

Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy

Edited by

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Preface

There are those who would have us believe that the study of the history of philosophy is enjoying something of a revival in English-speaking countries. Evidence for this view is not, on the face of it, that difficult to find. Looking at the state of the ancient philosophy, one sees a robust and confident subject whose best practitioners combine philological expertise and historical sagacity with philosophical skill. Likewise, early modern philosophy reveals its house to be in good order. Those who work on the philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, having liberated themselves from the anachronism so typical of post-war scholarship on Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hume and Kant, are now far more aware of, and responsive to, the general intellectual context in which the canonical works of modern philosophy were composed and disseminated; the publication in 1998 of *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* provides solid evidence of this new, more historical outlook. The general buoyancy of the history of philosophy in the Anglophone world can be illustrated still further by examining current practices in fields such as medieval and nineteenth-century philosophy. Even analytic philosophy, the least historically minded of disciplines, is nowadays characterized by a greater awareness of its origins and development.

Nevertheless, one major area of philosophy's past remains neglected by the philosophical academy: the Renaissance. The appearance in 1986 of *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, and in 1992 of *Renaissance Philosophy*, volume III in the Oxford University Press series 'A History of Western Philosophy', has made little impact on scholars based in departments of philosophy. The three centuries from the death of William of Ockham in 1347 to the publication of Descartes's *Meditations* in 1641 are still treated as a 'specialist subject' and left, with a sigh of relief, to the attentions of intellectual historians and historians of science.

It is our hope that the articles in this volume will help to end the long-standing exclusion of the Renaissance from the standard philosophical curriculum. We aim to demonstrate that a distinctive element of the philosophical and intellectual culture of this period is very relevant to our understanding of the practice and development of philosophy in the early modern era. That element is humanism. Beginning in the fourteenth century as a movement which focused on the recovery, interpretation, assimilation and emulation of the writings and artefacts of ancient Rome and, to a lesser extent, Greece, humanism soon broadened into a vigorous cultural programme which influenced almost every aspect of the culture of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Philosophy, however, was an area which, so we are led to believe, fell outside the ambit of humanism, with the minor exception of moral philosophy, which was treated in a highly rhetorical manner. Humanists are traditionally portrayed as scholars obsessed with *recherché* points of grammar and philology, scorning the works of the great scholastic philosophers, whose classical erudition and linguistic skills they found wanting. The humanist movement supposedly produced narrow-minded pedants, more concerned with the style of a philosophical argument than with its substance and more interested in the classification of philosophical positions than in their concrete and detailed analysis.

Not surprisingly, given the prevalence of this caricatured view of Renaissance humanism, the noteworthy contributions which it made to the whole range of philosophical disciplines have all too often been overlooked. Yet these contributions played a key role in early modern philosophy. The rigorous philological methods developed by humanists, for instance, resulted in a spate of new Latin translations and critical editions of ancient philosophical works. Virtually all our modern texts of the seminal works of ancient philosophers, including Aristotle, Plato, Seneca, Sextus Empiricus and Cicero, are profoundly indebted to the tireless endeavours of humanist editors. The appearance of new editions, based on solid philological argument and detailed knowledge of the original sources and manuscript traditions, served to stimulate deeper interest in the philosophical arguments contained in the works. The result was a proliferation of different exegetical approaches to philosophical texts, which, in turn, helped to determine the direction of early modern philosophy.

The influence of humanism did not stop there. It can be seen in the rediscovery and revival of ancient philosophical traditions such as Scepticism, Epicureanism, Stoicism and Neoplatonism which had either been lost or ignored for centuries. Many of the pivotal figures in

seventeenth-century philosophy arrived at their distinctive views and theories as a result of direct engagement with these older traditions. Here one thinks of the relation of Hobbes and Gassendi to Epicurean materialism, of Descartes and Spinoza to Stoic accounts of the passions and of Leibniz to Platonic metaphysics. Humanists were also responsible for continuing many medieval debates concerning faith and reason, especially when the concept of faith was informed and invigorated by advances in biblical criticism and a renewed attention to patristic sources. This last aspect was central to the attempt of many early modern thinkers to gauge the exact relations of their philosophical and scientific ideas to their religious beliefs. Various features of the new 'mechanical philosophy' also benefit from being seen against the backdrop of the ideals and achievements of the humanist movement, which, contrary to conventional wisdom, remained a powerful force throughout most of the seventeenth century.

All the articles in this volume, except that of Brian Vickers, were first delivered as papers in the colloquium on 'Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy' held at the Warburg Institute, in collaboration with King's College London, on 13–14 June 1997, at which Douglas Hedley, Sarah Hutton and Quentin Skinner also spoke. We would like to acknowledge the generous support given to that colloquium from the Mind Association; the Philosophy Programme of the School of Advanced Study of the University of London; the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College London; and the British Society for the History of Philosophy.

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7 The myth of Francis Bacon's 'anti-humanism'

Brian Vickers

A curious phenomenon in the history of philosophy is the emergence of myths about philosophers or philosophical schools, 'received ideas' which bear little relation to reality, but which persist for many years and prove hard to eradicate. One such myth is that Francis Bacon (1561–1626) was hostile to Renaissance humanism, both as a discipline and as a body of studies, and that he was in particular a foe of poetry and rhetoric. The erroneous conceptions of his attitude to these two branches of the *studia humanitatis* have been exposed,¹ although scholars ignorant of this literature continue to repeat them. As for the general misconception of Bacon being an enemy of humanism itself, that seems to be spreading steadily, unchallenged and uncorrected. Thus, in a recent and valuable *Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, one reads the pronouncement by Anthony Grafton that: 'Bacon treated Renaissance humanism...as a fatal disease of learning.'² Four sentences follow, purportedly summarizing Bacon's attitude to humanism, including the criticism that: 'The philology of the humanists, with its obsessive citation and imitation of authorities, had been an intellectual distraction from the thinker's true mission of extending man's empire.' No texts by Bacon are quoted, and no critical discussions are cited.³

In the same volume we read Joseph Loewenstein's considered opinion that Bacon represents 'anti-classicism', is indeed 'the most famous and, ultimately, the most influential' exponent of this—doubtfully existing—movement. Loewenstein does quote and discuss passages from Bacon, namely his account of the three 'distempers of learning' from Book One of the *Advancement of Learning* (1605), which I shall consider below. But he draws from it the further negative formulations that Bacon exerted an "'anti-humanist" influence', that he made an 'assault on humanist rhetoric' and was also 'one of the leading importers of...anti-Ciceronianism'.⁴ I shall return to these wider, but no less misleading claims.

