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## Rhetoric in Spain : an overview

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### Abstract

In the paper, the author stresses the main trends in Spain in contemporary research in rhetoric, as well as the most influential authors, their international renown, the current major research projects and their theoretical and methodological input into the scholarly discussion in Spain. After discussing the general framework, the author presents contributions by individual scholars included in this monographic issue.

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### Key words

rhetoric, argumentation, Theory of Literature, General Textual Rhetoric, interdisciplinarity

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## Rhetoric in Spain: an overview

### 1. Introduction

In the middle of June 2015, rhetoric was in the media spotlight in Barcelona. The reason was because of a question included in the Spanish language part of the National University Entrance Examination which asked students to define ‘cataphora’ in 30 words, and to illustrate their answer with examples. The media highlighted this question in their reports on the examination, triggering a big debate about the cataphora, the meaning of the exam, and, last but not least, rhetoric. Although it is an endophoric element that belongs properly to the field of Text Linguistics, journalists treated it as a rhetorical device. For instance, one article published in *El País* (11 June 2015) informed readers that “A Question about a Rhetorical Trope Provokes Panic in the Catalan University Entrance Exams” (“Una pregunta sobre una figura retòrica desencadena el pànic a les proves de selectivitat de Catalunya”). Students’ reactions tended to be apocalyptic, in some ways claiming that, “They are against us,” or “They wanted to lay a trap for us.” The most upset students said that the question was part of a very well laid plan to thwart their academic studies and condemn them to a bleak future. Most of them stressed that nobody knew the word, which was of no use at all and, what is more, it had not been explained by the teacher during the course. Behind their complaints, the question emerged: Who on earth is interested in rhetoric?<sup>1</sup> Even though the question in the exam had nothing to do with rhetoric itself, the media managed to create a link between this antiquated and useless knowledge with the notion of cataphora.

In Spain, the National University Entrance Examination has become a media ritual in which the script has been written for years. In 2015, after the Spanish language examination, the question about the cataphor produced questions about

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1. In the days following the National University Entrance Examination, many opinions were published in the newspapers. Just to mention one illustrative example, José Andrés Rojo wrote, in *El País*, the article “Una catáfora en el momento más duro del año” (11 June 2015), which encapsulated feelings about the exam at the time. Interestingly, the Spanish language examination was only held in Catalonia, since each autonomous community (*comunidad autónoma*) is responsible for its own education policy. Even though the programmes are the same, the examinations are different in each autonomous community.

languages and, broadly speaking, it indirectly produced a negative opinion of rhetoric. In the wake of this recent controversy, it would be wrong to think that there is social contempt for rhetoric in Spain. These reactions fall within the context of the National University Entrance Examination, which is a final exam for baccalaureate students: the marks obtained determine their choice of degree course at university. The media have been reporting on this subject in mid-June for many years now, sometimes as the leading news item, focusing on the kinds of questions that are included, especially in the Spanish and Catalan language examinations. These languages are in the media spotlight in Catalonia – they *inform* about the most difficult exam, what questions have come up (although they may be a small part of the final mark as a whole), how difficult students think the exams have been, how teachers and sometimes experts have gauged them.

This situation contrasts with the efforts made by many researchers to thoroughly explain to the public what rhetoric is and what this discipline can bring to knowledge and to society today. Every year publishers launch their new books, presenting the discipline to a wide audience; some of the best Spanish scholars have published academic works combining academic rigor with their attempts to interest non-specialist readers. Many works have been published in recent years; in a selective review, Laborda (2004) highlighted these three books: *Todos pueden hablar bien en público* (Everyone Can Speak Well in Public), written by Roberto García Carbonell in 1981 and republished many times by Edaf; *Com parlar bé en públic* (How to Speak Well in Public), by Joan Rubio and Francesc Puigpelat, which was published in Catalan by Pòrtic (Barcelona, 2000) and deserves to be translated into other languages; and *El arte de hablar* (The Art of Speaking), by José Antonio Hernández Guerrero and María del Carmen García Tejera (2004), specialists in literary theory at the University of Cádiz. This last book sets out to present the principles of rhetoric, with some practical comments: it is an academic work, as can be seen by its comprehensive bibliography and its division into chapters, following the five classical canonical parts of discourse. There are some reflections too on the relationship between rhetoric and other sciences such as psychology, pedagogy, and poetics. It differs from self-help guides aimed at a general readership.

