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Rhetoric and the Origins of the Human Sciences: A Foucauldian Tale Untold

Daniel M. Gross

ABSTRACT. Michel Foucault's famous history of the human sciences focused on "the order of things" and in doing so it overwhelmed a rhetorical perspective that can track the arts of moving souls: pedagogy, politics, and psychology. If we revisit Foucault from a rhetorical perspective there are consequences: 1) at the level of architectonic, we rediscover rhetoric's role at the inception of the human sciences, and 2) at the level of thematic, we can make better sense of rhetorical phenomena such as the sixteenth/seventeenth-century sacred arts of listening which feature a "public ear." Foucault's late interest in the pastoral picks up this rhetorical thread, although he never was able to revise the disciplinary and biopolitical history implicated therein. This article initiates just such a revision, paying particular attention to historiographic questions, and to recent discussions of biopower that wind up looking very different from this rhetorical perspective.

KEYWORDS: Foucault, biopower, human sciences, sacred rhetoric, listening

I. Foucault's Disciplinarity

Recently scholars have reconnected Michel Foucault's philosophically inflected *parrēsia* or frank speech to classical rhetoric which, ultimately in Foucault's analysis, is aligned with flattery.¹ But before his final turn toward classical antiquity, Foucault spent many more years working on early modern human sciences where, again, rhetoric *could have* appeared central. It did not. Paying close attention to the role "speech" plays in Foucault's influential history of the human sciences, however, teaches us something important about both his methodology and his historiography. In *The Order of Things* (1966) Foucault famously explains how speech is *clarified* in the post-Classical human sciences where "man" first appears as such:

The modern themes of an individual who lives, speaks, and works in accordance with the laws of an economics, a philology, and a biology, but who also, by a sort of internal torsion and overlapping, has acquired the right, through the interplay of those very laws, to know them and to subject them to total clarification – all these themes so familiar to us

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3 today and linked to the existence of the "human sciences" are excluded by Classical
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5 thought: it was not possible at that time that there should arise, on the boundary of the
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7 world, the strange stature of a being whose nature (that which determines it, contains it,
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9 and has traversed it from the beginning of time) is to know nature, and itself, in
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11 consequence, as a natural being.²
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15 Foucault's "Classical" (early Enlightenment) thought may have paid attention to human nature
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17 recognizing, for instance, in natural history and the analysis of wealth the existence of particular
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19 human needs, desires, and capacities. But according to Foucault, human nature was produced in
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21 the European (late) seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a correlate to general categories of
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23 representation. Human needs were understood in terms of their satisfying object and its price;
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25 human desires were named and classified according to general taxonomic habits; human
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27 capacities such as imagination and speech were reflected in a natural order. In the Classical age
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29 there existed no domain proper to human nature, indeed no consciousness of man as such.³ Man
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31 as the being whose nature is to know itself "as a natural being" simply did not exist until the end
32
33 of the eighteenth century, when the human sciences of economics, philology, and biology
34
35 consolidated this new reality. So although "Renaissance 'Humanism' and Classical rationalism
36
37 were indeed able to allot human beings a privileged position in the order of the world ... they
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39 were not able to conceive of man."⁴ Importantly, a decade later Foucault would replace "man" in
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41 this summary with "population,"⁵ but more on that anon.
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48 In *The Order of Things* human beings are produced as the object of sanctioned
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50 knowledge: the deep structure that determines what kind of information can be accounted for and
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52 what remains outside, the methods for organizing relevant information, the discursive
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54 regularities that address a particular form of life. Ontology, in short, is the product of
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3 epistemology; or perhaps more accurately, ontologies are for Foucault only a second order
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5 reflection upon the epistemology of an age and the sorts of life it produces. At this point
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7 Foucault's approach productively establishes a radical break with questions about "man's" role,
8
9 his dignity or his nature, all of which assume that there is a man whose role, dignity or nature can
10
11 be in question. Foucault asks: What are the epistemic conditions that produced man, and what is
12
13 the history of these conditions? Such questions successfully circumvent the assumptions of
14
15 philosophical anthropology while promoting a more radically historicist inquiry into the
16
17 intellectual culture of early modern Europe. Thanks to this work, a new sort of inquiry is possible
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19 that does not reduce conceptual history to the history of a term such as "man" or "human nature"
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21 – tracking its historical variation and reoccupation – but instead subordinates the terms to
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23 particular conditions of use, filled out with concrete subjects.
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29 The problem with Foucault's approach in *The Order of Things* is that it is
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31 epistemologically deterministic. And this constraint ultimately explains why he puts the
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33 invention of human nature that marks modernity at the end of the eighteenth century. But I will
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35 locate it two centuries earlier, at the time of the Protestant Reformation, and in the exemplary
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37 work of Martin Luther's academic lieutenant, the rhetorician and theologian Philipp
38
39 Melanchthon. For Foucault human nature is first a product of the human sciences – no more, no
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41 less. Perhaps it was "directly presented to discourse" in the natural sciences of the Classical age,
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43 given a definitive status and accorded a good deal of attention, but it had no independent
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45 epistemological status before the nineteenth century, and thus also no ontological consequences.
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49 On these grounds Foucault polemicizes that the concept proper did not exist, nor the man so
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51 addressed. I, too, argue that human nature is a product of the human sciences, but I define the
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53 human sciences differently. Neither just the disciplines that take as their object man as an
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3 empirical entity (nineteenth-century economics, biology, and philology [*Order of Things* 344]),
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5 nor just the reflexive "meta-epistemological" disciplines that try to explain what makes man
6
7 capable of treating himself as an empirical entity (psychology, sociology, the analysis of
8
9 literature and mythology [367]), the human sciences must be understood, first, as *meta-practical*.
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11 They are interventionist disciplines that reflect practice in more or less systematic fashion. Hence
12
13 the disciplines that regularly draw attention to practice are pedagogy, politics, and psychology
14
15 broadly conceived, as well as rhetoric – the first such "human science," and resource for those
16
17 that come after. More specifically, I will suggest that tracking the modern fate of sacred rhetoric
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19 helps us bracket Michel Foucault's history of the human sciences, thereby allowing us to better
20
21 grasp not just how people are managed, but also how they are moved. The core of my argument
22
23 is that *movere* fits poorly into the biopolitical framework built by Foucault, which means that
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25 rhetoricians must adopt Foucault's rich material with some skepticism while cultivating more
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27 appropriate disciplinary alternatives. In this article I offer an alternative history of the human
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29 sciences more appropriate to our field, and I sketch some of the consequences for rhetorical
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31 theory thus tied to Foucault.
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39 Foucault's characterization of the human sciences does at least mark out its domain in an
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41 intuitive and terminologically precise manner. But it also precludes the possibility of considering
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43 the human sciences as engaged reflection upon practice – which is a serious distortion if one
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45 indeed wishes to treat the human sciences archaeologically. At this stage in his early career,
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47 Foucault is left without a way to explain the history of human nature as anything other than a
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49 correlate to the history of thought. Addressing this error, I begin chronologically with the
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51 pedagogy of the German Reformation because it best demonstrates the accelerated development
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53 and integration of meta-practical disciplines during this period that produces human nature in its
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3 modern form – a human nature that emerged out of the extended battle for man's soul – from the
4 effort to render the soul susceptible to grace, doctor it, and train it to the body politic. Thus better
5 for our purposes than "human sciences" would be the term "practical arts," understood as
6 interventionist disciplines that reflect practice in more or less systematic fashion. Or we can say
7 that the practical arts of antiquity – ethics, psychagogy (i.e. Socratic "movement of souls"),⁶ and
8 politics, as well as rhetoric and poetics viewed from a practical perspective – were elaborated in
9 modernity and consolidated for new purposes, becoming what we can call in retrospect the
10 proto- or early human sciences. Methodologically, in other words, we can learn from Foucault as
11 we work from a different disciplinary orientation.

