

## ETHICAL AND POLITICAL QUALITIES OF EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC IN ANCIENT GREECE

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**Słowa kluczowe:** retoryka epideiktyczna, argumentacja, wartości etyczne, dyskurs polityczny

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**Abstract:** Krystyna Tuszyńska. ETHICAL AND POLITICAL QUALITY OF EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC IN ANCIENT GREECE. "PORÓWNANIA" 17, 2015. Vol. XVII. P. 5-21. ISSN 1733-165X. Originating from the Greek source, a Latin definition of the orator is *vir bonus dicendi peritus* and rhetoric itself is *ars bene dicendi*. This particularly calls for an explanation of the words *bonus* and *bene*. *Bonus* has as much reference to the person of the speaker as it has to the competence in artistic persuasion. In my article I will concentrate on the meaning of *bene* and *bonus* from the point of view of the use of the language as a means of communication. The scope of the usage of speech is connected with the common wealth according to which public life and its political and ethical conditions are moulded. The sense of purpose on the other hand lies in the duty of the orator to persuade the audience, to make them believe they have been persuaded successfully. All this becomes possible thanks to the orator's use of invention and of artificial technique, and to him being perceived as a good man by the audience, where 'good' should be understood in both moral and aesthetic terms. Aristotle lays emphasis on three elements: (1) the technique in the arguments of the speech, (2) the *ethos* of the orator and (3) the *pathos* produced by the orator in the listeners. In this way Aristotle connects the art of persuasion and dialectics with ethical studies (1356 a 25). For the philosopher, the man is *zoon politikon*, and the art of rhetoric arises from the necessity of human agreement, the *consensus*. Because *ethos* is for Aristotle a vehicle for argumentation, the orator has to produce his *ethos* all the time during the speech. Aristotle di-

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vides rhetoric into three genres: deliberative, forensic and epideictic. In epideictic rhetoric the listener is only a spectator (*theoros*) and a judge (*krites*) of the orator's talent. In my article I would like to prove that epideictic rhetoric, considered a kind of show or theatrical performance, was also a vehicle for many ethical and political qualities. I am going to analyze four speeches of three Ancient orators: Gorgias, Isocrates and Dio of Prusa and ask questions about the nature of epideictic rhetoric, about its capacity and origin. In my opinion thorough research and a rethinking of the term 'epideictic genre' are needed.

**Abstrakt:** Krystyna Tuszyńska. ETYCZNE I POLITYCZNE WARTOŚCI RETORYKI EPIDEIKTYCZNEJ W STAROŻYTNEJ GRECJI. „PORÓWNANIA” 17, 2015. T. XVII. S. 5-21. ISSN 1733-165X. Zapożyczona z greki łacińska definicja mówcy brzmi: *Vir bonus dicendi peritus*, a samą retorykę określa się mianem *ars bene dicendi*. Terminy *bonus* i *bene* wymagają wyjaśnienia. *Bonus* (dobry, zdatny) odnosi się zarówno do osoby samego mówcy, co do jego znajomości arkanów artystycznej perswazji. Cel zaś występu retorycznego powiązany jest z pojęciem „wspólnego dobra”, które jest wyznacznikiem zarówno życia publicznego, co wartości politycznych i etycznych, uznawanych w danej społeczności. Obowiązkiem nałożonym na mówcę jest, zakończone sukcesem, przekonanie audytorium. Mówca realizuje ten cel dzięki swojej inwencji, za sprawą użytych technik artystycznych, wreszcie przez wytworzenie u słuchaczy przekonania, że jest „dobrym mężem”, przy czym epitet „dobry” należy rozumieć zarówno w sensie etycznym, co estetycznym. Arystoteles w *Retoryce* kładzie nacisk na trzy elementy współtworzące występ oratora: (1) technikę argumentacji, (2) *ethos* mówcy, (3) *pathos*, zespół uczuć, które mówca wzbudza w słuchaczach. Dzięki temu, Arystoteles łączy retorykę z jednej strony z dialektyką, z drugiej ze studiami w zakresie etyki (1356 a 25). W Arystotelesowskim podziale retoryki na doradcą, sądową i epideiktyczną w tej ostatniej słuchacz jest tylko widzem (*theoros*) oraz sędzią (*krites*) talentu mówcy. W artykule zamierzam dowieść, że retoryka epideiktyczna, oceniana jako rodzaj pokazu czy teatralnego występu, była w istocie nośnikiem wartości etycznych i politycznych. Poddaję analizie cztery mowy starożytnych retorów: Gorgiasza, Izokratesa i Diona z Prusy, a także stawiam pytanie o charakter retoryki epideiktycznej, jej pojemność jako gatunku oraz jej początki. Wszystkie powyższe zagadnienia wymagają, moim zdaniem, solidnych badań i reinterpretacji.

The definition of the orator popularized in Latin, but derived from Greek, is (in Latin): *Vir bonus dicendi peritus*, which means a good man efficient at speaking (Lausberg 39)<sup>2</sup>. The adjective *bonus* has as much reference to the person of the orator as to the art of rhetoric (*techne, ars*). The concept of rhetoric has always been connected with the theory of state and rhetoric itself as the art (*techne*) was born in the agora. In the origin of rhetoric the most important element is the democratic system in Athens. However, what is almost equally important is a series of trials in Sicily at the time of the subversion of tyranny in the fifth century BC.

