from both halves of their relation to rhetoric – their sense of its inauthenticity and their sense of its inevitability – if poetry is to make interpreting nobility basic to its projects. If we do that, we can use modernist explorations of the figure of the orator to help us formulate two arguments addressed to the theory of rhetoric – that the social impact of rhetorical values may reside almost as much in how eloquence trains and tests agents as it does on how we learn the skill of making appropriate arguments, and that perhaps the best link between rhetoric and ethics consists in the emphasis it puts on measuring agents in terms of various dynamic qualities in the sentences that they can make continuous with the sense of character that they project. This test applied to George Bush dramatizes why many of us find him so unsatisfying a leader (and why others are persuaded by his adopting the rhetorical image of the one who refuses rhetoric). And William Jefferson Clinton does not fare much better: equivocation is not much more ennobling than the effort to conceal inarticulacy in bold simplicities.

Here I have to limit my claims to brief remarks on Yeats and Stevens, two poets with quite different ways of constructing the orator and so two quite different ways of affording contemporary rhetorical theory means of recuperating the significance of eloquence. Yeats wants eloquence virtually to replace argument. Eloquence persuades by virtue of the states that uttering certain statements make possible for the psyche: character is measured by the sentences one can speak without embarrassment or irony. Stevens, too, is committed to the close link between sentences and souls. But for him the orator most fully succeeds when even distinctions of person fade away before what the psyche experiences as it reflects on its powers of imagination sustained within the music of words.

For Yeats, the ideal orator is a figure constantly testing what he or she can convincingly speak. Traditional rhetoric is problematic because it is based on illusion: "The rhetorician would deceive his neighbors, / The sentimentalist himself" (Yeats 1983: 161). Poetry by contrast tests rhetorical language by treating the speaking as a form of resistance to "the thought of others that has the authority of the world behind it" (Ellmann 1948: 5). There can be almost no accommodation to the audience because the expected roles too readily prevent speakers from taking the risks necessary to know just what reaches of the language they can make their own: "processions that lack high stilts have nothing that catches the eye" (Yeats 1983: 343). How then measure the risks and maintain the distance from "rhetoric"? One of Yeats' favorite devices was to allow himself forms of excess impossible for the standard rhetor, then to try to show how personal agency might bear such excess. Consider, for example, the amazingly arrogant and condescending form of second person address that introduces "September 1913":

> What need you, being come to sense,
> But fumble in a greasy till
> And add the half-pence to the pence
> And prayer to shivering prayer, until
> You have dried the marrow from the bone; (Yeats 1983: 108)

His own distance from any form of fawning is instantly established, so the way is clear for him to try out positive roles that can sustain this arrogance. And in that clearing he arrogates to himself the capacity to identify with what for him was the true spirit of Ireland. Irish heroism begins in contempt and ends in the tragic heroism of willing one's victimage by those one condemns. Here, for example, Yeats turns to Parnell:

> . . . A man
> Of your own passionate serving kind who had brought
> In his full hands what, had they only known,
> Had given their children's children loftier thought,
> Sweeter emotion working in the veins
> Like gentle blood, has been driven from the place,
> And insult heaped upon him for his pains,
> And for his open-handedness, disgrace; (Yeats 1983: 110)

Yeats suggests that having adapted himself to contempt, he can also take on the role of those who sacrifice themselves to the ideals that take them beyond the contempt. And in making such identifications he hopes that he can open a possible future for a society condemned to repeat the same self-destructive banalities.

However, Yeats would soon lose even this degree of hope for the political order. The psyche had to find rewards within its own displays of power. So the orator becomes the impassioned poet trying out rhetorical devices before the mirror of his own self-reflexive intelligence. The grander the rhetoric he can master, the greater the ambitions he can have for his soul to enter a world where the traffickings of the rhetorician are only dim memories. Take, for example, the closing lines of his "Prayer for my Daughter." The poem had developed an elaborate vision of bringing up his daughter to an ideal of graciousness that can establish a socially effective presence of the soul as radical innocence. To complete the picture, he has to establish his own authority both to propose such a vision and to be its beneficiary. So he turns to chiasmus, one of the more intractable of rhetorical figures, in order to measure what his own soul can naturalize when it is energized by this particular form of imagining:

> And may her bridegroom bring her to a house
> Where all's accustomed, ceremonious; . . .
> How but in custom and in ceremony
> Are innocence and beauty born?
> Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,
> And custom for the spreading laurel tree. (Yeats 1983: 190)

All the eloquence that study can confer has ultimately to be continuous with the father's natural response to what his sense of his daughter allows him to think.