12
13 Also methodologically we can learn from the ways in which Foucault ties an important
14 thematic – in this case "human nature" – to the historical disciplines that produce it. If a scholar
15 interested in rhetoric investigates human nature through the lens of philosophical idealism and its
16 real-world effects, as did post-war intellectual historians in the wake of Kristeller,⁷ Garin,⁸ and
17 Trinkaus,⁹ then it is sensible to conclude that human nature was conceived of differently in pre-
18 modern and modern periods with the Italian Renaissance marking the break.¹⁰ If a scholar
19 interested in rhetoric investigates human nature from the perspective of epistemology per se, as
20 does early Foucault, then the very concept can readily be seen as an eighteenth-century
21 invention. Noticeably missing is an investigation of human nature from the perspective of the
22 history of the practical arts,¹¹ and in particular from the perspective of the first practical art:
23 rhetoric.¹²

24
25 What happens to the history of the human sciences when we take seriously the practical
26 work of moving souls as it is treated by Foucault briefly, and as it is treated in the rhetorical
27 tradition extensively? What if psychology, pedagogy, and politics are first considered meta-

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3 practical arts, like rhetoric, instead of soft natural sciences that exercise biopower?¹³ We produce
4
5 a new genealogy of the human sciences that allows us to grasp important biopolitical phenomena
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8 Foucault missed and that we have missed accordingly.
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10 After Foucault, accounts of being – described, identified, taxonomized, administered –
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12 predominate where the natural and human sciences agree. In fact, human science is now
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14 regularly conceived of as biopower, a Foucauldian concept picked up prominently by Giorgio
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16 Agamben, Ian Hacking and many other leading theorists. One might wonder, why this non- or
17
18 anti-rhetorical tendency? The dominance of philosophy over rhetoric offers one explanation and
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20 here, again, Foucault provides the key. Even though he typically rejected the description of his
21
22 work as philosophy per se – insofar as that meant for him a twentieth-century discipline arm's-
23
24 length from history and politics – philosophy (not rhetoric) understood classically, as a political
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26 orientation toward truth shapes much of his work, including his analysis of biopower and the
27
28 academic disciplines that produce it. Characteristically, in his methodological introduction to a
29
30 key lecture course translated as *Security, Territory, Population* (1978) Foucault explains, "in one
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32 way or another, and for simple factual reasons, what I am doing is something that concerns
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34 philosophy" understood as the politics of truth (3). In contrast I argue that biopower and its
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36 disciplines can be better understood from the perspective of rhetoric. And once this perspective
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38 on the human sciences shifts, an important set of dyads – active/passive, agent/patient, voice/ear
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40 – appear differently and the art of listening itself emerges as vital.
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48 On the way toward this conclusion, however, we first must take seriously the practical
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50 work of moving souls. As noted above, psychology, pedagogy, and politics should be revisited as
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52 practical arts, like rhetoric, instead of soft natural sciences that exercise biopower. Doing so
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54 obliges a return to the origins of the human sciences not in Foucault's Classical age but, rather,
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3 two centuries earlier when the reformation of human nature became a central concern at least in
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5 the European and colonial contexts.¹⁴
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10 II. Rhetoric and the Origin of the Human Sciences

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12 Although one would not know it from reading Georges Gusdorf, Michel Foucault, Donald
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14 Kelley, Roger Smith, Fernando Vidal or, for that matter, most of the recent scholarship in the
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16 leading journal on the topic *History of the Human Sciences*,¹⁵ the German Reformation
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18 theologian and rhetorician Philipp Melanchthon can be credited for practically grounding the
19
20 modern human sciences. Melanchthon's innovation lies in his practical treatment of a human
21
22 being forged at the intersection of two theological principles. First, since God works in and
23
24 through a living human being, human nature can be studied in terms of natural philosophy and
25
26 not just Scripture. Second, since human nature is wanting – *Infirma natura hominum* – we are
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28 subject to the practical arts of medicine and rhetoric, the two disciplines that provide some hope
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30 of therapy: medicine addresses the pathologies of the body and rhetoric addresses the pathologies
31
32 of the soul. Considering Melanchthon's influence in the schools and universities across Europe,¹⁶
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34 it is worth reconsidering these humanistic origins of the modern human sciences designed to
35
36 *reshape* humankind instead of merely describing it or subjecting it to experimental science. I
37
38 now revisit some counterintuitive disciplinary arrangements in the early modern context in order
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40 to circumvent received assumptions about how the human sciences work, sciences that addressed
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42 the new needs of a reformation by cobbling together pre-existing sources and practices.
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51 As preparation for the traditional higher faculties of medicine, theology, and law,
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53 Melanchthon defines three arts: the art of "persuasion" that includes moral philosophy, history,
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55 and the study of literature-as-moral-example; the art of logic that includes grammar, dialectic,
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3 and rhetoric; and the art of physics. Since all arts are means to maintain private life or guide
4 public life, the *genos protreptikon*, *genos logikon*, and *genos phusikon* are ultimately taught for
5 practical reasons.¹⁷ At the risk of further complicating matters, it is critical to recognize that
6 rhetoric – as either specific art or as architectonic – is central to all three of these disciplinary
7 modalities: 1) it is a source for logical topics and for training in syllogistic thinking in the *genos*
8 *logikon*; 2) it is the traditional domain in which one learns how ethos and pathos persuade and is
9 thus a source for the *genos phusikon*; and finally 3) rhetoric orients study in physics to its proper
10 end, namely, the partial restoration of lapsed human nature. Thus rhetoric is a source for
11 Melanchthon's *genos protreptikon*, or civic art of persuasion. Moreover there is every indication
12 that Melanchthon consciously put rhetoric to use in architectonic fashion. In an important preface
13 to Cicero's *De officiis*, for instance, Melanchthon announces the efficacy of this Greek (or more
14 specifically pseudo-Galenic) idea: "An art is a system of habituated definitions the end of which
15 is to foster life." Immediately citing Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, rhetoric then is identified as
16 the single and sufficient example of such an art.¹⁸ Scientific projects that foster life, in other
17 words, are modeled on the art of rhetoric *à la* Quintilian, who had carefully defined the spheres
18 of activity where such rhetorical fostering is possible. Perhaps more importantly, from
19 Melanchthon's perspective, those definitions had become habituated over time so that human
20 lives were already bound up materially in the project of renewing human nature. That is why
21 Melanchthon gives us a strange physics of human nature, instead of a metaphysics one might
22 readily expect from a theologian like him.