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<sup>2</sup> This definition was created by Quintilian in his *Institutio oratoria* (II, 17, 37).

The very continuity of the 'master and pupil' tradition also played a very important part in the origin of rhetoric as art: Corax, the first rhetorician in Syracuse, very likely the author of the concept of rhetorical probability – *eikos*, had a pupil in the person of Tisias, who first proved that rhetoric was an art, *techne*, and as a *techne* could be taught and learned by others. Tisias may have composed a small rhetorical handbook illustrating such argumentation (*eikos*) and explaining how to present facts and proofs effectively in a simple standardized structure (Kennedy 498)<sup>3</sup>. His pupil, Gorgias, was a master of the theory of illusion (*apate*) as an inevitable and justified error of man's aesthetic activity (Tuszyńska 1989: 19-22). And Gorgias himself was a teacher of Athenian orator Isocrates whose importance in the theory of Greek prose is paramount. Isocrates' influence on Greek prose style was immense indeed, and although Demosthenes is the favourite model in the theory of rhetoric in later centuries, Isocrates' spirit hovers over the writers of the Second Sophistic, which is visible for example in the writings of Dio of Prusa. With Isocrates' the concept of a good and honest (these are synonymous terms for him) orator consists of two elements: one is an individual talent (*physis*) and the other is practice perfected through education (*askesis, epimeleia*).

Although the art of rhetoric in its origin has forensic roots (Corax, Tisias), with Gorgias it begins to transform into epideictic rhetoric. It is quite interesting that the two extant speeches by Gorgias – the *Encomium of Helen* and the *Defence of Palamedes* – were meant to be forensic speeches. However, since they deal with mythological figures they really are epideictic speeches. For Gorgias, that noble master of word and a lawgiver of epideictic rhetoric, *genos dikanikon* (forensic rhetoric) was a model, which only proves the point of view of Aristotle that man is *zoon politikon*, a social and political animal (Aristotle 1253 a 10). But what I would like to underline is the fact that it is not rhetoric that makes him *zoon politikon*, but, on the contrary, the origin of rhetoric is connected with the human need of interaction with others and pursuit of agreement, consensus. The main aim of rhetoric is to work out the common attitude towards public questions.

Rhetoric as the art, in a general sense, is the use of language in such a manner as to impress the hearers and influence them for or against a certain course of action. Rhetoric refers the matter to the language and through the language. Such is the meaning of *ars bene dicendi*, the art of suitable speaking. In this view the art of rhetoric is opposed to grammar whose main characteristic is correct speaking:

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<sup>3</sup> The structure evolved into the four usual parts of the classical forensic oration: *prooimion*, or introduction, aimed at securing the attention, interest and good will of the jury; *diegesis*, or narration, presenting the background and the facts in a clear and rapid summary; *pistis*, or proof of the contention of the speaker; and *epilogos*, or conclusion, in which the speech is summarized and often an attempt is made to arouse the emotions of the jury on behalf of the speaker.

grammar is *scientia recte dicendi*, the knowledge of correct speaking (Lausberg 29). Thus the feature of grammar is *recte*, and the feature of rhetoric is *bene*. The ramifications of the above are not to be overlooked. According to the above, correct speaking is opposed to effective speaking, speaking equipped with stylistic ornamentation. At points correct speaking is opposed to artificial speaking. Very often this opposition ('correct speaking' - 'artificial speaking') takes place thanks to rhetorical figures and tropes. The art of rhetoric gives to a speaker many possibilities to present his opinions thanks to his skill.

I would like now to turn my attention to the adverb *bene*, which will be considered from the point of view of a speech and its purpose. The scope of the use of the art of persuasion refers to public questions or citizen matters, *politika zemata, questiones civiles* (Lausberg 39, 51)<sup>4</sup>. The scope of the speech is in this way connected to common good and public life and its political and ethical conditions are created in accordance with it.

As was said above, it is the duty imposed on the orator to impress the hearers and to produce in their soul a will "to be persuaded". In the very word *bene* there are two aspects: a technical and an ethical one. To speak *bene* means to speak with flourish and to be right. There are three aims of rhetorical presentation: (1) *docere* - to teach, (2) *movere* - to move, (3) *delectare* - to please. The ethical aspect of the orator's performance has its roots in Plato's conception of rhetoric presented in his two dialogues, the earlier one, the *Gorgias* and the later one, the *Phaedrus*. The differences between Plato's treatment of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* and in the *Gorgias* are quite obvious<sup>5</sup>: the latter deals chiefly with various definitions of rhetoric and its nature as expounded by its professors; the former is a philosophical *theory* of rhetoric as it ought to be if it is to justify its claim to be considered a true art. But the most important point is that the foundation of true rhetoric is psychology, the science of the mind (soul, *psyche*), of every individual hearer. The definition of rhetoric accepted here by Plato, i.e. 'winning men's mind by words' (*psychagogia dia logon*) is contrasted with the earlier vague definition attributed to Corax - 'the artificer of persuasion' (*peithous demiourgos*). In fact, Plato's conception of rhetoric has not been accepted in the rhetorical practice, but two elements are very important in the development of rhetoric as an art: the knowledge of psychology of the hearer and the honesty of the orator who conforms to the rules of 'fair play'.

