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ANCIENT AND RENAISSANCE RHETORIC AND THE HISTORY OF CONCEPTS

In this paper I shall examine the ancient and Renaissance theory of rhetoric and some aspects of its relationship to the history of concepts.[1] Rather than offering a systematic exposition of either, I want to excavate some of the assumptions that are common to what I shall term the 'ideology' of rhetoric — that is to say, the attitudes towards language, ethics, politics and so on that are built in to rhetorical theory — and the methodology of the contemporary enterprise of intellectual and conceptual history as it has been theorised and practised in England by Quentin Skinner and in Germany by Reinhart Koselleck. Having formulated and implemented an agenda for the history of political thought from the early 1970s to the late 1980s in the terms of speech-act theory, Professor Skinner has recently taken something of a 'rhetorical turn' in his study of the rhetorical dimension of political thought; more particularly, he has brought to light the role of the rhetorical figure of redescription in conceptual change. In what follows, I shall look for the reasons for the general suitability of classical and Renaissance rhetorical ideology to a Skinnerian in-

tellectual history and a Koselleckian history of concepts, and then explore the more specific roles of redefinition and redescription in the process of conceptual change. It is my hope that drawing attention to the thinking behind classical rhetoric will help to underpin the case for the incorporation of a specifically rhetorical dimension to the history of concepts.

The Ideology of Rhetoric

In his *'Art' of Rhetoric*, Aristotle makes one of the outstanding systematising contributions to the rhetorical traditions of antiquity and the Renaissance,[2] offering the first coherent intellectual justification for the role of rhetoric in public life.[3] Aristotle defines rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever".[4] Rhetoric is concerned not with the substance of arguments, but rather with the principles of a practice geared towards the production of conviction (*pistis*) in an audience, achieved by the quality of persuasiveness in argument. The end product, then, is not persuasive speech, but a persuaded audience — it is a practice of transformation affecting the mind or the soul, what Plato calls in the *Phaedrus* 'psychagogy'.[5] This is the force behind Aristotle's classification of rhetoric as a *techne*, a term rendered in the Latin tradition of antiquity and the Renaissance by *ars*, which designates an activity of 'making' or 'producing' as opposed to knowing or doing: 'art' or 'craft' rather than science, *techne* "deals with bringing something into existence".[6] Because it produces a persuaded audience, rhetoric is unmistakably pragmatic in its attention to the usefulness of different kinds of persuasive strategies. It provides a kind of mechanics of argument, seen most clearly in the elaborate system of rhetorical or dialectical topics. For Aristotle, the topics are a series of logically grounded points of view from which a question may be approached, with a view to the discovery of persuasive arguments; in Cicero's simplification, they are the *loci communes* or 'common places' where such arguments are found. For example, one way to produce a good argument about a subject, according to the system of topics, is linguistic — to investigate its etymology, conjuga-

tions (words etymologically related), and equivocations (improper usages or ambiguities). It seems likely that Koselleckian onomasiology and semasiology may be traced back to this ancient rhetorical-dialectical heritage.

The pragmatic character of rhetoric, its instrumentalist ideology, is not of course Aristotle's invention. Indeed, in his well-known attack on the rhetoric of the sophists in the *Gorgias* Plato takes exception to the fact that it "cares nothing for what is best", i.e. the truth, but rather concerns itself with the manipulation of the audience by dangling "what is most pleasant for the moment" before them.[7] Part of Aristotle's response is to say that to condemn rhetoric outright is at best naïve and at worst deceptive. As he says, everyone uses rhetoric, for "all, up to a certain point, endeavour to criticise or uphold an argument, to defend themselves or accuse."[8] More specifically, Aristotle retorts that although rhetoric is designed to be dogmatically neutral, technically indifferent to the truthfulness or otherwise of the content of the argument to which it is attached, this does not imply that the orator is absolved of moral or philosophical responsibility for the content or effect of his argument.[9] Rather, if someone succeeds in persuading the audience by means of an immoral or untrue proposition, it makes more sense to blame the person than the persuasiveness of the argument. In other words, one of the attitudes built in to the theory of rhetoric is an emphasis and concentration on the instrumentality of discourse or language, which carries an implicit distinction between rhetoric considered as a system and the rhetor as a morally accountable user of that system. In cases of dangerous driving, we blame the driver, not the car.[10]

