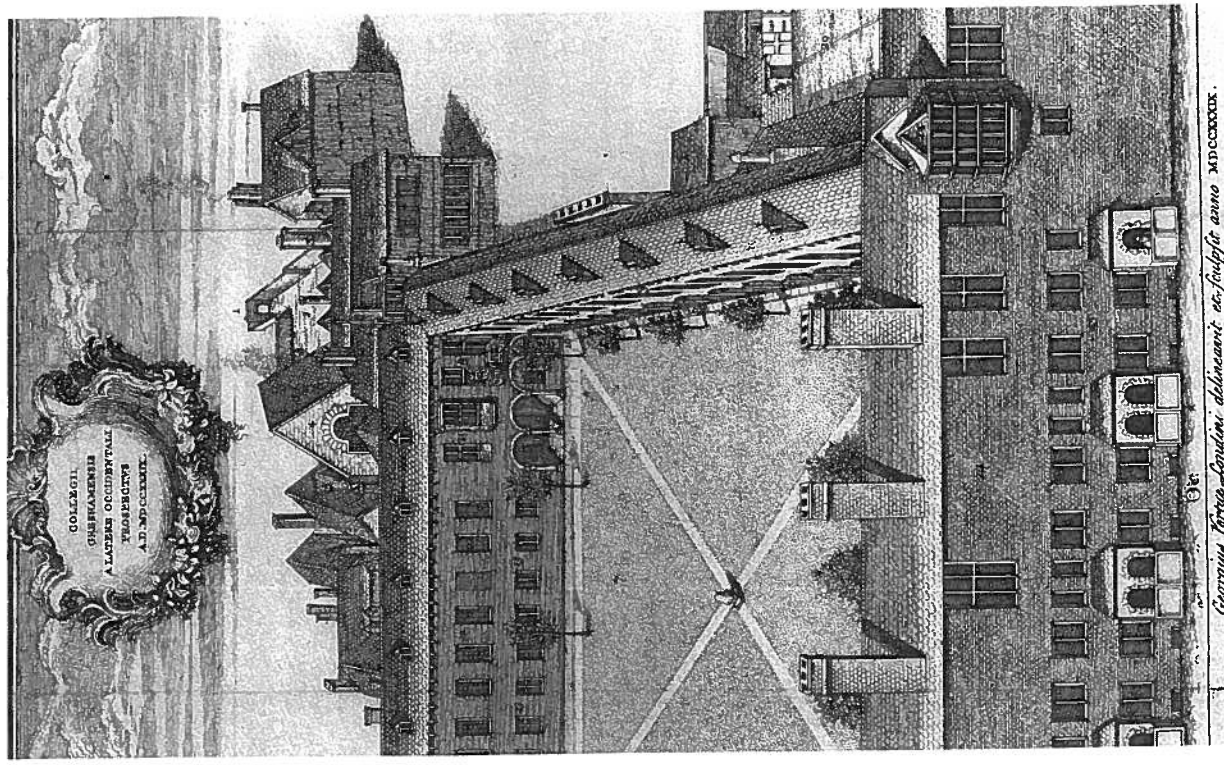


Sir Thomas Gresham and Gresham College

Studies in the intellectual history of
London in the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries

edited by
Francis Ames-Lewis



George Vertue, Gresham College on Bishopsgate detail.
(Detail of engraving for J. Ward, Lives of the Professors of Gresham College,
London, 1740). Guildhall Library, Corporation of London.

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seventeenth centuries. Here I focus on the civic rhetoric that was elaborated in the period 1580 to 1620.

First a short background in rhetorical issues. At the centre of the debate about behaviour is the issue of deceit, particularly of how you know deceit when it is happening. In schematic terms this issue is mapped in the movement from Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetoric* (1553) which portrays the courtier as a 'humanist' and therefore good, to George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) which portrays the courtier as displaying himself and radically ambivalent. Roughly between the two comes Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione's *The Courtier* (1561) which discusses the complex web of being noble by birth and how one displays this nobility in order to insist on a hierarchy of power. Most critics and historians have treated this question as one of ambivalence.³ And, since a fundamental part of rhetoric is ethos, or the presentation of the speaker, if ethos becomes inevitably untrustworthy and ambivalent, then rhetoric necessarily moves to the popular definition we think of today, rhetoric as an unscrupulous mode of communication. However, in all the major writings on rhetoric from Plato onward, rhetoric is not defined in this way alone, but also as at the heart of moral philosophy. So, why does this moral activity 'disappear' from rhetoric in the seventeenth century, especially in the light of the fifteenth- to sixteenth-century humanist revisioning of rhetoric precisely as moral training?