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<sup>4</sup> Sulpicius Victor (I, 17) quoted by Lausberg in par.48: *Civilis quaestio est quae nullius artis propria in communi omnium opinione versatur...; civilem quaestionem ...velut materiam arti suae subiectam habet ipsa rhetorica.*

<sup>5</sup> I have written about Plato's conception of rhetoric in the book *Plato and rhetoric: From a critique to a model*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, 1996.

The next step in the theory of rhetoric belongs to Aristotle. In view of this fact, the three (and in particular the first two) books of Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* have been described as 'an expanded *Phaedrus*'<sup>6</sup>. The first book deals with the means of persuasion, the logical proofs, based upon dialectic and the second one deals with psychological or ethical proofs, based upon the knowledge of human emotions and their causes, and of different types of human character. The question of style and arrangement (which is only mentioned in *Phaedrus* in reference to the superiority of oral over written instruction) is treated, but less fully, in the third book. According to Rhys Roberts, Aristotle was going to prove that Plato had been wrong in the *Gorgias* when describing rhetoric contemporary to him as 'an art of cooking in human souls', but, on the other hand, he was right in the *Phaedrus* when he presented the art of rhetoric based upon the science of reasoning and the knowledge of psychology (Roberts 32).

The very conception of Aristotle was a division of rhetoric as a whole into three kinds, corresponding to the three kinds of hearers; for the hearer must be either a judge of the future or a judge of the past or a mere spectator (critic) of the orator's skill and the positive or negative value of the subject of rhetoric performance. Hence the three kinds of rhetoric are: deliberative, forensic and epideictic (Aristotle 1358a 22-1358 b 3). The following conclusion may be surprising, but it is conformable to the whole method of explaining used by Aristotle as a philosopher: the aim, *telos*, is the main criterion of nature's working. Because the orator speaks to the hearer thus the hearer is the main aim of every speech. He is the most important criterion. The business of the deliberative kind of rhetoric is to exhort or dissuade, its time is future, its end the expedient or the harmful. In the nature of forensic rhetoric it is to accuse or defend, its time is past, its end the just or the unjust. Epideictic rhetoric praises or blames, its time is present (sometimes may be future or past, according to the means of argumentation), its end the noble or the disgraceful.

What I find interesting in epideictic rhetoric is the hearer being a critical spectator, *theoros*, of the orator's skillful qualities presented in the speech - praise or censure, the objects of which are the noble and the disgraceful, virtue or vice. We should remember that in one Greek word *epideixis* there are two aspects: one is, of course, the skill of an orator, his rhetorical talent, but on the other hand, which I would like to underline, a more important one is the moral value of the object which is presented. *Epideixis* is making a show of ethical qualities concerning the person, thing or idea being presented. It is to put before the eyes of the general public a much-desired value. The Romans understood the Greek term *epideiktikon*

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<sup>6</sup> See: J. H. Freese's Introduction to Aristotle *The Art of Rhetoric*. An English translation by John Henry Freese. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. P. XXV.

quite well and translated *genos epideiktikon* as *genus demonstrativum*, because on the word *demonstrativum* there is included a demonstration, a manifestation of the feelings and opinions of the orator<sup>7</sup>.

The division into the three kinds of rhetoric initiated in Aristotle's theory is not as invariable as one could understand it to be. In epideictic rhetoric we can very often find ethical and political qualities which made particular speeches substantially more serious than the orator's trivial performance. It seems to be clear in the light of what was said about the origin of rhetoric and about the meaning of the term *epideixis*.

In my opinion epideictic rhetoric has intense ethical and political qualities, which I would like to illustrate with four examples of epideictic rhetoric: the *Defence of Palamedes* by sophist Gorgias from the fifth century BC, the *Encomium of Helen* and *Euagoras* by Athenian orator Isocrates from the fourth century BC and the second *Oration on Kingship* by Dio of Prusa from the second century AD. The latter represents the so called Second Sophistic. All of them are examples of Greek rhetoric, but of course, we can find similar examples in Roman rhetoric too<sup>8</sup>. I would also like to ask about the limits of rhetorical genres and about the meaning of the vague term 'epideictic rhetoric'.

The sophist Gorgias in the field of epideictic rhetoric was, as was said before, a lawgiver. He is regarded as a creator of artificial Greek prose. His writings were distinguished by flowery ornamentation, poetical coloring, unusual phraseology and many new rhetorical figures, for the employment of which the contemptuous term "to *gorgiaze*" was invented (Turasiewicz LXVI). "To *gorgiaze*" has become the synonym of "to speak artificially". Gorgias was not only a brilliant speaker and an artist of the word, but first of all he believed deeply in the power of words. The word was for him *dynastes megas*, 'the great powerful ruler'. His *Encomium of Helen* was called 'an essay on nature and power of *logos* (Versényi 44). *Peitho*, the Persuasion, is a powerful goddess to Gorgias. Words have the same power in relation to the human soul as medicaments to the human body. A well-chosen word creates an illusion, hence Gorgias is known as the author of the illusionistic theory of art<sup>9</sup>, the theory which is presented in his *Encomium of Helen*. I would like to concentrate my attention however on the second extant oration by Gorgias, his *Defence of Pala-*

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<sup>7</sup> There is no technical problem in translating the Greek term *epideiktikon* into English as *epideictic* or into Latin as *demonstrativum*, but in Polish the term *popisowy* is a crude mistranslation, because it suggests only artistic skills and the aim of an orator to give pleasure to the audience. For polemic with this Polish term see: J. Ziomek, *Retoryka opisowa*. Wrocław: Ossolineum 2000. P. 32.