Then Yeats had another change of heart. Having in effect exhausted the lyrical and social possibilities for the soul's powers of artifice, he turned to idealizing the self in its most immediate and intense forms of self-realization. But why should such self-absorption be worthy of attention? Again he turns to elaborate chiasma, this time using it to characterize how the "I" can open itself to a sweetness available when one manages to renounce all overt idealization and the bitterness that necessarily accompanies it:

> I am content to follow to its source
> Every event in action or in thought;
> Measure the lot; forgive myself the lot!
> When such as I cast out remorse
> So great a sweetness flows into the breast
> We must laugh and we must sing,
> We are blest by everything
> Everything we look upon is blest. (Yeats 1983: 236)

Here the chiasmus is not a sign of will remaking the world and proving itself capable of living within the conditions of custom and ceremony it can compose. Rather, the

chiasmus emerges almost as gift of nature and sign of how eloquence opens on to impersonal forces. Because the self is sufficiently capacious to be responsive to the imperative to laugh and to sing, it finds the excesses of rhetoric entirely compatible with the effort to strip the psyche to its most elemental energies. The artfulness seems to reside within the "must," within the experience of forces usually repressed by abstract visions of what it takes to maintain identity. When this speaking surrenders the very idea of finding a shape in the forms that the cultural order provides, it discovers that its sense of freedom proves elegantly inseparable from its sense of its own necessities.

Where the Yeatsian orator dramatizes personal power and mediates its claim to public significance, Stevensian orators dramatize the power that eloquence has to compose a music of words reaching beyond all concerns with personality. Stevensian rhetoric in effect frees speaking from everything but its own internal expansiveness. The self yields to what the language composes as human possibility, and the audience becomes an idealized listening no longer driven by its demands that speakers play scripted parts in outmoded seduction plays:

> Is the poem both peculiar and general?
> There's a meditation there, in which there seems
>
> To be an evasion, a thing not apprehended or
> Not apprehended well. Does the poet
> Evade us, as in a senseless element?
>
> Evade, this hot, dependent orator,
> The spokesman at our bluntest barriers,
> Exponent by a form of speech, the speaker
>
> Of a speech only a little of the tongue?
> It is the gibberish of the vulgate that he seeks.
> He tries by a peculiar speech to speak
>
> The peculiar potency of the general,
> To compound the imagination's Latin with
> The lingua franca et jucundissima.

There is no strong imperative here – of will or of nature – that demands the expansiveness rhetoric provides. Instead, the rhetoric is a quiet and playful one, relying on intelligent mobility for its measure of the powers of mind. The most obvious playfulness is the delightful shift from naming Latin in English to Latinizing its opposite pole, the *lingua franca*. This is not simply a joke. The poem dramatizes the capacity of speaking to realize potentials within its own language – here the chance to turn the figure of "imagination's Latin" into the actual practice of Latinizing. And in that process we see how "peculiar speech" makes manifest by individuation what

remains "the peculiar potency of the general." Poetry reveals a strange particularity exploring resources common to all those capable of putting the language to use. What begins in the wit extends to an awareness of how completely the syntax and line endings keep the assertions here incomplete, yet help realize quite ambitious claims. The intricacies of evasion literally take place in order to make language function as an exponent, a way of raising particularity to higher powers, as speech passes by our bluntest barriers into a self-reflexive pleasure that cannot but reach beyond the individual speaker.

Stevens ultimately wants a sense of rhetoric in which this exponential quality of oration becomes the focus for reflecting on fundamental human powers all too easy to ignore when we are caught up in the world of praxis. All his ladders start with the possibility that

> There are more heroes than marbles of them.
> The marbles are pinchings of an idea,
> Yet there is that idea behind the marbles,
> The idea of things for public gardens,
> Of men suited to public ferns. (Stevens 1954: 276)

Because "the hero is not a person" (276), poetry can only approach a satisfying ethos if it manages to get beyond the entire domain of representational statuary to a very different kind of human presence. This presence consists in what the qualities of speaking make available. The particular folds into the general because of what it manages as a particular. And in the process the oratorical dimension of poetry can take on significant social functions in two basic ways. First, it has the power of the "Large Red Man Reading" to "speak the feeling" for the world "which people lack because they succumb to those thin, those spended hearts" whose language had come to seem only the ordinary instrumentality of the world. And, even more important, this rhetoric released from specific speech situations has the capacity within the poem to give concrete content to possibilities of desire and self-reflection that hover on the margins of our images:

> It is not an image. It is a feeling.
> There is no image of the hero.
> There is a feeling as definition . . .
> The hero is a feeling, a man seen
> As if the eye was an emotion,
> As if in seeing we saw our feeling
> In the object seen and saved that mystic
> Against the sight, the penetrating
> Pure eye. Instead of allegory,
> We have and are the man, capable
> Of his brave quickenings, the human
> Accelerations that seem inhuman. (Stevens 1954: 278–9)[11]

IV

It would be foolish of me to expect rhetorical theory to begin championing Stevens' idea of the hero or Yeats' explorations of arrogance as a testing of putting on his courage with his eloquence. But it does not seem to me foolish to hope that rhetorical theory can recognize that language itself loses much of its power and its capacity to transform social life when it is conceived only as an instrument of enlightened praxis. Rhetoric has to worry about how we frame ends as well as how we negotiate agreement about them. And it has to preserve terms for honoring the sheer exemplary impact of distinctive eloquent performance. It may even be the case that the *lingua franca* will only bind us to one another and to the world when it becomes inseparable from the imagination's Latin. Finally, it does not seem foolish to call for a rhetoric attentive to how its own processes have to be the bearers of many of the most important values we can claim for ourselves.