That passage from the *Advancement of Learning* is also quoted by Neil Rhodes in a stimulating study of rhetoric in the English Renaissance, according to which it provides ‘the most famous disparagement of Humanist rhetoric’, in which ‘the Humanist ideal of *copia* is most effectively challenged’.⁵ Rhodes, unlike Bacon’s other detractors, shares the negative attitude ascribed to Bacon, affirming that ‘there is a good deal of truth in Bacon’s caustic summary of the Humanist enterprise as being a programme for excessive verbal dilation’—hardly a fair characterization, one might feel. Bacon’s ‘own preference’, Rhodes tells us, ‘was for the laconic’.⁶

If we turn back to the 1970s, we find similar pronouncements. Charles Webster, in his admirable study of Bacon’s effect on science, medicine and reform from 1626 to 1660—which, for all its detail, fails to register the full weight of Bacon’s influence, even in the texts actually quoted—writes that the

Advancement of Learning had dwelt prophetically on the weaknesses of humanism. Excessive admiration for classical authors, reaction against the barbarism of the schoolmen, concentration on the study of languages and a taste for elaborate preaching had resulted in ‘an affectionate study of eloquence and copie of speech’. As this grew to excess, ‘men began to hunt more after words than matter’. Thus the great humanist educational theorists, such as Sturm and Ascham, were accounted responsible for enticing intellectuals into an idolatrous worship of the linguistic arts (grammar, rhetoric and logic), and away from the more profitable sciences, which represented the true springs of human knowledge.⁷

Webster attributes to Bacon some opinions that he really did hold, as does Grafton more recently, but on the issue of his ‘anti-humanism’ they are both misinformed.

The myth of Bacon’s hostility to Renaissance humanism is, no doubt, more widely diffused than this brief survey can show. It occurs in books of all sizes, from Charles Webster’s massive tome down to Anthony Quinton’s slim volume on Bacon in the ‘Past Masters’ series, which says of Bacon’s attack on ‘delicate learning’ in the *Advancement of Learning* that: ‘This, in effect, is humanism.’ Having made this misidentification, Quinton objects that: ‘Humanism as a general movement is far more than the kind of gentlemanly dilettantism and preoccupation with style...that Bacon attacked.’⁸ Humanism was indeed more than that, as Bacon would have been the first to assert.

Equally misguided, and equally dogmatic, is Douglas Bush's judgement in his volume for the 'Oxford History of English Literature' (published in 1945, reissued in 1962). Here Bacon is characterized as 'a destructive critic, a mouthpiece for the modern world's declaration of independence'. Among the *loci classici* that Bush indicates is that passage in Book I of the *Advancement of Learning* defining 'the three principal vanities or distempers of learning', where, we are told, 'Bacon arraigns', among other targets, 'the rhetorical discipline of medieval and Renaissance humanism, the study of words instead of matter...'⁹

I

This passage having been the object of so many partial commentaries, it may be worth quoting it *in extenso*, in order to see what Bacon says and what he does not say. After all, it is an established principle in the analysis of any text, philosophical or literary, that meaning can only be reliably obtained from the full context. At this point in his *Two Bookes of the Proficience and Advancement of Learning*, to give its original title, Bacon is working through a strategy derived from epideictic rhetoric, with its opposed poles of praise and blame, *laus* and *vituperatio*. He first deals with the negative pole, considering 'the discredits and disgraces which [learning] has received; all from ignorance', taking various forms, 'appearing sometimes in the zeal and jealousy of divines, sometimes in the severity and arrogance of politiques [politicians], and sometimes in the errors and imperfections of learned men themselves'.¹⁰ Under this third heading Bacon discusses 'those errors and vanities which have intervned amongst the studies themselves of the learned', itemizing three major forms—this is the passage mistaken as an attack on humanism—and eleven 'peccant humours'.¹¹ Having dismissed ignorant criticisms and added his own critique, Bacon shifts to the positive pole, arguing for the dignity of learning, seen both by divine testimony and from many human proofs.¹² This concludes his plan to show 'the excellency of knowledge' in Book I, and he can devote Book II to reviewing 'what has been done for the advancement of learning with the defects of the same'.¹³

Bacon's intention in discussing these 'errors and vanities' in the way knowledge has been pursued is not to justify them, 'but, by a censure and separation of the errors, to make a justification of that which is good and sound, and to deliver that from the aspersion of the other'. This is how he sets about it:

There be therefore chiefly three vanities in studies, whereby learning hath been most traduced. For those things we do esteem vain, which are either false or frivolous, those which either have no truth or no use: and those persons we esteem vain, which are either credulous or curious; and curiosity is either in matter or words. So that in reason as well as in experience, there fall out to be these three distempers (as I may term them) of learning; the first, fantastical learning; the second, contentious learning; and the last, delicate learning; vain imaginations, vain altercations, and vain affectations; and with the last I will begin.

Martin Luther, conducted (no doubt) by an higher Providence, but in discourse of reason finding what a province he had undertaken against the Bishop of Rome and the degenerate traditions of the church, and finding his own solitude, being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succours to make a party against the present time; so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved. This by consequence did draw on a necessity of a more exquisite travail in the languages original wherein those authors did write, for the better understanding of those authors and the better advantage of pressing and applying their words. And thereof grew again a delight in their manner of style and phrase, and an admiration of that kind of writing; which was much furthered and precipitated by the enmity and opposition that the propounders of those (primitive but seeming new) opinions had against the schoolmen; who were generally of the contrary part, and whose writings were altogether in a differing style and form; taking liberty to coin and frame new terms of art to express their own sense and to avoid circuit of speech, without regard to the pureness, pleasantness, and (as I may call it) lawfulness of the phrase or word. And again, because the great labour then was with the people (of whom the Pharisees were wont to say, 'Execrabilis ista turba, quae non novit legem'), for the winning and persuading of them, there grew of necessity in chief price and request eloquence and variety of discourse, as the fittest and forciblest access into the capacity of the vulgar sort.

So that these four causes concurring, the admiration of ancient authors, the hate of the schoolmen, the exact study of languages, and the efficacy of preaching, did bring in an affectionate study of eloquence and copie of speech, which then began to flourish. This grew speedily to an excess; for men began to hunt more after words than

matter; and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment. Then grew the flowing and watery vein of Osorius, the Portugal bishop, to be in price. Then did Sturmius spend such infinite and curious pains upon Cicero the orator and Hermogenes the rhetorician, besides his own books of periods and imitation and the like. Then did Carr of Cambridge, and Ascham, with their lectures and writings, almost deify Cicero and Demosthenes, and allure all young men that were studious unto that delicate and polished kind of learning. Then did Erasmus take occasion to make the scoffing echo; 'Decem annos consumpsi in legendo Cicerone', and the echo answered in Greek, ὄνε, *Asine*. Then grew the learning of the schoolmen to be utterly despised as barbarous. In sum, the whole inclination and bent of those times was rather towards copie than weight.

Here therefore is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter: whereof though I have represented an example of late times, yet it hath been and will be 'secundum majus et minus' in all time. And how is it possible but this should have an operation to discredit learning, even with vulgar capacities, when they see learned men's works like the first letter of a patent or limned book; which though it hath large flourishes, yet it is but a letter? It seems to me that Pygmalion's frenzy is a good emblem or portraiture of this vanity: for words are but the images of matter; and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture.

