*Paideuma* 61:257–274 (2015)

# STUDIES IN RHETORIC AND CULTURE
## A new Berghahn Books series*

Michał Mokrzan

In 2009 Berghahn Books (Oxford, New York) launched a new series entitled "Studies in rhetoric and culture". Since then, six compendia have appeared that present the results of conferences, meetings and discussions within the International Rhetoric Culture Project (www.rhetoricculture.org), where scholars from around the world explore how 'rhetoric structures culture and culture structures rhetoric' (Tyler and Strecker 2009:21).

The first volume of the series, entitled "Culture and rhetoric" and edited by Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (2009c), is a collection of articles that provide a theoretical and methodological foundation for research on the figurative and persuasive dimension of social relations. Starting with the observation that there is an organising rhetorical pattern in every communicative expression, the authors view rhetoric as both an instrument to gain knowledge about reality and a means to create the customs, lifestyles, mores, ethos and habitus we call culture. Contrary to other contemporary scholars who contest the notion of culture (Rabinow *et al.* 2008), the researchers maintain that the concept is important for the human sciences. However, they propose to rethink it, 'and locate culture in the domain where it ultimately belongs – that is, rhetoric' (Strecker and Tyler 2009a:1). The series shows that 'by means of rhetoric we create phantasms, by means of rhetoric we act like demons, and by means of rhetoric we conjure up those ideas, values, moral rules and laws that constitute the basis of culture' (Strecker and Tyler 2009a:5). The articles collected in the first volume prove this claim by analysing specific cultural phenomena and initiating theoretical reflections. The articles deal with the concept of human being as *homo rhetoricus* (Peter L. Oesterreich), the rhetorical theory of culture (Ivo Strecker, Stephen Tyler, Christian Meyer, James W. Fernandez, Robert Hariman), the tropological and persuasive dimension of anthropological knowledge (Alan Rumsey, Philippe-Joseph Salazar, Boris Wiseman), as well as the religious experience (Michael Herzfeld) and the rhetorical analysis of Shakespeare's poetics (Anthony Paul).

In my view, one of the most intriguing questions emerging from these debates is what we mean when we speak of the 'return' of rhetoric in contemporary discourse on culture and society. This issue is addressed particularly well by Alan Rumsey, who argues that we cannot proclaim 'a simple "return" to rhetoric' (2009:131). He follows John Bender and David E. Wellbery in saying that

---

* Translation from Polish by Marta Songin-Mokrzan

> the contemporary return of rhetoric presupposes, through its very structure as return, an end of rhetoric, a discontinuity within tradition, and an alternation that renders the second version of rhetoric, its modernist-postmodernist redaction, a new form of cultural practice and mode of analysis (Bender and Wellbery 1990:4).

With the recognition of the rhetorical nature of language and culture, the age-old distinction between rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourses has lost its legitimacy. A similar argument appears in the chapter written by Tyler and Strecker (2009:26). The word 'rhetoric' as used in the Rhetoric Culture Project refers, therefore, to its modern understanding as a new form of discourse and culture. It was Friedrich Nietzsche, cited several times in the series' volumes and considered by Christian Meyer (2009:37) to be a founding father of the rhetorical theory of culture, who claimed that 'there is obviously no unrhetorical "naturalness" of language to which one could appeal; language itself is the result of purely rhetorical arts' (Nietzsche 1989:106). Thus, it can be argued that '[r]hetoric is no longer the title of a doctrine and a practice, nor a form of cultural memory; it becomes instead something like the condition of our existence' (Bender and Wellbery 1990:25).

The co-authors of the Rhetoric Culture Project share the opinion of George Kennedy that all forms of communication, even cultural and social, carry 'some rhetorical energy; [...] there is no zero-degree rhetoric' (1998:215). As pointed out by Peter Oesterreich, the universality and ubiquity of rhetoric does not mean that 'every human being is a well-versed orator' (2009:50). Individuals generally communicate by means of rhetoric even though they are often not aware of it. This includes both verbal and non-verbal areas of human experience. Contributors to the Rhetoric Culture Project therefore speak of 'the wild rhetoric of the realm of everyday life' (Oesterreich 2009:53), 'internal rhetoric' (Nienkamp 2009:18) and 'vernacular rhetoric' (Hauser 2011:169).

Taking into account co-authors' statements on the universality of rhetoric, it can be concluded that, after phonocentrism, videocentrism and logocentrism, there is yet another centrism to come. The belief that all culture is rhetorical may resemble, to its potential critics, the semiotic approach called pansemiotism, according to which everything, even a roadside stone, is a sign. Drawing conclusions from the discussion of semiotics led by its critics in the 1960s, we should also ask whether the assumption that culture and, as Anthony Paul claims (2014:22), even the physical world is rhetorical entangles us again in the aporias of pansemiotism. In this regard I follow Michael Carrithers' suggestion that

> culture comprises a repertoire of things learned, including mental schemes and images, values and attitudes, dispositions, forms of speech and organisation, narratives, and commonplace knowledge. These things are doubtless a guide to people, a resource, and they certainly require our explanatory efforts. But they are not active in themselves, not the single source of what people do (2009a:4).