Most work on the issue has looked at the exclusive education system for the aristocratic and wealthy that frequently acted as a precursor to court attendance and public display at a time when display was becoming part of the definition of the subject in the early modern nation (later to become the subject within the ideology of nation states). More recently critics have begun to look at the extensive literature on personal behaviour explicitly in the non-court areas: that of preachers, merchants, doctors, and lawyers.⁴ My own work has been focusing on the more general categories of civic and domestic life.⁵ In the history of courtiership, Frank Whigham, in particular,

³ For example, on stance perception Lawrence Green, 'Stance perception in sixteenth-century ethical discourse', in V. Aarons and W. Salomon (eds), *Rhetoric and ethics: historical and theoretical perspectives* (Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter, 1992), pp. 59-80; on self-fashioning, Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (London, 1980); and on the social construction of identity, Frank Whigham, *Ambition and privilege: the social tropes of Elizabethan courtiership theory* (London, 1984). See also S. May, *The Elizabethan courtier* (Columbia, 1991).

⁴ For example, Douglas Bruster, *Drama and the market in the age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1992); Richard Halpern, *The poetics of primitive accumulation* (London, 1991); and Ceri Sullivan, 'Mercantile Rhetoric', paper given to the International Society for the History of Rhetoric day conference, Leeds, March 1997.

⁵ These categories are firmly in the vernacular. See W. Boucher, 'Vernacular humanism in

Civic rhetoric, 1560-1640

Lynette Hunter

As many of the articles in this volume attest, Thomas Gresham was one of a new group of people who in the Tudor period were defining for themselves, outside the court, a social place of enormous respect and power. Their actions and behaviour are central to the debate raging all through the period concerning gentility and nobility by birth or by actions - a debate that set the terms for the final disruption of the concept of divine power, laid out the vocabulary for the Civil War of the seventeenth century, and formed the basis for the constitution of a 'class' called the bourgeoisie who became the citizens of the liberal social contract.

The discussion of appropriate behaviour and communication, which was emerging in the late sixteenth century, was embedded in the teaching of rhetoric. It has, however, been neglected by historians of rhetoric who still, with some few exceptions, make the story of rhetoric focus implicitly on the separation made by Peter Ramus between rhetoric and logic.¹ Some studies pursue the separation into a discussion of logic as opposed to eloquence, and are concerned with rhetoric as deceit. Others pursue the separation into a discussion of logic as opposed to the rhetoric of poetry with all its ambiguities.² Both of these elements are allied closely to court poetry, and in each case the implication is that rhetoric as a field for dealing with the probable, rather than the certainties of logic and the ambiguities of poetics, simply disappears. This paper will argue that rhetoric as a methodology and philosophy for dealing with the probable is developed quite firmly into *sermo*, or conversational, rhetoric. My argument here is part of a longer work that addresses the issues of courtly, civic, mercantile and professional, familial, personal and psychological behaviour in the sixteenth to

¹ See A. Grafton and L. Jardine, *From humanism to the humanities* (Cambridge, 1986), for an alternative view; see also J. S. Freedman, 'The diffusion of the writings of Petrus Ramus in Central Europe', *Renaissance Quarterly* 46 (1993), pp. 98-152.

² For an overview of early critical response, see J. J. Murphy (ed.), *Renaissance rhetoric*

allies the reception of Italian civic humanism with the development of courtly style. He looks at Castiglione, della Casa, Guazzo and others, as offering versions of definition for the courtier and differing only in whether you think they are exclusionary or not - in other words either there to keep other groups of people out of the nobility, or there to be used by others precisely to get into the ranks of the courtly.⁶

My reading differs, especially with regard to Guazzo who, it seems to me, is suggesting a different kind of rhetoric for the person outside the court. This rhetoric of civic humanism follows the trend of increasingly using the word 'civil' to distinguish not the regal from the court,⁷ but the court from the city. In the process the word takes upon itself the role of arbiter and descriptor of the civic and economic realm, economics referring - at least until 1640 - to the subsistence financing of the household. I read Pettie's translation of Guazzo's *Civile Conversation* (1581) not as a continuation of the Castiglione/Machiavelli line on courtly self-display, but precisely as a debate about how to distinguish that behaviour from other kinds of behaviour that are more trustworthy and less competitive. The word 'conversation' is allied to *sermo* rhetoric⁸ - elaborated on by Cicero not in the *Orator* but in the *De Amicitia* on friendship. Possibly more important, is Erasmus's translation from the Epistle of St John: In the beginning was 'logos' not as *verbum*, as in many bibles of the time, but as *sermo* or conversation,⁹ recalling the Greek understanding of logos as 'proportionality' not a narrow and reductive mode of the rational.¹⁰ 'Conversation' marks the travel of trustworthy rhetoric from the civil court of the 1560s, first into the civic and economic - the realms of the city and household by 1600 - then into a more restricted sense of neighbourliness and the curtailed private family by 1630, and finally, although quite outside the scope of this paper, into the

ism (Cambridge, 1996); J. Martindale, *English humanism: Wyatt to Cowley* (London, 1985); and M. McClintock, 'The Reformation and the emergence of English vernacular rhetoric in mid sixteenth-century England', a paper delivered to the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, 1997.

⁶ See also J. Lievsay, *Stefano Guazzo and the English Renaissance, 1575-1675* (Chapel Hill, 1961), and W. Rebborn, 'Baldesar Castiglione, Thomas Wilson, and the courtly body of Renaissance rhetoric', *Rhetorica* 9, 3, (1991), pp. 207-26.

