PROCEEDINGS OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF RHETORIC

ACTES DE LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE POUR L'HISTOIRE DE LA RHÉTORIQUE

VOLUME II, 1986-88

edited by

Albert W. Halsall

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PREFACE

The publication of the second volume of Proceedings of the Canadian Society for the History of Rhetoric which met during the annual meetings of the Canadian Learned Societies in 1986, 1987 and 1988 signals both our right to be accorded consideration as an accredited Canadian Annual Learned Society and the distance we have come in the ten years since our founding as a Society in 1979. Although less than one quarter of the papers read by members of the Society at Winnipeg, McMaster and Windsor (9 out of 42) appear in this volume, the area they cover is impressive. Equally impressive are the interdisciplinary links forged by the Society in the same period with fellow societies as diverse as the Society for Renaissance Studies, the Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing and the Canadian Society of Hermen-eutics and Postmodern Thought. The significant contribution we have made, as students of rhetoric, in such divergent yet logically and linguistically related fields surely confirms our discipline as being of central importance in the modern study of discourse and texts, whether such study concern itself with their production or reception.

The papers you hold in your hands cover topics in the history of argumentation in the West from the Greek Sophists five centuries before Christ through to Nietzsche's reception of their ideas. A French Renaissance philosopher's use of maxims as well as nineteenth-century Marxist revolutionary propaganda both provide matter for analysis by specialists in the study of discursive rhetoric or propaganda. The twentieth century is represented here in texts which study the contributions made by rhetorical models to the modern passion for literary theory. And if your interest is in the relations between rhetoric and poetics and in the application of a rhetorical method to literary texts, you will find a rigorous example in the analysis of Jules Romains' 1923 polemical comedy, Knock ou le triomphe de la médecine. Whether your interest be in Structuralist or Semiotic theories of textuality, or in Feminist deconstructions of dead Biblical metaphors upon which a male-oriented Christianity has constructed a Weltanschauung favourable to men, you will find thought-provoking analysis here. And if you want to see how the rhetorical theory of the Inventio, when followed skilfully, allows an orator

to speak, or a scriptor or logographer to write at length on a single figure of rhetoric, have a look at "Rhetoric and Rationality".

Finally let me draw your attention to the papers of our two invited speakers. Both came from Britain to address the CSHR on subjects they were currently researching. Peter France's paper on Roland Barthes studies the rhetoric of a seminal French thinker of the nineteen-sixties, one who in large part reversed a trend (begun by Peter Ramus in the sixteenth century) which would have reduced rhetoric to the study of the Inventio, or to the discipline modern rhetoricians know as stylistics; in other words, rhetoric minus its persuasive function. Walter Redfern, on the other hand, shows by his study of the pervasive nature of the cliché in our use of language how frequently stereotyping evolves from didactic models we learn as children grappling with the problems of code-acquisition. Just as our moral, political, social and intellectual decisions depend on the semantic values, both denotational and connotational, we learn to assign to existential events and situations in the "real" world, so do such epistemological choices become evident in the kinds of rhetoric we choose to employ in order to persuade others to share our views. Obviously, in so doing, we also learn to question our own choices and once again it is the study of rhetoric which enables us to see through the deceptive uses of language made by others or by ourselves. Or, as Paul Shorey wrote in 1908, "We are freed from rhetoric only by study of its history"[1].

As members of the Canadian Society for the History of Rhetoric, we can well be proud of the progress we, as a Society, have made in so short a time. We can all look forward confidently to 1991, when the third volume of Proceedings will signal once again our right to be considered a productive member of the Canadian Learned Societies.

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[1]Paul Shorey, Tapa 40 (1908), p.185, cited by George Kennedy, The Art of Persuasion in Greece, Princeton N.J., Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 2.

PRÉFACE

La publication du deuxième volume des Actes de la Société canadienne pour l'histoire de la rhétorique signale deux faits. Le premier, c'est le droit que notre Société a mérité par ses réunions d'être considérée officiellement comme une des sociétés savantes canadiennes qui se réunissent annuellement. Le deuxième fait, c'est le progrès que nous avons fait, en tant que jeune société savante, pendant les dix années depuis notre fondation en 1979. Moins de 25% des communications faites par nos membres à Winnipeg, à McMaster et à Windsor en 1986, 1987 et 1988 respectivement paraissent dans ce volume. Néanmoins, elles couvrent un domaine impressionnant. Tout aussi impressionnanants sont les liens interdisciplinaires que la SCHR a forgés avec ses semblables professionnelles, des sociétés aussi diverses que la Société pour l'étude de la Renaissance, l'Association canadienne des professeurs de rédaction technique et scientifique et la Société canadienne pour l'herméneutique et la pensée postmoderne. Notre contribution, en tant que spécialistes de rhétorique, à l'étude moderne du discours et des textes, que ce soit du point de vue de leur production ou de celui de leur réception, souligne l'importance centrale de notre discipline dans les recherches discursives et pragmatiques actuelles.

Les communications publiées dans ce volume couvrent des sujets divers. Dans l'histoire de l'argumentation, deux analystes se penchent sur les Sophistes; l'un d'eux étudie leurs rapports avec la Rhétorique d'Aristote, l'autre leur réception par des philologues du dix-neuvième siècle, y compris Frédéric Nietzsche. Ensuite, un spécialiste de l'argumentation examine la co-existence dans le discours socialiste de la fin du dix-neuvième siècle de propagande et d'arguments idéologiques. D'autres examinent l'emploi discursive que faisait Montaigne de maximes et de sententiae, ou la rhétorique du charlatan, le docteur Knock, dans la pièce de Jules Romains. Que vous vous intéressiez à la déconstruction féministe de présuppositions phallocratiques découvertes dans les doctrines chrétiennes sur la nature des attributs divins, vous trouverez de quoi vous contenter ici. Ou, par contre, si vous cherchez à voir comment l'exploitation habile de quelques-unes des figures de l'Inventio permet un orateur, ou logographe, de

développer sa pensée de façon à la fois ingénieuse et convaincante, jetez un coup d'oeil sur <<Rhetoric and Rationality>>.

Enfin, je me permets d'attirer à votre attention les communications présentées par nos deux orateurs invités. Tous les deux sont venus du Royaume-Uni pour parler de leurs sujets de recherche actuels. Peter France étudie la rhétorique de Roland Barthes, ce qui l'amène à exposer la pensée de celui qui, déjà aux années soixante, indiquait la voie qu'ont prise depuis les chercheurs dans les domaines de l'argumentation et de la pragmatique. Walter Redfern, pour sa part, choisit de montrer par l'étude du cliché comment les problèmes posés à l'enfant au moment où il lutte pour acquérir les codes linguistiques et discursifs contribuent aux présuppositions et aux stéréotypes qui risquent d'informer l'emploi subséquent qu'il fera du langage. En d'autres termes, il montre que c'est bien l'étude de la rhétorique qui permet à l'orateur de surprendre les secrets de sa propre manipulation des codes. Ou, comme Paul Shorey l'a dit en 1908: <<On ne se libère de la rhétorique qu'en en étudiant l'histoire>>[2].

En tant que membres de la Société canadienne pour l'histoire de la rhétorique, on peut être fiers des progrès que nous avons accomplis en si peu de temps. On peut prévoir avec confiance la publication en 1991 du troisième volume des Actes qui signalera encore une fois la contribution active qui a déjà permis à notre Société d'acquérir la réputation d'une Société savante canadienne dynamique et productive.

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[2] Paul Storey, Tapa 40 (1908), p.185, passage cité par George Kennedy dans The Art of Persuasion in Greece, Princeton N.J., Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 2.

I. RHETORIC AND ARGUMENTATION: RHÉTORIQUE ET ARGUMENTATION

A) THE SOPHISTS; ARISTOTLE; NIETZSCHE

GIUSEPPE MAZZARA

La contribution de l'école gorgienne à la théorie de l'argumentation aristotélicienne.

Je me propose de montrer des influences possibles qu'avaient Gorgias et ses élèves, Alcidamas et Isocrate, sur la dialectique rhétorique d'Aristote.

Introduction

Dans le chapitre IV du premier livre de sa Rhétorique Aristote attaque d'une façon tout à fait résolue la thèse centrale du Phèdre, qui vise à ramener le but de la rhétorique à l'intérieur de la dialectique des idées, dont la méthode consistait en un processus mélangé d'analyse et de diérèse. Par cette méthode Platon se proposait de définir les aspects de chaque chose et d'éclaircir ce qu'on voulait enseigner (Phèdre, 256de[1]). Qui ne fait pas tout son possible pour bien philosopher -- avait averti Platon -- ne saura jamais assez pour parler sur quoi que ce soit (Ibid., 261).

Aristote lui répond en disant qu'"énumérer chaque chose avec soin et la diviser en espèces et la définir selon la vérité ne peut pas être le but de l'art rhétorique dans la présente situation, mais d'un art plus proche de la rationalité" (Rhétorique, I, 4, 1359b 1-7). Il fait observer encore que le but de la rhétorique n'est pas celui de se tranformer en science d'objets déterminés, qui dans ce cas serait la dialectique des idées, mais celui, plus simple, d'être la faculté de procurer des arguments ou logoï (Rhét. I, 2, 1356a 30-33; 4, 1359b 12-15). Il ajoute que plus nous nous éloignons de ce but, plus nous finissons par éliminer la nature de la rhétorique et celle de la dialectique qui lui est semblable ("analogue",1354a 1; sa "ramification", 1356a 25; sa "pareille", 1356a 31). On le fait si l'on essaie de les organiser en sciences d'objets déterminés et non seulement de logoï (1359b 12-15).

Ainsi faisant, Aristote reprend la thèse du Gorgias (451d-454a), selon laquelle le but de la rhétorique pour notre Sophiste serait celui de persuader avec des logoï, ce qui

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[1]Les indications des pages et des chapitres, etc. dans les ouvrages cites renvoient aux editiotions identifiees dans la <<note bibliographique>> a la page 20.

explique toute sa force. Au même moment, il s'oppose au Platon du même dialogue (454a-456a), mais aussi au Platon du Phèdre (259e-260d), qui critiquait une telle rhétorique pour le fait qu'elle n'était pas un art ou une expertise technique [Techné] comme toutes les autres parce qu'elle n'avait pas d'objet déterminé.

Nous nous rendons aussitôt bien compte que cela met en jeu non seulement une thèse fondamentale, mais tout l'ensemble de la pensée rhétorique de Platon, qui se basait sur l'épistemé comme science absolue de la cause et de l'essence des choses.

Puisque pour Aristote la rhétorique n'est pas une telle science, mais plutôt celle où règnent les propositions conformes à l'opinion commune, c'est-à-dire les probabilités [endoxa], il en vient à se trouver dans la même position de départ que Gorgias et que ses élèves, Alcidamas et Isocrate, quand ils contestaient la thèse de Platon.

Au point où nous en sommes, nous pourrions aussi nous demander comment il est possible qu'Aristote soit passé de sa critique de la rhétorique (Rhét., I, 1, 1354a 11-1355a 20) à la mise en valeur presque générale de la rhétorique des Gorgiens et surtout de celle d'Isocrate, lui qui avait écrit d'abord aussi une Grille polémique contre la Grille d'Isocrate[1].

a) Des points de contact entre Aristote et Isocrate contre Platon: une influence possible exercée par Isocrate sur la Rhétorique d'Aristote (Rhét., 1355a 21-1355b 7)?

On se souviendra que les Gorgiens avaient identifié le but de la rhétorique comme celui de rendre justes tous ceux qui la mettent en pratique, par analogie avec tous les autres arts, qui rendent tel qu'il est l'art qu'ils acquièrent. De la même façon, Platon identifiait la rhétorique directement à la justice, conçue comme science de ce qui est juste, en sorte qu'il pouvait conclure le chapitre XIV en affirmant que "jamais l'expert de rhétorique ne voudra commettre d'injustice", et, donc, il ne voudra pas persuader son public de croire identiques des propositions contraires.

Une telle affirmation était en contradiction flagrante avec ce que Gorgias avait dit dans le précédent chapitre (le chapitre XI), où il disait que ce n'est pas l'art qui est

[1]Sur ce sujet, voir E. Berti, La filosofia del primo Aristotele, Firenze, 1962, pp. 159-75.

condamnable, mais celui qui en fait un usage incorrect. L'art rhétorique est semblable à tout autre moyen de lutte; il faut s'en servir avec justice: il ne faut, par exemple, enlever la réputation ni aux médecins, ni aux autres techniciens, seulement parce que la rhétorique en a le pouvoir.

En plein accord avec ces intentions, Isocrate reprend cette page du Gorgias, répétant les mêmes choses et, dans quelques cas, les mêmes exemples. Ceux-ci incluent le "courage" et la "force", exemples auxquels il ajoute celui de la "richesse".

> Je m'étonne, [dit-il], qu'ils [les Platoniciens] blâment des discours au moyen desquels on essaie de dépasser les autres, plutôt que ceux dont on se sert pour tromper et pour commettre l'injustice. Et ils ne blâment pas de la même manière d'autres biens, tels que la 'richesse', la 'force' et le 'courage'. En effet, on trouvera aussi parmi ceux qui possèdent de tels biens des personnes qui s'en servent pour tromper et pour faire du mal aux autres (Nicoclès, 3).

Cette oeuvre est généralement datée autour de 368, c'est-à-dire autour de la publication du Phèdre et du Théétète (369-368), peut-être au moment de l'arrivée d'Aristote à Athènes; en tout cas, elle a été publiée sûrement avant la Rhétorique I. Il est donc plausible a priori qu'Aristote l'a connu, d'autant plus qu'il était déjà entré en conflit avec Isocrate, ayant publié une Grille où il aurait opposé une polémique à la Grille d'Isocrate.

Aristote écrit dans la Rhétorique:

> Bien qu'il soit vrai que qui se sert injustement de cette faculté des discours peut nuire gravement, cependant, ce fait est propre à tous les biens, exceptée la vertu, et surtout parmi celles qui sont les plus utiles, telles que force, santé, richesse, commandement d'armée (Rhét., I, 1, 1355b 2-6).

Je crois que, quand Aristote écrivait ces choses, il avait présents à l'esprit les paragraphes du Nicoclès mentionnés plus haut; il me semble de plus que de même qu'Isocrate reprenait le langage de Gorgias, de la même manière Aristote reprend le langage d'Isocrate. En effet, il me semble que les termes de "richesse" et de "courage" évoluent dans le même cercle formé de l'argumentation isocratienne.

En outre, ce n'est pas là une notion isolée. Elle arrive à la fin d'une série d'objections au Gorgias (Rhét. I, 1, 1355a 21-b 2), dans le sens d'une reprise d'instances gorgiennes, telles qu'elles étaient énoncées par Gorgias dans le chapitre XI susmentionné et à qui le Nicoclès se reliait, comme l'on a vu. Telles me semblent être les notions

relatives au fait qu'aussi bien la dialectique que la rhétorique persuadent des contraires, et donc qu'elles ne sont pas des sciences déterminées. Cela me semble aussi vrai de celles relatives au fait qu'il ne faut pas persuader de choses mauvaises, où la responsabilité est de nouveau déplacée: de l'art rhétorique elle passe à l'éthos de l'orateur qui s'en sert.

En ce sens, je voudrais réserver une attention particulière à l'instance aristotélicienne relative au fait qu'en face de certains, même si nous possédions la science la plus exacte, nous ne pourrions les convaincre en la prenant comme notre seule base, mais qu'il est nécessaire -- dit Aristote -- de produire les arguments [pisteis] et les discours construits sur des notions communes (Rhét. I, 1, 1355a 24-36). Isocrate s'en servait et c'est sur celles-ci que non seulement le Gorgias, mais aussi la République et le Phèdre, avaient exprimé le plus grand mépris.

Certainement cela marque -- à mon avis -- la fin d'une discrimination injustifiée et préconçue contre l'opinion et contre Isocrate, qui l'avait instituée comme l'objet de sa rhétorique. Évidemment, Aristote se rendait bien compte que le discours selon la science [ho kata ten epistemen logos] était trop didascalique ou trop didactique (Rhét. I, 1, 1355a 26) pour qu'on l'utilise d'une façon généralisée. On ne peut pas, fait-il observer par exemple, l'utiliser quand on parle à une grande masse de personnes. Aristote, donc, refuse cette thèse du Phèdre et du Gorgias, mais surtout de la République, où elle était pleinement théorisée et développée, et contre laquelle il semble qu'Isocrate se retourne dans l'Antidose (258-269) au bénéfice des discours communs et utiles.

Toutefois Aristote ne refuse pas du tout le discours selon la science; il se trouve donc ici en accord en quelque façon avec Isocrate. En effet, il dit qu'on peut appeler "orateur" celui qui connaît les enthymèmes vrais et apparents (Rhét., I, 1, 1355b 18-20) du fait qu'il possède une connaissance précise des instruments de son art, et du fait qu'il les applique afin de déterminer les faits.

A son tour, Isocrate soulignait que l'orateur devait connaître la science des discours (Contre les Sophistes, 10), aussi bien qu'il devait soigner bien l'application de ces instruments, afin de montrer la vérité. Par exemple, dans l'Antidose (54), il disait qu'il présentait au public des morceaux tirés de ses discours précédents, afin que son

public puisse être à même de mieux juger son art directement et à partir d'un savoir clair, plutôt que grâce à des opinions. Isocrate montre ainsi que son idéal gnoséologique relève du savoir clair, idéal que soutenait Gorgias dans Palamède (3) et que nous propose encore Aristote -- à mon avis -- pour le domaine rhétorique, à savoir, une < <pratique> >.

Il me semble clair que cela signifiait qu'il fallait reconnaître explicitement à la rhétorique d'inspiration gorgienne et à celle d'Isocrate en particulier le statut d'un art [techné] véritable. Platon, au contraire, dans le Gorgias (465a), dans la République (VI, 493b) et dans le Phèdre (260e; 262c) l'appelait une simple technique peu habile d'ailleurs.

En réalité même Platon avait en quelque manière mis en valeur certains aspects de la rhétorique gorgienne, tels que la persuasion, l'expression, la disposition et le discours improvisé d'Alcidamas. Cependant il n'avait jamais poussé son éloge jusqu'à considérer l'opinion, qui a un statut propre et autonome, comme capable de se constituer en un art véritable. En effet, c'est là -- à mon avis -- le point principal du Phèdre, où bien au contraire, Platon se montre inébranlable. Tout au plus l'opinion pourrait-elle faire l'objet d'un art de second degré, bien qu'il ne le dise pas explicitement. C'est à partir de là qu'il juge Isocrate comme un rhéteur qui a encore besoin de s'élever à des choses plus divines (Phèdre, 279a), et qui est, donc, imparfait, de la même manière que dans le Sophiste (267b-268c) il définira le sophiste comme un philosophe imparfait[2].

Aristote, pour sa part, dans le proème du premier livre de la Rhétorique, de tous les exemples cités dans le Phèdre retient surtout celui qu'y représente la vérité. Mais il le fait en le rendant l'objet d'une dialectique des opinions et non des idées. Le résultat en est qu'il possédait ainsi les prémisses pour une remise en valeur presque générale de la rhétorique d'inspiration gorgienne, avec ses fonctions catégoriales et précatégoriales.

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[2]Sur ce dernier concept, voir G. B. Kerferd, < <Le sophiste vu par Platon: un philosophe imparfait> >, dans Positions de la Sophistique (éd. Barbara Cassin), Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1986, pp. 13-25.

A ce propos, il me semble que la rhétorique "historique" d'Alcidamas (Peri Soph., 1) et surtout l'"empirique" d'Isocrate (Antidose, 187) sont à même de tenir en échec, en quelque manière, la rhétorique "scientifique" de Platon.

b) Quelques-unes des caractéristiques de la rhétorique d'Alcidamas et d'Isocrate accueillies par Aristote

1) Les aspects précatégoriaux

Pour Alcidamas la chose la plus importante pour l'orateur est de ne pas perdre la parole. Cela est d'autant plus vrai dans le cas d'une évaluation en termes de vérité et de fausseté. Si un savant manque de paroles ou se taît, il tombe dans le ridicule et s'aliène la sympathie du public. Parler avec facilité signifie être à même de se défendre ou se s'aider au-delà des mêmes contenus, selon un instinct, pour ainsi dire, de type bio-physique (Peri Soph., 16).

De même, quand Isocrate dans le Nicoclès (5-9) et ensuite dans l'Antidose (253-7) fait l'éloge du logos, il ne dit pas que nous nous distinguons des animaux du fait que c'est le logos qui nous permet de communiquer entre nous, selon la vérité ou la fausseté seulement; ni que c'est le logos qui nous a permis d'instituer des lois justes ou injustes. Il dit tout simplement que, tandis que les animaux nous dépassent par d'autres fonctions, telles que la rapidité et la force, nous ne les dépassons en rien d'autre que le logos. C'est-à-dire que, d'un autre point de vue, Isocrate reconfirme le concept précatégorial du logos soutenu par Alcidamas, comme quelque chose d'utile avant tout dans la vie pour s'aider soi-même, de la même manière que toute autre faculté bio-physique.

Il me semble qu'Aristote se montre bien plus sensible que Platon à cet aspect du logos. En ce sens je crois qu'on peut déjà entrevoir tout de suite des exemples de ce type dans les premières lignes de la Rhétorique (I, 1, 1354a 3-7), quand Aristote dit que "tous se mêlent jusqu'à un certain point
de questionner sur une thèse et de la soutenir, de se défendre et d'accuser". Il n'y précise pas encore la qualification de ces actions typiquement humaines, comme il le fait, par exemple, dans le Peri Hermeneias. Je le crois voir également rappeler Isocrate dans la page suivante (1355b 1-2), au moment où Aristote dit que "s'il est honteux de ne se pouvoir défendre avec son corps, il serait absurde qu'il n'y eût point de honte à

ne le pouvoir faire par la parole, dont l'usage est plus propre à l'homme que celui du corps".

Par contre, Platon ne prend en considération parmi les fonctions catégoriales que l'affirmation et la négation.

2) La pragmatique et les aspects catégoriaux

Mais je crois que certaines instances d'Isocrate sont, elles aussi, à même d'interférer en quelque sorte sur l'aspect catégorial de la rhétorique platonicienne. Comme Platon le disait auparavant, celui qui veut devenir un rhéteur compétent doit se mettre à bien philosopher (Phèdre, 261a). Cela en constituait seulement l'aspect théorique; mais il y avait aussi un aspect pratique, qui en prévoyait la mise en oeuvre. A ce propos, Platon avance l'exigence d'une certaine sensibilité pour servir comme aptitude à celui qui voudrait cueillir le convenable [kairos]. Cependant, sur la base de la description qu'il en fait au cours du chapitre LVI du Phèdre, on peut noter facilement que, malgré son insistance, il n'existe pas en fait d'évaluation suffisante de cet aspect fondamental de la paideia oratoire.

A mon avis, cette exigence reste extrinsèque au savoir platonique, qui doit être acquis avant sa mise en oeuvre; et Isocrate a bien raison de lui objecter que quiconque a suivi toutes les leçons et appris toutes les notions, mais ne s'est pas exercé en fait dans la réalité, pourra tout au plus plaire comme "poète [ou inventeur] de discours" (Antidose, 192), mais ne pourra jamais devenir un rhéteur compétent.

Qui veut réussir à être un tel rhéteur doit avant tout avoir une nature bien douée; ensuite il doit être bien instruit, se chargeant de connaissances dans tous les domaines; enfin il doit aquérir par des expériences pratiques l'art d'exercer le discours (Antidose, 185-7).

Comme on peut le voir, les deux premières requêtes partagent l'exigence platonicienne. Il faut y noter comment Isocrate montre qu'il a bien accueilli la leçon platonicienne exposée dans le Phèdre, selon laquelle la rhétorique doit se baser sur la connaissance. La troisième requête en constitue, par contre, un véritable cas de spécificité. Ici nous trouvons finalement le terme "expert" [entribeis] expliqué dans toute sa valeur positive, tandis que jusqu'ici nous l'avons vu utiliser (à partir du Gorgias

jusqu'au Phèdre) en un sens absolument négatif. Maintenant est mise en lumière la force de la pratique en face de l'abstraite théorie des idées. Il n'existe pas -- dit justement Isocrate -- de science qui explique tous les faits (Antidose, 184). Au contraire, "ceux qui sont capables d'examiner ce qui se produit généralement saisissent [les faits] dans la plupart des cas" (Antidose, Ibid.).

Ainsi disant, Isocrate reconfirme ce qu'il avait dit dans le discours Contre les Sophistes (sect. 14-18), où il soulignait, entre autre choses, que le but [ergon] d'une âme courageuse et opinante est celui de "choisir pour chaque sujet les procédés qu'il faut, [de] les combiner et les ranger dans l'ordre convenable, [et de] ne pas se tromper sur le moment opportun à leur emploi".

Il me semble que ce concept trouve un écho direct dans la Rhétorique d'Aristote et dans sa Métaphysique (I, 981a 3-5), où le Stagirite, s'opposant au jugement de Platon (Gorgias, 462b-463b), cite Polo (qui, comme Isocrate, est lui aussi élève de Gorgias), en disant qu'il n'a aucune raison de n'affirmer que l'art naisse de l'expérience. En effet, nous trouvons un résultat de cette attitude quasi isocratienne exhibée par Aristote dans la Rhétorique (II, 22, 1395b 23-1396a 3) où il fait observer que les rhéteurs cultivés parlent moins bien devant les foules que les ignorants. C'est que les premiers énumèrent des propositions générales et universelles qui ne sont pas persuasives, tandis que les seconds, qui puisent dans ce qu'ils savent, s'adaptent mieux à l'auditeur. Aristote donne cet exemple pour indiquer qu'afin d'être efficace, un orateur n'a pas besoin d'un quelconque savoir, si élevé et précis qu'il soit, mais d'un savoir qui s'adapte à la fois au kairos particulier. Cela ne peut être bien fait que par celui qui connaît les prémisses enthymématiques particulières à chaque argument, des plus familiers aux moins connus (1396a 30-1396b 18).

Mais je crois que même Platon a tenu compte de cette instance isocratienne de la praxis oratoire. En utilisant dans ses Lois (XII, 968d-969a) le même concept que le kairos du Phèdre, il se montre bien plus sensible à l'instance de la praxis et beaucoup moins sûr au sujet de la théorie.

c) Le Proème de la Rhétorique, I: une attaque contre les Gorgiens?

Nous avons vu les arguments pro-gorgiens qui ont poussé Aristote à se retourner contre Platon. Mais dans le même proème, il existe des arguments par lesquels il semble se réclamer de Platon contre les Gorgiens. En effet, il me semble que toute la section où il parle de "l'insuffisance des techniques antérieures" et du "rôle du plaideur" etc. (1354a 11-1355a 18) s'inspire du discours platonicien contre les Gorgiens. Aristote critique certains théoriciens contemporains qui avaient consacré leurs traités à des questions qui restent étrangères au logos: la calomnie, la pitié, la colère et les autres passions. Selon Aristote, ils cherchaient ainsi à corrompre les juges en faisant appel à leurs passions, ce qui les empêchait de juger selon la vérité, mais plutôt selon leur plaisir ou leur intérêt. Par contre, ils ne trouvaient rien à dire sur ce qui forme le "corps" de la cause, les enthymèmes. Et, en effet, ce sont les enthymèmes, qui représentent l'élément le plus important de la rhétorique. Le but de la rhétorique, dit Aristote, est de démontrer si une chose s'est produite ou non et si l'on peut bien la vérifier ou non.

Aristote ne précise pas qui étaient ces faiseurs de traités. L'un d'eux était peut-être Trasimaque, qu'Aristote cite dans la Rhétorique (III, 1404a) et qui avait été mentionné aussi par Platon dans le Phèdre (267c-d). Cependant, si l'on se base sur ce que dit Aristote au sujet de "l'insuffisance des techniques antérieures" dans la Rhétorique, je crois qu'on peut inférer qu'il parle de certains aspects négatifs de la rhétorique d'inspiration gorgienne, en l'occurrence sa prétension de procurer du plaisir à l'auditeur, coûte que coûte (voir Gorgias, Hélène, 5). C'est, du reste, ce qui avait justifié la prise de position anti-gorgienne du Gorgias, où Platon avait appelé cette prétension "adulatrice".

Aristote semble ici partager la critique platonicienne. Il semble également donc -- comme l'on a dit -- critiquer âprement les rhéteurs qui, afin de les corrompre, poussent les juges à éprouver des passions. Du moment qu'Aristote soutient cette thèse dans le proème, la plaçant au centre des procès judiciaires, on pourrait la voir comme une attaque qu'il mène contre Isocrate et Alcidamas. A Isocrate il semble qu'il avait contesté son activité de logographe. Une trace de cette polémique se trouve peut-être dans l'Antidose (sect. 31), où Isocrate déplore que son accusateur dise qu'"il inspirerait de la jalousie à tous les auditeurs, et que mon activité prétendue auprès des tribunaux

excitherait en vous de la colère et de la haine, sentiments sous l'empire desquels les juges se montrent plus sévères pour les accusés".

Mais Aristote se tourne aussi peut-être contre Alcidamas, qui en fait avait été des deux celui qui s'était le plus occupé, dans sa paideia, de l'aspect judiciaire, et qui par sa théorie de la rhétorique comme l'art des discours adressés à des auditeurs spécifiques, avait souligné l'importance non seulement de leurs opinions et de leurs jugements, mais aussi de leurs désirs. Selon Alcidamas donc, il faut persuader le public en se servant de mots improvisés, avec une expression et une disposition proportionnées à chaque situation. Le but en est de suggestionner le public afin qu'il accepte plus facilement les opinions de l'orateur.

Il me semble qu'Alcidamas s'inspire assez évidemment de Gorgias qui, dans l'Hélène (8-9), dit que le logos peut susciter la terreur, la peine, la joie et la pitié et opérer à travers le mètre de la poésie, en sorte que l'âme éprouve une affection propre à elle et qu'elle tire de faits qui lui sont étrangers. Aristote aussi se réclame des mêmes paragraphes de l'Hélène auxquels il confère son propre style, quand il dit que dans les procès judiciaires les questions à trancher sont étrangères aux juges qui "ne [les] considèrent jamais que pour leur intérêt propre et n'écoutent que pour le plaisir" (Rhétorique, I, 1, 1354b 31-35). Le même concept est répété plus loin (Rhétorique, II, 1, 1378a 19-22), quand l'énumération des passions (peine, plaisir, colère, pitié, terreur) reflète même plus complètement celles qui sont mentionnées, comme nous avons vu, dans l'Hélène. Cette coincidence de thèmes et de langage nous porte à croire que, quand il écrivait la section du proème susmentionnée, Aristote avait à l'esprit les Gorgiens. S'il en est ainsi, et vu le caractère énigmatique de ce premier chapitre de la Rhétorique, nous pouvons faire observer qu'il porte en effet les signes d'une grand tension. Celle-ci marque la remise en valeur de certains aspects de la rhétorique d'inspiration gorgienne qui se contraste à la conservation d'instances platoniques et aussi au refus intransigeant d'autres instances de la paideia oratoire gorgienne. Au travers des diverses modifications ou ajustements, quelques éléments de cette tension trouveront une résolution positive. Il s'agit surtout de ceux qui se rapportent à l'aspect proprement argumentatif. Tandis qu'Aristote, dans la Protreptique, continuera à se montrer aussi intransigeant que dans le proème envers d'autres aspects de la rhétorique, tels que le

rôle et la signification des principes sur lesquels elle se base, et leur influence sur l'éthique. En cela il se met d'accord avec le Platon de la République.

d) Aristote précise son opinion sur les arguments [pisteis]

Dans le deuxième chapitre du premier livre de la Rhétorique et dans le proème du deuxième livre, nous trouvons, si l'on se tient au proème du premier livre, un changement d'opinion tout à fait imprévu. Contrairement à ce qu'il y disait, maintenant Aristote affirme qu'il y a trois types d'argumentations procurés par le logos: ceux qui concernent respectivement soit le caractère de l'orateur, soit la manière de disposer l'auditeur, soit le logos même.