NOTES

1 One could make the argument that rhetoric's cultural fortunes depend on whether it is linked primarily to poetics or to philosophy. When it is linked to philosophy, it has significant public claims and begins to treat itself with the appropriate self-importance. Thus, for Michael J. Hyde and Craig Smith (1993), what had been the early modern philosophical demeaning of rhetoric now gives way to philosophical respectability. Where early modern thought treated rhetoric as a "form of 'popular' and emotional speech that exhibits eloquence and encourages people to form 'wrong ideas,'" contemporary "philosophy has turned to rhetoric in the hope that the alliance can foster a "hermeneutical space of communicative praxis" (69, 71). There is also now a revival of rhetoric's conjunction with poetry, at least in the domain of poetry slams and extensions of hip-hop, but these shifts in value have not (yet) had much impact on intellectual life or on the sense of cultural relevance possible for poetry.

2 One might say that modernist ideals of concrete presentation are not very far from traditional emphases on the concreteness of the plot or imagined situation. I find strong support for my general claim about continuities in poetry's resistance to the authority of rhetoric in Gerald Bruns' superb *Modern Poetry and the Idea of Language* (1974). Bruns offers a compelling story of how classical rhetoric depended on distinctions between style and content (or speech and thought) that gradually emerged into modernist efforts to explore and bring together what he calls "hermetic and orphic" orientations toward poetry. Bruns then helps us see that even in traditional poetics allegory plays the role of at once acknowledging the importance of style and of pointing toward relations to the real which depend on the internal structures and modes of self-reference established by the imagination pushing against rhetorical notions of content and audience (cf. pp. 22–5). I differ from Bruns, however, because his primary stress is on the different relation of speech to "language" in rhetoric and in poetry, while mine will be on projections about the social relations that each domain seems most concerned with establishing for itself. Bruns sees poetry coming into its own when it emphasizes the range of effects and affects possible by intricate linguistic self-reference, while I emphasize poetry's sense of how it can establish distinctive ways of negotiating values and modes of investing in those values.

3 In this regard Paul de Man's work on "rhetoricity" proves directly in a Platonic lineage: rather than examine how rhetoric structures arguments, we have to look at how the possibility of rhetoric shapes

our understanding of language users. To keep that psychology in focus, de Man emphasized what he called "rhetoricity," a principle that indicates how in any speech situation the imaginary projections about the self or about specific personal desires are likely to pervade and distort what is presented as a deliberative process. I develop the importance of stressing rhetoricity in my essay "Toward a Hermeneutics Responsive to Hermeneutical Theory" (1997). And for ways that rhetoric resists granting authority to epistemic principles that erase psychology, see Victoria Kahn (1997).

4   Hence, Wallace Stevens writes: "We live in concepts of the imagination before reason has established them" (Stevens 1965: 154). I am influenced here by the work of my graduate student Charles Sumner on how modernism takes up the challenge of Hegel's insistence on art's limitations in relation to the concept.

5   Kant played a crucial role in elaborating the possibility that art could communicate and even provide access to the real precisely because it refused to conform to practices that relied on concepts.

6   "You know what I call architect's curves – flat pieces of wood with all different kinds of curvature. By a suitable selection from these you can draw approximately any kind of curve you like. The artist I take to be the man who simply can't bear that 'approximately'... Suppose that instead of your curved pieces of wood you have a springy piece of steel of the same types of curvature as the wood. Now the state of tension or concentration of mind... may be represented by a man employing all his fingers to bend the steel out of its own curve and into the exact curve which you want." See Hulme (1962: 100).

7   Eliot's basic formulation of the value of impersonality seems to me endlessly worth repeating because its intelligence is so often ignored: "For it is not the greatness, the intensity of the emotions, the components, but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts" (Eliot 1950: 8–9). Two pages later he adds: poetry is fundamentally a "concentration" making possible "not a turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality" (10). And then Eliot offers the telling irony: "But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things" (10–11).

8   Thomas Docherty (2002) offers a strong argument for the value of keeping the roles of author and of the audience indeterminate when we approach works of art. At stake is the possibility of having a cogent alternative to the now-standard liberal desire to have art represent various cultural identities.

9   Derek Attridge (2002) seems to me to present an important contemporary theoretical version of modernist ideals by combining a strong sense of how invention constitutes literary values with this insistence on singularities that resist society's investments in being able to subsume particulars under cultural norms. And see also Stevens on Marianne Moore and on Eliot as exemplars of singularity in his "A Poet that Matters" (Stevens 1969: 252).

