

*ADAM SMITH*

IV

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

THE GLASGOW EDITION OF THE WORKS AND  
CORRESPONDENCE OF ADAM SMITH

*Commissioned by the University of Glasgow to celebrate the bicentenary of  
the Wealth of Nations*

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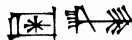
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ADAM SMITH

# Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

EDITED BY  
J.C. BRYCE

GENERAL EDITOR  
A.S. SKINNER



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## Preface

This volume, consisting of a version of Adam Smith's first work, may in a double sense claim as its 'onlie begetter' John Maule Lothian (1896–1970), himself a son of the University of Glasgow, M.A. 1920; he discovered the manuscript, and the careful scholarship with which he edited it has enormously eased the labours of anyone who now studies it. Both publicly and privately he acknowledged the help he had received over the classical references from Professor W. S. Watt of the Chair of Humanity in the University of Aberdeen, and as Professor Watt's beneficiary at one remove I wish to add my own thanks. My longest-standing debt in this field is to that great scholar who taught so many to take seriously the literary criticism of the eighteenth century, David Nichol Smith; and he delighted to recall his own beginnings as an academic teacher in Adam Smith's University. Gaps and errors are of course my own. 'What is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always to hand'. Johnson's wry comment must haunt the mind of anyone who tries to annotate a text as densely allusive as the present one.

The contribution of Professor Andrew Skinner to this book far exceeds what even the most generous General Editor might be expected to make. That the materials ever reached printable shape, or after arduous and complex proof-reading became presentable, is due entirely to his determined energy and wisdom. My personal as distinct from my editorial debt to him is for all he has taught me in conversation and by his writings about the central role of the *Rhetoric* in Adam Smith's work as a whole. To the secretaries of the Glasgow Political Economy Department, especially Miss Chrissie MacSwan and Mrs Jo Finlayson, I am very grateful for the skill and patience with which they typed extremely awkward copy. I have enjoyed the counsels of Mr Jack Baldwin of Glasgow University Library's Special Collections; of Professors D. D. Raphael and M. L. Samuels; and of Mr J. K. Cordy of the Oxford University Press, who in addition has shown apparently inexhaustible patience. I am also grateful to Mary Robertson for her invaluable assistance in compiling the index.

1982

J.C.B.

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# Key to Abbreviations and References

## WORKS OF ADAM SMITH

Corr.	<i>Correspondence</i>
EPS	<i>Essays on Philosophical Subjects</i> included among which are:
Ancient Logics	'The History of the Ancient Logics and Metaphysics'
Ancient Physics	'The History of the Ancient Physics'
Astronomy	'The History of Astronomy'
English and Italian Verses	'Of the Affinity between certain English and Italian Verses'
External Senses	'Of the External Senses'
Imitative Arts	'Of the Nature of that Imitation which takes place in what are called the Imitative Arts'
Stewart	Dugald Stewart, 'Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith, LL.D'.
Languages	<i>Considerations Concerning the First Formation of Languages</i>
TMS	<i>The Theory of Moral Sentiments</i>
WN	<i>The Wealth of Nations</i>
LJ(A)	<i>Lectures on Jurisprudence, Report of 1762-3</i>
LJ(B)	<i>Lectures on Jurisprudence, Report dated 1766</i>
LRBL	<i>Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres</i>

## OTHER WORKS

JML	<i>Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres</i> , ed. John M. Lothian (Nelson, 1963)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
OED	Oxford English Dictionary

Note: symbols used in the textual apparatus are explained on pp. 7 and 27.

# Introduction

## 1. *The Manuscript*

In *The Scotsman* newspaper of 1 and 2 November 1961 John M. Lothian, Reader (later titular Professor) in English in the University of Aberdeen announced his discovery and purchase, at the sale of an Aberdeenshire manor-house library in the late summer of 1958, of two volumes of manuscript 'Notes of Dr. Smith's Rhetorick Lectures'. They had been part of the remainder of a once extensive collection begun in the sixteenth century by William Forbes of Tolquhoun Castle, and in the late eighteenth century the property of the Forbes-Leith family of Whitehaugh, an estate brought to the Forbeses by the marriage of Anne Leith. In September 1963 Lothian published an edition of the notes as *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres Delivered in the University of Glasgow by Adam Smith, Reported by a Student in 1762-63* (Nelson).