And if culture is a set of inactive tools potentially deployable by social actors, then rhetoric, according to Carrithers, should be conceived as the skill involved in using these tools. In my opinion, accepting Carrithers's understanding of the relationship between culture and rhetoric allows to avoid the charge of panrhetorism. It can be considered that not everything is rhetorical – just as not everything is semiotic – but that everything can become rhetorical. Cultural phenomena are not rhetorical as such, but used for specific purposes (to convince someone, to shape one's attitude, or to create interpretations of reality), they can gain this dimension.

The second volume of the series, "Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life", edited by Carrithers (2009c), is devoted to the rhetorical and cultural responses to events, which due to their traumatic and uncanny nature, fire rhetorical ingenuity and infinite varieties of inward and outward persuasion. Referring to ethnographic research and discourse analysis, the authors show that by using rhetoric people are able to make the 'vicissitudes of life' comprehensible (Carrithers, Brigitte Nerlich, Ralph Cintron), learn difficult truths (Megan Biesel, Stevan M. Weine), shape emotions and moral attitudes (F.G. Bailey, James W. Fernandez) or create cultural identity (Jean Nienkamp, Ellen B. Basso).

Thus, in order to explain the process through which German society struggles to overcome its Nazi past, Carrithers uses the tropology of James Fernandez (1986), according to which people metaphorically comprehend certain domains by referring them to other domains. Metaphorical thinking helps us understand experiences which at first seem obscure and incomprehensible. Carrithers notes that

> stories, like metaphors, are mind-expanding: just as metaphors bring in another domain of thought to a topic of speech, widening our understanding, stories can bring in a broader context, a more richly populated setting, inviting us to consider that more, and different, events and persons are relevant to the matter in question than we might have thought (2009b:40).

Metaphors and narratives 'work together to achieve a persuasive effect, and indeed to create a more or less consistent interpretation of a whole landscape of events and their aftermath' (Carrithers 2009b:49).

A similar thought is expressed in Brigitte Nerlich's article dedicated to the rhetorical and cultural dimensions of the epidemic of foot and mouth disease (FMD), which broke out in Britain in 2001. Analysis of the narratives, metaphors and arguments which were used by media in political discourse and in everyday life to describe the epidemic encourages Nerlich to recognise that, in addition to its material and technical ways of coping with stressful situations, society creates symbolic mechanisms, in which rhetoric plays an important role. Nerlich notes that the deployment of the conceptual metaphor 'Handling FMD is a War'

> created, at least initially, a certain solidarity between the government, the farmers and the public and ensured that a policy that some saw as outdated was regarded, at least for a time and at least by some, as time-honored and solid, as a policy 'that works'. Declaring 'war' against the disease reinforced this solidarity (Nerlich 2009:92).

The third volume, entitled "Economic persuasions" and edited by Stephen Gudeman (2009b), raises two problems: the persuasiveness of economic and anthropological discourses, and the rhetorical nature of the economic phenomena of everyday life, such as exchange, work and property. The articles show, in Gudeman's words, that '"thinking rhetorically" is a profitable way to think about economy' (2009a:4). By adopting such a perspective, the authors are able to demonstrate that the debate between formalists and substantivists, which occurred in economic anthropology in the 1960s, took the form of a rhetorical dispute (James G. Carrier and William Milberg). 'Thinking rhetorically' is also useful for the purpose of understanding the persuasive power of money (Keith Hart, Ruben George Oliven), the theory of the gift (Nurit Bird-David and Asaf Darr) and the processes of legitimising private property (Gudeman). In my opinion, what is most valuable in this book is precisely that it extends the research initiated by Deirdre McCloskey (1998) on the rhetoric of economics to the anthropological study of economic phenomena. In the words of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), rhetoric here turns out to be both 'good to think with' and 'good to live by'. This statement can be illustrated by James Carrier's (2009) article on economic anthropology and Keith Hart's (2009) study of money.

Carrier claims that the arguments of the formalists and substantivists were deployed *de facto* not to convince opponents but to strengthen one's own identity:

> Each side of the debate tended to define themselves by their difference from those on the other. Formalists emphasized rational calculation of means in relations to ends as a human constant; substantivists emphasized the social contexts and institutional patterns of economic activity (Carrier 2009:19).

There is thus nothing particularly odd in stating that 'the debate was abandoned rather than resolved' (Carrier 2009:19).

Although it is not explicitly alleged by Carrier, the conclusion can be drawn that the dispute between the parties to this discourse can be explained by the concept of the rhetorical situation outlined by Lloyd Bitzer (1968). In Bitzer's theory,

> [t]here are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: the first is the exigence; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the audience to be constrained in decision and action, and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience (Bitzer 1968:6).

