



# Rhetoric as Philosophy: The Humanist Tradition (Rhetorical Philosophy and Theory)

*Ernesto Grassi*

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**Rhetoric as Philosophy: The Humanist Tradition (Rhetorical Philosophy and Theory)** Ernesto Grassi  
Originally published in English in 1980, *Rhetoric as Philosophy* has been out of print for some time. The reviews of that English edition attest to the importance of Ernesto Grassi's work.

By going back to the Italian humanist tradition and aspects of earlier Greek and Latin thought, Ernesto Grassi develops a conception of rhetoric as the basis of philosophy. Grassi explores the sense in which the first principles of rational thought come from the metaphorical power of the word. He finds the basis for his conception in the last great thinker of the Italian humanist tradition, Giambattista Vico (1668–1744). He concentrates on Vico's understanding of imagination and the sense of human ingenuity contained in metaphor. For Grassi, rhetorical activity is the essence and inner life of thought when connected to the metaphorical power of the word.

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