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“Giving” Speeches. On the Possible Affinities Between Rhetorical Genres

According to a common opinion that has been widely circulated as an axiom,¹ as well as used in rhetorical lectures to define the fundamental characteristics of *artis rhetoricae*, poets are born, and orators made (*Poetae nascuntur, oratores fiunt*). This could serve as an introduction to reflections on the duties of a speaker and the role of imitation and practice, but was also suited to justifying the domination of the poet over the rhetor in the art of the word. For it was the poet’s calling that acquired higher approval, while the orator was educated in the human world, and it was the matters of this world that his actions served. Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski attributed a special place in the hierarchy of products of the human intellect to poetry, writing that:

Oratoria opera ad locum plerumque certum, ad personam, ad necessitatem, ad tempus astringuntur, quibus sublatis finis eorundem operum deperit plerumque. Atque adeo ex natura sua mortalia sunt. Quid enim nunc opus est *Philippicis* Demosthenis vel Tullii? At opera poetarum suoapte genio immortalia sunt atque ab his singularium rerum circumstantiis expedita. Res enim singulares iuxta universalem modum tractant.²

Disregarding the rhetorical question—which begs an answer—about the usefulness of the speeches of the ancient masters, it is worth emphasizing

¹ See e.g. W. Potocki, “Poetae nascuntur, non fiunt,” in *Dziela*, ed. L. Kukulski, vol. 2, *Ogród nie plewiony i inne utwory z lat 1677–1695* (Warszawa, 1987), p. 658. This is an idea known from Cicero’s speech *Pro Archia Poeta* (line 18: “Atque sic a summis hominibus eruditissimisque accepimus, ceterarum rerum studia et doctrina et praeceptis et arte constare, poetam natura ipsa valere et mentis viribus excitari et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari.”)

² M.K. Sarbiewski, *O poezji doskonałej czyli Wergiliusz i Homer (De perfecta poesi sive Vergilius et Homerus)*, trans. M. Plezia, ed. S. Skimina (Wrocław, 1954), p. 14. “Works of oratory are predominantly associated with a specific place, person, circumstances, or time. When they cease to be current, the purpose of the works themselves is usually also lost, and by their very essence they are therefore mortal. For what use are Demosthenes’ *Philippics* or Tullius to us today? In contrast to this, works of poetry in their essence are immortal and free of the bonds resulting from the circumstances, since they deal with specific cases in the light of general truths.”

the conviction, present even in this polemical approach to the problem, of the fundamental connection between rhetoric and circumstances.

Aristotle's basic division of rhetoric into three types, which seeks to provide a "methodical consideration" of the field, stemmed from reflection upon the circumstances of a speech, concluding that the listener's situation, designated by the objective of the oration, played a decisive role.³ Situations that required that the listener make a decision on the past belonged to the forensic genre, those referring to choices in the future to the deliberative type, and those concerning the present to epideictic (ceremonial) oratory. In classical rhetoric, this is the genre that elicits certain problems in terms of its naming, description, and operation.⁴ Aristotle's fundamental acknowledgement of the possibility of the occurrence of a dispute, undertaking matters "known to a certain degree" and not constituting the object of a scientific discipline, harmonizes with the further division of actions of speakers possible within the specific rhetorical types. In a court, there is room for defense and accusation, in a forum for advising and dissuading, and in a situation of rhetorical display for praise and reprimand. This is the extent of the possibilities given by methodical and generalized consideration of circumstances. But this is not to say that there have not been certain doubts caused by the finality of this division.

Quintilian, presenting a critical appraisal seeking to encapsulate the entire rhetorical tradition, and having cited the distinctions supported by the authorities of Aristotle and Cicero, voiced a doubt that led him to further reflections. If praise and reprimand were to be attributed to the demonstrative genre, then:

... in quo genere versari videbimur, cum querimur, consolamur, mitigamus, concitamus, terremus, confirmamus, praecipimus, obscura dicta interpretamur, narramus, deprecamur, gratias agimus, gratulamur, obiurgamus, maledicimus, describimus, mandamus, renuntiamus, optamus, opinamur, plurima alia?⁵

Endeavoring to explain why authors he regarded as authorities limited such great diversity to the narrow confines of a tripartite classification, he cited the opinion of those who saw the reason in the link between this division and the former oratorical practice. According to them, oratory was actually supposed to be limited to the actions indicated in these three parts. He also recalls the conception of Anaximenes of Lampsacus, today identified as the author of the sophistical *Rhetoric to Alexander*, according to whom forensic

³ Arystoteles, *Retoryka*, in *Retoryka. Poetyka*, trans. H. Podbielski (Warszawa, 1988), pp. 61, 75–78.

⁴ Cf. bk III, 12–16 in M. Fabius Quintilianus, *The Institutio oratoria of Quintilian with an English Translation*, vol. I, trans. H.E. Butler (London, 1958), pp. 394–397.

⁵ Quintilianus, *Institutio oratoria*, p. 390.

and political rhetoric constituted two genres, but some seven variants (ἔδη) existed: encouragement, dissuasion, praise, reprimand, accusation, defense and criticism.⁶ For Quintilian, however, it was obvious that the first two belonged to the deliberative genre, the next two to the ceremonial one, and the remainder to the forensic type. Ultimately, he concluded that it was safest and most rational to aspire to the opinion of the majority, that is to settle for *tria genera dicendi*.