⁷ See Thomas Hobby, *The Book of the Courtier* (London: David Nutt, 1561), and Richard Mulcaster, *A learned commendation of the politique laues of England*, trans. of Fortescue (London: Richard Tortill, 1567).

⁸ J. Tinkler, 'Renaissance humanism and the genera eloquentiae', *Rhetorica* 5, 3, (1987), pp. 279-309.

⁹ See Richard Cunningham, 'Rhetorical or scientific inconsistency? A gap between programme and practice in early modern science', conference paper to the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, Saskatoon, 1997.

intimacy of religious behaviour,¹¹ the construction of spiritual virtue and the conversation of women. Interestingly 'conversation' became a technical rhetorical term for women's speech in the seventeenth century,¹² and is found well into the eighteenth in for example the work of David Hume.¹³

What is this kind of rhetoric, this code of behaviour that 'conversation' signifies or gestures toward? The key areas under discussion in the 1560-1640 period are behaviour in personal, familial, civic and government locations. They call at each respective juncture on moral, economic, and political or ethical issues. Commentaries from the period discuss the way that behaviour offers evidence in both looks and speech for the 'true' nature of an individual. In the early years of Elizabeth's reign there is extensive discussion on judging people by their looks and bodily gestures, even by their use of force - for if you use force you must believe you are right and therefore, with the rhetorical impulse to assertive persuasion, you are right: might is right. This is despite many commentaries to the contrary which argue that one only uses force if all else fails, and that force is therefore an indication of weakness. Thomas Newton's translation of Lemnius' *Touchstone of Complexions* (1576) observes on its title-page that the state, habit, disposition and constitution of the body are all indicative of inclinations, affections, motions and desires. In 1580 Thomas Blundeville notes that virtue and an honest disposition are distinguished from malicious defrauding by the 'Body'.¹⁴

But during the period up to 1615 a major shift toward speech and away from looks occurs, that is part of a move to democratic principles. It is also anti-militaristic, arguing that war should only happen on behalf of the nation, and it is universalizing. A great deal that is said about *sermo* rhetoric is based on the same arguments. The two ways of assessing behaviour are connected to two systems of rhetoric. One, gesture, is essential to the orator and courtier, and is illustrated in the voluminous and slightly later *Chirologia* (1644) by Bulwer. Yet despite the recent incessant talk about 'body-language', people in most western cultures are not trained formally in gesture. The other, speech, is more familiar to us. It is worth noting here the trope of the eye and the soul, where we look into the soul of another, or their eyes

¹¹ For this, see George Fox, *The Christian Principle and Peaceable Conversation of the People (of God) called Quakers with respect to the King and Government once more asserted* (London [?], 1685).

¹² See, for example, the letters of Dorothy Moore, in the Hartlib Archive, University of Sheffield; Lynette Hunter, *The letters of Dorothy Moore* (forthcoming; Amsterdam, 1999).

¹³ For this, see Nancy Struwer with B. Vickers, *Rhetoric and the pursuit of truth: language change in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Los Angeles, 1985).

¹⁴ Thomas Blundeville *Three Morall Treatises* trans. of Plutarch (London: Henry Denham,

'peace' ours, in a gazing that is not necessarily an interaction.¹⁵ The parallel trope of the tongue and heart has a different emphasis, for the originator/speaker displays his or her heart and the audience hears and recognizes it in a potentially more engaged manner. The two systems are important to the development of conversational or *sermo* rhetoric, which is allied with *negotio* and interaction, and is distinguished, as we shall see, from eloquence, fashion and the gaze. Certainly the two approaches were an issue debated at the time. Puttenham, among others,¹⁶ distinguishes between physiognomy as the clue to manners through the eyes, and writing or speech as the clue to manners through language; and he goes on to claim the latter as the appropriate path.

A RHETORIC STORY FOR CIVIC DISCOURSE

Sixteenth- to seventeenth-century rhetoric is aware of three fields, not just the split between logic and rhetoric as discourses about certain and uncertain things respectively. The three fields are roughly equivalent to those in classical rhetoric of the epideictic, the deliberative or demonstrative, and the judicial. But in the many vernacular texts concerned with civic life they are shifted into (for example) William Fulwood's terms of Myth, Gravity and Doctrine, or T. B.'s translation of Johannes Sturm's work on oratory, which offers the terms Pathetic, Moral and Proportional.¹⁷ Rhetoric comprehends that all logics have their own rhetoric and even rhetorics have stances. Rhetoric also thinks of uncertain things as probable and as plausible: in this, as Agricola attempted to remind people, it lays claim to dialectics.¹⁸ The plausible indeed is the partner of the certain, because one person's certainty is another's arbitrary choice; whereas in the probable all grounds for knowing are first to be discussed and agreed upon. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century rhetorics debate the issues between these kinds of uncertainty at length, and the plenitude of that word 'logos' which Erasmus elaborates into signifying '*sermo, verbum, oratio, ratio, sapientia*, and *computus*'¹⁹, indicates that the debate is not a binary one but is highly complex.