In the dispute in the field of economic anthropology in the 1960s, the fundamental problem of the ontic status of the economic phenomena is the exigence, the interpretive community of social scientists is the audience, and the intellectual traditions, which researchers participating in the discussion refer to, are viewed as constraints. According to Bitzer's theory, the rhetorical discourse developed by economic anthropologists should be viewed as a response to the exigence, but – what is extremely important in this context – the arguments used in the dispute also shaped the exigence itself.

When complemented by Bitzer's theory, Carrier's considerations can provide a useful basis for an analysis of the logic of other anthropological debates, for example, that between supporters of the moral model of science (Scheper-Hughes 1995) and researchers who advocate a vision of anthropology as a purely scientific endeavour (D'Andrade 1995). Sydel Silverman notes that, 'this debate provoked a barrage of heated responses from other anthropologists, who took issue with either or both combatants on a variety of grounds' (2005:336). Just like economic anthropologists in the 1960s, the participants in the dispute did not speak to each other, but past each other. The arguments deployed did not reach their opponents, nor were they intended to convince anyone or to influence any change of opinion, but rather they reinforced the sense of the cohesion and identity of the conflicting interpretative communities.[1] Therefore, the structuralist view of totemism also applies to anthropology itself. As Claude Lévi-Strauss points out: 'Totemism is thus reduced to a particular fashion of formulating a general problem, viz., how to make opposition, instead of being an obstacle to integration, serve rather to produce it' (1998:89). Theoretical schools in anthropology are similar to totemic clans: Each clan or school needs an oppositional clan or school to establish its own identity.

"Economic persuasions" not only provides inspiration for a future analysis of the rhetoric of economic and anthropological discourses, but by problematising commonsense thinking it also expands our knowledge to the rhetorical dimension of economic phenomena. For example, Hart's article seeks to answer the questions of 'how people communicate through money. What does money d o and how? Wherein lies its power to persuade?' (Hart 2009:138; emphasis in the original). One of the answers to these questions is:

> Money – the main device in capitalist societies for making social relations objective – is at the same time a benchmark for concrete narratives of subjective attachment. Money's persuasiveness lies in this synthesis of impersonal abstraction and personal meaning, objectification and subjectivity, analytical reason and synthetic narrative. Its seductive power comes from the fluency of its mediation between infinite potential and finite determination (Hart 2009:139–140).

Rhetorical analysis can thus serve as an effective tool with which to criticise one's own society. This is also indicated by Michael Herzfeld – one of the co-authors of the Rheto-

1 See Songin-Mokrzan (2014).

ric Culture Project – in his book "Cultural intimacy: social poetics in the nation-state" (2005). Designing the concept of social poetics – understood as a technical analysis of the rhetorical features of human symbolic expression – Herzfeld claims that 'any symbolic system used as an instrument of persuasion – or, as we might now say, used for performative effect – can be examined under this heading' (2005:183). The practices of defamiliarisation – which, according to Herzfeld, constitute the goal of anthropological research – can be successfully employed by analysing such an instrument of persuasion as money in capitalist society.

The fourth volume, "The rhetorical emergence of culture", edited by Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (2011), continues research into the anthropology of rhetoric by expanding and deepening the discussions of the preceding three volumes in the series. The articles deal with the intersubjective nature of social relations (John W. Du Bois), embodied experience (John Shotter), tenor in culture (Ivo Strecker), i.e. 'the movement of thought and feeling that results from the co-presence, co-operation, and interaction of the two parts that constitute a metaphor' (Strecker 2011:141), collective performances (Filipp Sapienza) and the political aspects of authorship (James Thomas Zebroski). This volume also incorporates ideas which are relevant to the theory and methodology of rhetorical anthropology. Referring to the book "The dialogic emergence of culture" (Tedlock and Mannheim 1995), which announces the rise of a dialogic methodological perspective in anthropology, in their "Introduction" to the volume Girke and Meyer write about the rhetorical emergence of culture. They try to go beyond dialogic anthropology, which neglects, they say, the agonistic and persuasive dimension of human life. According to Girke and Meyer, Tedlock and Mannheim 'do not enrich the anodyne and inoffensive concept of "dialogue" with ideas of power, dominance, and fight' (2011:7). In my opinion, the dialogic perspective, by marginalising the issue of antagonism in social relations, is close to the theory of communicative action introduced by Jürgen Habermas, which emphasises the importance of reaching c o n s e n s u s in social actions. 'What is missing from this approach is the power of persuasion' (Girke and Meyer 2011:9). The analysis, undertaken within the framework of the Rhetoric Culture Project, highlights how consensus may turn into conflict. Girke and Meyer propose a model of the emergence of culture which takes into account both the collaborative and confrontational nature of social interactions, as 'dialogue is only one side of the rhetorical medal' (Girke and Meyer 2011:9).