This canonical division in classical rhetoric was never discarded. Also never forgotten was the aspiration to reflect theoretically upon the entire field of the practical applications of rhetoric. The declared premise of subjecting the art of rhetoric to the demands of practice was voiced strongly in teaching on rhetoric in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁷ The numerous rhetorical manuscripts, which even today have not all been studied, featured diverse titles indicating their close connection to Polish reality. These mostly concerned the possibility of successful application of rhetoric in the adult life of a Polish nobleman, and therefore used such wording as:⁸ ...*ad usum practicum accomodatae* (MS, Lietuvos mokslų akademija F41–530), ...*praecepta rhetoricae ad usum nobilitatis iuventutis Poloniae accomodata* (MS, Biblioteka Jagiellońska [hereafter: “BJ”] 2710), ...*ad usus politicos Polone iuventuti...* (MS, Biblioteka Czartoryskich 2455 I), or even more broadly in a 1689 lecture from Poznań: *Polonia extra Poloniam circumferenda seu methodus orationum domi et extra Polonae iuventuti usui futuro tradita...* (MS, Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich [hereafter: “Oss.”] 1563 I). Some even more distinctly point not only to adaptation to the needs of the young novice of the rhetoric class, but also to the subordination of the theory itself to the demands of contemporary life, for example, *Partitiones oratoris Poloni ad statum civilem seu politicum, sacrum et militare accomodatae et in usum iuventuti Polonae elaboratae...* and *Facilis eloquentiae modus seu praecepta artis oratoriae accomodata moderno saeculo ad componendas quasvis orationes...* (MS, Vilnius universiteto biblioteka F3–2076). In this practical perspective on the art of rhetoric, the general model of three rhetorical types also tends to be insufficient, and

⁶ A list of variants of oration, disregarding the generic classification, was also given by Diogenes Laertius when discussing Plato’s oeuvre. These variants included: encouragement (in two forms: to fight and to make peace), dissuasion, accusation, defense, praise, and reprimand. See R. Krzywy, *Poezja staropolska wobec genologii retorycznej. Wprowadzenie do problematyki* (Warszawa, 2014), p. 30.

⁷ See, e.g.: S. Bednarski, *Upadek i odrodzenie szkół jezuickich w Polsce* (Kraków, 1933), pp. 200–201; E. Ulčainaitė, *Teoria retoryczna w Polsce i na Litwie w XVII wieku. Próba rekonstrukcji schematu retorycznego* (Wrocław, 1984), p. 175; B. Otwinowska, “Retoryka,” in T. Michałowska (ed.), *Słownik literatury staropolskiej* (Wrocław, 1990), pp. 719–720; M. Korolko, “Retoryka w polskich kolegiach jezuickich,” in L. Grzebień and S. Obirek (eds.), *Jezuici a kultura polska* (Kraków, 1993), p. 137.

⁸ I cite these examples on the basis of the list provided by Eugenija Ulčainaitė, *Teoria retoryczna*, pp. 177–199.

rhetors generally employ more detailed distinctions.⁹ Usually, a division according to circumstances is superimposed on the generic classification. Speeches associated with births, weddings, or funerals, as well as with events specified by place—national or regional parliaments—are discussed. Neither their composition nor the division is determined definitively, as various authors also use other categories, such as parliamentary or military speeches. Of course, the list of variations within specific circumstances is also not a closed one, as Małgorzata Ciszewska’s continuing research on the theory of hymeneal oratory clearly shows.¹⁰ Sometimes, the overriding rule by which the diverse addresses dictated by the circumstances of life are ordered becomes the division into *orationes maiores* and *orationes minores*.¹¹ The latter include *oratiunculae*, and although these belong to all three rhetorical types, they are usually categorized as epideictic.¹² The composition of these small speeches might also vary; they usually include welcomes, farewells, congratulations, words of thanks, requests, and sometimes also *oratio dedicatoria*.

Oratio dedicatoria is a concept that was not known to the classical exponents of rhetoric. It is also absent in such important and popular compendia of rhetorical theory as the works of Cypriano de Soarez, Nicolas Caussin, Gerhard Voss, and Michael Radau. And yet, an unscientific survey (I found it in eight printed works and six manuscripts) suggests that it was employed relatively often, and was a well-known term in both Poland and Europe. Despite this, the question of what a dedicatory speech is defies a simple answer.

The very interest in dedication among rhetors is motivated by the increasing popularity of dedicating works. According to Bartholomäus Keckermann, the practice of honoring somebody through a dedication reached such an exaggerated level that he calls it “begging”—*artificium quoddam mendicandi*. Not wishing to be accused of overlooking a type of speech, however (“ne nimirum ullum orationis genus omissum a nobis esse videri possit”), the

⁹ Ulčínaitė pays little attention to this issue; she is interested in reconstructing the “rhetorical model,” so rather issues common with the classical tradition. The author only notes in broad terms: “The nature and characteristics of the *dispositio* in seventeenth-century rhetorics are discussed not only in general but also in detail in every genre of oratory: *in genere demonstrativo, deliberativo, iudiciali*; the characteristics of the order resulting from the specific genre of rhetoric are thereby revealed.” Ulčínaitė, *Teoria retoryczna*, p. 76.