¹⁵ Although the eye can act as a Neo-platonic hook, according to Ficino; see for example, Fleur Rothschild, *Recovering Romeo and Juliet*, PhD, University of London (1987).

¹⁶ George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poetrie* (London: Richard Field, 1589); and see also Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde* (London: V.S. for W.B., 1601).

¹⁷ W. Fulwood, *The Entimie of Idleness* (London: Henry Bynnceman for Leonard Meylard, 1568); T. B., *A Ritche Storehouse or Treasure for Nobilitye and Gentlemen*, trans. Johannes Sturm (London: Henric Denham, 1570).

¹⁸ L. Hunter, 'Watson and McLuhan's From cliché to archetype', in L. Hunter (ed.), *Topos, commonplace and cliché: toward an understanding of analogical reasoning* (London, 1991), pp. 199-227.

Arguably the most contentious of the three areas of rhetoric is the deliberative or demonstrative - and particularly the deliberative, if we take Daic's distinction between the two,²⁰ because the demonstrative is closer to description and therefore less uncertain. The epideictic is largely without pragmatic aim, and the judicial is focused on certainties and evidence. Those middle terms found in Fulwood and Sturm, of Gravity and the Moral, and which pertain to the deliberative and demonstrative, emphasize the importance of knowing how or whether you are being deceived, or if the speaker is trustworthy. They are completely dependent on ethos, as was the earliest printed English rhetoric, Caxton's 'rhetor', whose first instruction was to devise some reason to make the hearer glad and willing to listen to him.²¹ The probable and the plausible make different demands on ethos, the former being grounded in context and necessary debate between rhetor and audience, and the latter being more a matter of constructing an image that the audience will want to accept. I have called these 'stance' and 'ethos' in earlier work. For the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the ethos of the probable is negotiated in conversation, and the ethos of the plausible is often called 'character' and is mediated in 'style'.

The underlying stimulus for several rhetorics from the middle of the sixteenth century is, like that for Thomas Wilson, to distinguish rhetoric from logic, but also to search for the positive effects of rhetoric - even though some, such as Thomas Blundeville, in what could be seen as a desperate attempt to rescue the action of rhetoric, argue that logic is the art of discoursing probably.²² Earlier, in 1573, Ralph Lever is concerned that logic deprives one of the use of copiousness²³ - that topical reasoning so necessary in addressing the diversifying public of the sixteenth-century city, and argues that what one needs is 'witcraft' not logic. Again, Fulwood notes that a civil letter does not use logic but plain familiar speech.²⁴ While these comments are possibly part of the same impetus that led to Peter Ramus's separation of rhetoric from logic that eventually relegated rhetoric to orna-

conference of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, Saskatoon, 1997, from M. O. Boyle Erasmus on language and method in *theology* (Toronto, 1977); *Annotattonum in Evangelium Joannis* 1:2, 1B vi, 335A.

²⁰ Angel Dale, *The English Secretarie* (London: Robert Waldegrave by Richard Jones, 1586), pp. 44 and 84.

²¹ William Caxton, *The Myrrour* (London: printed by L. Andrews of Calis, 1527), D3.

²² Thomas Blundeville, *The Art of Logike* (London: John Wendet, 1599).

²³ Ralph Lever, *The Arte of Reason, rightly termed, Witcraft, teaching a perfect way to argue and dispute* (London: H. Bynnceman, 1573).

²⁴ W. Fulwood, *The Entimie of Idleness*, A7r. See also J. Rice Henderson, 'Erasmus on the art

ment and without reason,²⁵ these writers make the claim that logic can only speak convincingly or be seen as 'proof' when speaking to a restricted and specialized audience. Rhetoric is therefore needed to provide reason in all other areas.

However, Ramusian rhetoric having most effectively reached England in the 1570s, culminating in Abraham Fraunce's *The Arcadian Rhetoric* of the 1580s, the more substantial and direct response came with, for example, the rhetorics of Peacham and Puttenham, which both explicitly argue that ornament is not the only thing that rhetoric does.²⁶ Henry Peacham notes that one needs both eloquence and wisdom; eloquence to pierce to inward parts of the audience or to gain affection is, on its own, ambivalent, and must be anchored by wisdom or reason. George Puttenham reiterates the observation, saying that eloquence alone is ambivalent, and that honesty is necessary, requiring decency and decorum, first because language is transgressive by nature, and second because the speaker speaks of other people and hence has a responsibility toward them. Both of these arguments indicate a concern with the ethos of rhetoric. In a manner similar to Thomas Elyot who, in his *Dictionary* of 1538, takes on both logic and eloquence, Puttenham draws on the analogy of medicine for rhetoric. Elyot is concerned to distinguish between the eloquence of those like the humanist Lorenzo Valla and the 'many words' rhetoric of Agricola, and does so by distinguishing the former from the latter as a lawyer from a doctor - the doctor being best able to determine the contentious and uncertain. Puttenham's famous description of 'art' shows the artist working at his best as a gardener or physician,²⁷ drawing explicitly on Plato's *Phaedrus* which distinguishes the rhetoric of the actor, and the rhetoric of power, from the rhetoric of love and philosophy conveyed through gardening and medicine.

