

# Rhetoric and Politics



Rhetoric and Politics:  
Central/Eastern European Perspectives

Edited by

Maria Załęska

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations .....	vii
List of Tables .....	viii
Chapter One .....	1
Rhetoric and Politics: Mapping the Interrelations Maria Załęska	
<b>Part I: <i>Ethos</i> and Self-presentation of the Politicians</b>	
Chapter Two .....	20
Rhetorical Patterns of Constructing the Politician's <i>Ethos</i> Maria Załęska	
Chapter Three .....	51
Using Forms of Address as a Rhetorical Means of Constructing the <i>Ethos</i> of the Politician in the Polish Political Media Discourse Krystyna Wróblewska-Pawlak and Monika Kostro	
Chapter Four .....	66
Rhetorical Value of Temporal Categories in the Construction of Political Identities Agnieszka Kampka	
<b>Part II: <i>Pathos</i> and Other Emotive Means in Politics</b>	
Chapter Five .....	86
What <i>France</i> and <i>La République</i> Stand For in Charles de Gaulle's Speeches Alina Ganea, Anca Gâță	
Chapter Six .....	107
Emotions as a Rhetorical Tool in Political Discourse Georgeta Cislaru	

Chapter Seven.....	127
Rhetorical Codes of Social Realism: Words and Images in Bolesław Bierut's 'Six-years Warsaw's Reconstruction Plan'	
Agnieszka Kuś	
<b>Part III: Not Only Logos: Contextualised Argumentation in Politics</b>	
Chapter Eight.....	148
Women Persuading Women: The Rhetoric of the Polish Women's Party	
Barbara Sobczak	
Chapter Nine.....	173
"Winkelried of Nations" or a "Trojan donkey"? Rhetorical Justification for Poland's Military Mission in the War on Terror	
Anna Bendrat	
Chapter Ten .....	193
The Rhetoric of Great Powers	
Iwona Krzyżanowska-Skowronek	
<b>Part IV: (Ir)rationality in the Political Conflicts</b>	
Chapter Eleven .....	212
Rhetoric of Perspicuousness in Solving a Difference of Opinion	
Gabriela Scripnic, Anca Gâță	
Chapter Twelve .....	227
Attack as a Self-presentation Strategy: The Rhetoric of Law and Justice Party	
Oliwia Tarasewicz-Gryt	
Chapter Thirteen.....	244
Eristic in Politics: The Case of Polish 2007' Debates	
Jan Miklas-Frankowski	
Chapter Fourteen .....	264
Format from the Rhetorical Perspective: Principles of the Polish Pre-electoral TV Debates in 1995-2010	
Agnieszka Budzyńska-Daca	
Contributors.....	283
Index.....	287

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1. Emotional appraisal
- Fig. 2. Portrait of Bierut (Bierut 1951: 7)
- Fig. 3. Conference of the United Polish Workers' Party [*PZPR*] (Bierut 1951: 9)
- Fig. 4. People returning to Warsaw after the World War II (Bierut 1951: 19)
- Fig. 5. Every day life in the destroyed city (Bierut 1951: 61)
- Fig. 6. Increase in Warsaw's population (Bierut 1951: 73)
- Fig. 7. Public transport before/after (Bierut 1951: 98)
- Fig. 8. Glassblowers and their products (Bierut 1951: 146)
- Fig. 9. Electoral poster of the Women's Party
- Fig. 10. Polish public opinion on military action in Iraq. Public Opinion Research Center, June 2003
- Fig. 11. Polish public opinion on participation of Polish troops in Iraq. Public Opinion Research Center, June 2003
- Fig. 12. Polish public opinion on the global role of the United States. Public Opinion Research Center, November 2004

## LIST OF TABLES

- Table 1. A framework for the analysis of *ethos*
- Table 2. Rhetorical patterns of the creation of *ethos*
- Table 3. Emotional expression
- Table 4. Evaluation
- Table 5. Insults
- Table 6. Fear vs. anger oriented marks
- Table 7. Consequences of the debate's natural order rejection

## CHAPTER ONE

# RHETORIC AND POLITICS: MAPPING THE INTERRELATIONS

MARIA ZAŁĘSKA

### Introduction

Rhetoric *and* politics or rhetoric *in/of* politics constitute a heterogeneous area of research. The long history of both rhetoric and politics gives anything but a straightforward answer concerning their interrelations. The common problem for the rhetoricians, discourse analysts and linguists who explore this area of research is therefore defining the object of analysis. What does qualify a language/discourse/rhetoric as political? In fact, the area of study that embraces, often indiscriminately, *politics, polity, policy*, and *the political* (Fr. *le politique*, Pol. *polityczność*) expands constantly and it becomes more and more complex (see Heidenheimer 1986, Blok 2009). The core concepts constitutive for this field of study include among others power, the common good (*res publica*), leadership, in/equality, interests and values (see Nelson 1998, Blok 2009). The relation between rhetoric and politics will be discussed briefly first from the perspective of politics, next from the perspective of rhetoric.