<sup>8</sup> I can give the example of Cicero's speech *Pro Archia Poeta* which is a forensic speech, but at the same time it is an epideictic speech, and a praise of the all values called in Latin *humanitas*, in Greek *paideia*. This term is impossible to translate into modern languages with one word only: it encompasses education, culture, knowledge, and ethic.

<sup>9</sup> I have written about Gorgias' *APATE* in the above-mentioned article.

*medes*. The speech is an example of mutual penetration of forensic and epideictic rhetoric. It belongs to epideictic rhetoric because it deals with a hero of the Trojan War, Palamedes. Yet this oration has a character of defense in which there are used many topics characteristic of Athenian jurisdiction. The most important topics put in the *Defence of Palamedes* are connected to a moral habit, *ethos*, of the speaker, which *ethos* the orator expresses with the use of appropriate language and well-chosen proof. In his defense Palamedes presents his morals beyond reproach, illustrating the speech with facts which testify in his favour to human beings. The topic was known in Athenian jurisdiction as 'the topic of the past life', *paroichomenos bios*. In the next step Palamedes uses the topic 'of noble birth', *eugeneia*. *Eugeneia* implies noble deeds and merits. Palamedes also recalls the topic of pity (*eleos*) which appeals to the emotions. This topic was criticized by Aristotle due to being based particularly on emotions which are irrelevant and have only the effect of biasing the judge and at the same time neglecting the proof which for Aristotle is the body of rhetoric argumentation (Aristotle 1354 a 15). But Palamedes rejects the topic of pity, because it is proper to a mob and not to the most famous and important leaders among the Greeks, *tous protous ton proton Ellenas Ellenon*. The main aim of this epideictic speech is formulated at the beginning of Palamedes' speech. A hero – as he says – defends his good opinion, his fame, *time*, but not his life, because death is given to everybody, without exception. The most important feature is how somebody dies – held in high regard or charged with a crime. Palamedes uses the apagogic method in his speech which is based on judging the falseness of reasons from the falseness of consequences<sup>10</sup>. Another method used by Palamedes is the logical method *reductio ad absurdum*. The conduct of Palamedes' defense lies in two possibilities – a desire or an opportunity. Palamedes proves that even if an opportunity to betray his country arose, he would not take it, nor, if he desired to betray his country, would an opportunity be given to him. In this way Palamedes excludes the two motivations of all human actions: desire and opportunity.

The social and forensic argumentation is based on two elements: *ethos* and *pathos*, which means that the orator must consider not only how to convince or persuade, but also how to create a certain impression of himself, and to put the judge into a certain frame of mind. Aristotle considers three qualities necessary to enable the speaker to convince the audience of his trustworthiness: practical wisdom (*phronesis*), virtue (*arete*) and goodwill (*eunoia*) (Aristotle 1378a 5). As we can see, Palamedes fulfills these duties: he proves his practical wisdom with the topic of the past life, his virtue with the topic of noble birth, which implies noble deeds and merits. His wisdom is proven with the knowledge of two kinds of death – dying when being held in high esteem dying charged with a crime. The third feature of

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<sup>10</sup> I analyze this method in the book *Philosophy in the Rhetoric of Gorgias of Leontinoi*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, 1987. P. 97-103.

a good speaker, good will, is showed by Palamedes by rejecting the topic of pity. Instead he introduces *pathos*, which means putting the judge into a certain frame of mind, in the last words of the epilogue of speech when he refers to the judges as 'the last link of justice' created to give verdict (par. 36). The judges will be responsible for the wrong verdict, for the death of an innocent man.

The *Defence of Palamedes* is a fictional speech. It belongs to the genre of epideictic rhetoric, but the kind of argumentation used by Palamedes makes this speech something more significant than a trivial sophistical performance<sup>11</sup>.

The second composition which I would like to analyze is Isocrates' *Encomium of Helen*. Similarly to Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen*, Isocrates' *Encomium* is an epideictic speech. Isocrates' oration was written as an answer to Gorgias who, according to tradition, was a teacher of Isocrates. Isocrates wrote this speech in 386 BC, but because of his weak voice he never delivered it. Both speeches are very interesting from three points of view: both works deal with the same subject, which allows comparison of the rhetorical skill of the two authors; the earlier one (by Gorgias) is mentioned in the later one (by Isocrates) and is discussed there in terms of 'constructive criticism'; both orations are extremely interesting and have already been discussed from the point of view of philosophical, political, stylistic etc. questions<sup>12</sup>. The criticism presented by the Athenian orator deals with the assumptions of two rhetorical kinds – Gorgias' composition is not an encomium but a defense of Helen's conduct (Isocrates, *Helen* par. 14), whereas 'the composition of defense does not draw upon the same topics as the encomium, nor indeed does it deal with actions of the same kind, but quite the contrary' (Isocrates, *Helen* par.15). Isocrates, without doubt, wants to give a model declamation, rivaling the work of the Sicilian sophist. He agrees that the choice of Helen as a heroine of the oration is correct, because Helen distinguished herself by origin (*genos*), beauty (*kallós*) and fame (*doksa*). At this point we could ask what the true reason for writing this speech is (the speech by Isocrates)?