10 The following statement by Yeats indicates the kind of mental labor it would take to bring the role of orator back into poetry:

Walter Pater says music is the type of all the arts, but somebody else, I forget now who, says that oratory is their type. You will side with one or the other according to the nature of your energy, and I in my present mood am all for the man who, with an average audience before him, uses all means of persuasion – stories, laughter, tears, and but so much music as he can discover on the wings of words. I would even avoid the conversation of the lovers of music, who would draw us into the impersonal land of sound and color, and I would have no one write with a sonata in his memory. (Yeats 1961: 267–8)

11 Had I the space I would show how he puts this sense of elemental eloquence to work by establishing in "To an Old Philosopher in Rome" a fully concrete focus for the union of particular and general without a theater of ego or of praxis. But here I can only cite three passages that indicate how he proceeds:

Speak to your pillow as if it was yourself.
Be orator, but with an accurate tongue. (509)

It is poverty's speech that seeks us out the most . . .
And you, it is you that speaks it without speech,
The loftiest syllables among loftiest things. (510)

. . . He stops upon this threshold,
As if the design of all his words takes form
And frame from thinking and is realized. (511)

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My Life with Rhetoric: From Neglect to Obsession

Wayne C. Booth

As I've observed the amazing explosion, through the last half-century, of books entitled *The Rhetoric of X, Y, or Z*, and as I've read through various drafts of the essays in this volume, I've been struck by how many "corners" I've neglected, while being preoccupied with others. And I've been even more struck – or perhaps stricken – with a sense of how often, working in and on this or that corner of the vast rhetorical world, I've avoided rhetorical terminology, despite inevitably depending on rhetorical issues and terms. In contrast to my many works that have "rhetoric" in the title and employ explicit rhetorical terms throughout, I find too many attempts where I've followed the widespread tacit academic rule: *Even when you are doing rhetorical studies, as you probably always are, DON'T USE RHETORICAL TERMINOLOGY!* Like the majority, I've just put on other masks: as "ethicist," as "teacher," even occasionally as "philosopher."

Most who have used my work have ignored that neglect. Because I did help to revive the non-pejorative use of the word in my first book, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, many have seen me as a fully devoted rhetorician. But the embarrassing truth is that, like most who were raised in the twentieth century, it took me a long time to see the centrality of rhetoric, and even now I can't claim to have done any deep study of the history of rhetoric. I've never dug into the subject as fully as did Aristotle or Cicero or Quintilian or many a Renaissance or eighteenth-century scholar, or Jost and Olmsted as they've compiled this book.

In effect wandering all over the intellectual landscape, as a "generalist," I've failed to master the *full range* of resources available to anyone who wants to persuade anyone about anything. I'm amused, for example, to find that of the sixty-four "figures of speech" listed at the end of Sloane's *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, I can remember using, or even understanding, only thirty-seven of them. What is "auxesis"? What is "enallage" or "kerygma"? Are you shocked at my ignorance? A few of you reading here will know all sixty-four of those terms; others will join me in knowing only a fraction. In any case, I'm sure that only a tiny minority of those now studying rhetoric, in one form or

another, would escape the label I apply to myself: HORE: "Half-Obtuse in Rhetorical Erudition."

My confession is not only that I have never spent years digging into the history of rhetoric and its floods of terminology. It is – to repeat – that I have so often followed the modern and postmodern practice of putting on a mask, failing to state openly that I was trying to handle one corner of what Aristotle rightly labeled rhetoric's "universal" territory. As I don't have to remind anyone who has read this far in this book, rhetoric has no single discipline: it covers every bit of human communication, good and bad, every academic field, every corner of our lives.

Part of my neglect was sheer ignorance about rhetoric's scope. For example, it didn't even occur to me until about halfway through my seven years working on *The Rhetoric of Fiction* that I was really attempting a "rhetoric."[1] I was proud to think of myself as doing "poetics"! And even after the book was completed I had to wrestle with whether to ignore the advice of many not to use the word *rhetoric* in the title. A major publisher actually included objection to the word as one reason for rejecting the manuscript: "Just drop that term; it will kill the book's sales."

That I was radically confused about the term even after adopting it was dramatized by one of the most negative reviewers. John Swiggart (I have no knowledge about what ever happened to him, but the name is deeply imbedded in my memory) attacked the book because its overly ambitious author was so confusing in his definitions of rhetoric, allowing different ones to dominate different parts of the book. Of course at the time I was angered by the review, while savoring the favorable reviews coming from others. Only later have I had to acknowledge to myself – not to him – that he was right: the book *is* laden with conflicting definitions, some handled in really confusing ways.

In many sections, I see myself as having confined the "rhetoric" of fiction to a corner: the self-conscious authorial intrusions upon the "poetic" structure. The full "plot" or "unity" of the work was quite separate from the rhetorical ornaments. But in other parts of course I embraced my current view: the total "poetic" work is in fact utterly rhetorical, since every stroke contributes to the effect upon any fully attentive reader. "The author makes his readers," not just as they read but as they deal with the makings in their "real" life after the reading. The plot structure is thus, in what I might today call the better parts of that book, just as much subject to rhetorical inquiry as is the most blatant bit of intruded authorial commentary.

Thus I inadvertently joined the club of all those who, over the centuries, have gone back and forth on the question of what rhetoric is and how it should be studied. And in parts of that book I joined the club of twentieth-century maskers who dodge the terms while pursuing the ideas.

In a book I am now struggling with, perhaps to be called *The Rhetoric of RHETORIC*, I have a long chapter on several intellectual giants of our time – the last hundred years? – who have studied rhetoric without ever using rhetorical terms: Louis Althusser, Susanne Langer, Michael Polanyi, R. G. Collingwood, Ernst Cassirer,

the heroes of the "ordinary language" movement, and so on. But for here I'll dwell a bit more on my own follies.