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51 More broadly, human nature in the early European sixteenth century was the product of a
52 science designed to master the physics of passivity. What deserved scrutiny was not our
53 depraved natural desires and inclinations but rather the dynamics of passive susceptibility: how
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3 we listen, learn, and change. Once again, this is why rhetoric assumed an important position in
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5 both Reformation doctrine and practice. The rhetorical tradition had established in fine detail the
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7 mechanics of speech situations, pedagogy, and motions of the soul. Comparing Melanchthon's
8
9 final *Rhetoric* to his *Liber de anima* (on the soul), we see in dramatic terms the transfer of
10
11 techniques from the discipline of rhetoric to theology, to political science and beyond.
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15 Following classical design, Melanchthon divides the parts of an oration into the
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17 exordium, narration, proposition, confirmation, rebuttal, and peroration. The peroration
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19 materializes rational argument by way of the emotions, and it provides a model for the
20
21 hermeneutics of reading Scripture. But it is the scientific implications of the exordium that are of
22
23 particular interest. According to Melanchthon, the function of the exordium is to "prepare the
24
25 souls of the auditors" along three lines (*praeparandi sunt animi audientium*): auditors are
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27 rendered benevolent, attentive, and docile (*benevolos, attentos et dociles*). First, benevolence is
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29 achieved when the business at hand is set up in terms of quotidian niceties, whether that be
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31 appreciation for the opportunity to speak, a self-deprecating comment, or some other device one
32
33 uses as an indirect invitation to listen. It also is a strategy the speaker uses to establish his
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35 honesty, credibility, and amicability before the real issue is addressed. Melanchthon offers an
36
37 example from Paul because it ties rhetorical art to everyday life: Paul begins his letter to the
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39 Romans by praising their lived faith. Second, according to Melanchthon auditors are rendered
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41 attentive when the magnitude and significance of the issue at hand is emphasized, as when Paul
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43 tells the Romans that he is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God. Finally,
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45 auditors are rendered docile, for example when Paul gets to the heart of the matter: the gospel
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47 reveals God's grace.¹⁹ Thus Melanchthon offers much more than illustrations of technical
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49 rhetorical principles as did many scholars of biblical rhetoric.²⁰ He expands their disciplinary
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3 scope from the classroom exercise and university disputation to everyday religious experience,
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5 as it takes rhetorical form.
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8 Everyday rhetoric renovates the image of God that languishes in human nature. As
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10 Melanchthon remarks in his *Liber de anima*, although humankind is fallen, nevertheless there
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12 remains in humankind a vestige of God expressed by way of common sense (a Stoic *sensus*
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14 *communis*). The notions thus expressed are both precepts of natural law (e.g. Thou shalt not kill)
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16 and unambiguous formulae, such as the syllogism that allows one to apply natural law in any
17
18 given case (I shall not kill). The image of God that produces in human nature this *lumen naturale*
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20 is no doubt weak, but it can be strengthened by way of sacred rhetoric. One invokes God in daily
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22 prayer (*quotidiana invocazione*) and considers God's testimony inscribed by way of *logos*, the
23
24 Word.²¹ What we witnesses, then, as we move from a treatise on good speaking to theology is
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26 that the rhetorical techniques used to persuade remain the same, but the rhetorical situation is
27
28 redoubled. The self is rendered benevolent, attentive, and docile by way of daily prayer. Only
29
30 after souls are readied can the Holy Ghost act as rhetor, delivering God's message.
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32 Melanchthon's discussion of self-persuasion clearly harkens back to Quintilian. But the inner life
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34 in which it functions has been renewed. Where hope dilates and guilt convolutes, prayer is
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36 oriented toward a life worth living.
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43 Augustine, himself a teacher of rhetoric, encouraged preachers to entreat and reprove,
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45 rebuke and exhort where reason resisted.²² But it was first in the Reformation that the Holy
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47 Ghost was boldly described as "rhetor," distending in resolute hope those hearts that had been
48
49 brutalized by more violent passions. Witness Luther in his commentary on Psalm 121:
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52 These words are better read in the future tense: "It will not come to pass that your foot
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54 will move, nor that he who watches over you will sleep." This verse stands in relation to
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3 the previous insofar as the prophet had made a promise, indeed has pressed with
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5 promises, urging and exhorting to retain faith in divine aid. It is however absolutely
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7 necessary to encourage and urge not only others, but ourselves, in response to those
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9 dangers and vexations which are visible and immediate. For the things that sadden us are
10
11 present, while those that console us are absent. Wherefore it is necessary that, while those
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13 things that vex us are present, we are encouraged through the Word to patience and
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15 perseverance. Moreover this experience should be conjoined to doctrine. For our eyes are
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17 much too weak to extend to the invisible, to see the end of present affliction. Our nature
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19 retains a way to see how it can be freed, but when this is not evident we are tormented by
20
21 invisibility and absence. We therefore need exhortations so that (if I may express it so)
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23 the shallow and constricted nature of our heart is dilated, enhanced, and prolonged. . . .

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29 The Holy Ghost rhetorizes [*rhetoricatur*] in order to illustrate the Promise.²³

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32 It is a passage stunning both in its interpretive strength and in its bold flirtation with blasphemy.
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34 Associated over the centuries with lowly arts of cooking and magic, lying and loquacity, rhetoric
35
36 would seem a bitter pill to give the Holy Ghost.
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39 Let us summarize rhetorical formulas Luther assimilates into what we might call his
40
41 religious existentialism.²⁴ First Luther insists that *absentia praesentia facere* (making absent
42
43 things present) is a solipsistic principle before it is altruistic: we must persuade ourselves if we
44
45 are to have any hope of persuading others. Similarly Quintilian VI.2.26 offered this advice about
46
47 good rhetoric: "essential for moving the emotions of others is first to move oneself." However
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49 Luther expands this rhetorical principle beyond the altruistic, where one conjures emotion for the
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51 sake of another represented in court, for example, raising it to the level of an existential
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53 principle. He describes how our nature is brutalized by seeing only what is directly before the
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3 eyes, most often things dangerous and vexing. Hearts without hope of redemption are full of fear,
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5 confined to the passions that correspond to terrible memory and present threat. What one lacks in
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7 this state of nature is a visceral sense of a future that might be anything other than more of the
8
9 same. Hope is what the Holy Ghost provides by way of rhetoric in a vivid future tense: it is the
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11 divine Promise that speaks through the Gospel. So just as classical rhetoricians recommended
12
13 that the rhetor stir fortuitous emotions in the legal or political arena by rendering the absent
14
15 present, Luther suggests that the Holy Ghost implants patience and perseverance in the heart by
16
17 vividly illustrating a future full of hope. Where a juriconsult can illustrate circumstances of a
18
19 crime in detail vivid enough to make judges weep (*enargeia* in Greek and *illustratio* in Latin),
20
21 the historical Passion of Christ can be illustrated, in detail vivid enough to make it felt
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23 immediately in the sinner's heart, inspiring faith. For Luther, then, faith is a calm emotion and
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25 the product of a sacred rhetoric.²⁵
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32 Against this Lutheran background we notice how Melanchthon's physics of persuasion
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34 spills from inner life into the political arena and beyond, into the entire spectrum of human
35
36 activity. Analyzed in *Liber de anima* as a subcategory of the *potentia locomotiva*, the "passive
37
38 intellect" lets things happen. Melanchthon writes,
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41
42 Following upon the activity of the inventive intellect, another faculty recognizes and
43
44 accepts the resulting dictate. This faculty is called the passive intellect. Aristotle sees it in
45
46 all of life: in the arts, in public and private deliberation, in military strategy, in poetics
47
48 and eloquence. Certainly the passive intellect can be more or less acute and is always
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50 stronger when combined with the inventive – the latter being the stronger of the two
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52 faculties. As Themistocles needed forethought and the creative intellect to persuade
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3 citizens to leave the city and board ships, invention must eventually be reconciled with
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5 the deliberative capacities of an audience and find acceptance."²⁶
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8 Even if agency overpowers patience, patience is nonetheless necessary for activity to take effect,
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10 and this principle could have radical consequences across the spectrum of everyday experience.
11
12 A few examples are illustrative. Radical reformer Sebastian Franck in his *Paradoxes* (1534)
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14 would say that only through sheer suffering, resignation, and surrender might one impregnated
15
16 by the power from on high. Later, in the English context (c. 1609), John Donne would pursue a
17
18 similar passive principle in his holy sonnet "Batter My Heart, Three-Person'd God." But the
19
20 principal could also have practical consequences for everyday experience including what one
21
22 learns in school. Luther would say that that the Word of God finds entrée through natural and
23
24 sacred languages so one should study passively in order to become a better vehicle. Melanchthon
25
26 warns that products of the inventive intellect, if they are to have any consequences, need to be
27
28 heard, understood, and synthesized in sometimes pedestrian forms. Only then, and only if
29
30 circumstances are appropriately disposed, might one expect life to be lived well enough. Or, to
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32 put this in terms of the disciplines available in this Reformation context, the human sciences
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34 conceived rhetorically might make life barely livable as they provide some practical
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36 opportunities for self and social improvement.
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43 Melanchthon's insertion of rhetoric into the nascent human sciences, or what he calls the
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45 (practical) arts, is both influential in its own right and representative of a larger tendency.
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47 Perhaps most significantly Erasmus in 1526 had similarly called attention to the proper use of
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49 practical arts of the soul by translating and introducing three of Galen's treatises. No doubt
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51 Melanchthon evokes Erasmus when defining in his own work the *artes animum*, which turns out
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53 to be a key term not far from Foucault (see below).²⁷ However the Humanist Melanchthon was in
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3 a unique position to articulate the human sciences – including rhetoric – in new and
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5 consequential fashion by adjusting breakthroughs in natural philosophy to the new demands of
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7 Lutheran theology.
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10 The human sciences are a direct result of a theology that puts tremendous weight on
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12 humankind's fallen nature. There is indeed something to the claim of Kristeller, Garin and
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14 Trinkaus that the view of humankind in Reformation thought was dour, at least in comparison to
15
16 the expressed optimism of Renaissance philosophers. But out of a deep pessimism about the
17
18 natural capacities of lapsed humankind came the opportunity to intervene systematically and
19
20 radically in the human condition. If not born, at least the good person might be made. So starting
21
22 with the obscure image of God in humankind (*imago Dei*), human nature would have to be
23
24 invented practically from scratch. It is thus no accident that the Reformation produced a series of
25
26 fervent pedagogues, preachers, and other meddlers in human affairs, including those experts in
27
28 rhetoric, the Jesuits of the counter-Reformation. The political dimension of sacred rhetoric is
29
30 expressed, for instance, in the grand style by confessor to Louis XIII and political rival of
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32 Richelieu, Nicolaus Caussin.²⁸ Rhetoric could play into Jesuit strategy: the divine origin of
33
34 sacred rhetoric empowered its legitimate spokespeople above kings; rhetoric's exegetical powers
35
36 could save deluded Christians; and its ability to mediate distance made it possible to reach non-
37
38 Christians either at home or in the most remote outposts of the expanding Christian world.
39
40 Ultimately, no matter where one stood in the Christian world, one could learn from Caussin's
41
42 rhetoric of power. The *Eloquentiae sacrae et humanae parallela* was read beyond French
43
44 borders, and reprinted, for instance, as late as 1681 in Köln. And despite its confessional
45
46 specificity, it would be canonized by Daniel Georg Morhof in his history of rhetorical
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48 pathologies.²⁹
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3 I should make it clear that this is not a faith-based argument about the origins of the
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5 human sciences, nor is it even a scholarly argument from the point of view of theology or
6
7 religious studies. Instead the argument here is that secular rhetorics *worked through* a certain
8
9 kind of religion to produce the early human sciences. The most salient religious fact in the
10
11 context examined is that humankind sins, and sin cannot be attributed to God. Its immediate
12
13 causes lie elsewhere. Sin is the wedge driven into the chain of causation that might have run
14
15 unbroken from God through humankind down to the smallest atom in the universe. It violently
16
17 wrenches open a gap in which human behavior is undetermined, where urgings, threats, and the
18
19 art of persuasion are all that one has, where ultimately transient institutions such as ritualized
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21 prayer and civil law provide what stability there is, where Satan and cynical social technology
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23 are constant threats. Sin makes sacred rhetoric necessary, and rhetoric dissolves in the human
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25 sciences.
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32 But what does Melancthon's strange science of humankind have to do with our current
33
34 conception of the human sciences? Is it simply a path not taken on the way to positive human
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36 science, an inspired curiosity trotted out for our amusement before returning to the dustbin of
37
38 history? Melancthon's practical arts of the soul in fact challenge both the philosophical
39
40 distinction between human and natural science, and the historiography that gives this distinction
41
42 its form. Even beyond Foucault it is still difficult to find "human science" and "human nature"
43
44 treated in a manner appropriate to our field. Here are some key instances. Though common
45
46 practice especially in the German context, it is nonetheless anachronistic to apply the term
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48 human sciences, or *Geisteswissenschaften*, to disciplines predating the mid-nineteenth century,
49
50 when the term was established by Schiel, Helmholtz, and Droysen as a catch-all contrary to the
51
52 natural sciences, or *Naturwissenschaften*.³⁰ J. S. Mill's "moral sciences" would be equally
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3 problematic nomenclature for the domain established by Melanchthon, because it aimed at
4 deducing social laws and establishing causes, not transforming people and populations.³¹ Finally
5
6 Aristotle's "practical sciences" is a misnomer translated from the other side of history as it carves
7
8 out a domain "made or modified by man" contrasting with the domain of natural science.³² So
9
10 generally there are two ways this philosophical distinction is made. One follows the tradition of
11
12 German hermeneutical philosophy in drawing a fundamental distinction between the practical
13
14 human sciences and theories of "natural" things, with the former treating changeable human
15
16 habits, skills and institutions, and the latter treating physical phenomena subject to precise
17
18 definition and knowledge. The "positivist" position, by contrast, draws the distinction between
19
20 human and natural science not as a philosophical principal so much as a matter of degree. That is
21
22 to say, the human sciences are thought to differ from the natural sciences not because they treat
23
24 essentially different objects using essentially different methods, but rather because the former is
25
26 a "soft," or less rigorous version of the latter. In this positivist scenario the emergence of the
27
28 human sciences is usually located in the early Enlightenment and, more specifically, in the sort
29
30 of desire Hume expressed in his *Treatise of Human Nature* to do for internal human nature what
31
32 Newton had done for external nature. No doubt the clarity of these hermeneutic and positivist
33
34 positions has been disputed and the periodizations contested, but basic contours of this division
35
36 remain influential.