What is interesting in this composition? Isocrates himself in the *Letter to Jason's Children* says that he was never interested in epideictic oratory or in competing in this genre of rhetoric (Isocrates 434). But his *Encomium of Helen* was written, as was

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<sup>11</sup> 'Trivial sophistic performance' I am using in the sense of a sophistical game with an audience (Greek term *paignton*, very difficult to translate into English, used by Gorgias in his *Encomium of Helen*, par.21) I would like to underline that sophistic production has more significant value than an empty performance whose aim is only to give pleasure to the audience (*delectare*).

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion see: G. Kennedy. 'Isocrates' *Encomium of Helen*: a Panhellenic Document'. *TAPA LXXXIX*, (1958). P. 77-83; G. Heilbrunn. 'The Composition of Isocrates' *Helen*', *TAPA CVII* (1977). P. 147-159; J. de Romilly, 'Gorgias et le pouvoir de la poésie'. *Journal of Hellenic Studies XCIII* (1973). P.155-162; from Polish scholars see: R. Turasiewicz, 'Sofista Gorgiasz w kręgu wielkomocarstwowej polityki Aten'. *Meander XXV* (1970). P. 305-330; K. Tuszyńska-Maciejewska, 'Gorgias' and Isocrates' different Encomia of Helen'. *Eos LXXV* (1987). P. 279-289.

said before, as an answer to Gorgias' speech. Isocrates' intention is to correct Gorgias' fault. Isocrates as an orator was interested in speeches which deal with political, social and ethical matters, in Greek *politika zemata*, in Latin *questiones civiles*. He did write an epideictic speech nevertheless. The question is: who is really praised in Isocrates' composition? At first the orator refers to an unknown episode from the life of Helen of Troy: Athenian hero Theseus had eloped with Helen when she was a young girl, but gave her back to her brothers as a virgin. Praising the beauty of Helen, Isocrates praises Theseus who laid the foundations for the greatness of Athens. Isocrates equalized the famous deeds of Heracles with those made by Theseus. Of course, the praise of the Athenian hero was very important as voiced by a well-known Athenian orator. Theseus revealed many of his virtues, such as pity toward the gods (*eusebeia*), prudence (*sophrosyne*), justice (*dikaioisyne*), courage (*andreia*) and especially the manner in which he governed the city (*ten polin dikoesen*). Isocrates describes in the successive paragraphs (23-37) the 'absolute prowess' (*panteles arete*) of Theseus. He made Athens a city-state so great that even up to the present day it is the greatest state in Greece, as Isocrates says (par. 35). *When Theseus had established a common fatherland and had set free minds of his fellow-citizens, he instituted for them on equal terms that rivalry of theirs distinction based on merit* – in these words Isocrates gives an account of laying down the foundations of democracy in Athens (Isocrates 81). All the dangers of the city he made his own and bestowed the benefits upon the common people. His clemency may be seen in the remaining Athenian institutions. In fact Isocrates praised Athens as an example to imitate for other city-states. The praise of Theseus takes fifteen paragraphs of the speech and it is a rhetorical figure known as *paraleipsis*, in Latin *praeteritio*, which means seeming disregard whose aim is to absorb the attention of the audience (Lausberg 477). And the case of Theseus gives to Isocrates an opportunity to praise the Athenian political system and the virtues particularly valuable to the Athenian *polis*. Isocrates' praise of Athens bears some resemblance to that of Thucydides' in his *Peloponnesian War*. In the composition by Isocrates however we can find some features more proper to deliberative rhetoric, particularly in his recalling virtues important for public life. As we know, Isocrates was a great educator of the young generation and spent his life teaching rhetoric as an art which could make young people better citizens and statesmen<sup>13</sup>. Isocrates' elevation of

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<sup>13</sup> Isocrates' long life bridges the age of Pericles and that of Philip of Macedon. He was a major educator, he claimed to be a philosopher. Both, he and Plato, claimed to teach philosophy and to expound 'ideas', both shared a reference to Socrates and a conviction that education was essential to a virtuous society. These similarities however only serve to sharpen their differences as leaders of the two major academic institutions of Athens in the decades after 390 BC. Although Isocrates mentions his 'philosophy' and his school in almost all his works, his educational programme is described at greater length only in his two works: in the early fragmentary treatise *Against the sophists* and in his later apology, the *Antidosis*.

rhetoric into general education for the leaders of society was permanently influential. It reverberates in Cicero's *De oratore* and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* and the whole concept of later classical education (Kennedy 512). Isocrates himself claimed to be philosopher and shared with Plato a conviction that education was essential to a virtuous society. It is a paradox that while Isocrates has since antiquity been canonized in the history of rhetoric, he himself never used the word *rhetorike*<sup>14</sup>, and instead constantly refers to his own activity as *philosophia* (Livingstone 15). What making him an epideictic orator is that he is the prime example of a writer of 'written' discourses, of carefully elaborated and polished speeches intended to be circulated in written form or to be read aloud to small groups (Kennedy 510). These 'epideictic' discourses have significant political contents and are vehicle of philosophical, political and social views of the writer<sup>15</sup>.