Nous pouvons nous demander ce qui a pu provoquer ce changement d'avis. Je crois que nous pourrions trouver facilement une réponse en considérant la différence temporelle entre la composition de ces deux parties de la Rhétorique: hypothèse, du reste, qui a été émise par beaucoup de chercheurs[3]. J'aimerais soutenir cette hypothèse en considérant le passage du premier livre de la Rhétorique (1368a 19-21) où Aristote cite le nom d'Isocrate à propos de l'amplification:

> Si l'agent n'offre pas par lui-même assez ample matière, il faut le mettre en parallèle avec d'autres; c'est ce que faisait Isocrate, parce qu'il n'était pas habitué à plaider en justice. Mais cette comparaison doit être faite avec les hommes fameux; car elle prête à l'argumentation et à la beauté, si l'on fait paraître l'auteur meilleur que les hommes de mérite.

Il me semble que ce que dit Aristote ici exprime exactement ce que faisait Isocrate dans son Antidose (2-3). Ayant exposé ses arguments dans un discours simple, il courait le risque de s'exposer à la haine du public. Il inventa donc un procès feint, contre un certain Lysimakhos, de sorte qu'il puisse se défendre, comme s'il s'agissait d'un vrai procès (voir aussi l'Antidose, 26).

D'autre part, nous trouvons dans l'Antidose (278-80) deux observations qui pourraient être considérées comme des critiques ponctuelles de ce qui est dit dans le proème susmentionné du premier livre de la Rhétorique. a) On a déjà parlé de la première observation: il s'y agit de la crédibilité que possède l'orateur honnête. A

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[3]Voir, dans ARISTOTELE, Retorica, Laterza, Bari, 1961, l'introduction d' A. Plebe.

Aristote qui affirme que: "la démonstration rhétorique est un enthymème et ceci est, pour ainsi dire, en un sens absolu, la plus forte des argumentations" [1355a 7-8], Isocrate répondrait: "la démonstration fournie par la vie d'un homme a plus de force [pour persuader] que celle d'un discours" (Antidose, 278). b) A Aristote qui dit: "car seules les argumentations sont artificielles [entekhna], tout le reste n'est qu'accessoires" et "les enthymèmes... sont pourtant le corps de l'argumentation", Isocrate répondrait:

> les appels à la vraisemblance, les arguments et tous les moyens de prouver ne servent que pour la circonstance où chacun d'eux est employé, tandis que la réputation d'honnêteté, non seulement donne plus de confiance dans les discours, mais encore ajoute du lustre à tous les actes de celui qui en jouit (Antidose, 280).

Il me semble plausible d'imaginer qu'Aristote a tenu en très grande considération les observations d'Isocrate, du moment que, contre la lettre du proème cité, il écrit expressément: "Les preuves administrées par le moyen du discours sont de trois espèces: les premières consistent dans le caractère de l'orateur" (1356a 1-2) et "c'est le caractère (de l'orateur) qui, peut-on dire, constitue presque la plus efficace des preuves" (1356a 13).

S'il en est ainsi, il me semble probable qu'Aristote, en un premier temps, a réagi contre quelques aspects de la rhétorique du type gorgien évoqué plus haut. Il attire, par contre, l'attention sur ce qui constitue le pivot de la rhétorique platonicienne, c'est-à-dire sur la connaissance des faits qui soutienne la démonstration enthymématique et qui serait, donc, l'unique argument vraiment à même de persuader. Cependant, quand il s'agit de trouver dans les faits concrets les moyens de persuader, Aristote a dû constater la limitation qu'impose une telle définition, qui finit par le rejeter sur certaines positions abstraites observables dans le Phèdre. L'insuffisance de ces positions pour intégrer le kairos, ce qui l'en avait éloigné, s'explique à la lumière de la grande attraction qu'il ressentait à l'égard de la pragmateia empirique d'Isocrate et surtout peut-être à celle possédée par l'Antidose. Il n'est pas exclu -- à mon avis -- que ce soit des considérations de ce type qui aient pu pousser Aristote à ajuster ses évaluations de l'argumentation.

Il semblerait qu'avec cette remise en valeur des éléments extérieurs aux "faits", Aristote ait dit son dernier mot. Mais il n'en est rien. On trouve un signe de son

oscillation (nous dirions de son ajustement) dans le proème du deuxième livre. Là, à propos des causes par lesquelles l'orateur se montre plus crédible, il dit: "Quant aux orateurs, ils inspirent confiance pour trois raisons; les seules en dehors des démonstrations qui déterminent notre croyance: la prudence, la vertu et la bienveillance" (1378a 6-8). Le concept d'éléments qui restent extérieurs aux faits de la cause, concept discuté dans le proème du premier livre, réapparaît ainsi encore une fois.

En outre, dans le proème du troisième livre, Aristote, qui reprend cette question surtout à l'égard de la manière de disposer l'auditeur, précise que cet élément (et implicitement celui aussi du caractère de l'orateur) reste extérieur à la démonstration au sens propre du terme. Il le reconfirme ainsi comme l'élément vraiment artificiel ou artistique et comme le premier qui se soit affirmé historiquement.

Cependant, Aristote reconnaît, comme les Gorgiens d'ailleurs, que dire ce qu'on doit dire par le moyen d'un logos d'une certaine qualité n'est pas indifférent à la persuasion. Cest là la raison pour laquelle celui qui voudrait être persuasif doit rechercher cette qualité. Et maintenant Aristote dit même qu'il s'agit là d'un élément nécessaire, bien qu'il ne soit pas du tout suffisant à la démonstration.

Encore une fois donc, Aristote s'oppose à la lettre du proème du premier livre, et d'une manière même plus explicite que dans le proème du deuxième livre:

> [...] car, en stricte justice, on doit uniquement chercher, en ce qui concerne le discours, à ne causer ni peine ni plaisir; car les seules armes avec lesquelles il est juste de lutter, ce sont les faits, en sorte que tout ce qui n'en est pas la démonstration est superflu. Néanmoins, l'action a, comme nous l'avons dit, grand pouvoir par suite de la perversion de l'auditeur (1404a 5-7).

Il répète ainsi la valeur possédée par l'appel aux émotions dans le cas d'un public nombreux non cultivée. Mais il y reconfirme aussi ce qui reste son point fort, la démonstration enthymématique du "fait".

Malgré ces limitations et ces mises au point, nous pouvons nous rendre compte combien Aristote s'est éloigné de la critique méprisante des rhéteurs de son temps exprimée et dans sa Grille et dans le proème du premier livre de la Rhétorique.

Voilà peut-être la raison pour laquelle il a jugé que ce n'était pas nécessaire de l'éliminer de cette section initiale de son oeuvre. C'était peut-être une question d'orgueil ou d'honnêteté intellectuelle, ou peut-être des deux à la fois. Il aurait pu vouloir

montrer que son adversaire, aussi bien que lui, avait raison, et que leurs rhétoriques étaient plus semblables qu'elles n'en avaient l'air.

En tout cas, Aristote a bien montré qu'il n'avait pas peur de modifier sa pensée là où il fallait la changer, et de la soutenir, là où il le fallait.

En conclusion, sa rhétorique peut être considérée -- à mon avis -- comme formant le juste milieu entre la rhétorique de la science absolue de Platon et la rhétorique empirique de l'opinion commune d'Isocrate.

Note bibliographique:

Les indications des pages et des chapitres, etc. dans les ouvrages cités renvoient aux éditions suivantes:

ARISTOTE, La Rhétorique (Paris, Société d'Édition < <Les Belles Lettres> >, 1967, 3 vols.

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PLATON, Oeuvres complètes. Paris, Société d'Édition < <Les Belles Lettres> >, 1952, 14 vols.

Le Docteur Giuseppe Mazzara poursuit ses recherches en histoire de la philosophie grècque ancienne dans la Faculté de Lettres de l'Université de Palerme (Italie). Il est l'auteur du Gorgia ontologo e metafisico (Palermo, 1982) et de plusieurs communications présentées dans le cadre de colloques internationaux consacrés à l'histoire de la philosophie. Il travaille actuellement sur les rapports entre les rhétoriques sophiste, platonicienne et aristotélicienne.

JOHN POULAKOS

NIETZSCHE'S RECEPTION OF THE SOPHISTS

This essay is part of a larger project concerned with the history of sophistical rhetoric. Treating our present understanding of the Greek Sophists as the result of several critical receptions from Plato to Lyotard, I examine Nietzsche's reception in light of the understandings he inherited from his predecessors and the treatment his reception has received in the hands of his successors. Why Nietzsche? At least from a theoretical point of view, Nietzsche is interesting because rather than simply adding yet another perspective on the Sophists to the total horizon of their critico-historical understanding he calls into question all the previous receptions, from Plato to Zeller, that were prevalent during his time. In so doing, he problematizes for us the theory of reception articulated by Hans Robert Jauss[1]. According to Jauss, the proper understanding of a past work depends not only on the reader's thorough familiarity with that work but also on his/her acquaintance with all the criticism available from the time of the work's publication to the present. As will be shown, Nietzsche's reading of the Sophists renders this view highly problematic by insisting that a particular critical perspective is rarely an innocent gesture--more often than not it is suspect because it serves disciplinary as well as institutional interests. But if this is so, a reader's understanding of a work requires that (s)he go beyond the work and the criticism and inquire into the interests that they sought to serve. According to this line of thought, the history of a work's reception may not so much designate parameters within which the work may be properly understood as stand in the way of a reader's understanding of it. As such, a reader may be better off departing from rather than following the "tradition". Nietzsche is peculiarly qualified to address the perils of normatively controlled intellectual production because he broke away from the academic scene and the discipline of

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[1] Hans Robert Jauss, Towards an Aesthetic of Reception, trans. Timothy Bahti, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982,

philology[2]. As one might expect, what he had to say about the interpretations of his predecessors and contemporaries has rendered many of their positions highly vulnerable. Because he has embarrassed the academic orthodoxy, whose ideological base is an amalgam of Platonism and Aristotelianism, he has been labeled a heretic and his thinking on the Sophists has been left out of account in the more recent commentaries of such prominent academic scholars of antiquity as Jaeger, Untersteiner, Havelock, Guthrie, Kerferd, and Rankin[3].

Nietzsche's reception of the Sophists extends beyond what he actually said about them and includes his insights into the Hellenic culture, his remarks on classical rhetoric, and his critique of philology as well as morality. Of course, all these areas cannot be covered comprehensively in a short journal article. But even if space were not an issue, I would not attempt to be exhaustively thorough--such would amount to "a complete silencing of [Nietzsche's] personality"[4]. As he did in his Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks, I will focus on those points in his work "which constitute a slice of personality and hence belong to that incontrovertible, non-debatable evidence which it is the task of history to preserve"[5]. But beyond my attempt to imitate Nietzsche's approach to the past, the points I have chosen to emphasize are warranted if one assumes that a) the Sophists' principal concern was rhetoric, b) rhetoric shapes and is shaped by the culture in which it is produced, c) sophistical rhetoric is, properly

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[2]For a discussion on the ways in which disciplines control discourse see Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on language, trans, A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 215-37.

[3] See Werner Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture. 3 vols., trans. Gilbert Highet, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.; Mario Untersteiner, The Sophists, trans. Kathleen Freeman, New York: Philosophical Library, 1954; Eric A. Havelock, The Liberal Temper of Greek Politics, London: Jonathan Cape, 1957; W.K.C. Guthrie, The Sophists, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971; G.B. Kerferd, The Sophistic Movement, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981; H.D. Rankin, Sophists, Socratics and Cynics, Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble Books, 1983.

[4] Friedrich Nietzsche, Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks, trans. Marianne Cowan (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1962), 25.

[5]. Ibid., 24.

speaking, an area in the field of classical philology, and d) rhetoric tells people what they should and should not do. In this paper, I submit that Nietzsche's reception is more persuasive than that of other commentators because, unlike them, he is loyal to antiquity, not to a specific discipline or to the institution of higher education. This means that instead of "studying and placing" the Sophists, he adopts and invokes them.

I

Because Nietzsche's reception of the Sophists came in the wake of the receptions of Hegel, Grote, and Zeller, and because what he has to say is not only an interpretation of some classical texts but also a response to the receptions of others, it is important to portray the tradition that preceded him. First Hegel. During Hegel's time, sophistry was "a word of ill-repute" signifying that "by false reasoning, some truth is either refuted and made dubious, or something false is proved and made plausible"[6]. Against this prevailing understanding, Hegel undertook "to consider . . . from the positive and properly speaking scientific side, what was the position of the Sophists in Greece." To do so, he proposed "to put [the] evil significance of sophistry] on one side and to forget it" (354).

According to Hegel, the Sophists represent a natural (logical) sequel to pre-Socratic thought. As such, he posits, they understood Anaxagoras' principle of nous (Notion) as thought and applied it "to worldly objects generally, and with it penetrated all human relations" (354). Now when the Notion is applied to actuality, the result is culture. The Sophists made culture "the general aim of education" (355) by teaching people to investigate rather than simply believe (356), "to exercise thought as to what should have authority for them" (357). For Hegel, the innovation of the Sophists lay in their attempt to move their contemporaries from mythos to logos. As such, they taught that critical thought is a better guide than the oracle, custom, passion, and the feelings of the moment (355-6).

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[6]. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Lectures in the History of Philosophy, 3 vols., trans. E.S. Haldane (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1892), 1:32. Page numbers of subsequent citations from Hegel's Lectures appear in the text.

Hegel argues that insofar as the Sophists were concerned with thought qua thought their culture was culture in philosophy; but insofar as they applied thought to the manifold world of actualities, their culture was also culture in eloquence. The philosophical aspect of their enterprise focused on what constitutes power "amongst men and in the State" (357) while the rhetorical aspect focused on the ways in which power can be acquired (358). Asserting that "[t]hat man is powerful who can deduce the actions of men from the absolute ends which move them," Hegel posits that the Sophists were "speculative philosophers" because they taught "what is the mainspring of the world." Their speculations led to a widespread consideration "of that which is involved in the moral world and which satisfies man." Before the advent of the Sophists, people are said to have been satisfied to conform to ordinary morality and "to obey law as an authority and external necessity." But sophistical teachings created in man the desire "to satisfy himself in himself, to convince himself, through his reflection, of what is binding upon him, what is his end and what he has to do for this end" (357). In this way, one's impulses and desires were construed as a source of power; and only inasmuch as one afforded them satisfaction could he become satisfied (357-8). For Hegel, the Sophists "taught how these powers could be moved in empirical man." Their instrument in this endeavor was rhetoric, which "teaches how circumstances may be made subject to such forces; it even makes use of the wrath and passions of the hearer in order to bring about a conclusion" (emphasis added). Thus, Hegel notes, "the Sophists were more especially the teachers of oratory." This means that they concentrated on eloquence, which seeks "to show the manifold points of view existing in a thing, and to give force to those which harmonize with what appears to me to be most useful; it thus is the art of putting forward various points of view in the concrete case, and placing others rather in the shade" (358). As masters of eloquence, the Sophists could keep in mind a wealth of categories (topoi) and turn subjects around and consider them from many angles (359). This enabled them "to say something of everything, to find points of view in all" (356).

For Hegel, the Sophists' lessons were founded on subjective rationalism, a doctrine that led to the realization that "everything could be proved" by means of arguments and counterarguments (369). However, he observes, because "arguments for and against can be found for everything" (368), the Sophists' students often tried "to

deduce any conclusion required by others or by themselves" (368-9). In light of this subjective appropriation of reason, nothing was secure (369) and everything was made uncertain. Hegel concludes that by activating the principle of subjectivity, the Sophists made a minor but necessary contribution to the history of philosophy: "On account of their formal culture, the Sophists have a place in Philosophy; on account of their reflection they have not. They are associated with Philosophy in that they do not remain at concrete reasoning, but go on, at least in part, to ultimate determinations" (371).

Against Hegel's idealist perspective, George Grote offered a positivistic account of the Sophists, grounding their emergence in the socio-political conditions of the latter part of the 5th century B.C. and explaining their activities in terms of the demands of the practical life of the time. Unlike Hegel, who sought to trace the development and discover the inner logic of Greek thought, Grote was more interested in the close examination of the available evidence, the warranted discernment of the relevant historical facts, and their accurate portrayal. Grote saw no grounds for the traditional equation of Sophist = immoralist. In his mind, Plato had overstated his case and "recent German historians of philosophy" were wrong to assert that Sophistic had "poisoned and demoralized, by corrupt teaching, the Athenian moral character. . . "[7]. Relying on the distinction between the contemplative and the active life, Grote points out that the Sophists, "who taught for active life, were bound by the very conditions of their profession to adapt themselves to the place and the society as it stood" (319). Moreover, they "ministered to certain exigencies, held their anchorage upon certain sentiments, and bowed to a certain morality, actually felt among the living men around them" (355). Refuting the German scholars, Grote writes that their argument made sense only insofar as there was some "proof that the persons styled Sophists had some doctrines, principles, or method, both common to them all and distinguishing them from others. But such a supposition is untrue: there were no such common doctrines, or principles, or method belonging to them . . . . [T]hey had nothing in common except their profession, as paid

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[7]. George Grote, A History of Greece (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1942), 8:332. Page numbers of subsequent citations from Grote's History appear in the text.

teachers, qualifying young men 'to think, speak, and act' . . . with credit to themselves as citizens" (332-3). Grote linked the Sophists' instruction in rhetoric to the attempt "to multiply the number of competent speakers . . . and thus to create a public of competent hearers and judges" (320). Moreover, he defended them ingeniously against the charge that some of their students misused or abused rhetoric: "If they taught one ambitious man to deceive, they also taught another how to expose his deceit, and a third how to approach the subject on a different side, so as to divert attention, and prevent the exclusive predominance of any one fallacy" (320-1).

Combining Hegel's interest in the internally generated development of Greek thought and Grote's concern with the evidence from the past, Zeller argued that the Sophists represented a school of thought (Sophism) that changed the direction of philosophy. For Zeller, "Sophism is . . . a philosophy of civilization" whose "object is man as an individual and as a social being together with the culture created by him in language, religion, art, poetry, ethics, and politics"[8]. The Sophists differed from the philosophers of the past in that they "made no attempt to penetrate into the first causes of things," followed an empirico-inductive method, and had predominately practical ends in mind (77). Zeller credits the Sophists with the "systematic education of the young"[9] but goes on to argue that "the great moral danger of the sophistical system of education" lay in its replacement of the pursuit of the truth with the study of persuasion (78). Zeller concludes that "Sophism had by its philosophic scepticism not merely thrown doubts on the possibility of science but by its relativistic theories and the thorough-going individualism of some of its members had shaken the existing authorities of religion, state and the family to their foundations. It had raised more problems

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[8]. Eduard Zeller, Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, trans. L.R. Palmer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950), 76. Page numbers of subsequent citations from Zeller's Outlines appear in the text.

[9]. Unfortunately for Zeller, Aristotle is emphatic that a major weakness of the Sophists' educational practice was its unsystematic character. See Aristotle, On Sophistical Refutations, trans. E.S. Forster (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1978), 184a 1.

than it had solved" (92-3). Therefore, the Sophists must be faulted for not offering positive affirmations on the other side of their epistemological and moral denials. Similarly, their doctrine must ultimately be rejected because it is "superficial and one-sided in its nature, and unscientific and dangerous in its results"[10].

II

In light of the above three pre-Nietzschean receptions of the Sophists, we are now in a better position to understand what Nietzsche has to say. But before proceeding, let us consider what he thought of Hegel, Grote, and Zeller. About Hegel he says: "Hegel's success against 'sentimentality' and romantic idealism was due to his fatalistic way of thinking, to his faith in the greater reason on the side of the victorious. . . . [In Hegel we find the] "will to deify the universe and life in order to find repose and happiness in contemplation and in getting to the bottom of things; Hegel seeks reason everywhere--before reason one may submit and acquiesce"[11]. About Grote, this is what he says: "Grote's tactics in defense of the sophists are false: he wants to raise them to the rank of men of honor and ensigns of morality--but it was their honor not to indulge in any swindle with big words and virtues--" (WP, 429). Finally, this is what he has to say about Zeller: "[M]ost of the learned work done by university philosophers seems to a classicist to be done badly, without scientific rigour and mostly with a detestable tediousness. Who, for example, can clear the history of the Greek philosophers of the soporific miasma spread over it by the learned . . . labours of . . . Zeller? I for one prefer reading

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[10]. Eduard Zeller, A History of Greek Philosophy, vol. II, trans. S.F. Alleyne (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1881), 504-5.

[11]. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufman and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967). The Will to Power is hereafter abbreviated as WP.

Diogenes Laertius to Zeller, because the former at least breathes the spirit of the philosophers of antiquity, while the latter breathes neither that nor any other spirit"[12].

At face value, Nietzsche's unflattering remarks about Hegel, Grote and Zeller are intriguing pieces of historical gossip. But upon closer examination, they suggest, indeed they contain, telling aspects of his scathing critiques of the false glorification of philosophical reason, the empty promise of scientific history, and the degenerate practices of philology. Nietzsche does not see philosophical reason, as "an independent entity" but rather as "a system of relations between various passions and desires" (WP, 387). Reason for him is neither a thing-in-itself nor "the" defining faculty of human beings; rather, it is a conceptual tool man has devised to further his purposes. When he looks at the whole history of philosophy, Nietzsche sees it permeated with a falsehood according to which "beautiful feelings" are treated as "arguments" and "convictions" as "criteria of truth" (WP, 414). As he argues in The Will to Power, "The aberration of philosophy is that, instead of seeing in logic and the categories of reason means toward the adjustment of the world for utilitarian ends . . . one believed one possessed in them the criterion of truth and reality. . . . The naivete [here] was to take an anthropocentric idiosyncracy as the measure of things, as the rule of determining 'real' and 'unreal': in short, to make absolute something conditioned" (584).

In light of these comments, it would seem that Nietzsche, who admits his "profound aversion to reposing once and for all in any one total view of the world" (WP, 470), would fault Hegel for giving us a totalized version of early Greek thought, a version, in which the Sophists are merely exponents of predetermined historical processes, or agents expediting the "progressive unfolding of the Universal Mind or Spirit."[13]. For our part, we may join Nietzsche and argue that the Hegelian view renders the Sophists impotent servants of a ceaseless movement toward an inevitable end.

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[12]. Friedrich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator" in Untimely Meditations, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 186-7. "Schopenhauer as Educator" is hereafter abbreviated as SE.

[13]. George B. Kerferd, The Sophistic Movement (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6.

Nietzsche also objects to the positivistic ways of George Grote: "Against positivism" [which posits 'There are only facts'] "I would say: No, facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact 'in-itself': perhaps it is folly to want to do such a thing" (WP, 481). Before something can become a fact, a certain sense must be projected into it (WP, 556). Positivism, he says elsewhere, is brutal because it forgets what goes into the making of a fact and because it recognizes facts without becoming excited (WP, 120). If one can see that "the ascertaining of facts in general is fundamentally different from creative positing, from forming, shaping, overcoming, [and] willing" (WP, 605), one can easily fault positivism for disregarding the central role human impulses play in the determination of facts.

Clearly, Nietzsche does not accept much of Grote's method of investigation. Nor does he accept much of his conclusion, namely that the Sophists were not immoralists. On the contrary, he proposes that with the Sophists we have a blurring of "the boundary between good and evil" (WP, 427). More precisely, with them we arrive at a "very remarkable moment: the Sophists verge upon the first critique of morality, the first insight into morality:--they juxtapose the multiplicity (the geographical relativity) of the moral value judgments; --they let it be known that every morality can be dialectically justified; i.e., they divine that all attempts to give reasons for morality are necessarily sophistical . . .; they postulate the first truth that a 'morality-in-itself,' a 'good-in-itself' do not exist..." (WP, 428). For Nietzsche, "The Sophists are no more than realists: they formulate the values and practices common to everyone on the level of values--they possess the courage of all strong spirits to know their own immorality" (WP, 429).

Finally, Nietzsche wants nothing to do with Zeller because the latter exemplifies the spiritlessness of the typical scholar of philology. Generally speaking, Nietzsche regards the scholar as "the herd animal in the realm of knowledge--who inquires because he is ordered to and because others have done so before him" (WP, 421). The trouble with most scholars is that they are sober, weary, exhausted, and dried up; as such, they "can receive absolutely nothing from art [of which rhetoric is a special instance], because they do not possess the primary artistic force, the pleasure of abundance: whoever cannot give, also receives nothing" (WP, 801).

When looking at his profession of ten years, Nietzsche sees that "ninety-nine of a hundred should not be philologists at all"[14]. Most philologists are in their profession for the wrong reasons. Worse, the "majority draw up the rules of the science in accordance with their own capacities and inclinations; and in this way they tyrannize over the hundredth, the only capable one among them" (P, 3). Nietzsche bemoans the fact that "the inner purpose of philological teaching has been entirely altered; it was at one time material teaching, a teaching that taught how to live; but now it is merely formal" (P, 31). This state of affairs is especially sad because the proper study of antiquity offers us a unique opportunity to acquaint ourselves with the magnificent ideal of excellence supplied by the ancients. As far as Nietzsche is concerned, philology was meant for the rare few who have an affinity with the Greeks, who love the subject, and who approach it so as to understand their own age in terms of the best humanity has hitherto achieved. Sadly, however, the learned scholars of the classics have devised tight controls and strict methodological schemes that ultimately stand in the way of delighting in the study of the greatest epoch in human achievement. One grave consequence of this state of affairs is that "Classical antiquity has become a take-it-or-leave-it antiquity and has ceased to produce a classic and exemplary effect; a fact demonstrated by its disciples, who are truly not exemplary" (SE, 192). The same critique can be advanced against philosophy, a discipline encrusted by centuries-old institutional practices. To illustrate this point, Nietzsche compares Kant, the academic philosopher, and Schopenhauer, a free thinker: "Kant clung to his university, submitted himself to its regulations, retained the appearance of religious belief, endured to live among colleagues and students; so it is natural that his example has produced above all university professors and professorial philosophy. Schopenhauer had little patience with the scholarly castes, separated himself from them, strove to be independent of state and society--this is his example, the model he provides--to begin with the most superficial things" (SE, 137).

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[14]. Friedrich Nietzsche, We Philologists, trans. J. M. Kennedy (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), 2. We Philologists is hereafter abbreviated as P.

Judging from Nietzsche's critique of his predecessors, the Sophists cannot be understood and appreciated in terms of the march of thought toward the One true philosophy, or in terms of the historical sociology of their activities, or in terms of the countless details philology has amassed about their life and thought. How then are they to be understood and appreciated? To answer this question, Nietzsche looks at the Greek culture with the eyes of imagination and stands awed: "When the Greek body and soul 'bloomed,' . . . there arose that mysterious symbol of the highest self affirmation and transfiguration of existence that has yet been attained on earth. Here we have a standard by which everything that has grown up since is found too short, too poor, too narrow" (WP, 1051). For Nietzsche, the Sophists are worthy of note and admiration because they grew out of a lively and fertile culture: "The Greek culture of the Sophists had developed out of all the Greek instincts. . . . And it has ultimately shown itself to be right: every advance in epistemological and moral knowledge has reinstated the Sophists." In other words, the Sophists are remarkable because they were true Greeks; by contrast, "when Socrates and Plato took up the cause of virtue and justice, they were Jews or I know not what" (WP, 428). On a more precise note, Nietzsche suggests that because the Greek culture had "an excess of powers at its disposal" it "constitute[d] a hothouse for the luxury cultivation" of great individuals like the Sophists, who owed their greatness "to the free play and scope of [their] desires and to the yet greater power that knows how to press these magnificent monsters into service" (WP, 933).

In his search for the characteristic mark of the Greek culture, Nietzsche finds that eloquence was "the breath of this artistic people"[15]. He also observes that "rhetoric [arose] among a people who still live[d] in mythic images and who [had] not yet experienced the unqualified need of historical accuracy: they would rather be persuaded than instructed"[16]. In this kind of culture, it is not surprising that "training an individual

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[15]. Cited in Samuel Ijsseling, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict, trans. Paul Dunphy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 107.

[16]. Carole Blair, "Nietzsche's Lecture Notes on Rhetoric: A Translation", Philosophy and Rhetoric, 16, 2, 1983: 96-7.

to excel in rhetoric was the ultimate goal. . . "[17]. Comparing the tragic age of the Greeks with his own, Nietzsche laments: "Anyone who seriously wanted to train in Germany as an orator... would find that school nowhere" (SE, 131). Because the contemporary scholars of antiquity have been seduced by scienticism and historicism, imitating the ways of the natural sciences and collecting facts for their own sake, "they have forgotten how to address other men" (P, 73). In a clearly sarcastic note, Nietzsche borrows from Wolf and says that "antiquity was acquainted only with theories of oratory and poetry... that formed real orators and poets, 'while at the present day we shall soon have theories upon which it would be as impossible to build up a speech or a poem as it would be to form a thunderstorm upon a brontological treatise'" (P, 60).

Nietzsche is not only critical of the demise of rhetoric in his own culture; he also states the case for classical oratory in the affirmative. In his own lecture notes for the rhetoric course(s) he taught at Basel, he demonstrates a thorough familiarity with the early rhetorical tradition. Treating rhetoric as a specific difference between antiquity and modernity, he notes that "the best application to which it is put by our moderns is nothing short of dilettantism and crude empiricism"[18]. For Nietzsche, rhetoric requires a proper disposition: "one must be accustomed to tolerating the most unusual opinions and points of view and even to take a certain pleasure in their counterplay; one must be able more or less to appreciate the art being applied." This customary tolerance and aesthetic pleasure were fully present in the Greek mind, which sought "to perceive all matters of the intellect, of life's seriousness, of necessities, even of danger, as play"[19]. After a brief discussion of Plato's intense dislike of rhetoric and preference for dialectic, Aristotle's definition of rhetoric (in which "even the legein [speaking] is not essential")[20]. and the subsequent quarrel between rhetoricians and philosophers, Nietzsche puts forth his "sophistical" view of the art of discourse.

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[17]. Cited by Ijsseling, 107.

[18]. Blair, 96.

[19]. Blair, 97.

[20]. Blair, 101.

According to this view, there is no difference between natural and rhetorical language--all language is rhetorical. Dismissing the traditional view according to which rhetorical language is ornate and flowery whereas nonrhetorical language is unadorned and "natural", he explains that the reason ancient literature seems to us "rhetorical" is that "it appeals chiefly to the ear, in order to bribe it." By contrast, "our prose is always to be explained more from writing, and our style presents itself as something to be perceived through reading"[21]. The postulate that all language is rhetorical has a series of implications all of which point straight to the sophistical perspective: a) "the power to discover and to make operative that which works and impresses... is... the essence of language[22]; b) "language does not desire to instruct but to convey to others a subjective impulse and its acceptance"; c) the distance between language and the essence of things is as great as that between rhetoric and that which is true; d) "language is rhetoric because it desires to convey only a doxa [opinion], not an episteme [knowledge]"[23].

Taken by the aesthetic dimension of speech, Nietzsche spends considerable time on the figures and tropes, explaining that even though they are "considered the most artistic means of rhetoric"[24], they "are not just occasionally added to words but constitute their most proper nature"[25]. This is so because language is an inadequate tool of representation and a poor index of the nature of things, including its own: "language never expresses something completely but displays only a characteristic which appears to be prominent to it [language]"[26]. Nietzsche does not stop with the aesthetics of rhetoric; he also includes a discussion of the moral dimension of speech. In his mind, the aesthetic and moral complement one another as the listener wants to believe both

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[21]. Blair, 106.

[22]. Blair, 106-7.

[23]. Blair, 107. It will readily be recalled that all these implications are points of view Plato attributes to the sophistical rhetorician in the Gorgias.

[24]. Ibid.

[25]. Blair, 108.

[26]. Blair, 107.

"in the <u>earnestness</u> of the speaker and the <u>truth</u> of the thing advocated"[27]. Belief in the earnestness or sincerity of the speaker can be brought about by the appropriateness of the orator's language whereas belief in the truthfulness of his propositions can be secured by the clarity and purity of the speech. For persuasion to occur, both appropriateness and clarity in language must be exhibited. As he puts it, "Whenever the 'naturalness' is imitated nakedly, the artistic sense of the listeners will be offended; in contrast, whenever a purely artistic expression is sought, the moral confidence of the listener will be shaken. It is a playing at the boundary of the aesthetic and moral: any one-sidedness destroys the outcome"[28].