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39 Melanchthon's Reformation project encourages us to relax our fixation upon natural
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41 scientific initiatives of the seventeenth and eighteenth century that obscure what was, and still is,
42
43 broadly taken to be humanistic in the human sciences. For Melanchthon rhetoric as an
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45 architectonic discipline not only teaches, it also transposes emotions and moves the soul; it
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47 establishes functional patterns for those disciplines explicitly designed to reflect upon and
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3 systematically intervene in human activity. Although it had an irreducible descriptive moment,
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5 Melanchthon's proto-human science was essentially *prescriptive*, designed to cure and refashion
6
7 humankind into more graceful creatures. With this rhetoric of the human sciences in view, then,
8
9 a whole host of rhetorical phenomena start to make sense where they might not have otherwise.
10
11 Most importantly, when we shift our perspective from a classical "art of speech" to sacred
12
13 rhetoric as it infuses the early modern human sciences and its particular concern with human
14
15 experience transformed, rhetoric reappears as the "art of listening." With this new perspective on
16
17 hand it becomes possible to make sense of some historical objects of study that would otherwise
18
19 remain strange or obscure, one of which is rhetoric as the art of listening as it appeared in
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21 English literature after the Reformation.
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27 Simply listing some sermon titles provides a sense for the auditory culture we have
28
29 largely forgotten: Hugh Roberts, *The day of hearing* (1600), Robert Wilkinson, *A sermon of*
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31 *hearing, or, jewell for the ear* (2nd ed. 1602), Stephen Egerton, *The boring of the eare* (1623),
32
33 William Harrison, *A plaine and profitable exposition, of the parable of the sower and the seede.*
34
35 *wherein is plainly set forth, the difference of hearers, both good and bad* (1625), Thomas
36
37 Shepherd, *Of Ineffectual Hearing the Word* (2nd ed. 1652).³³ Meanwhile natural-scientific
38
39 treatises such as Richard Brathwaite's *Essaies upon the five senses* (1620) and contemporaneous
40
41 dramatic works including Shakespeare's acoustically paranoid *Othello* set the stage for a culture
42
43 generally interested in "the other side of language." Indeed as Kenneth Gross suggests in
44
45 *Shakespeare's Noise*,³⁴ Renaissance drama revolves around the work of slander, hearsay, and
46
47 other obvious forms of social audition that travesty "the common Renaissance emblem of the
48
49 ruler as a Herculean rhetorician, able to draw those who hear him by fantastic chains that radiate
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51 from his mouth to their ears" (and here you might recall for example the frontispiece to Thomas
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3 Wilson's 1560 *Art of Rhetoric*).³⁵ Moreover in Renaissance drama and beyond, continues Gross,
4 "the ear of the king, the confessor, the judge, the spy, the actor, the lover – each is different"
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6
7 (35), which again has ramifications for the rhetorician. Finally with Neil Rhodes we should
8
9 remember sensual hierarchy was an explicit concern of the period: for instance Robert
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11 Robinson's (1617) *Art of Pronunciation* draws an anxious distinction between the *vox audienda*
12
13 and *vox videnda*, where the first is the audible voice and the second a voice visible in writing.³⁶
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15 These examples are a first indication that rhetorical theory should be just as nuanced regarding
16
17 the listener as the speaker. As scholars we should be able to consider how the listener, like the
18
19 speaker, is constituted as such. Here my suggestion is that our revised history of the human
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21 sciences help us understand how literature like this might actually be central to the early modern
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23 context where it appears most prominently.
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30 So how exactly does the ear figure differently in this literature? Listening is not just the
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32 road to passive indoctrination. Nor is the reverse adequate: the active listener-as-judge tells only
33
34 part of the story, which means that many of our more recent efforts to recuperate the agency of
35
36 the auditor miss the point.³⁷ Most importantly, listening in this literature is characterized
37
38 explicitly as a public, not a private, act. Of course for the devout, listening to the Word of God is
39
40 the acoustic event *par excellence*, which in turn poses a problem for our more recent social
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42 scientists of communication since from a secular perspective there would be nothing to hear,
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44 literally speaking: listening to the Word of God would have to be a metaphorical stand-in for an
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46 event of some other kind subject to social science, empirically understood. What, then, does it
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48 look like when a listening model is built around this nonevent? Significantly for these ministers
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50 of the Word, the privacy of the home is reserved for private prayer whereas *the public sphere is*
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52 *for listening*.³⁸ "Cannot we sit at home and read a sermon?" asks an imaginary interlocutor in
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3 Jeremiah Burroughes's 1646 *Gospel-worship ... hearing the Word*. No, because "the great
4 ordinance is the preaching of the word, faith comes by hearing, the Scripture saith and never by
5 reading."³⁹ Several ministers later collect their advice in a treatise *Concerning Hearing the Word*,
6 which dramatically qualifies what they call the "bare hearing" of sacred scripture "read in a more
7 private Way, and by Persons of a private Character."⁴⁰ In sum "hearing the Word preach'd is a
8 social Duty" unlike prayer, which can be done in private (25). Fundamental in all of these
9 accounts is the assumption that listening, like speaking, is a highly complex, rhetorical activity
10 that warrants constant practice and reflection. Consistent with the nascent human sciences we
11 have been tracking this far, early modern rhetoric as the art of listening is "meta-practical."
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24 Along with scriptural injunctions to hear truly and not just barely, these Puritan treatises
25 and sermons provide all sorts of practical injunctions. Prepare the soil by meditating upon
26 Scripture and completing worldly business that might distract you; then in church continue to
27 fight the enemies of attention such as stray thoughts, wandering eyes, needless shifting and
28 stirring, irreverent talking and laughing; come to church with something in your stomach but not
29 too much, otherwise you'll doze off; remember to jostle your slumbering neighbors, and so on.
30 After all, if one can stay awake for a play and thereafter repeat long discourses point for point,
31 then certainly one should be able to do the same in church, observes Thomas Taylor.⁴¹ For
32 Stephen Egerton the social character of hearing entails concrete social responsibility: the social
33 body must be in place at the right time in order for the public ear to function, and therefore
34 individuals have the responsibility to mobilize those who would otherwise be dismembered,
35 namely children, the elderly, the infirm.
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52 Why, ultimately, does the art of listening seem to us like a minor motif in the grand
53 symphony of rhetorical speech, a reversal of the order of things where the major modern theme
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3 points with Foucault toward a convergence of secular powers realized in the social body? In fact
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5 during the latter part of his career Foucault worked on transformative arts of the soul, which is
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7 when he discovered, not coincidentally, rhetoric as the art of listening in the second sophistic. To
8
9 cite one example from a late lecture published as *Technologies of the Self*, Philo of Alexandria's
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11 interpretation of the Bible provides a very precise indication of the way people must listen.⁴² At
12
13 this point Foucault's thesis is that oral rhetoric (including dialogue) as a civic art gives way to
14
15 new technologies of the self, including writing and listening, where self exploration and self
16
17 mastery (even subjection) are more important than mastery in a civic domain. "In Plato the
18
19 themes of contemplation of self and care of the self are related dialectically through dialogue.
20
21 Now in the imperial period we have the themes of, on the one side, the obligation of listening to
22
23 truth and, on the other side, looking and listening to the self for the truth within difference
24
25 between the one era and the other is one of the great signs of the disappearance of the dialectical
26
27 structure" (33). However Foucault the philosopher (of a sort) never systematically revisited *The*
28
29 *Order of Things* with these practicalities at hand; we therefore are left with epistemic projects of
30
31 biopolitical management. That said, in 1978 Foucault does come very close to a revision, so it is
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33 worth concluding this section with a reminder why, although Foucault knew something
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35 substantial about rhetoric, his philosophical orientation misled ultimately.
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44 *Security, Territory, Population* is about how early modern governmentality emerged out
45
46 of the Christian pastorate which has roots in Saint Gregory Nazianzen echoing up through the
47
48 eighteenth century and the familiar traditional form of *regimen animarum* or the "government of
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50 souls" (151) – a power exercised not on unified territories but on "a multiplicity on the move"
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52 (126). Rhetoric, we might reasonably think? No says Foucault, and he says as much:
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3 Finally, and above all ... and it is this that I would like to stress, is that in Christianity the
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Finally, and above all ... and it is this that I would like to stress, is that in Christianity the
pastorate gave rise to an art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding, taking in hand, and
manipulating men, and art of monitoring them and urging them on step-by-step, an art
with the function of taking charge of men collectively and individually throughout their
life and at every moment of their existence. For the historical background of this
governmentality that I would like to talk about, this seems to me to be an important,
decisive phenomenon, no doubt unique in the history of societies and civilizations. From
the end of antiquity to the birth of the modern world, no civilization or society has been
more pastoral than Christian societies. And I do not think that this pastorate, this pastoral
power, can be assimilated to or confused with the methods used to subject men to a law
or to a sovereign. Nor can it be assimilated to the methods used to train children,
adolescents, and young people. It cannot be assimilated to the formulae employed to
convince, persuade, and lead men more or less in spite of themselves. In short, the
pastorate does not coincide with politics, pedagogy, or rhetoric. It is something entirely
different. It is an art of "governing men..." (165).