These later rhetorics, and others of the 1580s, are centrally concerned with ethos and with defining the 'reason' or reasoning process of rhetoric, so that one can distinguish the deceitful from the decent and decorous. Many writers such as Puttenham attempt to establish courtly behaviour as learned but not pedantic, and as non-violent. The move reflects more general concerns in the early philosophy of civic discourse to shift the education of the nobility away from hunting and fishing and fighting toward learning. It goes hand in hand with a growing insistence that fighting is inappropriate within the nation or city or family, and is only tenable in war

²⁵ Peter Ramus, *The Rudiments of Rhetoric* (London: Robert Waldegrave, 1585).

²⁶ Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London: H. Jackson, 1577); George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London: Richard Field, 1589).

between nations.²⁸ In itself this becomes part of the founding definition of a citizen: the person willing to go to war on behalf of the nation. It is from the 1590s, despite Fulwood's early commentary, that one finds, more and more, the concerns of civic discourse coming to claim the rhetoric of reason and ethos as appropriate to the civic and as different from the rhetoric of the courtier.²⁹

Having gleaned this set of issues from vernacular rhetorics of the 1560s to the 1590s, I would now like to look specifically at three rhetorics from the turn of the century: first, D. T.'s *Essays Politicke, and Morall* (1608), second Ludwig Bryskett's *Discourse of Civil Life* (1606), and third, James Cleland's *The Institution of a Young Noble Man* (1607). D. T.'s *Essays* are dedicated to the governess of the children of James I, Lady Ann Harrington. In them the writer talks about the distinction between the rhetorical and the eloquent as one explicitly between the probable and the plausible, and outlines two distinct sets of rhetorical strategy. He argues that a rhetorical event consists of the person persuading, the affections of the audience, and the soundness of reason. As such, ethos is central and can be found in two forms. The person persuading wants the audience to be of his opinion, and to achieve this he may simply insist that the audience agree. However, what he should do is demonstrate that he is trustworthy in his heart, his mouth and his works,³⁰ and negotiate with the audience. Significantly, James Cleland's *Institution*, which is dedicated to the King's younger son Charles, also states that even nobility of birth does not guarantee virtue; virtue must be demonstrated and negotiated with the public because this kind of negotiated rhetoric is appropriate to civil conversation. D. T. here and in his later book *The Dove and the Serpent* (1614) is engaging in a defence of 'opinion' or ethos, which is under attack. For example, B. R.'s *Opinion Diefled* (1613) rants:

Opinion, the legitimate child of affection, a most inconstant thing, it standeth but upon the pleasure of men, but especially of the irresolute multitude. Opinion a smooke vapour, the breath of the vulgar, the applause of the ignorant, the mother of hypocrisie ... turneth the world topsie-turvie.³¹

²⁸ Francis Bacon, *The Essays of Sir Francis Bacon* (London: John Beale, 1612 and 1616), p. 239; Richard Robinson, *A morale methode of civile policie, containinge learned and fruitful discourse of the institution, state and government of a common Weale*, trans. of Francesco Patrizi (London: Thomas Marsh, 1576).

²⁹ See M. T. Crane, *Framing authority: sayings, self, and society in sixteenth-century England* (Princeton, NJ, 1993); and J. Hankins, 'Humanism and modern political thought', in Krage (ed.), 1996, pp. 118-141.

³⁰ D. T., *Essays Politicke, and Morall* (London: H. L. for Mathew Lownes, 1608), f. 10v.

³¹ B. R., *Opinion Diefled. Discovering the Ingins, Troupes, and Traynes that are set in this Aee wherebv to catch Obntion. Neither flourished with art or smoothed with flatterie*

The affection of the audience, or pathos, is also clearly under attack, and D. T. goes to some lengths to defend it as under the governance not only of passion and the senses but also of the soul.³²

The third element in D. T.'s rhetorical event is reason, and he argues that it works by way of probable conjecture, to demonstrate need, not, as he says, against a sense of justice and 'honestie',³³ but instead to ensure that reasoning about necessity is wrapped up in and contextualized by ethos. The main strategies are not syllogisms but rhetorical enthymemes and inductions, 'especially when they be seconded by a lively and decent action'.³⁴ And yes, rhetorical eloquence may be separated from 'decencie', at which point it becomes 'a dangerous weapon in a mad man's hand'.³⁵ And yes, it may be abused, especially when government is impoverished. But it need not be like this plausible rhetoric aimed at 'sharpness' (in the sense of 'sharp practice'). Probable rhetoric is perspicuous. It addresses a diverse audience much as the physician heals different people in different ways³⁶ - remember that the predominant medical system is still Galenic - and to do so it must use the topics and commonplaces to reach that diversity.³⁷