In my view, the editors of the volume are proposing to merge Aristotle's concept of agonistic rhetoric with the Christian rhetoric of Augustine in research on culture. As Kenneth Burke notes, the concept of rhetoric presented by Augustine is peaceful and dialogical (1969:53). It is determined to reach an agreement and is oriented on a receiver; the sender, in turn, is viewed here as an ally, not an opponent. 'Augustine is concerned rather with the c a j o l i n g of an audience than with the routing of opponents' (Burke 1969:53; emphasis in the original). Therefore no one leaves the social interaction defeated; both sides of the rhetorical discourse establish a dialogue, which results in mutual

understanding. The interpretation of the rhetoric proposed by Aristotle is at odds with that presented by Augustine. Aristotle declares that rhetoric does not aim to eliminate *dissensus* and the reconciliation of conflicting parties, but to defeat an opponent in a dispute. Conflict and rupture are the natural habitat of rhetoric.

The editors of the fourth volume argue that the rhetorical theory of culture should be able to explain the multidimensional nature of the actions undertaken by social actors in everyday life. Therefore, one of the challenges facing researchers who use the rhetorical perspective is how to achieve this goal without falling into the idealistic and materialistic biases of such orientations as functionalism, structuralism, dialogical anthropology or ethnoscience. These orientations emphasise too strongly either the ideational dimension of culture – pointing to hidden mechanisms, codes, and structures – or the material character of social relations – when they focus on observable behaviour. Contributors to the fourth volume argue that combining the reflection on tropes, figures and topoi as symbolic categories that arrange the realm of human experience with the problem of their applicability in everyday social interactions helps to overcome biases of the previous theory of culture. The philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953), recalled by John Shotter, which expresses the view that 'meaning is physiognomy' (Shotter 2011:41), allows one to talk about the embodied patterns of experience, thus breaking the Cartesian opposition between real (physical world) and ideal (world of thought). Following the direction outlined in Wittgenstein's "Philosophical investigations" (1953), Girke and Meyer argue that 'rhetoric acknowledges the virtues of a discursive or dialogical approach, while simultaneously emphasising just as much the material dimension of living bodies who communicate and, conjointly or in contention, create culture' (2011:2). The editors of the fourth volume rightly point out that

> [t]he notion of rhetoric also highlights the human body as one of the factors involved in interaction. The production of utterances and other actions is a bodily activity requiring energetic effort and involvement, so that these actions do not only possess a symbolic, but also a material aspect (Girke and Meyer 2011:6).

At the same time, the rhetorical theory of culture is not rendered illusory by extreme subjectivism. Problematising the category of agency, Tyler reminds us that 'the whole idea of speaker agency is illusory even under the best of circumstances, whatever they may be. Both structuralism and deconstruction provide strong arguments against the idea of the totalitarian speaker' (2011:308).

The fifth volume of the series, "Astonishment and evocation: the spell of culture in art and anthropology", edited by Ivo Strecker and Markus Verne (2013c), is dedicated to Stephen Tyler. The editors of the book explain that while in 2006 they were engaged in developing the results of the conferences devoted to the rhetoric culture theory,

> the 75th birthday of Stephen Tyler was also imminent. Because Stephen was considered a kind of 'dean' of the project, it seemed appropriate to give his anniversary some special

> recognition. So word was sent to all the scholars involved in the rhetoric culture project, inviting them to contribute to a Festschrift devoted to Stephen's ideas of ethnography as an art of evocation and a means for catharsis (Strecker and Verne 2013a:vii).

The volume contains only some of the submitted articles, the others having been published in the book "Writing in the field: Festschrift for Stephen Tyler" (Strecker and La Tosky 2013).

The co-authors of "Astonishment and evocation" and "Writing in the field" agree that the role played by Tyler, both in developing a rhetorical theory of culture and in establishing contemporary anthropology, is not to be underestimated. It is after Strecker's discovery made in 1981 of "The said and the unsaid: mind, meaning and culture" (Tyler 1978) that the Rhetoric Culture Project was born. This event is a founding myth of the project.[2] In his book, Tyler turns to the 'rhetorical and hermeneutical vision of language that returns language to its proper context of everyday uses and understandings' (Tyler 1978:xii). Tyler proposes a model of discourse, which plays an important role in the theory and methodology of rhetorical anthropology. This model consists of the following constitutive elements:

> intention, convention (competence), and act (performance). [...] [e]ach component acts upon itself, and intention and convention interact, as do convention and performance; and while performance acts upon intention, intention only acts upon performance mediately through convention (1978:136).

This model does not give priority either to a speaker, as in the oratory mode, nor to a listener, as in case of hermeneutics. It also resigns from granting priority to the code, which is the subject of interest in structural semiotics and performances, also cherished by performative anthropology (Tyler and Strecker 2009:24–25). Tyler, and Strecker as well, 'do not want to abandon these loci, but argue that no one of them alone dominates as the origin or starting point of understanding' (Tyler and Strecker 2009:24). Visual representation of a discourse model as spirals superimposed on one another and inscribed in the Pinwheel Galaxy (a spiral galaxy discovered by Pierre Méchain on 27 March 1781) is the emblem of the Rhetoric Culture Project (Hariman 2009:224).