In the last two decades, scholars been addressing a general audience; they have also been doing specialized research and creating academic researchers' networks. Recently, there has been varied research into rhetoric, as is shown by the creation of journals on the subject of rhetoric (*Logo. Revista de retórica y teoría de la comunicación* founded by López Eire in 2001 at the University of Salamanca) or monographic issues devoted wholly or partially to the discipline through journals covering topics such as linguistics, literature or communication (Volume 8

of *Revista de Investigación Lingüística* was about Linguistics and Rhetoric, with papers by scholars such as Albaladejo, Laborda and Pujante. Issue number 3 of *Llengua, Societat i Comunicació* was about rhetoric and persuasion, with papers from scholars such as Laborda and Hernández Guerrero). Ambitious research projects are currently being undertaken, encouraging students to devote their research to rhetoric: e.g., “Metaphor as a component of Cultural Rhetoric,” led by Tomás Albaladejo, with the participation of many Spanish and international specialists in his team (2011-13; ref. FFI2014-53391); and “Retórica constructivista: discursos de la identidad – identidades individuales, identidades urbanas y alternativas eco-sociales,” headed by David Pujante and with several Spanish scholars in his team (2014-16; reference code FFI2013-40934).

Furthermore, many Spanish rhetoric scholars have become internationally renowned. To mention but a few, Tomás Albaladejo was the president of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (2001-2003). David Pujante is currently a member of the Board of the *Journal of Rhetoric* and was a member of the editorial board of *Rhetorica. A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, published by the International Society for the History of Rhetoric and the University of California Press, Berkeley (1999-2003). Tomás Albaladejo (Autonomous University of Madrid), José Javier Iso Echegoyen (University of Zaragoza) and María Esperanza Torrego Salcedo (Autonomous University of Madrid) are members of the Scientific Committee of the journal *Rétor* (2011-), promoted by the Argentine Association of Rhetoric. The author is currently a member of the Scientific Committee of the journal *Res Rhetorica*, published by the Rhetoric Society of Poland.

As in many other countries, the history of rhetoric continues to be a relevant and progressive subject of study. Most history textbooks devote chapters to certain authors and periods: to Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, i.e. Quintilian, who was born in Calahorra in the first century AD (his *Institutiones Oratoriae* was translated from the late eighteenth century onwards and praised by Marcelino Menéndez Pidal); to the revival of the discipline during the Renaissance, which was led by writers such as Juan Luis Vives, Frederic Furió i Ceriol and especially Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, known as *el Brocense*; to the main Spanish contribution to the discipline in the seventeenth century, Baltasar Gracián’s work entitled *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (Wit and the Art of Ingenuity); to the decline during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and to the renewed impetus from the second half of the twentieth century onwards. During the past few decades, studies of the history of rhetoric in Spain have been published, along with classical texts and their translations into Spanish and Catalan. A succinct presentation of these studies was written by Pujante (2003, 63-68) and, one focusing more on Catalan culture, was published

by Jaume Medina (2000).<sup>2</sup> All these authors aim to link ancient rhetoric to current approaches to discourse. For them, modern-day lines of research can converse with traditional. Medina is an illustrative case: his book *L'art de la paraula* (The Art of the Word) is based on an earlier one, *Elementa Artis dicendi*, which was a presentation, published anonymously in 1901, of the essential elements of classical rhetoric, addressed to the students of the Company of Jesus. Medina, who attributes the *Elementa* to the Jesuit Jaume Nonell (1844-1922), claims to write current rhetoric based on Nonell's book: not only does he write new chapters and rewrite others, he also proposes completely new examples taken from both classical authors and contemporary Catalan writers. For Catalan readers today, he proposes a presentation of rhetoric (and not only because Nonell's *Elementa* is his model) deeply rooted in classical tradition and at the same time open to contemporary Catalan and European influences (French and Italian rhetoric are usual references). He invigorates the tradition and does not discount contributions from the past. Medina is not the only example: most of the greatest specialists in the history of rhetoric have attempted to open up the discipline to other sciences. To mention just one relevant example, López Eire has linked rhetoric to advertising (*La retórica en la Publicidad / The Rhetoric of Advertising*, 1998) and to communication and politics (*Retórica y comunicación política / Rhetoric and Political Communication*, 2001)

However, studies focused on the history of rhetoric go beyond general textbooks: partial monographs have been published regularly in different periods. Two specific examples include Francisco Chico Rico (1989, 1998a, 1998b, 2009), and Alfonso Martín Jiménez (1997, 2000, 2003 and 2009).