A second characteristic of rhetorical ideology is closely related to its instrumentality, but immediately stems from the nature of the subject matter on which rhetoric is properly brought to bear. Working within an Aristotelian epistemological framework, classical and Renaissance writers are generally in agreement that there is little to be gained from applying rhetorical argumentative methods to the domain of scientific investigation, since the ends of science and rhetoric are different (science instructs, whereas rhetoric persuades)[11] and the nature of the knowledge to which they relate is distinct. As Aristotle says, "no one teaches geometry" with rhetoric. In contrast to the objects of scientific investigation, the problems for which rheto-

ric is appropriate or useful are those "about which we deliberate", which admit of solutions that are not certain, but only probable, or which may command assent through plausibility.[12] According to disciplinary categories commonly elaborated in the early modern period, such are the questions arising in the domain of *philosophia practica*, which includes moral philosophy and politics.[13] Since these are practical, particularistic and by nature imprecise, rather than speculative, scientific, or universalist categories of inquiry, reasoning must be supplemented by rhetoric in order to make one's argument truly effective. However, as a consequence of the inherent uncertainty of the matter under discussion, rhetoric must theoretically enable one to prove opposites or argue both sides of a case.[14] For, as the Stoic Zeno suggests, if there are not two sides to the question then there can be no need to deliberate on it, and it would be possible simply to demonstrate conclusively that one side is right or true. It is impossible, therefore, to have two valid arguments from true premises to opposite conclusions.[15] This important postulate, originating in the *dissoi logoi* (two-fold arguments) of the sophists, gives rise in the Roman rhetorical tradition to the argument *in utramque partem*, a technique which becomes one of the standard procedures in an early modern rhetorical education.[16]

The important point is that because they deal with uncertain problems, rhetoricians are technically committed to the potential reversibility of any proposition and therefore, implicitly, to the idea that no rhetorical argument is *ex hypothesi* uncontestable. This commitment is accentuated by two institutional factors. The first is the agonistic format in which rhetoric originates. In the deliberative and forensic *genera,* rhetorical argument is designed to win the case by persuading the audience of the merits of one's own standpoint, but also by undermining an opponent's case. Destroying the opposition, seen in arguments of *destructio,* or *restructio sive subversio*, forms an integral part of the rhetorical enterprise.[17] The *narratio*, the section of speech where the orator ostensibly states the facts of the case, is actually the place where, as the *Ad Herennium* puts it, he can "turn every detail" to his advantage "so as to win the victory."[18] Certain topics are identified as particularly vulnerable to attack: Aristotle notes that definitions of things are the easiest to undermine, and Cicero, Quintilian, and the author of the *Ad Herennium* (drawing examples from Aristo-

tle) all pay close attention to the kinds of argument that can be employed to manipulate definitions in one's favour.[19] In other words, definition is treated by rhetoric as a 'move' in a persuasive 'game' rather than a logical procedure — something made plain in the *Ad Herennium* by the placement of its discussion of *definitio* in between the manifestly stylistic figures of *gradatio* and *transitio*.[20] There is surely an echo of the rhetorical emphasis on the localised heuristic function of definition and the perception of its fragility in Nietzsche's famous dictum "only something which has no history can be defined". More generally, it is an intuition inherent in rhetorical agonism that "If a shrine is to be set up, a *shrine has to be destroyed*: that is the law — show me an example where this does not apply!"[21]