One would have thought that on account of his insights on classical rhetoric in general and sophistical rhetoric in particular Nietzsche would have earned a prominent place in the history of classical scholarship. However, ever since his quarrel with Wilamowitz[29] classical philologists, historians of Hellenic philosophy and rhetoricians have either ignored or patronized him[30]. Consequently, Nietzsche's voice has been silenced. Given to the rigors required by the accepted methods of classical scholarship, and taken by the reductive monism of Plato, the majority of the scholars of antiquity have excommunicated one of their own because he dared question their unquestioned

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[27]. Blair, 114.

[28]. Blair, 115.

[29]. Condensing this quarrel, Lloyd-Jones writes: "Wilamovitz asked 'What can we do for philology?'; Nietzsche asked 'What can philology do for us?' To the classicists, with whom Nietzsche's standpoint has so much in common, the ancients had supplied a pattern, an ideal standard of excellence; for the historicists with their relativistic outlook no such thing could exist." Hugh Lloyd-Jones, "Nietzsche and the Study of the Ancient World" in James C. O'Flaherty, Timothy F. Sellner, and Robert M. Helm, eds., <u>Studies in Nietzsche and the Classical Tradition</u> (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 13.

[30]. For an extensive discussion on the ways in which Nietzsche's work has been belittled by classicists, see William Arrowsmith, "Nietzsche on Classics and Classicists (Part II)," <u>Arion</u>, 2, no. 2 (Summer 1963), 5-27.

assumptions and because he saw greater truths in the rhetoric of the Sophists[31]. And even if it be granted that no scholar is obligated to take into serious account the views of his/her predecessors, most would agree that simply mentioning the work of a past colleague is harmless. Therefore, those classical philologists who have ignored Nietzsche can be at least faulted for not being thorough in a discipline that glorifies thoroughness.

The only exception is E.R. Dodds, who takes Nietzsche into account in the appendix, the supplement of his critical edition of Plato's Gorgias. Dodds argues that much of what Nietzsche says is espoused by Callicles, Socrates' third opponent in the Gorgias. As he puts it, "there can . . . be little doubt that certain of the most notorious of his own [Nietzsche's] doctrines were in some measure inspired . . . by the anti-Plato in Plato whose persona is Callicles"[32]. Of the various Nietzschean doctrines, Dodds stresses that of the will to power by saying that Nietzsche made 'respectable' Callicles' position, that is, "power belongs of right, not to casual majorities, and not to some specialized class of technicians, but to the man who is shrewd enough and bold enough to grasp it"[33]. Beyond this formulation, Dodds sets out to substantiate the "peculiar historical link"[34] between Nietzsche and Callicles by pointing to the similar phraseology between some of the words attributed to Callicles and some Nietzschean views. While suggestive and even useful, these linguistic parallelisms are an argument for the historical continuity of an idea or the ironic frustration of Plato's wish, to eliminate the Sophists, by the Calliclean ghost as reincarnated in Nietzsche. In both cases, however, Dodds' scholarship misses the point. First, if Nietzsche's writings are interesting, they are so not because they coincide with Calliclean doctrines but because they constitute

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[31]. In the classicists' hostile disposition toward Nietzsche, Arrowsmith sees an attempt "to cut Nietzsche down to professorial size or to render harmless by ridicule the most radical critique of classical scholarship ever made from within the profession." Arrowsmith, 5.

[32]. E.R. Dodds, Plato Gorgias: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959), 387.

[33]. Dodds, 291.

[34]. Dodds, 387.

"the most sustained, the deepest and most comprehensive criticism"[35] of the Platonic tradition. Second, insofar as Dodds links Nietzsche to Callicles, he leaves the inference open that Nietzschean doctrines are as vulnerable in the hands of Platonists as those of his "blood-brother"[36] in the hands of Plato. This inference, however, is unsafe because Nietzsche was not a convenient character in a Platonic dialogue and because he posed questions to which Plato's disciples have had no answers. Thus, if it be true that "Nietzsche laid himself more open than most to genuine misunderstanding", it is not so much on account of "his oracular and highly metaphorical style"[37] as on account of the fact that those who have misunderstood him have been faithful Platonists with no tolerance for the sophistical or the Nietzschean ways of rhetoric.

III

Since Hegel's reception, the Sophists have been studied in a light more abundant than Plato's perspective would admit. Even so, they have been forced to fit categories they could not have dreamt of. Nietzsche joined Hegel, Grote and Zeller and others in liberating sophistical rhetoric from Plato's stranglehold but, unlike them, he resisted placing it in the stranglehold of the dominant intellectual schemata of his age. Thus, he did not commit the error of taking the Sophists out of one philosophical trap and into another. Instead, he reinscribed their message onto the palimpsest of the history of rhetoric and specified its meaning for his culture. In so doing, he rendered the Sophists a force to be reckoned with not because they are intrinsically interesting but because what they had to say was especially poignant for the German culture of the late 19th century.

Beyond his familiarity with the Hellenic rhetorical tradition and his own culture, Nietzsche shows throughout his works that rhetoric is an immense power that requires

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[35]. George P. Grant, "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship," Dionysius, 3 (December, 1979): 10.

[36]. Guthrie, 107.

[37]. Dodds, 391, n. 1.

and yields a healthy and strong personality, a personality full of exuberant vigor and superabundant cheerfulness. Adopting the sophistical point of view, he regards rhetoric as an artistic enterprise, sceptical of any and all institutional and disciplinary claims, and committed to freeing people from the chains of fear and convention. For his painful honesty and iconoclastic rhetoric he has been dismissed or marginalized by rigid philologists and dogmatic moralists alike. Yet he refuses to go away. In fact, like rhetoric itself, he is witnessing a renaissance among some post-modern thinkers who, like him, believe that the human world is Rhetorical, All Too Rhetorical[38].

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[38]. See Samuel Weber, Institution and Interpretation, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987; Alexander Nehamas, Nietzsche: Life as Literature, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985 (especially ch. 3, "A Thing Is the Sum of Its Effects"); Jacques Derrida, Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles, trans. Barbara Harlow, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979; Paul de Man, "Nietzsche's Theory of Rhetoric," Symposium (Spring, 1974): 33-51.

MARC ANGENOT

Le Discours socialiste commun à la fin du XIXe siècle: rhétorique et idéologie

Je voudrais présenter l'esquisse générale, accompagnée de quelques exemples, d'une recherche que je commence et qui se situe dans le prolongement de mes travaux depuis cinq ou six ans sur la théorie du discours social[1] et, spécifiquement, sur l'analyse en coupe synchronique du discours social français en mil huit cent quatre-vingt-neuf.

Cette étude du discours social visait essentiellement à dégager de la diversité des langages, des genres et des discours qui se produisent et se différencient en un moment donné dans une société un ensemble d'éléments qui construisent une hégémonie, des manières de connaître et de représenter le monde qui (en dialectique avec la division du travail discursif, avec la répartition instituée des types discursifs) forment dominance pour un état de société. Cette hégémonie est un objet hétérogène, plein de contradictions et en évolution constante. Elle comporte un répertoire de topoï, de thèmes d'époque, sous-tendu par une certaine gnoséologie formée de manières canoniques de produire de la connaissance et de l'argumenter. Tout cela cependant ne constitue aucunement un système stabilisé, la doxa étant travaillée par des facteurs centrifuges de distinction, de spécialisation et de dissidence, ou de "paradoxisme".

La production de la norme linguistique, de la langue légitime, qui fait évidemment partie de cette hégémonie, comporte de même son échelle de distinction et sa dissimilation en idiolectes divers, plus ou moins canoniques, qui se réfèrent à l'idéal-type tout en marquant fortement des identités sociales. La Recherche du temps perdu est largement consacrée à l'identification de ces langages: Monsieur de Norpois (qui parle comme on écrit dans la Revue des Deux Mondes) ne s'exprime pas comme

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[1]. On verra essentiellement: "le Discours social: problématique d'ensemble" in R. Robin, préf. Le Discours social et ses usages (Centre de recherche sociologique. II, 1 : 1985) et deux ouvrages déjà parus : Ce que l'on dit des Juifs en 1889 (Montréal: Ciée, 1984) et Le Cru et le Faisandé (Bruxelles: Labor, 1986).

Oriane de Guermantes laquelle n'entend rien au degré de distinction langagière de Madame Verdurin ou au style "esthète" du jeune Bloch...

A travers un mouvement constant, où de la doxa s'engendre le paradoxe, où l'originalité se fabrique avec du lieu commun, où les querelles politiques, scientifiques, esthétiques ne se développent que par des enjeux communs et en s'appuyant sur une topique occultée par la vivacité même des débats; à travers aussi les fonctions "locales" de chaque discours, fonctions d'interpellation, de légitimation, charmes et psychagogies diverses -- à travers ces diversifications et ce "bougé" constant, j'espère parvenir à faire apparaître que tout cela ne forme pas une nébuleuse centrifuge, mais est soumis à la régulation de ce que j'ai nommé une hégémonie. C'est ce qui fait que pour nous, avec ce qu'on nomme le recul du temps, la psychopathologie de l'hystérie de Charcot, la littérature boulevardière et libertine de Catulle Mendès, l'esprit d'Henri Rochefort ou d'Aurélien Scholl, les romans d'Émile Zola ou ceux de Paul Bourget, les factums antisémites d'Édouard Drumont et les chansons de café-concert de Paulus nous semblent, tant par leur forme que par leur contenu, appartenir à la même époque -- alors que superficiellement, tout les distingue -- cette époque que les contemporains avaient appelée avec une nuance d'angoisse crépusculaire la "Fin de siècle" et qu'une génération plus tard on identifiera avec une involontaire ironie comme "la Belle époque", le début de cette Belle époque qui va grosso modo de la présidence de Carnot à celle de Fallière.

Ce n'est pas sur cette formation hégémonique que je voudrais maintenant travailler mais sur ce qui s'opère dans ses marges, ce qui s'institue dans une société comme contre-discours, opposant ou cherchant à opposer aux langages et aux idées dominants un contre-langage, une vision du monde alternative. C'est ici que je viens au socialisme dont je compte étudier la propagande et la "littérature" à la fin du XIXe siècle c'est-à-dire au moment de constitution du mouvement ouvrier et syndical sous sa forme moderne. Sans doute d'autres discours de dissidence se perçoivent alors du centre de l'hégémonie et sont stigmatisés avec une incompréhension irritée: la périphérie discursive est occupée par toutes sortes de groupuscules qui compensent leur faiblesse numérique et leur isolement par une convivialité doxique à toute épreuve: il y a les

adeptes de la Religion positiviste, les sectes spiritistes, les mystiques décadents des Annales du Surnaturel; il y a les féministes, les partisans de l'"Émancipation des femmes" dont les thèses et les propos paraissent d'une inénarrable cocasserie lorsqu'ils sont rapportés par les chroniqueurs établis des discours légitimes.

Mais enfin, à l'évidence, le complexe discursif qui a le plus cherché à s'affirmer dans son autonomie menaçante face aux discours "bourgeois" et à convertir les masses en les détachant peu à peu des insidieux mensonges produits par la classe des "exploiteurs", c'est la propagande socialiste. Les travaux sur l'histoire du ou des socialismes sont nombreux. Si les travaux sont nombreux, il en est peu cependant qui abordent les discours socialistes sous la perspective que je viens d'esquisser.

Le Discours socialiste commun

Les historiens du socialisme abordent généralement l'étude des écrits, journaux et brochures qui ont assuré la propagation des idées révolutionnaires et la légitimation des luttes ouvrières depuis l'aube du XIXe siècle sous une perspective dont je voudrais prendre le contrepied. Beaucoup, d'abord, font une histoire traditionnelle, celle des groupes, des individus, de leurs actions et de leurs tribulations traitant les textes comme archive et comme information sans s'y arrêter, en "passant à travers" en quelque sorte. D'autres travaux récents se donnent pour objet la diffusion de doctrines spécifiques, de systèmes soutenus par de petits groupes (les fouriéristes, les socialistes-rationnels p. ex.) tout en ayant connu une certaine pénétration dans les mouvements politiques et syndicaux. On a étudié ainsi l'introduction en France des théories anarchistes, mais surtout celle du marxisme -- ceci pour constater que jusqu'au début du XXe siècle au moins cette introduction est inexistante; que ce qui passe pour du marxisme est alors, à partir de traductions insuffisantes, un ravaudage de slogans inexacts et de thèses sommaires et confuses. (Je m'en rapporte ici aux travaux successifs de Dommanget, 1966, Lindenberg, 1975, Paquot, 1980, et de Marie Ymonet, 1984). Il me semble que la question première n'est pas là, que ces problèmes de théories, de doctrines ne sont pas ceux qu'il faut traiter en priorité. La question préliminaire serait d'établir positivement ce que cela a été qu'être (que se dire) socialiste, en termes de convictions affirmées, de

langage et de propagande. Ma question sera: de quoi était fait, dans les années 1880-1890 le discours socialiste courant dans les dispersion de ses tendances, de ses "média" (journaux quotidiens, affiches, revues et brochures), de ses porte-parole (des chefs prestigieux aux anonymes "meneurs" des meetings et des grèves, aux braillards d'estaminet haineusement méprisés par la presse distinguée).

Mon hypothèse est qu'il s'est constitué au long du XIXe siècle et n'a cessé d'évoluer au XXe, un discours socialiste commun (DSC). non directement lié à telle théorie, telle pensée; discours complexe et relativement cohérent, formant "vision du monde", avec sa topique, argumentative et narrative, avec sa phraséologie, ses images stéréotypées, son pathos et sa rhétorique, ensemble structuré d'énoncés qui traversent les horizons du passé, du présent de l'avenir, qui motivent et légitiment les luttes en cours, montrent le mouvement de l'histoire sur le vecteur utopique de la "Sociale" et de son avènement imminent. Matrice générale construite de topoï (au sens de Curtius) où vont inlassablement puiser les éditorialistes, les conférenciers itinérants, les "beaux parleurs" d'usine et d'atelier; formant un récit, constamment réactualisé section par section: récit de l'exploitation, récit des luttes, récit prophético-utopique de la Révolution imminente et de l'instauration de la République sociale. Etre socialiste, c'était assumer ce récit-là; y glisser sans doute à l'occasion, des formules et des thèses venus de Proudhon, de Louis Blanc, de Colins de Ham, de Marx comme d'ailleurs de Rousseau, de Darwin, de Victor Hugo ou de Michelet. L'ensemble cependant ne forme pas un syncrétisme, ni un patchwork doctrinaire: la logique en est ailleurs. Très souvent, la référence aux théoriciens a servi de faire-valoir rhétorique établissant fantasmatiquement le caractère scientifique du socialisme, puisque l'énoncé "nous socialistes, possédons une science de la société" a été un des topoï du répertoire dont je parlerai.

Ce Récit, base de la propagande socialiste, "credo" du militant, canevas de l'orateur, du journaliste d'extrême-gauche, n'a cessé, de 1848 au Front populaire et jusqu'à nos jours, d'être repris, rebricolé par adjonctions successives de narrèmes, d'images, de clichés, d'être remis à jour, adapté à la conjoncture, à l'événement du moment. Il a constitué aussi une "mémoire" sélective de la classe ouvrière, agrémentée d'un répertoire

d'exempla mythico-historiques, de la révolte de Spartacus à la défenestration de l'Ingénieur Watrin ou à la fusillade de Fourmies...

Conçu comme réponse (sur un ton amer, résolu, impavide et menaçant) aux mensonges de l'idéologie bourgeoise, le DSC n'a cessé de se développer en un dialogue polémique ("n'allez surtout pas croire ...", "vous ne croyez pas si bien dire ...") avec les publicistes bourgeois, les spécialistes de la question sociale et les pouvoirs religieux et séculiers dont le DSC dénonce les hypocrites vérités. Ce DSC devait fonctionner simultanément comme: -- une sociogonie, récit global de l'histoire des luttes sociales prolongées dans l'utopie rationnelle de la Révolution imminente, -- comme un credo, c'est-à-dire un ensemble de propositions dont l'assertion par tout "exploité" faisait de lui un socialiste et le transfigurait en un instrument de la propagande révolutionnaire, -- comme un palladium, un moyen de se défendre contre l'idéologie bourgeoise et ses insidieuses évidences, comme un contre-discours dont l'intériorisation rendait invulnérable aux discours des exploiteurs, -- comme une sermocination pleine de menace adressée au capitaliste exploiteur et jouisseur et lui annonçant la "fin de son règne", -- comme un instrument d'interpellation, "interpellation en sujet" qui est le propre de l'idéologie; le prolétaire qui se reconnaît dans ce récit d'exploitation et de luttes, qui s'identifie à l'énonciateur, le Peuple vengeur et son "Mané-Thécel-Pharès", s'incarne du même coup comme sujet idéologique, comme socialiste; il cesse d'appartenir aux masses exploitées et bernées, dont le DSC a pour fonction de "convertir" un à un les meilleurs éléments...

Il convient que je précise ici pourquoi je parle d'un discours socialiste commun, et ce que je prétends mettre dans cette épithète. Pour ce que j'en ai déjà examiné, il existe en effet un complexe discursif, à la fin du XIXe siècle, qui est commun aux différents partis -- possibiliste, allemaniste, guesdiste, blanquiste, colinsiste, anarchiste, etc ..., -- non dans le sens que leur propagande serait identique (elle l'est cependant en partie dans ses images, ses topoï, sa phraséologie, son pathos). mais dans le sens que les divers points d'antagonisme entre les partis (par exemple: la manière de thématiser la Révolution-à-venir par rapport à 1789 et à la République bourgeoise) sont chèrement disputés en un dialogue polémique; que les "nuances" y sont des enjeux fondamentaux:

le champ du DSC trouve ainsi sa cohésion et sa spécificité autant dans un "stock" commun de formules éprouvées, de slogans, de récits historiosophiques et d'images, que dans des noeuds discursifs disputés, dont la "juste" formulation fait l'objet de polémiques féroces.

L'adjectif "commun" peut vouloir dire "anonyme" ou "collectif", (alors que les doctrines portent un nom: Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Karl Marx) commun aux divers publicistes des diverses factions se donnant délégation de la parole prolétarienne, ou encore expression mythique du Prolétariat même énonçant sa vérité à la face de la Bourgeoisie ... C'est dans mon titre un terme problématique par excellence, terme que les conclusions de la recherche devront venir interpréter. L'adjectif "commun" ne sous-estime en tout cas pas, mais au contraire pointe le doigt vers le trait essentiel de l'histoire du mouvement ouvrier: sa division changeante et permanente, de 1848 à nos jours, en trois ou quatre grands groupes doctrinaires qui, malgré ce qu'ils avaient "en commun", ont épuisé en tout temps une bonne part de leurs énergies en polémiques haineuses et en dénonciation passionnées aux masses de leurs erreurs, trahisons et sectarismes réciproques. Je ne pense évidemment pas que ces divisions furent le reflet simple et direct d'oppositions théoriques; de sorte que la haine des guesdistes pour les possibilistes serait simplement homologue de l'incompatibilité épistémologique entre Marx d'une Part et Paul Brousse ou Colins de Ham de l'autre!

Ma référence au discours socialiste <u>commun</u> exprime le parti-pris de ma recherche: parler du socialisme, de son histoire, en partant de la propagande courante et non des philosophies, des doctrines. En partant de ce que disent dans leur masse les éditoriaux et les brochures du socialisme et non ce qui s'est théorisé dans les têtes de Marx et d'Engels et a pénétré si peu dans cette grande rumeur propagandiste où les mêmes formules, les mêmes images, les mêmes assertions (qu'on jugera simplistes) forment un <u>stock</u> où on n'a qu'à puiser et se retrouvent sur les lèvres des ouvriers "conscients et organisés" à l'atelier ou à l'estaminet. Mon objet sera donc cette production discursive anonyme, omniprésente, essentielle, que le XIXe siècle (en sentant encore l'origine religieuse de ce mot) appelle la "propagande", objet de l'"apostolat socialiste".

Il va de soi que, -- mettant entre parenthèses les théories des Louis Blanc, Fourier, Proudhon, Marx, Bakunin, ou plutôt les décentrant pour focaliser sur la propagande "courante" -- je ne compte pas négliger la théorie totalement: je compte chercher à voir notamment comment certaines phrases, prises hors contexte ou voulues d'emblée comme des slogans ("La Propriété c'est le vol", "Prolétaires de tous les pays ..."), ont eu une destinée propre, une efficace perlocutoire, un rôle ritualisé dans la symbolique du mouvement ouvrier.

Je donne à "propagande" un sens positif sans jugement a priori, alors que ce mot a pris, depuis S. Tchakhotine au moins, un sens à la fois défavorable (= "viol des foules") et restrictif (les seuls slogans, les cris collectifs, la phraséologie à effet pavlovien). J'appelle propagande ou discours socialiste commun tout ce qui a argumenté pendant plus d'un siècle le bien fondé de "l'idée" socialiste, tout ce qui a visé à "convertir" les masses et à faire "trembler les bourgeois" et qui, -- sous forme de brochures, d'éditoriaux et de chroniques de journaux, mais aussi de poèmes militants et en symbiose avec du roman "engagé" (inconnu de l'historien pour le XIXe siècle) -- forme la masse de l'imprimé socialisant, loin devant les théories, les analyses de la conjoncture, la "science".

Propagande et littérature

De la propagande stricto sensu (que je vois construite comme un grand récit sociogonique dont, selon les conjonctures et les contextes, le militant-publiciste peut réactiver telle ou telle séquence), je compte aller vers la "littérature" socialiste. Elle est à distinguer de la "littérature populaire" et de la "parole ouvrière". Il s'agit, dès 1848 et jusqu'au roman maoïste et "gaucho" des années 1970, d'une "littérature engagée" en prise directe avec la propagande dont je parle: chanson militante ou satirique dans la tradition des Lices et Caveaux, poésie épique, nouvelles et romans en feuilleton dans la presse ouvrière, théâtre révolutionnaire (inédit) joué par des "amateurs" dans les Cercles d'études sociales. A part quelques études sur la chanson sociale (Dupont, Pottier, Jouy, ...), il est peu de dire que cette littérature est ignorée. Elle est écrite par des militants. Dire qu'elle est médiocre; qu'elle transpose maladroitement et pauvrement Michelet et Hugo mêlés à Pixérécourt, Béranger et Ponson du Terrail, serait ne pas voir le problème

que pose cette littérature scotomisée: celui de la possibilité même de l'opposition, de la "dissidence" idéologiques, de la résistance efficace à l'hégémonie "bourgeoise" et de la possibilité incertaine de combiner à la propagande socialiste une forme esthétique pertinente et accessible aux masses (ou à l'idée qu'on s'en fait). C'est ici un problème proche des recherches sur la littérature et le théâtre de 1789-1793, sur la littérature bolchevik des premières années etc.... Des fouriéristes et saint-simoniens de 1848 aux maoïstes et "gauchos" de 1970, ce problème n'a cessé de revenir "hanter" le mouvement ouvrier et la gauche intellectuelle.

Il faudra alors se demander quel degré d'autonomie et de déconstruction polémique a pu atteindre cette propagande socialiste, immergée quoi qu'elle en soit, dans le discours social "bourgeois". La question sera de situer le DSC et son évolution par rapport aux formes dominantes, aux thèmes dominants, du discours social. Intentionnellement, la propagande socialiste s'institue comme un contre-discours, parole collective d'une classe exclue, d'une contre-société d'exploits dont les champions prophétisent à l'exploiteur capitaliste sa ruine vengeresse. Mais enfin, une interdiscursivité doit pouvoir se percevoir et maintenir certains courants thématiques entre le contre-discours socialiste et divers champs du discours social bourgeois.

Dans la logique de mes recherches antérieures, la propagande socialiste sera aussi envisagée comme dispositif intertextuel, que l'intertexte soit la "Religion populiste" de 1848 (concept de Berenson, 1984) ou le darwinisme social, ou encore la publicité médiatique "détournée". On voit les enjeux de cette approche du point de vue de l'évolution historique.

J'entends enfin voir accessoirement comment les discours socialistes furent représentés au centre hégémonique du discours social: cela va de l'article, pondéré et consterné, du penseur de la Revue des Deux Mondes rendant compte aux lettrés de ce que disent les socialistes la figuration littéraire du "Meneur", du gréviste et de ses propos dans le roman de littérature canonique.

Ma recherche me placera dans la position de premier investigateur pour bien des aspects et des questions. Mon but n'est cependant pas d'aborder simplement un corpus partiellement inexploré. Cette recherche doit me permettre d'intervenir dans un certain

nombre de grands débats de notre époque en littérature et en histoire politique et culturelle: celui de l'utopie et de l'utopisme (Bloch, Mannheim), celui de la nature et de la fonction de la propagande (de Tchakhotine à Ellul...), celui de la délégation sociale, de "l'invention" de l'intellectuel de parti (posé de façon insistante par P. Bourdieu, M. Ymonet), celui de la bonne manière d'aborder l'histoire même du socialisme (en réaction, comme je l'ai dit, aux approches de Lindenberg, Paquot, Ymonet et al.), celui de la "parole ouvrière" (Rancière 1981, Bollème, 1985) et celui -- redoutable -- de l'"échec esthétique" des littératures militantes. Il me permettra, comme je l'ai dit, de prolonger ma réflexion sur "hégémonie" et "contre-discours".

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Il conviendrait après cet exposé général, un peu abstrait, de passer à des illustrations qui feraient apparaître les divers aspects et les constantes de la propagande socialiste, montrerait la continuité entre le fait rhétorique et l'idéologie, entre la forme, l'efficace performative et le sens interdiscursif. Mais au lieu de plusieurs exemples, je choisis de m'arrêter à un seul: il est bref puisqu'il s'agit d'un slogan de Jules Guesde. Il ne me faudra pas moins beaucoup d'espace et de pages pour l'analyser comme je l'entends, c'est-à-dire sous tous ses aspects et dans toutes ses composantes.
Le slogan inventé par Jules Guesde vers 1889, martelé par lui en clausule de ses discours, imprimé en finale de ses proclamations électorales, -- c'est: "Place au prolétariat conscient et organisé!" que dans son affiche des législatives, à Marseille, septembre 1889, il reprend et couple à un mot d'ordre complémentaire: "Arrière les bourgeois!". Ce slogan est reçu par le milieu socialiste avec une vive approbation[2]. Je

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[2]. En explicit d'un éditorial (Égalité, 12. 2; p. 1) intitulé "La Situation":

"... Que ce fils naturel du bourgeoisisme, le boulangisme, tombe le parlementarisme son vilain, très vilain père, [c'] est pain bénit, mais à une condition: c'est que sur leur cadavre à tous les deux, le socialisme révolutionnaire monte au Capitole.
Place au prolétariat conscient et organisé! JULES GUESDE."

[On notera que le slogan de Guesde occupe une position dont le modèle est celui du Delenda Carthago dont il conserve certaines résonnances: conclusion unique, toujours

voudrais le lire dans toute son extension socio-discursive, dans son efficace pragmatique et dans sa forme poétique. Je dis "poétique" en rappelant que le premier exemple que donne R. Jakobson de la fonction poétique est justement un slogan politique ("I like Ike") et non un exemple littéraire. Les slogans, affirme Olivier Reboul[3], s'inscrivent entre les deux extrêmes de "l'automatisme" et de "la conversion". Je corrigerais Reboul en disant qu'un grand slogan est à la fois, formule figée, phraséologie pavlovienne et interpellation vivante, produisant "quelque chose de semblable à une révélation" (Reboul, 1975, 90).

On connaît des travaux, d'approches très diverses, sur le slogan et les "cris performatifs", -- ceux de Jacques Guilhaumou sur des slogans de 1789 (du type "Du pain et la Liberté!"), ceux d'Olivier Reboul, le premier à avoir tenté une typologie d'ensemble, et ceux de L.-J. Calvet, dans la Production révolutionnaire, lequel intègre heureusement une réflexion sur les données mélodiques et rythmiques.

Le mot de slogan est inconnu à la fin du siècle passé; il n'entre en français que vers 1920 portant d'abord sur le langage publicitaire. Il n'est pas de terme spécifique pour désigner ces énoncés que seule la Police de sûreté générale peut cataloguer comme "cris séditieux".

Malgré les travaux que j'ai cités plus haut, le slogan, entre le cri collectif, le mot d'ordre et la devise demeure mal circonscrit: "formule concise, anonyme, adressée aux masses" voilà, parmi les éléments de définition (Reboul, 1975, 42) ce qui peut nous convenir pour chercher à déterminer ce qui se produit en 1889 et qui porte ces caractères-là. Inutile de chercher dans la publicité d'alors, dans la réclame: elle est encore à

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identique et lapidaire de toutes considérations sur la conjoncture, identifiant synthétiquement ce qui est "en marche".]

[3]. Olivier Reboul. Le Slogan. Bruxelles: Complexe, 1975.

l'époque, bavarde, emphatique et prolixe. Elle ne vise pas la concision malgré les efforts incertains des Pastilles Géraudel qui furent parmi les premières entreprises à chercher du moderne:

"Le plus grand général est le général Boulanger. Le plus grand chanteur est le chanteur Paulus. Les meilleures pastilles sont les pastilles Géraudel."
(Publ. Vie parisienne, 1888, passim)

Olivier Reboul ne distingue guère les slogans faits pour être criés collectivement ("Vive X", "A bas Y") de ceux qui, tout aussi collectifs dans leur destination, n'étaient pas spécifiquement vocalisables. Si "les lendemains qui chantent", ou même "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité" sont, à son jugement, des slogans, on ne peut cependant les faire scander aisément par une foule. Cependant l'élément rythmique et mélodique importe dans le slogan alors même qu'il n'est fait que pour être imprimé ou affiché:

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 /     /         /
"Credere, Obedere, Combattere" (slogan du fascisme),
    /         /          / /  /
"Le Pain, La Paix, La Liberté" (slogan du Front populaire).
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Le Parti boulangiste, -- objet fascinant de l'histoire politique moderne car il est le premier grand mouvement que l'on peut, avant la lettre, qualifier de fasciste - a fonctionné en 1888-1889 avec deux slogans: l'un qui résume en un cri sa haine du parlementarisme allié à "la Haute banque juive": "A bas les voleurs!"; l'autre qui, malgré son rythme tripartite, n'apparaît pas bien fameux: il résumait sa stratégie et était vraiment la devise du "Parti républicain national", c'était: "Dissolution/Révision/Constituante". Cependant je vois sur les marges apparaître comme titre d'une obscure revue une formule qui a un bel avenir de slogan: La France au Français. Toute une histoire d'antisémitisme et d'Action française passe dans ce slogan qui, en 1889, apparaît comme un détournement nationaliste d'une formule socialisante de l'avocat radical Francis Laur: "la Mine aux mineurs" - elle-même calquée sur la

formule de Monroe, "l'Amérique aux Américains", car il y a une histoire à faire des contaminations et des emprunts de slogans.

Les Républicains doivent à Gambetta le slogan le plus inusable du progressisme des années 1880-1890: "Le Cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi!" Ce slogan avait pourtant la faiblesse immanente de pouvoir aisément se retourner et se renvoyer en boome-rang. Le Comte Albert de Man rétorquera par: "le Parlementarisme, voilà l'ennemi!" -- contre-slogan qui fait l'unanimité extrême droite/extrême-gauche, c'est-à-dire qui réalise l'union proto-fasciste des réactionnaires (dont ici les "catholiques sociaux") et des boulangistes, sinon même des blanquistes.

Une constatation que je ne puis développer quant à la nature des cris collectifs en 1889 est la prédominance des cris hurlés, des cris époumonnés sur les cris scandés. Peut-être le slogan des boulangistes ("Révision/Dissolution/Constituante") était-il susceptible d'être scandé. Les slogans socialistes comme celui de Guesde, placés en explicit d'un discours martelé et tonitrué, sont des slogans que l'on hurle en "tenant" sur la dernière syllabe allongée. Ainsi de ceux attestés en fin de meeting parmi les plus fréquents:

"Viv(e) la Social(e)!" et "Viv(e) la Commun(e)!"