### From the perspective of politics

The research practices within political philosophy and political science diverge from the methods and objectives pursued within rhetorical, discourse and linguistic analyses. Political science attempts to distinguish the political from the non-political. It tries to elaborate a set of criteria that define politics, meant as a unique form of participating in the polity (see e.g. Stankiewicz 1973, Dybel and Wróbel 2008). According to some scholars, the activity called ‘politics,’ being undertaken publicly by free people in order to articulate and organise their competing interests,

realizes a civilizing mission (Crick 1992). Such criteria exclude from the concept of ‘politics’ the ways of exercising power that do not take into account the freedom of the ruled, as in dictatorships or in totalitarian states.

Less normative and more descriptive accounts explore various practices of exercising power subsumed by the laymen under a broad concept of politics. In qualitative approaches, the differences are seen not in binary terms, i.e. as politics vs. non-politics, but rather in scalar terms. With respect to the prototypical ‘politics,’ more or less divergent forms, such as postpolitics, as-if-politics or subpolitics are analysed (see Dybel and Wróbel 2008: 61-71).

Modern rhetoricians, discourse analysts and linguists focus on the speakers’ linguistic and metalinguistic activity. Therefore, they rarely, if ever, address the question of what *is* politics according to some principled criteria, or which part of communicative activities corresponds to such a definition and, hence, which part should be excluded from the analysis. Instead, rhetoricians, discourse analysts and linguists are interested in what *counts as* politics in current communicative practices. This volume reflects some of the key approaches applied within the field. The criteria that are commonly used while addressing rhetoric *and/in/of* politics fall into three main categories, often combined: the way of speaking, the source, and the theme.

Rhetoric *in/of* politics, conceived as a way of speaking, is characteristic for the Aristotelian rhetoric of deliberation. Aristotle theorizes an interrelation between politics and the rhetorical *genus deliberativum*, i.e. a way of speaking that enhances making good choices within the available possibilities (see chapter by Maria Załęska). However, the deliberative genre concerns the rational decision-making in general rather than strictly “power-infused/snatched interactions” in which “socially competing or unequal actors” are involved (Okulska and Cap 2010: 7). A “deliberative” way of speaking does not limit itself only to the political discourse. Instead, it has a universal value. It may appear in virtually any reasonable discourse on any subject, including daily social behaviour. Even a politician may happen to speak reasonably about the available options and their feasibility (for a study of decisions in politics, see Pietraś 2000). On the other hand, a politician’s discourse may also lack this feature, despite being qualified as political according to the two other criteria.

The criterion of source may qualify the discourse of political actors—politicians, candidates, parties—as political. What counts as the political discourse is a speech stemming from someone who counts as a politician (for analyses, see e.g. Ardizzone 2005; Lauerbach *ed.* 2007). It is hard to

pass over without noticing the underlying circularity, which incidentally informs research on any specialized discourse. Within this approach, the necessary and sufficient condition for analysing the political rhetoric is to choose texts delivered by whoever has changed his/her status from an ordinary person to a politician. Such an approach, irrespective of the criteria actually applied for considering a person a politician acting in her/his political capacity, informs many chapters contained in this volume (e.g. by Krystyna Wróblewska-Pawlak and Monika Kostro, Agnieszka Kampka, Oliwia Tarasewicz-Gryt, Agnieszka Kuś, Alina Ganea and Anca Gâță, Gabriela Scripnic and Anca Gâță, Barbara Sobczak, Anna Bendrat, Jan Miklas-Frankowski, Agnieszka Budzyńska-Daca).

The thematical area constitutes the third criterion of inclusion into the political discourse. In the most radical, Foucaultian approach, any subject concerning human relationships is intrinsically political, being imbued by power-relations, interests and values. Critical approaches (such as Critical Discourse Analysis, see Wodak 2009; Wodak and Chilton *eds.* 2005) attempt to unveil their presumed political character which remain hard to detect even for the social actors involved.

Mainstream research on rhetoric *and/in/of* politics addresses mainly issues that overtly involve power relations, legitimization, competing interests and rights of large social groups, differing criteria and values, as well as the necessity to take consequential decisions. The attempts to regulate the public discourse by imposing censorship on certain issues, by qualifying them as SEP (i.e. *Somebody Else's Problem*, see Czyżewski, Dunin and Piotrowski 2010), or by suppressing and silencing them prove that they are indeed perceived as strictly political, thus able to influence the current policy. Hence, the study of texts concerning such subjects as power, freedom, justice, peace, political institutions and similar is treated almost by default as the analysis of “political rhetoric” and/or “political discourse” (see e.g. the chapter by Iwona Krzyżanowska-Skowronek about the great powers or a case-study by Anna Bendrat about the political decision-making).

Apart from the issues traditionally qualified as political, there are some issues that may be categorized as political (the processes of politicization) or, inversely, as not relevant any more for politics (the processes of depoliticization; see Muntigl 2002 and Davies 1994). Due to awareness-raising mechanisms and/or ideologization, more and more subjects, treated until recently as natural, universal or private, are reframed in a perspective of power, legitimization, competing large-scale interests, rights, choices and decisions. Politicization processes are discussed in the chapter by Barbara Sobczak who shows the recategorisation of the role of women:

from allegedly natural and/or religious frame into the frame of political power, interests and rights.