The second institutional factor sharpening the classical and Renaissance rhetorician's commitment to the contestability of argument concerns the audience. As opposed to the probability or certainty achieved through dialectical or demonstrative-scientific techniques, insofar as rhetoric is distinctive it is concerned with plausibility: the qualities which will command the assent of the audience. Aristotle states in the *Rhetoric* that whilst ideally the listener should be convinced by arguments that are purely logical demonstrations, an eloquent style which stirs (and therefore manipulates) the emotions "is of great importance owing to the corruption of the hearer".[22] This teaching provides a distinctive emphasis on emotional affectivity in both Roman and Renaissance rhetoric.[23] It is not just because of the insufficiency of unaided human reason in the uncertain territories of morality and politics that rhetorical persuasion is necessary. Because audiences often consist of people who are bored, too busy or distracted to concentrate properly, or simply stupid, the rhetorician must capture their attention with an attractive style and give them the pleasure that they seek. In other words, in a somewhat circular fashion, rhetoric incorporates a conception of its audience that assumes its susceptibility to the surface pleasures of linguistic ornament, and its ignorance of subterranean trickery, in order to justify its recourse to these very techniques.[24]

It seems to be neither a distortion nor an exaggeration to describe this nexus of rhetorical doctrines, methods, and characteristics as entailing (in modern terminology) an implicit commitment on the part of the rhetor in his or her use of language to contingency — the

perception that things may always be said to be otherwise, or else described in ways that are incommensurable — but also to contestability — the admission that disagreements will necessarily be endemic to the subject matter under discussion. Furthermore, these commitments are themselves the legitimate source of the most effective weapons in the rhetorician's arsenal. Is it not possible, then, to speak of the weapon of desubstantialised language in rhetoric?

Turning to the contemporary practice of the history of ideas or concepts, it is quite apparent that this rhetorical emphasis on the instrumentality, contingency, and contestability of discourse correlates closely with two guiding principles of Professor Skinner's enterprise. The first is the Nietzschean perspectivist principle, that just as ideas or concepts change over time, so they will never provide any Archimedean point from which to grasp the world as it is in itself. The second is the Wittgensteinian principle which states that a concept's use in a specific historical and linguistic context forms an indispensable part of its meaning. In this second respect I can see no significant rupture between Skinner's earlier method, formulated in the terms of Austinian speech-acts and linguistic contextualism, and his more recent focus on the rhetorical dimension of intellectual history. According to both approaches, concepts or ideas are historically determined, are subject to continual revision and transformation, and can have no autonomous history — their history must be in an important sense a rhetorical history of things done with them. There is, therefore, a broad translatability between Austinian illocutionary acts and rhetorical uses of a concept in argument.[25] Rhetoric's rigorous dogmatic neutrality, its disregard of the truthfulness of the matter of argument, here becomes a positive quality for the historian. Rather than offering a wholesale explanatory theory of intellectual history, it provides instead a variety of means of conceptualising the strategies employed by historical agents to make *their* concepts perform their designated tasks within language. Moreover, rhetorical analysis has one distinct advantage over modern theories of linguistic action in that it can provide not only explanations of uses to which concepts have been put, but also — more importantly for someone seeking to explain the intentions of historical agents — a more fully historicised basis for the comprehension of these uses in terms which would have been understood by these agents.

If a political theorist has been using rhetorical tools — and all the signs are that rhetoric's status at the centre of school and university education was generally undisputed until the beginning of the eighteenth century at the earliest[26] — then it makes straightforward methodological sense for us to begin our explanations in the terms of these tools.