On entend aussi:

"Viv(e) la Révolution Social(e)!"

(Ex. Cri du travailleur, Lille, 5-12.1; p.2 et aussi L'Aurore sociale, no s.d., août 1889). "Vive la Commune!" est évidemment celui qui suscite chez les bourgeois l'indignation la plus horrifiée (Compte Rendu des obsèques de Félix Pyat, Figaro, 10.8; p.2).

Les "Vive!" peuvent facilement se prolonger en litanies rouges et se compléter par des "à bas!":

"Vive la Commune!
A bas Floquet!
A bas Boulanger!"

Manifestation sur la tombe de Blanqui, 6 janvier)

On ne voit donc proliférer chez les socialistes que ce qui est le "degré zéro" du slogan dans l'histoire discursive, les formules du type Vive + x. Sur ces cris, qui entraînent la ruée des sergents de ville, s'achèvent toutes les réunions publiques.

Vive + x est éminemment fait pour être imprimé. Il n'est pas de proclamation électorale, pas d'affiche politique qui ne se termine par: "Vive la France!", "Vive la République!" (à gauche) et, chez les socialistes: "Vive la Sociale!"

Les meetings de grève s'achèvent au "cri unanime de 'Vive la grève!'" (Gaulois, 16. 10; p.l), avec ici également la contrepartie négative et menaçante:

"Vive la grève!
A bas les exploiteurs!"

(Rapp. Cri du Peuple, 2.1)

"A mort les patrons!
A bas l'armée!
Vive la sociale!"

(Rapporté Gaulois, 27.10; p. 3)

Les libertaires ajoutent au cri de grève, la "vulgarité" virile du blasphème:

"Vive l'anarchie, Nom de Dieu!"[4].

Le slogan de J. Guesde, même s'il est conçu comme résumé crié, revendicatif et menaçant, en final d'un discours, s'écarte de ces cris tonitrués par un ton plus solennel plus ample et emphatique:

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[4]. L'Attaque, no 43, p. 2; Cf. Père Peinard, 15. 9; p.9: "Vive la Sociale! Vive l'Anarchie!" -- "Vive l'anarchie! Mort aux voleurs!", à la fin du procès de la Bande à Pini, Lanterne, 7.11.

/ / /
"Place au Prolétariat (allitération en "p"), conscient et
/
organisé!" (quatre groupes accentués).

Il est certainement l'écho modifié de l'explicit du Manifeste communiste, le seul énoncé de Marx qui en soit jamais cité verbatim: "Prolétaires de tous les pays, unissez-vous!" (Congrès socialiste, d. de Genève, p. 10). Dans le cri de Jules Guesde, l'optatif ou le jussif de Karl Marx ("unissez-vous!") est formulé comme réalisé dans les qualificatifs "conscient et organisé". L'élément internationaliste ("de tous les pays") est par contre absent ou refoulé dans l'implicite.

Comment peut-on analyser ce slogan guesdiste et pourquoi a-t-il paru "bon", susceptible de "marcher"? Apparemment cet énonce n'a rien de bien frappant. Il réalise cependant un mot d'ordre à interprétation complexe et ambiguë; il offre un bon exemple de détournement intertextuel, c'est-à-dire d'appropriation militante du pathos bourgeois, en même temps qu'il verbalise la composante allégorique-utopique de la sensibilité socialiste. Le slogan est évidemment un détournement ironisé d'un énoncé aristocratique, "féodal", tel qu'il peut être connu par le théâtre de Boulevard: "Place à Monseigneur le Prince de Condé! Allons, manants, faites place!" Ce qui s'avance d'aujourd'hui, drapé dans la pourpre de l'Histoire, ce n'est pas un Prince d'Ancien Régime, c'est le souverain collectif du monde nouveau, le Prolétariat. Non pas le "Peuple souverain" dont se gargarisent les républicains opportunistes en période électorale, celui qui trime et qu'on gruge, mais le peuple des producteurs tel qu'en lui-même enfin l'histoire le change en Prolétariat.

Si l'on cherche à comprendre le sens connotatif du mot "prolétariat", il convient d'abord de voir qu'il n'est aucunement synonyme de "classe ouvrière" ou de "travailleurs". La propagande socialiste représente le prolétaire sous trois états ontologiques, pourrait-on dire, qui rappellent invinciblement la distinction théologique entre l'Église souffrante, l'Église militante et l'Église triomphante. Il faut rappeler que

le mot "militant" est, autant que celui même de "propagande", une métaphore détournée, mais encore sentie, du vocabulaire ecclésial. Dans l'énoncé de l'exploitation et de la souffrance, la propagande parle du peuple, "le peuple qui travaille et qui endure" (Jean Volders; Le Peuple, Brux., 21.5; p.l), ou "les travailleurs, les exploités, les souffrants" (Égalité, 20.5; p.2), la "classe exploitée" qui, en clé pathétique, s'énonce comme "les déshérités de la vie", ceux qui n'ont "d'autre destinée qu'une vieillesse hâtive et misérable ou une mort prématurée" (Egalité, 8.2; p. 1). Ici se greffe la conglobation des souffrances et des misères et le tableau contrasté de l'ouvrier et du "capitaliste qu'il enrichit de sa sueur" (Parti ouvrier, 28.10; p.l) car l'image, ridicule aux yeux des publicistes bourgeois, de la "sueur du peuple" et du patron qui "boit [cette] sueur" est parfaitement attestée.

Deux grandes transpositions métaphorico-mémorielles s'inscrivent ici: celle du salarié comme forçat, galérien, bagnard dans "le bagne légal de l'usine" (J.-B. Dumay, 1889, cité par Poinsot, 1976, 385), dans "les geôles capitalistes" (le Prolétariat, 19.10; p. 2); celle du salariat comme esclavage moderne: "le salariat a remplacé l'esclavage" (P. Devillers; Egalité, 13.7; p. 2); bien mieux: "la condition du prolétaire est inférieure à celle de l'esclave ancien" (Egalité, 25.5; p. 2) Plutôt qu'à l'esclave, c'est au "serf" du régime féodal (connu par l'enseignement primaire républicain) que le salarié industriel est comparé: il est un "serf moderne" (Egalité, 10.5; p. 1) dans la mesure où le capitalisme est lui-même, par homologie historique, une "nouvelle féodalité" avec ses "barons de la finance" et ses châteaux-forts.

Le vocabulaire change dès qu'on passe à l'état militant auquel s'applique essentiellement l'épithète de conscient et qui est systématiquement construit en une opposition entre le socialiste et "la masse": "la masse aveugle des exploités" (Brissac; Parti ouvrier, 29.11; p. 2). Cette "masse" est toujours déterminée par un qualificatif qui s'oppose à la conscience militante: "la masse émasculée" (vs. le socialiste "viril"), "la torpeur de la masse prolétarienne" (le Prolétariat, 12.10; p. 1) ou, expressément, de la "masse inconsciente":

"La démocratie socialiste qui veille et indique la voie
à suivre n'a pas été écoutée par la masse inconsciente"

(le Peuple, 28.1; p. 1).

L'adjectif "conscient" est une épithète de nature accollée à la minorité agissante des socialistes: "les travailleurs conscients" (Parti ouvrier, 22.7; p. 1), "les socialistes conscients" (ibid., 1.8; p. 1), "dans le camp du travail, tous les travailleurs conscients [sont] rangés sous la rouge bannière internationale" (Prolétariat, 19.10; p. 1). C'est ici que la grande métaphore militaire, celle de la "bataille sociale", de ses "deux camps", de "l'armée socialiste", de l'heure proche où "l'avant-garde" entraînant les masses se jettera dans le "combat définitif" -- cette métaphore donne à plein et réalise la conception que l'on se fait du Parti organisé militairement en "avant-garde" et "serrant les rangs" autour du drapeau de la Révolution. (voir, par exemple, La Voix du Peuple, 10.2; p. 1). La stratégie socialiste consiste à représenter les "soldats conscients" du Parti, avec en arrière, en réserve, "des milliers de déshérités et de parias" (Le Peuple, 28.4; p. 1) qui -- convaincus le jour venu, -- se joindront à l'avant-garde organisée et seront "irrésistibles". Le slogan de J. Guesde résume ou recoupe cette propagande et ce modèle stratégique. Il est du même tonneau que les innombrables mots d'ordre, formules jussives, appels aux militants qui forment la finale ordinaire des éditoriaux: "Au combat!" (Parti ouvrier, 1.8; p. 1), "En avant! Contre la bourgeoisie", (L. Dorvy; Égalité, 14.4; p. 2), "Peuple, réveille-toi! Esclaves, levez la tête, secouez le joug, rompez vos chaînes" (Bourson, Egalité, 25.5; p. 2). Mais il a l'avantage de transformer l'appel à l'action en énoncé grandiloquent où l'Histoire identifie le Prolétariat, la ci-devant "masse exploitée", transfigurée par son émancipation, "en marche" vers la Sociale.

Reprenons l'analyse du slogan: "Place au Prolétariat, conscient et organisé!" Ceux qui, tout au long de l'histoire, ont dû "faire place" au passage des grands de ce monde sont désormais ceux qui vont occuper toute la place et qui disent à la Bourgeoisie, cette "nouvelle féodalité", "déguerpissez!..." Car l'énoncé ne séduit que parce que, -- solennel et hautain dans sa forme explicite, -- il est menaçant dans son sens implicite complémentaire: allons, faites place nette, il n'y a plus de place pour vous et, comme

on chante dans l'Internationale (qui vient d'être mise en musique par Degeyter): "La Terre n'appartient qu'aux hommes / L'oisif ira coucher ailleurs!" Ainsi l'embrayeur solennel "Place à _____" est-il un idiome gigogne qui recèle d'autres idiomatismes: "faites place nette", "quittez la place" et qui instaure un mundus inversus où ce sont les "manants" qui disent aux princes et aux "barons de la finance", "faites-nous place!" ou mieux encore, "nous venons prendre votre place"[5]. Ce caractère de détournement interlocutoire et de renvoi en boomerang est certainement un des grands mécanismes de la rhétorique socialiste dont les écrits polémiques de Karl Marx sont remplis.

Le slogan de Jules Guesde active indirectement un autre topos du DSC, qui est le topos de "l'heure-est-venue", la Révolution est imminente et fatale et, comme on chante encore en entonnant l'Internationale: "C'est la lutte finale!"...

Ce slogan par sa forme même, identifie donc le moment indubitable de son énonciation: moment eschatologique qui, au centre de la propagande oratoire de l'"Apôtre" du Parti ouvrier, est celui de la Révolution-fatale-et-imminente. Ici encore, J. Guesde ne fait que marteler, répéter un topos-clé de la propagande: la Révolution est "en marche", énoncé qui forme une sorte d'allégorie visuelle:

> "Aucune puissance humaine n'est désormais capable de faire reculer le prolétariat en marche vers sa libération définitive."

(Parti ouvrier, 2.1; p. 1).

C'est ici en effet que le mot de "prolétariat" prend toute sa puissance. Auparavant, on identifiait des "travailleurs", des "salariés" plus techniquement, des "exploités", des "prolétaires". Les prolétaires deviennent au moment de la Lutte un sujet unique et

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[5]. Ajoutons que le présentatif "Place au prolétariat" doit se concrétiser par l'image complémentaire du "Prolétariat qui s'avance" (à la façon du Roi barbu de la Belle Hélène), du "Prolétariat en marche", ou comme le dit Guesde, "le socialisme révolutionnaire [qui] monte au Capitole" sous l'identité allégorique d'un flot de drapeaux rouges.

C'est ce que je nomme le potentiel de concrétisation allégorique propre aux grands Énoncés du DSC.

singulier, le "Prolétariat". L'imminence de la révolution prolétarienne est un énoncé obligé de la "méthode Coué" propagandiste:

> "Il est certain que la révolution sociale est proche."
> (O. Berger, Égalité. 2,4; p. 2)

> "L'heure de l'émancipation intégrale des salariés est venue."
> (J. Allemane, Le Prolétariat, 15.6; p. 1)

> "La Révolution sociale est si prochaine qu'elle semble commencée."
> (cit. Égalité, 28.5; p. 1)

Ou encore dans des termes expressément paraclétiste dans un speech de Louise Michel: "les Temps sont proches" (cit. Égalité, 28.5; p. 1).

L'énonciateur du slogan n'est pas Jules Guesde ni le Parti ouvrier, c'est en fait l'Histoire qui, parlant au-dessus de la lutte des classes, énonce prophétiquement que "l'heure de la Révolution a sonné au cadran de l'histoire" (autre topos). C'est la main qui écrit sur le mur au festin de Balthasar: "Mané, thécel, pharès: mesuré, pesé, divisé", la voix qui annonce la chute du Vieux monde, l'avènement du monde nouveau...

On voit donc apparaître quelques traits qui caractérisent la propagande socialiste: -- le détournement ironisé de la phraséologie bourgeoise (ou féodale) où le Prolétariat, nouveau Prométhée, vole aux exploiteurs les armes langagières dont ils se sont servi contre lui; -- l'Inscription sous-jacente, implicite, d'un mythème utopique-messianique que j'ai rapporté à la matrice originelle du festin de Balthasar; -- la Construction mythico-pragmatique d'un énonciateur, l'Histoire vengeresse, Juste judex ultionis, juste juge du Règlement des comptes, comme est identifié "Celui qui viendra" dans le Dies irae. A cet énonciateur, correspondent deux destinataires distincts: le peuple militant qui reçoit mandat et confirmation, mais aussi le Bourgeois qui "tremble" en sachant son jour venu. Car la propagande socialiste présente ce trait de pragmatique, qu'elle est conçue pour être entendue également de la classe exploiteuse: on se flatte que ses énoncés engendreront chez les jouisseurs une sainte terreur, de sorte que le destinataire prolétarien puisse se réjouir doublement, et de ce que l'heure de la revanche a sonné, et de ce que les Bourgeois, -- même s'ils feignent de n'en être pas troublé, -- savent in petto que les jeux sont faits et qu'il leur convient sous peu de faire place.

Mon analyse peut sembler un peu longue, elle ne peut cependant omettre les deux adjectifs dans leur qualification ambiguë du Prolétariat. "Conscient et organisé": l'épithète peut se lire comme conditionnelle: si le prolétariat devient conscient et s'organise, il pourra jouer son rôle, prendre sa place. Elle peut s'entendre comme épithète de nature: le Prolétariat est par définition conscient de son rôle historique et donc organisé sous la forme de son Parti militant. Le problème en effet est celui de la conscience de classe: dans la masse ouvrière, comme on l'a vu plus haut, le slogan ne sera compris que par les "socialistes conscients" du rôle historique qu'est appelé à jouer le prolétariat. L'énoncé doit être construit, dans la logique même du guesdisme, comme corrélation nécessaire entre la conscience socialiste et l'organisation en parti: le prolétariat est la partie consciente des masses; organisée dans le Parti ouvrier parce que consciente. En ce cas, l'organisation est un épiphénomène de la prise de conscience: le parti est la forme "militante" que prend cette conscience prolétarienne. Il en résulte que le-Prolétariat-conscient-et-organisé est une périphrase synonyme de: Part ouvrier, ce que confirme la tactique du guesdisme et qui fait plus que préfigurer la pensée léniniste. Le Prolétariat, c'est ce qui est organisé parce que porteur de la conscience ouvrière; autrement dit le Prolétariat, c'est le Parti et non pas "les masses", inconscientes et inorganisées, dont il convient que la propagande "convertisse" les plus conscients. Les masses n'incarnent pas le Prolétariat, lequel ne peut être conçu comme amorphe et mystifié. Le slogan de Jules Guesde recèle donc une stratégie qui vise à identifier le Sujet de l'histoire. Le publiciste libéral de 1889 peut bien remarquer que son Parti ouvrier ne remporte que 0.5% des voix aux élections. Un tel constat est disqualifié par le slogan guesdiste qui contient à la fois une historiosophie et une stratégie.

Un slogan est un énoncé qui dans une stratégie active, "agit plus qu'il ne dit" (Reboul) et dit infiniment plus que son sens littéral parce qu'il s'inscrit en bonne place dans un réseau intertextuel, parce que, dans ses éléments implicites, dans les connotations des termes employés, dans les inférences et les sous-entendus qu'il permet, il résume une vision des choses, une sociogonie et un programme d'action. Le slogan de Jules Guesde

réalise exemplairement ces axiomes et en lui se résume, s'inscrit en abyme toute la propagande socialiste dans sa rhétorique et son idéologie.

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II. RHETORIC AND INTERPRETATION / RHÉTORIQUE ET INTERPRETATION

A) MODERN (POST-STRUCTURALIST AND FEMINIST) RHETORICS / RHÉTORIQUES MODERNES (FÉMINISTE ET POST-STRUCTURALISTE)

B) INTERPRETATION OF THE INVENTIO: FIGURES, TROPES AND TOPICS / L'INTERPRÉTATION DE L'INVENTIO: FIGURES, TROPES ET TOPOI

C) RHETORIC AND POETICS: THE INTERPRETATION OF LITERARY TEXTS/ RHÉTORIQUE ET POÉTIQUE: L'INTERPRÉTATION DES TEXTES LITTÉRAIRES

A) MODERN (POST-STRUCTURALIST AND FEMINIST) RHETORICS / RHÉTORIQUES MODERNES (FÉMINISTE ET POST-STRUCTURALISTE)

PETER FRANCE

ROLAND BARTHES, A RHETORIC OF MODERNITY

One of Barthes's last published writings was a piece called 'Délibérations', which appeared in Tel Quel in 1979. It concerns the problems of writing a journal, and includes the following anecdote:

> 13 août 1977
>
> Ce matin, vers huit heures, le temps est superbe. L'envie me prend d'essayer le vélo de Myr, pour aller à la boulangerie. Je n'ai pas fait de vélo depuis que j'étais gosse. Mon corps trouve cette opération très étrange, très difficile, et j'ai peur (de monter, de descendre). Je dis tout cela à la boulangère - et en sortant de la boutique, voulant remonter sur ma bicyclette, naturellement, je tombe. Or, par instinct, je me laisse aller à tomber excessivement, les deux jambes en l'air, dans la posture la plus ridicule qui soit. Et je comprends alors que c'est ce ridicule qui me sauve (d'un trop grand mal): j'ai accompagné ma chute, et par là je me suis donné en spectacle, je me suis rendu ridicule; mais, par là aussi, j'en ai amoindri l'effet.
>
> Tout d'un coup, il m'est devenu indifferent de ne pas être moderne. (BL, 408)

The relevance for my subject of this little story will, I hope, become clear. Barthes the non-modern is associated here with the emphatic gesture; the deliberately assumed rhetoric of falling (a kind of amplificatio) saves him from harm. He is like one of those wrestlers depicted in a very early piece from Mythologies, 'Le Monde où l'on catche' and finds himself enacting the Baudelairean phrase which occurs so often in his writing: 'la vérité emphatique du geste dans les grandes circonstances de la vie' (M, 13). He is like an ancient masked actor or indeed an orator, but he is also a modern clown - Buster Keaton perhaps, or one of the protagonists from Godot. Ancient and Modern meet here.

My subject is in fact a new development of the old quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns; I shall be concerned with the ambiguous relation to the ancient (and in particular ancient rhetoric) of a writer who often seemed the arch-priest of the modern, championing the most recent developments in all the arts, opposing the modern 'scriptible' to the ancient 'lisible', and recurring constantly to the refrain of 'notre

modernité'. At the same time, it is obvious that in our time - and long before our time for that matter - the modern may seek models or allies among the old classics (whether Greco-Roman or more recent) against what has happened in between - so the Pre-Raphaelites, so Stravinsky, so T.S.Eliot. Or else the modern may turn out to be a closet ancient, or at least a doubter. In another late work, Incidents, we read the following piece of private journal. Barthes has returned home in the evening and dutifully reads a piece of new fiction

> mais ce sont comme des devoirs, et, une fois ma dette payée (à tempérament), je referme et reviens avec soulagement aux Mémoires d'outre-tombe, le vrai livre. Toujours cette pensée: et si les Modernes se trompaient? S'ils n'avaient pas de talent? (I, 80).

Chateaubriand is in fact one of the great values of Barthes's later years; he is far from being an uncomplicated Ancient, indeed it appears that for Barthes much of his appeal lies in the frontier position he occupies - the source of a new sensibility and a new attitude to writing, and yet a lover of the old and one who makes unashamed use of the full resources of the old art of writing. The way he describes his position in the 'Préface Testamentaire' to the Mémoires d'outre-tombe, swimming hopefully and regretfully between two worlds, may be applied to Barthes, or to many other writers of our time for that matter. In literary terms at least the tension of the Ancient and the Modern is still with us and as in the seventeenth century the battle-lines often pass through the middle of a great writer's work (think of Perrault or Racine). In this tension attitudes to rhetoric and eloquence are central.

Rhetoric was a constant point of reference for Barthes, from the youthful writings of his wartime years to La Chambre claire, the last book published in his life time. His reflexions on the ancient discipline and its modern possibilities are long and complex, and they have a good deal to teach us. So, rhetorically dividing my material into three parts, I shall deal in turn with rhetoric as model, rhetoric as enemy, and rhetoric as springboard.

Rhetoric as Model

In many of Barthes's essays of the 1960s in particular, one encounters the notion that the theoretical practice of rhetoric was the precursor of modern linguistics and semiotics. In a piece published on 28 September 1967 in the Times Literary Supplement, for instance, he speaks of it as 'that impressive effort by a whole culture to analyse and classify the forms of speech, and to make the world of language intelligible'. This comes from the high period of structuralism, when Barthes shared with Genette, Todorov and others an interest in the revival and renewal of the old discipline in a modern science of literature - or more generally of sign systems. Of course the term was familiar to him before the 60s; Philippe Roger has written interestingly about his frequently positive use of it as early as 1942, in the articles written at the sanatorium of Saint Hilaire du Touvet[1]. But it was in the 60s, at the time of his 'petit délire scientifique' (RB, 148), when he was writing his Système de la mode, that Barthes was led to study the rhetorical tradition more closely and present it at his seminar at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1964-65. The result is 'L'Ancienne Rhétorique: aide-mémoire', published for the first time some years later in 1970, in a number of the structuralist journal Communications devoted to 'recherches rhétoriques'.

Some specialists of the history of rhetoric belittle Barthes's work as the condescending invasion of their territory by an amateur. It is true that he touches on the subject somewhat rapidly and then moves on. Nevertheless, he was by training a classicist; the fact that he writes history from the perspective of modernity only adds to the interest of his account of what he calls a 'voyage mémorable' (AR, 222). And even when he came to publish his 'aide-mémoire' there was not a lot published in French to guide students over this vast ocean. At the time, then, it met a need; looked at today, it is above all interesting as a record of the confrontation of a modern writer and an ancient tradition.

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[1]. This paper owes a great deal to Philippe Roger's subtle and passionate book, Roland Barthes, roman.

His starting point is 'le texte moderne'. He speaks of the need to 'savoir à partir de quoi et contre quoi il se cherche' and thus to 'confronter la nouvelle sémiotique de l'écriture et l'ancienne pratique du langage littéraire'. Nor is rhetoric confined to history; the modern world too is 'incroyablement plein d'ancienne Rhétorique' (AR, 172). One cannot fail to notice the tone of hostility, or at least suspicion, in this presentation, but Barthes goes on to note that in working on his subject he has been filled with excitement and admiration by the force and subtlety of this old system - and also, importantly, by 'la modernité de telle de ses propositions'. Read in the light of the new, the old can give support to the new.

At the outset, Barthes proposes a distinctly modern - and suggestive - classification of six 'pratiques rhétoriques' (AR, 173-4):

1. An art - the art of persuasion.
2. A discipline - something taught in schools.
3. A science (or at least a proto-science) of the 'effets de langage'.
4. A prescriptive code - involving a set of rules and norms.
5. A social practice - rhetoric as a source of power and prestige.
6. A game - involving a para-rhetoric of parody and derision.

It will be seen that from a modern, subversive point of view, good and bad are intermingled here, rhetoric offering scope for development and distortion. At all events, Barthes stresses the need for moderns to know rhetoric without censuring it (without imposing an orthodoxy which would downgrade certain rhetorical practices, notably the extravagant ones) if they are to understand European culture of the past and of the present. Already in the 60s he is declaring the need for a proper history of rhetoric such as the International Society for the History of Rhetoric exists to provide.

Not surprisingly, Barthes insists above all on the debt of literature to rhetoric (he is barely interested in public speaking). He notes the fusion of rhetoric and poetics which has been so important a feature of European culture. Already in an earlier work, Le Degré Zéro de l'écriture, he had argued that rhetorical norms of intelligible communication (with speech as the model for writing) governed a literature that was unproblematic and rested on a common social code (to which he tends to give the label 'bourgeois'). Thinking mainly of seventeenth-century France, he writes:

> 'Poétique', aux temps classiques, ne désigne aucune étendue. aucune épaisseur particulière du sentiment, aucune cohérence, aucun univers separé, mais

seulement l'inflexion d'une technique verbale, celle de 's'exprimer' selon des règles plus belles, donc plus sociales que celles de la conversation. (DZ, 34)

Clearly, the young Barthes had little time for this view of the poetic, but this did not prevent rhetoric being valuable -- with due modification -- as a science of connotations appropriate for analysing the function of most literary texts today. The connotations involved are primarily linguistic, and concern the use of figures and the way in which words acquire secondary, socially determined meanings. In certain articles of the years 1966-7 we find Barthes relating these concerns to Jakobson's 'poetic function' (Jakobson's Essais de linguistique générale had appeared in French in 1963). Indeed he suggests in a paper given in Brussels in 1966 that the word 'rhetoric' could be substituted for 'poetic' to designate the element that makes of any verbal message a work of art (BL, 133). This of course was precisely the position of the Belgian rhetoricians who in 1970 published the Rhétorique générale.

One apparent advantage of rhetoric for the structuralist was that it privileged the impersonal system against the notions of personal expression or creativity. In rhetoric, Barthes writes, in the 'aide-mémoire', 'ce que nous appelons l'auteur n'existe pas' (AR, 184). It was in 1968 that he published his article ''La Mort de l'auteur' (BL, 61-7), but the idea had been around for some time. In the early sixties, in an article in Annales later reprinted in Sur Racine, he had called for a history of literature which would give an account of the evolution of institutions rather than a set of critical biographies (SR, 147-67). Clearly rhetoric would have to be one of these institutions.

Rhetorical analysis might serve then to deflect critical attention away from the sacrosanct author to the medium he used (or which used him, according to a certain structuralist theology). But it had a particular usefulness, being concerned with general and repeatable semiological phenomena, for the description of mass culture. In the 'aide-mémoire' Barthes makes a specific link between Aristotle and the mass media. Aristotle's rhetoric, he writes, is 'une logique volontairement degradée'. As such, 'mutatis mutandis et toutes proportions (historiques) gardées, elle conviendrait bien aux produits de notre culture dite de masse, ou règne le vraisemblable aristotélicien, c'est-à-dire à ce que le public croit possible' (AR, 179). So, in an article entitled 'Rhétorique de l'image', Barthes dismantles the way signifying systems operate in publicity

photographs. The vendors of pasta (Pâtes Panzani) use visual topoï (a shopping bag spilling over with vegetables indicates genuine home
cooking, etc.) to persuade their audience in the same way as the unscrupulous orator uses words (OO. 26-9). Rhetoric is seen here as 'la face signifiante de l'idéologie' (OO. 40). It therefore gives a new sharpness, and apparent scientificity, to the type of analysis that he had performed so memorably in Mythologies, where the fringes of the actors in Mankiewicz's Julius Caesar signify 'Romanity' and the vaseline on their faces, read as sweat, signifies strenuous moral dilemmas (M, 27-30). Sometimes Barthes apparently enjoys and even celebrates the rhetoric he analyses (thus in the pieces on wrestling or the Tour de France), but more often the analysis is at the same time a warning or a denunciation. Rhetoric here provides the model for a critical approach to verbal messages of all kinds - much as it was later to do for Terry Eagleton in the closing pages of his Literary Theory.

Why do we find this type of denunciation in Barthes's writing? Is it simply the left-wing, vaguely Marxist stance which was more or less obligatory for French intellectuals at the time? Certainly he refers respectfully or admiringly to Marx, Sartre and Brecht, for all of whom the demystification of illusions had a political purpose. However, in Barthes - and one says this with hindsight - we seem to have to do rather with an exacerbated consciousness of codes of all kinds. The world oppresses us with its multitude of signs, and his response is often a kind of semioclastic fury, in which he mocks and exposes the falsity of so-called natural modes of expression. In this, perhaps in spite of itself, rhetoric is a great help. But in so far as rhetoric actually inculcated such codes, it had also to be the enemy - and this brings me to the second panel of my triptych.

Rhetoric as Enemy

For Barthes the modern, however useful rhetoric might be as a tool for analysing the productions of others, there could be no question of an uncomplicated nostalgia for a lost golden age of rhetoric such as we find, for instance, in Marc Fumaroli L'Age de l'éloquence. Le Degré Zéro de l'écriture shows him committed to the tragic twentieth-

century view of a divided language. On such a view, 'La rhétorique ancienne' could not offer a model for his own practice or for that of the serious writer of today. The last sentence of the 'aide-mémoire' speaks of the need to 'faire tomber la Rhétorique au rang d'un objet pleinement et simplement historique' and to 'revendiquer, sous le nom de texte, d'écriture, une nouvelle pratique du langage' (AR, 223). The eloquence taught by rhetoric is not compatible with the writing practices embodied in such moderns as Philippe Sollers. What then made old rhetoric unacceptable?

In the first place, as I suggested above, there is the political argument. From Le Degré Zéro de l'écriture, rhetoric is associated with the classical period, which Barthes cavalierly labels 'bourgeois'. It is, moreover, an instrument of class domination. It will be recalled that the 'aide-mémoire' includes among the uses of rhetoric its social function; it is, he says, 'cette technique privilégiée (puisqu'il faut payer pour l'acquérir) qui permet aux classes dirigeantes de s'assurer la propriété de la parole'. The 'classe de rhétorique', as it still existed under the Third Republic, was a 'consécration initiatique de la culture bourgeoise' (AR, 223). Barthes's use of the term 'bourgeois' is a loose one, but it clearly marks at least some sympathy with a Marxist view of cultural history. In this view, rhetoric is part of a formidable and repressive institutional system. At the limit, 'bien parler' becomes an enemy of the people.

Such motives are undoubtedly present at times in the bourgeois Barthes's hostility to traditional rhetoric, but I do not think, if we take his work as a whole, that they are the determining ones. As I suggested above, the essential thing seems to be a more personal resistance, a difficult and deeply felt relation to language. One needs to remember his constant desire to be a writer, not just someone who uses words instrumentally (an 'écrivant') but one who works on and with words (an 'écrivain', EC, 147-54). Ideally, this would imply the ability to make words carry a powerful reality. So, in Le Degré Zéro, Barthes describes how in modern poetry, eloquence falls away and we are faced with 'le Mot qui nourrit et comble comme le dévoilement soudain de la vérité' (DZ , 37). There is a sort of mystical desire for presence at work here, the same desire which in La Chambre claire found a fulfilment in photography, since the chemical nature of this art guarantees that a physical reality is transmitted through all the codes of representation ('Je vois les yeux qui ont vu l'Empereur', CC, 13). But, alas,

language is not usually like that; it is utterly permeated by codes (many of them transmitted by rhetoric) which mediate and deform any expressive intention. Barthes demonstrates this neatly in the introduction to his Essais critiques. A friend has lost a loved one, and I write to express my sympathy. What happens is that 'je fais des "phrases" avec le plus aimant de moi-même' - thousands of speakers and writers have been there before. So I try to avoid such phrases and reduce the message to one word: 'Condoléances'. But this won't do either; it has inescapable connotations of coldness. And so on... (EC, 11-12). In a word, Barthes, like many moderns, suffers from an excessive sign-consciousness[2] which makes it virtually impossible for him to adopt the practices of traditional rhetoric. One might distinguish between three types of objection.