Identification of the lecturer was easy. It had always been known that Smith gave lectures on rhetoric; his manuscript of these (Stewart, I. 17) was among those destroyed in the week before his death in obedience to the strict instructions he had given, first to Hume in 1773, then in 1787 to his literary executors Joseph Black and James Hutton. Lecture 3 of the discovered report is a shortened version of the essay on the First Formation of Languages published by Smith in 1761. Further, Lothian found later in the 1958 sale volumes 2-6 of manuscript notes of lectures on Jurisprudence, and though they bore no name they turned out to be a more elaborate version of the lectures by Smith reported in notes discovered in 1876 and published by Edwin Cannan in 1896. A search in Aberdeen junk-shops was rewarded, thanks to the extraordinary serendipity which Lothian's friends always envied him, by the finding of the missing volume 1. These volumes have the same format and paper as the *Rhetoric* and the same hand as its main text.

When the Whitehaugh family acquired these manuscripts is not known. Absence of mention of them in three successive catalogues of the collection now in Aberdeen University Library has probably no significance; these are lists of printed books. No link between the Forbes-Leiths and the University of Glasgow has come to light. The most probable one is that at some point they engaged as a private tutor a youth who had been one of Adam Smith's students and who knew that he would endear himself to his notably bookish employers by

bringing them this otherwise unavailable work by a philosopher already enjoying an international reputation as the author of the *Moral Sentiments*. Such private tutorships were among the most usual first employments of products of the Scottish universities in the eighteenth century; and of Smith himself we learn from the obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of August 1790 (lx. 761) that 'his friends wished to send him abroad as a travelling tutor' when he came down from Oxford in 1746 after six years as Snell Exhibitioner at Balliol—though WN V. f. i 45 suggests that even after his happy travels with the young Duke of Buccleuch in 1764–66 he had doubts about the value of such posts. Still, both his successors in the Chair of Logic at Glasgow had held them. Of course the discovery of a Whitehaugh tutor among the graduates of, say, 1763–64 would not necessarily bring us nearer to identifying the note-taker, who may have been another student. Such notes circulated very widely at the time. Indeed, given the celebrity of this lecturer it is surprising that the *Rhetoric* should have turned up so far in only one version. The attempt to match the handwriting of the manuscript with a signature in the Matriculation Album of the relevant period has been thwarted by the depressing uniformity of these signatures; entrants were calligraphically on their best behaviour.

In the matter of provenance an interesting possibility is opened up by a letter from John Forbes-Leith to James Beattie, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen in 1779 about his family's library (JML xi, quoting *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* LXXII, 1938, 252). The *Rhetoric* is not mentioned, but its subject-matter lay so much in Beattie's field of interest that one is tempted to wonder whether he was in some way instrumental in acquiring the manuscript. A similar possibility is that Smith's successor as Professor of Moral Philosophy in 1764, Thomas Reid, who maintained his contacts with friends in Aberdeen long after his move to Glasgow, may have obtained the notes and handed them on to Whitehaugh. Reid is known to have been anxious to see notes of his predecessor's lectures: 'I shall be much obliged to any of you Gentlemen or to any other, who can furnish me with Notes of his Prelections whether in Morals, Jurisprudence, Police, or in Rhetorick'—so he said in his Inaugural Lecture on 10 October 1764 as preserved in Birkwood MS 2131/4/II in Aberdeen University Library.

The manuscript of the *Rhetoric*, now Glasgow University Library MS Gen. 95. 1 and 2, is bound in half-calf (i.e. with leather tips) and marbled boards. In the top three of the six panels of the spine is incised blind in cursive: 'Notes of Dr. Smith's Rhetorick Lectures: Vol. 1st.' and '... Vol. 2nd'. The pages are not numbered; the present edition

supplies numbering in the margin. The gatherings, normally of four leaves each, have been numbered on the top left corner of each first page, apparently in the same (varying) ink as the text at that point. Volume 1 has 51 gatherings, of which the 14th is a bifolium, here given the page-numbers 52a, v.52a, 53b, v.53b, to indicate that it is an insertion. Volume 2 consists of gatherings 52-114; 94 has six leaves; and 74 has a bifolium of different paper stuck in loosely between the first and second leaves with no break in the continuity of the text, and a partially erased 'My Dear Dory' written vertically on the inner left page, i.e. ii. v. 90 under the note about Sancho Panca. The pages measure 195 × 118 mm, but gatherings 1-4 only 168 × 106 mm (of stouter paper than the rest), and 5-15 185 × 115 mm. The watermark is LVG accompanied by a crown of varying size and a loop below it, and in some of the gatherings GR under the crown. This is the L. V. Gerrevink paper commonly used throughout much of the eighteenth century. The chain lines are vertical in all gatherings. The first page of each of the earlier gatherings is much faded, as though having lain exposed for a time before the binding was done.