In recent years, history has not been the discipline's only major interest. The field also enjoys the richness and complexity of the current major trends in rhetoric in Spain, mainly because of the wide range of authors and approaches. Pozuelo (1988, Ch. 8) and Salvador (2008) have both highlighted three main lines of research: 1) the rhetoric of argumentation; 2) rhetorical theory, theory of literature and stylistics; and 3) General Textual Rhetoric. Even though new trends, concerning especially the Internet and digital media, have emerged over these last few years, we will follow this classification.

## 2. The rhetoric of argumentation

Interest in argumentation was revived after Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's

2. Important works of synthesis of the discipline have been published in recent years. See, for example, Hernández Guerrero and García Tejera (1998); Albaladejo (1989); Antonio López Eire (2000); Medina (2000), Pujante (2003) and Pastor (2016). Besides these Spanish scholars, since the 1990s international studies have been translated into Spanish: Mortara Garavelli's book (1991), which has since been republished several times, or the case for classical rhetoric made by Barthes (1990).

magnificent study, *Traité de l'argumentation. La nouvelle rhétorique*, published in 1958. Since then, argumentation has been closely linked to classical rhetoric. For his part, in his defense of the history of rhetoric, Barthes (1970) upheld the relationship between rhetoric and reason. He distinguished between the rhetoric of reason and of proof and of literary style. The rhetoric of argumentation has its foundations in the beginnings of the discipline, and according to Laborda (2006: 16), it is “the one which belongs to the new rhetoric.”

Although it is true to say that major contributions in argumentation have not become points of reference of the discipline, as have the works of Ruth Amossy or Christian Plantin in the French-speaking world, in the last few years many authors have published contributions in which scholars defend argumentation, usually linked to politics or communication.<sup>3</sup> This is the case with Xavier Laborda's book *Lágrimas de cocodrillo* (Crocodile Tears, 2012). He bases his analysis of political discourse on concepts arising from rhetoric and pragmatics (courses the author teaches at the University of Barcelona) since his approach sets out to combine several disciplines closely linked to discourse analysis. The author presents six studies of political discourse in which public figures from the Spanish political arena (Pasqual Maragall, the former mayor of Barcelona, or the judge Baltasar Garzón), as well as current journalistic debates (multicultural society, immigration or refugees), are at the heart of interviews and reports. In order to interpret the political discourse, the author often refers to irony, sarcasm, the speaker, the principles of discourse analysis according to political personalities (Garzón), the rhetorical code of politicians (e.g. What should the good politician do when addressing the citizens? Can he or she make promises?), social representation, and the role of the media. Many chapters were first published as articles in academic journals.

Most of the major contributions on argumentation have been specialist papers about particular subjects. Several have focused on political discourse (López Eire 2009, Pujante and Morales-López 2009), often in relation to the media (Martín Jiménez 2010 and 2012; Pujante and Morales-López 2009), social movements (Pujante and Morales-López 2013), or political parties and election campaigns (Iglésias 2015). At the same time, there have been theoretical contributions on argumentation that point to the relationship between the Theory of Argumentation and other sciences such as Linguistics (Salvador 2005 and 2006), which consider the rhetorical genres and the place of argumentation. In a recent paper by Pujante (2014), he advocated the *ensayo de erudición* as a genre of argumentation.

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3. Of note is the fact that in the comprehensive insight into argumentation in Spain and Portugal presented by Salvador (2008; 230-233), there are more highlighted contributions from Portuguese scholars (Américo de Sousa, Daniela Braga, Manuel Maria Carrilho, Grácio) than Spanish. On the other hand, it must be remembered that Perelman's book was translated into Spanish 30 years after it was first published in French, in Gredos' prestigious Biblioteca Románica Hispánica collection.