What is significant about probable rhetoric is that while rhetoric and its ethos usually leads to the topos of 'good counsel' from subject to monarch, which is standard to humanist literature about courtly behaviour, D. T. sees it as central to the development of friendship. Friendship between equals, within either liberal or mechanical professions, he says, is not lightly given because equals are always competing within their fields. Furthermore, friendship between those of 'different means, or mindes' is difficult because of those differences.³⁸ But a rhetoric of perspicuity is not competitive, and is constructed to deal with difference. In this he echoes Fulwood's avocation of familiar speech over 'rare and diffused speech'.³⁹ In *The Dove and the Serpent* (1614), these issues are developed further into the concepts of conversation and negotiation, *sermo* and *negotio*.⁴⁰ There they are also tied to a particular kind of civic behaviour that, in common with other writers of the period to 1615-20, he sets up against the ambivalence of the potentially deceitful courtier.

³² D. T., *Essates*, f. 15v.

³³ *Ibid.*, f. 26.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 27v.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 29.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 30.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 30v.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 95.

³⁹ Fulwood, *Entimie of Idleness*, A7.

⁴⁰ D. T., *The Dove and the Serpent*. In which is contained a large description of all such

Rhetorics of *sermo* and *negotio* also become indicators of behaviour during this period. For example one finds S. Gibson in 1616 arguing that preachers must speak profitably, not plausibly, and must be honest and unapproachable in conversation.⁴¹ From being civil behaviour in court, marked by learning and oratory, this kind of negotiated rhetoric becomes, around 1590-1600, an indication of personal behaviour in the civic and economic worlds. However, from just slightly later, around 1630, 'conversation' becomes synonymous with private personal behaviour until at least the end of the seventeenth century. In the brief interlude upon which I am focusing, it is as if the potential for deceitful rhetoric in all areas outside logic and *ratio* becomes more and more worrying, more and more an articulated anxiety. For example William Vaughan's *The Golden-grove* (1608), which addresses politics, the civic and the economic, speaks of truths as faith and promise 'nowadays' beset by fraud,⁴² and of deceit becoming ever more rife.⁴³ As it does so, a probable rhetoric of trustworthy ethos is pushed from the posed civility of the courts toward the civic and eventually, via the economic of the familial, into private and finally spiritual behaviour. So that by 1616, I. B., among others, reflects a growing emphasis on the negative effects rather than the skill of flattery and deception in the courtesy of civil speech.

But just at this juncture, 1600-20, a negotiated rhetoric of conversation as an indicator of personal behaviour and economic relationships also becomes a marker of the 'middle people' - as Bacon calls them in 1597 - or, as described by M. R. in *A President for Young Pen-Men* (1615), a marker of the 'carriage of civility' for those between the lord and the lackey. The early sixteenth-century books on civic rhetoric, because of their focus on courtly behaviour, speak of the necessity of learning conversation in the city. Conversation needs practice, meeting and accompanying, and conversational *negotio* is contrasted with the otiose of country life. Puttenham underwrites this context when he claims that to learn civil and gracious behaviour you need to be within 50 miles of London,⁴⁴ although he also depicts some *otium* as hidden *negotium*.⁴⁵ The point about conversation is that it unifies the rhetoric of gesture with that of language, it brings the body and mind together, whereas in the otiose and in *ratio*, the mind only is at work. A number of

⁴¹ S. Gibson, *The Only Rule to walke by: Guiding Christs Ministers, and all his members, how to frame their conversation in the way to salvation* (London: by George Purstowe for Ralph Mab, 1616), C2v, 16.

⁴² W. Vaughan, *The Golden-grove, moralized in thre Bookes; A word very necessary for all such, as would know how to governe themselves, their houses, or their country* (London: Simon Staford, sold by Richard Serger and John Browne, 1599 and 1608), 155, F4v.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, G2v.

writers point this out, including Edward Willis in 1615, who contrasts the work of both body and mind in civil discourse with the split that occurs in 'idleness'; or Bryskett who contrasts conversation with the intellectual *ratio* devoid of both reason and passion. This collocation of words is clearly moving partly towards the concept of a 'work ethic' in conversation, negotiation and business. Bacon discusses negotiation largely under the topic of economics.⁴⁶ At the same time the collocation makes it clear that if one uses *ratio* alone, if one isolates oneself from discussion, one splits the body from the mind, and loses contact with emotion, passion and reason. One thus belies completely any sense that Descartes' use of *ratio*, and the split of mind from body, was anything more than an individual's plausible opinion or otiose whim, and certainly could not have been accorded the status of reason or truth.