Three hands, here designated A, B, and C, can be distinguished. Hand C, using a dark ink, appears in only a few places in the earlier pages, and may be that of a later owner of the manuscript: sometimes merely touching up faded letters. An appreciation of the nature and authority of the notes depends on an understanding of the activities of scribes A and B, who (especially A) were responsible for transcribing them from the jottings made in class. The scribal habits, of which the textual apparatus will furnish the evidence, rule out the possibility that the pages we have were written while the students listened.

There is an apparent contradiction between two reports of Adam Smith's attitude to note-taking. According to his student John Millar, later Professor of Law: 'From the permission given to students of taking notes, many observations and opinions contained in these lectures (on rhetoric) have either been detailed in separate dissertations, or engrossed in general collections, which have since been given to the public' (Stewart I. 17). The *Gentleman's Magazine* obituary (lx. 762) records that 'the Doctor was in general extremely jealous of the property of his lectures . . . and, fearful lest they should be transcribed and published, used often to repeat, when he saw any one taking notes, that "he hated scribblers".' The paradox is resolved if we remember the advice given by Thomas Reid, and by many a university teacher before and since, that those who write most in class understand least, 'but those who write at home after carefull recollection, understand most, and write to the best Purpose', and that this reflective reconstruction of what has been heard is precisely what a

philosophical discourse requires (Birkwood MS 2131/8/III). The general success with which our scribes grasped the structure and tenor of Smith's course, as well as much of the detail, exemplifies what Reid had in mind. Even the exasperated admissions of failure—'I could almost say damn it', 'Not a word more can I remember' (ii. 38, 44)—confirm the method by which they are working. In some cases the scribe begins his transcription with a heading which will recall the occasion as well as the matter, as when he notes that Smith delivered Lectures 21 and 24 'without Book' or 'sine Libro'; and he is careful to give Lecture 12, the hinge between the two halves of the course, the title 'Of Composition' because it begins the discussion of the various species of writing.

Our manuscript is the result of a continuous collaboration between two students intent on making the notes as full and accurate a record of Smith's words as their combined resources can produce. The many slips and gaps which remain should not blind us to the great pains taken. Working from fairly full jottings, Scribe A writes the basic text on the recto pages (except, oddly, i. 18–68 when he uses the verso pages), and thereafter two kinds of revision take place. He corrects and expands the text, writing the revision above the line when only a word or two are involved. Unfortunately the additions of this kind are far too numerous to be specially signaled without overburdening the textual apparatus, and they have been silently incorporated in the text. In any case it is impossible to distinguish those added *currente calamo* from those added later, except of course where the interlined words replace a deletion (and these are always noted here). When the addition is too lengthy to be inserted between lines, Scribe A writes them on the facing page (i.e. a verso page, except at i. 18–68) at the appropriate point, and often keys them in with x or some other symbol. All such additions on the facing page are, in this edition, enclosed in brace brackets { }. Scribe A's sources for his additional materials no doubt varied; some of it was certainly 'recollected in tranquillity' as Reid would have recommended; some of it such a tirelessly conscientious student would acquire by consultation with a fellow-student, or perhaps one of the sets of notes in circulation from a previous year. There is reason to think that some of the material had simply been inadvertently omitted at the first transcription.