Finally, the criterion of subject permits to include into the field of political rhetoric also the issues regarded as relevant for the politics. This is the criterion adopted in the chapter by Georgeta Cislaru that addresses the instrumental use of emotions as they relate to the public and political discourse, and the chapter by Agnieszka Kuś that discusses the visual resources as instruments of propaganda.

### **From the perspective of rhetoric**

Rhetoric, or “an ability, in each case, to see the available means of persuasion” (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1355b 27-28), appears to be very complex. The scope of this volume shows that the capaciousness of the definition paradoxically is both a limitation and a fortune of rhetoric. A limitation—because it makes rhetoric an all-embracing cover term that potentially may contain everything. A fortune—for exactly the same reason.

The field of the rhetoric and/in/of politics shares partially the concerns of the area of research subsumed under the names of Political Linguistics, Politolinguistics, Political Discourse Analysis and/or Analysis of Political Discourse (for an overview of definitions, see Pisarek 1986; Bloomaert 1994; Hodges and Nilep 2007; Okulska and Cap 2010). The relations between rhetoric and politics are presented in four main ways: (i) politics-as-rhetoric; (ii) rhetoric as expressed by politics; (iii) politics as expressed by rhetoric and, partially, (iv) rhetorical criticism which among others deconstructs politics by applying rhetorical framework.

In the most extreme accounts, politics-as-rhetoric approach echoes the claims of the rhetorical turn. The rhetorical turn equates virtually all phenomena to their linguistic/discursive/rhetorical manifestations, treating words as the very substance of politics, not its expression. Such a view negates the very existence of any non-rhetorical components of politics as experienced by the rulers and the ruled (e.g. institutions, interests, wars, social and economic conditions). In more moderate approaches, only a partial overlap is postulated, although treating rhetoric as merely the expressive aspect of politics (i.e. politics as expressed by rhetoric approach discussed below) is regarded erroneous:

A political culture is defined in part by rhetorical possibilities: its figurative self-portrait, its political ontology, its laws of inclusion and exclusion, its commonplaces and clichés.... The role that rhetoric plays in routinizing communication and delineating channels of social power can be obfuscated by an appeal to aesthetic niceties.... Rhetoric is mistakenly

viewed as the mere expression of real politics—never its substance—while critical strategies for parsing the political body are religiously ignored. (Gross 2006: 14)

A less radical approach distinguishes both phenomena and explores their bidirectional interrelations.

Rhetoric as expressed by politics is rarely examined. However, unconscious rhetorical habits actually form a mental mold underlying politics. Such mental schemes, internalized as “natural”, predetermine what is thinkable and what is unthinkable. Thus, they suggest what can be argued as a viable political solution and what counts as apparently nonexistent because it is allegedly “impossible.” Within the volume, the chapter by Anna Bendrat adopts at least partially this perspective, uncovering some deeply internalized cultural *topoi* able to direct political thinking and influence political decisions.

Politics as expressed by rhetoric, i.e. communicating politics through appropriate rhetorical strategies and persuasive words in concrete settings, reveals by far the most frequently studied direction. Most chapters in this volume represent this approach, falling into two broad categories. Some chapters adopt a “paradigmatic” perspective that focuses on the paradigms of language from which a choice must be made by the speaker. Any choice is treated as rhetorically significant by virtue of other choices within the framework—available, yet rejected. For example, the chapter by Krystyna Wróblewska-Pawlak and Monika Kostro examines the choices within the system of Polish forms of address made by the politicians while speaking with other politicians. Far more frequent is a “syntagmatic” perspective which explores rhetoric at a quite different level of complexity. Indeed, it privileges content rather than form, texts rather than linguistic categories, configurations rather than separated elements. The researchers are interested in reconstructing the underlying systematicity of choices: characteristic themes, characteristic argumentations, characteristic appeals. For example, the chapter by Agnieszka Kampka unveils patterns of temporal categories that emerge from the rhetoric typical for some political parties, while the chapter by Oliwia Tarasewicz-Gryt uncovers patterns of argumentation idiosyncratic for a political party.

Rhetoric as expressed by politics and politics as expressed by rhetoric create recognizable patterns accounting for what is thinkable and what is actually thought. This permits a reconstruction of a “figurative self-portrait”, or even “political ontology”, with the respective “laws of inclusion and exclusion” constitutive for the manner of speaking and thinking typical for politicians or parties.