The second element of the *Encomium of Helen* which goes beyond the limits of epideictic rhetoric is the thesis of Isocrates that Helen, being the most beautiful woman in the world, became the reason for the Trojan War. It was the first war in which all the Greeks fought together in defense of the common good. The whole Greek world fought against barbarians, against Asia – an Eastern enemy of the European civilization. We should underline the fact that a union of all Greek cities in a war against the East was the main interest and a political dream of Isocrates. Isocrates devoted his whole long life to the very idea: his goal was to find a means to form such a union and appoint its leader. As a precondition for that, Isocrates stresses the unity of Greek culture. Naturally, his first choice for a leader of the union were Athens, but soon he moved on to other cities of the Greek world such as Sparta with its king Archidamus, Syracuse with its tyrant Dionysius, the cities of Cyprus and their rulers, the Thessalian tyrants and at the very last he chose the Macedonian king, Philip (Kennedy 513). Thus, in his *Encomium of Helen* Isocrates praises not so much Helen as the idea of a union of the Greek cities against the Eastern enemy. Again, to this idea were devoted all the works of Isocrates and the noblest expression of the praise of Hellenism is to be found in the *Panegyricus*:

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<sup>14</sup> Isocrates uses the noun *rhetoreia* in the meaning of 'skill in public speaking' (*Against Sophists* par. 21) and the adjective *rhetorikos* in the meaning 'skilled in public speaking' (*Nicoles* par.8). Niall Livingstone is of the opinion that in each case the reference is clearly to a faculty rather than to a discipline or art. Compare: N. Livingstone. 'Writing Politics: Isocrates' Rhetoric of Philosophy'. *Rhetorica* 25, 1 (2007). P. 15 (note 1).

<sup>15</sup> Of course, we should remember that these discourses although had political and ethical values were also 'demonstrations' of Isocrates' literary and rhetorical skill and were models for his students to imitate. According to G. Kennedy, Isocrates this way follows the sophists who combined an interest in **what** they were saying with a demonstration of **how** to say it. See: G. Kennedy. 'Oratory'. *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*. Part 1: *Greek Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. P. 510.

Our city has so surpassed the rest of mankind in thought and speech that her pupils have become the teachers of others, she has made the name of the Hellenes seem no longer that of a race, but of an intelligence, and those are called Hellenes who share our culture rather than those who share our blood (Paneg. 50) (quotation from: Kennedy 513).

To Isocrates the greatest opponent of Hellenism was the Persian king. The major exposition of Isocrates' political thought began around the year 380 with *Panegyricus*, calling for Athens and Sparta to cooperate, under Athenian hegemony, in a common Pan-Hellenic programme. Though the theme was a traditional one in epideictic oratory, Isocrates applies it to the specific circumstances of his time and his ideas may have had in fact some influence. The ideas appear in the exhortations *To Demonicus*<sup>16</sup> and *To Nicocles* on the duties of the monarch and *Nicocles or the Cyprians* on the duty of citizens. All of them are called the *Cyprian Orations* and they result from Isocrates' associations with the island of Cyprus. The first of the *Cyprian Orations* is the *Euagoras* devoted to the memory of the late king of Cyprian Salamis, Euagoras. The *Euagoras* is an idealization of monarchy. The speech presents the origin (*genos*), the beauty (*kallos*) and the virtue (*arete*) of the king who died in 374 BC and was succeeded by his son Nicocles. All the four *Cyprian Orations* are an example of exhortative literature. They are especially interesting in three questions: (1) man in his relation to god, (2) man in his relation to another man, (3) man in relation to himself – the harmonious development of his character. We should underline that the *Euagoras* is in Greek literature the first praise of a historical person and at the same time is a precursor of epideictic genre called royal speech, *basilikos logos*. Although the *Euagoras* is a typical epideictic speech, its context is very important from the point of view of Isocrates' educational programme. The orator praised the Cyprian monarch, a historical person of contemporary times, because he was looking for an example of an ideal king – a leader who would be able to unite all Greek city-states against the Persian king. Isocrates taught many sons of important Greek political figures and was going to educate future statesmen and leaders of the Greek world. Nicocles himself was a son of a king. This rhetorical eulogy was composed for a festival held by Nicocles in memory of his father, and Isocrates himself had known Euagoras and admired him. Indeed, there is much exaggeration in the delineation of the character of the hero. However, such an embellishment was always present in eulogies. In consequence, Isocrates relates only the successes of Euagoras and omits all mention of the reverse of the king<sup>17</sup>. The best traits of Euagoras' character were useful to the orator to describe a model of a king<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> The authenticity of this oration has been challenged. Nevertheless *To Demonicus* is written in the spirit of the educational and political model of Isocrates.

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle in the *Politics* (1311 b) states that Euagoras was murdered, but Isocrates is silent as to the manner of the death of his hero.

<sup>18</sup> The *Euagoras* is mentioned by Menander Rhetor in one of his two treatises *On epideictic oratory* as a first example of rhetorical genre called *basilikos logos*, a royal speech. We used to call the author of

The last piece which I would like to present here is the second *Oration on Kingship* by Dio of Prusa, a Greek moral writer, a sophist and a philosopher of the Second Sophistic. Dio was a man of all-round excellence who defied categorization (Philostratus 1.7.487). Dio certainly had training in rhetoric, although we do not know who taught him, and several of his works show that he proceeded to public performance of the sort which earned him the name of a sophist. In Rome, Dio also learnt Stoicism from Musonius in sixties of the first century AD. Then, expelled by the emperor Domitian, he led a life of a Cynic. The philosophy gave body to Dio's rhetoric, and the most substantial are his four works *On Kingship*, at least two of which were intended for delivery to the emperor Trajan on Dio's ambassadorial visits to Rome in the years of his intense political activity in Prusa. They analyze imperial virtues in various literary forms and tones. In this paper Dio's second *Oration on Kingship* is of particular interest to me.