Salvador (2008: 231) wrote about the main subjects related to argumentation, which “extends beyond the framework of what is purely the *logos* to connect with the *pathos* (the emotions of the receiver, or of the patient being hypnotized) and the *ethos* (the credibility of the orator or of the hypnotist).” Over the last few years specialists in rhetoric have contributed thoughts on these topics, as have specialists from other sciences: in 2011 the philosopher Victoria Camps published the essay *El gobierno de las emociones* (The Government of the Emotions), winner of the 2012 National Essay Prize, (re)interpreting the history of philosophy and the relationship between reason and emotions, which presents some stimulating parallels with contributions by current international specialists in rhetoric, such as Christian Plantin (2011) or Emmanuelle Danblon (2013).

### 3. Rhetorical theory, theory of literature, stylistics

As mentioned above, the second strand of the main trends in rhetoric is the relationship between rhetorical theory and the theory of literature. Since the beginning of the movement to renew rhetoric in Spain, several specialists in the theory of literature have reflected on the significance of the discipline today and on possible new paths to explore (Albaladejo *et al.* 1998). In his comprehensive overview, Salvador (2008: 233) focused on an aspect associated with the image of rhetoric: *elocutio*. Pujante (2003: 392; 2011: 186-214) and Salvador (2008: 392) pointed out that the decline of *elocutio* in recent years runs parallel to the revival of the rhetoric of multidimensionality.

During the 1960s and 70s, major contributions had in common “the awareness of the importance of figurative language and tropological studies,” which already existed in Spanish stylistics studies, “but it grew and gave rise to different studies on the subject” (Salvador 2008: 233-234). In the 1980s, it was the advent of cognitive semantics, parallel to the beginning in that decade of this discipline in American linguistics: “The metaphor arose then as a first-order cognitive instrument that was widespread in different types of discourse but played a key role in understanding lyrical poetry and linguistic creativity” (Salvador 2008; 234). Several outstanding contributions have been published in stylistics studies, closely linked to literary theory. The work of the group of researchers at the University of Valencia is based on Czech structuralism, the Tartu School, and Italian Semiotics. Villanueva (2004) theorized about “realism” as a strategy for the literary representation of reality. As Salvador (2008: 235) concluded, “a large part of the work carried out in literature theory focuses on the rhetorical notion of discourse genres and how to establish and characterize them as types.” There is a long tradition focusing on this topic, with contributions from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century



and in modern times. Over the last few years Salvador (2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2014) has published many papers focusing on the metaphor, lyrical poetry, and other types of discourse.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. General Textual Rhetoric

The third line was put forward by García Berrio (1989), aiming to develop the entire rhetorical legacy with the aid of modern research conducted in textual linguistics and text theory. He began this ambitious approach – General Textual Rhetoric (GTR), as he and his followers call it – in order to establish a general science of linguistic expressiveness, where literary discourse takes pride of place. Since then, García Berrio, Albaladejo, Chico Rico, Pujante and Pozuelo have intended to redefine rhetoric as a field of knowledge dealing with expressiveness. Chico Rico (1989), García Berrio (1989) and Albaladejo (1993) reflected deeply on the concept of *intellectio*; Albaladejo (1989) also discussed the role played by the *dispositio* in the structure of the rhetorical system and aimed to incorporate it into the macro-structure, in line with the approach of text linguists. Another of Albaladejo’s contributions refers to his term *poliacroasis*, i.e., the numerous ways of hearing and interpreting a discourse, either explicitly or implicitly, since people do not have to decide, but can be instructed on certain subjects and convinced to accept a particular point of view (Albaladejo 1999).