There is also a common area for both politics and rhetoric: what is thinkable but till now unthought. Even if rhetoric and politics are not reducible to each other, they partially share the common ground of creativity required while seeking options for future actions:

And when we understand how the rhetoric of a particular social reality is put together, it becomes all the more clear how things might be different. As opposed to univocal speech that would mean the same thing everywhere, rhetoric is always in brackets, whether that means it is a public statement subject to skepticism, a truth claim subject to counterevidence or counterargument, a law subject to contextual interpretation or historical revision, or even a poetic expression or image that “makes a world” and is therefore subject to remaking. Despite being embedded in relatively stable institutions, from the law to visual stereotypes, rhetoric always represents the possibility that things might be otherwise. (Gross 2006: 15)

‘Creativity’ is a positively connoted term. However, paradoxical as it could seem, the creativity without any self-limitation sometimes risks degeneration (an analogy with cancer which may be viewed as an unlimited “creativity” of the human body cells is revealing). The volume reflects latent ambiguity of rhetoric creativity—both liberating and potentially manipulative—based on the assumption than “things might be otherwise.” Indeed, it illustrates a broad spectrum of nuanced realizations, from positive to negative ones. The polarization may be expressed as “good” vs. “bad” rhetoric, or as a contraposition between the communicative behaviour of *homo seriusus* vs. *homo rhetoricus* (Fish 1989, Lanham 1976). The unfortunate choice of the term *rheticus* suggests misleadingly that rhetoric is intrinsically suspected and that *homo seriusus* does not apply it in his discourse at all.

The political rhetoric used by *homo seriusus* consists in the clear articulation of options and interests, as well as in arguing for the appropriate criteria of choice and reasonable judgments. Ideally, it is the rhetoric applied for civic affirmation within deliberative democracy. Within “good” rhetoric, the participants involved in political communication are regarded as rational human beings, capable of both creative and critical thinking. Being aware that “things may be otherwise”, the participants seek creative solutions during serious, consequential political debates with clearly articulated pros and cons. The ethical borderline of such a political rhetoric is the common good (*res publica*). Its logical borderline is constituted by the rules of logic and in general by an *ad rem* approach in which *ethos* and *pathos* are used in relation to *logos*. Even visual arguments, if used (see Blair 1994 or Vasta 2011), facilitate rational

discussion instead of substituting it. The scarcity of empirical material illustrating such rhetorical practices is reflected in the volume: only a few chapters, and those only tangentially, address the positive pole of the rhetoric *and/in/of* politics (see the chapters by Maria Zafęska; by Gabriela Scripcnic and Anca Gâță; and, partially, the chapter by Barbara Sobczak).

At the opposite extremum “bad” rhetoric appears, privileged by *homo rhetoricus*. Its origins are traced back to sophists. Sophists’ merits consist in adopting more descriptively-oriented perspective that permitted to explore complexity, fluidity and contingency of human communication (see Mielczarski 2010), somewhat obscured by the more normatively-oriented Aristotelian rhetoric. However, due to sophists’ legitimization of logical short-cuts:

...rhetoric became a testament to privation—an expression of humankind’s captivity by a world of appearances, momentary interests, and sensory passions. ...Rhetoric thus was constituted on the principle of insufficient reason. (Falzer 1991: 240-241, quoted in Brown 1997: 10)

Rhetoric so conceived became the domain of manipulative politics (as Machiavelli advised the prince), postpolitics or as-if-politics. In extreme cases this kind of rhetoric permits the speaker to play the role of a politician without even doing politics in the strict sense of the term. Within the “bad” rhetoric, the political activity putatively undertaken for the common good (*res publica*) is actually reframed as a private game of personal interests. Characteristically, the audience is viewed less in rational than in biological terms. This explains the growing interest in the advances of neuro-rhetoric, but also of cognitive psychology and anthropology. Their results indeed may conveniently be converted into new behavioral persuasive strategies and PR campaigns. Possibly avoiding the audience’s critical mind, such strategies are based on biological stimuli of the rhetorical *actio* (e.g. gestures, voice, strength, colour, image, distance, appropriate associations) and the expected biologically encoded emotive reactions. The awareness that “things may be otherwise” does not appear in terms of a discussion between clearly articulated alternatives. Instead, what counts is rather the aesthetical, emotive and/or biological category of attractiveness. The “likeability factor” causes abandoning apparently less attractive possibilities even without critically examining them. Such a change of perspective accounts for the politicians’ interest in tricks and a tendency toward ostentation and provocation instead of facing serious problems. The ethical commitment of politics, i.e. the common good, is rarely if ever respected. Mobilising emotions and enhancing the “likeability factor” seems far cheaper than convincing logically. This

manifests especially when the accepted pluralism, denounced even as a postpolitical clash of rationalities (Staniszki 2009: 220), excludes the possibility of a common ground. Therefore, the logical borderline of the respect for the rules of logic is often violated: eristic reasoning, contradictory commitments and bald lies are accepted and easily implemented into incommensurable argumentations. Since the emotive is less demanding than the logical, *ethos* (understood only as a strictly controlled self-presentation) and *pathos*, both detached from *logos*, are clearly privileged. Since what counts now as ordinary politics involves combinations of the above-mentioned factors, the majority of the chapters in the volume explore negative rather than positive phenomena in rhetoric *and/in/of* politics.

The fourth above-mentioned mainstream field of research concerns the rhetorical criticism, i.e. the ability of rhetoric (as a theoretical framework) to deconstruct rhetoric (as actual communicative practices), unveiling the obscure political implications conveyed by the ways of speaking. Rhetorical criticism (e.g. Caccarelli 1998) is strictly interrelated to Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1995, 1996). Within the volume, only the chapter by Iwona Krzyżanowska-Skowronek—and that but tangentially—entails rhetorical criticism.