The second *Oration on Kingship* represents epideictic oratory known as *logos basilikos*, a royal speech. Dio is famous because of his freedom of word, Greek *parrhesia*<sup>19</sup>, but in this speech Dio was interested in something more important than a mere praise of the Roman emperor whose counselor, *symbolos*, Dio was going to become. In the second *Oration on Kingship* Dio uses a literary form close to epideictic, but possessing an advisory feature called the 'mirror of a ruler' which was popular in the Byzantine times since it gave examples and stimulated to make choices (Cichocka 73-74). In the speech mentioned here the orator used a comparison of a good king to a good bull, one that is obedient to its herdsmen. This comparison is taken from Homer's *Iliad* 2, 480-483, where Agamemnon sets the army in array for the first time. This comparison was chosen by Homer in order to praise the hero's strength and with a desire to demonstrate it. The bull was used by the poet to portray a king who had authority over his subjects. It is his desire to always save the dependent multitude from dangers and to stay obedient to his herdsmen; this is the duty of a ruler who is a real king. This bull never makes war against man, but accepts the dominion of his superiors. Like a bull accepts the dominion of his herdsmen, a good king accepts the dominion of gods, who are his superiors. The herdsmen deal with the bull and leave him in charge till extreme old age, even after he becomes weak and worn out. But sometimes there emerges a bull which is savage and hard to handle, unlike the noble bull, and it rules in violation of the laws of nature and treats his own herd with contempt and brings it

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two treatises a common name Menander, but in fact the author is unknown and probably there were two different authors of *On epideictic oratory* at the end of the second century AD or at the beginning of the fourth century AD.

<sup>19</sup> Dio very often in his speeches raises the issue of *parrhesia*, a freedom of word, e.g. in *Orations on Kingship*. I analyze this motive in my book *Dyskurs Diona z Prusy w Mowach o królestwie. Mariaż retoryki z filozofią*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, 2013.

to the ruin. Thus, when it is necessary, the good bull fights for his herd and protects the multitude of his subjects from a new ambitious bull, because he wants his herd to appear superior and also wants his subjects to be recognized as such.

At this point we have to stop for a moment and look at the political situation in the Roman Empire at the time when Dio's work was being composed. The emperor Trajan was the good bull who was ready to fight for his people when a new bull appeared on the stage of history, powerful and intimidating to the wellbeing of the Roman Empire. The one who is meant here as the new bull is the brave Dacian king, Decebal (Jaczynowska 246). And another bad one, the third bull, who had brought his own herd to a ruin, was the emperor Domitian, an antecedent of the emperor Nerva (Trajan's adoptive father), a man responsible for a shameful peace with the king Decebal. The reign of Domitian was condemned for *damnatio memoriae*, 'condemnation of memory'<sup>20</sup>, and he himself was murdered in consequence of a political plot to reorganize matters of the Empire (Whitmarsh 1998: 201).

The above comparison is a means of amplification, helpful in presenting Dio's thesis. From the philosophical point of view Dio was a Stoic and as a Stoic he was a diehard royalist<sup>21</sup>. But in this speech he gives a warning to the emperor Trajan. The second *Oration on Kingship* gives a choice to Trajan: to be a good bull, to rule for common good and with pity or to be eliminated for being a bad and savage bull. Dio speaks in dead earnest, the discourse becomes serious. Undoubtedly, we are dealing here with something more important than a mere epideictic performance. We have to agree with an opinion of Craig A. Gibson (Gibson 1) that Ancient Greek compositional instructions as evidenced in Greek handbooks on the *progymnasmata* included a strong moral component. The same situation we can notice in the Roman art of rhetoric: No one in ancient Greece and Roman Empire would have doubted the claim that literary-rhetorical education was intended to make the student better in both an intellectual and **moral sense**. Dio was a well-educated orator, born into a wealthy family in Prusa (in the province of Bithynia, which covered north-western Asia minor), and he seems to have inherited Roman citizenship from both his father and mother). He was, thus, firmly entrenched in the elite and his orations are results of an immersive education available only to the members of his class (Whitmarsh 2008: 156). As a public speaker Dio welltravelled, famous and successful, moving in the highest echelons of

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<sup>20</sup> *Damnatio memoriae* is the Latin phrase literally meaning 'condemnation of memory' in the sense of a judgment that a person must not be remembered. It was a form of dishonor that could be passed by the Roman Senate upon traitors or others who brought discredit to the Roman State. In Ancient Rome, the practice of *damnatio memoriae* was a condemnation of Roman elites and emperors after their deaths. If the Senate or later emperor did not like the acts of an individual, they could have his property seized, his name erased and his statues reworked.

<sup>21</sup> I try to prove it in my above-mentioned book from 2013.

Roman power<sup>22</sup>. His career can be viewed as a barometer of the changing temper of the imperial household: prospering under honest Vespasian, exiled under tyrannical Domitian, recalled under noble but aged Nerva, embraced by the righteous Trajan, Dio desired to play a part in the political and social life on Roman Empire.