But the third term in the collocation, 'city/country', shifts its significance with the shift of 'civic' from the court to civility and the middle people, probably following a change in the social use of the country and the development of the country house and of course a tremendous change in the scope of urban life.⁴⁷ Increasingly, civil conversation is associated not with the city itself but with civic life, the economic and hence familial life, and with business dealings in any place, even in the country. There is a particular emphasis on familial life as the training ground for the individual's behaviour that will feed into the city and eventually the nation. Familial training is a concept that is found in Patrizzi, in Guazzo and in della Casa, but is there downplayed in relation to the instructions on courtly behaviour. In later English works, familial training seems precisely to deal with the gap left by the breakdown of the feudal concept of 'service' which occurs during the latter part of the sixteenth century. Lodowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life* (1606), which is a translation of another Italian work, by Giraldi, speaks of acquiring civility and civil conversation in domestic and familiar settings in order to focus on the moral and intellectual aspects of life,⁴⁸ although always in preparation to serve the nation. This line recurs in a number of places, not only in the younger Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1620) but also in Thomas Braithwait's *The English Gentleman* (1630). Braithwait's famous line, 'As every man's house is his Castle, so is his family a private Common-wealth',⁴⁹ separates the domestic world from the

⁴⁶ Bacon, *Essays*, p. 193.

⁴⁷ C. Wilson (ed.), *Skills and equipment for provisioning the country house, 1700-1900* (Stroud, 1996).

⁴⁸ Lodowick Bryskett, *A Discourse of Civill Life: containing the Ethike part of Morall Philosophie: fit for the instruction of a Gentleman in the course of a vertuous life*, trans. of Giraldi (London: for William Aspley, 1606), p. 92.

⁴⁹ Thomas Braithwait, *The English Gentleman and English Gentlewoman* (London: John Dawson, 1630/1635) [1641 edition including *The Turtles Triumph*, Presented in a Supple-

economic, moves the former firmly into the private and defines it as the root of sacred and moral knowledge.⁵⁰

The inexorable alliance of civility with personal life and behaviour begins to take on, in Bryskett and others, the idea of 'true' personal life: the need for irreproachable actions. He notes that it is not enough to have merely a good image, you need good manners and you learn these in the domestic and familial world, which for him is best found in the country - although his 'country' is close to the city, and trains one for action within it. Bryskett also notes that 'comliness', the ultimate focus on physical beauty as one's ethos, is not a good indicator of personal worth, and that the 'misshapen' can be 'nurtured' by conversation.⁵¹ Picking up on the other extreme, of linguistic ethos, an exemplary letter from the country to the city in *A President for Young Pen-Men* (1615) notes, with surprise, that the city man is writing 'like himself' and not just with 'bare words'.⁵² Braithwait, who sanctifies the country as a topos for proper familial training, echoes this in his anxiety to distinguish the true orator from the actor or mere 'verbal rhetorician'. A gentleman's education consists in liberty (individual), conversation (familial) and public society. Therefore to show that he is 'prudent' rather than 'ridiculous' he must learn to converse over matter and not just with words,⁵³ again learning that skill in the family but for the public good.

Alongside this commentary on training in civil conversation, there runs an on-going attempt to distinguish the public role of conversation, in serving the nation in the city, from the actions of the courtier who may claim to do the same at court. The entire debate is grounded in an opposition between negotiation and focus on words on the one hand, and the visual fashion of court style on the other. The topos develops out of the notion of plausible rhetoric as sleight of hand, visual trickery, done by the rhetor to the audience, as opposed to probable rhetoric as an interchange between rhetor and audience, and having its primary location in speech. However, 'interchange' is also found in letter-writing, and thence more broadly and later as an element of diaries, journals and autobiographies. Fulwood notes in 1568 that the best letter-writing is that which makes the reader feel as if the writer is present.⁵⁴ But Fulwood also notes that it is the primary work of the rhetor to get the benevolence of the audience by recognizing and valuing it for itself, which is the ethos position of negotiation. In 1597 Bacon extends this in his essay on 'Discourse', saying that it should be

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁵¹ Bryskett, *A Discourse of Civill Life*, p. 33.

⁵² M. R., *A President for Young Pen-Men. or the Letter-Writer* (London: G. Eld for Robert Wilson, 1615), F3v.

⁵³ Braithwait, *English Gentleman*, p. 47.

'interlocutory' and adjusted to the needs of its audience - first, so that they understand what is being said, and second, so that in the understanding of the audience the rhetor or speaker can learn from them.⁵⁵ These points are reiterated frequently in discussions of conversation throughout the seventeenth century, for example in John Evelyn's *Public Employment ...* (1667), a classic defence of *negotio* against *otio*, which continues to ally conversation and *negotio*, but which shifts the alliance of *otio* with the country or with idleness to an alliance with the 'closet'. The closet holds both the sense of the private and sexual, and the sense of secrets or a 'club culture', which has since been seen as the rhetorical basis not only for fantasy but also for the structure of the liberal social contract which was of course beginning to take shape by the end of the seventeenth century.⁵⁶