The second revision, much less extensive but very useful, is Scribe B's. Apart from a few corrections of A's words, B makes two sorts of contribution. He fills in a good many of the blanks clearly left by A with this in view—alas, not enough, though he is obviously in many ways better informed than A. This comes out also in the sometimes substantial notes he writes on the verso page facing A's text, with

supplementary illustration and explanation of the points there treated. These are enclosed in { }, with a footnote assigning them to Hand B. They raise the same question of source as A's notes. From the fact that B never himself deletes or alters what he has written and generally arranges his lines so as to end exactly within a certain space, e.g. opposite the end of a lecture (i. v. 116; ii. v. 18), we may deduce that he is working from a tidy original or fair copy: another set of notes? The order in which A and B wrote their inserted matter varied: at i. 46 A's note is squeezed into space left by B's, and similarly at ii. v. 30 and elsewhere: but normally B's notes are clearly later than A's, as at i. v. 146, and at ii. v. 101 B's note is squeezed between two of A's although the second of these was written (in different ink) later than the first.

There is a noticeable falling-off in verso-page notes from about Lecture 16 onwards: inexplicable, unless Scribe A was becoming more adept in transcription. Certainly the report of the last lecture is much the longest of them all, but Smith probably, like most lecturers, used more than the hour this time in order to finish his course. Scribe A relieved the tedium of transcription by occasional lightheartedness. There is the doodled caricature of a face (meant to resemble Smith's?) 'This is a picture of uncertainty', at ii. 67; at ii. 166 'WFL', i.e. 'wait for laugh', is inserted then deleted; at ii. 224 the habitual spelling 'tho' is for once expanded by the addition of 'ugh' below the line. Of special interest is the added note at i. 196 recording the witticism of 'Mr Herbert' about Adam Smith's notorious absent-mindedness. The joke about Smith must have been made just after the lecture and the note added shortly after the transcription in this case.

Henry Herbert (1741-1811), later Baron Porchester and Earl of Carnarvon, was a gentleman-boarder in Smith's house throughout the session 1762-3. On 22 February 1763 Smith wrote to Hume introducing him as 'very well acquainted with your works' and anxious to meet Hume in Edinburgh (Letter 70). Hume (71) found him 'a very promising young man', but refers to him on 13 September 1763 (75) as 'that severe Critic, Mr Herbert'. There is a letter from Herbert to Smith (74) dated 11 September 1763.

To suggest that Herbert may have been the source of at least some of the additional notes would be an unwarranted use of Occam's razor. No one enjoying this degree of familiarity with the lecturer and consulting him on the content of the lectures would have left so many blanks unfilled; and Smith would certainly not knowingly have helped to compile notes of his talks. It is also worth noting that the Rhetoric lectures, unlike those on Jurisprudence etc. (see LJ 14-15), were not followed by an 'examination' hour in which additional points might be picked up.

The well-marked scribal habits of Scribe A point to his having suffered from a defect of eyesight, some sort of stenopia or tunnel-vision. He is prone to various forms of haplography, omission of a word or syllable which resembled its predecessor: 'if I may so' (*say* omitted), 'coing' (*coining*), 'possed' (*possessed*). He writes 'on the hand', adds *r* to the, and imagines he has written 'other'. Angle brackets < > have been used for omissions here supplied. There are frequent repetitions of word or phrase; these have been enclosed in square brackets [ ]. There are innumerable instances of anticipation of words or phrases lying ahead: most of these have been corrected by the scribe when his eye returns to his original jottings. In one case he anticipates a phrase from the beginning of the following lecture (i. 116, 117), showing that on this occasion he had allowed a weekend to pass before transcribing Lectures 8 and 9—Friday and Monday, 3 and 6 December. He often tries to hold in his mind too long a passage, writing words that convey the sense and having to change them, when on going back to his jottings he finds the proper words. He starts to write 'object' and has to change it to 'design'. Most of the many overwritten words in the manuscript are examples of this, and unfortunately it is seldom possible to decipher the original word; where it is, it has been noted. The scribe's memory of the drift of Smith's meaning no doubt played a part; but here as elsewhere he is eager to record the master's *ipsissima verba*. He frequently reverses the order of words and phrases and restores the proper order by writing numbers above them.