The four speeches presented above: Gorgias' *Defence of Palamedes*, Isocrates' *Encomium of Helen* and his *Euagoras*, and Dio's second *Oration on Kingship*, prove that a skillful orator can overcome rigid principles of Aristotle's division in the art of rhetoric. A clever orator can introduce ethical and political qualities to epideictic oratory. In the case of the *Defence of Palamedes* it is the importance of good fame and death in glory. In the case of the *Encomium of Helen* these qualities are the background of democracy and a union of all Greek city-states against the Eastern enemy. In *Euagoras* there is presented a model leader of the Pan-Hellenic world. In the case of the second *Oration on Kingship* the orator presents the consequences of wrong choices made by the ruler of the empire. As we can see, it is possible for a skillful orator to use the epideictic genre for ethical and political qualities, and the limit of Aristotle's genres there is not so much rigid as it is described by the philosopher. The capacity of the epideictic genre is great and only the speaker decides how to use it.

My last question is about the term of 'epideictic rhetoric'. To describe epideictic rhetoric only in terms of 'encomium' or 'blame', to see in it merely flowery ornamentation, poetical colouring and unusual phraseology seems to me to be unsatisfactory. It is unquestionable that this type of rhetoric was born in the agora, both in its deliberative and forensic genre. One of the most popular terms in rhetorical education was the Greek word *melete*<sup>23</sup>, meaning 'pattern, practice'. This term was reserved to (1) a reproduction of the forensic or the deliberative speech and to (2) finished rhetorical composition as a whole (Russell 10). Along the lines of this meaning, epideictic rhetoric was not described as the *melete* for students. The first theoretician who applied the *melete* to epideictic speeches was already mentioned Menander Rhetor in his treatise *On epideictic oratory*: "The demonstration of public speeches composed by the people known as sophists I regard as practice for real cases, not as the true epideictic" (331.16) (quotation from: Russell 10). The term 'sophists' had been employed long before to designate Gorgias and other classical masters of verbal wizardry, and in philosophical circles it had acquired uncomplicated connotations that called attention to the ancient rivalry between philosophers, who sought the truth, and rhetoricians, who could make anything

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<sup>22</sup> Tim Whitmarsh follows J.L. Moles' article "The career and conversion of Dio Chrysostom". *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 98. P. 79-100.

<sup>23</sup> From the verb *meletan*, 'to take part', 'to deliver a speech', 'rehearse'.

sound like the truth. The sophists of the Roman Empire, belonging to the so called Second Sophistic, were a product of a long unbroken tradition. Their performances were crowded with admirers, and their schools were attended by the intellectual elite of the Greek world. These showmen brought new vitality to the myths and history of the Greek past (Bowersock 655).

Systematical education in the field of rhetoric was born in the late fifth century BC, when there already existed a tradition to compose speeches in various literary genres. The teachers who developed their rhetorical technique were not only dependent on practice in courts or the assembly, but they could take their motives and subjects from epic poetry, from drama and from history. They were, of course, under the influence of democratic institutions of Athens and her social and political life, but they could make their teaching more amusing and less controversial (Russell 16). Sophists' interest in Greek tragedy is obvious, e.g. Gorgias formulated the definition of tragedy and was interested in the drama of Aeschylus (Rosenmayer 225)<sup>24</sup>. Sophists like Gorgias and Prodicus took their motives from myths: Gorgias borrowed from mythology the figure of Helen of Troy and Palamedes to use in his epideictic speeches and Prodicus composed an epideictic speech on the Choice of Heracles, by which one Xenophon was greatly impressed (Xenophon. *Memorabilia* II, 1.21-34). We have to underline that in these compositions heroes were actuated by the influence of social reality of the Greek *polis* (city-state). In my opinion 'sophistical performance' more research in this field is necessary: on the one hand we should take into consideration an association between 'theatrical performance' and 'sophistical performance', on the other hand we should seek connection between the reality of city-state life present in the suggestiveness of sophistic literary composition and the world of epic and drama were nursed by Greek mythology. The sophists created a new literary genre: epideictic rhetoric thanks to linking theatrical elements with social and political discourse which had been born in the agora and flourished in deliberative and forensic rhetoric. Sophists were deprived of civil laws, so they could not hold magistrates, could not deliver speeches in the Assembly or the Council, they could not represent a litigant in the court. Thus, their only choice could be epideictic rhetoric, but their interests were concentrated on the social and political life of the Greek city-state. We know sophists to have been teachers of political virtue, *arete*, writers interested in the law of nature, in the theory of language, in the controversy *nomos – physis*, in the theory of society, and many other problems discussed at the time of the development of democratic institutions in Athens. Their quite distinct type of performance was the *epideixis* or public display lecture. The sophist Hippias gave

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<sup>24</sup> Also the sophist Antiphon wrote tragedies before his rhetorical career began (source: John Poulakos, *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece*. University of South Carolina Press, 1995. P. 46.)

such performances regularly at the Pan-Hellenic games at Olympia. Gorgias offered to speak on any subject whatever in the theatre at Athens, and he spoke also at Olympia and at the Pythian games at Delphi. Occasionally, both Hippias and Gorgias assumed the purple robes of the rhapsodist, as though to emphasize the fact that they belonged to the same tradition that the poets of earlier days had belonged to and that both groups performed the same function (Kerferd 29)<sup>25</sup>. And a poet in the past played the part of a counselor in Greek society. Sophists desired to be of great importance in Greek society too and this function was their main interest. In epideictic rhetoric, according to Aristotle, the hearer is a spectator, *theoros*, but it does not mean that the contest of this type of production had to be insignificant or trivial.

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<sup>25</sup> A poet since Homer's time has been in Greek society a fountain-head of wisdom and expert on such diverse matters as medicine, military affairs and popular morality.

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