## Overview of the chapters

The volume focuses on the rhetoric and politics as filtered through the background, experiences and research interests of the scholars stemming from Central and Eastern Europe. The volume is divided into four parts. The first three are dedicated to the three rhetorical categories: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. The fourth one illustrates their interaction within the main form of engagement in politics, i.e. the conflicts of interests.

Part I concerns *ethos* and its modern conceptualizations. The three chapters explore different aspects of self-presentation within political discourse. In Chapter Two, “Rhetorical patterns of constructing the politician’s *ethos*”, Maria Załęska proposes a theoretical framework that distinguishes three sets of criteria involved in creating the politician’s *ethos*. The three postulated patterns (mimetic, poetic and argumentative) are treated as idealizations that make intelligible different ways in which the politician conveys his or her self-characterization within discourse. Within the mimetic pattern, the politician speaks from his/her perspective, and the main persuasive resource is his/her authenticity. The speech reflects one’s personality, not mediated by any calculative approach. Within the poetic pattern, the politician adopts mainly the audience’s

perspective. Trying to conform to its expectations, the politician may dissociate from his/her authentic self in order to appear a desired type of person for a role s/he wants to play in politics. Within the argumentative pattern, the politician adopts mainly the perspective of the problem. The quality of arguments a politician formulates reveals, as a by-product, his/her quality as an arguer, but not as a person. Since in the actual communication there are practically no pure types, the identified features may only help to point out dominant tendencies in the complex construction of *ethos* within concrete texts. The text offers a general framework that allows for accommodating different aspects of *ethos* discussed in other studies contained in the volume.

Among available means of persuasion useful while constructing the politician's *ethos* there is the strategic management of the interpersonal relations with the recipient. In Chapter Three, entitled "Forms of address as a rhetorical means of constructing the *ethos* of the politician in the Polish political media discourse," Krystyna Wróblewska-Pawlak and Monika Kostro argue that the forms of address may be viewed as a rhetorical means that enables each speaker to construct his/her *ethos* during the interaction with the addressee. The forms of address, by naming the interlocutor in peculiar ways, establish a specific type of social relation between the participants. The analysis of Polish election campaigns shows that forms of address can constitute a sophisticated rhetorical means used to modulate the tone of the interaction and to construe the image of candidates. By selecting a particular form of address, a politician makes not only a speech act of addressing his/her interlocutor, but also an act of social and/or political categorisation. Seen in this way, image management relies on a politician selecting such address strategies which stress positive elements of his/her own identity, and which, at the same time, emphasise unfavourable elements of the identity of his/her political opponent.

Another aspect of political categorisation is addressed by Agnieszka Kampka in Chapter Four, entitled "Rhetorical value of temporal categories in the construction of political identities." The author argues that the analysis of various ways of history perception allows the researcher to understand why people living in the same country can interpret reality in quite different ways. Public rhetoric may be treated as a process by means of which human desires are transformed into commonly shared moral codes defining the course of action. The author presents how the temporal theme functioned in the parliamentary debates. The way in which politicians speak of history, how they interpret their own and other people's biographies, depends not only on their party allegiance. The rhetoric of a given party is a derivative of the collective identity which is

constructed during the conversations carried out by the party members. Identities are sets of meaning, which allow individuals to define themselves as persons, or as actors performing social roles, or as members of a group. The focus of the author's attention is the communicative dimension of identity. In considerations devoted to the role of temporal categories in collective identity construction, the notion of cultural memory is crucial. Collective identity is not something solid, existing beyond communication. It exists because individuals express it since it motivates them to thinking and to acting. The author shows in what manner rhetorical analysis of the parliamentary discourse allows for reconstruction of the elements constitutive of the identity of the members and followers of political parties.

Part II is dedicated to the emotive means complementary to *ethos*, namely to *pathos*. The three chapters explore the subtle mechanisms mobilised by the politicians to raise the emotions: the emotionalisation of meanings, the intensification of powerful sentiments and the creation of the emotional impact through verbal and visual aesthetics.

Chapter Five entitled "What 'France' and 'La République' stand for in Charles de Gaulle's Speeches," by Alina Ganea and Anca Gâță, aims at presenting the way in which a notion, belonging to a set of concepts which could be considered as commonalities (sets of values, beliefs, shared experiences, elements that bind a community), integrates new notional aspects and thus acquires a powerful rhetorical potential in discourse. Such notions may be initially endowed with emotional meaning, which makes them more powerful rhetorically and also politically. Commonalities are meant to stir the audience's emotions in that they create a common identity and make the people aware of similar or identical historical experiences. The authors show that in trying to raise the awareness of the audience concerning the emergent necessity to take action, de Gaulle uses the terms pointing to the two notions as emotional triggers that legitimize the political project designed by the orator. The recurrent use of the term *la République* in the Gaullian speeches has a rhetorical function since the notion triggers profound nationalistic feelings such as pride, loyalty, and the sense of belonging, all of which ensure the audience's acceptance of the political project presented by the politician. De Gaulle resorts to antithesis between the present state of the country and what *France* and *la République* used to be and should be like. This antithesis has the rhetorical virtue of transmitting the politician's implicit message of discontent with the present reality or with future prospects and the necessity of taking immediate action. The antithesis also serves to persuade the audience with

respect to the reliability of de Gaulle's promise of bringing back *France* and *la République* on stage.