The aim of the present edition has been to allow the reader to judge for himself the nature of the manuscript by presenting it as fully as print will allow; but in the interests of legibility several compromises have been made. Where the punctuation is erratic or accidental it has been normalized: e.g. commas separating subject from verb, 'is' from its complement, a conjunction from its clause, and the like. The original paragraphing has been retained where it clearly exists and is intended. Not all initial capitals have been retained. The scribe usually employs them for emphasis or to convey an impression of a technical or special use of a word; but in 'Some', 'Same', 'Such', 'with Regard to', 'in Respect to', 'for my Part', 'for this Reason', etc., the capital has been ignored. Frequently used abbreviations have been silently expanded: such are *y<sup>s</sup>* (*this*), *y<sup>m</sup>* (*them*), *y<sup>r</sup>* (*their*), *y<sup>n</sup>* (*than*), *y<sup>sc</sup>* (*those*), *nëyr* (*neither*), *oy<sup>r</sup>* (*other*), *Bröy<sup>r</sup>* (*Brother*), *þt* (*part*), *agst* (*against*), *figs* (*figures*), *dis* (*divisions*), *noñve* (*nominative*), and others of similar type. It has not been possible to record the many changes of ink, pen, and style of writing (from copperplate to hurried), though these are no doubt indicative of the circumstances in which Scribe A was working. The misnumbering of Lecture 5 onwards has been corrected, and noted.

To sum up the textual notation used:

{ }	notes on page facing main text—'Hand B' if relevant
< >	omissions supplied conjecturally
[ ]	erroneous repetitions
<i>deleted</i>	deleted words not replaced above line
<i>replaces:</i>	words corrected in line above a deletion
<i>changed from:</i>	original word decipherable beneath <i>over-writing</i>
<i>superscript indicators:</i>	normally refer to the <i>preceding</i> word or words, to which reference is made.

## 2. *The Lectures*

The notes we have date from what was apparently the fifteenth winter in which Adam Smith lectured on rhetoric. Disappointed of a travelling tutorship on coming down from Balliol, and after two years at home in Kirkcaldy in 1746–8, he 'opened a class for teaching rhetorick at Edinburgh', as the obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Aug. 1790, lx. 762) puts it; and it goes on to remark on an advantage enjoyed by Smith and frequently to be noticed in later years: 'His pronunciation and his style were much superior to what could, at that time, be acquired in Scotland only'. The superiority was often (as by Sir James Mackintosh in introducing the second edition of the 1755–6 *Edinburgh Review* in 1818) ascribed to the influence of the speech of his Glasgow Professor Francis Hutcheson, as well as to his six Oxford years. His awareness of language as an activity had certainly been sharpened by both experiences of different modes—differences so often embarrassing to his fellow-countrymen, speakers and writers alike, in the mid-century. *The Edinburgh Review* no. 1 named as one of the obstacles to the progress of science in Scotland 'the difficulty of a proper expression in a country where there is no standard of language, or at least one very remote' (EPS 229); and two years later, on 2 July 1757, Hume observes in a letter to Gilbert Elliott of Minto (Letter 135, ed. J. Y. T. Greig, 1932) that we 'are unhappy, in our Accent and Pronunciation, speak a very corrupt Dialect of the Tongue which we make use of'. The background of desire for 'self-improvement' and the part played by the many societies in Edinburgh and elsewhere are described in JML xxiii–xxxix, and D. D. McElroy, *Scotland's Age of Improvement* (1969). Smith 'teaching rhetorick' in 1748 was the right man at the right moment.

In the absence of advertisement or notice of the lectures in the *Scots Magazine* (these would have been unusual at this time: not so

ten years later) we do not know exact dates; but A. F. Tytler in his *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Honourable Henry Home of Kames, containing sketches of the Progress of Literature and General Improvement in Scotland during the greater part of the eighteenth century* (1807: i. 190) gives this account:

It was by his [sc. Kames's] persuasion and encouragement, that Mr Adam Smith, soon after his return from Oxford, and when he had abandoned all views towards the Church, for which he had been originally destined, was induced to turn his early studies to the benefit of the public, by reading a course of Lectures on Rhetoric and the *Belles Lettres*. He delivered those lectures at Edinburgh in 1748, and the two following years, to a respectable auditory, chiefly composed of students in law and theology; till called to Glasgow. . . .