My most striking examples of terminological neglect have been my many recent works on the ethical effects of fiction. Deepening the case implied throughout *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, all of my work on ethics can be reduced not to a code of what fits some moral code but rather: "What narrative forms and techniques have good or bad rhetorical (ethical) effects?" Yet the word *rhetoric* plays very little role, for example, in *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction*.

An even more blatant example is my recent inquiry into "Why Ethical Criticism Can Never Be Simple" (Booth 1998a). Rhetorical terms are not even mentioned, nor is there any reference to any rhetorician – unless Sheldon Sacks could be counted as one. In his splendid, neglected book *Fiction and the Shape of Belief*, a work that could have been entitled *The Rhetoric of Fiction #2*, he makes no mention of rhetoric whatever. Well, that's not quite true: in one footnote he explains briefly how he both relies on and disagrees with *The Rhetoric of Fiction*: the only appearance of the r-word throughout. Just as his book explores the diverse rhetorical genres that should be considered when dealing with the effects fiction aims for in the world, my essay presents an argument that all ethical criticism must take into account the differences of intended rhetorical impact of individual works that belong to different fictional species.

Why did I so often neglect the terms even while going through decades obsessed with how to improve our rhetorical efforts and the efforts of others? One possible answer – one that I don't feel comfortable with – was suggested recently by my friend and former colleague, Gerald Graff, when I asked him why, in his new book on how to improve students' writing (Graff 2003), a book that concentrates on how to educate students in good rhetoric, he avoids the term. "Well," he said, "that term puts people off. I guess I was afraid it would drive readers away." I can't remember thinking that way about it, considering the success of the early title. But for one reason or another, I was in some works avoiding the language while in others attempting to contribute to what turned out to be an explosion of interest in *rhetoric* – that term that will never have a definition fully pinned down.[2]

But why, then, to repeat, did it take me so long to discover how central rhetorical studies were to my basic interests – the improvement of human communication? Assuming that my early educational experience of "rhetorical neglect" is fairly typical, I now trace a bit of it, as a very rough analogy for "the history of rhetorical education in the twentieth century." Readers here who are my age will surely want to shout, "Been there, done that." Younger readers who have read the rest of this book will – I hope – be a bit shocked.

Early "Non-Rhetorical Education"

Did my "English" teachers (or yours) in elementary and high school ever mention "rhetoric" as a reputable academic subject? Of course not. It was all grammar,

correctness, drills in how to diagram sentences. "I must give your paper an 'F'; you have written 'I laid down,' and you used 'inferred' instead of 'implied.' And you've started four sentences with 'and' or 'but!'"

I can't remember a single allusion to any of the great rhetoricians, ancient or modern. Though some of the better teachers did try to get us to think about our readers and the problem of "accommodation to audience," we were never using language like that. Nor were we made aware that we were learning to practice and analyze "rhetoric."

In college the same silence prevailed. For my freshman English term paper, in 1939, I was assigned Machiavelli's *The Prince*. I did read it assiduously, but I can't remember becoming aware of how much the master was explicitly and implicitly dealing with traditional rhetorical questions. My teacher and I never talked about that aspect of the book: we talked only about "politics." Surely my memory is a bit wrong here: we must have often discussed how Machiavelli's language, like his argument, was aimed at teaching rhetorical skill. In any case, as I wrote my proud little piece on "Machiavelli's politics" I must have been touching on rhetorical matters at every point.

That silence continued throughout my majoring in "English" at Brigham Young University. In the only textbook from that time that I have preserved on my shelves, the one I remember as wonderfully stimulating, I can't find a single use of the word *rhetoric*. Of course, my scanning is superficial: I'm unable now to reread the 1,300-page book. But I have thumbed through and then looked carefully at the 414 titles recommended for further reading at the end of the book. And what do I find? Nothing about rhetorical studies, or about the work of any rhetorician – no reference even to the small number of textbooks that were dealing with rhetoric back then. There is no reference to classical rhetoricians except for one to Cicero's "On Friendship." Though the aim of the book is, as the Preface said, to provide a "foundation for a closely coordinated course in reading and writing," and though it includes much that I would want to include in any college course in "English," the editors have carefully excluded any suggestion that what they're talking about could have any connection to rhetoric (Campbell et al. 1940). I'm now sure that they would have cringed at the very idea of identifying their project with "training in good rhetoric."

Education of a Hypocritical Missionary

After about three years of college, the "English major" accepted a "calling" to be a Mormon missionary for two years. And I thus landed into rhetorical territory I'd before only occasionally dreamed of: not just how to produce understanding or prevent misunderstanding, but how to reconcile rival rhetorics.

I had been raised as a devout, orthodox Mormon. I had then, for reasons it would take a hundred pages to trace, become seduced by a horde of "rationalists" whose beliefs and motives clashed harshly with many Mormon teachings. Reading Plato, Spinoza, Darwin, and a variety of critics of scriptural literalism, I soon saw myself as deeply split: still a devout Mormon yet now an honest doubter of many key Mormon teachings.

