

Abstract of the PhD thesis *Ethos and Its Non-heroic Types in Polish Epics 1550-1650* by Tomasz Kolowca

My thesis examines the subject of ethos in several early modern epic poems. It tests hypotheses regarding the presence of ethoses other than heroic in mentioned poems. This other ethos – called by me “non-heroic” – is the tradition that started with Hesiod’s *Works and Days* and Vergil’s *Georgics* and for centuries was shadowed by its heroic older variant. The aim of this study is to shed light on existence of such poems in Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth around years 1550-1650.

For this thesis I chose seven epic poems: *Muza gór wielickich* (1608), Walenty Roździeński’s *Officina ferraria* (1612), Sebastian Klonowic’s *Flis* (1598), Marcin Borzymowski’s *Morska nawigacyja do Lubeka* (1662), Sebastian Klonowic’s *Roxolania* (1584), Samuel Twardowski’s *Przeważna legacyja* (1634) oraz Eliasz Pielgrzymowski’s *Poselstwo i krótkie opisanie rozprawy z Moskwą* (1603). For the context I also mentioned few others, i.e. Andrzej Zbylitowski’s *Droga do Szwecyjej* (1597), Krzysztof Winter’s *Ferri officinarum fodinarumque Silesiacarum descriptio et denotatio brevis* (1556) and Adam Schröter’s *Regni Poloniae salinarum Vielicensium descriptio carmine elegiaco* (1564). Poems were written in XVIth and XVIIth century in Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. All but one are written in Polish, *Roxolania* is composed in Latin.

First chapter presents a study about genres and history of mentioned poems and also analyses meaning of the term “ethos” and its derivatives. It also studies a history and historical remarks about heroic (chivalric) ethos in ancient, medieval and early modern epic poems. Then tries to present the character of non-heroic ethos and establish its proper definition. This part also investigates the literature of this subject emphasizing the role of Maria Ossowska’s *Ethos rycerski i jego odmiany* (1973) for the whole Polish humanities. The model proposed in her book consists of various concepts, terms and definitions. I use some of these in case studies and analysis later on.

Next part investigates the meanings of several sociological, philosophical and philological terms similar in meaning. These are: habitus (Pierre Bourdieu’s theory), character (exploring meaning in ancient Greece, *progymnasmata* and ethnological meanings), mentality (mostly *Annales*), norms (social and moral), customs and habits (sociological theories, Sumner’s theory), lifestyle and tradition. Another part of this chapter explores the term *example* (meaning a person worth imitating) and its types: realistic (e.g. Napoleon) and idealistic (e.g. ideal emperor). In this chapter there are also smaller chapters exploring several

terms: myth, cultural legend, authority (as a man worth imitating), ideal and idol. There is a small chapter which investigate types of systematic organisation of ethos like codes or catechisms.

Second part of the thesis investigates variants and elements of ethos in mentioned epic poems. I identified three types of non-heroic ethos in Polish-Lithuanian epic poems: dangerous profession ethos, diplomatic ethos and ethno-religious groups ethos. Next chapter examines details of every ethos.

Dangerous profession ethos is represented by four kinds: miners' ethos, raftsmen's ethos, blacksmith's ethos and sailor's ethos. Every of this poems reveals specific world of craftsmen. I investigate their language, customs, religious views, rulebooks and everyday living presented through chapters of these poems. Some of them are more detailed, some are just sketched. They also differs in terms of narrator's position – if he is craftsman himself or he is just a tourist.

Second type of non-heroic ethos is presented in two longer epic poems by E. Pielgrzymowski and S. Twardowski. In both cases main hero is a diplomat at work, on legacy in hostile countries' capitals, Moscow and Istanbul. In both cases the aim of the hero is not a victory or domination – it is an alliance, truce or peace. These poems are analysed using some concepts taken from New Diplomatic History authors. These concepts are attributed not only in terms of the subject but also construction of poems.

The last type of non-heroic ethos is presented as written by Klonowic in Roxolania, the poem about customs, mores and *leges* of Ruthenians. In this chapter I also mention genres like *descriptio gentium*.

Thesis ends with summary and bibliography.