

Preface

We are presenting the reader with a volume of studies focused on literary genres of early modernity. What all the essays share is a focus on literary forms that do not fit neatly in the classical model that had been first developed in the ancient Greek and Roman literature and then reinforced by Renaissance poetics. Thus, particular chapters of the volume discuss texts that, for various reasons, either eluded the poetics of the era completely or were introduced as novel creations, unknown to ancient authors. Some of the studies discuss genres that lacked any theoretical reflection that would go beyond an introduction that laid down the author's own rules and principles. Other studies analyze some modifications that Renaissance and Baroque authors made to genres that had been codified in Antiquity. Thus, the book concentrates on *elogia*, *stemmata*, and certain types of oration, psalms, sermons, romance, and even books of arms, *silvas*, or the commentary. Apart from them, it analyzes the ode in its new, modern form. Sometimes form of a text provides a starting point, and sometimes it is a text's amorphous structure that sparks reflection. Attempts at specifying generic frameworks and at defining certain types of speech can be found side by side with instances of generic ambiguity that renders it impossible to pinpoint a definite standard or model for a particular literary work. What unites this variety of topics and approaches, however, is the common goal to take a closer look at genre-related problems of old European literature and to show its richness and artfulness.

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