I am suggesting that we, as rhetoricians, take up this project Foucault never completed for
broadly philosophical reasons, returning to the scene where our modern scientific disciplines
emerged, and figure out more accurately how different our world looks when the rhetorical
origins of the human sciences are revitalized.

A traditional "ought" discipline instead of a social scientific "is" discipline, rhetoric
provides an especially useful analytic because it catalogs compensatory models calibrated to the
fragments of a particular age wherein, for instance, the "good man speaking well" implicates
people who will never be up to the task, as well as fragile institutions that cannot be realized

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3 without training designed to overcome initial conditions of physical immaturity, inarticulateness,
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5 incompetence, and ethical inadequacy: vanishing points of original sin. In fact we have seen how
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7 the human sciences have an altogether different genealogy discernible by way of sacred rhetoric,
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9 or the art of moving souls gracefully. And this genealogy has implications for rhetorical theory
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11 that now is interested in the political arts of life management or biopower.
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18 III. Implications Historiographic and Biopolitical

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20 We can now better understand what Martin Heidegger was up to in his crucial 1924 lecture
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22 course on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which does not follow the later tradition of grouping that work
23
24 with the logics and the *Poetics*, but rather counterintuitively with the *Physics*, *On the Soul*, and
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26 *On the Movement of Animals*.⁴³ Situating rhetoric with physics actually has a substantial tradition
27
28 going back to Aristotle, as Heidegger demonstrated with dramatic flair in his SS 1924 lecture
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30 course which was delivered at the same time that he was working intensively on Luther's
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32 phenomenology of the passions, and engaging Wilhelm Dilthey's rhetorically-sensitive work on
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34 the human sciences where Melanchthon played an important role. Heidegger, in these 1924
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36 lectures, resituates Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in the Aristotelian corpus understood very differently in
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38 comparison to his academic contemporaries: not as bifurcated projects with natural sciences on
39
40 one side and human sciences on the other, but rather as methodologically continuous with
41
42 Aristotle's *Physics* providing many of the basic concepts. Or as Heidegger put it in his 1922
43
44 introduction to the Aristotle book that never appeared but rather morphed into *Being and Time*:
45
46 "Beings in the how of their being-moved became the central phenomenon for Aristotle, and the
47
48 explication of this phenomenon was the main topic of his physics" (126). It is in this scholarly
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50 context where rhetoric is rediscovered by Heidegger – *beings in the how of their being-moved* –
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3 contra the schoolmen and schoolteachers who would make it instrumental, contra the classicists
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5 who would make it some superadded aesthetic, and contra the historians of the human sciences
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7 who would ignore rhetoric altogether, unless narrowly attached to one unseemly type of political
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9 art.
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13 Meanwhile when Theodore Kisiel notes the "perversity" of Heidegger's 1924 interest in
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15 rhetoric as the art of listening, we can now see how it's not so strange after all. What ties these
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17 two puzzles together should now sound familiar. It can be posed as a simple formula worked out
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19 with great complexity by Heidegger in 1924: again not just Being, but being-moved. The SS
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21 1924 lecture course on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was first scheduled as a course on Augustine before
22
23 Heidegger changed the topic in the effort to accelerate his planned book on Aristotle. As
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25 Heidegger tries systematically to provide "the [ontological] concepts for things which are usually
26
27 treated in a nebulous way ... in theology,"⁴⁴ Augustine provides crucial material for Heidegger's
28
29 Aristotle interpretation. Consider, for instance, Augustine in *The City of God against the Pagans*
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31 XX. "By 'they that hear' [shall live, comments Augustine on John 5.25] He means those who
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33 obey and believe, and who persevere even to the end" [shall live; *Qui audierint dixit qui*
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35 *oboedierint, qui crediderint et usque in finem perseveraverint*]. But what Augustine describes is
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37 by no means instrumental rhetoric: it would be a mistake to conclude one must simply listen to
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39 and obey God, devote oneself to following God's commandments. His point is that one's very
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41 capacity to hear depends upon how one lives. So with respect to the second resurrection, notes
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43 Augustine, "He does not say, as in the first resurrection, 'and they that hear shall live' [but rather
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45 "all that are in their grave shall hear His voice"; *quando omnes, qui in monumentis sunt, audient*
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47 *vocem eius et procedent*; John 5.28-9]. For all shall not live." What this means, Augustine
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49 explains, is that "not all will have that life which, because it is a life of blessedness, is the only
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3 life worthy to be so called. For, clearly, if they were without any kind of life at all, they would
4 not be able to hear and come forth in their rising bodies." [Non dixit quemadmodum in prima: *Et*
5 *qui audierint, vivent*. Non enim omnes vivent, ea vita scilicet, quae, quoniam beata est, sola vita
6 dicenda est. Nam utique non sine qualicumque vita possent audire et de monumentis resurgente
7 carne procedere].⁴⁵