But yet notwithstanding it is a thing not hastily to be condemned, to clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy itself with sensible and plausible elocution. For hereof we have great examples in Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and of Plato also in some degree; and hereof likewise there is great use; for surely to the severe inquisition of truth, and the deep progress into philosophy, it is some hinderance; because it is too early satisfactory to the mind of man, and quencheth the desire of further search, before we come to a just period; but then if a man be to have any use of such knowledge in civil occasions, of conference, counsel, persuasion, discourse, or the like; then shall he find it prepared to his hands in those authors which write in that manner. But the excess of this is so justly contemptible that

as Hercules, when he saw the image of Adonis, Venus' minion, in a temple, said in disdain, 'Nil sacri es', so there is none of Hercules' followers in learning, that is, the more severe and laborious sort of inquirers into truth, but will despise those delicacies and affectations, as indeed capable of no divineness. And thus much of the first disease or distemper of learning.¹⁴

As readers can now see, Bacon never attacks 'Renaissance humanism'—if, indeed, such a category were even available to him. His critique is directed against the excessive imitation of Cicero's Latin style and forms part of a well-documented episode within humanism, stretching from the quarrel between Poggio Bracciolini and Lorenzo Valla in 1452, through the later disputes between Angelo Poliziano and Paolo Cortesi, between Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Ermolao Barbaro, between Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola and Pietro Bembo, culminating in the whole series of literary quarrels sparked off by Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* (1528). This was essentially a dispute about *imitatio*, a basic process in the training of an orator (and hence of any educated person). The formulaic *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had laid down that the faculties needed by the orator (*inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, *pronuntiatio*) could be acquired by three means: using *ars*, *imitatio*, *exercitatio*.

By theory is meant a set of rules that provide a definite method and system of speaking. Imitation stimulates us to attain, in accordance with a studied method, the effectiveness of certain models in speaking. Practice is assiduous exercise and experience in speaking.¹⁵

The discussion of *imitatio* in classical rhetoric and literary criticism was familiar to Petrarch and to all Renaissance scholars worthy of that name, who would have known the relevant passages in Cicero (*De oratore* II.21.89–23.98), Seneca (*Epistulae morales* LXXXIV) and Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* X.1.20–131). Petrarch showed his knowledge of these texts in at least three of his *Familiares* (I.8; XXII.2; XXIII. 19); and whoever follows out this debate through the sixteenth century will see the well-known passages emerging like familiar faces in a crowd. Anyone seeking guidance can draw on older and still useful studies, such as that by Izora Scott,¹⁶ or benefit from the recent work by Martin L. McLaughlin,¹⁷ which sums up and valuably extends a well-documented debate.

It is strange that scholars who have pronounced on Bacon's

supposed anti-humanism should fail to recognize that he was merely intervening in a debate over *imitatio* carried out within humanism, especially since such scholars must know that learning to write and speak by imitating the relevant models was a major element in humanist educational theory. Bacon's discussion offers both a history of the rise of Ciceronianism, tallying in some features with contemporary accounts, but with its own idiosyncrasies, and an analysis of its consequences for literary language, brilliantly exploiting rhetorical resources in order to mimic the fault attacked.¹⁸ Far from being an assault on humanism, or on rhetoric, Bacon's critique subscribes to a main tenet of humanist rhetoric: the need for a functional correspondence between the *res* or subject-matter of a discourse and its *verba*, with priority always to be given to the former.

For the historical part, Bacon is idiosyncratic in ascribing the revival of learning—when 'the ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved', necessitating intensive work 'in the languages original'—to Martin Luther, in the early sixteenth century, rather than to Petrarch in the fourteenth, or to the recovery of Greek at Florence in the fifteenth century. Nor can the Reformation leaders be given sole credit for the Renaissance hostility to scholastic Latin, which we would also date from the time of Petrarch and Valla. Nor, finally, would we connect either of these trends with a need of 'winning and persuading' the people through 'the efficacy of preaching', developing 'eloquence and variety of discourse' directed to their limited 'capacity'. Neither the revival of learning nor the concern for a properly Latin style had any populist appeal; indeed, the world of Poggio, Valla, Poliziano and the other actors in this dispute was that of an intellectual élite, learned, touchily self-conscious about what constituted correct or authentic Latin. Although no previous commentator seems to have noticed it, Bacon's opening historical account is idiosyncratic in several respects; and it is hard to know what his sources were, or what he was trying to achieve.

His account of the later stages of Ciceronianism (Osorio, Sturm, Carr, Ascham) is more accurate, but even here there are strange omissions. His marvellously polemical Erasmus quotation comes not, as we might expect, from the *Ciceronianus*, but from the colloquy *Echo*,¹⁹ first printed in 1526. Punning on the ending of 'Cicerone' rhyming with ὄνε, the Greek vocative of 'ass', Erasmus makes Echo endorse the words of the other speaker, 'Youth', namely, that 'I shouldn't pore over Cicero so much that I neglect all the rest', and that 'you don't approve of a man's tormenting himself all his life long for the sole purpose of becoming a Ciceronian'. In *Dialogus cui titulus*,

Ciceronianus, sive De optimo genere dicendi (a title deliberately echoing that of Cicero's *De optimo genere oratorum*), Erasmus richly elaborated these criticisms through the wonderful *persona* of Nosoponus (Mr Workmad), who explains the laborious principles and methods by which dedicated Ciceronians could only use words authenticated by Cicero himself (in some cases only in the inflected forms he had used). Nosoponus also unwittingly exposes the total unsuitability of Ciceronian Latin for the writings of a Christian world. Despite his mocking tone, Erasmus's critique of the neopaganism implicit in Ciceronianism was fully serious, as was his anger with those exponents of this cult who rejected all other Latin styles as incorrect.²⁰ Erasmus's attack was directed partly against Longolius (Christophe de Longueuil), whose biographer recorded that he had for five years confined his reading to the works of Cicero, in order not to contaminate his Latin style. But since Longueuil had a great following in Italy, Erasmus hit a sensitive nerve among Italian and French humanists, including Guillaume Budé and his supporters, Etienne Dolet, Ortensio Lando, J.C. Scaliger and others who rose to the defence of Ciceronianism.

Bacon shows no sign of acquaintance with these events of the 1530s, nor does he refer to other prominent Ciceronians of that period, such as Mario Nizolio, whose *Thesaurus Ciceronianus* (1535) could be misused as a guide to exclusively Ciceronian style. Humanists writing later in the century could deplore these excesses, as did Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poetry* (written c. 1580; published 1595):

Truly I could wish [that] the diligent imitators of Tully and Demosthenes (most worthy to be imitated) did not so much keep Nizolian paper-books of their figures and phrases, as by attentive translation (as it were) devour them whole, and make them wholly theirs. For now they cast sugar and spice upon every dish that is served to the table...²¹

Sidney's metaphor ('devour...make them wholly theirs') goes back to Seneca's instancing of the bees' ability to transform 'the juice which they obtain from flowers' into a unified substance, as an injunction to those practising *imitatio* to use models but develop their own individuality.²² Failure to do so, Sidney and other humanists warned, would result in a superficial borrowing, a patina of style lacking substance. Bacon endorses this judgement.