More broadly, it is worth considering the relationship articulated in classical and Renaissance philosophy between rhetoric on the one hand and ethics and politics on the other. Reacting to the Platonic critique, Aristotle rehabilitates rhetoric by integrating it fully to ethics and politics. According to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, all moral or political choices are 'deliberated desires', which properly involve not simply the logical calculation of consequences, but emotions such as fear and anger. If we choose to go to war, according to this view, these emotions have an inevitable and legitimate place in shaping our decision.[27] Since a knowledge of rhetoric is concerned with the emotions as well as the virtues — and consequently with their proper place in collective thinking — rhetoric is therefore, he says, "an offshoot" of the theoretical discipline of politics.[28] The notion that rhetoric has a legitimate, even necessary place in ethical and political inquiry and practice is another of Aristotle's legacies for classical Rome and the Renaissance. As part of this legacy, the ethical virtue of *phronesis* (rendered in Latin by *prudentia*) — the practical reason manifested by the ability to make good decisions in circumstances of uncertainty — is not based on abstract universality like its Kantian counterpart, but is comprised by a particularistic attention to what is reasonable or plausible in any given situation, as well as to the historical tradition which shapes that situation.[29] In rhetorical terms, in order to make our argument about politics or ethics plausible, it should be framed in the terms understood by the audience, use examples with which they are familiar, and take into account the particular virtues and emotions which they collectively value. These are known as endoxic proofs, based on commonly held beliefs. It is crucial, however, that our political or ethical arguments are always rhetorical in that they seek to persuade an audience of the merits of our point of view.

My point is not to argue for a neo-Aristotelian or neo-classical conception of politics, but rather that in the notions of plausibility,

endoxic proof, and the emphasis on the rhetorical dimension of all political and ethical argument there is something valuable which (consciously or not) has been incorporated to the contemporary investigation of political or social ideas or concepts. The methods of Skinner and the 'Cambridge school' may be characterised as rhetorical in their attentiveness to linguistic and sociopolitical contexts, which enable and constrain the use of particular ideas in particular ways, by agents who make them plausible or endoxic to their historical audience. But the ultimate purpose of this kind of inquiry — as with *Begriffsgeschichte* — is also rhetorical on a larger scale. By drawing attention to the fluctuation of the meanings and uses of concepts throughout historical time, these enterprises are simultaneously, if for the most part implicitly, exercises in political or social rhetoric which seek to persuade us that the meanings which we attribute to concepts, and the uses to which we put them, are themselves historically contingent; that because their meanings are historically determined they are only ever plausible or endoxic to the 'audience' which holds them; and that we ourselves, who are enabled or constrained by our concepts, may act to make them otherwise — perhaps rhetorically. Rhetoric, then, not only has a place in politics, but also in the historiography of social and political thought. In this way, it may be said to underlie the process by which our thought gets outside the objects it examines, thereby enabled to contribute to a larger project of *Ideologiekritik* seeking to dispel historical illusions of conceptual necessity.[30]

Redefinition, Redescription and Conceptual Change

The coincidence of the contestable status of language in classical and Renaissance rhetoric and the explicitly historicised view of ideas or concepts articulated by Professors Skinner and Koselleck enables us to articulate the strategic activity of political theorising in specifically rhetorical terms. One common theoretical strategy, also clearly a rhetorical 'move', is the definition (or re-definition) of key terms or concepts. As we have seen, built in to the system of classical rhetoric is an

underlying assumption of the contingency of definitions, and it is this assumption which facilitates re-definition. On the other hand, the very effectiveness of this 'move' depends, ironically, upon the audience's tendency to *overlook* the contingent character of definitions, and so its persuasive capability rests upon a deception. This is in accordance with the general principle that rhetoric should cover its tracks in order to be effective; but we should also note that this technique is parasitic on Aristotelian scientific method, in which a proper definition (a statement of 'essential nature', *ousia*) is the indispensable first step and therefore the basis of a logically demonstrative proof.[31] In ancient and Renaissance pathology, for example, it is a commonplace that there can be no understanding of a disease without a logically secure definition of that disease.[32] And it is of course because of this traditional scientific weight carried by the concept of definition that Hobbes proposes in the *De cive* that we must commence analysis of ethics by first defining our descriptive terms in ways that accord with common usage and avoid ambiguity.[33]