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15 For Augustine, like Aristotle before him and like Heidegger much after him in 1924,
16 rhetoric is not a skill but is rather meta-practical: rhetoric is a way of life dependent upon what
17 kind of life one lives, which might be for instance blessed or ungodly in religious terms, praise or
18 blameworthy in ethical terms, friendly or unfriendly in political terms. And although Heidegger
19 offers a strong critique of the human sciences divided along the lines of *Geisteswissenschaften* /
20 *Naturwissenschaften* (he is determinedly not a scientist of rhetoric nor is he an intellectual
21 historian), Heidegger's interest in sacred rhetoric as it reorients disciplinary history winds up
22 looking very much like the story we have told insofar as *movere* becomes central to his
23 reorganization and revitalization of Aristotle. For rhetoricians, in short, the history of the human
24 sciences cannot be understood primarily by way of bare-life technologies after Foucault. Instead
25 they must be understood by way of the life that can be lived one way or another, which means
26 that persuasive technologies matter deeply. In the language of early modern disciplinarity,
27 therefore, rhetoric's proper domain is second nature not first, and its purpose is to move people
28 not just know them.

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48 Rhetorical genealogy thus also provides a contrast to Giorgio Agamben's oft cited *Homo*
49 *Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* to the extent that his work relies in this characteristic
50 passage upon Foucault's biopower: as the territorial State passes into the "State of population,"
51 man is subject to bestialization achieved through the most sophisticated political techniques. "For
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3 the first time in history, the possibilities of the social sciences are made known, and at once it
4 becomes possible both to protect life and to authorize a Holocaust."⁴⁶ Again it is crucial to
5 distinguish rhetorical studies from Foucault and Agamben on biopower, which has been
6 explained in the following way. First Agamben reminds us that "The Greeks had no single term
7 to express what we mean by the word 'life'. They used two terms that, although traceable to a
8 common etymological root, are semantically and morphologically distinct: ζωή, which expressed
9 the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods), and βίος, which
10 indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group" (1). Modernity for
11 Agamben is then marked precisely by the collapse of this distinction whereby ζωή is politicized:
12 "the politicization of bare life as such . . . constitutes the decisive event of modernity and signals
13 a radical transformation of the political-philosophical categories of ancient thought" (4). At this
14 point my argument is that we must keep more careful track of the qualified life – βίος for
15 Aristotle and *vita* for Augustine – if we are to understand the early modern human sciences. And
16 to do this rhetoric, not philosophy, is the most helpful disciplinary tool. With Augustine I reply:
17 Not just life but "a life worth living," a life qualified and distinguishable not only from death.⁴⁷
18 Or in contrast to Foucault and some of his most important interpreters including Giorgio
19 Agamben, Roberto Esposito, and Ian Hacking,⁴⁸ not just the territorial State or the State of
20 population where our creaturely life is primary, but the state of our souls – and I mean that
21 practically.

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23 Before closing, I wish to address some doubts about the redemptive aura my genealogical
24 argument might have generated thus far. Is this life worth living just "affirmative biopolitics" as
25 it has been criticized to great effect by Afro-pessimists Fred Moten, Frank Wilderson and Jared
26 Sexton amongst others? Michael Hart offers an example of affirmative biopolitics when he

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3 writes in the *New Left Review* that "Biopolitics is the realm in which we [like Foucault's Cynics]
4 have the freedom to make another life for ourselves, and through that life transform the world."⁴⁹
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8 For instance I think that Sexton would critique Hart's affirmative and specifically pre-racial
9 interpretation of Foucault and Agamben: "The affirmation of blackness, which is to say an
10 affirmation of pathological being, is a refusal to distance oneself from blackness in a valorization
11 of minor differences that bring one closer to health, to life, or to sociality."⁵⁰ In other words, to
12 affirm our being gone awry is sometimes precisely to demonstrate pessimism toward a normative
13 being as such, understood (perhaps incorrectly) as "bare life." I also like to think that the "life
14 worth living" is composed by rhetorical projects that appear in their very failure to train
15 successfully – hence the ear as a welcome defacement of the rhetorical tradition where the voice
16 is primary. After all, transformative projects of the human sciences cannot, by definition,
17 succeed completely and for that we should be grateful.
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32 Finally, those who are less inclined toward genealogical work might still retain some
33 increased degree of skepticism toward the brilliant intellectual projects like Foucault's which
34 may do many things well, but lose track of rhetorical threads on their way toward philosophy.
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36 Sometimes, in other words, we can do more useful work by asking our own questions more
37 consistently and pursuing the answers on our own rich, rhetorical terms, without giving way to
38 the momentum behind some of the leading analytics of our day – not only Foucault's *parrēsia*,
39 but also his discipline and disciplinarity, governmentality, biopolitics, and biopower. Although the
40 issues raised by these Foucauldian lines of inquiry may be important, we would do well to see
41 his own work as the product of particular disciplinary formations, as we draw from different
42 resources altogether.
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¹ Arthur E. Walzer, "Parrēsia, Foucault, and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2013): 1-21. Walzer's article also summarizes the uptake of Foucault and rhetorical studies per se. A lively "Forum on Arthur Walzer's *Parrēsia*, Foucault, and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition" appears in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2013): 355-81. Contributors include Pat J. Gehrke, Susan C. Jarrett, Bradford Vivian, and Arthur E. Walzer.

² Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1970 [1966]), 310.

³ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 309.

⁴ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 318.

⁵ "To sum up, I think that if we look for the operation (*opérateur*) of transformation for the transition from natural history to biology, from the analysis of wealth to political economy, and from general grammar to historical philology, if we look for the operator that upset all these systems of knowledge, and directed knowledge to the sciences of life, of labor and production, and of language, then we should look to population." Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*, eds. Michel Senellart and Arnold J. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 78.

⁶ Along with the pastoral I discuss in this essay, Foucault devotes significant attention in his late lectures to psychagogy as the movement of souls. However this movement is contrasted explicitly with rhetoric insofar as Foucault treats psychagogy (*psukhgōgia*) as a truthful relation to being, which is to say a special kind of philosophical relation. The key passage comes at the end of the final Collège de France lectures where Foucault focuses on Plato's *Phaedrus* in his effort to identify a specifically philosophical and political practice of truth. "The discourse of rhetoric, the mode of being of rhetorical discourse is such that, on the one hand, indifference to the truth means that it is possible to speak for or against, for the just as for the unjust. And, on the

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5 other hand, rhetorical discourse is marked by being concerned solely with the effect to be
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7 produced on the soul of the listener. In contrast, the mode of being of philosophical discourse is
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9 characterized by the fact that, on the one hand, knowledge of truth is not just necessary to it, it is
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11 not just its precondition, but is a constant function of it. And this constant function of the relation
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13 to the truth is in discourse, which is the dialectic, is inseparable from the immediate, direct effect
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15 which is brought about not just on the soul of the person to whom the discourse is addressed, but
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17 also of the person giving the discourse. And this is psychagogy. The *tekhnē* peculiar to the true
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19 discourse is characterized by knowledge of the truth and practice of the soul, the fundamental,
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21 essential, inseparable connection of dialectic and psychagogy, and it is in being both a
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23 dialectician and a psychagogue that the philosopher will really be the parrhesiast, the only
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25 parrhesiast, which the rhetorician, the man of rhetoric cannot be or function as. Rhetoric is an
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27 *atekhnia* (and absence of *tekhnē*) with regard to discourse. Philosophy is the *etimos tekhnē* (the
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29 genuine technique) of true discourse." Michel Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others:*
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31 *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1982-1983*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchell
32
33 (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 335-36.