Bacon seems to know the later phases of Ciceronianism, referring to four representative figures: Jeronimo Osorio (1506–80), a theologian

known as 'the Portuguese Cicero'; Johannes Sturm (1507–89), head of the Strasbourg Gymnasium, nicknamed 'the German Cicero', who published numerous commentaries on the rhetorical works of Cicero and Hermogenes,²³ and whose own publications include *De periodis* (Strasbourg, 1550), and *De imitatione oratoria* (Strasbourg, 1574); Nicholas Carr (1524–68), who succeeded Sir John Cheke as Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge in 1547 and made Latin versions of Eusebius and Demosthenes; and Roger Ascham (1515–68), Reader in Greek at Cambridge and tutor to Queen Elizabeth I from 1548 to 1549, who praised Cicero in *The Scholemaster* (1570) as the ideal model for Latin prose and who was a friend of both Osorio and Sturm. All four figure in a work which Bacon might have known, the *Ciceronianus* (London, 1577) of Gabriel Harvey. Indeed, since Bacon was at Trinity College, Cambridge between April 1573 and March 1575, he may have heard some lectures by Harvey, who was University Praelector in Rhetoric between April 1574 and February 1577.²⁴

II

Harvey's *Ciceronianus* is revealing both of the late stage of the dispute over Ciceronianism and of the quarrels leading up to it. Amusingly, Harvey presents himself in his youth as an exemplar of the worst kind of narrow imitator of Cicero:

I readily acquiesced with the idea of certain Italians, that all the others should be neglected and Cicero alone kept in one's hands. Neither Bembus, nor Sadoletus, nor Longolius, nor Riccius the trumpeter of Longolius thought of Cicero with more respect than I nor magnified him more in words.

Harvey records how he had proudly aligned himself with these and other followers of Cicero: 'Pontanus, Cortesius,...Nizolius too, and Naugerius'.

As for Erasmus and those who clove to his views, Budaeus, More, Aegidius, Glareanus, Vives, and all the others who were not considered Ciceronians, I not only scorned them as perfectly infantile, but even pursued them with hate as utter enemies,²⁵

—a reaction that can be found even in Ascham's otherwise urbane *Scholemaster*.²⁶ The consequences of this one-sided loyalty for Harvey's Latin style were equally extreme:

Why should I tell how great and simon-pure a Ciceronian I was at that time in the choice of every single word, in the composition and structure of sentences, in the discriminating use of cases and tenses, in the symmetry of cut-and-dried phrases, in the shaping of sentence-divisions and clauses, in the rhythmical measuring of periods, in the variety and smoothness of clausulae, in the careful and elaborate multiplication of all sorts of refinements?...I am compelled by a sense of shame to omit mention of those curls and curling-irons, with which my whole style was elegantly frizzed in every part,²⁷

using such Ciceronian tricks as *Quanquam, Etsi, Cogitanti mihi saepenumero*, and above all ‘that most blessed clausula of them all, *Esse videatur*’—already singled out by Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* X.2.18) as an instance of superficial imitation.

In other words, Harvey presents himself as having violated some of the basic precepts in classical and Renaissance humanist rhetoric: he has based his *imitatio* on one sole author, from whom he has taken over merely superficial features of style, rather than any thoughts or matter of substance. As he puts it, in the appropriate terms:

Summa erit haec. Pluris verba, quam res; linguam, quam mentem; vnam dicendi artem, quam mille intelligendi doctrinas faciebam; solam M.Tullij elocutionem omnibus philosophorum, atque Mathematicorum postulatis anteferebam: in eo esse neruos, atque artus imitationis credebam, si verba quam plurima eligerem illuminata, atque nitida: eaque in quadrum redacta, numerosa comprehensione deuincirem.²⁸

But Harvey gives us not only a self-accusation, presenting his juvenile follies: this is also a conversion narrative, for two books totally transformed his attitude to *imitatio*. The first was the ‘*Ciceronianus* of Ioannes Sambucus’²⁹—that is, *De imitatione a Cicerone petenda dialogi tres* (Paris, 1561; rev. edn. Antwerp, 1563), which took a more balanced view of imitation as a wider process, properly involving several authors, basing itself on thought and argument, not just on verbal features. Sambucus also referred Harvey to the text that made the greatest impression on him, Peter Ramus’s *Ciceronianus*. Harvey’s own copy (Paris, 1557) survives in the library of Worcester College, Oxford, with a note at the end ‘in his beautiful Italian hand: “I redd over this Ciceronianus twice in twoo deyes, being then Sophister in Christ’s College. Gabriel Haruey”’,³⁰ that is, in 1569. From Sambucus

and Ramus, Harvey finally learned the correct practice of *imitatio*: to borrow things that are 'excellent and in conformity with the most careful usage of *speech and thought*', avoiding 'the warts and, so to speak, the ulcers and scars of diction'.³¹ He followed Ramus's advice by imitating "not only [Cicero's] Latinity but his resources of wisdom and factual knowledge, and most of all his virtues of conduct and character".³²

Further enlightenment came from Johannes Sturm's edition of Cicero's *Orationes* (1563), from whose praise of Erasmus Harvey regained his respect for that scholar.³³ He even learned to appreciate his *Ciceronianus*, with its mockery of the fanatic 'fowler after Ciceronian words, ...childishly gathering a few posies from Cicero like pebbles on a beach, while trampling under foot the most precious gems of argument and pearls of philosophy'.³⁴ Finally, Harvey came to know the *Ciceronianus* (1575) by Joannes Thomas Freigius, a professor of humanist studies at Freiburg and a disciple of Ramus. (Harvey's copy of this book is also in Worcester College Library.)³⁵ Freigius confirmed him in the correct attitudes taught by Erasmus and Ramus:

In Cicero I began to observe not only the oratorical eloquence of which I have spoken but also consular and senatorial wisdom; and from his pleasant gardens I began to pluck the fruits of reason as well as the flowers of oratory...In short, now for the third time I detected the error of the Italians in imitating his ornamental speech and not his momentous subject matter.³⁶

III

Reading Gabriel Harvey's account of how *imitatio* should be practised one has the feeling, as so often in Renaissance rhetoric, that a modern writer is recapitulating in his own experience some fundamental teachings of antiquity. It is impossible not to be reminded of the injunctions of Cicero himself, that the orator should 'show the student whom to copy, and to copy in such a way as to strive with all possible care to attain the most excellent qualities of his model' (*De oratore* II.22.90), or Quintilian's urging that while he 'should read none save the best authors', the reader should not assume

that anything which he finds in them may be taken as a canon of style, with the result that he imitates their defects (and it is always easier to do this than to imitate their excellences) and thinks

himself a perfect replica if he succeeds in copying the blemishes of great men

(*Institutio oratoria* X.1.20, 25)

Modern, like Renaissance, readers will recall the elder Seneca's warning that: 'You should not imitate one man, however distinguished: for an imitator never comes up to the level of his model. This is the way it is; the copy always falls short of the reality' (*Controversiae* 1, Pref. 6), a warning enlarged on by Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* X.2.10–18, 23–6). Quintilian's final advice is especially relevant to sixteenth-century Ciceronianism:

But imitation (for I must repeat this point again and again) should not be confined merely to words. We must consider the appropriateness with which those orators handle the circumstances and persons involved [*in rebus atque personis*] in the various cases in which they were engaged,

observe their judgement, powers of arrangement, ability to arouse the audience's feelings, all the procedures by which an orator makes his case persuasive.