However, there is a final twist, because if defining or redefining a concept may help the orator to settle controversies about the description of things, nevertheless he must not only tailor his definition to the requirements of his larger argument, but also retain an awareness that his definition must counteract that offered or assumed by his opponent.[34] Contingency thereby returns as a function of institutional agonism. In fact, because there is a significant degree of persistence in the concept of definition across the centuries,[35] this double use of the concept definition — as a logically conclusive procedure, but also as a rhetorical tool or weapon which derives its utility as a manoeuvre from the inevitably contingent nature of all such definitions — still thrives in political theory. To take a very recent example, Ronald Dworkin argues in his *Sovereign Virtue* that some liberal theorists (like Berlin and Rawls) have mistakenly assumed that we must choose between liberty and equality because they have overlooked the fact that "equality is a contested concept", and that "people who praise or dispraise it disagree about what they are praising or dispraising". Dworkin is scoring points against his opponents here by assuming what I would call a rhetorical stance according to which the crucial concept of equality is, as it were, definitively undefinable. However, he abandons this stance by going

on to substitute his own definition, a standard of "equal concern" that a government must have for all its citizens for it to be legitimate.[36] A rhetorically-minded sceptic, naturally distrustful of the ideological role of the legislative language of definitions in political theory, may be tempted to ask why 'equality' can be a contested concept when that of 'equal concern' — which on the surface at least appears to contain the concept of equality — cannot. That, however, is a matter for Dworkin's opponents.

The strategy of redefinition is clearly a function of the broad rhetorical assumption of the manipulability of concepts through language, and falls into the category of manoeuvres which achieve their effects by what Quintilian calls substitution of *verbum pro verbo*. Insofar as this technique operates primarily in the domain of language, however, its persuasive capabilities are limited. It is a central doctrine of Roman rhetoric that the most effective eloquence derives from a proper conjunction of *res* and *verba*, and that of the two *res* must always take priority in shaping argument. This teaching is undisputed by Renaissance writers, and is well exemplified by Cato's dictum, endlessly quoted throughout the sixteenth century, "*rem tene, verba sequentur*". As Quintilian says, "the best words are essentially suggested by the subject-matter, and are discovered by their own intrinsic light."[37] More persuasive, then, is argumentation which involves the substitution of *res pro re*, an alteration of the range of reference of a word. This may be effected by the figure of redescription, which typically involves the contestation of an existing evaluation of an action, object, word or idea, and its subsequent reappraisal in different, usually opposite, terms.[38] Because it is specifically tailored towards an alteration of moral status, redescription in its most straightforward exemplification entails persuading one's audience that what has been previously valued as morally good should in fact be properly accounted as bad, or *vice versa*. However, redescription may also be involved more subtly in extenuating an alleged vice, diminishing the force of an argument that alleges viciousness, or conversely in amplifying the force of one attributing virtue. And since what is vicious stimulates negative emotions (contempt, hatred), and what is virtuous provokes positive ones (love, admiration), the calculated rhetorical affect is a modification of the audience's emotional attitude towards the object thus redescribed.

The effectiveness of redescription stems from a number of doctrines common to classical and Renaissance conceptions of rhetoric and philosophy. In the first place, the Aristotelian axiom which locates virtue topologically at a mid-point or mean between extremes implies that the two are often in close proximity on the ethical spectrum, and that the distinction between them can easily be confused, or indeed manipulated by the orator. Second — and this seems to be an insight on the part of the classical rhetoricians which remains true today — is the fact that description is frequently also moral evaluation, either explicit or implicit, and that many of the terms employed by descriptive language are shared by those of evaluative language. If we recall, then, that rhetoric is appropriate to inherently uncertain questions and draws on the audience's 'corrupt' susceptibility to emotional manipulation, redescription draws on a conception of ethics which is characterised above all by ambiguity, and on a conception of the audience whose judgements will to a large degree be determined by their emotional responses to the moral qualities they perceive to be attached to an object.