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40 ⁷ Paul Oskar Kristeller provides the sketch of early modernity dominant in intellectual history
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42 since at least the 1400s. His focus question: "What is the Renaissance philosophy of man?" As it
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44 turns out, Medieval and Renaissance philosophies can be distinguished according to whether
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46 their view of human nature is pessimistic or optimistic. See Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Dignity
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48 of Man," in *Renaissance Concepts of Man and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row,
49
50 1972), 5.

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54 ⁸ See especially Nancy Struever, "Garin, Camporeale and the Recovery of Renaissance
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56 Rhetoric," *Modern Language Notes* 119, no. 1 (2004): 47-55. Struever explains how the Italian
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5 program redid the history of philosophy "not as an internalist account of philosophy as a group
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7 of disciplines – logic, metaphysics, epistemology –, but as responses to a broad range of cultural
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9 events" (48). That is to say philosophy-as-rhetoric / rhetoric-as-philosophy e.g. Ernesto Grassi,
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11 *Rhetoric As Philosophy; The Humanist Tradition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State
12
13 University Press, 1980). I argue in this article that the rhetorical history of the human sciences
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15 has to first untie this rhetoric-philosophy knot which Foucault also adopts counterproductively.
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18 ⁹ *Theologia Rhetorica* lies at the heart of the Trinkaus essay entitled "Themes for a Renaissance
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20 Anthropology." The rhetorical theology Trinkaus finds most pronounced in the writing of
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22 Lorenzo Valla produced a new understanding of human nature by combining Sophistic-
23
24 Ciceronian epistemology with the religious eroticism of Augustine. No longer was man a part of
25
26 a great chain of being, a graduated scale of animal, human and divine, each segment overlapping
27
28 with the next; Platonic metaphysics had been definitively left behind. See Charles Trinkaus, *The*
29
30 *Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 390; A.O.
31
32 Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (New York: Harper and
33
34 Row, 1965). However Trinkaus ultimately treats human nature as a universal concept introduced
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36 in extant literature by the Sophists, revised in Plato's *Timeus*, rendered rhetorical in Cicero's *De*
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38 *officiis*, and restored to the Platonic model in the medieval Christian tradition (running through
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40 Nemesius of Emesa's fourth-century treatise *De natura hominis* to late medieval Scholasticism),
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42 before finding its modern expression in late Renaissance Humanism (343-96).
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49 ¹⁰ Thus Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance self-Fashioning*: "Perhaps the simplest observation we
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51 can make is that in the sixteenth century there appears to be an increased self-consciousness
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53 about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process" Stephen Greenblatt,
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55 *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago
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5 Press, 1980), 2. In a way, Greenblatt radicalizes Burckhardt's claim, arguing that the expression
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7 of human nature – its rhetoric – actually produced the Renaissance individual. In contrast to
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9 Greenblatt I focus on the disciplinary history of rhetoric.
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12 ¹¹ The foremost challenger to rhetoric as architectonic of the human sciences is law. See Donald
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14 R. Kelley, *History, Law, and the Human Sciences* (London: Variorum, 1984); "Altera natura:
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16 The Idea of Custom in Historical Perspective," in *New Perspectives on Renaissance Thought:
17
18 Essays in the History of Science, Education and Philosophy*, eds. John Henry and Sarah Hutton
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20 (London: Duckworth, 1990). Schematically the difference between the two disciplines as
21
22 architectonics of the human sciences is that rhetoric appeals, whereas law punishes and protects.
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26 ¹² See however Hans Blumenberg's important 1970 essay where he defines modernity as the turn
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28 from metaphysics to anthropology. This claim, reminiscent of Dilthey and of Blumenberg's own
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30 masterwork *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (1966), is then given a new twist: as God slowly
31
32 retreats from the modern world, philosophical anthropology begins to generate rhetorics of
33
34 human nature in place of God. Humankind has no unmediated or purely "interior" relationship to
35
36 itself; indeed no predetermined essence or nature whatsoever. Rhetoric provides compensation
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38 for this essential lack, creating the verbal institutions that give self and Other form. Hence we
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40 find the historical subject defined by way of comparison, the school subject trained in the art of
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42 verbal delay, the religious subject formed in ritual prayer – a rhetorical act that is particularly
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44 meaningful to Blumenberg because of its massive historical scope (447). Hans Blumenberg, "An
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46 Anthropological Approach to the Contemporary Significance of Rhetoric," in *After Philosophy:
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48 End or Transformation?* eds. Kenneth Baynes, James Bohman, and Thomas McCarthy, trans.
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50 Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 433, 456.
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5¹³ "Biopower" appears in the first volume of the history of sexuality, *La volonté de savoir* (1976)
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7 which translates to "the will to knowledge" significantly since the subtitle highlights an
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9 epistemic and disciplinary analysis that originates in Foucault's earlier work on the human
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11 sciences and their institutions. Now biopower is contrasted with the subtractive powers of a
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13 sovereign in that the power to take life with the sword becomes one element among others
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15 working to "incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a
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17 power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them..." (136). And
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19 "discipline" in the sense of bodily control as well as in the academic sense now merge in
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21 characteristic fashion. Though Foucault observes that the great technology of power only
22
23 consolidates in the nineteenth century, most was in place earlier: "During the classical period,
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25 there was a rapid development of various disciplines – universities, secondary schools, barracks,
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27 workshops; there was also the emergence, in the field of political practices and economic
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29 observation, of the problems of birthrate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration. Hence
30
31 there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of
32
33 bodies in the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of 'biopower'" (140).
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35 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New
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37 York: Vintage, 1980).

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44¹⁴ Discussions of Melanchthon and English arts of listening are drawn in part from two
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46 previously published essays: Daniel M. Gross, "Melanchthon's Rhetoric and the Practical Origins
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48 of Reformation Human Science," *History of the Human Sciences* 13, no. 3 (2000): 5-22; Daniel
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50 M. Gross, "Listening Culture," *Culture & Rhetoric*, eds. Ivo Strecher and Steven Tyler (New
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52 York: Berghahn, 2009), 59-73.
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¹⁵ Georges Gusdorf, *Introduction aux sciences humaines; essai critique sur leurs origines et leur développement* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1960); Donald Kelly, "The Idea of Custom in Historical Perspective," in *New Perspectives on Renaissance Thought: Essays in the History of Science, Education and Philosophy*, eds. John Henry and Sarah Hutton (London: Duckworth, 1990); Roger Smith, *The Norton History of the Human Sciences* (New York: Norton, 1997); Fernando Vidal, *The Sciences of the Soul: The Early Modern Origins of Psychology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

¹⁶ Sachiko Kusukawa, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: The Case of Philipp Melanchthon* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Heinz Scheible, *Melanchthon: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Beck, 1997); Karl Hartfelder, *Philipp Melanchthon als Praeceptor Germaniae* (Nieuwkoop: Graaf, 1964); T. Muther, *Die Wittenberger Universitäts- und Facultäts-Statuten vom Jahre 1508* (Halle: Buchhandlung des waisenhauses, 1867); C. Scheurl, *Briefbuch, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation und ihrer Zeit*, F. von Soden and J.K.F. Knaake, eds. (Aalen: Zeller, 1962); Lawrence D. Green and James J. Murphy, eds., *Renaissance Rhetoric Short-Title Catalogue 1460-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

¹⁷ Philipp Melanchthon, "De corrigendis adolescentiae studiis," *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl: Studienausgabe*, R. Stupperich ed. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1963), 34-39.

¹⁸ τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐγκαταλψεων ἐγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐνὶ τῷ βίῳ. "Finem seu utilitatem in omnibus artibus in primis spectandam esse probat ex ipsius artis definitione, quae et Quintiliani causa fuit, cur rhetorices finem tam magna cura libro secundo capite decimo octavo quaesiverit." Philipp Melanchthon, "Praefatio in officia Ciceronis," *Corpus Reformatorum Philippi Melanthonis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, eds. C.B. Bretschneider and H.E. Bindseil (Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1846), Volume 11, 257 [hereafter CR].