If we have thoroughly appreciated all these points, we shall be able to imitate our models with accuracy. But the man who to these good qualities adds his own, that is to say, who makes good deficiencies and cuts down whatever is redundant, will be the complete orator of our search

(X.2.27–8)

The major rhetorical category running through this whole debate, from classical antiquity to Harvey's *Ciceronianus*, as through Bacon's briefer critique of Ciceronianism, is the conjunction of *res* and *verba*, the subject-matter and its verbal expression. The traditional teaching was that the two were to be properly correlated; that *res* or thought was the more important partner, to which words were subordinate; and that an excess of *verba* over *res* would make for bad writing. Every Renaissance rhetorician knew Cato's saying, 'rem tene, verba sequentur',³⁷ and similar utterances by Cicero: 'rerum enim copia verborum copiam gignit',³⁸ Horace: 'verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur'³⁹ and Quintilian: 'Paulatim res facilius se ostendent, verba respondebunt'.⁴⁰ The *Institutio oratoria* provides us with the fullest account of this topic, often echoed in the Renaissance. Quintilian

regularly describes speeches as having both *res* and *verba*,⁴¹ and unfailingly gives the priority to *res*. Although *elocutio* is the orator's chief resource, and hardest art to master, it does not depend on 'the study of words alone' ['Non...sola est agenda cura verborum'], and Quintilian denounces those who, 'disregarding the subject-matter which, after all, is the backbone of any speech, devote themselves to the futile and crippling study of words in a vain desire to acquire the gift of elegance...' (VIII pr.18). 'Curam ergo verborum, rerum volo esse sollicitudinem':

Therefore I would have the orator, while careful in his choice of words, be even more concerned about his subject matter. For, as a rule, the best words are essentially suggested by the subject-matter and are discovered by their own intrinsic light (20–1).

To collect single words and waste time over their 'elaborate weighing and measurement' would be to hunt 'not for the true ornaments of speech, but for meretricious finery, as though there were any real virtue in words save in their power to represent facts' (26–7). While '*elocutio* calls for the utmost attention, we must always bear in mind that nothing should be done for the sake of words only, since words were invented merely to give expression to things...' (32).

Later in this book Quintilian describes a form of amplification which resembles emphasis but exceeds it in power: 'but emphasis derives its effect from the actual words, while in this case the effect is produced by inference from the facts, and is consequently far more impressive, inasmuch as facts are more impressive than words' (VIII.4.26). Equally, there are some perversions of style, such as the affectation of archaic expressions, which will make a speaker or writer invert the true priority of *res* over *verba*: 'the man who catches the infection will not choose his words to suit his facts, but will drag in irrelevant facts to provide an opportunity for the use of such words' (VIII.3.30). In an emergency, such as having to plead a case at short notice, orators will need 'to develop special mental agility, to give all our attention to the subject [*rebus*], and to make a temporary sacrifice of our care for the niceties of language [*cura verborum*], if we find it impossible to secure both' (X.7.22). The goal of the orator, in Quintilian's well-known formulation, was to accumulate a store of resources, *copia rerum ac verborum*,⁴² where the verbal sequence expresses an actual priority. These terms regularly recur in the Renaissance, as in Erasmus's famous treatise *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo* (1512; three times enlarged by

1534), and the *De ratione studii ac legendi interpretandique auctores* (1512), which begins with the bold statement that: ‘In principle, knowledge as a whole seems to be of two kinds, of things and of words. Knowledge of words comes earlier’—presumably, as a child learns to speak—‘but that of things is more important.’⁴³ Of the hundreds of writers who followed Quintilian and Erasmus in reiterating the greater importance of the subject-matter, let us just recall Sir Philip Sidney’s letter to his younger brother Robert on 18 October 1580, advising him on his studies. ‘For the method of writing Historie’, Sidney tells him, ‘Bodin hath written at large; you may reede him and gather out of many wordes some matter’—a fatal sign of verbosity.⁴⁴ That was obviously a current danger for a young student, given the stylistic fashions then in vogue: ‘So you can speake and write Latine not barbarously I never require great study in Ciceronianisme, the cheife abuse of Oxford, *Qui dum verba sectantur, res ipsas negligunt*.’⁴⁵

It is from this basis that Gabriel Harvey compared the style of Osorio’s oration *De gloria* unfavourably with that of Cicero’s *De amicitia*, bringing out

the difference between the redundancy of Osorius and the copiousness of Cicero. Both men have fluent diction, to be sure; but whereas Cicero’s flows without any ripples, like a smooth and quiet river, Osorio’s sometimes overflows its banks, like a swollen, hurrying torrent, too impatient to be confined within the bounds set by the other.⁴⁶

In ascribing *copia* to Cicero, *redundantia* to Osorio, Harvey was doubtless aware that Quintilian described the latter as a vice of style (*Institutio oratoria* VIII.3.57; XII.10.12–19). Harvey’s criticism of Osorio was reinforced in the prefatory epistle to his *Ciceronianus* by William Lewin, a fellow of Christ’s College and perhaps Harvey’s tutor, who judged it ‘a little more copious and overflowing than was proper’ (‘magis, quam par fuit, redundans & circumfluens oratio’).⁴⁷

Returning to Bacon’s critique of Ciceronianism we can now see that it is entirely typical of Renaissance rhetorical humanism in its conceptual categories and in the judgements resulting. His characterization of Osorio—‘Then grew the flowing and watery vein of... the Portugal bishop to be in price’—might have come straight from the pages of Harvey’s *Ciceronianus*. At all events J.W.Binns, in his recent study of ‘Ciceronianism in sixteenth-century England: The Latin debate’, finds that Bacon’s account of ‘the growth and progress

of a Ciceronianism which paid more attention to style than to matter...is just and perceptive', while his 'use of the term "watery" to describe [Osorio's style] is thus in the mainstream of critical thinking'.⁴⁸ In evoking this fashion of writing Bacon perhaps echoes Harvey's self-mocking description of the care for superficial qualities of style that marked his juvenile flirtation with Ciceronianism (quoted above at page 144), but he goes one further in juxtaposing both the vices and virtues of style. He begins with a plain statement of the disease, in the appropriate language, when care for *verba* exceeds that for *res*. Then he enlarges this simple distinction into two unequal parts, first showing how the mimicry of Ciceronian Latin developed a self-propagating power (*redundantia*), proliferating before our eyes:

	men began to hunt
<i>more</i> after words <i>than</i> matter; and	
<i>more</i> after the choiceness	of the phrase, and
the round and clean composition	of the sentence, and
the sweet falling	of the clauses, and
the varying and illustration	of their works with tropes and
	figures
<i>than</i> after the weight	of matter,
worth	of subject,
soundness	of argument
life	of invention, or
depth	of judgement.