It is of course unsurprising that from antiquity onwards there has been considerable resistance to and criticism of the idea that morally evaluative terms can be manipulated by the rhetor at will, since it conjures up a world of moral arbitrariness, and consequently political corruption and anarchy: every discussion of virtue and vice is doomed to be a perpetually unresolved argument *in utramque partem*, and so the character of every political action is always in dispute.[39] Indeed, many of the rhetoricians of antiquity and the Renaissance are aware of the dangerous implications attending such strategies, which seem to have such blatant disregard for the notion of a substantial, comprehensible, and unitary ethical truth. In the second edition of his *Garden of Eloquence*, for example, Henry Peacham condemns redescription because it "opposeth the truth by false tearmes and wrong names".[40] Generally, however, they have recourse to the Aristotelian distinction between rhetoric as a technical, neutral system and the morally accountable user of that system. If vice is confused with virtue, we should blame the orator.[41]

This distinction is crucial for understanding not only why rhetoricians are able to advocate the use of what they realise are potentially unethical techniques, but also, by extension, why authors who

do not profess a belief in the essential moral ambiguity of actions or universal moral arbitrariness feel free to use them. To implement redescription as a localised technique to undermine a particular doctrine is to take advantage of the rhetorical insight about evaluative language as it relates to a specific instance, but not necessarily to advocate the universal application of this insight. In Skinner's well-known example, when Machiavelli redescribes the 'princely' virtues of clemency and liberality as the vices of laxity and ostentatiousness, he does not try to deny that some unequivocally cruel actions are rightly regarded as vicious, even if they may well be useful to a ruler.[42] Obviously, in any concrete political situation, to draw a universal conclusion from the premises of redescription — to go on to argue that all evaluative terms are arbitrary — would violate the principle that rhetoric should cover its tracks.[43] It would be an unsuccessful rhetorical move that would leave the opponent the easy retort that therefore one's own description is equally arbitrary.

However, it is precisely by exposing and adopting the underlying ideology of rhetoric, by uncovering its tracks, that we may see how redescription may provide a model for understanding shifts in normative vocabulary and therefore a rhetorical mode of conceptual change. By uncovering the mechanics of the moves attempted by historical agents, shown to be transforming inherited traditions of describing particular actions or ideas, such a mode can avoid the reduction of conceptual change to shifts in extra-linguistic structural forces, whilst taking as its starting point the intellectual and linguistic contexts which both enable and constrain the nature of the moves available to a theorist in a given historical situation. This rhetorical mode can also avoid explanations of conceptual change in which ideas or concepts appear to have a life of their own, independent of their usage by agents — I am here thinking not only of Lovejoy's approach but also that of Foucault in *The Order of Things* — instead offering a picture in which ideas are only transformed when they are put to a particular use.

For these reasons, I think that rhetorical explanations of conceptual change may well be fruitfully incorporated into the grand Koselleckian project of writing the history of concepts. However, there are limits to the utility of examining how concepts have been transformed by

redescription. Most obviously, rhetorical redescription occurs on the micro-level, in very particular and localised circumstances, but to connect such theories with the macro-level explanations with which *Begriffsgeschichte* is also concerned will present considerable difficulties.[44] Consider a contemporary example of rhetorical redescription: in the 1980s a new concept emerged from the mainstream conservative media, signified by the neologism 'political correctness', which is the product of the attempted redescription of what had been perceived to be some of the traditional virtues of liberal society — tolerance, equality, and so on — as vices which threaten the freedom of the individual. Unfortunately, I am unaware of who originally coined the phrase. However, whilst we can see the rhetorical nature of the move involved, its effectiveness as a weapon in contemporary debate has depended not only upon its neat 'fit' into a particular political ideology but also, to a large extent, upon its widespread reception, manipulation, and propagation throughout our social and cultural as well as political institutions.[45] How do we describe — and in what kind of explanatory language can we account for — the influence of individual agents' rhetorical moves on the developments of institutional conceptualisations over time? Or, to take a famous historical example, by what kind of method should we measure the influence of Mandeville's innovative and shocking redescription of private vices as public virtues in the *Fable of the Bees* on the emerging institutions of the market in the eighteenth century? This redescription clearly found a place in the 're-moralised' economy theorised by Adam Smith — which absorbed the economic and political implications of Mandeville's *Fable*, and which designates vices like drinking to a sphere external to that of true moral duties — but how do we gauge the impact of a single rhetorical move on a phenomenon as complex and multifaceted as the market? Under what conditions, and by what means, does an innovation on the micro-level become a transformation on the macro-level?