In Chapter Six, "Emotions as a rhetorical tool in political discourse," Georgeta Cislaru analyzes the role of two strong emotions—fear and anger—that have a pragmatic force leading to decision making and action. The author aims at showing the way emotional expressions circulate through discourses. Indeed, emotions are constitutive of the rhetoric of the political discourse, but also of the media discourse and public opinion, and they have a pragmatic force leading to decision making and action. The study of emotional expression questions then the (potential) social impact of the discourse. Within the frame of Discourse Analysis and the theory of emotional appraisal, fear and anger are two dominant emotions examined, inasmuch as they represent the most common emotional reaction to the events such as sanitary risks, attacks, catastrophes, etc. However, while the same emotions, and sometimes the same emotional expressions, may be used in the political, media, and public opinion discourses, which interact in a kind of dialogue and share intertextuality, they usually do not have the same rhetorical value nor a similar argumentative orientation.

Aesthetics is a powerful way of mobilising emotions. The emotionalisation of political discourse may be achieved through skilful combination of verbal and visual resources. In Chapter Seven, "Rhetorical codes of Social Realism: words and images in Bolesław Bierut's 'Six-years Warsaw's Reconstruction Plan'", Agnieszka Kuś focuses on a synergy of visual and written material used to compose a published edition of a politician's speech. The political discourse, delivered by the communist President, Bolesław Bierut, on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1949, and subsequently published in 1951, constitutes a perfect primary source for applying the visual rhetoric as a method of analysis of Social Realism. The author claims that unveiling the mechanisms through which the illustrations are implemented within the text permits to explore to the full extent propagandistic notions promoted by the speech as they appear in the discussed edition. The study offers not only an interpretation of concrete material, but it also promotes solutions that could enlarge the array of methods relevant for the historical research, which has a tendency to narrow down the value of visual sources to a mere illustration.

Part III is dedicated to the ways in which the argumentation, i.e. broadly defined rhetorical *logos*, interacts with the emotive means. The three chapters of this section explore rhetorical mechanisms underlying the construction of reasoning in political contexts, as well as the metapolitical argumentation. In Chapter Eight, "Women persuading women: the rhetoric of the Polish Women's Party," Barbara Sobczak discusses the rhetorical

strategies used by the founders and members of the only Polish party grounded in gender criteria, i.e. the Women Party. In a country with a scarce feminist tradition, the very existence of the party is an attempt to mobilize women to participate in the political life. The study concentrates on the analysis of *inventio*, i.e. the topoi and arguments selected by women to convince the female electorate that they join a women's initiative. The analysis shows that the Party, in this peculiar rhetorical situation, did not manage to construct a coherent message, nor to build an attractive public image. The main rhetorical problem was the construction of the common identity, regarded as the essence of a persuasive act. The electoral campaign proved unable to construct a shared ground of experience and values, and a common language for a community defined by the gender criterion.

Anna Bendrat, in Chapter Nine entitled “‘Winkelried of Nations’ or a ‘Trojan donkey’? Rhetorical justification for Poland’s military mission in the War on Terror” explores the ways in which political rhetoric and geopolitics were inextricably intertwined during the military operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. In the speeches given by U.S. president George W. Bush and the Polish president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, the author isolates a common topos of exceptionalism, which in both cases helped to create a nationalistic narrative of a country’s heroic mission and then transform it into a powerful vehicle for promoting a universal fight against terrorism. The comparative analysis of the exceptionalist national rhetoric as an argumentative form in the selected presidential war addresses directs attention to the ideological determinants in foreign policy decisions.

In Chapter Ten, “The Rhetoric of Great Power Politics,” Iwona Krzyżanowska-Skowronek argues that the states which gain the status of great powers use a specific kind of rhetoric, regardless of the times, political systems and underlying culture. The rhetoric of great powers is the main tool to legitimise their authority in the world order. The author suggests that the rhetoric resulting from domination has characteristic features, such as the creation of the myth of greatness, or the promotion of their own values as universal. The author claims that the rhetoric of great powers is elitist, since usually the universal values, allegedly allowing for the correct understanding of the world, are propagated by better educated groups. Any threat to the great power is considered as an attack on the highest values. This may transform the rhetoric supposed to guard the peace and stability into the war rhetoric. The author addresses also a broader methodological problem, i.e. the relation between the power, knowledge and language. Every culture resorts to the values it appreciates, and these values are the effect of the rhetoric resulting from domination.

Therefore, a circularity emerges: the language-object of the analysis is also the instrument of the analysis, which points out to the limits of any possible explanation.

Part IV explores the interaction of emotive and rational means within the conflictive interactions. The difference of views is fundamental for the rhetorical persuasion. It is also the most frequent situation in politics. The four chapters in this section involve all the components discussed in the three previous parts: the self-presentation, the strong emotions, and the formulation of arguments. Since the politicians are strongly motivated to win in the conflict, they often transgress the conventions of argumentation through manipulating, faking sincerity, applying eristic means, as well as adapting the conventions of genres to enhance their own victory.