Those bare, unadorned symmetries in the second part of the sentence sum up pages of teaching from the rhetoric-books on the main virtues of style for which the orator should strive: 'weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment'. That is surely the definitive expression of what the distinction between *res* and *verba* really implied. Bacon's concluding antithesis, then—'the whole inclination and bent of those times was rather towards copie than weight'—is not an attack on *copia*, *tout court*, but describes what happens when writers cultivate *copia verborum* in separation from *copia rerum*, resulting in that disordered condition 'when men study words and not matter'. The terms in which Bacon formulates his critique of Ciceronian *imitatio* are not critical of, but derive from the rhetorical tradition, from Cato to Quintilian. His dismissive flourish, comparing their enamoration with words to Pygmalion's madness in falling in love with the statue he had made,

unites a story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with part of Aristotle's definition of language,⁴⁹ an unlikely combination for a modern, perhaps, but wholly typical of humanist eclecticism, where all quotations are equally useful.

IV

If Bacon's 'anti-humanism' turns out to be a myth based on the misreading of a single passage in the *Advancement of Learning*, in ignorance of the historical context behind it, the related charges that he was 'anti-rhetorical' are equally insubstantial. As I have recently shown,⁵⁰ Bacon used and recommended rhetoric throughout his life. As can be seen from the recorded book-purchases made for him and his brother Anthony by their tutor, John Whitgift, Master of Trinity and future Archbishop of Canterbury, they worked on the standard humanist texts, blending philosophy, rhetoric and history. The books bought for them to use included substantial editions of Aristotle and Plato, 'tullies workes', 'ciceronis rheto' (the rhetorical works, probably including *Rhetorica ad Herennium*), 'one commentarie of tullis orations', the *Orations* of Demosthenes, 'hermogenes in greke and laten', and historical works by Caesar, Sallust and Xenophon.⁵¹ Bacon's training as a lawyer involved him in the proto-rhetorical exercises of the moot and the bolt, while his forty years as an MP gave rise to a great number of parliamentary speeches, constructed on the best rhetorical principles, displaying a clarity of outline and forcefulness of expression. His many letters of advice to Queen Elizabeth, King James, Buckingham and others high in government show his mastery of deliberative rhetoric, adjusting argument to the context, time available and nature of the person addressed. As a professional lawyer who rose to the highest legal offices, Bacon practised as a courtroom advocate in full awareness of the great classical models, Demosthenes and Cicero.

His several treatises on education show a complete adherence to classical and Renaissance principles and methods. He advised students to keep a notebook as they read, recording arguments, phrases, observations from their reading, organized according to 'heads' or topics, a method far superior to epitomes, as he believed, with many other educationalists.⁵² His early work *Of the Colours of Good and Evil*, added to the 1597 *Essays*, was a specimen collection of sophisms to be used in teaching argument and its fallacies.⁵³ His discussion of rhetoric in the *Advancement of Learning* included many traditional emphases, such as the need for speakers to make 'Provision or

Preparatory store for the furniture of speech and readiness of invention', which he divided into two main categories: *Antitheta Rerum*, groups of theses arranged *pro et contra* (a collection which shows many overlaps with the *Essays*);⁵⁴ and *Formulae*, sentences or phrases to be used as openings, conclusions and linking passages.⁵⁵ Bacon himself compiled two exemplary notebooks during his vacation leisure time: the *Promus of Formularies and Elegances* (Christmas, 1594–5); and the *Commentarius Solutus* (summer, 1608).⁵⁶

As for Bacon's attitude to rhetoric, he fully endorsed the importance ascribed to it in the *vita activa* by Cicero, the Florentine humanists and many writers in the sixteenth century, acknowledging that

although in true value it is inferior to wisdom,...yet with people it is the more mighty: for so Salomon saith [“the wise in heart shall be called prudent, and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning”],⁵⁷ signifying that profoundness of wisdom will help a man to a name or admiration, but that it is eloquence that prevaieth in an active life.⁵⁸

Bacon knew well the rhetorical writings of Cicero and Quintilian, but the key model for this discussion is Aristotle. He draws on the *Rhetoric* for its defence of rhetoric against Plato's reduction of it, in the *Gorgias*, to 'a voluptuary art, resembling it to cookery'. Where Aristotle had argued that 'Rhetoric is useful because things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites',⁵⁹ Bacon stated that 'speech is much more conversant in adorning that which is good than colouring that which is evil; for there is no man but speaketh more honestly than he can do or think'.⁶⁰

Bacon shared Aristotle's ethical optimism, but he gave it a more convincing elaboration, as I have shown,⁶¹ by fusing Aristotle's *De anima* with faculty psychology in order to give rhetoric a key role in the internal workings of the human mind in the process of moral choice. 'The duty and office of Rhetoric', he wrote, 'is to apply Reason to Imagination for the better moving of the will.'⁶² Well aware that rational processes can be disturbed, Bacon declares that 'the end of Rhetoric is to fill the Imagination to second Reason, and not to oppress it'. Its role is corrective, supportive, protecting reason from disturbance and forming a channel for the passage of virtue. For, Bacon argues (turning the tables on Plato by appropriating a famous saying from the *Phaedrus*):

as Plato said elegantly, that ‘virtue, if she could be seen, would move great love and affection’;⁶³ so seeing that she cannot be shewed to the sense by corporal shape, the next degree is to shew her to the Imagination in lively representation,

an ability given to rhetoric, denied to the dry processes of logic. If the affections ‘were pliant and obedient to reason’, Bacon continues:

there should be no great use of persuasions and insinuations to the will, more than of naked proposition and proofs; but in regard of the continual mutinies and seditions of the Affections... Reason would become captive and servile, if Eloquence of Persuasions did not practise and win the Imagination from the Affection’s part, and contract a confederacy between the Reason and Imagination against the Affections.⁶⁴

The proper ‘force of eloquence and persuasion’, then, is to attack the affections, which think only of present gratification, by drawing on reason’s awareness that every act has its consequence in the future.

This brief exposition may suffice to show that Bacon was not only not hostile to rhetoric but that he gave it a positively benign role in social life and individual psychology, one unmatched, to my knowledge, by any other Renaissance theorist of knowledge. His conception of the imagination was also far more positive than many of his contemporaries, conceding its dangers but giving it a legitimately creative power. His attitude to poetry, and literature in general, was equally positive, sharing with Sidney and other Renaissance theorists the belief in literature as having great freedom, being linked (like rhetoric) to the imagination, ‘which, being not tied to the laws of matter, may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined’. Poetry, which he valued as ‘one of the principal portions of learning’, he defined as essentially fiction, a ‘Feigned history’ (so agreeing with both Aristotle and Sidney).

The use of this Feigned History hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it; the world being in proportion inferior to the soul.

So poetry goes beyond history by feigning ‘acts and events greater and more heroical’, but also ‘more just in retribution, and more according to revealed providence’, always ending events with ‘more rareness’

and variety, a focus on the ideal and potential, rather than the actual, which brings its readers great benefits.

