

Preface

The present volume contains the papers from an interdisciplinary symposium on rhetoric held at the Norwegian Institute in Rome in October 1998: Rhetoric across the Humanities. In addition we include the papers of Gaasland and Røstvig which were not given at the seminar, but which were written as a tribute to Roy Eriksen who celebrated his 50th birthday October 8th.

The symposium was partly financed by the Faculty of Humanities, University of Tromsø with the support of the Norwegian Institute in Rome. The organisers (Roy Eriksen and Toril Swan) wanted to bring together people who approached rhetoric from different angles. The location – Rome – could not have been more perfect; the lectures were interspersed with visits to wonderful sites such as the Campidoglio and the Villa Farnesina, with Roy Eriksen as guide. Thus rhetoric – the art of shaping words or stone or colours for the shared purpose of communicating a perspective – came before the participants' eyes as well as their ears: a truly memorable experience.

Academically, then, the participants belong in a variety of fields – consequently the present volume includes a great range of topics – art history (Hodne, Plahte Tschudi, and Aavitsland), linguistics (Breivik, Swan), literature and poetics (Eriksen, Folkestad, Gaasland, Strand Rangnes, Røstvig, Sandhaug, Visconti, and Wolfe), and political discourse (McCafferty). And the various artifacts and texts analysed similarly are the products of different eras, varying from the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance to our own day. We hope the readers will enjoy the variety as much as the participants enjoyed the intellectual exchanges between scholars in different fields at the symposium.