In his paper, Pujante (2015) explains the origins and development of GTR, and discusses the main contributions and authors (see specifically section two of his paper). Their modern contributions have been expanding the point of view of the classical ones and they have been challenging how the perspective of the mechanisms behind discourse production can be integrated into the perspective of reception (semasiological mechanisms).<sup>5</sup>

#### 5. Presentation of the thematic issue

This issue of *Res Rhetorica* is devoted to rhetoric in Spain. Many other scholars easily deserve to have been invited to write a paper for this issue, but this monographic issue does not seek to be exhaustive. It features four articles whose conceptual framework and subject matter are representative of the ways in which

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4. This author, who for years has been promoting an interdisciplinary approach to discourse, is also a poet and a literary critic, on Catalan poetry chiefly. In his interdisciplinary approaches, references to international specialists are usual (Lakoff, Fairclough, Van Dijk), as well as to current Spanish specialists (Albaladejo, Pujante, Morales-López). He has also published several works with Dominique Maingueneau.

5. Some years earlier, Salvador (2008: 230) had already pointed to the same overview and future challenges: “This modern rhetoric will have to expand the point of view of the classical contributions, which was focused on the mechanisms behind discourse production (i.e., onomasiological mechanisms) while little attention was paid to reception (semasiological mechanisms), and it must attempt to integrate the two perspectives.”

rhetoric is addressed in this country. At the present time, the discipline is multimodal and multilingual (apart from English, Spanish is the main language in which translations or papers are published, but some scholars publish outstanding works or translations into Catalan); it has explored new paths and has given consideration to other sciences. The present and the immediate future, probably in the short and medium term too, is and will be interdisciplinary, international and multilingual (English, Spanish, Catalan, Galician, French, German, Italian), chiefly in line with the different audiences the research will address. This issue is evidence of current trends in the discipline in Spain, which are often deeply rooted in ancient rhetoric.

**Tomás Albaladejo** is the Spanish scholar who has published the most papers and books concerning rhetoric. In the paper “Cultural Rhetoric. Foundations and perspectives” the author synthesizes a variety of ideas from the last few decades (*rhetorica recepta*, *polyacroasis*, *methaphoral engine*, *transferential critique...*), which, in the previous papers, he linked to his proposal of a methodological system of studying the relationship between culture and rhetoric and analyzing rhetorical discourses, literary works, and texts of other kinds from the point of view of their rhetorical foundations and their perlocutionary force upon receivers. That is to say, his proposal is to consider cultural rhetoric, built from rhetoric itself. Its system and components are those of rhetoric, but cultural rhetoric emphasizes the role of culture in discourse and communication and the role of rhetoric in culture. It focuses on cultural items in connection with the production of rhetorical discourse.

The author highlights how rhetoric has extended its domain from the original field of oral discourse towards fields which were new for it, such as written discourse, the discourse of journalism and other media, and the newest spaces of communication, such as digital discourse. The author suggests that the cause of this extension is its inclusion in culture. For him, it is necessary to examine the constitution of rhetoric and its components in order to be aware of the role of culture in rhetoric.

The author upholds the idea that if we think of the rhetorical operations, the *partes artis*, it is possible to learn that culture transverses the whole system of rhetoric. If one looks at the *inventio* together with *argumentatio* (in connection with the parts of discourse, i.e., the *partes orationis* – *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, and *peroration*) when dealing with *narratio* and *argumentatio*, one can find a strong presence of culture inside those rhetorical operations

For Albaladejo, cultural rhetoric is also based on the comparison of discourses from an interdiscursive perspective, in order to be able to deal with literary discourses, i.e., literary works, taking into account their rhetorical foundations and characteristics. Indeed, one of the most important concerns of rhetoric is its

historical engagement with literature, since Greco-Roman Antiquity rhetoric and poetics have constituted the classical disciplines of discourse.

Cultural rhetoric can provide useful instruments for the analysis and the explanation of *interculturality* as an issue in literature and communication. Another task of cultural rhetoric within the current perspectives of research is to review the major studies that deal with literary and/or artistic works and pay attention to the role that cultural items have in works in order to project them onto receivers for the achievement of perlocutionary aims concerning persuading and/or convincing. The author refers here to a classical work in the Spanish tradition, the book *Formación de la Teoría Literaria moderna* by Antonio García Berrio (1977), and the recent book, *A Tale Blazed Through Heaven. Imitation and Invention in the Golden Age of Spain* by Oliver J. Noble Wood (2014).