The 'auditory' included Alexander Wedderburn (who edited *The Edinburgh Review* 1755-6), William Johnston (who became Sir William Pulteney), James Oswald of Dunnikeir (a boyhood friend of Smith's from Kirkcaldy), John Millar, Hugh Blair, 'and others, who made a distinguished figure both in the department of literature and in public life'. When on 10 January 1751 Smith wrote (Letter 8) to the Clerk of Senate at Glasgow accepting appointment to the Chair of Logic there and explaining that he could not immediately take up his duties because of his commitments to his 'friends here', i.e. in Edinburgh, the plural shows that he had sponsors for his lectures besides Kames, and it has been supposed that these were James Oswald and Robert Craigie of Glendoick. There is independent evidence that at least in his last year at Edinburgh if not earlier he also lectured on jurisprudence; but Tytler is quite clear on the duration of the rhetoric course; and after Smith's departure for Glasgow a rhetoric course continued to be given by Robert Watson till *his* departure for the Chair of Logic at St Andrews in 1756. This was only the beginning: one of Smith's first 'auditory', Hugh Blair, on 11 December 1759, began a course on the same subject in the University of Edinburgh, which conferred the title of Professor on him in August 1760 and appointed him to a new Chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (destined to become in effect the first Chair of English Literature in the world) on 7 April 1762. Smith's original lectures were presumably delivered in one of the Societies, the Philosophical being the most likely because since the '45 its ordinary activities had been suspended, and Kames would have seen the courses as a way of keeping it alive. In 1737 Colin Maclaurin, Professor of Mathematics (see Astronomy IV. 58), was instrumental in broadening the Society's scope to include literature and science.

\* \* \*

When Adam Smith arrived in Glasgow in October 1751 to begin teaching as Professor of Logic and Rhetoric he found his duties augmented owing to the illness of Thomas Craigie, the Professor of Moral Philosophy, the work of whose classes was to be shared by Smith and three other professors. We hardly need evidence to prove that, hard-pressed as he was, he would fall back on his Edinburgh materials, including the Rhetoric, which it was his statutory duty to teach. Craigie died in November and his Chair was filled by the translation to it of Smith in April 1752. Throughout the eighteenth century the ordinary or 'public' class of Moral Philosophy met at 7.30 a.m. for lectures on ethics, politics, jurisprudence, natural theology, and then at 11 a.m. for an 'examination' hour to ensure that the lecture had been understood. A 'private' class, sometimes called a 'college', attended by those who had already in the previous year taken the public class and were now attending that for the second time—or even third—but not the examination class, met at noon, normally three days a week. Each professor used the private class for a course on a subject of special interest to himself. Hutcheson had lectured on Arrian, Antoninus (Marcus Aurelius), and other Greek philosophers; Thomas Reid on the powers of the mind.

Adam Smith chose for his private class the first subject he had ever taught, Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Here a question arises. Rhetoric was now in the domain of his successor in the Chair of Logic, James Clow. There is no record of a protest from Clow, as there was in Edinburgh from John Stevenson, who had been teaching logic and rhetoric for thirty-two years when Blair's Chair was founded. Several explanations suggest themselves, apart from personal good-will. The phrase 'Belles Lettres', though it did not mollify Stevenson, differentiated in a decisive way the two Glasgow courses. Clow's emphasis seems to have rested on rhetorical analysis of passages, in keeping with the discipline of logic (see JML xxx quoting Edinburgh Univ. Lib. MS DC 8,13). More important, at Glasgow a public class was not the offender. In any case Smith's rhetoric students had attended Clow's class two years before, and the opportunity (which Smith knew they enjoyed) of making correlations can only have been philosophically beneficial. Similar opportunities were opened by their hearing at the same time—and having already heard—Smith's discourses on ethics and jurisprudence. The lectures on history and on judicial eloquence would be illustrated by those on public and private law. And we must not forget that these students were simultaneously studying natural philosophy, theoretical and practical, the fifth year subjects of the Glasgow Arts curriculum. Such juxtapositions were then as now among the great benefits of the Scottish University system, and

without them Scotland would not have made the mark she did in philosophy in Adam Smith's century. In particular, Smith's students must have noted the multi-faceted relationship between the ethics and rhetoric, in three broad areas. First, Smith employed many of the general principles stated in TMS in *illustrating* the different forms of communication: for example, our admiration for the great (ii. 107 and below, section 4), or for hardships undergone with firmness and constancy (ii. 100). Smith also drew attention to the influence of environment on forms and modes of expression (ii. 113–16, 142 ff., 152 ff.) in a manner which would be familiar to those who had already heard his treatment of the rules of conduct. Secondly, Smith's students would note the points at which the rhetoric *elaborated* on the discussion of the role of sympathy and the nature of moral judgement and persuasion (cf. TMS I. i. 3–4; cf. 18–19 below). The character of the man of sensibility is strikingly developed in Lecture XXX (ii. 234 ff.) while the argument as a whole implies that the spoken discourse could on some occasions affect moral judgement. Thirdly, Smith's students would perceive that the arguments developed in the lectures on rhetoric *complement* the analysis of TMS, where it is remarked that:

We may judge of the propriety or impropriety of the sentiments of another person by their correspondence or disagreement with our own, upon two different occasions; either, first, when the objects which excite them are considered without any peculiar relation, either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of; or, secondly, when they are considered as peculiarly affecting one or other of us' (TMS, I.i.4.1).