Firstly, and most simply, there is the reliance on the 'vraisemblable', which often means the cliché or 'idée reçue'. We have seen how Barthes uses this Aristotelian notion to pursue the ideologies of the mass media. Likewise, in analysing Balzac's story Sarrasine, he speaks with some disgust of what he calls the 'cultural codes' which produce an spurious effect of truth to life. Notice the Sartrean images in these concluding remarks:

> La "Vie" devient alors, dans le texte classique, un mélange écoeurant d'opinions courantes, une nappe étouffante d'idées reçues: c'est en effet dans ces codes culturels que se concentre le démodé balzacien, l'essence de ce qui, dans Balzac, ne peut être (ré-)écrit. (S/Z, 211).

Seen in this light, rhetoric is fraudulent and repulsive.

Secondly, there is the notion, implied in much traditional rhetorical theory, that form and content can be separated. Language is seen here as the optional clothing of an essential idea, and this clothing may be varied according to the circumstances. Writing at the beginning of his essay on Loyola about the Jesuit teaching of language and rhetoric, he notes that they bequeathed to modern Europe 'l'idée du bien-dire'. Paradoxically, Loyola himself was seen as a bad writer in this perspective, but this of course didn't matter, since what counted was the message. Indeed, 'bad writing' in this tradition can easily become a sign of saintliness - another cliché! Barthes concludes:

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[2]. On this question, see the illuminating essay by Gérard Genette, 'L'Envers des signes' in Figures I, pp.185-204.

> Ainsi se confirme une fois de plus la place que notre société assigne au langage: décoration ou instrument, on voit en lui une sorte de parasite du sujet humain, qui s'en sert ou s'en revêt, à distance, comme d'une parure ou d'un outil que l'on prend et dépose selon les besoins de la subjectivité ou les convenances de la société. (SFL, 46)

'Les convenances de la société' - this implies an idea of decorum, and therefore of censorship. The central rhetorical tradition, like Polonius, required a dress that was 'rich, not gaudy' - or in the terms of art, Attic rather than Asiatic. Realising the aberrations that the idea of language as clothing might lead to, traditional rhetoric stamped hard on what it described as the abuses of figural language[3]) seeking to subordinate all language use to that 'pseudo-naturalisme rhétorique' (the rule of clarity and so-called 'natural' style) which still dominates schoolroom practice. Against this, Barthes warms to the type of playful attitude to words that was often stigmatized as 'sophistry', the other face of rhetoric which finds a distant and tragic descendant in Paul de Man.

Above all, against the rhetorical separation of form and content, Barthes praises a language which avoids instrumentality and becomes as far as possible consubstantial with the subject, with the writing body. This is more and more obvious in his writings of the 70s. A good example, from the non-literary domain, is his championing of the music of Schumann, in particular an article entitled 'Rasch' and published in 1975. What he hears in this music is not notes, themes, grammar or structure, but 'des coups: j'entends ce qui bat dans le corps, ce qui bat le corps, ou mieux: ce corps qui bat'. The music won't stay put ('gros défaut rhétorique' says Barthes); it avoids development and composition (OO, 265-6). The reasonableness of rhetoric is short-circuited by the presence of the body.

A third objection to rhetoric is that it is based on speech this being especially objectionable to what one might call middle-period Barthes, round 1970, when the ideal

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[3]. See for instance Fontanier's strictures on 'l'abus des tropes' in Les Figures du discours: 'Quels ne doivent donc pas être les inconvéniens, les dangers d'un abus qui tombe sur la signification ou sur l'expression? Et peut-il y en avoir de plus graves, de plus funestes? Que cet abus existe, et voilà infailliblement le style, recherché, précieux, incohérent, inintelligible, absurde, ridiculement outré, emphatique, et n'offrant partout qu'un horrible amas de sottises, d'extravagances' (p.189).

of 'écriture' is at its most powerful. On this view, eloquence signifies the arrogance of the orator, of what is called the 'discours fort'. The speaker dominates, monologically. A particular bogeyman here is the teacher or professor. Barthes had attacked Picard as a 'Sorbonne professor' in their quarrel about Racine, so it was ironically painful to him to be seen as a professor, and indeed to become a professor at the Collège de France, where he gave what one might call an inaugural anti-lecture. In a 1971 article entitled 'Écrivains, intellectuels, professeurs' he speaks of the 'liaison fondamentale entre l'enseignement et la parole' and gives a neat analysis of the discomforts of the professor, who must choose either to assume the role of an authority, speaking well, or to try, by deliberately speaking less confidently, to soften the harsh role that makes of every speaker a policeman, since 'la phrase nette est bien une sentence, sententia, une parole pénale'. Either way, the professor cannot escape. The law is manifest not in what he says, but in the fact of speaking; 'parler, c'est exercer une volonté de pouvoir' (BL, 345-7). Naturally, therefore, Barthes prefers writing to speaking, and a form of writing (which the words 'écriture' and 'texte' signify) which does not follow the rhetorical patterns of speech.

In all this, he is on the side of what Jean Paulhan, in Les Fleurs de Tarbes, called 'la Terreur' - that modern attempt to get away from traditional eloquence. This is visible in his own writing practice. In his early books and articles, he more or less plays the game, conforming, if playfully at times, to norms and genres - the essay, the thesis, the book review, the newspaper article. His later work tends towards uncoded, fragmented forms. In Roland Barthes par lui-même and Fragments d'un discours amoureux, the basic unit is something like a Nietzschean aphorism, a short text, in which reflexion and anecdote mingle (the narrative becoming much more prominent in the second text). There is quotation and self-quotation, the rubbing together of different voices and different styles, and in Roland Barthes the play between the first and third person pronouns. Rhetorical dispositio is avoided (or apparently so) by the adoption of the seemingly arbitrary alphabetical order.

All this might seem like an anti-rhetorical form of writing. But of course rhetoric is not so easily eluded. As Paulhan, that subtle defender of the old discipline, noted in 'La Rhétorique renaît de ses cendres', rhetoric envelops anti-rhetoric: 'si Montaigne

connaît Cicéron, Cicéron s'attend à Montaigne' (Oeuvres, II, 164). The enemies of rhetoric often turn out to be its reformers. So perhaps it can be understood differently and as such be welcomed as an ally after all.

Rhetoric as Springboard

It is interesting to see that in the 'aide-mémoire' Barthes speaks of rhetoric as 'un dialogue d'amour' (AR, 177), echoing his earlier statement in the preface to Essais critiques: 'la rhétorique est la dimension amoureuse de l'écriture' (EC, 14). In his writing, such words carry a strong positive connotation, and they certainly go against a certain image of rhetoric, dry, formalistic, unscrupulous. What does he mean by such phrases? Essentially, that if we want to communicate emotion (and such is 'la disposition profonde de la littérature' (EC, 13), we need a special attention to language such as rhetoric can provide. Returning to the example of the letter of condolence cited above, one finds that Barthes concludes his oscillation between unsatisfactory formulations by declaring:

> pour redresser mon message (c'est-à-dire en somme pour qu'il soit exact) il faut non seulement que je le varie, mais encore que cette variation soit originale et comme inventée', [puisque] 'seule la forme permet d'échapper à la dérision des sentiments' (EC, 12, 13).

Writers and speakers (but Barthes is only concerned with writing) need to use figures, to act parts, to wear masks. Adopting the role of actor-orator gives pleasure and allows real communication to take place.

One may cite here two quotations which recur in his writing. The first, which one finds from Le Degré Zéro to La Chambre claire, is the Latin larvatus prodeo (I advance masked). He envisages literature as a figure pointing to the mask it is wearing. Only through this deliberate and open assumption of artifice is truth possible, or as Barthes puts it in Le Degré Zéro, 'la sincérité a ici besoin de signes faux, et évidemment faux, pour durer et pour être consommée' (DZ, 32). The second quotation has already been mentioned, Baudelaire's phrase 'la vérité emphatique du geste dans les grandes circonstances de la vie' (M, 13). Barthes uses this as an epigraph to the opening piece in Mythologies, where modern wrestlers are compared, only half in jest, with actors in

Aeschylus. Unlike the 'Romains au cinéma' with their unacknowledged conventional signs masquerading as natural, the wrestlers use (according to Barthes) a whole elaborate code (of gestures, actions, appearances) to signify emotion in an open and emphatic manner.

Such, as Paulhan suggested in Les Fleurs de Tarbes was the value of rhetoric to the writer: it taught a deliberate use of language through which the modernist Terror might be overcome, even today. As Philippe Roger has shown, the young Barthes writing on 'Plaisir aux classiques' for the sanatorium journal, had formulated 'le rêve conciliateur d'une fusion de l'usage de la parole et de l'être-là des mots, de l'art du discours et de la "force" du silence' (Roger, p.335). For all his modernist anguish and adventure, the dream did not disappear. The problem for the older Barthes, in his ambition to be an 'écrivain' rather than a mere 'écrivant' was to find the appropriate rhetoric. How was he himself to put on the mask?

Certainly, he recognizes often enough that he writes to woo the reader (he tends to use the less decorous verb 'draguer'). In Roland Barthes par lui-même there is an interesting fragment entitled 'Hypocrisie?' in which he distances himself from a certain type of anti-rhetorical modernity:

> Parlant d'un texte, il crédite son auteur de ne pas ménager le lecteur. Mais il a trouvé ce compliment en découvrant que lui-même fait tout pour le ménager et qu'en somme il ne renoncerait jamais à un art de l'effet. (RB, 106)[4].

'Un art de l'effet' - this is what rhetoric is all about. It may be seen as classical and therefore outdated ('démodé), but the 'démodé' increasingly becomes a positive value for Barthes who admits (or proclaims) in Roland Barthes par lui-même: 'J'écris classique' (RB, 96). To use a term which had apparently been downgraded in S/Z, he is always 'lisible' - even if his particular brand of readability is not to the taste of every reader.

One must not exaggerate of course. There is no question of a return to Cicero. Barthes will never be happy with clear, eloquent sociable speech, good rhetorical disposition, the confident and unproblematic use of commonplaces. If one is looking for

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[4]. Philippe Roger has shown that the author in question here is Philippe Sollers (Roland Barthes, roman, pp. 313-4).

historical parallels, he is more like Montaigne, making original use of an old art, indulging himself quite consciously in classical forms, but never in a simple-minded way. The old rhetoric is subverted and renovated, but it retains its power to affect the reader. There is obviously no space here for a proper study of Barthes's own rhetorical strategies, which could be observed for instance, in Mythologies, L'Empire des signes or Roland Barthes par lui-même, some of his most successful pieces of writing. I shall confine myself to a very brief discussion of two of his late works, saying a few words about Fragments d'un discours amoureux (1977) and a little more about La Chambre claire (1980), which seems to me his masterpiece.

In Fragments, the wooing of the reader is visible from the introductory 'Comment est fait ce livre'. Barthes's rhetoric is not to persuade readers by overwhelming them with eloquence, but to involve them as partners, to offer them a stimulus for their own reading/writing. Ideally the book is placed under the cooperative sign 'Aux Lecteurs - aux Amoureux - Réunis' (FDA, 9). Like so many of Barthes's publications, the work is also presented in quasi-academic form, as a study of discourse. However, this study is not given in discursive form; instead a 'dramatic' method is chosen: 'on a donc substitué à la description du discours amoureux sa simulation, et l'on a rendu à ce discours sa personne fondamentale, qui est le je, de façon à mettre en scène une énonciation, non une analyse' (FDA, 7). And so the text proper, a series of dramatic fragments, is preceded by the framing words: 'C'est donc un amoureux qui parle et qui dit:' (FDA, 13). The theatrical mode (the mask) allows Barthes to speak emphatically, like an orator. And indeed the larvatus prodeo makes its appearance in the fragment 'Cacher': 'je m'avance en montrant mon masque du doigt: je mets un masque sur ma passion, mais d'un doigt discret (et retors) je désigne ce masque' (FDA, 53). Like an orator, the delirious lover has repeated recourse to all the old topoï, topoï which are at the same time ridiculous and necessary. Barthes was increasingly fascinated by what he (like Flaubert) called 'la bêtise'; one could say that the problem with rhetoric, with its formulae and commonplaces, is that to the subtle it is stupid, and yet indispensable if we are to communicate. This, it seems to me, is the point of the following remarks:

> L'amoureux délire...mais son délire est bête. Quoi de plus bête qu'un amoureux? Si bête que nul n'ose tenir publiquement son discours sans une sérieuse médiation: roman, théâtre ou analyse (à bout de pincettes) (FDA, 209)

In Fragments d'un discours amoureux, Barthes has found a strategy which allows him to commit himself to this dangerous eloquence.

La Chambre claire goes further. It is worth noting that not long before writing it, in a lecture with the Proustian title 'Longtemps, je me suis couché de bonne heure', Barthes had shocked some modernist listeners by declaring his wish to write a novel. In this lecture, he speaks of the emotion, the pity, he has felt in reading 'un grand roman, comme hélas on n'en fait plus', War and Peace. Here and in Proust's novel, literature has created moments of truth, which are based, he says on 'une reconnaissance du pathos' (note the rhetorical term). He concludes that the novelist he would like to be must 'accepter que l'oeuvre à faire...représente activement, sans le dire, un sentiment dont j'étais sûr, mais que j'ai bien du mal à nommer, car je ne puis sortir d'un cercle de mots usés, douteux à force d'être employés sans rigueur' (BL, 322-3). One sees here still the discomfort with the clichés of existing rhetoric and at the same time the recognition that some form of literary rhetoric, albeit indirect ('sans le dire'), will provide the answer.

Without being quite the desired novel, La Chambre claire is the beginning of a solution to these problems. Barthes has found a way to write his book. It is worth noting that unusually for him, there is no prefatory material here, except for the teasing cover. The text presents itself, apparently straightforwardly, as a 'note on photography' - published under the imprint of Cahiers du cinema. One might expect, therefore, an academic continuation of such earlier writings as the article 'Rhétorique de l'image'. And indeed at times Barthes does use - or imitate - the discourse of science, with its terminology (semiotic, phenomenological, etc), and its taxonomies (studium/punctum, the four types of studium). All this, however, is cast into the narrative form of a quest, written in the first person. This is not meant to be read as actual autobiography, but is a fictional narrative, a rhetorical strategy. One may compare it to Descartes's Méditations, or indeed, 'toutes proportions gardées' to A la recherche du temps perdu. It begins with these words:

> Un jour, il y a longtemps, je tombai sur une photographie du dernier frère de Napoléon, Jérôme (1852). Je me dis alors, avec un étonnement que depuis je n'ai jamais pu réduire: 'Je vois les yeux qui ont vu l'Empereur'. (CC, 13).

Thus, with striking simplicity, is launched a voyage of discovery, apparently a search for the nature of photography, in fact a quest for a more fundamental reality. And the end, carrying the same eloquent resonance as the end of Proust's novel, is:

> A moi de choisir, de soumettre son spectacle [that of photography] au code civilisé des illusions parfaites, ou d'affronter en elle le réveil de l'intraitable réalité.

The 'je' in these sentences both is and is not Barthes - just as Proust's narrator is only fleetingly Marcel. He does express the desires, fears and thoughts of the author, yet he is also a masked figure, the narrator. In the same way, Barthes had said of the 'autobiographical' Roland Barthes par lui-même: 'tout ceci doit être considéré comme dit par un personnage de roman' - or by an orator, we might say.

The particular 'réveil de l'intraitable réalité' which La Chambre claire gives us concerns the way in which the chemical reality of photography gives us the shock of a living presence which is now dead - a banality, and yet, like other rhetorical commonplaces, an essential truth, rendered harmless by familiarity, yet capable of being reactivated by the power of words. The centre of Barthes's book, and its point of maximum power, is about his mother's death, one of the commonest of themes, as common as love and as difficult to write about. The disguise of the note on photography has led him, as if by accident, to the heart of the matter, and now he writes without embarrassment and with a classic beauty of phrasing worthy of Chateaubriand, Tolstoy or Proust. Rather than try to analyse this prose, let me just quote a few sentences:

> Or, un soir de novembre, peu de temps après la mort de ma mère, je rangeais des photos. Je n'espérais pas la 'retrouver', je n'attendais rien de ces 'photographies d'un être, devant lesquelles on se le rappelle moins bien qu'en se contentant de penser à lui (Proust). Je savais bien que, par cette fatalité qui est l'un des traits les plus atroces du deuil, j'aurais beau consulter des images, je ne pourrais jamais plus me rappeler ses traits (les appeler tout entiers à moi). Non, je voulais, selon le voeu de Valéry à la mort de sa mère, 'écrire un petit recueil sur elle, pour moi seul' (peut-être l'écrirai-je un jour, afin qu'imprimée, sa mémoire dure au moins le temps de ma propre notoriété)... (CC, 99)

> J'allais ainsi, seul dans l'appartement où elle venait de mourir, regardant sous la lampe, une à une, ces photos de ma mère, remontant peu à peu le temps avec elle, cherchant la vérité du visage que j'avais aimé. Et je la découvris.(CC, 105-6)

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What is the moral of this story? Is it simply a case of 'How I learnt to stop worrying and love rhetoric' - Barthes finally managing to do what everyone else does and fall off his bicycle with the necessary brio? Not really, I think. La Chambre claire may be his most successful performance, using a narrative rhetoric to suggest what is not easy to say, but his work as a whole shows a constant and fascinating interweaving of the three threads I have distinguished. In his theory and practice we see, not an unproblematic celebration and continuation of ancient rhetoric, nor a naïve modern rejection of its artifice, but a complicated love-hate relationship which is exemplary for the modern writer and indeed for the modern student of rhetoric.

a) Works by Roland Barthes:

AR = "L'Ancienne Rhétorique: aide-mémoire", Communications, 16 (1970), pp.172-223.

BL = Le Bruissement de la langue (Paris: Seuil, 1984).

CC = La Chambre claire (Paris: Gallimard, 1980).

DZ = Le Degré Zéro de l'écriture (Paris: Seuil, coll. Points, 1972.

EC = Essais critiques (Paris: Seuil, 1964).

FDA = Fragments d'un discours amoureux (Paris: Seuil, 1977).

I = Incidents (Paris: Seuil, 1987).

M = Mythologies (Paris: Seuil, Coll. Points, 1970).

OO = L'Obvie et l'obtus (Paris: Seuil, 1982).

RB = Roland Barthes par lui-même (Paris: Seuil, 1975).

SFL = Sade, Fourier, Loyola (Paris: Seuil, coll. Points, 1980).

SR = Sur Racine (Paris: Seuil, 1963).

S/Z = S/Z (Paris: Seuil, 1970).

b) <u>other works</u>

J.Dubois et al. (Groupe μ), Rhétorique generale (Paris: Larousse, 1970).

T.Eagleton, Literary Theory (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

P.Fontanier, Les Figures du discours, ed. G.Genette (Paris: Flammarion, 1968).

M.Fumaroli, L'Age de l'éloquence (Paris, Geneva: Droz, 1980).

G.Genette, Figures I (Paris: Seuil: coll. Points, 1966).

R.Jakobson, Essais de linguistique générale, tr. N.Ruwet, (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1963).

J.Paulhan, Les Fleurs de Tarbes (Paris: Gallimard coll. Idées, 1973).

J.Paulhan, Oeuvres complètes, 5 vols (Paris: Cercle du Livre Précieux, 1966-70).

P.Roger, Roland Barthes, roman (Paris: Grasset, 1986).

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CHRISTINE MASON SUTHERLAND

SOME RHETORICAL PROBLEMS OF THEOLOGY IN RELATION TO THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND A POSSIBLE APPROACH TO THEIR SOLUTION

In Rhetorica for Winter 1987, Kathy Eden begins her article, "Hermeneutics and the Ancient Rhetorical Tradition" with a quotation from Schleiermacher: "the unity of hermeneutics and rhetoric results from the fact that every act of understanding is the obverse of an act of discourse, in that one must come to grasp the thought that was at the base of the discourse" (59). It is this matter of the 'thought at the base of the discourse' that I particularly want to address. Specifically, I want to look at two women's approaches to Christian theology: Mary Daly's Beyond God the Father and Sally McFague's Metaphorical Theology.

Christian theology is often considered to be the last stronghold of the male. The scriptures were written, or written down, by men, and throughout the centuries have been interpreted primarily by men. The community which theology serves--the church--has until recently excluded women from the priesthood and for the most part from the preaching ministry; and even today a large part of the church still denies important and influential positions to women. It is not surprising, therefore, that feminists are troubled by an institution which appears to exclude them. To quote Mary Daly: "If God is male,

then the male is God" (19). Even moderate feminists object to this apparent identification of God and the male in Christianity, and radical feminists have attacked Christianity as one of the most powerful of the forces which have contributed to their oppression. The bitterness and hostility of such radical feminist attacks are, and are meant to be, shocking. They therefore draw attention to themselves in way which the more moderate criticisms do not. Yet I believe that these more moderate contributions will have a more lasting significance; I also believe that some of them, in particular McFague's Metaphorical Theology, are more truly typical of a feminine approach. In what follows I shall try to support this contention.

In doing so, I shall draw upon a recent, and I think very important work, Women's Ways of Knowing, by Mary Field Belenky and others. The book is particularly useful because what it addresses is the way that women--not specifically feminists--look at the world and interpret their experience of it. What the authors are concerned with, then, is the feminine, rather than the feminist. And what they see as distinguishing the typically feminine from the typically masculine approach is the strong preference for a connected way of knowing. This they contrast with what they call separate knowing.

Separate knowing they characterize as objective and impersonal. It involves the deliberate exclusion of feeling and the application of abstract rules and principles. It is essentially adversarial, and it is based on doubt rather than on belief. The procedures of separate knowing, say the authors, "have been most highly elaborated and explicitly codified in the sciences, but they exist in some form [. . .] in all the disciplines" (109). This method of approach has been the dominant one since the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century; it was developed by males, to be used by them, and although

many women have successfully learned how to use it, most of them have never been really comfortable with it.

Far more natural to the female is the connected way of knowing. This is concerned with synthesis rather than with analysis, with the particular rather than with the general, with the concrete rather than with the abstract. It includes specific persons and contexts; it is opposed to adversarial positions, preferring a win/win/ rather than a win/lose outcome; and it is grounded in belief rather than in doubt. "Women find it hard to see doubting as a game," say the authors; "they tend to take it personally. Teachers and fathers and boyfriends assure them that arguments are not between persons but between positions, but the women continue to fear that someone will get hurt" (105). "Believing" on the other hand, "feels real to them, perhaps because it promises to reveal the kind of truth they value--truth that is personal and particular, and grounded in first-hand experience." What is typical, above all, of connected knowing is the quality of caring, reconciling, healing and nurturing. Whereas separate knowing sees education according to a banking metaphor-information is power, money in the bank, and is transferred from one person to another--connected knowing sees it according to a metaphor of midwifery--a bringing into being, a co-operative process. Connected knowing is unifying; separate knowing is divisive.

Before I go any further, I want to make two points clear: first, the authors do not claim that the distinction between separate and connected knowing is a new one. John Stuart Mill made it in contrasting the approaches of Jeremy Bentham and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (113n). And secondly, as the foregoing example implies, connected knowing is not confined to women. There is evidence that it is gender-related, the

authors tell us, but not that it is gender specific. Moreover, it seems to me that connected knowing is increasingly recognized as important in the academic world of today. The separation of subject and object, of the knower from the known, is no longer taken as a given, even in scientific enquiry. And whatever we women might like to think, I do not believe that the questioning of the ultimate value of separate knowing has arisen as a result of women's contributions, though it may have encouraged, and been encouraged by them.

Now where the study as religion is concerned, an approach which takes account of the context--in rhetorical terms, one that recognizes the importance of ethos and pathos--is no new thing. The significance of the message in terms of the credibility of its source and the cultural values of its audience has been seen as important in religious studies for quite some time. But here I must make a distinction between the study of religion and the practice of it-between those who investigate a religious belief and those who hold it. And I think it is true, certainly of conservative theologians, that although they take ethos and pathos very seriously so far as the transmission of the message is concerned, they do not allow them to affect the central belief. That it, ethos and pathos affect how the message is sent, not what it fundamentally is. When, therefore, the feminist objects that the patriarchal image of God as Father is one that excludes her, and that she cannot receive the message because she does not feel herself to be part of the audience, the typical conservative response will be: "That is too bad, and we are very sorry that you feel excluded; but we cannot alter the facts; and one of the facts is that God is Father, and therefore male."

Recognizing--or at least assuming--this to be the response of traditional Christianity, Mary Daly rejects Christianity altogether. A religion which bases itself on the concept of God as patriarch has, she believes, nothing to offer women. The only kind of religion which she sees as acceptable to women is the Dianic--that is, witchcraft--which not only recognizes but privileges women. "The witch that burns within our being will have to bring out [our] potential stature, repudiating ambivalence and servitude, refusing the torture and honors which are their only reward" (149).

The question which we must now ask is this: is Mary Daly's approach typical of connected knowing? At first it may appear that it is. Certainly Daly takes very seriously matters of ethos and pathos. The message of Christianity is unacceptable because its source--men--lacks credibility, and because of the negative emotional response it stimulates in women. But in a more fundamental way, Daly's approach is inconsistent with the values of connected knowing, which is essentially unifying and reconciling, not divisive and adversarial. Whatever may be true of radical feminists, women in general do not care only about other women; they care about people. Daly, in fact, uses men as scapegoats in much the same way as men have often used women, projecting upon them whatever is denied in the self. She merely turns the tables. The antagonism between the sexes is thus maintained and indeed promoted. And just as she divides the human race, alienating one half of it from the other, so she divides and alienates the means of persuasion. For Daly, it seems, logos has no significance at all. What matters in religion is relevance and usefulness. Whether Christianity or any other religion actually accords with the way things are is a question which she entirely ignores. Ethos and pathos are privileged to such an extent that logos is totally excluded. And this kind of divisiveness,

it seems to me, is not typical of connected knowing. Daly belongs with connected knowers only in so far as she rejects separate knowers, whom she accuses of 'methodolatry' (11).

Sally McFague's more moderate approach seems to me to be more typical of connected knowing, and thus more truly feminine, because it is healing and creative. It divides neither the human race nor the means of persuasion. Instead, she brings considerations of ethos, pathos and logos together in a fruitful way. Although she takes as seriously as Daly does the objections of women to the patriarchy which traditional Christianity has supported, she neither accepts nor rejects it; she has another look at it; she asks questions about it.

The fundamental question that McFague asks is: "What kind of statement is 'God is Father'"? Her answer is that it is a metaphor. Now this response is so obvious that it may appear that it cannot be useful. Not only is it obvious to us in the twentieth century; it was obvious to most of the great theologians from Augustine to Aquinas to Luther and beyond. As Augustine says, all our human language is inadequate to describe God, who is ultimately beyond our powers of description (McFague, 130). But McFague follows up this recognition of the metaphorical nature of the statement by bringing to bear upon it the extensive study of metaphor that has been done this century, particularly that of Paul Ricoeur. In particular, she applies Ricoeur's assertion of the tensive quality of metaphor: that it says at one and the same time both 'is' and 'is not.' As long as metaphor is alive as metaphor, this tension is evident. But metaphors, particularly those which are extensively used for a long time, have a tendency to die; and when they die, the tension is lost. The 'is not' falls out and is forgotten. And this is particularly

dangerous in view of the interactive nature of tenor and vehicle. That is, although primarily the vehicle is used to shed light upon the tenor, the tenor is also affected by the vehicle. To say that war is like a chess game modifies not only our ideas of war but also our ideas of chess (37).

What happens when this tension between 'is' and 'is not' is lost is that the metaphor dies as metaphor, and is interpreted as literal truth. As McFague puts it, 'similarity becomes identity' (41). This, she claims, is what has happened to the metaphor of God the Father: it has ceased to be understood as metaphorical and is now taken as being literally true. It is not surprising that this has happened. In the first place, the metaphor has been with us for some time, and it would be more surprising if it had not fossilized. In the second place, there has been within the Protestant tradition a strong tendency towards literal interpretation especially among the more conservative parts of the church. Here I must make it clear that I do not altogether agree with McFague: she sees metaphorical, as distinct from symbolic, interpretation as typical of Protestants. What I see, on the other hand, is the increasing tendency of Protestants--who by and large abandoned the fourfold interpretation of the medieval church--to insist upon literal interpretation where earlier theologians would not. For example, on the vexed question of the interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis, St. Augustine asserts in the Confessions that we cannot possibly know what Moses meant when he said that God created the heavens and the earth, and must therefore be content with any interpretation that is consistent with the principle of love (302). This is a great deal more liberal than the rigidly literal interpretation insisted upon by some of the more extreme Protestants today.

One of the problems with the idea of God the Father is, then, that it is a dead metaphor that has become a literal truth. But this is not the only problem. Another has to do with its dominance. Theology, which because of the ineffability of its subject, must always rely heavily upon metaphors, can offset the danger of their fossilization by shifting them all the time. As McFague says:

> The strong iconoclasm of the Old Testament, its fear of making graven images of God, resulted in a superabundance of images, none of which was to be regarded as literal or even adequate. As one exegete says, "A Hebrew sucked the juice out of each metaphor as he used it and threw the skin away at once." The Hebrew poet piled up and threw away metaphors of God in the hope of both overwhelming the imagination with the divine richness and undercutting any idolatrous inclination to absolutize images (43).

The same is true, of course, of the New Testament, both in the parables of the Kingdom and in the metaphors of Himself used by Jesus as they are recorded in John's Gospel. Here Jesus refers to himself as, among other things, bread, a vine, a door, a shepherd and a way.

Had the metaphor of God as Father been used all along as one of many, according to the scriptural model, not only would it have been less likely to be taken literally; it would also have been less potent. But, in fact, it has been not only a metaphor, but also a model; and as such it has become the object of idolatry: that is, it has assumed an importance which it should not have. McFague attacks the patriarchal model on two grounds, one feminist--its irrelevance--but the other theological--its idolatrousness.

McFague defines a model as a dominant metaphor, a metaphor with staying power. It organizes and controls other metaphors in an organic, consistent and comprehensive manner. And drawing upon the work of Max Black, McFague points out

that a model acts as a filter or screen, one which allows certain elements to be more clearly visible (23). But because it does this, it also acts as a set of blinders, suppressing whatever is not consistent with it (82).

Because the model of God as Father has been dominant in this way, it has screened out much that cannot be seen in terms of it, both in the Bible itself and in Christian experience. For example, McFague claims that it has blinded us to the fact that, although Jesus spoke of God as His father and ours, he specifically denied any identification of the human with the divine father. Here McFague follows Rosemary Ruether's interpretation of Matthew 23:9, "Do not call any man on earth father; for you have one father and he is in heaven" (151). The model has also tended to obscure the fact that the ministry of Jesus was anti-establishment: he identified with the poor and the outcast, with people of other cultures and with women.

In particular, with women. I am reminded here of the work of another and much earlier feminist, one who also had some claim to be considered a theologian. Dorothy Sayers, in "The Human-Not-Quite-Human" has this to say:

> 'Blessed be God,' says the Jew, 'that hath not made me a woman.' God, of course, may have his own opinion, but the church is reluctant to endorse it. I think I have never heard a sermon preached on the story of Martha and Mary that did not attempt, somehow, somewhere, to explain away its text. Mary's, of course, was the better part--the Lord said so, and we must not precisely contradict Him. But we will be careful not to despise Martha. No doubt, He approved of her too. We could not get on without her, and indeed, (having paid lip-service to God's opinion) we must admit that we greatly prefer her. For Martha was doing a really feminine job, whereas Mary was just behaving like any other disciple, male or female, and that is a hard pill to swallow.
>
> Perhaps it is no wonder that women were first at the Cradle and last at the Cross. They had never known a man like this Man-there never has been such another. A prophet and teacher who never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized; who never made arch jokes about them, never treated them either as 'the women, God help us' or 'the ladies, God bless them'; who rebuked without querulousness and praised without condescension; who took their

questions and arguments seriously; who never mapped out their sphere for them, never urged them to be feminine or jeered at them for being female; who had no axe to grind, and no uneasy male dignity to defend; who took them as He found them and was completely unselfconscious. There is no act, no sermon, no parable in the whole Gospel that borrows its pungency from female perversity; nobody could possibly guess from the words and deeds of Jesus that there was anything 'funny' about woman's nature (46).