¹⁰ Cf. M. Trębska, *Staropolskie szlacheckie oracje weselne. Genologia, obrzęd, źródła* (Warszawa, 2008); and the perspective, supplemented by new findings, presented in M. Ciszewska, *Tuliusz domowy. Świeckie oratorstwo szlacheckie kręgu rodzinnego (XVII–XVIII wiek)* (Warszawa, 2016).

¹¹ J. Niedźwiedz, *Nieśmiertelne teatru sławy. Teoria i praktyka twórczości panegirycznej na Litwie w XVII i XVIII w.* (Kraków, 2003), p. 94. Here, especially, the discussion of *gratulationes* and *salutationes*.

¹² e.g. G. Vossius *Rhetorices contractae sive partitionum oratoriarum libri quinque* (Lugduni Bataavorum, 1640), pp. 148–225, enumerates—in the deliberative genre: *monitio, commendatio, concitatio i conciliatio, adhortatio, dehortatio, consolatio, petitio*; and in the forensic type: *obiurgatio, invectiva, expostulatio, and deprecatio*.

author opts to present in his textbook the principles of *oratio dedicatoria*.¹³ Gaetano Verani also began his lecture on dedication speeches by complaining that practically all volumes of books appeared to be under the patronage of some powerful sponsor, which unfortunately facilitates spiteful criticism.¹⁴ The simplest justification for examining the subject of dedication speeches came from Jan Kwiatkiewicz: since it is a frequent occurrence that books are dedicated, this type of speech must be examined.¹⁵ In fact, these justifications alone show that a dedication is a speech that is an attribution of a work. And indeed, the most frequent definitions explain it in a similar way. In textbook form and in the traditional question–answer model, Stanisław Rapal presented one such definition:

Primo: Quid sit dedicatoria? Respondeo, est oratorius sermo, quo alicui nostrum opus inscribimus et nuncupamus.¹⁶

For Keckermann, Kwiatkiewicz,¹⁷ Hilarion Jaroszewicki, Gérard Pelletier, and Joseph de Jouvençy, a dedicatory oratory entails giving away written works.¹⁸ But there is also another understanding of a dedication that can be found in the manuscripts of Polish rhetoricians. Jan Kołozwarski’s rhetoric from 1645 *Rhetor Polonus seu precepta universe Polonae nobilitatis ordini percommoda* (MS, Oss. Lw 7832/I), in Chapter 10, “De dedicatione,” states clearly that:

Dedictiones fiunt vel cum munus aliquod deferimus, vel cum operam librosque nostros alicui devovemus.¹⁹

Professor Teofil Rutka defines a dedicatory speech almost identically in his lecture *Orator Polonus...* in 1657: “Dedicatio est oratio qua vel munus aliquod vel libros animosque nostros cuiquam devovemus.”²⁰ A lecture from

¹³ B. Keckermann, *Systema rhetoricae in quo artis praecepta plene et methodice traduntur...* (Hanoviae, 1608), p. 453.

¹⁴ G. Verani, *Pantheon argutae elocutionis omnia politioris litteraturae genera complectens, in decem libros distributum* (Messanae, 1670), p. 390.

¹⁵ J. Kwiatkiewicz, “Suada civilis huius aevi genio et nostratis politiae ingenio ... accomodata,” in *Suada civilis et Phoenix rhetorum opus bipartitum* (Pragae, 1690), p. 211.

¹⁶ S. Rapal, *Via ad eloquentiam quatuor passibus epistolarum, chriarum, syllogismorum et orationum constans* (Pragae, 1717), p. 706.

¹⁷ J. Kwiatkiewicz’s conception is presented by I. Słomak, “Teksty zalecające z perspektywy teorii wymowy i w praktyce. Ujęcie Jana Kwiatkiewicza,” in M. Jarczykowska, B. Mazurkowska, and M. Marcinkowska (eds.), *Wypowiedzi zalecające w książce dawnej i współczesnej* (Katowice, 2015), pp. 35–46.

¹⁸ H. Jaroszewicki, *Arbor Tulliana Iasinsciano...*, f. 139 a [<http://www.medievalist.org.ua/2013/01/arbortulliana-iasinsciano.html>]; G. Pelletier, *Reginae palatium eloquentiae* (Lugduni, 1657), p. 728; J. Juvencius, *Candidatus rhetoricae* (Lugduni, 1720), p. 282.

¹⁹ J. Kołozwarski, *Rhetor Polonus seu precepta universe Polonae nobilitatis ordini percommoda*, MS, Oss. Lw 7832 I, p. 26.