The editors of the fifth volume of the series point out that 'the ramifications of these and other related thoughts have led Tyler to emphasise the role of evocation in ethnography' (Strecker and Verne 2013b:2). As Tyler notes:

> Evocation is neither presentation nor representation. It presents no objects and represents none, yet it makes available through absence what can be conceived but not presented. It is thus beyond truth and immune to the judgment of performance. It overcomes the separation of the sensible and the conceivable, of form and content, of self and other, of

---

2 See Strecker (1991:vii) and Strecker and Tyler (2009b:vii).

> language and the world. Evocation – that is to say, 'ethnography' – is the discourse of the post-modern world (1987:199–200).

And the source of evocation, Strecker and Verne add, are wonder and astonishment. They 'are part and parcel of the encounter with the world in our own and in other cultures, and they produce mental and emotional energy, which leads artists and anthropologists alike to look and examine closely a particular phenomenon that has caught their attention' (Strecker and Verne 2013b:1). Of all volumes of the series this one explores the relationship between rhetoric and culture *per se* to the least extent. Nevertheless, it is an excellent source of inspirations for researchers who advocate the postmodern paradigm as a model for practicing humanistic reflection. Despite the fact that the collected texts consider issues which vary significantly, such as the symbolic of indigo (Boris Wiseman), the phenomenon of co-presence (Strecker) or ritual speech (Douglas E. Lewis), all directly or indirectly refer to Tyler's thought mentioned above.

Introducing the sixth volume of the series, entitled "Chiasmus and culture", the editors Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman declare that the articles within it demonstrate

> what the unsettling logic of chiasmus has to tell us about the world, human relations, cultural patterns, psychology, and artistic and poetic creation. They treat chiasmus not only as a figure of speech, but as a generative principle, an aesthetic idea, a method of composition, a tool of ideological manipulation, a matrix of social interaction, a philosophical problem, a metaphor, an elemental image or sign (2014:1).

The contributors to the volume convincingly show that the logic of chiasmus plays an important role in the scientific, philosophical, rhetorical and artistic discourses developed, among others, by such writers and thinkers as Hans Christian Andersen (Wiseman), Aristotle (Philippe-Joseph Salazar), James Joyce (Paul), Jacques Lacan (Alain Vanier), Montaigne (Philip John Usher), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Isabelle Thomas-Fogiel), Néstor Perlongher (Ben Bollig), Shakespeare (Paul, Robert Hariman, Strecker) and Martin Heidegger (Stephen Tyler). The presence of chiasmus is also noticeable in ritual actions.

For instance, the article by Douglas E. Lewis, which is dedicated to the ethnorhetoric in Tana Wai Brama, a region in east central Flores, eastern Indonesia, shows that in the collective imagination the death of Mo'an Rénu (a ritual specialist) was a consequence of the chiasmatical inversion of paired words in ritual speech. Lewis writes:

> Rénu's error was to speak of:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | *Ina nian tana réta* | Mother land and earth above |
> | *Ama lero wulan wawa* | Father sun and moon below |
>
> rather than the canonically – and cosmologically – correct sequence of words denoting the quadripartite deity of Tana 'Ai:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ina nian tana wawa* | Mother land and earth below, |
| *Ama lero wulan réta* | Father sun and moon above. |

> In the cosmology and classifications of the people of Wai Brama, the land and earth, as 'mother', are feminine, while the sun and moon, as 'father', are masculine. The land is below the sun and the moon is above the earth. While not in the form we would normally expect of a chiasmus, Rénu spoke, in other words, chiasmatically and turned the world upside down (Lewis 2014:199–200).

"Chiasmus and culture" proves that the Rhetoric Culture Project not only significantly expands our understanding of culture and society, but also redefines the categories developed by rhetorical studies. The three introductory articles by Paul, Wiseman and Strecker, dedicated – to paraphrase J. David Sapir (1977) – to the anatomy of chiasmus, may serve as an example. Focusing not on the form, but on the semantic content, Paul extracts four types of chiasmus: the cross, the mirror, the circle and the spiral. Each of these types expresses a different attachment to reality and various ways of experiencing the world:

> Cross-chiasmus, if it uses effects of dissonance or ambiguity, does so only to resolve them; apparent contradiction is subordinate to agreement; doubleness to an overarching unity of statement. Cross-chiasmus may respond to our desire to see a proper and healthy order of things affirmed or restored, or it may help us to comprehend available alternatives (Paul 2014:26).

> The mirroring aspect of chiasmus is present when the content of the second half contradicts that of the first, without (as in the Quintilian formula) making clear that the second is to be preferred, thus giving rise to a tension that is unresolved, and hence to doubt, stasis, perhaps even a sort of mental paralysis (Paul 2014:28).