We may well begin with the recognition that, as Koselleck has suggested, situations of sociopolitical crisis such as civil war or revolution provoke intense semantic struggles in which concepts are transformed, and in which agents have frequent recourse to rhetorical techniques of redescription.[46] However, it also seems that crisis is not a necessary precondition for, but rather an accelerator of con-

ceptual change, since the meanings of concepts (as both Koselleck and Skinner agree) are *always* contested. A Hobbesian would indeed argue the opposite, that it is semantic confusion that produces crisis, not *vice versa*. It also seems that when every concept put to a particular ideological use enters the domain of public discourse, that concept not only gains a new historical layer of meaning, but is also liable to be transformed, possibly in unintended ways, in its reception. To answer such questions systematically, and to account more fully for the process of conceptual change in history, we would need to integrate rhetorical analysis of persuasive moves with concepts to extralinguistic explanations from social and political history. A step towards bridging the gap between the two could be taken by developing a historicised hermeneutics of reception that attends to the creative function of rhetorical strategies on the level of the public's horizon of expectations.[47] Unfortunately, there is no distinct ancient or Renaissance tradition devoted to this.

Notes

[1] This is a slightly revised version of a paper delivered at the annual conference of the History of Concepts Group in Tampere on 28 June 2001. I would like to thank the audience on this occasion for their perceptive comments, and also Iain McDaniel, Kari Palonen, and Quentin Skinner for their incisive and constructive suggestions on an earlier draft.

[2] By the term 'Renaissance' in this essay I mean to indicate not simply a chronological period, but the early modern project — most strongly associated with European humanism — of recovering and investigating ancient knowledge.

[3] For recent appraisals of the *Rhetoric* see Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's 'Rhetoric'* (Berkeley, 1996). For its influence on subsequent rhetorical traditions see William W. Fortenbaugh and David M. Mirhady (eds.), *Peripatetic Rhetoric after Aristotle* (New Brunswick and London, 1994).

[4] Aristotle, *The 'Art' of Rhetoric* 1.2.1 (1355b), trans. J. H. Freese (London, 1926).

[5] *Phaedrus* 261a; see also ibid., 271c.

[6] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* 6.4 (1140a), trans. H. Rackham (London, 1934).

[7] *Gorgias* 463a-465c, trans. W. F. M. Lamb (London, 1925).

[8] *Rhetoric* 1.1.1 (1354a).

[9] *Rhetoric* 1.1.12 (1355a).

[10] In extreme situations, of course — as when a car crashes, or demagogy — some are tempted to blame the instrument as well as its user.

[11] *Rhetoric* 1.1.12 (1355a).

[12] *Rhetoric* 1.2.12 (1357a), 3.1.6 (1404a).

[13] See Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A study in the fortunes of scholasticism and medical science in European intellectual life* (Cambridge, 1980), 49-55.

[14] *Rhetoric* 1.1.12 (1355a).

[15] Related in Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* 1034e.

[16] See Thomas Sloane, 'Rhetorical Education and the Two-Sided Argument', in H. Plett (ed.), *Renaissance-Rhetorik* (Berlin, 1993).

[17] See, for example, Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata*, trans. Rudolph Agricola and Johannes Catanaeus, with a commentary by Reinhard Lorich (London, 1575), fols. 64r-80r.

[18] *Ad C. Herennium de ratione dicendi* 1.8.12, ed. and trans. Harry Caplan (London, 1954); cf. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 4.2.111-124.

[19] Aristotle, *Topica* 7.5 (155a3-4ff.); Cicero, *De inventione* 1.8.2; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 7.3.1; *Ad Herennium* 4.25.35.

[20] *Ad Herennium* 26.35.

[21] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge, 1994), 2.13, 24.

[22] *Rhetoric* 3.1.5-6 (1404a).