²⁰ *Orator Polonus inter praecepta rhetorica orationum ... doctrinis politicis, ethicis ac polemicis ... illustratus ...*, MS, Oss. 1937 I, p. 28.

the second half of the seventeenth century, preserved in manuscript 78 II of the Silesian Library, also explains that usual practice is for a dedication to be information about devoting a work, philosophical theses, or a gift to somebody. Interestingly, there follows a concrete example of the last case referring to a gift to mark somebody's name day: "dedicatur in vinculu[m] nominis vel imago vel munus proportionatum personae vel anulus et similia."²¹

Oratorical giving of presents accompanied many festivities: name days or birthdays, Christmas, and New Year. Above all, though, it was one of the most developed points of wedding celebrations. In Polish records of templates or authentic orations, it would usually appear with the phrase "giving," either with a general complement—a gift—or specifically identifying the item in question, for example, a chain. Of course, in wedding customs, certain categories of presents had a specific, symbolic character, and their place and role were additionally specified (e.g. giving a wreath, a ring, or marzipan). Perhaps it was due to this need for analyzing the subject in detail—or perhaps due to the quantitative dominance of entire series devoted to giving of wedding presents—that the most space in lectures on the subject was reserved for the presentation of wedding oratory. This domination of marriage ceremonies is also visible in the very construction of the parts of lectures devoted to *orationibus dedicatoriis*. For example, in the rhetoric *Orator Polono-politicus* from the collection of the Baworowsky Library (MS, Oss. Baw. 476), which probably dates from the time of John III Sobieski, following an extensive introduction of dedicatory speeches concerning books, the author briefly presents other kinds of speeches:

De dedicationibus munerum idem intelligendum quod de oblationibus serti, annuli, muneris nuptialium, eodemque modo formantur sicut illae sed de his in nuptiali materia.²²

The rhetor employs the phrase *dedicatio munerum*, although the usual terms to use were *oratio redditoria* or *oblatoria munerum*. Therefore, *dedicatio operis* and *dedicatio munerum*, standing alongside one another, turn out to be two variants, essentially serving the same situation, just in different specific circumstances. Rhetors give more space and attention in the parts discussing dedication speeches to literary dedications. A unique case here is that of Rutka, the foundation of whose synthetic chapter "De commendatione et dedicatione" is the giving of a present, which serves as a model for both variants. Let us quote a lengthy passage that captures the essence of the idea.

Peragitur dedicatio sic. In exordio causam adferes (si munus adfers) quare istam dedicationem institueris, nimirum vel stabiliendae amicitiae vel amoris testificandi. In confirmatione

²¹ [J. Marszałkowski], *Liber rhetorices dulcis plenum[ue] antiquitatis*, MS, Biblioteka Śląska 78 II, pp. 166–167.

²² *Orator Polono-politicus*, MS, Oss. Baw. 476, f. 103r.

extenuabis munus tuum indignumque tali personae dices, gratum tamen nihilominus fore sperabis, et quod ille animum donantis non dona introspectat. Conclusionem absolves petitione, ut grato animo munera accipiantur. Pari quoque dedicationem suam formabit: qui librum dedicat, praeterquam quod sic utilitates libri dedicati recensere teneatur.²³

The invention and disposition used in the two orations are in fact identical here. The only feature that distinguishes giving a book from other presents is the presentation of the benefits that it brings. This brief assertion could refer to meta-literary reflection, popular in dedication statements and literary criticism, and determining, so to speak, the reception of the work among its readers.

The awareness of the similarity of bestowing gifts and giving books steered the course of Rapal’s reflections in an entirely different way. His lecture about dedication speeches in *Via ad eloquentiam* is not only one of the most extensive of its kind, but is also characterized by criticism, focusing on showing the similarities and differences between the two types of speech. This is heralded even by the first sentence:

Dedicatariae merito sequuntur oblatorias, quae licet distinguantur ab invicem, non sunt tamen a se multum dissitae.²⁴

The fundamental similarity is the tripartite construction: “Quotnam partes habeat? Respondeo: tres, sicuti oblatoria.”²⁵ The introduction may be varied, as long as it establishes the subject and introduces the dedicating person. The main part presents the reasons for the dedication of the work to the person in question. The chief role in devising these reasons is played by the dedicating person and addressee of the dedication, and an auxiliary role by the names, functions, coat of arms, and the like, of the latter. Of course, the circumstances referring to the address must have a laudatory significance. The conclusion takes the form of a request to accept the work. Following these general instructions is not specified in the form of a specific presentation of the arrangement of dedication speeches. According to Rapal, “it is best to follow the inspiration of one’s own talent.” Yet syllogisms may be universally applied, such as: major premise—he to whom it most befits to be dedicated to should receive the dedication; minor premise—this thing should most be dedicated to the recipient, conclusion—I therefore dedicate it. An arrangement making use of syllogisms and thereby adding greater coherence to the speech was often recommended by the authors of school rhetorics.²⁶ Elocution also combines giving a gift and a literary work.

²³ *Orator Polonus*, MS, Oss. 1937 I, p. 28.

²⁴ Rapal, *Via ad eloquentiam*, p. 706.

²⁵ Rapal, p. 706.

²⁶ Ulčínaitė, *Teoria retoryczna*, pp. 75–76.

Quonam stylo sint conficiendae? Respondeo, pari oblatoriarum, plano nimirum, sed ponderoso, maxime si gravibus et in dignitate eminentiori viris constitutis fiat dedicatio.²⁷

Most interesting is Rapal's listing of the differences between *oratio dedicatoria* and *oratio oblatoria*.