> The circle-chiasmus brings one back to the starting point; there is mental movement within a closed system. The characteristic effect is one of melancholy, the sense of life as a labyrinth (Paul 2014:33).

> The spiral-chiasmus involves an open-ended movement, returning the mind to a starting point that is now changed, whereby a further movement is initiated, a process which may continue indefinitely, generating new possibilities (Paul 2014:36).

The approach proposed by Paul may sound controversial to the defenders of the traditional division of *elocutio*, who understand chiasmus primarily as a figure of speech created by changing the word order, but here it grows to the rank of a trope. Contrary to chiasmus understood as a figure of speech, chiasmus as a trope is capable of creating new meanings. It is therefore the result of an operation on the syntagmatic axis as well as on the paradigmatic one. This view is also shared by Robert Hariman and Ivo Strecker.

Hariman presents an interactive theory of chiasmus. He argues, that

> chiasmus works not simply through a logic of crossing or exchange between two terms, but also through the generation of a third term that becomes the bridge between the original pairing. Thus, in the ABBA format, A and B are not changed into one another, but generate a third term, C, to mediate their relationship (Hariman 2014:52).

For example, in the famous line from Shakespeare's Macbeth, 'fair is foul and foul is fair', the third term is 'power'. For Hariman, chiasmus, considered as a trope, 'works in part by generating a third term (and the social energy animating that term), and in its more philosophical moment that third term is a mentality' (2014:58). Strecker, in turn, looks at chiasmus from the perspective of the social and psychological theory of metaphor he has developed. He criticises terms which Ivor Armstrong Richards (1936) and J. David Sapir (1977) use to describe the two parts of a metaphor. Richards 'introduced the term "tenor" for the first and "vehicle" for the second part of a metaphor [...]. In *Anatomy of Metaphor*, Sapir followed Richards' train of thought and referred to his terminology but replaced it with his own' (Strecker 2014:76). In Sapir's terminology 'discontinuous term' refers to 'vehicle' and 'continuous term' to 'tenor'. Strecker urges us to replace these terms with 'pathetic' and 'sympathetic', which, in his opinion, relate better to the type of experience generated by the use of metaphor:

> So far we have seen that the first part of metaphor is 'pathetic' and the second 'sympathetic'. As they act upon each other, both parts generate an ephemeral whole, the quality of which cannot be precisely described but may be evoked by metaphors such as 'colour', 'aura', 'sound' or 'tenor'. Generally, the two parts of metaphor uphold a positive relationship characterized by resonance, response and cooperation, and what may be called 'semantic sympathy' (Strecker 2014:77).

Strecker shows, however, that 'the internal dynamics of chiasmus on the other hand are very different, for the two parts of this trope are characterized not by consonance but by dissonance, not by stabilizing resemblance but destabilizing antinomy' (Strecker 2014:77). According to Strecker, social actors use metaphors when they want to 'establish and affirm the conventions they live by, and on the other side, they use chiasmus to throw each other's received wisdom into question' (Strecker 2014:78). Chiasmus emerges just at the moment of an emotional dissonance induced by challenging the obvious truths. 'Without shattering, there is no opening of the mind, no search for appropriate "third terms", no spiralling thoughts about mutual oppositions! Shattering provides the rhetorical energy of chiasmus' (Strecker 2014:87).

As these examinations of the logic and structure of chiasmus show, these authors do not speak with one voice. Creatively developing the theory of rhetorical tropes, they offer original ideas, which vary from traditional ones. Their deliberations may, however, sometimes seem controversial, as in the case of Paul's reflection on the status of chias-

mus. If I read his intentions properly, Paul pushes his interpretation in a direction once followed by Lévi-Strauss. He argues that

> chiasmus is not merely employed as a stylistic device but is perceived to be an ordering principle of the physical world. Yet for well over two thousand years rhetorical categories were seen as nothing more than ways of organizing language; it was never thought that they might represent structures that apply beyond the boundaries of verbal discourse. It is somewhat as if for centuries mathematics was used only as a tool in building and manufacture. The realization that rhetorical figures correspond to patterns and structures that are deeply inscribed in human thought and experience, and in the physical world, has still barely begun to reveal its implications for our understanding of every aspect of existence (2014:22).

What, in my view, is controversial in this passage is the claim that chiasmus is a principle that orders the physical world. This statement is at odds with Friedrich Nietzsche, who says in the essay "On truth and lies in a nonmoral sense": 'We believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things – metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities' (1979:82–83). The conclusion from this – so important for the Rhetoric Culture Project (Meyer 2009:37, Hariman 2009:228) – is not that the world is chiastically structured, but that we interpret the world by deploying chiasmus. Paul, however, identifies the interpretation of the physical world with the physical world itself. Following the deconstruction of Rainer Maria Rilke introduced by Paul de Man (1979), he expresses this view even more strongly when he argues,

> Even if one accepts this deconstructive interpretation, that Rilke goes to Orpheus because he is hungry for chiasmus rather than vice versa, the question still remains as to why the poet is so possessed by his master-figure in the first place. If Rilke is insistently chiastic, like Joyce, is it not because chiasmus answers to his expectation of the world, if not his experience of it, and strikes in him a deep chord? If the poet's mind is chiastic it is, in the first place, because he finds life chiastic (Paul 2014:33).