In contrast, court style is focused on the rhetor alone who is, as John Cleland's *The Institution of a Young Noble Man*, of 1607, puts it, 'a slave to one humour, self-love'.⁵⁷ Earlier Puttenham calls those of 'little conversation' those people who keep to themselves, 'phantastical' men,⁵⁸ and contrasts them with those who delight in a busy life, exercise and invention, whose speech is the image of their heart.⁵⁹ The man of conversation is a man of action, because as Cleland says, it is one's duty to move toward action in the service of one's country.⁶⁰ It is not enough to know things,⁶¹ hence courtly displays of learning are not good enough. This is a theme echoed not only in the younger Peacham, but also in many of the plans of education drawn up by teachers for students and fathers for sons throughout the seventeenth century. Furthermore, because the end of conversation is action, one needs prudence, justice and temperance,⁶² not fashion,⁶³ nor, with Braithwait, 'rhetorical varnish'.⁶⁴

Bryskett allies prudence with reason, which engages and controls passion, as opposed to the intellectual, which represses passion completely into the rational and/or sublime contemplative. D.T. in 1608 reiterates this but emphasizes that compassion is controlled passion, that reason tells us that civility is steadfast and faithful but not beyond 'pictie and equitie';⁶⁵ and that passion

⁵⁵ Bacon, *Essays*, pp. 117-8.

⁵⁶ For this, see Carol Pateman, *The problem of political obligation: a critique of liberal theory* (Cambridge: 2nd edn, 1985).

⁵⁷ James Cleland, *The Institution of a Young Noble-Man* (Oxford: Jos. Barnes, 1607), p. 168.

⁵⁸ Puttenham, *English Poesie*, p. 14.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶⁰ Cleland, *Institution*, p. 9.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

alone leads to self-love. Cleland's notion of prudence extends these comments into a concept of 'commonality', that the conversational rhetor speaks to many, not just to a restricted group (club culture again). As Gibson later points out, speaking to a mixed audience requires one to frame one's conversation carefully,⁶⁶ what Cleland calls 'decorum' in words. In this, Cleland is reiterating the earlier commentaries on the decorum of conversation,⁶⁷ on the need to be 'copious and meete',⁶⁸ to have discretion and measure,⁶⁹ and 'decencie'.⁷⁰ Cleland himself advocates the 'apt and meete'⁷¹ of prudence: 'O dear prudence, how necessary art thou for our life and conversation'.⁷² And Cleland ties 'commonality' to his argument that virtue is the source of nobility, not birth or wealth; and this virtue is shown and learned in action and conversation. Indeed he notes that it is a rare thing for a nobleman to be common, and when achieved it is an 'imitation of God's goodness'.⁷³

Yet, embedded in Cleland's concept of prudence, virtue and commonality is not only a sense of democratic individualism but also a belief in a common universal humanity. Cleland states that the best wit is also universal. This cluster of significant words around prudence - decorum, 'apt and meete', 'decencie', discretion and measure - is echoed in Braithwait's insistence on prudence for 'neighbourliness',⁷⁴ for which you engage in discourse and communication, action and negotiation, pastime and recreation, but relatively unproblematically. The same cluster hovers around the notion of prudence in Hobbes' *Briefe of the Arte of Rhetorick* (1639), but here one sees the problem of the simultaneous existence of the autonomous individual and the universal man emerging, for ethos is a function not only of virtue in the rhetor but also of passion in the audience.⁷⁵ The simultaneity is famously articulated in *Leviathan* in terms of the rhetoric of governmental power and the need for the person both to be represented by one inclusive image as well as being an individual.

While this notion of negotiated rhetoric is democratic in its emphasis on experience and good works, it also internalizes the conflicting systems of value by birth and/or by virtue or works that Castiglione's *The Courtier*

⁶⁶ Gibson, *The Only Rule*, dedication.

⁶⁷ T.B., *A Ritche Storehouse*, f. 44v.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ John della Casa, *Galateo: ... A treatise of the manners and behaviours, if beboweib a man to use and esbeue, in bis familiar conversation* (London: for Raufe Newbery, 1576).

⁷⁰ Puttenham, *English Poesie*, pp. 124-5.

⁷¹ Cleland, *Institution*, p. 169.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-9.

⁷⁴ Braithwait, *English Gentleman*, pp. 72-3.

⁷⁵ Thomas Hobbes, *A Briefe of the Arte of Rhetorick* (Oxford: C. A. Talboys, 1833: reprinted

attempted to keep separate. Anyone living in a world in which ambition can change their status must see the possibility of change for all people. Hence they must also accept that this is not always possible. Bacon says explicitly that not all people should aim to be noble for that renders those left without nobility as peasants, 'base swaine driven out of heart',⁷⁶ people with no value or virtue. It is here that he refers to the middling people so necessary to the civic world of a nation. *Negotio* becomes a place of doublethink: the place where you accept that certain elements of the individual will be repressed or suppressed to serve the state.

After Hobbes, but not necessarily because of Hobbes, 'conversation' and *sermo* rhetoric become increasingly separated from negotiation, and retained in two areas, first in the spiritual behaviour of the private individual, and second in the family, especially in women's language and in the communal writings of letter, diary, journal and autobiography. *Negotio* itself is most fully retained in the concept of subjecthood: the schizophrenia of the citizen and subject of the state and its attendant analyses in psychology and psychoanalysis.

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