Quonam pacto munerum oblatoriae distinguantur a dedicatoriis? Respondeo primo: munera offeruntur fere amicis et notis. Dedicaciones fiunt patronis etiam ignotis. Secundo: in oblatoriis quaeritur bonum illius, cui offerimus; in dedicatoriis quaeritur bonum dedicantis. Tertio: oblationes munerum fiunt ex humana consuetudine, dedicaciones vero ex quadam quasi necessitate etc.²⁸

The first rule that the rhetor cites is not entirely confirmed in Polish practice. The examples of dedications to family or friends that are described frequently go beyond a strict patronal relationship. The remaining two conditions can hardly be taken literally. After all, the good of the addressee might be treated as the pleasures or uses of reading that are often mentioned in dedications. As proof of the now conventional dedication of books, one just has to recall the remarks of other rhetors. On these points, therefore, Rapal's opinion reflects only certain aspects of dedicatory practice, and not its completely different essence. The vague "quaedam quasi necessitas" ["a kind of necessity"] in conjunction with the search for one's own good is a trace of the impact on the theory of the laws of dedicatory "economy" that is evident in practice—treating the dedication as a way of seeking support of the powerful.²⁹ It also seems likely that the evaluation of the dedicatory reality that permeates his theoretical reflection might have affected his untypical generic categorization of *oratio dedicatoria*.

Ad quodnam genus oratorium deducantur? Respondeo, ad genus deliberativum, nam praecipuus labor est, ut res dedicata suscipiatur, quod suasionem quandam prae se fert.³⁰

Generally, authors classified dedicatory speeches in the demonstrative genre.³¹ The justification for this was their laudatory nature. According to Keckermann, "etiam dedicatio est quaedam orta laudatio," and therefore also "exornatio et actio talis esse debet qualis laudationis et gratulationis, nempe florida et excitata."³² The author of the lecture *Orator Polono-politicus* explained

²⁷ Rapal, *Via ad eloquentiam*, p. 706.

²⁸ Rapal, p. 766.

²⁹ Keckermann, sensitive to bad dedication practices, recommended such methods of amplification (making use of examples and opposites) "ne videamur lucri aut quaestus causa alteri aliquid dedicasse," Keckermann, *Systema rhetoricae*, p. 543.

³⁰ Rapal, *Via ad eloquentiam*, p. 707.

³¹ This is demonstrated by the placement of sections within discussion of the *genus demonstrativum*. For example, J. de Jouveny (*Candidatus rhetoricae*, pp. 280–282) first mentions epideictic speeches.

³² Keckermann, *Systema rhetoricae*, pp. 543–544.

that a laudation should be selected in such a way as to concern the addressee most directly, and that even if the speaker gave reasons justifying attribution of a work to a given person, “they must still be connected with praises of that person.”³³ But at the same time, rhetors generally agreed that an essential element of a dedication is a *petitio*. If it is to be treated in fully functional terms, it should open the possibility of a twofold reaction: acceptance or rejection of the request, and, consequently, acceptance or refusal to accept the gift.³⁴ In fact, though, the requests in this type of *oratio dedicatoria* are subject to imperatives of politeness. This politeness invalidates their persuasiveness, so to speak—in other words, the rules of custom actually block the possibility of refusal. The speaker only asks out of politeness, since a bilateral, socially entrenched agreement exists that states that a gift must be accepted. For this reason too, dedication speeches should be placed in the demonstrative genre.

It is also remarkable to note how all rhetors, including those combining attribution of a book with giving a present, remained silent on the possibility of a response being given to a dedication speech. And yet in Polish oratory, the fundamental principle of politeness was manifested in the dialogistic form. Of course, parts of the lectures of these authors, whether they concerned cheerful giving of small gifts or bestowing presents as a whole, should also indicate the rules for providing an appropriate answer. This absence, incomprehensible from the point of view of the coherence of the theory, clearly results from dedicatory practices. The authors of lectures support their arguments with examples, which tend to be of dedications of philosophical theses, and moreover recommend that: “Plurima exempla dedicatariorum orationum in libris impressis leges tam oratoriis quam historicis, a principio statim libri, maxime in penegyricis recentioribus....”³⁵ Certainly, print is the main type of oratorical bestowal of books, and yet one that does not allow the continuity of the giving–thank–ing sequence to be maintained, and entirely changes the communicational relationship, in which the situation of an individual giving a work to a specific addressee is almost secondary to the generalized address to the reader. One might even question whether rhetors writing about the *oratio dedicatoria operis* even take its functioning in the spoken word into account. The author of rhetoric BJ 1984 did not; for him, it was identical to a dedication letter.

Haec igitur oratio ut plurimum conficitur per modum epistolae ut patet in omnibus libris quibus dedicatariae praeponuntur. Haec igitur oratio vel proprius epistola sic conficitur.³⁶

³³ *Orator Polono-politicus*, f. 102v.

³⁴ This can be seen in the case of speeches asking for a maiden’s hand in marriage during courtship, when there was always the possibility of various responses.

³⁵ [Marszałkowski], *Liber rhetorices*, p. 168.

³⁶ *Dux oratorius, seu sacrae et humanae eloquentiae praecepta ex Cicerone, Ari[stote]le, Quintiliano, Hermogene et aliis antiquissimis rhetoribus*, MS, BJ 1984, p. 251.