Not only parts of the scriptures but also important elements in the Christian experience have been screened out by the model of the Fatherhood of God. McFague refers briefly to the women mystics of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is worth quoting here from the one among them whose ideas of God as Mother were most highly developed. Here is a passage from Revelations of Divine Love, by Julian of Norwich, a contemporary of Chaucer:

> As we know, our own mother bore us only into pain and dying. But our true mother Jesus, who is all love, bears us into joy and endless living. Blessed may He be!
> As mother feeds her child with her milk, but our beloved mother Jesus feed us with himself (169).

McFague's point is significantly corroborated and indeed extended here by Caroline Walker Bynum. Bynum's book, Jesus as Mother, was published in the same year as McFague's Metaphorical Theology; no doubt that is why McFague does not refer to it. For Bynum makes it clear that the idea of Jesus as Mother, though it is used by the female mystics, does not arise for the first time in their work:

> In recent years, several scholars have become deeply interested in this aspect of medieval piety, impelled by a feminist theology that either calls for androgynous God-language, or condemns the image of 'God our Father.' This new enthusiasm for the 'mother Jesus' of medieval religious writers has usually concentrated on the thirteenth and fourteenth century uses of the image, especially on the sophisticated theology developed around it by the anchoress Julian of Norwich. . . and has often implied that such a devotional tradition is particularly congenial to women and must have been developed by or for or about them. The first flowering of the image after the patristic period appears to come in the twelfth century in the works of men (111).

In the list of eight such men she includes Bernard of Clairvaux, and Anselm of Canterbury, from whom, she says, the Cistercians may have borrowed the idea. In Bynum's view, the image of Jesus as mother has less to do with explicitly feminine experience than with the tendency of the piety of the time. In the earlier medieval period, God was thought of primarily as king, judge and warrior. In contrast, eleventh and twelfth century writers stress Christ's humanity. "The fundamental religious drama is now located within the self, and it is less a battle than a journey" (16). The mystics--and not only the female mystics--"see moral evil as the opposite of union--that is as an experience of alienation, emptiness, a personal suffering or loss of what is good and meaningful, rather than as a chosen rebellion against good or a deliberately espoused corruption" (17).

It is interesting to note in passing how closely this resembles the experience of the twentieth century.

The fact that important parts of the Christian tradition and experience have in this way been screened out by the dominant model of God the Father suggests to McFague that, in spite of its dominance, it is not the root metaphor of Christianity. It is important for her to establish this point, for she identifies herself as a reformer, not, as Mary Daly does, as a revolutionary. Here McFague uses as a parallel the history of science, as set forth by Thomas Kuhn in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. She accepts the proposition that a paradigm will continue to dominate as long as it can tolerate anomalies. When it can no longer do so, there will be a revolution, and it will be replaced by a new paradigm, provided that one is ready to take over. In her view,

the failure of the patriarchal model to accommodate feminine experience constitutes a critical anomaly. If, then, the patriarchal model is the fundamental model, the root metaphor of Christianity, without which it cannot survive, what will occur is not a reform, but a revolution. To quote McFague: "The question [feminists] are asking is whether Chrisianity has the resources as well as the openness to address the anomaly they pose, or whether they must, in order to be true to their experience, base themselves in another paradigm" (83).

Daly's answer is, of course, that they must. The paradigm she favours is that of witchcraft. But McFague disagrees. For her, the root metaphor of Christianity is not patriarchy but relationship. Again, I quote: "The content of the root metaphor of Christianity is a model of personal relationship exemplified in the parables and with its chief exemplar Jesus himself, a tensive relationship distinguished by God's impossible way of love in contrast to the loveless ways of the world. This root metaphor occurs within the paradigm of the Jewish religion, and its basic assumptions are partially affirmed and partially revolutionized by the introduction of the new metaphor" (108).

This way of being is, as she says, itself highly metaphorical in that it is open-ended, tensive, and dynamic, not static: "Its distinctive note is not a new view of God, or a new image of human nature, but a new quality of relationship, a way of being in the world under the rule of God" (109).

As McFague sees it, the metaphor of relationship is superior to that of patriarchy, because it is more inclusive: paternity itself is included within it, as just one of the many metaphors for God, all of them ultimately inadequate. God can still be seen as father,

but not in such a way as to preclude his being seen also as mother, or as brother, or--and McFague sees this as particularly important for our time--as friend.

What McFague attempts, then, is not revolution but reform. She does not reject the whole of the Christian tradition; rather she puts it in a new light. And it appears to me that her reforming approach is far more typical of a connected way of knowing than is Daly's revolutionary one. It reconciles apparent contradictions instead of reinforcing divisions.

Let me briefly summarize some of the apparently warring elements that McFague reconciles:

First, she brings together the means of persuasion, and allows them to cooperate, rather than to conflict with one another. Unlike the conservative theologians, who fail to take the non-rational means of persuasion seriously, or Mary Daly, who ignores the rational, she allows considerations arising out of ethos and pathos to inform her enquiry into the logos. By doing so she brings new light to bear upon the nature of the patriarchal model in a way which promises to be fruitful not only for women but for men as well.

This brings me to my second point. McFague's feminism does not operate in such a way as merely to turn the historical tables. The violence of some feminist attacks upon men, the absolute refusal to recognize that men and women can understand one another and be part of one culture does not seem to offer much hope for the future, and will in the end, I think, be self-destructive.

In "Affirmation by Negation in the Women's Liberation Movement," Brenda Robinson Hancock suggests that the use of men as scapegoats is necessary if women are

to overcome their sense of alienation from themselves. This may be true, for some women at least, but I think and hope that it will be only a passing phase.

Thirdly, McFague reconciles both traditional and modern insights. Far from destroying or negating the traditional wisdom of the Christian community, she rejuvenates it by using a new metaphor to bring to light much that has for too long been hidden. And although Daly's total rejection of the tradition may at first appear to make her more truly modern, I do not think that this is really so. As McFague herself says, witchcraft is not a serious option for the modern industrialized world (159). It drew its strength from an agrarian community and it is not likely that it can be reintroduced at this stage. McFague, though she retains much that is traditional, is also deeply in touch with both the knowledge and the experience of the twentieth century. As I have tried to show, she uses the insights into the nature of language, particularly metaphor, which have been an important part of twentieth century studies. And she recognizes too that our experience of the world in the twentieth century has convinced many of us that the old conception of the world as static is no longer tenable. Our century experiences the world as dynamic rather than as static. As Ricoeur says of metaphor, the emphasis must be on the verb, not on the [static] noun.

As long ago as 1930, Ortega y Gasset said that the world in the twentieth century had become 'scandalously provisional.' Since 1930, it has become more provisional still. What McFague does, I think, is to take 'scandalously' out of the statement. Quoting John Dominic Crossan, she asserts that life for the Christian is "life on the edge of the raft" (109). And this highly provisional way of being has, in her view, always been

typical of Christianity as it was preached by its founder; the life and teaching of Jesus discounted all security except that which was grounded in trust in God.

In this way, McFague's approach accommodates and reconciles both the twentieth century's deepest and most painful experience of life and the original and essential message of the Christian gospel.

And this unifying, reconciling and healing quality makes it, I believe, typical of feminine discourse at its best. I certainly would not argue that this approach is exclusively feminine in the sense that it is never used by men. It is, however, one which is particularly congenial to women because it allows them to include all that they most deeply value in their experience of the world.

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B) INTERPRETATION OF THE INVENTIO: FIGURES, TROPES AND TOPICS / L'INTERPRÉTATION DE L'INVENTIO: FIGURES, TROPES ET TOPOI

DAVID GOODWIN

RHETORIC AND RATIONALITY

Titles can be very useful aids to invention. Take the title of this session: "The Rationality of Rhetoric/ The Rhetoric of Rationality." When I first read this, the antimetabole struck me as being exactly right: the terms, "rationality" and "rhetoric," were balanced, as subject and object, on either side of the preposition, "of". And the first prepositional phrase ("the rationality of rhetoric") was balanced by its mirror opposite on the other side of the slash. Something about the tropology of this title -- about its reversal and balance, then -- seemed to express the relationship that I believe holds between these two terms.

Specifically, the reversal of the words, "rhetoric" and "rationality," suggested that each term plays the same role as the other, at least grammatically. And the balance of the same words and structure suggested that the two prepositional phrases were not only grammatically, but also conceptually, interrelated. This interrelationship didn't seem to be a matter of strict semantic equivalence (I couldn't simply substitute the one word for the other and have the phrase mean the same thing). Nor was it a matter of one term being superior to, or more real than, the other (both words take turns as the subject and object of the preposition). In short, the relationship didn't seem to be one of identity (the title doesn't read "rationality is rhetoric ...
rhetoric is rationality"), nor one of reduction (again, the title isn't "rationality as rhetoric," etc.)

How rhetoric and rationality are interrelated is the subject of this paper. But before I go on to discuss this subject, I must make one confession and two statements of policy.

My confession: that everything so far said about the title of this session -- about how its reversal and balance implies a particular relationship between the key terms, etc. --presupposes, as you no doubt noticed, far more than it explains.

Which leads me to my first statement of policy: that before discussing the rationality-rhetoric relationship generally, I will again return to my earlier claims about the title of this session. Specifically, I plan to look at the structures shaping my claims, since it is in these structures that rationality and rhetoric coinhere and interact most freely.

And this brings me to my second policy statement: that this paper is partly a story leading to a conclusion and partly a plot proceeding from an argument. The reasons (or this, as I hope to show, are essential to my main point: namely, that narratives and arguments are interdependent; that narrative resolutions and argumentative conclusions necessarily inform and shape each other; and finally, that rationality and rhetoric, as general concepts, are adequate to each other by virtue of this interdependence.

II

Let me get the story rolling. Imagine four different people reading the title of this session. The first person is a quasi-platonist who believes that rhetoric is a "bad emanation" of rationality; that reason deals with the world in its unity exclusively; and that rhetoric, with its emphasis on difference, conflict, and action is a kind of ersatz reason. Imagine this person reading the same words, the same antimetabole as you and I have. The first prepositional phrase raises in this person's mind the question -- "what is rational about rhetoric?" -- the answer to which is: "very little." The second phrase doesn't even register, since the question -- "what is rhetorical about rationality?" - doesn't make any sense. "Rationality" is the god-term here, and any interrogation of the god-term by an inferior one is blocked, or disqualified, as blasphemous. The slash of the title, then, demarcates a clear threshold between sense and nonsense, since only the first of two prepositional phrases can accommodate the basic premise here: that rhetoric can be reduced to a kind of flattery -- the form of rationality without its content.

Imagine a second person. One who believes that rhetoric and rationality, persuasion and conviction, action and thought, are essential to our humanity but

irreconcilable in our experience; that the world drives a wedge between each pair of concepts. Both prepositional phrases make perfect sense. But the slash marks a chasm, an unbridgeable gap that separates their truths. The antimetabole of the title, then, expresses the ideal (namely the balance and reciprocity of these concepts) while, at the same time, the slash (the point of balance between mirror phrases) blocks the desired integration of the two.

The third person is an utter skeptic. This person celebrates in the power of the mind to call everything -including the relationship between rationality and rhetoric -- into question. This negativity questions the adequacy of the trope, antimetabole, to express anything of value about human experience. Indeed, it calls into question the adequacy of language itself to express anything about reality. Here, the slash is the mark of illusion, since any claims of balance and reversal signal the masquerading of wishful thinking as knowledge and truth.

The fourth person believes much the same things as I do. Namely, that rationality and rhetoric, though not identical, and certainly not reducible to each other, are nonetheless intimately dependent on each other. For such a person, the antimetabole signals a balance and mirroring important to each; and the slash, the very point at which integration takes place.

Now for each person, the title "means" something different. Each has brought a different implicit structure to the antimetabole, and each would present a different conclusion -indeed, a different argument -- about the significance of the title, and more importantly, about the relationship between its
key terms. To use a phrase borrowed from Hayden White via Kenneth Burke, the "master tropes" have determined the interpretations of, and arguments about, the title's antimetabole[1].

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[1] As James M. Mellard points out in his book, Doing Tropology: Analysis of Narrative Discourse, "the most common tropologies today are either dyadic or tetradic," with Claude Levi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan and Roman Jakobson falling into the first camp, and Peter Ramus, Giambattista Vico, Kenneth Burke and Hayden White falling into the second [1-2]. I decided to follow the tetradic model, not because of any ontological commitment -- the tropological world needn't divide into four master tropes any more than the physical world need divide into earth, air, fire. and water -- but for

The first master trope is metaphor. Metaphor enacts identification: the equation of the predicate subject with its object is asserted, undisturbed by any differences potentially disruptive of the identification. However, should another metaphor arise, one that challenges or undermines the first, the initial metaphor must contain, reduce, or diminish the intruder in order to protect its integrity and sacredness. This is what happened with our first person. He or she viewed the prepositional phrases as disruptive statements of identity -namely, "rhetoric is rationality/ rationality is rhetoric" -- and then proceeded to align "rhetoric" with mere appearance so that it could never be identified with the reality-term, "rationality."[2].

The second master trope is metonymy. Metonymy enacts separation and reduction. As in the phrase, "twenty hands" for twenty sailors, the whole is reduced to a part, and to this extent' the whole is separated from itself. The sailor is reduced to a function, separating the person as subject (with a whole life history, set of desires, interests, ambitions, etc.) from the person as object (mechanism on board the ship). The second person's viewpoint, then, is metonymic: rhetoric and rationality may belong together, but the two can never overcome their separateness, and our desire for their union can never be satisfied.

The third master trope (and here I'm departing from White's and Burke's order) is irony. Irony enacts negation, and is trans-tropological because it can call into question, or negate, any other trope. A doubtful tone of voice, or the right context, can undermine the statement of identity in "Juliet is the sun" or the reduction in "my friend is all thumbs." Irony can even call into question the adequacy of negation, creating a kind of mise en abyme in which even doubt is doubted. The ironic consciousness, then, views

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pedagogical reasons. A fourfold division frustrates the pull towards facile polarity while allowing for maximal comprehensible difference, something required to illustrate my argument, but rendered impossible by discussions of twelve or fifty or a hundred master tropes.

[2]. For Hayden White's discussion of the master tropes, see Metahistory, "Explanation by Emplotment," pages 7-11.

the reversal and balance of antimetabole -- and any claims about the relation of rationality to rhetoric -- as a delusion, as wish-fulfillment.

The fourth master trope is synecdoche. Synecdoche enacts integration. In the statement, "he is all heart," the person is not being reduced to a bodily organ, nor strictly being identified. Instead, the qualities of the person are integrated with the qualities associated with the heart. What the one embodies, then, is brought together with what is embodied by the other: a testament to the ultimate adequacy of the two to coinhere.

Clearly each master trope represents a different enactment, a different way of organizing the world, and in particular, a different relationship between rationality and rhetoric. Each brings what Michael Polanyi has called "tacit," or "personal," knowledge to the antimetabole of the title, and each constructs a different kind of focal knowledge, namely a different interpretation of, and argument from, the same series of words[3]. For one person, then, the slash separates sense from nonsense, for another, it marks a chasm, an irreversible separation between the key terms; for another, it marks self-delusion; for yet another, the possibility of integration.

Each enactment involves a different action moving towards a different kind of resolution. I've talked about acts of identification, reduction, negation, integration. To talk about the interaction -- and reaction -- of these master tropes as they encounter each other, I now look to a narrative paradigm, and especially the modulation of genres. For as I hope to show, narrative kinds use the enactments of the master tropes as ways of ignoring, separating, overturning, and incorporating the elements of other stories. In short, generic modulation of narratives might well be the tacit structures determining not only what conclusions people derive, but also what processes of argumentation they use

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[3]. For a collection of essays, articles, and lectures by Michael Polanyi on personal knowledge, metaphor, poetry, art, myth, religion and other topics, see Meaning, edited by Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch.

with what audience[4]. Seen this way, rationality could be defined as the integration of tacit and focal structures; and rhetoric, as the study of this integration.

The complexities of generic modulation prevent my enumerating more than just one set of examples, taken, once again, from my story about the four people and the title of this session.

Suppose we look at our eiron, that third person who championed the power of negativity. His basic narrative strategy is satire and parody. In talking to the first person -- namely, the platonist -- the satirist finds himself becoming impatient: the platonist strikes him as naive, oversimplistic, romantic (in the sense of being romance-oriented), too deferential to the notion of rationality to achieve the complexities of doubt and reflection that the eiron values so highly. A slight exaggeration of these tendencies -- which might take any form, ranging from parody to invective -- and the satirist turns the romance on its head.

In talking with the other two people, he does much the same. The tragic view of the second person (that important aspects of reality -- here, rationality and rhetoric -- cannot be reconciled) and the comic view of the fourth person (that reconciliation and integration are possible) are called into question by all the strategies of negation open to the satirist. The resulting satire would show that loss and separation cannot be sources of real revelation about the human condition, nor that reconciliation ultimately can triumph in a human community.

Suppose we now look at the satirist from the perspectives of the other people. How might their narratives modulate the satirist's negativity and turn it towards their own ends, towards their own resolutions?

The guiding narrative of the first person is romance. One of the distinguishing features of romance is its self- sufficiency: it creates a world not immediately affected by events and considerations outside itself. Melodrama is one particular form of

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[4]. A recent book by Walter R. Fisher, Human Communication as Narration: Towards a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action (1987) outlines "a new logic, one appropriate to his basic conception of human communication as narration [ix]." Of special interest to this paper is Part III, "Narrative Rationality, Good Reasons, and Audiences."

romance. In it, the division of its world into hero, victim, and villain is adequate to explaining experience. The divisions themselves are usually quite clear: the hero and the villain are quite distinguishable, and the resolution, either in the melodrama of triumph or defeat, is straightforward.

How might the melodramatist deal with satiric negativity? On the one hand, the melodramatist might encourage a satiric attack on the second prepositional phrase - "the rhetoric of rationality" -- since the satirist seeks to undermine the very notion that the melodramatist, too, rejects: that rhetoric can explain or complement the notion of rationality. In this case, the melodramatist might cast the satirist as a hero, as someone who rescues the god-term from the hands of blasphemers. On the other hand, any attack on the notion of rationality -- is another matter. Under these circumstances, the melodramatist will probably cast the satirist in the only negative role available to him: namely, as the villain. Once cast as a villain, the satirist becomes a character in the melodramatist's story. The satirist is thus contained, his negativity functioning only as the obstacle for the hero to surmount.

Again, tragic and comic narratives have their own ways of dealing with the satiric impulse. From the tragic perspective, the negativity of satire is good if it exposes any false integration, any facile reconciliation of people or forces (in this case, of rationality with rhetoric). The negativity of satire is bad, however, if it undermines the possibility of tragic enlightenment -- the knowledge or revelation that comes from accepting separation. Under these conditions, the tragic structure reduces the satirist to a failed tragic hero, one who retreats into the infinite postponement of skepticism, rather than embracing action and risk.

From the comic perspective, the negativity of satire also plays an important role. For a community to become integrated it must overcome its biases and limitations, members must question and doubt their own motives, must reflect upon their choices and actions. To the extent that doubt, questioning, reflection are all features of negation, the satirist plays an important role in securing the aims of comedy. But should negativity become a force in its own right, or challenge the very possibility of integration, then the satirist is cast as the malcontent, the outsider who refuses to join in the dance or attend

the wedding or whatever. Or to put it in the terms of this paper, the ironist excludes himself from whatever benefits derive from integrating rationality and rhetoric.

If these four people were to argue with each other, their tacit knowledge, or narratives, would determine the focus of their arguments. Argumentative strategies such as dismissal, discrimination, synthesis, follow from the general structures organizing the experience of each person. I suspect that many accusations of fallacious reasoning proceed from narrative antagonism and modulation. The satirist might interpret the clear cut categories of melodrama as oversimplistic, prompting a charge of excluding alternative possibilities. The comic, on the other hand, might point out that the satirist's act of negation affirms the very value of negation, and that, tu quoque, the satirist is inconsistent in his skepticism. Each uses a characteristic form of enactment, then to modify the enactments of the others.

III

So what is the relationship between rhetoric and rationality? My answer to this is tied to my vision of what rhetoric can be as a discipline. Rhetoric can be the study of how tacit knowledge conditions focal knowledge; how tropes and narratives condition argumentation; how patterns of generic modulation, for instance, condition rationality, and in particular, the use of certain dialectical moves, such as accusations of fallacious reasoning. Rhetoric, too, could study the converse of these relationships: how argumentation, for instance, affects narrative structures; how the process of adding distinctions, refuting evidence, connecting data to claims adds subplots, modifies resolutions, alters generic expectations. Such a study could look at the diachronic development of genres -- their hybrids, their anti-types, and so on -- as paradigms of how tacit knowledge develops[5]. Rhetoric could integrate this study with its traditional interest in the conventions and structures of focal knowledge: premises and conclusions, the processes of controversy, the structures of rational preference.

To achieve this, rhetoric, as a discipline, needs to take a synechdocal, comic view of itself. It needs to tell the story of integration, of how two kinds of knowledge -- tacit and focal, narrative and argumentative -- when taken together, constitute rationality. It needs to assert its adequacy: that it not only studies the integrations that allow for rationality, but participates in them. Rhetoric needs, then, to re-examine the old controversies about rationality itself -- about whether it is rooted in the context of cultural meanings or in a critical faculty -- and view the slash, so to speak, separating these concepts as the line dividing mirror images rather than as a great divide. Rhetoric needs, in short, to find in its interpretation of, and argument about, the title of this session a paradigm of its own adequacy as a discipline.

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[5]. The diachronic aspects of tacit knowledge need to be understood before any history of local, or argumentative, knowledge can be formulated. A good study of the diachronic changes in genres is Alastair Fowler's Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of genres and Modes, especially Chapters 9 to 13.

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ALEXANDER GORDON

MONTAIGNE'S MAXIMS: THE RHETORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Every reader of Montaigne has a favorite maxim from the Essays. "My opinion", for instance, "is that we must lend ourselves to others and give ourselves only to ourselves" (III, 10, 767 B), or again "All days travel towards death, the last one reaches it" (I, 20, 67 C). The choice is endless. Lablénie, who has made an anthology of Montaigne's aphorisms, lists between seven and eight hundred[1]. Already in the 16th century, the essayist was famous for his sententious style. Pasquier refers to his <<belles sentences>> and calls Montaigne the French Seneca[2]. Furthermore, our author appreciated the maxim in other writers. He admired the sententious manner of Tacitus[3], and we know that the walls of his tower were decorated with precepts culled from the Greeks, the Romans and the Bible. The maxim has of course an ancient pedigree. It was also commented on copiously by classical rhetoricians, and it seems of interest therefore to view Montaigne's use of it in rhetorical perspective. This is especially so since the essayist and all his readers were steeped in a long tradition of reading and writing rhetorically.

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[1]All quotations from Montaigne are taken from The Complete Essays of Montaigne, translated by Donald M. Frame. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958.

[2]. Cited in Les Essais de Montaigne, ed. by Pierre Villey and V. L. Saulnier, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965, 2 vols., vol. II, p. 1208.

[3]. Referring to Tacitus' History Montaigne writes: "It is "not a book to read, it is a book to study and learn; it is so full of maxims that you find every sort, both right and wrong" (III, 8, 719 B).

When we check the maxim or sententia in Lausberg's compendium[4], we discover an exhaustive fund of lore. This lore was never, of course, contained in one head, nor ever so well organized as in Lausberg's study. Like all rhetorical teaching, it was handed down with varying emphases, much repetition and frequent fragmentation. In his book, Sententiousness and the Novel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Geoffrey Bennington powerfully isolates two main directions in the welter of theory: 1) a current of thought which emphasizes the maxim as persuader (the most important theoretician here is Aristotle); 2) another current, largely defined by Quintilian, which studies the maxim's place in extended discourse.

In Aristotle the maxim is a general truth about questions of practical conduct to be chosen or avoided. The maxim may be doxal or paradoxal, i.e. it may confirm received opinion or go against it. Whatever the content, the maxim gives the orator status. By using it, he appears as the man of the broad view, the virtuoso thinker who is morally enlightened and able to lay down general rules. In this regard, however, Aristotle warns of a possible problem if the audience refuses to agree with the speaker. For this reason, he says, maxims should only be formulated by elderly men. All of Aristotle's teaching is thus focussed on persuasive power and moral authority.

For Quintilian, writing at a stage when rhetoric was more concerned with elocutio, the place of the maxim in extended discourse becomes a central problem. Maxim mania was rampant in Quintilian's time. For many, he says, the maxim is "the chief, nay almost the sole adornment of oratory"[5]. As usual, Quintilian aims at naturalness. Maxims should not be overly brilliant or far-fetched. They should also be used sparingly in order to give them heightened effect. Quintilian has great respect for sententiae, or "the eyes of eloquence", as he calls them, but they must not take over the whole speech. "I should not like to see the whole body full of eyes", he writes, "for fear

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[4]. Lausberg, Heinrich. Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik. Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1960, 2 vols.

[5]. Quintilian. The Institutio oratoria, trs. H. E. Butler. London: Heinemann, 1921, 4 vols., vol. III, bk. VIII, IV, 29.

that it cripple the functions of the other members"[6]. In the wake of Quintilian, later theoreticians endorse what Bennington has aptly called "marginalization". They recommend the placing of the maxim either at the beginning of a discourse or at the end, as initial or concluding remarks. Generally, then, aestheticians of the maxim address its prominence. They wish to avoid a mannered style which would foreground sententious statements and encourage their proliferation.

That Montaigne's essays deal with questions of practical conduct in Aristotle's sense is plain to all his readers. Although modesty and hatred of dogmatism will not allow him to confess to an overly didactic intent, countless statements may be gleaned from the essays to support the view that reading and writing in Montaigne's eyes must lead to practical wisdom. Moreover, any doubt that the essayist was only a neutral observer has been eliminated by rhetorically inspired studies, such as that of Margaret McGowan, Montaigne's Deceits (London: University of London Press, 1974). However, no matter how rhetorical and audience-oriented Montaigne may be, his essays are not formal speeches. They may weigh pros and cons in a deliberative way; they may become demonstrative in their praise of worthy men and women; and occasionally they may turn judgemental, especially when condemning the arrogant claims of political and religious revolutionaries. They are not usually concerned, however, with a specific case as the rhetorical speech is. They deal in generalities, and this difference leads to a contrasting use of the maxim in each genre. In the oration it sheds general light on particular issues. It comes after as a comment and is largely accessory. In the essay it is essential and comes first. General ideas are framed as maxims and these are then given concrete meaning through personal, historical and fictional examples. The rhetorical grid applied to Montaigne will thus provide a partial fit only. It will enlighten, but the perspective will remain oblique.

If we examine first of all the question of authorial image as raised by Aristotle, it can hardly be denied that Montaigne's concern in this respect is vital. The essays, after all, are an avowed self-portrait. In considering Aristotle's remarks, however, we

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[6]. Ibid., bk. III, V, 34.

should remember that they bear on credibility and status with the audience rather than on the orator's intention. For instance, Montaigne considers himself to be old when he writes the essays. His judgements are the fruit of much introspection, wide reading, considerable travel and active and responsible involvement in the political life of his country. Whether he considers himself entitled to coin a few maxims on the strength of this experience is debatable. Readers, on the other hand, may well accept more easily the moralizing tendencies of a man with such a background. His rules are tried and true. Similarly, whether Montaigne intends to impress by his sententious skill will never really be clear. We do know, however, that readers have appreciated him precisely on this account. We have mentioned the name of Pasquier and we may add that of John Locke[7]. Montaigne is eminently quotable, and much of his popularity must depend on his brilliant mastery of the pithy saying.

When we apply Aristotle's doxal/paradoxal distinction to Montaigne's maxims, we must face an initial difficulty. We may assume that the Stagirite based his distinction on the homogeneous beliefs of a relatively small society. The doxa was recognizable. In Montaigne's own time, doxal positions were far from clear. Protestants, for example, were pitted against Catholics, and belief in Europe's ways was undermined by the discovery of a different and refined civilization in the Americas. In spite of these uncertainties, we may perhaps define doxal as a) conforming to common sense, "motherhood" views and b) conforming to the principles of the ruling classes. Many of Montaigne's maxims belong to the a) category and are offered without explanation. "Friendship feeds on communication" (III, 10, 767 B), "Life is an uneven, irregular and multiform movement" (III, 3, 621 B). Others which belong mainly to category b) and which often reveal Montaigne's most conservative positions, require a supplement to justify them. Even though the idea expressed may be politically acceptable, Montaigne seems to feel that generalization is not easy and must be presented with nuance. "We owe subjection and obedience equally to all kings, for that concerns their office", he writes for example in ultra-monarchist fashion, but he also adds "but we do not owe

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[7]. Cited in Les Essais de Montaigne, ed. by Pierre Villey and V.-L. Saulnier, vol. II, p. 1221.

esteem, any more than affection, except to their virtue" (I, 3, 9 B). Thus heart and head are separated, and Montaigne's conservatism shows considerable reservations. His political views are always, it seems, inspired by a cool disillusioned realism. He believes in an imperfect here and now for which no plausible betterment may be imagined. "We may regret better times", he writes in a late essay, "but not escape the present; we may wish different magistrates, but we must nevertheless obey those that are here" (III, 9, 760 B). Montaigne is not unreservedly happy with this solution, of course. In a political dilemma, he would rather flee, he says, or hide, but there is no escape. "As long as the image of the ancient and accepted laws of this monarchy shines in some corner, there will I be planted" (ibid.). Laws, imperfect as they are, must be obeyed. This is the classic conservative position of the sceptic who, because of his scepticism, cannot justify an alternative. Laws are chancy things and, while doxally recommending obedience to them, Montaigne does not fail to show their lack of rational justification. As he rereads his maxims on this subject, he emphasizes the law's irrationality more and more. "The most plausible advice that our reason gives us in this matter is generally for each man to obey the laws of his country" (II, 12, 436 A), he writes in 1580, but in 1588 he adds enigmatically, "which is the advice of Socrates, inspired, he says, by divine counsel". (II, 12, 436 B). Knowing Montaigne's suspicion of divine inspiration, even with Socrates, we may well wonder what sort of guarantee this rider adds. In 1588 Montaigne states baldly in his last essay, "Of experience", that laws are maintained, not because they are just, but because they are laws. This is their mystic foundation, and they have no other. The essayist's last addition to this passage shows the conservative magistrate and twice ex-mayor of Bordeaux, speaking from the depths of his disillusioned experience. This state of affairs is how it should be, he says, because "they (the laws) are often made by fools, more often by people who, in their hatred of equality, are wanting in equity; but always by men, vain and irresolute authors" (III, 13, 821 C).

That Montaigne's doxal maxims are well weighed and no mere automatic response is then evident from their context. Paradoxal maxims, as Aristotle remarked, require even greater care in presentation. This will become clear, as we examine some of the subjects where Montaigne may seem to adopt a controversial stance: in the public

domain, problems of the vice d'état, torture, religion and suicide, and in the private sphere, questions of family and intellectual life.

Whether politics was subject to ethical constraint was a question widely debated in the 16th century and made urgent of course by the impact of Machiavelli's Prince. The late Montaigne sees life as a harmony of contraries, as music is a mixture of pitches, high and low. Therefore he admits evil, in the political arena at least, and allows it even a fruitful role. Deceit can serve, he writes in "Of the useful and the honorable", the opening essay of his third book, and he adds sententiously, "There are lawful vices, as there are many other good or excusable actions that are unlawful" (III, 1, 604 B). In the same essay we find maxims supporting the most naked realpolitik : "in every government there are necessary offices which are not only abject but also vicious" (III, 1, 600 B) ; and even more specifically brutal: "The public welfare requires that a man betray and lie" (ibid.). In view perhaps of the continuing bloodshed of the religious wars, Montaigne later expanded this maxim and declared: "The public welfare requires that a man betray and lie and massacre" (ibid. C). Such words are certainly descriptive, but whether they are prescriptive in an absolute way is much less clear. Montaigne himself refuses to participate in these necessary evils. He opts out, keeps his own hands clean and concludes his maxim with a personal reservation, "let us resign this commission to more obedient and suppler people" (ibid. B). Montaigne is genuinely torn. He cannot condemn the <<raison d'état>>, but at the same time he cannot execute it personally. Politically ends may justify means. The ordinary citizen, in Montaigne's eyes, should simply play his part without question. This view gives rise to one of Montaigne's best-known and most disturbing maxims: "An honest man is not accountable for the vice or stupidity of his trade, and should not therefore refuse to practice it: it is the custom of his country, and there is profit in it" (III, 10, 774 B). Such a maxim is of the type invoked by war criminals in their defence. In Montaigne's work it occurs in a long development on social roles. The latter are necessary, he believes, but must not be confused with the private human being. Montaigne is therefore balancing inner moral independence and outward social conformity. In this way his

machiavellian maxim is situated in a subtle discussion which makes it seem much less sinister and even appears to justify it.