Cultural rhetoric is a trend within cultural studies. The perspectives of cultural rhetoric are to analyze the art of language, to study interculturality in discourse and literature, to continue reviewing the preceding contributions of rhetoric as well as of poetics and other approaches to art of language, and to review major studies dealing with the cultural dimension of literature and art in order to interpret their contributions to the explanation of the perlocutionary projection of this dimension onto receivers.

**David Pujante's** paper, "Constructivist rhetoric within the tradition of rhetorical studies in Spain," proposes rhetoric based on the theoretical and methodological framework of constructivist positions on knowledge and discourse coming from very different approaches (philosophical, biological, neuroscientific, psychological). Pujante's article is framed within a contemporary paradigm, rooted in ancient rhetoric and other periods of the discipline. The author proposes that the study of ideological meaning, and specifically political discourse, can be analyzed from a dual perspective, 'socio-cognitive' and 'rhetorical-constructivist', in order to show that the construction of meaning is inseparable from the deliberate choice made by the agent in communicative practices. By basing himself on constructivist and rhetorical thought, the author reflects on reality, truth, rhetorical epistemology, discourse and social reality. He bases his ideas on both current thinkers and scientists (Owen Barfield, Basarab Nicolescu, Fritjof Capra) and on classical authors (Plato, Aristotle, the Sophists), with illustrative examples taken from a wide variety of sources (see the analysis of Clint Eastwood's film *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*). Pujante upholds that modern science has recently witnessed the arrival of rhetorical thought: that is to say, *homo rhetoricus* has inoculated *homo seriusus* with reasonable doubt. He also makes a case for rhetoric to return to its origins as a tool for citizens, as it could become an important instrument for explaining/analyzing the variants and conflicts of current social and

political discourse. In short, he upholds a way of interpreting rhetoric within the framework of modern constructivism.

**Esperanza Morales-López's** paper, "Frame construction in post-15M discourses," is also couched in a constructivist perspective, using data and analysis from an interdisciplinary analytical approach (CDA, rhetoric, argumentation, semiotics, complexity studies). Her analysis uses data from her own ethnographic research in order to consider a 'post-15M' social collective (on 15 May 2011, different social groups, inspired by other foreign social movements, took over the squares of the main cities in Spain and began a major civic protest against the political status quo; these movements were labeled the 'Outrage Movement', *Movimiento de los indignados*). It focuses particularly on the *Cooperativa Integral Catalana* ('Catalan Integral Cooperative'), an eco-social economic initiative based on a new form of self-managed cooperativism that prioritizes horizontal, autonomous and creative relationships between different group members bound together on the basis of cooperation and solidarity. The analysis is based on certain discourse features: a) the use of lexical terminology to designate the new realities being constructed, and the re-definition or re-signification of other terms; b) the construction of *image-schemas* using lexicalized metaphors, and c) the use of additional, more creative tropes to explain other meanings. This analytical paper, based on very varied solid theories, advocates for a formal analysis as an important part of discourse analysis, in which all relevant semiotic resources (that is discursive-pragmatic, rhetorical-argumentative and/or non-verbal resources) must be assessed in relation to their particular context. According to this author, discourse studies need to start breaking down the barriers between disciplines and move from interdisciplinarity towards a more fully transdisciplinary approach.

Finally, **Carmen Marimón LLorca's** paper, entitled "Rhetorical strategies in discourses about language: the persuasive resources of ethos," is conceived as a theoretical and practical contribution to the context of rhetorical analyses, focused on journalistic genres in Spanish, and especially on the metalinguistic discourse found in the Spanish press. Her rhetorical-discursive and critical perspective utilizes both the proposals of the traditional rhetorical corpus and those provided by enunciatively and pragmatically oriented linguistics, as well as concepts belonging to Communication Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis. Her article aims to show the relevance of ethos-based persuasion rhetorical strategies in the journalistic genre identified through the Spanish Columns on language (CSL), to identify the nature of the rhetorical discourse which characterizes CSLs, to discuss what type of persuasion is inherent to them, and to determine which elocutionary resources are best suited to them and, above all, to assess how much of it all falls upon the figure of ethos.