The same author consistently referred to the possibility of using the theory of epistolography on equal terms: "... omnes istae per modum epistolarium solent confici. Ideo vide authores de epistola dedicatoria et ex iudicio tuo ad arbitrium imitare."³⁷ This kind of interchangeability of epistolographic and oratorical categories was a considerably wider phenomenon, which also included other genres of demonstrative speeches,³⁸ and it was presumably so obvious that rhetors identifying dedication letters as examples of *orationes dedicoriae* did not see it as necessary even to mention that at least the formal indicators of letter writing set them apart. And yet, a minor remark by one rhetor, made when recommending a suitable style for a dedication, suggests that dedicatory orations also functioned beyond the written word.

Styl[us] eoru[m] nec nimis Laconicus, nec nimis fusus debet esse, sed melius inter Seneci[us]ianu[m] et Ciceronianu[m] verb[orum] flore[m] praeferens eloquentiam ut addat animu[m] excitetq[ue] lectore[m] ad legenda v[el] audienda ea quae hoc libro v[el] in thesib[us] exprimuntur.³⁹

Of course, as long as this is not just evidence of the expectation that a work might be read out loud.

Modest confirmations of oratorical dedication of books have survived in manuscripts, with three well-known examples being recorded in the *silva rerum* BOZ 855.⁴⁰ These are two speeches marked: "For dedicating a funeral book," and one "For dedicating a wedding b[ook]," intended to accompany the author's bestowal of a panegyric print at a funeral and a wedding. Only in one case (f. 23 r.) have the author and the work it accompanied been determined: Stefan Wilkostowski's *Rany Jaśnie Wielmożnym rodzicom...* [*Wounds to the Most Distinguished Parents*]. The fourth speech, found by Jakub Niedźwiedź, is also a dedication of a wedding panegyric, titled *Oratio p. Fabiani Doktorowicz SJ redditoria panegyris epithalamica...*,⁴¹ delivered in Polish,

³⁷ *Dux oratorius*, p.251. In the case of a letter of dedication, the theory assumed a reply to the dedication of the work. These indications can easily be referred to the correspondence when a book given by post was followed by such a response. Although this does not seem necessary for a printed dedication letter, the case described by Anna Sitkowa of the inclusion in the edition of a postil by Marcin Białobrzęski of a letter from Anna Jagiellon and Stephen Báthory, thanking the author for the bestowal of the work, shows the overlap between the circulation of authentic correspondence and printed dedications. A. Sitkowa, "O tekstach zalecających w postylli Marcina Białobrzęskiego," in M. Jarczykova, B. Mazurkova, and M. Marcinkowska (eds.), *Wypowiedzi zalecające*, pp. 136–138. Among the examples of publishing private letters as dedication letters are the works of Jan Kochanowski (e.g. the letter to Jan Zamoyski preceding *The Dismissal of the Greek Envoys*).

³⁸ Cf. M. Trębska, "'Vita iter est.' Oratorskie i listowne pożegnania i salutacje XVII i XVIII wieku. Rekonesans," *Barok*, 40/2 (2013), p. 191.

³⁹ *Orator Polono-politicus*, f. 103.

⁴⁰ M. Barłowska, "Dwie 'rzeczy przy pogrzebie.' Głosa do recepcji prozy Jana Kochanowskiego," in *Sarmackie theatrum*, vol. 6, M. Jarczykova and A. Sitkowa (eds.), *Między tekstami* (Katowice, 2010), p. 109.

⁴¹ Niedźwiedź, *Nieśmiertelne teatru*, s 106.

on August 27, 1727, at the marriage of Kazimierz Sapieha and Karolina Radziwiłłówna. Wilkostowski’s dedication of the book of mourning at the funeral of Katarzyna Ogińska, née Polubińska, is a very modest statement in terms of size, in fact comprising just three points: the eulogy to the deceased combined with praise for the family (using an exaggerated comparison to the heavens and the sun), the connected justification for the dedication of the printed book, and a request for gracious acceptance of the gift.⁴² In a condensed form, then, the most important themes mentioned by theoreticians were all taken into account. And yet, in the publishing frame of the printed work announced by the speech there was not one but two letters: one also addressed to the parents, and the other to the spouse of the deceased—and these texts are different from the presented dedicatory oration. Apart from where they are placed, in fact nothing points to their status as dedications; they do not even contain the bestowal formula, being faithful to the requirements of consolation. Studies of Dominican dedicatory letters show that consolatory epistles often came with funeral sermons devoted to the loved ones of the deceased. Here as well, some are lacking the classical wording of dedication of a work.⁴³ In the case of Wilkostowski’s bestowal of a book of mourning, the act of dedication conducted in person evidently affected the form of the epistolographic attributions.

Despite the lack of texts of dedication speeches for giving panegyrics, numerous indirect confirmations of their functioning within funeral ceremonies have survived, identified by Ciszewska in eighteenth-century printed funeral reports.⁴⁴ Based on these, she was able to ascertain that *orationes dedicatariae* were given by representatives of the colleges (or even the author himself), but their place in the ceremony varied: before the family gave their speech of thanks⁴⁵ or afterwards.⁴⁶ Yet the stage was always the space of the church, conforming to the pomp of the funeral. What is most interesting, however, is Ciszewska’s documentation, based upon a report on the funeral of Stefan Humiecki in 1737, of the operation of a speech of thanks for the

⁴² MS, Biblioteka Narodowa BOZ 855, f. 23r.