[23] See Lawrence D. Green, 'Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Renaissance Views of the Emotions', in P. Mack (ed.), *Renaissance Rhetoric* (London, 1994).

[24] Richard Lockwood, *The Reader's Figure: Epideictic rhetoric in Plato, Aristotle, Bossuet, Racine and Pascal* (Geneva, 1996), 84-99.

[25] On this matter, Quentin Skinner has pointed out to me the potential significance of the fact that Austin was himself educated in the major texts of classical rhetoric.

[26] For the case of England, see Lawrence D. Green, 'Rhetoric', in D. Sedge (ed.), *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, Vol. 2: 1500-1700*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, forthcoming).

[27] *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.2.2-5 (1139a-b).

[28] *Rhetoric* 1.2.7 (1356a).

[29] *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.5.1-8 (1140a-b), 6.7.6-8.9 (1141b- 1142a), 10.9.23 (1181b). Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London, 1975), 281, and Chantal Mouffe, 'Radical Democracy: Modern or postmodern?', in A. Ross (ed.), *Universal Abandon? The politics of postmodernism* (Edinburgh, 1988), 36.

[30] See, for example, Quentin Skinner, 'A Reply to My Critics', in James Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his* critics (London, 1988), 286; id., *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1998), 116-20, esp. 120; Melvin Richter, '*Begriffsgeschichte* in Theory and Practice: Reconstructing the history of political concepts and languages', in Willem Melching and Wyger Velema (eds.), *Main Trends in Cultural History: Ten essays* (Amsterdam, 1994), 126; id., *The History of Social and Political Concepts* (New York and Oxford, 1995), 159. The rhetorical dimensions of Skinnerian intellectual history are thoughtfully explored in Kari Palonen, 'Quentin Skinner's Rhetoric of Conceptual Change', *History of the Human Sciences* 10.2 (1997), 61-80, esp. 67-9. For a recent implementation of an engaged *Ideologiekritik* in a similar mould see Raymond Geuss, *History and Illusion in Politics* (Cambridge, 2001).

[31] Aristotle, *De anima* 1.1 (402b25-403a2).

[32] See Galen, *On the Therapeutic Method* 1.3.13, 1.4.6, 1.5.2-10, trans. R. J. Hankinson (Oxford, 1991) and *To Thrasyboulos* 1.806- 807, in *Selected Works*, trans. P. N. Singer (Oxford and New York, 1997).

[33] *De cive* 17.12; Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996), 317-18.

[34] Cicero, *De inventione* 1.8.2.

[35] The term 'definition' may today no longer carry explicitly Aristotelian scientific meaning, but it still operates in common usage in a logical manner that is derived from its Latin etymology: it should settle a controversy 'definitively', bringing all dispute to an end.

[36] *Sovereign Virtue: The theory and practice of equality* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001).

[37] *Institutio oratoria* 8.18-32; see also ibid., 8.4.26, 8.3.30, 10.7.22 and Horace, *Ars poetica* 311: "verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur".

[38] The following account of redescription is heavily indebted to Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, 138-80.

[39] See Quentin Skinner, 'Moral Ambiguity and the Renaissance Art of Eloquence', *Essays in Criticism* 44 (1994), 267-92.

[40] *The Garden of Eloquence* (London, 1593), 168.

[41] This is the implication in Cicero, *De partitione oratoria* 23.81 and Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 3.7.25.

[42] *Reason and Rhetoric,* 170-71.

[43] See Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.2.4 (1404b).

[44] For the micro- and macro-level dimensions of historical explanation in *Begriffsgeschichte* see Kari Palonen, 'An Application of Conceptual History to Itself: From method to theory in Reinhart Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte*', *Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought* 1 (1997), 49-59.

[45] See Peter Duignan and Lewis H. Gann, *Political Correctness: A critique* (Stanford, 1995).

[46] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the semantics of historical time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, Mass. 1985), 78; Melvin Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts* (New York and Oxford, 1995), 89-90.

[47] A good place to begin constructing the framework for such an investigation would be the theory elaborated in Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis, 1982).