

Abstract

The thesis deals with understanding in the rhetorical art of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, Marcus Tullius Cicero, and the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, how they understood their art and how they took into account comprehension on the part of the listener. The starting point of the investigation is phenomenological. It is based on Martin Heidegger's definition of the phenomenon of interpretation from *Being and Time*. The structure of practical interpretation and the fore-structures in which each interpretation is grounded are traced in theoretical texts of rhetorical art. This allows for a deeper analysis of the understanding that speakers mention and for capturing understanding even where they are not explicitly thematized. The analysis of the texts is divided into two parts. The first deals with understanding on the part of the speaker. The connection between the practical interpretation of rhetoric and the convergence of Roman rhetorical art and philosophy is shown. The second analytical section is devoted primarily to the listener's understanding, the connection of interpretation to attunement and proof. It traces the role that understanding plays in what takes place between the speaker, his adversary, and the listener, and how the listener should understand what is being used against him by the speakers. It showed that the listener should not fully understand the understanding on the part of the speaker.