⁴³ See A.P. Pawłowska, “Kultura retoryczna dominikanów z kręgu konwentu pw. Świętej Trójcy w Krakowie w I poł. XVII wieku na podstawie listów dedykacyjnych tekstów drukowanych w latach 1600–1650” (PhD diss., Jagiellonian University), pp. 202–208. I would like to thank the author for allowing me access to this work.

⁴⁴ Ciszewska, *Tuliusz domowy*, pp. 249–253.

⁴⁵ *Relacja pogrzebu świętej pamięci Jaśnie Wielmożnego J[ego]M[o]ści Pana Humieckiego, wojewody podolskiego, listatyckiego, gajowskiego etc. etc. starosty, dnia 28 stycznia w kościele archikatedralnym lwowskim odprawionego* (Lwów, 1737), f. A2r–v.

⁴⁶ *Kazania i mowy na walnym pogrzebowym akcie s.p. Jaśnie Oświeconej Księżny Jej[m]o[ści] Anny z Książąt Sanguszków Radziwiłłowej, kanclerzyny wielkiej W[ielkiego] Ks[ięstwa] Lit[ewskiego], miane, tudzież krótkie tegoż aktu opisanie z wyrażeniem castri doloris w kościele nieświskim Societatis Jesu wspaniałą i misterną strukturą erygowanego roku 1747, na wieczną w potomne wieki pamięć do druku podane* (Wilno, 1750), f. A₂v.

oratorical dedication of a panegyric of mourning.⁴⁷ This shows that, as with all cases of giving gifts, the ceremonial bestowal of a book was also subject to the rules of politeness and required a response in the shape of words of thanks.

A minor comment made by the author of the lecture *Dux oratorius seu sacrae et humanae eloquentiae praecepta...* leads me to the last, but rather important doubt over how we should view the essence of the dedication speech. It comes at the beginning of the chapter “De oratione dedicatoria,”

Oratio dedicatoria appellatur quae solet libris prae[po]ni et de hac nos in praesentia agemus: nam quae solet munera reddere aut honores iam est a nobis explicata supra sectione 2.⁴⁸

Indeed, in Chapter 2, “De or[atio]ne reddente munera sponso et sponsae,” the rhetor asserted that:

Non infrequens usus est reddendorum munerum apud nobilitatem Polonam quae quidem munera ad duo genera revocari possunt vel e[ni]m offeruntur honores, magistratus, dignitates vel aliquid pertinens ad suppellectilem domesticam utriusque formas subiciensque.⁴⁹

An equal status to bestowal of books and presents is assigned here to *reddere honores*, a rather extensive category of speeches which in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were part of the sphere of public ceremonies, rather than private ones. Orations accompanied the bestowal of offices, meaning the marshal of the crown handing over in the name of the king the symbols of the new position (for Lithuanian offices the laws of the Lithuanian marshal were abided by), for example seals for a chancellor and vice-chancellor, a mace for a hetman, or keys for a treasurer. An indispensable supplement to such a ceremony came in the form of personal oratorical words of thanks from the appointee.⁵⁰ Marshal Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski expressed the fundamental rule of dedication in a speech given when bestowing seals, identifying the three main “circumstances”: “what? to whom? after whom?”⁵¹ And indeed, it is true that the invention of a speech bestowing an office is determined by three main circumstances, but these are in fact “who? to whom? what?”; only occasionally does extended reflection on the predecessor take place (“after whom?”), as a particular

⁴⁷ Ciszewska, *Tuliusz domowy*, p. 253.

⁴⁸ *Dux oratorius*, p. 252.

⁴⁹ *Dux oratorius*, p. 232.

⁵⁰ See M. Barłowska, “‘Drogi klejnot i piastującemu ozdobny.’ Sejmowe mowy przy przekazywaniu pieczęci,” in *Sarmackie theatrum. Materiały z konferencji naukowej*, vol. 1, R. Ociecek and B. Mazurkova (eds.), *Wartości i słowa* (Katowice, 2001), pp. 167–185.

⁵¹ S.H. Lubomirski, “Mowa J[aa]śnie] W[iel]możnego] J[ego] M[o]ści P[ana] Lubomirskiego marsz[a]łka w[ie]lk[iego] kor[onnego] oddając pieczęć mniejszą kor[onną] J[aa]śnie] W[iel]możnemu] J[ego] M[o]ści Panu Tarłowi woj[ewodzie] lubelskiemu,” in J. Ostrowski-Danej-kowicz, *Swada polska i lacińska*, vol. 1 (Lublin, 1745), p. 218.

expression of homage. For example, if we apply the model of dedication given by Rapal to the speech of Marshal Łukasz Opaliński with which he bestowed the great seal to Jerzy Ossoliński, it fits almost ideally.⁵² The introduction to the subject, and of the dedicating person, here means demonstrating praise for a Commonwealth in which the monarch, praised himself for being concerned for its good, need not search for men to hold office, for there are so many worthy candidates. Giving the reasons for the dedication, connected with the person of the recipient, is an expression of praise for the new keeper of the seals, who proved his abilities and loyalty with his previous service. Yet there is not the request for acceptance of the gift that is essential in a dedication, or even a mild expression of hope that it will be accepted. In fact, the speech closes with a laudatory presentation of the office, which might correspond to a typical *praesentatio operis vel muneris*, subordinated to a stark warning to the addressee of the ways and requirements of worthy service and a reminder of the obligation to “work off” the favor. This difference can easily be explained by the change in the hierarchy of the giver and the receiver. In attributions of books, as well as bestowal of all kinds of gifts (regardless of the actual status), the donor employed a strategy of modesty and self-effacement, which was often recommended by theoreticians.⁵³ When it came to handing over offices, on the other hand, the royal grace flowed onto the appointee “from above.” The “bestowal” that was part of this differing hierarchy also did not create any fiction of uncertainty as to the acceptance of the gift.