The decision about whether to accept the "call" to do evangelical work was a really tough one, forcing me to debate with myself, often in my journals, about whether I could transform the official mission – "get the outsiders converted and baptized" – into my deepest mission: do what you can to help others; do *good* in the world. With the help of several thoughtful professors – first-class rhetors who never talked about rhetoric – I chose the two years that now I describe as "education in rhetorology": the art of probing beneath rival arguments to find common ground (topoi, places) on which the rivals can stand in agreement as they pursue truth together.

To describe how that worked – and often failed to work – would take far more space than I have here.[3] The point is that without knowing it, I was being prepared for a lifetime pursuit of how rhetorical studies can improve rhetoric, and especially of how the deepest rhetorology can at least sometimes discover harmony beneath surface conflict.

Graduate School

Memory says that through four years in graduate school, rhetoric was still officially off the chart, though some of my teachers were in fact confirming my quest for rhetorical probing. As I worked for my MA, rhetoric was never mentioned in any classroom; it was all either "literary history" or "literary criticism" – including some of the revolutionary "Chicago School" or "neo-Aristotelian" formalist quests for the unity of this or that poem or novel.

But then, for some miraculous reason that I can't recover, I found myself assigned the daunting task of reading Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric*, preparing for an examination, with no classroom instruction. After several rereadings, the book became for me a fantastic revelation, and its influence has continued until today. But did it then enter our talk about "English studies"? Hardly ever, except among us students who had received the assignment. Almost always quite explicit was the command, "Your job is to do both literary history and 'poetics' – with a tiny bit of linguistics on the side." Yet rhetorical inquiry was sneaking in most of the time, as maskers like Northrop Frye and Eric Auerbach took over this or that corner of our lives.

By that time, 1946–50, Kenneth Burke and others were already producing many revolutionary takes on rhetoric, expanding it to include all "symbolic communication." The Russian formalists had back in the 1920s discovered – as I learned only much later – the indispensability of rhetorical studies in all criticism of literature. But did the Russians or Burke or even Aristotle enter my study as I labored on a dissertation demonstrating the "unity" of the disunified *Tristram Shandy*? Not at all. My favorite teachers actually talked Burke's books down, even though both Ronald Crane and Richard McKeon had a kind of personal friendship with him. His works were for them sloppy, careless: "paratactic" rather than "syntactic." It was "rhetorical" rather than "objective" and "poetic." He was always dealing with matters that could never be decisively settled, "contingencies." His works never answered their most central question, "What's your evidence?"[4]

The result was that I discovered Burke's genius only slowly, first hearing him lecture, then reading him on my own and finding his work strongly pertinent to my inquiry into how fiction works on the world. And though I now think of myself as having attempted genuine justice to Burke, I've never paid adequate attention to those neglected Russians. Even my one essay on Bakhtin seems to me too reticent about labeling him a great rhetorician. (Of course, he is probably turning in his grave at that suggestion, just as Burke's soul felt twisted by my first effort to pin him down in public. Having read him and taught classes about him, I once published an adulatory essay about what he called Boik's Woiks, foolishly feeling that I was the first reader in the world who had really probed to his wonderfully important core. And his reply, called "Dancing with Tears in My Eyes," was the justified claim that I hadn't succeeded at all; I had "pinned him down" in the wrong corner.)

Because of that absurd downgrading of rhetoric by my mentors – always in the effort to celebrate "poetics" – I naturally joined those teachers who thought of rhetoric as pertinent only to our teaching of writing. Only slowly, stimulated by Burke and Richard Weaver and others, did we become aware that rhetoric was pertinent to everything we did.

A key transformation occurred for me in the middle of the decade of writing *The Rhetoric of Fiction.* As I suggested above, the project began as an attack on those "New Critics" who argued that only with Flaubert's rejection of telling in favor of "showing" did fiction begin to achieve the status of "poetry": genuine aesthetic value. Only slowly did I succumb to the realization that I was doing a *rhetoric* of fiction, and then find the courage to employ the nasty term.

In sum: although it is clear to me now that rhetorical matters had been at the center of most of my thinking, from adolescence on, the terminology has until quite recently continued to suffer shaky usage. At every moment in my teaching, at every moment in my writing, I was trying to think of ways to improve communication: by studying those ways and by training students in distinctions between defensible and indefensible forms of rhetoric. Even when I thought I was pursuing pure Truth, as a budding "philosopher," the basic impulse can now be seen as the pursuit of how to do that pursuit not privately but communally. For example, as I worked hard in my thirties on a speech – later an article – "demonstrating" the full "truth" of the ontological "proof" for the existence of "God," I wasn't thinking privately; I was thinking hard about what form of argument would get others to see the power of Anselm's and Descartes' arguments. It never occurred to me to call my article "Anselm's Rhetorical Ontology."

A Brief Tracing of the Personal Revolution

In my current book project, I try to deal – though too briefly – with the great rhetorical revolutionaries who have brought "us" to where "we" are today (the scare quotes are required, for reasons every reader here will understand). I could happily write over ten pages not only on Burke but on Chaim Perelman, maybe fifty on

Richard McKeon, and even some on a few of the "deconstructionists" who were trained in rhetoric and acknowledged their allegiance.[5]

Instead, I must here spend more time on the often-confusing works of a considerably less profound and influential figure, Wayne Booth. Some of the quotations will reveal me as an uneasy "masker." Others will – to my relief – demonstrate how my obsession took over. I'm actually a bit relieved, as I thumb through the pages, to find the evidence for the rising willingness to embrace Rhetorica as the Monarch of the Sciences, as she was sometimes portrayed in the early Renaissance.