Objects which lack a *peculiar* relation include 'the expression of a picture, the composition of a discourse . . . all the general subjects of science and taste'.

Smith's lecturing timetable is set out in LJ 13–22, with references to the sources of our information. On the Rhetoric lectures, two accounts by men who had heard them show with what clarity they were remembered more than thirty years later. The first was given by John Millar, Professor of Law, who had heard them both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, to Dugald Stewart for a memoir of Smith to be delivered at the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1793 (Stewart I. 16):

In the Professorship of Logic, to which Mr. Smith was appointed on his first introduction into this University, he soon saw the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a general view of the powers of the mind, and explaining so much of the ancient

logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity with respect to an artificial method of reasoning, which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all the rest of his time to the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles-lettres. The best method of explaining and illustrating the various powers of the human mind, the most useful part of metaphysics, arises from an examination of the several ways of communicating our thoughts by speech, and from an attention to the principles of those literary compositions which contribute to persuasion or entertainment. By these arts, every thing that we perceive or feel, every operation of our minds, is expressed and delineated in such a manner, that it may be clearly distinguished and remembered. There is, at the same time, no branch of literature more suited to youth at their first entrance upon philosophy than this, which lays hold of their taste and their feelings.

The second report, written after 1776 in a letter from James Wodrow, Library Keeper at the University of Glasgow from 1750 to 1755, to the Earl of Buchan and preserved in Glasgow Univ. Lib. Murray Collection (Buchan Correspondence, ii. 171), reads:

Adam Smith delivered a set of admirable lectures on language (not as a grammarian but as a rhetorician) on the different kinds or characteristics of style suited to different subjects, simple, nervous, etc., the structure, the natural order, the proper arrangement of the different members of the sentence etc. He characterised the style and the genius of some of the best of the ancient writers and poets, but especially historians, Thucydides, Polybius etc. translating long passages of them, also the style of the best English classics, Lord Clarendon, Addison, Swift, Pope, etc; and, though his own didactic style in his last famous book (however suited to the subject)—the style of the former book was much superior—was certainly not a model for good writing, yet his remarks and rules given in the lectures I speak of, were the result of a fine taste and sound judgement, well calculated to be exceedingly useful to young composers, so that I have often regretted that some part of them has never been published.

With this stricture on the style of WN, incidentally, may be compared the remark made by Lord Monboddo to Boswell that though Smith came down from Oxford a good Greek and Latin scholar, from the style of WN 'one would think that he had never read any of the Writers of Greece or Rome' (Boswell, *Private Papers*, ed. Scott and Pottle, xiii. 92); and even his friends Hume, Millar and Blair took this view. On the other hand John Ramsay of Ochertyre (*Scotland and Scotsmen in the eighteenth Century*, published 1888, i. 462) thought that in view of the purity and elegance with which he ordinarily wrote it was 'no wonder, then, that his lectures should be regarded as models of composition'. A kindred activity of Smith's in his Glasgow days is recorded in the Foulis Press Papers, extracted by W. J. Duncan in *Notes and Documents*

*illustrative of the Literary History of Glasgow* (Maitland Club 1831, 16): in January 1752 he had helped to found a Literary Society in the University, and 'he read papers to this society on Taste, Composition and the History of Philosophy which he had previously delivered while a lecturer on rhetoric in Edinburgh'. Of these, two were parts I and II of the essay on the Imitative Arts—this on the evidence of John Millar who was a member of the Society (EPS 172)—an essay which Smith told Reynolds he intended publishing 'this winter', i.e. 1782–3 (Reynolds, letter of 12 September 1782, in *Correspondence of James Boswell*, ed. C. N. Fifer, Yale UP 1976, 126).