The author selected four columns of a very different nature. They correspond to three different authors and they were published in several media from 1975 to 1998: Fernando Lázaro Carreter, *El dardo en la palabra* [The dart on the word], 1975, *INFORMACIONES* and *El nuevo dardo en la palabra* [The new dart on the word], 1999, *El País*; Luís Calvo, “El Brocense,” *Diálogo de la lengua* [Dialogue about Language], 1980, *ABC*; and Humberto Hernández, *Una palabra ganada* [One word won] 1998, *El Día* of Tenerife.

Marimón’s paper is seen as a first step of a project which aims to compile, systematize and characterize the genre CSL in the Spanish press, oriented towards the study of its rhetorical-discursive aspects. The author is constructing a corpus of CSLs published in the Spanish press from 1940 to 2015; so far, she has managed to identify 1079 columns from 11 different authors. This quantity will probably expand over the next few months. Marimon hopes that the study of the ways in which ethos is expressed will allow us to know how certain discursive practices are organized, which power relationships arise between interlocutors, what is considered expert knowledge about language, and who owns legitimacy to deal with the latter in the public space that the mass media represent. Marimon’s project will occupy a field which until now has not been widely studied, as the scarcity of available publications devoted to it demonstrates.

## 6. Coda

Many scholars have pointed out that the decline of rhetoric accelerated during the nineteenth century because it was increasingly, almost wholly, associated with literary tropes. In this article, I have shed some light on how rich, complex and varied the main lines of Rhetoric Studies in Spain currently are. Nevertheless, as mentioned at the beginning, common knowledge of rhetoric still remains, as in many other countries, at close to the same point it was before the New Rhetoric emerged in the 1960s. In the current version of the Spanish Royal Academy’s dictionary, the entry for ‘*retórica*’ lists these meanings:

### **retórica.**

(Del lat. *rhetorica*, y este del gr. ῥητορικὴ).

- 1) f. Arte de bien decir, de dar al lenguaje escrito o hablado eficacia bastante para deleitar, persuadir o conmover.
- 2) f. Teoría de la composición literaria y de la expresión hablada.
- 3) f. despect. Uso impropio o intempestivo de este arte.
- 4) f. pl. coloq. Sofisterías o razones que no son del caso. *No me venga usted a mí con retóricas.*

These four meanings reflect both the reduction of meanings that took place during

modern history before the contemporary age (1 and 2) and the negative and pejorative meanings throughout the history of the language (3 and 4). All these *classical* meanings are also included in the Institut d'Estudis Catalans' Catalan dictionary, which incorporates other meanings that do not go beyond predictable expectations.<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned above, only a part of Spanish society (students, journalists, language academies) has a common understanding of rhetoric, which represents a reduction of its true richness and complexity. A wide range of current trends and new approaches to rhetoric face *classical* meanings and prejudices, which could eliminate them and offer new meanings for a term with negative connotations in many cultures and countries. My hope is that all these new meanings that scholars are currently creating and developing, such as those contained in this issue, will be capable of modifying and overcoming the present codified and popular meanings.

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6. **1.1** adj. [LC] [FLL] Relatiu o pertanyent a la retòrica.

**1.2** adj. [FLL] Conforme a les ensenyances de la retòrica i a l'ús dels retors.

**2** f. [LC] [FLL] Art de l'eloqüència, de l'expressió oral i escrita. Estudiar la retòrica. Les regles de la retòrica. Un tractat de retòrica.

**3** m. i f. [LC] [FLL] Persona versada en retòrica.

**4** **1** adj. [FLL] Que mira d'obtenir un efecte particular sobre l'ànim de l'oïdor o del lector. Figura retòrica. Expressió retòrica.

**4.2** adj. [LC] Artificiós, formulari, sense sinceritat, sense contingut.

**5.1** f. [FLL] Manera de parlar o d'escriure ampul·losa i buida.

**5.2** f. [FLL] Abundància de paraules, sobretot quan són fora de lloc o enganyadores.

**5.3** f. pl. [FL] [LC] Raons que no són del cas. No em vinguis amb retòriques!

In this case, the Catalan dictionary includes both the *classical* and negative meanings included in the Spanish dictionary (2, 4.2 and 5) and other definitions, which are very descriptive (1, 3, 4.1).

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