Chapter Eleven, "Rhetoric of perspicuousness in solving a difference of opinion", by Gabriela Scripnic and Anca Gâță, approaches political discourse from a pragma-dialectical perspective, by pointing to a textual technique which works as a rhetorical strategy. Perspicuousness is defined by the authors as the speaker's effort to produce discourse characterized by brevity, clarity and nonambiguity. As such, it is likely to help in resolving misunderstandings in the political communication. The starting point of the study is the generally assumed fact that political discourse aims at convincing a particular audience or various types of audience of the acceptability of a particular standpoint. Perspicuousness may serve as a rhetorical device meant to solve actual or virtual differences of opinion in favour of politicians. The analysis, performed on excerpts of Romanian political discourse, shows that politicians may use perspicuousness strategically in two ways. First, perspicuousness as an attempt to eliminate ambiguity is undoubtedly needed in discourse so as to make the discourse more precise and thus to win the audience. Second, perspicuousness may be faked; this kind can be used consistently to give the audience the impression of clarity and lack of hidden meanings, while the search for clarity and brevity is pursued artificially.

In Chapter Twelve, „Attack as a Self-presentation Strategy: the Rhetoric of Law and Justice Party,” Oliwia Tarasewicz-Gryt examines a peculiar situation of the political conflict of interests: the election campaign. Using the material from the 2010 election campaign in Poland, the author examines an offensive self-presentation strategy that both provokes and maintains conflict. The author takes into account the complex interplay between such factors as time frame, type of audience and type of argumentation. The analysed rhetorical devices, especially the argumentation based on association and dissociation, contribute to shaping identities of both the offender and the offended. The author examines the

effectiveness of the rhetorical and eristic means in the communication of the politician with other politicians, as well as with the electorate, within a typology of communicative situations: the everyday communication with the followers, the moments of crisis communication, or in each stage of the election campaign addressed to a broad target audience.

A slightly different perspective on the eristic involved in the political conflict is presented in Chapter Thirteen. Jan Miklas-Frankowski, in the chapter “Eristic in politics: the case of Polish 2007 debates,” adopts a temporal perspective, observing the impact of the communicative strategies applied during the debates on the ongoing political events. According to the author, the meaning and function of the eristic stratagems is intelligible only within the broader context of each debate analysed as a whole, with its peculiar sequences and interactions. The author adopts a two-level theoretical framework. First, he identifies the eristic stratagems according to the Schopenhauer’s typology and its subsequent developments. Second, applying the Goffmanian dramaturgical model, he interprets the applied eristic means as a coherent self-presentation strategy: the politicians try to define the actual political situation, associating the positive values with themselves and the negative ones with the adversary.

In Chapter Fourteen, “Format from the rhetorical perspective: principles of the Polish pre-electoral TV debates in 1995-2010,” Agnieszka Budzyńska-Daca analyzes the pre-electoral debate as a genre of conflictual discourse. Using excerpts from the Polish material and commenting on the cultural-specific political communication, the author argues that the debate format may be fruitfully described in terms of the rhetorical *dispositio*. The natural order (*ordo naturalis*) of the debate, as established in the rhetorical tradition of persuasive discourse, allows for the implementation of the impartiality principle while presenting candidates at the debate. However, in the Polish tradition, the debate format is adapted to single politicians’ argumentative needs and skills. This diminishes the debate standards and marginalizes the substantive discourse. The negotiated order (*ordo artificialis*) of the debate, established each time by the respective campaign staff, violates the impartiality principle in order to guarantee the best possible public image of the participants in the situation of conflict of interests. The author, using the material of four cycles of Polish debates, examines the consequences of implementing different self-presentation strategies by individual politicians in the situation of mediated conflict. She also addresses the consequences of biased rules for the general culture of political communication between the authorities and citizens in a democratic society.

The interest of the volume lies not only in the theoretical and methodological issues it addresses, but also in the analysed material. While the political rhetoric within the languages such as English, French or German is widely described (and several chapters in the volume contribute to the mainstream), the political rhetoric of languages such as Polish or Romanian is considerably less explored. Given the pluralistic nature of contemporary politics, and the resulting necessity of finding compromises through discursive techniques, the study of relationships between rhetoric and politics seems more relevant today than it has ever been before. The authors of this volume hope to render the sense of the intense intellectual discussion over the inherent power of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* in the rhetoric *and/in/of* politics.

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# **PART I**

## **ETHOS AND SELF-PRESENTATION OF THE POLITICIANS**

# CHAPTER TWO

## RHETORICAL PATTERNS OF CONSTRUCTING THE POLITICIAN'S *ETHOS*

MARIA ZAŁĘSKA

### Introduction

It thus appears that rhetoric is and offshoot of dialectic and also of ethical studies. Ethical studies may fairly be called political; and for this reason rhetoric masquerades as political science, and the professors of it as political experts—sometimes from want of education, sometimes from ostentation, sometimes owing to other human failings. (Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1358 a1, 25-30)

The relations between rhetoric and politics have always been regarded with some suspicion. Does rhetoric simply express the political contents, does it unduly “masquerade as political science” or is it the very essence of politics meant as persuasion to common good? The issue of the politician's *ethos* offers an interesting perspective to explore the complexity of the problem. Does rhetoric enhance or prevent a sincere self-expression? Does it manipulate by default, creating a false public image of the politician? Or, maybe, is it the only way which gives the necessary force to the politician's ideas?