What modifications the lectures on rhetoric underwent between 1748 and the session in which our notes were taken it is almost impossible to determine. There are few datable post-1748 references. Macpherson's Ossian imitations, 'lately published' (ii. 113), appeared in 1760, 1762, 1763. Gray's two Pindaric odes, if the reference at ii. 96 includes them, belong to 1757; the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, of which Smith became so fond, to 1751; Shenstone's *Pastoral Ballad* to 1755. Rousseau's *Discours* (i. 19) appeared in 1755 and was discussed by Smith in the *Edinburgh Review* no. 2 (EPS 250–4). All of these references, except perhaps the last, could easily have been inserted without radical revision of the text. The unmistakable reference to Hume's *History of England* at ii. 73, whether we read 'so' or ('10' in the added marginal note, raises a complex question. The *History* appeared in instalments, working backwards chronologically, in 1754, 1757, 1759, and was completed in 1762, after which date the reference becomes relevant. On 12 January 1763 Smith must have read out what had stood in his manuscript for some years, and then in the last moments of the lecture made an impromptu correction when recollecting a friend's very recent publication. Why this afterthought is also recorded by Scribe A in an afterthought is perhaps not in the circumstances all that mysterious.

The general continuity of the lecture-course from 1748 to 1763, details apart, is established by its structure and by the set of central principles which inform all twenty-nine reported lectures and which could not have been added or superimposed on the argument at some intermediate stage of its development. Basic to the whole is the division into 'an examination of the several ways of communicating our thoughts by speech' and 'an attention to the principles of those literary compositions which contribute to persuasion or entertainment'.

To set this out in summary: first section, linguistic: (a) Language, communication, expression (Lectures 2–7, i. 85); (b) Style and character (Lectures 7–11).—Second section, the species of com-

position: (a) Descriptive (Lectures 12–16); (b) Narrative or historical (Lectures 17–20); (c) Poetry (Lecture 21); (d) Demonstrative oratory, i.e. panegyric (Lectures 22–23); (e) Didactic or scientific (Lecture 24); (f) Deliberative oratory (Lectures 25–27); (g) Judicial or forensic oratory (Lectures 28–30).

Two features of the course enable us to make a plausible guess at the contents of the introductory lecture—whose absence, by the way, tends to prove that this set of notes was not prepared with a view to sale. At the heart of Smith's thinking, his doctrine, and his method of presentation (the three are always related) is the notion of the chain (see ii. 133 and cf. *Astronomy* II. 8–9)—articulated continuity, sequence of relations leading to illumination. Leave no chasm or gap in the thread: 'the very notion of a gap makes us uneasy' (ii. 36). The orator 'puts the whole story into a connected narration'; the great art of an orator is to throw his argument 'into a sort of a narration, filling up in the manner most suitable . . .' (ii. 206, 197). The art of transition is a vital matter (i. 146). Smith is concerned with this on the strategic level just as contemporary writers on Milton and Thomson were on the imaginative. As a lecturer, giving an exhibition of the very craft he is discussing, he insists that his listeners know where they have been and where they are going. Dugald Stewart notes in his *Life of Thomas Reid* that 'neither he nor his immediate predecessor ever published any general *prospectus* of their respective plans; nor any *heads* or *outlines* to assist their students in tracing the trains of thought which suggested their various transitions' (1802: 38–9). In Smith's case the frequent signposts would have made such a *prospectus* superfluous, and readers of the lectures are more likely to complain of being led by the hand than of bafflement. What all this amounts to is that the opening theme-phrase 'Perspicuity of stile' must have been clearly led up to.

The other habit of Smith's gives a clue to how this may have been done. He often shows his impatience with intricate subdivisions and classifications of his subject, such as had long made rhetoric a notoriously scholastic game. La Bruyère speaks of 'un beau sermon' made according to all the rules of the rhetoricians, with the *cognoscenti* in the preacher's audience following with admiration 'toutes les énumérations où il se promène'. But though Smith thinks it all very silly and refers anyone so inclined to read about it in Quintilian, his teacherly conscience compels him to ensure that his students have heard of the old terms. Lecture 1 no doubt defined the scope of this course by saying what it was not going to include. At least since the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* early in the first century B.C. the orator's art had been divided into invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery; Quintilian's words (*Institutio Oratoria* III. iii. 1;