This type of conclusion, containing words of dedication, is closest to the bestowal of a bride completing the speech in which the betrothed is given to her husband. This so-called actual giving, defined by Ciszewska, involved the same invocations typical of bestowing gifts or offices—for example, “take,” “accept”—as well as including a warning about treatment of the wife and the need to demonstrate gratitude to her family. Orations on the occasion of bestowing a bride were treated with particular pomp, which added to their length, laudatory qualities, and elocutionary embellishments. But this type of speech too could be described in terms of the theory of the dedication speech—especially the simplest, three-point guise presented by Pelletier.⁵⁴ Starting with the occasion, in an extended form, would be the equivalent of reflection on marriage; showing the things to be dedicated would correspond to the expansive encomium to the family and the maiden; and the dedication of the work itself would be replaced by the closing words

⁵² Ł. Opaliński, “Łukasz Opaliński marszałek koronny oddaje pieczęć mniejszą J[ego] M[ości] P[anu] Jerzemu Ossolińskiemu,” in J. Pisarski, *Mówca polski*, vol. 1 (Kalisz, 1668), pp. 121–123.

⁵³ Cf. e.g. the erudition recommended by Kwiatkiewicz, “*Suada civilis*,” pp. 217–218.

⁵⁴ This theory is presented by I. Stomak, “*Teksty zalecające*,” p. 39.

of bestowal. From this perspective, the functional objectification of the bride confirms her subordination to parental authority. Yet rhetors did not even hint at such a possibility, presenting much more detailed recommendations concerning the invention and arrangement of wedding speeches.⁵⁵

If, though, we were to treat the most basic situational framework as an indicator of the kinship between orations, it would also be necessary to take into account other (albeit not all)⁵⁶ orations referred to in Polish as giving something. These might also include speeches on the occasion of giving up a flag or prisoners,⁵⁷ as well as all specific cases of bestowal. As a passage from one such address shows, it is by no means obvious what kind of speech it is from. When Samuel Maskiewicz requested the gracious acceptance of proof (*augmentum*) of his loyal work, and allusively entreated a reward, without the titular indication of the circumstances, it would be hard to guess that the oration concerns the bestowal of “the restored Grodno castle” in 1678.⁵⁸

The dedicatory nature of a speech, therefore, is defined by the presence of the one doing the giving (in person or through a delegate), the receiver, and the gift itself. The bestowed object, be it a work, thing, a symbolic object or a person, remained in the power of the dedicator. This fundamental relationship thus defines the range of positive affects demanded by the two roles: kindness, happiness, friendship, gratitude. It also designates the most important rhetorical strategies, such as focusing on the gift—whether by amplifying it or by reducing it—and justifying the dedication. The specific typical arguments and the execution of the topic of the object being given would depend on specific circumstances. Bestowal can take place in two model situations: when the dedicator was lower in rank (a work, gift, symbols of victory), or in a dominant position in the hierarchy relative to the recipient (giving an office or handing over a bride). The consequences are conclusion of the oration with a request or a warning, which may also be supplemented by wishes. The evident large differences in the importance of the various giving speeches, visible even in their great range—from a one-off bestowal of a gift, to dedications or exhibitions on the occasion of giving away brides—resulted from the use of various types of amplification, especially laudations of people, including the often recommended *encomia* stemming from coats of arms, enriched with witticisms and eruditions.

⁵⁵ Trębska, *Staropolskie oracje*, pp. 150–154.

⁵⁶ e.g. although described as “giving away” a coat of arms from a deceased official, such speeches actually tend to refer to its return.

⁵⁷ See M. Barłowska, “Głosy zwycięzców i nieprzyjacielskie chorągwie – oratorski fragment rycerskiej tradycji,” in W. Pawlak and M. Piskała (eds), *Wojny, bitwy i potyczki w kulturze staropolskiej* (Warszawa, 2011), pp. 357–372.

⁵⁸ [*Silva rerum* of Samuel Maskiewicz], MS, BJ 217/61, f. 83. My thanks to Małgorzata Ciżewska for making her copy of this text available to me.

The doubts that sometimes shine through from the authors of rhetorical treatises as to the definition and placement of an *oratio dedicatoria* act as a reminder not only of the constant, mutual influence of oratorical practice and rhetorical theory, but also, more broadly, of the conundrum of rhetorical classifications between striving for the closest, most precise encapsulation of the actual circumstances and the aspiration to identify similarities and the models of their generalization.

Translated by Benjamin Koschalka