No matter how deeply attached to the status quo, Montaigne's hatred of cruelty and suffering is absolute. For this reason he protests against torture as a means of obtaining judicial confession or of inflicting religious punishment. These are not doxal positions in the 16th century and require support. In the case of judicial torture Montaigne writes: "Tortures are a dangerous invention, and seem to be a test of endurance rather than of truth" (II, 5, 266 A). Here the word "seem" already attenuates the affirmation, and Montaigne adds eleven lines of amplification to justify the positive thrust of his statement. Condemning torture and burning at the stake in the name of religion, Montaigne adopts another tack. In his celebrated comparison of the cruelty of Brazilian cannibals with that of European Christians, he uses humour and picturesque evocation to make a telling point: "There is more barbarity in eating a man alive than in eating him dead; and in tearing by tortures and the rack a body still full of feeling, in roasting a man bit by bit... than in roasting and eating him after he is dead" (I, 31, 155 A).

Montaigne's religion has been the subject of much debate. His essays by and large did not incur the censure of church authorities until the 17th century. The essayist's own religious practice and certain passages of the essays were enough to testify to his orthodoxy. Yet striking maxims may be found in Montaigne's work to suggest that Christian truth is far from absolute. "We are Christians by the same title that we are Perigordians or Germans" (II, 12, 325 B), we read in the "Apology for Raymond Sebond". Religion is a mere accident of geography. Out of context this maxim seems aggressively demystifying. In context, however, we see that Montaigne is not discussing the truth of Christianity, but the way in which Christianity is believed. People are Christians because they are born in a Christian country. Montaigne's maxim is thus orthodoxly innocent, but only after a second glance.

Public acceptance of suicide was hardly a doxal position in Renaissance France. On the other hand, it is omnipresent in the writings of the classical Stoics who influenced Montaigne at the beginning of his career. Montaigne reproduces some of

Seneca's most striking maxims on this subject in his essay, "A custom of the island of Cea". He writes, for example : "The most voluntary death is the fairest. Life depends on the will of others; death, on our own" (II, 3, 252 A). Although one suspects Montaigne's sympathy for those pro-suicide opinions, he presents them in a classically coloured passage which suggests that they are the beliefs of a prestigious past rather than Montaigne's own. Moreover the whole discussion of suicide is prefaced by an introduction where the essayist emphasizes the tentative nature of his opinions and his complete submission to the Divine Will.

In the private sphere, Montaigne's paradoxal maxims on family relationships may appear paradoxal only to sentimental modern readers. The essayist likes to exaggerate humorously the cares of the family man. He writes therefore: "There is scarcely less trouble in governing a family than in governing an entire state" (I, 39, 175 A). Marriage is viewed unromantically as a necessary social institution, more durable than fleeting love. "A good marriage", we read, "if such there be, rejects the company and conditions of love" (III, 5, 647 B). Generally Montaigne affects a coolness in family relationships, a coolness which can become a frigid chill, as in the maxim, "We should have wife, children, goods, and above all health, if we can; but we must not bind ourselves to them so strongly that our happiness depends on them" (I, 39, 177 A). This maxim occurs near the beginning of "Of solitude" where Montaigne expounds the need for spiritual independence. Although forthright and breathtaking, the maxim does not shock the reader who has been well prepared for it by numerous classical examples, including that of Stilpon who escaped from the burning of his town but claimed that he had lost nothing of his own, even although his wife, children and worldly goods had all been consumed. With respect to children, Montaigne's preference for progeny of the mind over progeny of the flesh may not seem so paradoxal in today's world of careers first. "There are few men devoted to poetry", he writes, "who would not be prouder to be the father of the Aeneid than of the handsomest boy in Rome, and who would not more easily suffer the loss of the one than of the other" (II, 8, 293 A). This aphorism in favour of art over creature is embedded in justification. In the preceding lines we read that books, unlike a child, are our unique creation and in those following that

Epaminondas, Alexander and Caesar preferred their military victories to any mere monument of flesh and blood.

Montaigne's paradoxal views on the intellectual life are perhaps the best known of all. This immensely erudite man, who learned Latin as his mother tongue and who knew the classics by heart, constantly denounced the vanity of learning. He means of course learning which fills the mind rather than sharpens its powers. As usual Montaigne's paradoxal positions on this subject are engagingly presented. One example from "Of the education of children" will demonstrate how a maxim out of context may seem unacceptable, but how it works with persuasive force in its own milieu. Many readers are startled when they discover Montaigne's solution to the problem of the ungifted student. "I see no other remedy", he writes, "than for his tutor to strangle him early, if there are no witnesses, or apprentice him to a pastry cook in some good town, even though he were the son of a duke; in accordance with Plato's precept that children should be placed not according to the faculties of their father, but according to the faculties of their soul" (I, 26, 120 C). Tone and context make these words acceptable. We know that Montaigne is joking, and moreover philosophy, the main element of the child's education, has just been presented in such beguiling colours that all children will love it and none need fear the penalty of death or ignominious trade.

The paradoxal maxims, like the doxal, are thus delivered with great circumspection. The maxim, of necessity assertive, is always made palatable. Montaigne is the enemy of dogmatism. "Only the fools are certain and assured" (I, 26, 111 C), he writes, while at another point he announces his fondness for "those words which soften and moderate the rashness of our propositions: 'perhaps', 'to some extent', 'some', 'they say', I think', and the like" (III, 11, 788 B). We might note too that many of his maxims are couched as questions, as in the striking "When I play with my cat, who knows if I am not a pastime to her more than she is to me?" (II, 12, 331 C). Here Montaigne engages the reader, not by laying down the law, but by asking him to supply the answer himself.

Turning now to the aesthetic dimension, we recall that rhetorical teaching on the density and placing of maxims emphasized moderation, with the maxim being often

used as an epiphenomenon or conclusion, and sometimes in a liminal position as a shifter. Such usages may, of course, be observed in Montaigne. "On some verses of Virgil", the long essay on sex, ends with sententious affirmation of the equality of men and women: "It is much easier to accuse one sex than to excuse the other. It is the old saying: 'The pot calls the kettle black'" (III, 5, 685 B). A good example of the maxim as opener and closer, a typical rhetorical arrangement of the Middle Ages[8], can be found in a passage from the "Apology for Raymond Sebond" where Montaigne is demonstrating the common nature of all men, high and low. He begins with the maxim, "The souls of emperors and cobblers are cast in the same mold", goes on to develop this theme with specific examples and concludes sententiously, "Like appetites move a mite and an elephant" (II, 12, 350 A). Such rhetorically orthodox use of the maxim is, however, rather untypical of Montaigne. More usually, as Lablénie has pointed out, the maxims are piled up in a series. Rule upon rule, for instance, underlines the Stoic resolution of Montaigne in face of death: "He who has learned how to die has unlearned how to be a slave. Knowing how to die frees us from all subjection and constraint" (1, 20, 60 A). "There is nothing evil in life for the man who has thoroughly grasped the fact that to be deprived of life is not an evil" (ibid. C). These stiff-lipped precepts stand in sharp contrast to the epicurean maxims which serenely grace the last page of all the essays and which are piled up in similar fashion: "It is an absolute perfection and virtually divine to know how to enjoy our being rightfully. We seek other conditions because we do not understand the use of our own, and go outside of ourselves because we do not know what it is like inside" (III, 13, 857 B). "Yet there is no use our mounting on stilts we must still walk on our own legs. And on the loftiest throne in the world we are still sitting on our own rump" (ibid. C). At the aesthetic level, then, Montaigne's eloquence flouts every rhetorical rule. He writes artlessly, as he himself explains, by following his own natural rhythms of concentration and dilution: "As my fancies present themselves, I pile them up; now they come pressing in a crowd,

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[8]. Cf. Paul Zumthor <<L'épiphonème proverbiale>>, Revue des Sciences humaines, 163 (1976), pp. 313-28.

now dragging single file. I want people to see my natural and ordinary pace, however off the track it is" (II, 10, 297 A).

Art, artless. Rhetoric is an art, and Montaigne a seemingly artless personal philosopher. Is it not futile then to compare his style with a rule which he ignores? We can answer that Montaigne lived in a rhetorical age and that his education in reading and writing, like that of everyone else, was rhetorically oriented. Therefore, although he affects to distrust rhetoric, it is so ingrained in him that it becomes a second nature and he is rhetorical in spite of himself. A more satisfying answer is that rhetoric is simply a systematization of the most effective practices of nature. Montaigne is naturally gifted and hence effective and therefore rhetorical. This is especially evident in his treatment of the paradoxal maxim where all his skill is deployed in making a provocative statement acceptable by placing it in supporting context. Although Montaigne may not structure his thinking in this manner because of rhetorical doctrine, the reader may well receive it more knowingly because he has read the rhetorical classics. Here rhetoric functions less as an art of encoding than as one of decoding. More a tool of analysis than of genesis, it guides the reader rather than the writer.

A problem arises when we examine the aesthetic dimension of Montaigne's maxims. Rhetoric, we have claimed, codifies the effective practices of nature. It recommends moderate use of the maxim, yet Montaigne likes his maxims best when they appear in brilliant series. Is he then ineffective, or is there some fault in the teaching of rhetoric? Neither, of course. Our dilemma stems from the limited nature of the discursive field for which the rules of classical rhetoric were devised. Classical rhetoric, as we know, is primarily an art of legal disputation. In many cases, therefore, its precepts can apply only tangentially to a type of discourse as different as that of Montaigne's. If we wished to accommodate the essayist in a full rhetorical form, we should have to develop the restricted categories of the past. We should have to move from elocutio to dispositio. There we should have to ponder questions of tempo and then devise some compositional rule of rhythm which would cover Montaigne's "natural and ordinary pace". Such a study must await, however, another occasion. Meanwhile

we might note that it would probably exceed the bounds of an investigation as comprehensive even as the general rhetoric of the Groupe Mu.

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WALTER REDFERN

TRYING TO THINK THE UNTHINKING, OR, THINGS TO DO WITH CLICHES

My favourite French expression is à cheval. Not in the sense of 'on horseback', where I feel (to use an idiom from my native Liverpool about as comfortable as a cow on a bike). But rather in the sense of straddling, bridging the gap. Or, given the tendency to fiasco that marks much human enterprise, falling between two stools. What I am à cheval between, you will decide for yourselves. None of this is by way of an apology. You, students of rhetoric, should already have read my opening spiel as provocation, indeed as attack. But attack in the musical, not the military, sense. Though I will be using a scatter-gun.

Ortega y Gasset once wrote that 'commonplaces are the tramways of intellectual transportation'. Can we detect here some ecstasy (transport), clashing with the idea of fixed rails ? (And there is the fear of going off the rails. Rapture can automate; the thrill of thinking grow cold. The familiar Classical dictum 'Tout est dit' fed into the disillusioned 'Everything has already happened'. In 1880, the Director of the Russian Patent Office petitioned the government to dissolve his department, on the grounds that nothing new remained to be invented.

Our true Penelope is Flaubert. As Felman put it, Flaubert is 'our commonplace'. Flaubert's choice example of the mineral stupidity of the human race was a certain Thompson of Sunderland, who carved his name in letters six feet high on Pompey's column in Alexandria. For Flaubert, when it comes to clichés (and everything does), we are all (including Gustave himself -- to use Sartre's affectionate term of condemnation for his pathfinder -- we are all the family idiot. In Madame Bovary, Flaubert offers the existential cliché: the secondhand life of Emma, getting ruinously into debt as she tries to live off borrowed romance. Flaubert's backlash against cliché is the tactic of exaggeration and excruciation. If he cannot evacuate clichés, maybe he can saturate the world with them, give everybody a bellyful. And hopelessly (Flaubert would never have

stomached the automatism 'hopefully'), he would reduce us all to blissful silence. Part of him recognised, however, that such elective or enforced mutism would still leave cliché the upper hand, for 'silence gives consent'. Even his notorious project for a book about nothing, presumably intended as an escape from commonplace, is itself an élite cliché, like most inverted or twisted responses. Yet Emma Bovary herself is energised by clichés; they get her, and keep her, going, until she exhausts her capacity for self-delusion. Clichés, like military rhetoric in the trenches, send her over the top.

Emma, a parasite, is a plagiarist. Whereas the Classical poet usually confesses his larcenies, the Romantic, if nabbed, blames his on a broken home. All of us, even when we've graduated from the cradle, continue using cribs for the rest of our natural. Institutionalised plagiarism, while seldom pursued in England with the methodical vigour it was in France, was for a long time practised also in English schools. Think of those exercises where pupils are instructed to complete series of set expressions ('As fit as a ...'). In the 19th-century French version, or perversion, pupils were urged to write as if they were Cicero, etc. By a vicious circle, in these circumstances, the thief robbed himself, of a fully or even moderately personal expression. Jules Vallès's hero, Jacques Vingtras, complains : How can I impersonate Mucius Scaevola without the benefit of a charred wrist ? In protesting stereotyped exemplarity in a spirit of serious play, in addressing the dangers inherent in not having a style to call your own, Vallès ends up inventing a self and a style that are inimitable. Proust, who enjoyed both limp wrists and a hard head, recommended parody as invaluable training for a writer; he himself energetically mastered his awe of Flaubert via pastiching his prose. Such a response was therapeutic, exorcising and educational. Proust put stylistic play to work. People in general had been doing this instinctively since the beginning of time, for parody predates Eden (Satan as the ape of God). Even if the anathema against cliché is largely a post-Romantic phenomenon, the urge to resist and mock cliché is surely not bound by time, place or culture.

The Americans certainly did not invent, but they have boosted, the desire to do something useful with stock material. 'Familiarity breeds contempt, and children', said Mark Twain. thereby putting many marriages in a nutshell. The set phrase is here given an extension, and the familiar made somewhat strange. We talk about turns of speech

(tours in French). Language, with our active support, can lift itself on its points, and take off, as the word trope itself suggests. Human beings had been practising lateral, or up-ended, thinking millennia before de Bono codified the knack. Even subconsciously, in dreams, we can sidestep, renew or complicate the given. A pursued animal twists and turns in order to survive. In general life, of course, twisting (ankle, knee, neck) often grates or anguishes; we do not like to have our arms twisted. A fractious child, in some regions of Britain, is called 'twisty'. The two sexes can, respectively, get their knickers or their tassel in a twist. By all of us the twist can be gone round. A twist is, etymologically, a length of rope. Give a twister enough of it and he will hang himself. Joys and risks surround the whole business. Above all, it is necessary for psychic and social health. Unexamined taboos need to be scanned, altered and dislodged.

Clichés, like puns, can be put or made to work. Twisting clichés by the tail may help to retrain them, restore them to full employment in new contexts. Manipulation need not only be bent; it can set the crooked straight. After a particularly trite protestation of love by a woman, Cabrera Infante's narrator adds: 'From such corn mighty oath grow'. This rapid switch on acorns-oaks debunks the preceding commonplace. Though we sometimes forget this, clichés often begin as figurative phrases, and literalising them can give them back a strength they formerly possessed. In one of Flaubert's sketches, a father catches his son boozing in a bar and exclaims: 'Tu n'es qu'un pilier d'estaminet' (You're holding up the walls of this pub), whereupon the lad changes into a doorpost. Flesh is turned into thing in this transmogrified cliché; and it is ambiguous whether the censorious father has wrought this chastisement, or whether the boy's response guys the parental discourse. Vallès reactivates the idiom' 'manger son pain à la fumée du rôt' (to be only a looker-on) by having his starving young hero wave his stale crust in the smell of fish frying downstairs. This is an existential twist, essential for survival: he needs to 'tromper sa faim' (to stave off his hunger). Vallès's hero here puns for his very life. A related variant of literalisation is the tactic of dumb insolence, as enacted by the oppressed peasants in Ignazio Silone's Fontamara. They take official obfuscations at face value, and thus engage a return to basics. Wilful misreading or deliberate mishearing can have the virtue of at least passive resistance to tyranny.

Some writers of the type termed in French '<u>révolutionnaires de salon</u>', often seem incapable of distinguishing between verbal questioning or ridicule and storming the Bastille. They appear to take concepts like 'subversion' literally, and thus become victims of their own metaphorisation. It is very hard today to laugh anyone out of office, as politicians in alleged democracies learn the formerly aristocratic or totalitarian art of brazenness. Still, even politicians go on twisting. Churchill's (inaccurate) dismissal of Clement Attlee as 'a sheep in sheep's clothing' tried to imply that Atlee was simply what he looked like. A militant feminist might say 'One man's meat is another woman's poison'. Much twisting, whether of words, ideas, handkerchiefs or attitudes, no doubt springs from desperation and panic, like that of deadlined journalists having to come up with something eye-catching. More reflective reworking produces a mock edict like 'Register all puns', with the scrawled corrigendum underneath :'Puns don't kill people; people kill people'. The exchange on this graffito mingles views about the pointedness of wit with the controversy over gun-ownership. Within the advertising industry, agencies beget metaslogans which take off from rival claims, as when Carlsberg claims that 9 out of 10 cats say that their owners prefer it to other lagers. As with punning, ironic diversion demands the complicity and intelligence of a partner, who has to know what the ironist is getting at. This is the area splendidly caught in D.J. Enright's coinage, 'the wrought-ironic'.

As for the various modes of twisting, Milner has listed some of the major ones: phonological ('Diplomacy: the noble art of lying for one's country')-- I would prefer the term 'metaplasmic', as this example involves the alteration of only one letter--; morphological; syntactic lexical ('Hang-over: the wrath of grapes'); and situational. Twists can work by opposites, as in Robert Desnos's '<u>langage cuit</u>' (cooked language) which he opposed to '<u>langage crû</u>'(crude/raw language). Revamping proverbs or idioms can be, like homeopathy, a way of treating like with like, taking a hair of the dog that bit you. In addition, the very rigidity of structure in maxims, proverbs, slogans and other congealed forms seems positively to invite reversals, permutations, substitutions. A collaborator of the OULIPO régime, Bénabou, seeks to encourage others to spawn their personalised aphorisms, and proposes as an example this twist on Clausewitz :'<u>L'art est la continuation du hasard par d'autres moyens</u>'. This example is significant, for

Oulipiens blending Surrealism and Classicism, favour constrictions and loathe randomness, except insofar as such generation of new material from old is potentially infinite (as in Queneau's Cent Mille Milliards de poèmes. Classical as well as Modernist writers have worked to resuscitate clichés. In his Polite Conversation, as Pat Rogers points out, Swift's characters 'know what their word-hoard tells them'.Yet the effect is strangely full of life. Rogers goes on :'The demented farce has something to do with the inexhaustible flow of stale expressions'. Also a great punner and ironist, Swift in this area too 'is constantly burrowing beneath the surface of humdrum conversational language, so as to bring up amusing or damaging implications unsuspected in normal usage'.

It does not go without saying that tropes can stall into tropisms, that twists can be forced and futile (like the vast majority of puns). This happens especially when the originating metaphor has virtually sunk without trace and is beyond raising. It is unprofitable to joke about the wing of a building ('the castle was wounded in the left wing'), or the arm of a chair (the carpenter had to put the chair's broken arm in a sling'). Much twisting, like much play, is half-hearted or lazy, imitative; we talk of 'idle pursuits'. Milking clichés can turn sour. The twister bandies words. 'Bandy' also suggests askew, as 'bent' connotes deviant or criminal. Even reactivated clichés have to be spaced out, as do puns, or they may grow wearisome, and slow down the helter-skelter pace of usual reading or talking. No doubt all writers, unless they have something to hide, beg to be read in slow motion, but this is baying for the moon, or pissing against the wind. Rejigged formulae have their greatest impact if the total work of which they are the highspots is also dedicated, like Madame Bovary or Queneau's Le Chiendent. to undermining habitual modes of thinking, feeling or expressing. Otherwise, many reversals have long since become mechanical new clichés ('Let's have some new clichés!' ordered Sam Goldwyn), of the 'man bites dog' type.

All of us like to spend what Cabrera Infante, a little after and away from Henry Miller, calls 'quiet days in cliché.' Even or especially twists lean on the commonplace they transmute; they preserve it by alluding to it. The 'permissive society', even with its 'repressive tolerance', cries 'Anything goes!' and feels 'nothing is sacred'. Four clichés in succession, but their conjunction makes a point. A true scholar with a fine sense of

humour like Gershon Legman still criticises 'the dubious merriment of the "perverted proverb"', sometimes shortened to 'perverb'. In the custom of literalising idiom people have come to expect the turnaround, to feel secure if it appears and frustrated if it does not. Marcus Cunliffe finds a troubling coincidence between capitalist practices and those of much contempory humour and intellectual enquiry: 'The demand for "turnover" in the economic order causes a craving for "turnover" or rather "overturn" in the realm of imagination and the intellect'. He is frankly hostile to 'this relentless formulaic inversion, with its unearned knowing "novelty"'. Yet innovation by renewal is not always so methodical. There are happy accidents, windfall-proneness, as in serendipity. In themselves, clichés can contain plural meanings. In more senses than one, we can pull chestnuts out of the fire, at the risk, naturally, of burnt fingers. The idiom 'loose connections', for example, yields approximate association of ideas; a hint of madness; raffish acquaintances; a malfunctioning mechanism; distant contacts; to cast off moorings; and hit-or-miss coition. 'Different strokes for different folks' suggests varying ways of: swimming; administering corporal punishment; caressing; calligraphing; making friends with oarsmen; having a thrombosis; and making love. In both cases, not double but septuple entendre. Now, it is true that the specific context would indicate the proper meaning, but the realisation of other, improper meanings, once gained, colours all later responses to the phrase. Finally, in this area, my twist on a current series of double-talk: 'X do it.....' (e.g. 'Surfers do it standing up'). My proffering is 'Dons do it in their sleep', which is a quadruple entendre. On the literal/idiomatic level, it contains: dons teach in a comatose fashion; or, dons teach with no sweat. On the figurative/suggestive plane: dons make love without concentrating (the distrait professor syndrome); or, dons make love as easily as falling off a log. If clichés did not exist, we at-a-removers, we metamongers, would have to invent them.

It should be blatantly obvious that my personal cliché is the urge to see or to put puns everywhere. They are my passe-partout of the multiple French terms for cliché, my U.S. Cavalry. I never suffer, however, from that other unthinking reflex : the rush to apologise for puns. While I find obvious and pointless puns an especially excruciating form of automatism, which gives the listener a kind of mental lockjaw, I reject the implications of the French twist on 'jeux de mains, jeux de vilains' (roughly, no

humour like Gershon Legman still criticises 'the dubious merriment of the "perverted proverb"', sometimes shortened to 'perverb'. In the custom of literalising idiom people have come to expect the turnaround, to feel secure if it appears and frustrated if it does not. Marcus Cunliffe finds a troubling coincidence between capitalist practices and those of much contempory humour and intellectual enquiry: 'The demand for "turnover" in the economic order causes a craving for "turnover" or rather "overturn" in the realm of imagination and the intellect'. He is frankly hostile to 'this relentless formulaic inversion, with its unearned knowing "novelty"'. Yet innovation by renewal is not always so methodical. There are happy accidents, windfall-proneness, as in serendipity. In themselves, clichés can contain plural meanings. In more senses than one, we can pull chestnuts out of the fire, at the risk, naturally, of burnt fingers. The idiom 'loose connections', for example, yields approximate association of ideas; a hint of madness; raffish acquaintances; a malfunctioning mechanism; distant contacts; to cast off moorings; and hit-or-miss coition. 'Different strokes for different folks' suggests varying ways of: swimming; administering corporal punishment; caressing; calligraphing; making friends with oarsmen; having a thrombosis; and making love. In both cases, not double but septuple entendre. Now, it is true that the specific context would indicate the proper meaning, but the realisation of other, improper meanings, once gained, colours all later responses to the phrase. Finally, in this area, my twist on a current series of double-talk: 'X do it.....' (e.g. 'Surfers do it standing up'). My proffering is 'Dons do it in their sleep', which is a quadruple entendre. On the literal/idiomatic level, it contains: dons teach in a comatose fashion; or, dons teach with no sweat. On the figurative/suggestive plane: dons make love without concentrating (the distrait professor syndrome); or, dons make love as easily as falling off a log. If clichés did not exist, we at-a-removers, we metamongers, would have to invent them.

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mucking about; literally, rogues are dextrous) -- 'jeux de mots, jeux de vilains' (wordplay is rogues' play). I relish the way effective puns can tip the wink, sous-entendre as well as double entendre. Since writing Puns, I have become aware of a gathering movement to 'recuperate' this mode, indeed to make it modish. This fits in, I take it, with the navel-reviews and general self-referentiality of much presentday literature and critical practice. Punning is playing language at its own game, for while human beings have collectively built up language, made it what it is, no individual can master it totally, and to that extent it escapes us and enjoys a kind of autonomous existence. Puns have always got everywhere; as Swift said, like fleas. There are even punning clichés. 'See Naples and die' (e poi Mori) is one such, for Mori is next door to Naples, and itself the scene of more than one lethal plague. And the Land of Nod, where some of you would no doubt like to be right now. Many undoubtedly do feel that punners are shysters, who play dirty tricks on others with words. For such critics, puns, which to me are the agents of central intelligence, should be spat upon and marginalised. Even confirmed wordplayers like Christopher Ricks occasionally ask themselves: 'Or am I imagining all this ?' as they tuck into what strikes non-believers as a Barmecide Feast of language.

Are we in control of verbal associations? Our minds are mini-Rogets. We were all Rogeting words long before Roland Barthes egged us to roger them. Freud judged that, as with coincidences in action, language too can meet us half-way, through what he called 'linguistic compliance'. Though of course it takes two opposite motions to complete a true encounter; it takes two to tango. We can collaborate with language, as Ricks showed Orwell cooperating with cliché in his journalism. We do not have to follow rigid rails set down before us. This view grants us more dynamic choice than Lacan's influential decree that 'to the unconscious things are what they sound like. Paronomasia is one of the tropes that reveal the unconscious'. It seems that Lacan, with his often idiotic punning, tended to insinuate that he was the unconscious of his neophytes. I like the anecdote about Lacan confessing to Sartre his insane rage when he discovered his little daughter clumping about in his great clod-hoppers. Was this a case of following in the old man's footsteps, or stepping into dead man's shoes? For his

part, Lacan read this everyday childish event as a murder of the genitor. He could not stand reality punning back at him.

Whereas I believe that purposeful punning and twisting are a sign of life, for pessimists much within language tends towards death. Schopenhauer: 'The actual life of a thought lasts only until it reaches the point of speech.... As soon as our thinking has found words it ceases to be sincere or at bottom serious. when it begins to exist for others it ceases to live in us, just as the child severs itself from its mother when it enters into its own existence'. I find this passage curious. It suggests that others are needed to give the kiss-of-life to our stillborn thoughts, or a kind of eternal relay-race, in which the guttering torch is rekindled by the next carrier. The idea is gloomy for the individual, if promising for the species. Both Emerson and Max Müller considered words as 'fossil poetry'. Fossils may be durable, but they can hardly be brought back to life. Clichés are not fossils; they are more the living dead. Are rejuvenated clichés alive only in the sense that selected bits of our cadavers may still be useful to other livers? Is it the same cliché if it has been tampered with? To '<u>rejase</u>' is to reuse junk as something else. Some rejased objects are identifiable, others unrecognisable.

Lakoff and Johnson, in <u>Metaphors We Live By</u>, thoroughly document how pervasive and systematic are our daily clichés. 'Time is money' proliferates into: 'I don't have <u>enough</u> time to <u>spare</u> for that', 'You're <u>running out</u> of time'. 'Is it <u>worth</u> your <u>while</u>?' and so on. The authors' own discourse is clichéic, and heavily redundant. (I have rarely read a more reiterative text. Strange how many academic works spell things out as if for patronised infants). Their emphasis on networks of metaphors might suggest that we are trapped inside our habitual utterances, or it would, if we were not able to modify and renew these moulds. Ricks, in a very fine distinction, calls for 'a vigilant -- not beady-eyed -- engagement with clichés',though I feel he is preaching to the converted when he argues: 'Clichés invite you not to think -- but you may always decline the invitation, and what could better invite a thinking man to think? I think myself that many clichés which maybe should have caught their death long since lead a charmed life, can be given a new lease of life, can indeed be socially, the life and soul of the party. Clichés are as large as life and a fact of life. Do we always even understand them? They may be dated, or used in a private sense or context. Like proverbs they can

often seem paradoxical, enigmatic. 'Blind men and lame men copulate best'. With astigmatism and flat feet, I don't quite make it. In some traditional societies, proverbs act as a form of bondage (of the non-kinky variety), but also as a locus of competitiveness: proverb-jousts. Surely, we are often lulled into acceptance of received ideas by their very rhythm. Papal bull instructs the faithful to use the rhythm-method (also known as 'Vatican roulette'): safety in numbers, I suppose. The rhythm-method of clichés likewise numbs the mind, until we strike back.

I am not entirely convinced by McLuhan's sanguine faith that 'to release energy in the cliché needs the encounter of another cliché. But I know from a long marriage of two minds (and our sweet old etcetera) that my wife's writing style, cornucopiously spread with cliché but propelled by her passionate educational beliefs, has an invigorating impact on those who read it. I am less impressed when the dauntingly well-read Umberto Eco relaxes, becomes a Little Sir Echo, as when he writes of the film Casablanca: 'When all the stereotypes burst out shamelessly, we plumb Homeric profundity. Two clichés make us laugh but a hundred clichés move us, because we sense dimly that the clichés are talking among themselves, celebrating a reunion... Just as the extreme of pain meets sexual pleasure and the extreme of perversion borders on mystical energy, so too the extreme of banality allows us to catch a glimpse of the sublime'. We have heard this song before (play it again, Umb) from consenting and relenting aesthetes. It is a perfect example of High Camp.

There are less strident ways to defend, and indeed celebrate, clichés. They have their day, like any dog. Where would we be without such instantly applicable codes, such memory-joggers (that lovely French term, pense-bête), such professed solidarity? And think of the opposite: the desire to be original at whatever cost can produce the most godawful tripe. Michael Frayn is reluctant to dismiss as banal our common kit of metaphors: '"At the back of one's mind", "to run over the alternatives", "something stirred in her memory", "he groped for words", they're brilliant! A whole literature, really, trodden down into the soil like last year's leaves, fertilising, unrecognised and forgotten, whatever pushes above the ground now'. 'The poet', says Max Jacob, 'measures out his clichés' (I would add: if he is T.S.Eliot, with coffee-spoons). 'He cannot do without them, or he will be incomprehensible'. This view combines the

tactics of spacing out and of padding, two essential parts of any discourse. Where would we be without clichés (I repeat, as clichés quintessentially do)? Much of our complaining, our illusions of mental superiority, our joking, our creativity (especially in its recycling aspect) would have no material to work on or to kick against. Jean Paulhan wonders why clichés are singled out for opprobrium, when rhythm, rhyme, literary genres, and fixed social forms like the family, have many of the same characteristics. His simple answer is: they are shorter, easier to focus criticism on. His study of the formulaic, competitive, but sociable and productive hain-tenys of Madagascar enables him to think well of clichés, against the élitists who decry them. He finds (and I concur) that the whole phenomenon of cliché is a polysemous mystery, a baggy monster a bottomless pit.

Paul Valéry, whose mind was quicker on its pins than most, denied there was such a thing as an idée fixe :'Nothing is more walkabout than an idée fixe'. His essay on the topic, with its set-up of two thinking men clambering about vigorously over seaside rocks and exchanging machine-gun sprays of thought, enacts this idea about ideas. Or does it? As someone once said of an American pundit 'He writes like a revolving door'. That is: always on the move, but in circles. No wonder Valéry was so addicted to the Ouroboros motif,the snake biting its own tail.