I suggest that Paul makes an error like Lévi-Strauss at the end of "The raw and cooked" (1969), where – in the words of Umberto Eco – he holds that 'thought operations reproduce relations in reality, the laws of mind are isomorphic with respect to the laws of nature' (Eco 1996:12).

It should be emphasised that Paul's point of view is not representative of the whole Rhetoric Culture Project. It contrasts, for instance, with the position of Robert Hariman who argues that all examples of chiasmus provide evidence not for 'the presence of a specific form in nature', but for 'the marvellous ability of the human mind to see patterns and to pattern what it sees' (2014:47).

By way of conclusion, I would like to say that the Berghahn Books series "Studies in rhetoric and culture" is an incarnation of the rhetorical turn within the human and

social sciences initiated in the 1980s,[3] and that the six volumes of the series convincingly show that the project of rhetorical anthropology – which integrates the study of man as *homo rhetoricus* and the study of culture as *cultura rhetorica* – has come to occupy a key place in the contemporary humanities.

## *References*

BENDER, John and David E. WELLBERY
1990 "Rhetoricality: on the modernist return of rhetoric", in: John Bender and David E. Wellbery (eds.), *The ends of rhetoric: history, theory, practice*, 3–39. Stanford: Stanford University Press

BITZER, Lloyd
1968 "The rhetorical situation", *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1(3):1–15

BURKE, Kenneth
1969 *The rhetoric of motives.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press

CARRIER, James G.
2009 "Simplicity in economic anthropology: persuasion, form, and substance", in: Stephen Gudeman (ed.), *Economic persuasions*, 15–30. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 3.)

CARRITHERS, Michael
2009a "Introduction", in: Michael Carrithers (ed.), *Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life*, 1–17. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 2.)
2009b "Story seeds and the inchoate", in: Michael Carrithers (ed.), *Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life*, 34–52. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 2.)

CARRITHERS, Michael (ed.)
2009c *Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 2.)

D'ANDRADE, Roy
1995 "Moral models in anthropology", *Current Anthropology* 36:399–408, 433–36

DE MAN, Paul
1979 *Allegories of reading: figural language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

[3] See Simons (1990) and Mokrzan (2014).

ECO, Umberto
1996 *Nieobecna struktura.* Warszawa: KR

FERNANDEZ, James W.
1986 *Persuasions and performances: the play of tropes in culture.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press

GIRKE, Felix and Christian MEYER
2011 "Introduction", in: Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The rhetorical emergence of culture*, 1–32. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)

GUDEMAN, Stephen
2009a "Introduction", in: Stephen Gudeman (ed.), *Economic persuasions*, 1–14. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 3.)

GUDEMAN, Stephen (ed.)
2009b *Economic persuasions.* New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 3.)

HARIMAN, Robert
2009 "Future imperfect: imagining rhetorical culture theory", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 221–237. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)
2014 "What is a chiasmus? Or, why the abyss stares back", in: Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman (eds.), *Chiasmus and culture*, 45–68. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 6.)

HART, Keith
2009 "The persuasive power of money", in: Stephen Gudeman (ed.), *Economic persuasions*, 136–158. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 3.)

HAUSER, Gerard A.
2011 "Attending the vernacular: a plea for an ethnographical rhetoric", in: Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The rhetorical emergence of culture*, 157–172. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)

HERZFELD, Michael
2005 *Cultural intimacy: social poetics in the nation-state.* New York and London: Routledge

KENNEDY, George
1998 *Comparative rhetoric.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press

LAKOFF, George and Mark JOHNSON
1980 *Metaphors we live by.* Chicago: University Chicago Press

LEWIS, Douglas E.
2014 "Parallelism and chiasmus in ritual oration and ostension in Tana Wai Brama, eastern Indonesia", in: Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman (eds.), *Chiasmus and culture*, 187–218. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 6.)

LÉVI-STRAUSS, Claude
1969 The raw and the cooked. Volume I: *Mythologiques*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
1998 *Totemism*. London: Merlin Press

MCCLOSKEY, Deidre
1998 *The rhetoric of economics*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press

MEYER, Christian
2009 "Precursors of rhetoric culture theory", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 31–48. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

MEYER, Christian and Felix GIRKE (eds.)
2011 *The rhetorical emergence of culture*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)

MOKRZAN, Michał
2014 "The rhetorical turn in anthropology", *Český Lid* 101:1–18

NERLICH, Brigitte
2009 "'As if Goya was on hand as a marksman': foot and mouth disease as a rhetorical and cultural phenomenon", in: Michael Carrithers (ed.), *Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life*, 87–106. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 2.)