So as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation. And therefore it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shews of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things.⁶⁵

No one reading these passages receptively is likely to agree with Rhodes that Bacon's 'preference was for the laconic', or with Loewenstein that 'The Baconian aesthetic was, above all, prosaic'. Such misrepresentations of Bacon can only derive from an inadequate knowledge of his works and of the relevant modern secondary literature. Loewenstein, for instance, although failing to realize that Bacon's so-called 'anti-humanism' was part of the humanists' attack on Ciceronianism, repeats the glib identification of Bacon with a philosophico-stylistic movement invented by Morris W. Croll (in essays published between 1914 and 1929), known as 'Anti-Ciceronianism'. Croll's thesis, which posited a unified sixteenth-century movement against Cicero on the level both of thought and style, resulting in a non-symmetrical, short-breathed, so-called 'Senecan style', was an uneasy mixture of history of ideas with the history of style, neither historically documented; its deficiencies were made clear some thirty years ago.⁶⁶ Loewenstein's further identification of Bacon with the supposedly anti-rhetorical plain style of the Puritans and the Royal Society seems unaware that neither of those groups was opposed to rhetoric. The Puritan educational reformers in Samuel Hartlib's circle—William Dell, John Dury and others—all tolerated the *trivium* of grammar, logic and rhetoric, including them in their schemes for new curricula and new institutions. Greek, Hebrew and rhetoric received increased emphasis in the Puritan revival of Trinity College, Dublin, in the 1650s, while Cromwell's plan (1657) for a newly founded University of Dublin included a professorship of rhetoric. Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* (1667) includes an oft-quoted attack on the deceits of metaphor, but any analysis of that work which attends to its social and intellectual context will show that Sprat was really attacking nonconformists and enthusiasts, in religion and the occult. Sprat himself believed that the new science would actually provide richer material for figurative language. Other leading lights of that institution—John Wilkins, Robert Boyle, William Petty—not only

recommended rhetoric in education but used it in their own writings.⁶⁷ It is an easily verifiable historical fact that rhetoric lost no popularity in the seventeenth century, that it continued to hold a high esteem in school and university education, and that publications of rhetorical texts, both new and old, did not diminish.⁶⁸ That rhetoric maintained its prestige is perhaps due in some part to Bacon's advocacy of it.

V

If Bacon's anti-humanist, anti-rhetorical attitudes can be shown to be a myth, we are left with a matching mystery: Why is it that so many otherwise learned and well-informed scholars feel confident about ascribing opinions to Bacon without troubling to find out what he actually thought and wrote?⁶⁹

Notes

- 1 See J.L.Harrison, 'Bacon's view of rhetoric, poetry, and the imagination', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 1957, vol. 20, pp. 107–25, reprinted in B. Vickers (ed.), *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon*, London, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972, pp. 253–71; B.Vickers, 'Bacon's use of theatrical imagery', in W.A.Sessions (ed.) *Francis Bacon's Legacy of Texts*, New York, AMS Press, 1990, pp. 171–213; B.Vickers, 'Bacon and rhetoric', in Markku Peltonen (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 200–31.
- 2 Anthony Grafton, 'The new science and the traditions of humanism', in J. Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 203–23, at 205.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 205. The only supporting reference is R.F.Jones, *The Triumph of the English Language*, Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1953, p. 221 n. 5.
- 4 J.Loewenstein, 'Seventeenth-century English literature', in Kraye (ed.), *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 269–93, at 283–4.
- 5 N.Rhodes, *The Power of Eloquence and English Renaissance Literature*, London and New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, p. 61. See my review in *Modern Philology*, 1995, vol. 92, pp. 508–13.
- 6 Rhodes, *Power*; p. 182.
- 7 C.Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform 1626–1660*, London, Duckworth, 1975, p. 105.
- 8 A.Quinton, *Francis Bacon*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 23, 13.
- 9 D.Bush, *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century 1600–1660*, 2nd ed., revised, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 276.
- 10 References to this text will be in two forms: first, to the standard edition, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. J.Spedding *et al.*, 14 vols, London, 1857–74, in the form S.3.344; secondly, to the recent annotated anthology, *Francis Bacon*,

- ed. B.Vickers, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, in the form V.137. For this opening sequence see S.3.264–82; V.122–37, 586–94 (notes).
- 11 S.3.282–95; V.137–48, 594–600.
 - 12 S.3.295–319; V.148–68, 600–10.
 - 13 S.3.321–491; V.169–299, 610–76.
 - 14 S.3.282–5; V.138–40.
 - 15 [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium De ratione dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, trans. H.Caplan, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass. and London, William Heinemann and Harvard University Press, 1954, pp. 6–8 (I.2.3), with useful references to the older literature.
 - 16 I.Scott, *Controversies over the Imitation of Cicero as a Model for Style and Some Phases of Their Influence on the Schools of the Renaissance*, New York, 1910. It includes translations of the letters between Bembo and Gianfrancesco Pico (part II, pp. 1–18), and the whole of Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* (ibid., pp. 19–130). The latter is also available in an excellent annotated translation by B.I.Knott in the *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Toronto and Buffalo, University of Toronto Press, 1974–, vol. XXVIII.
 - 17 M.L.McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995; see my review in *Modern Language Review*, 1998, vol. 93, pp. 850–2. Of the secondary literature cited by McLaughlin, one could profitably consult the writings of H.Gmelin, G. W.Pigman III, H.C.Gotoff, J.F.D'Amico, D.A.Russell and E. Fantham.
 - 18 See B.Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968, pp. 111–13, 121–30, 160–4. On Bacon and Renaissance Ciceronianism see ibid. pp. 96–106. The author records his disappointment that none of the commentators who label Bacon an anti-humanist show any knowledge of these discussions. But contemporary criticism seems to have an increasingly short memory.
 - 19 See *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, trans. C.R.Thompson, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp. 373–7, at 376.
 - 20 See the introduction to *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 327–30.
 - 21 Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. G. Shepherd, London, T.Nelson, 1965, pp. 138, 227–8.
 - 22 Seneca, *Epistulae morales LXXXIV.3–4*; trans. R.M.Gummere, 3 vols, Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1962, vol. II, pp. 276–9.
 - 23 See C.Schmidt, *La Vie et les travaux de Jean Sturm*, Strasbourg, 1855; reprinted Nieuwkoop, B.De Graaf, 1970; and J.J.Murphy, *Renaissance Rhetoric: A Short-Title Catalogue of Works on Rhetorical Theory from the Beginning of Printing to A.D. 1700*, New York, Garland, 1981, pp. 277–9. For some caveats on this pioneering bibliography see my review in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 1983, vol. 69, pp. 441–4, and 1984, vol. 70, pp. 335–8.
 - 24 See *Gabriel Harvey's 'Ciceronianus'*, trans. C.A.Forbes, with an introduction and notes by H.S.Wilson, Lincoln, Neb., University of Nebraska, 1945, pp. 2–10. Harvey delivered his *Rhetor* (London, 1577) as two orations during the spring of 1575, and the first version of the *Ciceronianus* in the Easter term, 1576.

- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- 26 Roger Ascham, *English Works*, ed. W.A.Wright, Cambridge, 1904, p. 271: 'Erasmus, beyng more occupied in spying other mens faultes, than declaryng his own advise, is mistaken of many, to the great hurt of study, for his authoritie sake. For...he and Longolius onelie differing in this, that the one seemeth to give over much, the other over little, to him [Cicero] whom they both best loved and chiefly allowed of all other.'
- 27 *Harvey's 'Ciceronianus'*, p. 63.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 69: 'This will give the sum of the matter: I valued words more than content, language more than thought, the one art of speaking more than the thousand subjects of knowledge; I preferred the mere style of Marcus Tully to all the postulates of the philosophers and mathematicians; I believed that the bone and sinew of imitation lay in my ability to choose as many brilliant and elegant words as possible, to reduce them into order, and to connect them together in a rhythmical period.'
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 124.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 71 (my italics).
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 73; Harvey is quoting from Ramus, *Ciceronianus*, sig. Bij^v.
- 33 *Harvey's 'Ciceronianus'*, pp. 75–6.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 77.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 37 Cf. C.Julius Victor, *Ars rhetorica*, ed. R.Giomini and M.S.Celentano, Leipzig, Teubner, 1980, p. 3 (374).
- 38 Cicero, *De oratore* III.21.125 ('for a full supply of facts begets a full supply of words'). See also III.5.19, the opening of Crassus's discussion of rhetoric, where he complains that when Antonius arranged 'our shares in the debate...[he] took for himself the subject of the proper topics of oratory and left it to me to expound the proper method of embellishing them, he separated from one another things that cannot really stand apart. Every speech consists of matter and words, and the words cannot fall into place if you remove the matter, nor can the matter have clarity if you withdraw the words.'
- 39 Horace, *Ars poetica* 311 ('and when matter is in hand words will not be loath to follow').
- 40 Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* X.3.9, advice to the orator 'to write as well as possible; speed will come with practice. Gradually thoughts will suggest themselves with increasing readiness, the words will answer to our call...' Earlier he had urged the orator to 'first form a true conception of the principles of eloquence', read widely and 'develop the strength to use his acquisitions, so that every word is ready at hand and lies under his very eyes...the man who follows these instructions will find that facts and words appropriate to their expression will present themselves spontaneously' (VIII pr.28–9).
- 41 See, e.g., Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* II.21.1–4; III.3.1; III.5.1; VI.3.22; VIII pr.6; VIII.3.55–8 (itemizing the recurring faults in each domain).
- 42 *Ibid.*, X.1.5 ('a copious supply of matter and words').
- 43 See the *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. XXIV, which contains both these texts; my quotation is from p. 666.

- 44 Sidney is referring here to Jean Bodin, *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (Paris, 1556).
- 45 *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. A.Feuillerat, 4 vols, Cambridge, 1912, vol. III, pp. 130, 132.
- 46 Harvey's 'Ciceronianus', p. 57. It is worth quoting the Latin for the wordplay on *fluit/diffluit*, *ibid.*, p. 56: 'Id eo feci, non quod Ciceronem improbarem, probarem Osorium, set ut Osorianam redundantiam a Ciceronis copia internoscerem. Fluit quidem utriusque sermo: sed alterius, sine vllis salebris, ut liquidus, & sedatus ammis, fluit: alterius, nonnunquam extra ripas, vt turgidus, atque rapidus torrens, nec illis se cohiberi septis patitur, quae videbat ab altero praestituta.' Harold Wilson appositely cites Cicero's account of how he went to Rhodes to study with Molo, a distinguished teacher of oratory: 'Is dedit operam, si modo id consequi potuit, ut nimis redundantis nos et supra fluentis iuvenili quadam dicendi impunitate et licentia reprimeret et quasi extra ripas diffluentis coerceret' (Cicero, *Brutus* 91.316; 'He made it his task to repress if possible the redundance and excess of my style, which was marked by a youthful impetuosity and lack of restraint, and to check it so to speak from overflowing its banks').
- 47 Harvey's 'Ciceronianus', p. 40.
- 48 J.W.Binns, *Intellectual Culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Latin Writings of the Age*, Leeds, Francis Cairns, 1990, chap. 15 (pp. 270–90), at 272–8. Binns also discusses Harvey's *Ciceronianus*, along with other works by Laurence Humphrey and Bartholomew Clerke.
- 49 Cf. 'For words are but the images of matter' with Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 1 (16^a–8): 'written marks are...signs of affections of the soul [which]...are likenesses of actual things', trans. J.L.Ackrill in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J.Barnes, 2 vols, Princeton, Princeton University Press, vol. I, p. 25.
- 50 Vickers, 'Bacon and rhetoric'.
- 51 V.xxxviii.
- 52 See *Advice to the Earl of Rutland on His Travels* (S.9.12–13; V.73–4); *Advice to Fulke Greville on His Studies* (S.9.23–5; V.103–4); *A Letter and Discourse to Sir Henry Savile, Touching Helps for the Intellectual Powers* (S.7.102–3; V.118–19).
- 53 See S.7.77; V.97, and the later comments in the *Advancement of Learning* (S.3.412; V.240) and *De augmentis scientiarum* (S.4.459–72).
- 54 See S.4.472–92, and V.713–14.
- 55 See S.3.412–13; V.240–1.
- 56 See S.7.197–211 and 11.18–95; V.xlii–xliv.
- 57 Proverbs 16:21.
- 58 S.3.409; V.237–8.
- 59 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I.1 (1355^a22).
- 60 S.3.410; V.238.
- 61 Vickers, 'Bacon and rhetoric', pp. 210–22.
- 62 S.3.409; V.238.
- 63 Plato, *Phaedrus* 250D.
- 64 S.3.410–11; V.238–9.
- 65 S.3.343–4; V.186–7.

- 66 See Vickers, *Bacon and Renaissance Prose*, pp. 106–11, 284–6; and R.M. Adolph, *The Rise of Modern Prose Style*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1968.
- 67 See B.Vickers, 'The Royal Society and English prose style: A reassessment', in *Rhetoric and the Pursuit of Truth: Language Change in the Seventeenth Century*, Los Angeles, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1985, pp. 1–76. This essay also includes a critical evaluation of the pioneering work of R.F.Jones, especially his two earlier books, *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth-Century England*, St Louis, Missouri, Washington University, 1936; and the essays collected in *The Seventeenth Century*, Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1951, showing how Jones tended to take seventeenth-century pronouncements on language, science, and prose-style at face value, unaware of their polemical context in several highly contested political and religious controversies.
- 68 See L.D.Green, 'Rhetoric', in *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, 3rd ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming, vol. II: 1500–1700, ed. D.Sedge. This, the first adequate modern survey, will list 485 entries on rhetoric from 326 authors.
- 69 The misconceptions discussed are not the only ones to have pestered Bacon studies in recent years. For further discussion see the following articles by B. Vickers: 'Frances Yates and the writing of History', *Journal of Modern History*, 1979, vol. 51, pp. 287–316; 'Bacon among the literati: Science and language', *Comparative Criticism*, 1991, vol. 13, pp. 249–71; and 'Francis Bacon and the progress of knowledge', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1992, vol. 53, pp. 495–518. The fact is that the secondary literature on Bacon is of extremely variable quality.