The Rhetoric of Fiction (1961)

Rather than repeating what I said above, I'll just summarize how it appears to me now: a celebration of how all writers of fiction and all readers seek to achieve a rhetorical bonding. The authors do not just "make their readers," they create a communion between an implied author and an implied reader. And the effective critic of fiction works hard at rhetoric as defined by I. A. Richard: the art of "removing misunderstanding."

Now Don't Try to REASON with Me: Essays and Ironies for a Credulous Age (1967)

This collection was prompted by my increasing mistrust of diverse kinds of popular rhetoric. Mistrust of "reason" by skeptics, and mistrust of non-scientific proofs by empiricists, aroused my overtly rhetorical attacks against opposing extremes: naive credulity and total skepticism. *Reasoning together (good rhetoric) is how we bond.* Only four of the twenty-eight essays have the word "rhetoric" in the title, though I would now say that even the least overtly preachy of my selection of playful ironies are designed to carry a strong rhetorical punch.

A Rhetoric of Irony (1974)

The central point of this book – a point that an appalling number of careless readers, including Stanley Fish, rejected without working hard enough to understand it[6] – was to celebrate one kind of ironic rhetoric, the stable kind that authors hope will be understood behind their deliberately "misleading" surface language. *Stable irony, when it works, provides (along with successful metaphor) the tightest, most rewarding of all rhetorical bondings of authors and readers.*

Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent (1974)

This was my first full effort to grapple with the general differences between good and bad rhetoric – not just in fictions or ironies but *everywhere*. Disgusted with the diverse positivist attacks on any reasoning that relies on emotion or commonplace beliefs

(topoi, warrants), fed-up with the massive divorce of fact and value – with reason confined to the world of fact – *I set out to attack five "modernist" dogmas, as enemies of genuinely effective rhetoric.* I like now to claim that I was engaging already in postmodernist attacks on modernist mistakes, without falling into the excesses of skepticism that some postmodernists were already committing.

Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism (1979)

This effort to analyze the diverse "umbrellas" that pluralists construct, as canopies over their pluralities, pursues three major pluralisms, as developed by Ronald Crane, M. H. Abrams, and Kenneth Burke (with the greatest of all rhetorologists, Richard McKeon, always highly active in the background). Finding them all caught up in paradox, the book concludes with the shaky claim that *the true end of all inquiry, whether pluralist or monist, should be understanding – the kind of joining that can result only from full rhetorical probing of discourse.* The book should have been called something like *Rhetorical Understanding as the Goal of All Inquiry.*

Why did I avoid rhetorical terms in the title, and often even in the text? I can only speculate that I often felt my mind was on a ledge slightly *above* rhetorical inquiry: I was aspiring to be a philosopher, and I was simultaneously falling into the error of thinking that rhetorical studies are not at the center of all genuinely deep philosophical inquiry. And I understated the claim that rhetorical inquiry – what McKeon called, at its best, architectonic rhetoric – is the only full solution to pointless "philosophical" quarreling.

The Harper & Row Rhetoric: Writing as Thinking, Thinking as Writing, with Marshall Gregory (1987)

This "splendid textbook," an effort *to get all students to think about and pursue rhetorical understanding, rhetorical bonding with their readers*, seems to me now to underplay the full range of rhetorical resources available to anyone who carefully studies classical rhetoric. Marshall and I did have the courage to include "rhetoric" in the title, unlike far too many "freshman English" texts even today. But reading it now I think we should have pounded a bit harder on the key point: you students are surrounded by a "world" in which too few discoursers pay any attention to the importance of trustful rhetorical bonding. They just don't *listen* to the other side. And you can now start learning how to do something about that scandal.

The Vocation of a Teacher: Rhetorical Occasions, 1967–1988 (1988)

Again, I take some relief in my having been brave enough to use "rhetorical" in the title. The anthology could be thought of as an effort to dramatize how rhetorical studies are pertinent to every field, every discipline, every part of life. But as I look through the various essays, I sometimes cringe at my excessive caution in using the

traditional terminology. Was I still afraid of being seen as "merely a rhetorician," not a "thinker"?

I do take some pleasure in the capstone essay, "The Idea of a *Uni*versity, as Seen by a Rhetorician" (1987) – an essay that in pursuing the range over three kinds of audience dramatizes better than any of my others the full necessity for hard thought about rhetorical community – what some are calling the "discourse community" and that I like to call the "rhetorical domain."

The Art of Growing Older: Writers on Living and Aging (1992)

In this collection of more-or-less famous poems about aging *by* the aging, I do provide some commentary emphasizing how successful poems create a rhetorical "community" of friends, and how aging readers can find a community by reading the poems of aging poets. I even talk about how preparing the book bonded me with a community of "friends," most of them dead, of course. An accurate but impossibly awkward title would have read: *The Rhetoric of Poetry about Aging*. But rhetorical terms are scandalously rare, and these days I blame myself, mildly, for that neglect.