While it is obvious that a heavy dose of clichés can paralyse the brain and kill off a conversation, I do not want to believe, with Pietra, that their deadliness reminds us of emptiness and death: 'Le lieu commun ne dit pas rien; il dit le Rien' (The commonplace does not say nothing; it conveys Nothingness). Less macabre is Herschberg Pierrot's description, 'cet ineffable qu'est le cliché'. Yet Samuel Beckett of all people, dismissed such talk of the ineffable by reminding that all of us know perfectly well how to eff. Contrarywise, I need to remind myself that, as one exquisite proverbial cliché says, fine words butter no parsnips.

The instrument we all play expertly is the second fiddle. A keen student of slogans, Olivier Reboul, stresses that intellectuals too need slogans, high-cultural ones, such as quotations from authors or illustrious critics, because being an intellectual and trying to think for oneself is a lonely and anguishing occupation. 'Understandably the intellectual', he says, 'is tempted to rally to a clan, to think in ready-made formulae,

which free him from himself'. How vulnerable we are to foreign aids; we need brain-sized condoms. I see twisting, in all its forms, as such a prophylactic. To pick up on my opening motif à cheval, we are astride clichés (and this particular horse's colour is, of course, chestnut). They bear us, transport us (in both the utilitarian and the exalted sense): they can run away with us. But we have reins and knees and voices, to change their course. We can mix clichés, like metaphors, and end up in that challenging position: between the frying-pan and the deep blue sea. Or idioms can telescope, like this one I once heard: 'There's more ways than one to swing a cat'.

One last thought. If the theory proves correct that the universe is heading for a state where everything will be thrown into reverse gear, and time will run backwards, then people will have to rethink all our accumulated clichés. And coin some new ones.

Walter Redfern is professor of French at the University of Reading. His most recent publications include: Queneau: 'Zazie dans le métro' (London, 1980), Puns (Oxford, 1984). Clichés and Coinages will be published by Blackwell in September 1989.

C) RHETORIC AND POETICS: THE INTERPRETATION OF LITERARY TEXTS/ RHÉTORIQUE ET POÉTIQUE; L'INTERPRÉTATION DES TEXTES LITTÉRAIRES

EUGENIA NOIK ZIMMERMAN

KNOCK, OR THE TRIUMPH OF RHETORIC

Synopsis

This paper is divided into four parts.

Part I is a rhetorical anecdote.

Part II is theory:

1) I consider possible definitions of rhetoric and derive the existential propositions "rhetoric is the theory and practice of verbal strategies for achieving ends in the extra-rhetorical world.

2) I stipulate the axiological proposition "rhetoric = (+), sophistic = (-)".

3) I consider the three modes of persuasion in terms of their relationship to the object of analysis and specify as follows: for ethos, auctoritas will be foregrounded; for Pathos, Phobos and the collection of objects in Book I, chapters 5 and 7 of the Rhetoric deemed happiness or "good things" will be foregrounded; logos, as traditional, will consist of enthymemes and inartificial proofs.

Part III is the analysis of a particular case. Act I, Act II, scene 6 and Act III, scene 6 will be foregrounded. I discuss plot as a series of transformations (major and minor reversals) due to the powers of rhetoric. I consider the propositio of the play as a sententia/paradox with paradox to be understood in the original etymological sense. I examine the figures of irony, metaphor and metonymy and their role in establishing intelligibility.

Part IV, an extension of the analysis, is placed under the aegis of reader-response criticism. I establish a continuum of negotiable possibilities, their upper and lower bounds, and present an example of negotiation.

Dispositio

I Paradiegesis

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I Paradiegesis

I have been teaching courses in twentieth-century French literature for quite some time now and these tend to list heavily toward Existentialist and quasi-Existentialist fictional and dramatic worlds: Sartre's Les Mouches, Camus's La Peste, Malraux's La Condition humaine etc. Two or three years ago, as the Winter semester was nearing its end, a student came to me and said: "why must it all be so grim? Doesn't modern French literature have any happy texts?"

I thought about this for a while and, although not as yet a born-again rhetorician, I was nevertheless perfectly aware that I needed to please my audience - we live, after all, in parlous academic times -, so I decided to try and find at least one happy text for the year ahead.

I scouted around and eventually exhumed from the depths of my school-girl recollections, Jules Romains's 1923 play, Knock ou le triomphe de la médecine. I hadn't thought about Knock in donkey's years; it was one of those texts they tended to use in language acquisition courses along with St-Exupéry's Le Petit Prince, the short stories of Marcel Aymé, the novels of Simenon. Still, with the book-store breathing down my neck, I didn't have much time to play with so I shoved Knock onto my order form and, like Scarlett O'Hara, told myself I'd think about it tomorrow -- or rather in September and as we all know in April, September never comes.

In the fullness of time, September came and with it the problem of inventio. A happy, uncomplicated text and there was nothing in my academic background to equip me for dealing with happy, uncomplicated texts. What on earth was I going to say?

What I found to say is the subject of this paper.

II. The "Wishful Ought" vs the "Factual Is" or, One Man's Rhetor is Another Man's Sophist

The problem of ends and means which informs moral philosophy is not entirely without representation in the history of rhetoric. The following propositions are abstracted from historical sources but have been idealized for purposes of demonstration.

(1) All Rhetoric is Good (simple affirmative)[1].

This position is abstracted from Cato's vir bonus dicendi peritus ('a good (sic) man, skilled in speaking'): "The classical champions of rhetoric were unshaken in their adherence to this definition, in their conviction that goodness is a prerequisite of the true orator" (quoted and glossed Dixon 4).

(2) No Rhetoric is Good (simple negative).

This position is abstracted from that ascribed to Socrates in the Gorgias (459); rhetoric is not an "art" but a "knack": "The orator need have no knowledge of the truth about things; it is enough for him to have discovered a knack of convincing the ignorant that he knows more than the experts."

(3) Rhetoric is both Good and Its Contrary (complex term). This position derives from Aristotle in the Rhetoric (1355b): "In rhetoric... the term 'rhetorician' may describe either the speaker's knowledge of his art, or his moral purpose." The translator explains: ""'rhetorician' in fact, can mean either a trained speaker or a tricky speaker (sic) [24].

(4) Rhetoric is neither Good nor its contrary (neutral term).

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[1]. These categories are derived from the square of oppositions as extended by Greimas (29-32).

(Encyclopedia 3 and 4, 514), then by the rules of analogy, it is reasonable to claim that rhetoric is also an organon, one in the service of praxis, of actions and undertakings in everyday life. Consequently, my definition of rhetoric is: the theory and practice of verbal strategies for achieving ends in the extra-rhetorical world.

I seem, therefore, to be throwing in my lot with the Sophists, although ever since Plato it has not been the done thing for historians of rhetoric to give the Sophists a particularly good press. Still, I must admit to a sneaking fondness for those peripatetic pedagogues who, lacking slaves, estates or tenure, lived from student to student and taught as they could to survive. Nonetheless, in the interests of practicality -which the Sophists should be the first to appreciate - and to ensure economy of presentation, I will abide by the established norms. Let, therefore, "rhetoric, rhetorical, rhetorician" be "god" terms in the "plus" slot with "sophist, sophistry, sophistic" remaining as "devil" terms in the "minus" slot (Woodson 16, 27) for when there is need to refer to fallacious argument for illegitimate ends.

Any speaker, whether rhetorician or sophist, at some time or another, will be called upon to practise one or more of the three modes of persuasion, the appeals to ethos, pathos, logos, the three Aristotelian "proofs." I know of no better description of the relationship governing these three modes than that supplied by Sister Miriam Joseph in her monumental work, Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language:

> That mode of persuasion which Aristotle calls ethos is, in a sense, included in pathos, for the attitude of the audience toward the personal character of the speaker, their confidence in him and in his good will toward them, constitutes part of their feelings or frame of mind as they listen. And logos, the sum of the ideas in the speech, helps not only to inspire in the audience confidence and good will toward the speaker but also to affect their feelings favorably or unfavorably toward the person or matters being discussed. Consequently, although each of these three modes of persuasion ethos, logos and Pathos, has special reference either to the speaker, to the speech or to those spoken to, they are, nevertheless, closely interrelated; all three are intrinsic to the speech, all three are under the control of the speaker, and the measure of success of all three is the effect on the hearers... (393-94).

If, as is inferable from some of the statements by the Group Mu (8-27), and from "L'ancienne rhétorique" of Roland Barthes, rhetoric was the Ancients' version of communication theory, then this summation is particularly suggestive for a modern

audience, since it represents the rhetorical transaction as something very close to the communication model formulated by Roman Jakobson in his seminal address on the six functions of language (350-77). Transcoded into Jakobsonian terminology, ethos would correspond to the expressive function, pathos to the conative function and logos, in deliberative or forensic rhetoric to the referential or cognitive function and perhaps even, in the case of epideictic rhetoric - if we extrapolate from Perelman's discussion of the traditional views of the genre (47-55) -, to the poetic function itself. What about the two remaining functions? Surely the metalinguistic function is amply taken care of by Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian etc., the canon and its commentators and possibly the phatic function, the need to ensure a contact, might perhaps be given over to the fourth and fifth of the traditional parts of rhetoric, memoria and pronunciatio.

However, although the legitimacy of using the ancient proofs in modern rhetorical criticism seems to me reasonably well established, the particular properties ascribed to these proofs may well vary with the object to which they are applied. For Knock, the object of my own discourse, I propose the following ground rules:

Ethos. Together with the ethical properties of the speaker cited by Sister Miriam Joseph, "personal character... sincerity... truth... ability... good will (272), I would most particularly draw the attention of my own hearers to that property referred to by Quintilian as auctoritas (quoted in Corbett, p. 93). In order to gain his ends, it is essential that Dr. Knock convince his hearers that he legitimately speaks to them as one having authority.

Pathos. Of the nine Pathe, defined either in terms of pleasure or pain and discussed in Book II of the Rhetoric, phobos or fear, "a pain or disturbance due to a mental picture of some destructive or powerful evil in the future (1382a)[3] is the most relevant. For other aspects of Pathos useful in the context of Knock, we are better off with chapters 5 and 7 of Book I where Aristotle discusses what constitutes happiness and what constitutes "good things": "every individual man and all men in common aim

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[3]. I am indebted to Alan Brinton for a copy of his paper "Pathos and the 'Appeal to Emotion': An Aristotelian Analysis" (Canadian Society for the History of Rhetoric, Hamilton, 27 May 1987.)

at a certain end which determines what they choose and what they avoid. This end, to sum it up briefly, is happiness and its constituents" (1360b). It will be one of Dr. Knock's main tasks to discover what his hearers define as a source of happiness for themselves and persuade them that he can either increase or limit their access to it.

Logos. A short, all-inclusive definition will suffice: the use, whether for rhetorical or sophistic purposes, of enthymemes and testimony, artificial and inartificial proofs.

III Persuasion in the Text. Arguments and Exegesis[4].

Proem

In Act III, Scene 6 of Knock ou le triomphe de la médecine, Dr. Parpalaid, returning to the town of St. Maurice after an absence of three months, is amazed to find that in so short a time his successor, Dr. Knock, has managed to attract such an impressive and fanatically loyal clientele. "Do you really mean to tell me," he says, "that one hundred and fifty people a week line up for the privilege of seeing a doctor - and pay for it? No one forced them? No pressure was used?" Whereupon Knock replies: "I didn't need the army and I didn't need the police."

Now although it is a commonplace, both in Aristotle's Poetics and in modern literary theory, that plot may be described as a series of transformations, it is not quite that common to find these transformations ascribed so dramatically to the powers of rhetoric. For with the argumentum ad bacculum so clearly excluded, what else remains but the use of persuasion? Exactly what sort of persuasion and what can be inferred from it is what I should now like to consider.

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[4]. A Note on Procedure: 1) the analysis that follows, although reasonably detailed, is representative rather than exhaustive; 2) quotations in the original French are from the Folio edition, whereas quotations in English are from the Gidney translation; 3) the analysis is based on the written or dramatic text rather than the theatrical or performance text (Elam 3). Consequently, proofs will be adduced from purely verbal sources, both the transcribed dialogue and the didascalia (stage directions) which provide transpositions and, at times, interpretations of the non-verbal material in terms of verbal signs. Quoted stage directions will be italicized (underlined) as they are in the printed texts.

Act I

Argument. Having purchased the medical practice of Dr. Parpalaid, Dr. Knock learns belatedly 1) that his potential clients rarely, if ever, have serious, protracted illnesses; 2) that they are not in the habit of seeking medical advice for the infirmities they do have and 3) that they are, however, in the habit of paying for any medical expenses they might incur only once a year, at the end of September. (As the play begins, it is early October.)

Deciding to make the best of a bad bargain, Knock gradually reveals to Parpalaid (and, of course, to the audience) how he came to embark on a career in medecine.

1. His vocation was revealed to him by that persuasive medium par excellence, advertising, in the form of promotional material accompanying medical and pharmaceutical products.

2. Twenty years ago, although unlicensed, he obtained a position as ship's doctor: population of ship, 35; number of patients, 35.

3. Afterward, to finance proper medical studies, he built up a successful peanut business which, however, like most commercial undertakings, turned out to be boring. Indeed, the only professions he hasn't yet tried are medicine, politics, high finance and the priesthood.

4. He is now forty years old and has just received his degree after successfully completing his thesis.

As the act ends, the two medical men reach an understanding: in three months time, Parpalaid will return to assess what Knock, working under such difficult conditions, has managed to achieve.

This is a classic comic situation classically unfolded through a plot having a beginning (Act I), a middle (Act II) and an end (Act III).

Act I. A protagonist (Knock) tricked by an antagonist (Parpalaid) proposes to reverse the situation.

Act II. The various steps leading to the reversal are shown.

Act III. The reversal is accomplished and explicated. This reversal takes two forms: 1) a major reversal involving the population of St. Maurice whereby a

collectivity defining itself as healthy is transformed into a collectivity defining itself as ill and 2) a minor reversal involving two individuals: according to the formula of "the biter bit" (poetic justice, Parpalaid the trickster becomes Parpalaid the tricked. That these reversals are effected through various forms of rhetorical manipulation is already made clear to us in this first act.

1. Dr. Knock's dissertation, "Sur les prétendus états de santé" (31) / "On So-Called Good Health" (13), not only has a blatantly tendentious title, it comes with the epigraph "les gens bien-portants sont des malades qui s'ignorent" (31) / "Healthy people are sick people who don't know it" (13). This epigraph takes the form of a sententia which unlike "proverbs or adages [that] represent the testimony of many men [represents] the wisdom of one" (Joseph 98). Furthermore, this sententia also conforms to the figure of paradox and articulates the initial version of the propositio, the central thesis of the play. Finally, the attribution of this sententia/paradox to the historical figure of Dr. Claude Bernard, a possessor of certified ethos as the implied audience is expected to know, reveals a sophistic use of apomnemonysis, "a form of inartificial argument which quotes for authority the testimony of approved authors" (Joseph 102). By projecting onto Claude Bernard an apothegm of his own composition, by the ruse of metonymy - association - Knock fallaciously acquires a simulacrum of ethos for himself.

2. Knock's appointment as ship's doctor was also achieved through rhetorical stratagems:

> Comme j'ai horreur des situations fausses j'ai déclaré en entrant: "Messieurs, je pourrais vous dire que je suis docteur mais je ne suis pas docteur. Et je vous avouerai même quelque chose de plus grave: je ne sais pas encore quel sera le sujet de ma thèse." Ils me répondent qu'ils ne tiennent pas au titre de docteur et qu'ils se fichent complètement du sujet de ma thèse. Je réplique aussitôt: "Bien que n'étant pas docteur, je désire pour des raisons de prestige et de discipline, qu'on m'appelle docteur à bord." Ils me disent que c'est naturel. Mais je n'en continue pas moins à leur expliquer pendant un quart d'heure les raisons qui me font vaincre mes scrupules et réclamer cette appellation de docteur à laquelle, en conscience, je n'ai pas droit. (33)

(I hate being in a false position, so I told them right away: "Gentlemen, I could tell you that I'm a doctor but I'm not. What's worse, I haven't even chosen a subject for my thesis." They replied that they didn't insist on my being a doctor and they didn't give a good God damn about my thesis. Then I said: "Although I'm not a doctor, I'd like,

for the sake of prestige and discipline, to be called 'Doctor' on board." They said: "Naturally." Nevertheless I put in twenty minutes explaining why I have wrestled with my conscience and ended up by asking for a title to which I really had no right. 12-13)

We have here another variant of the appeal to authority, another sophistic version of the ethical proof. In the case of Claude Bernard, the source for the authority was legitimate; it was the attribution that was false. In this case, since Knock was not a doctor, the authority sought was illegitimate, but the attribution was true: Knock was himself the source, he revealed himself as such and thereby acquired the ethos of sincerity ("good character). However, through (post-Hegelian) dialecticalor-rhetorical-sleight-of-hand, to reveal is to conceal; Knock has made use of dissimulatio and of misdirection through a figure of ambiguity, equivocation.

According to the rules governing this possible world, since Knock's material success varies directly with his rhetorical success, it is not surprising that a sophistic appeal to ethos is one of the stratagems most persistently displayed.

3. Finally, once more by the rules of metonymy-contiguitythe association of medicine, high finance, politics and the priesthood invites - or at least renders plausible the inference - that given an appropriate context these professions can be seen as "standing for each other." Thus, right from the beginning, a precondition for allegorization is built into the structure of the dramatic world.

Act II

Scene 1

Argument. Two transformations through persuasion are accomplished. Transformation I: Knock persuades the town crier to be his accomplice; Transformation II: Knock persuades the town crier he is ill.

Transformation I is accomplished through various forms of the ethical proof:

1. Knock requires systematic use of his title to establish authority: " ... quand vous avez l'occasion de parler de moi au dehors, ne manquez jamais de vous exprimer

ainsi: 'le docteur a dit,' 'le docteur a fait' ... (sic), j'y attache de l'importance" (53) / " ... when you talk about me outside, be sure to say 'the doctor said,' 'the doctor did' ... it's important" (21).

2. Knock displays his "good character" by showing benevolence and liberality; he offers the crier top dollar for his services and offers the population at large free medical advice: "Le docteur Knock ... présente ses compliments à la population de la ville et du canton de Saint-Maurice, et a l'honneur de lui faire connaître que, dans un esprit philanthropique ... il donnera tous les lundis matin ... une consultation entièrement gratuite ... "(58) / "Dr. Knock ... presents his compliments to the people of the city and township of St. Maurice and is pleased to announce that in the interests of the welfare of the community ... his services will be available ... without charge ... every Monday" (24).

In the fulsome phrases of this address, might we not recognize versions of figures of ethos such as comprobatio ("a man commends the good he sees in the judges whose confidence he wishes to win"), parrhesia ("one is humbly respectful"), and philophronesis ("gentle speech and humble submission") (Joseph 273, 397)?

For Transformation II, in order to move the crier from his role as accomplice into his role as potential client, Knock has recourse to all three proofs as he gradually creates the presence of illness.

Logos 1) the illness is generated by means similar to those used to establish a "precising definition" (Copi 134-40): "K: 'De quoi souffrez-vous?' T: '[...] il y a des fois que je me sens une espèce de démangeaison. ... Ça me chatouille, ou plutôt, ça me gratouille.' K: 'Attention. Ne confondons pas. Est-ce que ça vous chatouille ou est-ce que ça vous gratouille?'" / "K: 'What's the matter with you?' TC: 'Sometimes after I've eaten I feel a kind of itch ... it tickles ... or scratches.' [...] K: 'Let's be clear about it. Does it tickle or does it scratch?'" (26).

2) The illness is diagnosed through the fallacy of the complex question (Copi 92-93): "Est-ce que ça ne vous gratouille pas davantage quand vous avez mangé de la tête de veau à la vinaigrette?" (63) / "Doesn't it scratch worse when you've eaten calf's head vinaigrette?" (27).

Ethos. Benevolent authority is exercised by the speaker over the hearer through the use of the imperative and of nonverbal signs: "K: (lui mettant la main sur l'épaule) 'Mon ami, faites votre travail aujourd'hui comme d'habitude. Ce soir, couchez-vous de bonne heure. Demain matin, gardez le lit'" (64) / "K: (Putting hands on crier's shoulders) 'Go about your work today as you always do. But get to bed early tonight and stay in bed tomorrow'" (27).

That fear has successfully been induced is clear from the non-verbal signs: "[Le tambour] se trouble peu à peu ... "avec anxiété " ...s'essuie le front" (64-65) / "getting gradually worried" ... anxiously ... "taking out his handkerchief" (27).

Scene 2

Argument. Transformation I: Knock persuades Bernard, the schoolmaster, to be his accomplice; Transformation II: Knock persuades Bernard that he is ill.

Scene 2 is clearly a variant of scene 1; like its predecessor, it sets in motion one or another of the three proofs.

Logos: intrinsic proof. Once again, Knock makes use of dissimulatio: as exemplified here, the assertion as fact of what one knows to be contrary to fact: "K: 'Ce n'est pas moi qui laisserai s'interrompre la collaboration si précieuse que vous accordiez à mon prédécesseur.' [...] B: 'C'est la première fois qu'il est question d'une chose pareille à Saint-Maurice.' K: (avec tous les signes d'une surprise navrée) [...] 'si je ne l'entendais pas de votre bouche, je vous assure que je n'en croirais rien" (67-69) / "K: 'I wouldn't want to break up the valuable collaboration that existed between you and my predecessor.' B: 'This is the first time I've heard of such a thing in Saint-Maurice.' K: (flabbergasted and in deep distress) 'If I weren't hearing it from your own lips, I wouldn't believe it'" (28-30).

Logos: extrinsic Proof. Knock offers as testimony plans for a set of lectures complete with scientific paraphernalia: "J'ai ici la matière de plusieurs causeries de vulgarisation, des notes très complètes, de bons clichés, et une lanterne" (71) / "I have some material for several popular lectures: complete notes, some good slides and a lantern" (31).

Testimony generates pathos (fear) as Bernard, showing all the signs of the classic hypocondriac ("le coeur chaviré ... tout frissonnant" (72) / "highly upset ... trembling" (31-32), follows the crier into the world of the invalid.

There is, however, a significant difference between the apparently identical outcomes of scenes 1 and 2. In the case of the crier, transformation - good health into ill health - was followed by acknowledgement. In the case of Bernard, acknowledgement is withheld: "B: 'vous pensez que moi, docteur, je suis porteur de germes?' K: 'pas vous spécialement.'" (73-4) / "B: 'Do you think I'm a germ-carrier, Doctor?' K: 'Not you necessarily'" (32). This particular strategy whereby the consequences of persuasion are followed not by the expected recognition but, paradoxically, by repudiation, has strong rhetorical force. It will reappear as ethos in Act III, scene 1 when Mme Rémy, the innkeeper turned nurse, offers the example of Bernard to Parpalaid as proof of Knock's disinterested nature and all-embracing concern (cf. 122-23/54).

<u>Scene 3</u>

<u>Argument</u>. Knock persuades the pharmacist Mousquet to be his accomplice.

In the world of fools and knaves we are examining, it is predicated of Mousquet that he is a knave. Consequently, for the transformation to occur, all that is required is the appeal to "good things" (<u>Rhet</u>. 1360b) - in this case, money and social status (scene 2, <u>passim</u>).

A more significant aspect of this scene, in terms of the general economy of the play is that it offers us the first example of the military metaphor: "Pour moi, le docteur qui ne peut pas s'appuyer sur un pharmacien de premier ordre est un général qui va à la bataille sans artillerie" (75) / "So far as I'm concerned a doctor who hasn't the support of a first-class pharmacist is like a general going into battle with no artillery" (33).

Here, too, constructed from the topics of invention according to arguments of comparison from the greater, the equal or the less (Joseph 147), surfaces the second version of the play's <u>propositio</u> as the <u>sententia</u>/paradox attributed to Claude Bernard

in Act I develops into: "La santé n'est qu'un mot, qu'il n'y aurait aucun inconvénient à rayer de notre vocabulaire. Pour ma part, je ne connais que des gens plus ou moins atteints de maladies plus ou moins nombreuses à évolution plus ou moins rapide" (80) / " 'Health' is a word which we could just as well erase from our vocabularies. For me there are only people more or less sick of more or less numerous diseases progressing at a more or less rapid rate" (35).

Scenes 4 and 5

Argument. Knock persuades the Lady in Black (scene 4) and the Lady in Purple (scene 5) that they are ill.

Just as the crier and the schoolmaster were variants of each other, so, too, are the Lady in Purple and the Lady in Black. These two "characters" are constructed out of a very small set of properties: sex, age, class, garment and, lastly, "good thing." These "good things" are the same that went into the construction of Mousquet. Here, however, they are parcelled out. The Lady in Black gets, essentially, "money"; this is communicated by stage directions in the form of a zeugma: "elle respire l'avarice paysanne et la constipation" (82) / "she exudes an atmosphere of peasant greed and constipation" (36). The Lady in Purple gets, essentially, "social status"; this, too, although a bit less directly, is communicated by the stage directions: "elle s'appuie assez royalement sur une sorte d'alpenstock" (92) / "She leans rather majestically on a sort of alpenstock" (40). In both cases, however, the appeal is to "appetency" which, as this paraphrase of Aristotle reveals, "accompanies sensation, since sensation is accompanied by pleasure and pain, and with them comes the appetite for that which is pleasant" (Ferguson 98).

Scene 6

Argument. Knock persuades the two young men that they are ill.

Scene 6 is the shortest scene in Act II but it is the climactic one and therefore the most powerful. Once it is over and the curtain rises on Act III, the town will have become a town of invalids, the major reversal will have taken place.

Scenes 1-5 dealt with the transformation of specific individuals; scene 6 deals with the transformation of the collectivity as a whole. As revealed first by the didascalia (1)

and then by the dialogue (2), the two young men are synecdoches for the population at large.

(1) Deux gars s'avancent. Ils se retiennent de rire, se poussent le coude, clignent de l'oeil. Pouffant soudain. Derrière eux, la foule s'amuse de leur manège et devient assez bruyante. (103)

(Two young fellows come forward. They are holding back their laughter, nudging and winking at each other, suddenly exploding. Behind them the crowd is enjoying their horse-play and becoming noisy. 46)

(2) "K: '[...] il me semble que je ne vous ai pas vus tantôt. Il y a des gens avant vous.'
P: 'Ils nous ont cédé leur place Hi! Hi! Demandez-leur.' (rires et gloussements.) (104)

("K: '[...] I don't think I've seen you before. There are others ahead of you.'
F: 'They're letting us go first. Ask them.' (laughs under his breath)" (46).

This is the basic confrontation. If Knock loses, he loses everything, if he wins, he wins everything.

His weapons are familiar: testimony, a sophistic use of inartificial proof and phobos, the production of an all-pervasive fear. Signs of phobos appear in the didascalia, and are arranged in ascending order of intensity according to the figure of auxesis or incrementum. "a figure which advances from less to greater" (Joseph 149): 1) "ils s'échangent des signes et gloussent, mais en se forçant un peu. 2) "les deux gars n'ont pas la moindre envie de rire" (104, 106) / 1) "they continue to make signs to each other and snigger a bit but with a bit of an effort". 2) "the two young fellows have lost all desire to laugh" (47).

The introduction of testimony accelerates the progression: "Knock [...] rapporte de grands cartons illustrés qui représentent les principaux organes chez l'acoolique avancé..." (106) / "Knock ... brings out some large posters showing the main body organs in an advanced state of alcoholism ... " (47). Whereupon: 3) "très timidement," 4) "très

piteux," 5) "il recule en tremblant" (106, 107) / (with great timidity "staggering back fearfully." "[he] continues to tremble" (48).

As the scene ends, the closing didascalia, pure commentary on the part of the implied author, reveals the outcome of the confrontation:

> Silence. Knock ouvre la porte. On entend le brouhaha des gens qui rient d'avance. Knock laisse passer les deux gars qui sortent avec des mines diversement hagardes et terrifiées et traversent la foule soudain silencieuse comme un enterrement (108).

(Silence. Knock opens the door. Noise of crowd beginning to laugh. Knock watches the young fellows go out. They look haggard and terrified as they pass through the crowd which becomes as silent as a funeral [sic] (48).

Who has won and who has lost cannot seriously be in doubt.

IV Persuasion by the Text. An adventure in Allegorization

Once again, Sister Miriam Joseph: "In considering... drama it must be remembered that there are two groups of hearers: the other characters in the play, who are the persons immediately addressed, and the audience attending the play, who are the ones ultimately addressed" (243). This concluding section will concern itself with the second group. What is it persuaded by? What is it persuaded toward?

Let us consider, first of all, a "traditional" analysis, based on Lansonian principles. In his introduction to the Gidney translation, Jack Godin, after reviewing the changes in St. Maurice, draws the following conclusion: "the will to action of the collective soul is irresistible and in the village has been brought about the creation of a unanimistic mind though the miracle of science... (VI).

Fair enough and no doubt reasonably true, but Unanimism, although perhaps still with us in other guises, has been relegated to the footnotes of intellectual history. Let us see, therefore, if having been liberated by reader-response criticism from too slavish a dependence on historical context, we might not do something else.

In The Theory of Comedy, Elder Olson, a neo-Aristotelian and member of the Chicago School, established the opposition "plots of cleverness" vs "plots of folly." In

plots of cleverness, there is either a well-intentioned wit or an ill-intentioned wit; in plots of folly, there is either a well-intentioned fool or an ill-intentioned fool: "for the ill-intentioned fool, there must be failure, for the well-intentioned fool, success; for the illintentioned clever man, failure and success for the wellintentioned one" (52-53).

Now I assume we all agree that Parpalaid was an illintentioned fool and he certainly failed, whereas Knock was an ill-intentioned clever man and he most certainly did not. What sort of comedy is this? What do we have here after all?

Perhaps what we have here could be approached through two of Northrop Frye's allegorizations of genre theory: comedy, the mythos of Spring and irony and satire, the mythos of Winter. I would argue that a "weak" interpretation of Knock would align the play with the "first or most ironic phase of comedy... in which a humorous society triumphs or remains undefeated" (177). On the other hand, a "strong" interpretation would opt for the "sixth phase of satire ... the chief form [of which] in our day is the nightmare of social tyranny. ... We often find, on this boundary of the visio malefica, the use of parody-religious symbols suggesting some form of Satan or Antichrist worship" (238).

Let us therefore postulate a continuum with the "weak" interpretation as its lower bound and the "strong" interpretation as its upper. We, the audience, will allegorize or "negotiate" along this continuum according to our ideological proclivities, foregrounding what suits our purpose.

How might a reader like myself, a lapsed Existentialist, choose to negotiate?

First of all, I would make much - as I did - of the evidence provided me by two of the major rhetorical figures: on the one hand, metonymy, which legitimizes the interchangeability of medicine and politics, on the other hand, metaphor which created the image of a Holy War. These, after all, are clearly in the text and cannot reasonably be denied.

With metaphor and metonymy as my basic proofs, I would return to the paradox containing the thesis of the play "ill health is good, good health is ill" and reformulate it - a legitimate rhetorical topic (Lanham 107-08) - as "the absence of physical illness entails the absence of moral wellness": let us, after all, not forget the obdurate M. Raffalens. Thus restated, the paradox easily generates its corresponding endoxa,

reputable universal opinion as Arnhart showed us; to wit, "the presence of physical illness entails the presence of moral illness." It is this endoxa - although the authors in question would scarcely thank me for applying to their work such an appellation - that, in varying degrees, governs two other allegorical texts, two coded texts with a reasonably clear referent in the extratextual world: Jean-Paul Sartre's Les Mouches and Albert Camus's La Peste.

So perhaps Knock ou le triomphe de la médecine wasn't quite so uncomplicated after all and perhaps, like the characters in Sartre's Huis clos, I am condemned for eternity - or at least until retirement, whichever comes first - to teach courses in twentieth-century French literature which list heavily toward Existentialist and quasi-Existentialist fictional and dramatic worlds.

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