NIENKAMP, Jean
2009 "Internal rhetorics: constituting selves in diaries and beyond", in: Michael Carrithers (ed.), *Culture, rhetoric and the vicissitudes of life*, 18–33. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 2.)

NIETZSCHE, Friedrich
1979 "On truth and lies in a nonmoral sense", in: Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy and truth: selections from Nietzsche's notebooks of the early 1870's*. Edited by Daniel Breazeale, 77–97. New Jersey: Humanities Press
1989 "Description of ancient rhetoric", in: Sander L. Gilman (ed.), *Friedrich Nietzsche on rhetoric and language*, 2–193. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press

OESTERREICH, Peter L.
2009 "*Homo rhetoricus*", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 49–58. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

PAUL, Anthony
2014 "From stasis to ékstasis: four types of chiasmus", in: Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman (eds.), *Chiasmus and culture*, 19–44. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 6.)

PAUL, Anthony and Boris WISEMAN
2014 "Introduction: chiasmus in the drama of life", in: Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman (eds.), *Chiasmus and culture*, 1–16. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 6.)

RABINOW, Paul, George E. MARCUS, James D. FAUBION and Tobias REES
2008 *Designs for an anthropology of the contemporary.* Durham and London: Duke University Press

RICHARDS, Ivor Armstrong
1936 *The philosophy of rhetoric.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

RUMSEY, Alan
2009 "Rhetoric, truth, and the work of trope", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 117–149. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

SAPIR, J. David
1977 "The anatomy of metaphor", in: J. Christopher Crocker and J. David Sapir (eds.), *The social use of metaphor: essays in the anthropology of rhetoric*, 3–32. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

SCHEPER-HUGHES, Nancy
1995 "The primacy of the ethical: propositions for a militant anthropology", *Current Anthropology* 36(3):409–420

SHOTTER, John
2011 "The dance of rhetoric: dialogic selves and spontaneously responsive expressions", in: Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The rhetorical emergence of culture*, 35–51. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)

SILVERMAN, Sydel
2005 "The United States", in: Fredrik Barth, André Gingrich, Robert Parkin and Sydel Silverman, *One discipline, four ways: British, German, French, and American Anthropology*, 255–347. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press

SIMONS, Herbert W.
1990 "Introduction: the rhetoric of inquiry as an intellectual movement", in: Herbert W. Simons (ed.), *The rhetorical turn: invention and persuasion in the conduct of inquiry*, vii–xii. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

SONGIN-MOKRZAN, Marta
2014 *Zwrot ku zaangażowaniu. Strategie konstruowania nowej tożsamości antropologii.* Wrocław-Łódź: Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze (*Łódzkie Studia Etnograficzne* V. 53.)

STRECKER, Ivo
1991 "Einführung", in: Stephen Tyler, *Das Unaussprechliche.* Ethnographie, Diskurs und Rhetorik in der postmodernen Welt, vii–xiii. München: Trickster
2011 "Tenor in culture", in: Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The rhetorical emergence of culture*, 137–154. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)
2014 "Chiasmus and metaphor", in: Anthony Paul and Boris Wiseman (eds.), *Chiasmus and culture*, 69–88. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 6.)

STRECKER, Ivo and Shauna LaTOSKY (eds.)
2013 *Writing in the field: Festschrift for Stephen Tyler.* Berlin and Wien: LIT Verlag

STRECKER, Ivo and Stephen TYLER
2009a "Introduction", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 1–18. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)
2009b "Preface", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, vii–ix. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

STRECKER, Ivo and Stephen TYLER (eds.)
2009c *Culture and rhetoric.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

STRECKER, Ivo and Markus VERNE
2013a "Acknowledgments", in: Ivo Strecker and Markus Verne (eds.), *Astonishment and evocation: the spell of culture in art and anthropology*, vii–viii. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 5.)
2013b "Introduction", in: Ivo Strecker and Markus Verne, *Astonishment and evocation: the spell of culture in art and anthropology*, 1–20. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 5.)

STRECKER, Ivo and Markus VERNE (eds.)
2013c *Astonishment and evocation: the spell of culture in art and anthropology.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 5.)

TEDLOCK, Dennis and Bruce MANNHEIM (eds.)
1995 *The dialogic emergence of culture.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press

TYLER, Stephen
1978 *The said and the unsaid: mind, meaning and culture.* New York: Academic Press

1987 *The unspeakable: discourse, dialogue, and rhetoric in the postmodern world.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press

2011 "Emergence, agency, and the middle ground of culture", in: Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.), *The rhetorical emergence of culture*, 304–318. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 4.)

TYLER, Stephen and Ivo STRECKER

2009 "The Rhetoric Culture Project", in: Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler (eds.), *Culture and rhetoric*, 21–30. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in rhetoric and culture 1.)

WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig

1953 *Philosophical investigations.* Oxford: Blackwell