

## EDITORIAL 2

### THE USES OF CONCEPTS

The second set of articles in this issue all present readings that focus on the uses of a concept in the political and/or rhetoric traditions: *parrēsia* [truth-saying], *rhetoric* and *nainen* [woman], respectively. Lauri Siisiäinen challenges the view of Foucault as concentrating primarily on the sense of vision in his political thought and analyses of power. Despite the centrality of such vision-related concepts in Foucault's work as 'the medical gaze', 'the panopticon' and 'the eye of power', Siisiäinen argues for a re-evaluation of Foucault as also a political thinker of the "sonorous-auditory" – voice, sound, music and hearing –, a focus evident throughout his work from the sixties on, but dealt with more detail and scope in his last Collège de France lectures from the early eighties. These lectures expand on Foucault's earlier comments on the potential of resistance to be found in the noise, chatter, howling and singing of the mass or crowd. Siisiäinen examines Foucault's reading of the concept *parrēsia* (truth-speaking or -saying) and its relation to governing to emphasize its connection to the multitude: the truth can only be spoken by the plurality of humans, by the crowd, not by any central agent or subject. The noise of the multitude, coming as an interruption and shock to the ruler, can have the power to force correction of injustices and to make the ruler himself accountable for his acts.

Whereas Siisiäinen is concerned with tracing a single thinker's conceptual development, Bassakos and Juntti analyse conceptual struggles and moves between different thinkers. Pantelis Bassakos sets out in his essay to find the root of Hobbes's deviation from Aris-

totle's concept of rhetoric. While Hobbes defines rhetoric as a faculty by which we understand what will serve our interest to win belief in the hearer, Aristotle's definition makes no reference to self-interest but simply to seeing the available means of persuasion, and actually denies that persuasion would be the *function* of rhetoric. What, then, asks Bassakos, is the ingredient in Aristotle's rhetoric that Hobbes wanted to neutralize in his reconceptualization? Bassakos's answer lies in the Humanistic tradition of rhetoric that accepts controversy, difference and dissent not as an obstacle to communication but rather as a condition of it. Hobbes, in contrast, sees difference as semantic instability, *ambiguity* instead of the Ciceroan *ambigere* – a radical defect of discourse that 'wrests the words from their true meaning.' Bassakos claims Hobbes's inability to accept a logic of difference that led to his misreading and mistranslation of Aristotle's text, a disavowal of the Ciceronian-Humanistic tradition that Hobbes is trying to keep out of sight.

Whereas Bassakos's essay presents Hobbes as concerned to bury a particular conceptual aspect of the rhetoric tradition, Juntti examines the emergence of a concept that became to be used in extremely rhetorical and political way: 'woman', i.e. *nainen*. Juntti points out that the emergence of gender concepts is a topic this far ignored in conceptual history, and following feminist research pointing out that the concept 'woman' has not existed historically outside class, race, time and place until a relatively brief time period, she sets out to uncover the history of the concept *nainen* in the Finnish context. In Finnish language newspaper texts from mid-19th century, 'female persons' were considered self-evidently different, not comprising a single category outside population statistics. However, the move towards erasing these differences and grouping all different 'female persons' under the common heading 'women' was already starting to take place. Juntti discusses several reasons for this: the growing interest in 'the women's question', legislative changes regarding women's position culminating in giving unmarried women full legal competence in Finland in 1864, and economic rationales: when women had the possibility of playing a role in society and the economy other than of a wife, a daughter or a servant, a need to create a general category of 'woman' that did not share meaning with 'wife' arose.

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