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5¹⁹Melanchthon, *Elementorum rhetorices libri II*. CR, vol. 13, 431-32.

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7²⁰ For instance Flacius Illyricus [Matthias Flacius], *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae seu de sermone*
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sacrarum literarum, in 2 vols. (Basel: Johannes Oporinus and Eusebius Episcopium, 1567);
Salomon Glassius, *Philologiae Sacrae, qua totius Sacrosanctae, Veteris et Novi Testamenti,*
Scripturae tum stylus et literatura, tum sensus et genuinae interpretationis ratio expenditur; libri
quinque; quorum I. II. Generalia de S. Scripturae stylo et sensu; III.IV. Grammatica Sacra; V.
Rhetorica Sacra (Jena: Steinmann, 1668 [1623]).

21²¹Melanchthon, *Liber de anima*. CR, vol. 13, 171.

22²² Saint Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 120.

23²³"recitus legentur haec in futuro 'Non dabit, ut moveatur pes tuus, neque dormitabit, qui custodit
te.' Cohaeret hic versus cum superioribus, quia enim instituit Propheta exhortationem in idem,
hoc agit, ut his ceu promissionibus instet, urgeat et hortetur ad retinendam illam fiduciam in
auxilium divinum. Est autem summe necessarium adhortari et urgere non solum alios, sed etiam
nos ipsos propter illa visibilia et instantia pericula et vexationes. Quia enim ista, quae contristant,
praesentia sunt, contra quae consolantur, sunt absentia, ideo opus est, dum durant praesentia,
quae vexant, ut verbo exitemur ad perseverantiam et patientiam. Est enim haec experientia
coniungenda cum doctrina. Nam oculi nostri multo sunt obtusiores, quam ut possint ad invisibilia
ista pertingere et finem praesentium afflictionum videre. Hinc fit, ut natura semper circumspiciat
de modo, quo liberari possit, et dum eum non videt, sicut est absconditus et invisibilis, cruciatur.
Opus est igitur hortationibus, ut ista (liceat enim sic loqui) naturalis brevitatis deum angustia cordis
nostri dilatetur, magnificetur, et prolongetur. . . . Rhetoricatur igitur Spiritus sanctus iam, ut
exhortatio fiat illustrior." Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke, kritische Gesamtausgabe*

(Weimar: Böhlau, 1883-1987), vol. 40/3, 59-60. Note the deponent form *rhetoricatur* which has a passive form but an active meaning.

²⁴Klaus Dockhorn, "Rhetorica movet: Protestantischer Humanismus und karolingische Renaissance," in *Rhetorik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte in Deutschland vom 16.—20. Jahrhundert*, Helmut Schanze, ed. (Frankfurt/M.: Athenaion, 1974); "Luthers Glaubensbegriff und die Rhetorik," in *Linguistica Biblica* 21/22 (1973): 19-39; and Dockhorn's famous review of Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode*, in *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 218 (1966): 169-206. For a bibliography on the topic of Luther and Rhetoric see Reinhard Breymayer, "Bibliographie zum Thema "Luther und die Rhetorik," in *Linguistica Biblica* 21/22 (1973): 39-44.

²⁵On this topic see especially Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

²⁶"Alterum officium est postea inventa intelligere, agnoscere, et tanquam dictata accipere. Ab hoc officio nominatur intellectus patiens. Vidit Aristoteles in omni vita, in artibus, in consiliis publicis et privatis, in stratagematibus, in poetica, in eloquentia, alios aliis perspicaciores esse, et inventionem plus valere: Alios inventa intelligere, et suis cogitationibus anteferre, ut Themistocles suadens, ut cives relicta urbe naves ingrediantur, plus valet intellectu faciente, quam alii, sed coeteri intelligunt consilium et adprobant." Philipp Melancthon, *Liber de anima*, CR Vol. 13, 148.

²⁷ Erasmus's translation of Galen: "Agite igitur, o pueri ... ad cognoscendas artes animum appellite ... scientes quaecunque artes nihil adferunt utilitatis ad vitam, has artes non esse." Quoted in Olaf Berwald, *Philipp Melancthons Sicht der Rhetorik* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994), 12.

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5²⁸ Nicolaus Caussin, *Eloquentia sacrae et humaneae parallela libri XVI* (Paris, Sebastian
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7 Chappelet, 1619), 1.

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9²⁹ Daniel Georg Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius philosophicus*, revised edition (Lubeck: Petri
10
11 Bockmanni, 1714), 941.

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14³⁰ For the history of this distinction see Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Significance of the
15
16 Humanist Tradition for the Human Sciences," in *Truth and Method*, second, revised edition,
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18 trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 3-42.

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21³¹ John Stuart Mill, *System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Being a Connected View of the*
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23 *Principles of Evidence, and the Methods of Scientific Investigation* (London: John W. Parker,
24
25 1843).

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28³² Richard McKeon, "Aristotle's Conception of Moral and Political Philosophy," *Ethics: An*
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30 *International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy* 51, no. 3 (1941): 290. McKeon's
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32 influential *Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House, 1941) separates 1) natural
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34 sciences 2) moral and political philosophy i.e. the practical sciences 3) rhetoric and poetic.

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38³³ On this literature see also Ceri Sullivan, "The Art of Listening in the 17th Century," *Modern*
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40 *Philology* 104, no. 1 (2006): 34-71; Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and*
41
42 *Their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

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45³⁴ Kenneth Gross, *Shakespeare's Noise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

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48³⁵ Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University
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50 Press, 1994).

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53³⁶ Neil Rhodes, *Shakespeare and the Origins of English* (Oxford: Oxford University press,
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55 2004), 9.

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³⁷ Though Krista Ratcliffe's award-winning book underscores the "stance of openness" that a person may choose to assume in relation to any person, text, or culture (xiii), her inattention to an alternative genealogy reproduces some familiar problems including most importantly the unnecessary decisionism built into this very definition that emphasizes agency as conscious choice (26). See Krista Ratcliffe, *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness* (Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 2005).

³⁸ Here I have paraphrased Hugh Roberts, *The day of hearing* (London: J. Barnes, 1600), 63.

³⁹ Jeremiah Burroughes, *Gospel-Worship, 1. Hearing the Word* (London: P. Cole and R.W., 1646), 167.

⁴⁰ John Newman, B. Grosvenor, Thomas Bradbury, Jabez Earle, William Harris, and Thomas Reynolds, *Practical Discourses Concerning Hearing the Word; Preach'd at the Friday Evening-Lecture in Eastcheap* (London: Printed by J. Darby, 1713), 9.

⁴¹ Thomas Taylor, *The Parable of the Sower and of the Seed* (London: T. Purfoot, 1634), 42.

⁴² Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 32.

⁴³ Martin Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, GA 18 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2002); translated as *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

⁴⁴ Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 292.

⁴⁵ *The City of God against the Pagans* XX .6 <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/cdd/index2.htm>

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⁴⁶ Giorgio Agamben's landmark *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998 [1995]), 3.

⁴⁷ See also Judith Butler on social death and a life worth living, including the interview: Fina Birulés, Interview with Judith Butler: "Gender Is Extramoral," *MR Zine*, May 16, 2009, <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2009/butler160509.html>

⁴⁸ Robert Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008 [2004]); Ian Hacking sums up his work: "I have long been interested in classifications of people, in how they affect the people classified, and how the affects on the people in turn change the classifications." In Hacking's "10 ways of making people" one can easily recognize Foucault's influence at the level of epistemology and his history of the human sciences: "1. Count! 2. Quantify! 3. Create Norms! 4. Correlate! 5. Medicalise! 6. Biologise! 7. Geneticise! 8. Normalise! 9. Bureaucratise! 10. Reclaim our identity!" *London Review of Books* 28, no.16(2006): 23-26. See also Ian Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

⁴⁹ Michael Hardt writes that Foucault needs the discovery of biopolitics to grapple fully with politics (Michael Hardt, "Militant Life," *New Left Review* 64 (2010): 159. He continues, "The militancy of the ancient Cynics, however, is clearly an entirely different politics of life. Biopolitics is the realm in which we have the freedom to make another life for ourselves, and through that life transform the world. Biopolitics is thus not only distinct from biopower but also may be the most effective weapon to combat it" (159).

⁵⁰ Jared Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," *InTensions Journal* 5 (Fall/Winter 2011).