For the Love of It: Amateuring and Its Rivals (1999)

While celebrating the joys of amateur chamber music playing, this book dwells on *the rhetorical effects of playing music together*. It is when we join others in the making of something, anything, but especially music, that we learn to listen to and understand those others. Again, I could say that the proper title would have read *How the Rhetoric of the Best Kinds of Amateuring Produces the Tightening of All Human Bondings*. (What sales a title like that would have produced!)

Rhetoric received direct attention only briefly. In one chapter I wrestle with the rivalry in my soul between the rhetorician and the would-be musician – a chapter that one friend, an ardent literary critic, objected to: "Your life as a rhetorician has *nothing* to do with your life as an amateur." To which I responded: "Does your life as a literary critic have *nothing* to do with a rhetorical outburst like that?"

The Craft of Research, with Joseph Williams and Gregory Colomb (1995; 2nd edn. 2003)

This work, by far the most successful since *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, reveals on almost every page that it is really an effort to get students and teachers to see research as a rhetorical enterprise: an effort to get readers and authors together in genuinely communal, trustful understanding about inquiry. I did occasionally suggest, meekly, that we call it *The Rhetoric of Research.* But though my two colleagues both agreed that the title would have been more accurate, they – and the Press – felt that the term would diminish sales! Was I right to back down? (See our Postscript acknowledging the authors, all "rhetoricians" in my view, who have influenced our writing of the book.)

I am of course tempted to conclude this ambiguous history with some recent examples in which my obsession with rhetoric is as clear as it has been throughout this essay. I could discuss a back-burnered book and several half-baked essays on the rival rhetorics of science and religion, one called "Ending the War Between Science and Religion: Can Rhetorology Do the Job?" (Booth 2002). I might cite another uncompleted and unpublished project on "The Rhetoric of Hypocrisy – Defensible and Indefensible." But I doubt that any more citations are needed to show how my life-path from rhetoric-neglect to rhetoric-obsession serves as an illustration of what is happening in the intellectual world.

Autobiographical evidence always risks not only unreliability but also tedium, to say nothing of accusations of egotism. But it at least explains why I am so confident that rhetorical studies are universally relevant. They enter every corner of our lives, even when we quarrel with our mates about what necktie or dress to wear for the party.

It's still lamentably true that many current thinkers, especially professional philosophers, continue to attack "rhetoric," or totally ignore it (using rhetorical tactics, of course).[7] They continue to feel contempt for those "expanders" who, like me, "reduce" all communication, all efforts to share thought, to some form of rhetoric. They still want a corner for "genuine thinking" – if not empirical at least demonstrable outside the contingent, unreliable territory of rhetoric. One retired philosopher, working on a book on Plato, shouted at me recently, "Throughout your life you've been writing in a way that would reduce Plato to a mere rhetorician." To which I answered: "Well, just wipe out that word 'mere,' please. Plato was one of the greatest rhetoricians of all time, though he, like you, would have bridled at the label."

So where are we now, really? Of course nobody knows, not even the most confident of the authors in this book. But what is encouraging is the explosion of explicit interest I have described and that is dramatized by the very existence of a book like this. Can one imagine its publication in 1950? Just compare the list of current journals mentioned throughout here with the total lack of such journals "back then" – whenever "then" is for you. Or call up H-Rhetor on the Internet and discover how many are engaged daily in dispute about this or that rhetorical question. No matter how we feel about the continuing contemptuous reductions of the term to "cheap persuasion" or rhetrickery, serious study of how to understand and improve human communication has taken a huge leap forward.

Isn't it a bit encouraging to be able to make at least this one strongly optimistic claim about the world, when so much awful rhetoric floods our lives daily?

Notes

1   Actually it could be said to have been more like thirteen years, because in one sense the project began as I began my dissertation on *Tristram Shandy*, a work in which I don't think the word "rhetoric" ever occurs.

2   If the word *explosion* puzzles you, just go to any library book catalogue, punch in as a keyword
    "rhetoric," or as a title "The Rhetoric of" and then trace the number of works, decade by decade,
    starting in 1950. My own sloppy search reveals three in 1950–9, with a sharp rise decade by decade
    to fifty-seven new titles in 1990–9. And this says nothing about the explosion of articles, in almost
    every academic field.

3   My fullest account so far is in Booth (1998b). In my forthcoming autobiography, I have a full chapter
    on the rhetorical disputes between the Self that still is a Mormon and the Self that rejects a fair share
    of what Mormonism officially claims.

4   A much fuller half-history of rhetoric at the University of Chicago will be given in an article I'm now
    writing with Frederick Antczak. It will include a mild indictment of me and my university for never
    having initiated a Department of Rhetoric.

5   I recently stumbled upon a fine interview with Jacques Derrida about his relations to rhetoric, and I
    found it revealing about how strongly his drive was motivated by rhetorical matters. See Derrida
    (1990).

6   See my "A New Strategy for Establishing a Truly Democratic Criticism" (a reply to Stanley Fish's
    "Short People Got No Reason to Live: Reading Irony"). *Daedalus* (issue on "Reading: Old and New"),
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7   For support see Vickers and Johnstone (2001).

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Index