

Review of Some Recent German Publications on Rhetoric

By Josef Schmidt, McGill University

Wilfried Barner, *Barockrhetorik. Untersuchungen zu ihren geschichtlichen Grundlagen. 2. unveränderte Auflage.* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 2002, pp. 537; Euro 28.-

***Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik, Bd. 5 (L-Musi) + 6 (Must-Pop),* hrsg. v. Gert Ueding (et al.), Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001 + 2003, cols. 1618 + 1592; Euro 138.-, respectively.**

Two major studies revived the interest in Germany in rhetoric in the sixties: Joachim Dyck's *Tichtkunst* (1966) and Wilfried Barner's *Barockrhetorik* (1968/70). Both authors decided to re-issue their seminal works. Dyck came out with a 3rd edition in 1991 with an up-dated bibliography. Barner waited until now with his reprint, prefaced by a short and spirited apologetic argument why he chose to do so. The main reason is the expansion of the discipline that made it impossible to "integrate" the vast developments that have since taken place. With an elegant compliment to the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, paying tribute to the "school" of James J. Murphy and the work of Marc Fumaroli, among others, he substantiates his argument that all these incredible developments of the discipline would make it impossible for him to do justice to the interdisciplinary expansion of the field, demonstrated most notably by the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*.

3/4 of this monumental project of the Tübingen team under the direction of Gert Ueding is now finished.. Volumes 5 + 6

continue to follow the high standards of the previous tomes. In actual fact, the articles keep to get more and more sophisticated.

As mentioned in previous reviews, it is a rhetorical delight to read leisurely through articles on substantial concepts like "Literatur, " Metonymie," or "Moderne" etc., refreshing one's knowledge and learning about modern trends. In terms of negative criticism there is quite often the tendency for heavy Teutonic academic syntax that will provide a serious obstacle for readers whose first language is not German. Quite often, too, there is a "German-centricity" in that relevant non-German literature is virtually ignored. Two cases in question: the entry on the Laswell formula does not even mention Marshall McLuhan; or the short article on "Märchen" cites numerous German critics, but does not mention Bruno Bettelheim, Jack Zipes, etc. My personal favourite in vol. 5 is the article by the very distinguished Birgit Stolt on "Lutherdeutsch"/(the German of Luther). It is incredible what she manages to include in this comprehensive survey of Luther's contribution to the development of the German language (roughly 14 cols.) viewed under the aspect of rhetoric.

My favourite articles in vol. 6 are: *Mystik*, *New Rhetoric*, *Nouvelle Rhétorique*, and *Physiognomik*. Only one of these entries has a multiple-author text that addresses specific issues.:. in "Mystik" Alois Haas discusses in an incredibly concentrated 3 ½ cols. within this major article the phenomenon of *theologica mystica* and *apophatic* language (negative language/religious experiences that can not be expressed in human language). "New Rhetoric" by Olaf Kramer predictably covers the Anglo-Saxon revival of the discipline, starting with C.K. Ogden/L.A. Richard - then highlighting K. Burke/R.Weaver/C. Hovland/W.Schramm,

and W. Booth. "Nouvelle-Rhétorique" by Manfred Kienpointner provides a systematic review of Ch. Perelman/L. Olbrecht-Tyteca's major treatise on argumentation (1958), and its history of reception in Europe as a new philosophical tool to argue ethical issues.

"Physiognomik" by Hartwig Kalverkämper is really a monograph in the disguise of a research article (cols. 1083-1190). Very richly illustrated, its methodology encompasses the historical development, the analytical scope of the history of mentalities and special aspects of art history.

[CSSR / SCÉR](#)