This chapter offers a theoretical framework that systematizes the conceptual area relevant for the rhetorical construction of speaker's characterization within and through the text. The author distinguishes three distinct patterns of the politician's self-presentation: mimetic, poetic and argumentative. The three patterns, discussed separately for the convenience of exposition, may overlap in the actual communication. Each of them mobilizes different resources of rhetoric and resolves in a unique way the relation between *ethos*, ethics and rhetoric in the realm of political communication.

## 1. Theoretical framework

The rhetorical idea of communication is based on the assumption that the human nature is knowable and that it may be fruitfully described as organised in types, forms, patterns, models. The knowledge about the human nature within the communicative interactions allows for predictability of action and reaction. The intelligibility and the predictability of certain behavioral schemes increase possibilities of successful rhetorical persuasion. The three main rhetorical proofs (*ethos*, *logos*, *pathos*) refer roughly to three elements of communication: the speaker, the message and the audience. *Ethos* is regarded as “the most effective means of persuasion” (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1358a1, 10). Yet, the conceptions of rhetorical *ethos* have significantly varied.

First, the very interest in self-knowledge and, consequently, the ideas of selfhood have evolved. Over time, philosophy, theology, morality, anthropology, psychology, sociology, law, rhetoric, linguistics, literary studies or art have problematized the concept. They have also elaborated numerous competing, even incommensurable conceptions of selfhood and identity: individual, collective, overt, covert, monolithic, unified, multiplied, splitted, fragmentarized, decentred, saturated, dialogic, polilogic, natural, technologized and many others (see e.g. Goffman 1959, Wolf 1994, Battaglia 1995, Leary 1995, Amossy ed. 1999, Gergen 2000, Castells 2004, Jacyno 2007).

Second, even within rhetoric itself, the concept of *ethos* kept evolving, staying sensible to the culture, ideology and political situation of a peculiar historical period. Therefore the Roman *ethos*, consonant with the ideals of the falling republic and the empire, developed differently from the Greek *ethos*, a concept which emerged within the democracy. The medieval Christian *ethos* differed from the Renaissance *ethos* as theorized by Machiavelli. In modern times, there are several competing models of *ethos* (see Burke 1969, Kennedy 1999). The definitions and scope of *ethos* vary substantially. The subtleties of distinct approaches to *ethos* developed by single theorists are discussed in full-length monographies that account for the complexity of the “speaker's factor” as a persuasive resource (e.g. Garver 1994, Woerther 2007).

Third, the theoretical ferment is reflected in the terminology. Some models introduce terminological distinctions within *ethos*. Amossy (2008) distinguishes rational and emotive dimensions of *ethos*. Charaudeau (2005) proposes two kinds of the positive political *ethos*: the *ethos* of credibility (which involves the *ethos* of seriousness, of honesty and of competence), as well as the *ethos* of identification (which embraces the

*ethos* of intelligence, of solidarity, of leadership, of strength and of character). Garver (2000) points out three kinds of *ethos*: the speaker's "real" *ethos*, the speaker's *ethos* as enacted in the text, and the audience's *ethos*<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, an array of concepts and terminologies alternative to *ethos* have emerged. Some of them address roughly the same phenomena as the ancient *ethos*, other introduce quite new aspects and presuppose different levels of self-consciousness, self-knowledge and self-control<sup>2</sup>. This leads to a theoretical and terminological problem. Should the "speaker's factor" be treated in terms of conceptual difference, distinguishing carefully among different accounts of *ethos* (and "non-*ethos*") by individual authors? Or, inversely, should it be conceived of rather as conceptual similarity, in the spirit of the Wittgensteinian "family resemblance"? In such an account, *ethos* is one of the notions pertaining to a broader area accounting for the "speaker's factor" within the speech, interrelated with heterogeneous concepts such as agency, selfhood, identity, personality, character, subjectivity, authorship, authority, charisma, personal culture, self-presentation, self-promotion, self-management, self-governance, technologies of self, image, personal branding, reputation, reputation management, impression management, public relations management or even management of the audience's experience, to mention just a few. In this chapter, the family resemblance account will be privileged, also because the quoted authors use different terminologies to address roughly the same phenomena. Aristotelian account of *ethos* will be treated as an orientating point, with respect to which other models will be discussed.

The conceptual area relevant for the "speaker's factor" has been subsumed in the Greek thought under the name of *ethos*. The concept of *ethos* (etymologically linked with 'ethnicity' and 'ethics') was developed in the Greek thought since its first attestations conserved till now (for a discussion, see Woerther 2007). However, its best known definition stems from Aristotle:

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker. . . . Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the