



Pathos in Neo-Latin Scientific Literature

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Abstracts

Tommi Alho (Innsbruck)

Pathos in Medical Dissertations at the Academy of Turku (1640–1828)

Dissertations are one of the most important – and most neglected – sources of early modern university education. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the dissertation transformed from a medium of teaching students how to deal with pre-existing knowledge into a tool for creating and communicating new knowledge (Chang 2004). In my paper, I address the use of *pathos* in early modern dissertations and, more specifically, discuss how the changes in its employment relate to the transformation of the dissertation genre. My analysis will focus on a specific category of dissertations (ca. 140) produced at a specific early modern university, namely the medical dissertations published at the Royal Academy of Turku between 1640 and 1828. Nearly all the dissertations published at the Academy of Turku have been catalogued (Vallinkoski 1962–69) and digitised by the National Library of Finland (<https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/123675139>).

References

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Dominik Berrens (Innsbruck)

***Maxima in minimis* – Pathos in Microscopic Literature**

The microscope was invented at the beginning of the seventeenth century, but unlike its ‘sibling’, the telescope, microscopic examinations initially had less scientific impact and reputation. While astronomy was regarded as the noblest of all scientific disciplines since antiquity, the study of smaller animals, partly disgusting substances, and bodily fluids not only needed a justification, similar to that already found in the Aristotelian work *De partibus animalium*, but also offered itself in particular for a solemn exaltation. We therefore find praise for the possibilities the new instrument offered, the hope to finally entangle the mysteries of matter, and also physico-theological notions in microscopical texts of the seventeenth century. The paper aims to give a first overview of common topoi and to examine the function of pathos in these texts.

Simona Boscani Leoni (Bern /Lausanne)

**Pathos in Neo-Latin Scientific Writing:
Some Case Studies from German Speaking Regions**

In this contribution I will focus my attention on the expression of emotions within the scholarly production at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the German-speaking area, particularly in the Old Confederation. My interest will turn to authors such as Johann Jakob Wagner (1641-1645), Johann Jakob Scheuchzer (1672-1733), Karl Niklaus Lang (1670-1741) and Moritz Anton Kappeler (1685-1769). They are naturalists who moved partly within the movement of physico-theology and dealt with questions of natural history, geology and the study of fossils. Particular attention will be paid to the rhetorical practices of expressing feelings and the techniques of ‘scientific’ persuasion used by these authors.

Simone De Angelis (Graz)

Pathos and Authority in “New Science” Texts

The pathos formula or motif “If Aristotle Were Alive” is variously applied in (scientific) texts of the late Middle Ages and the early modern period and can be motivated in different ways. It is mostly an author’s means to relate himself, and his knowledge claims respectively, to an ancient authority. Research also refers to this process as “counterfactual imagination”, a practice which is not merely to be understood in rhetorical or polemical terms. Rather, it has a precise epistemic function which my lecture aims at specifying. Thus, the paper shall focus on the significance of the authority argument and on the classification of this pathos formula in the ancient and late medieval theory of authority and testimony which particularly takes effect in the texts of the “New Science”.

Eric Jorink (Leiden)

Nicolaus Steno (1636-1686) and the Visual Argument in Leiden Medical Disputations

In seventeenth-century Leiden university, partly under the influence of René Descartes, academic disputations increasingly made claims to the own experience of the defendant. No longer were ancient authorities invoked, nor were these theses compiled by the professors, but student started to refer to their own experiments. We see this trend culminating in the two theses in 1661 by Nicolaus Stensen alias Steno, who denied claims of plagiarism by his former instructor, and included – for the first time in history, as far as I know, two engravings in his disputations. This is, as I will argue, part of a broader process, where words and images increasingly are getting a comparable heuristic status.

Johanna Luggin (Innsbruck)

***Pathos* in Neo-Latin Scientific Literature**

As an introduction to our workshop, I would like to present a few examples and formulate some first hypotheses about the origin and intention of using *pathos* in Neo-Latin scientific writing: The arousal of emotions in the reader is a key strategy of persuasion in ancient rhetoric. Many scientific Latin texts from the early modern period contain sections, where the author makes use of the *genus grande*, of high style, and of *pathos* to persuade the reader not only of the specific content of a work, but also of the importance of the subject treated more generally. In my introduction, I will briefly present the few and scattered thoughts of rhetoricians of science and historians of science about *pathos* in scientific discourse, before formulating some questions about the potential of using *pathos* as intentional mode of persuasion in Neo-Latin science, which can lead us through our discussion of all contributions, as well as presenting some hypotheses based on examples taken from works of Valentin Stansel (1621–1705) and Johann Beringer (1670–1738).

Ramunė Markevičiūtė (Berlin)

***Tu inclyte, Anglicanae laus gentis, omnibus unus qui plus perspexit –
überschwängliches Lob des Wissenschaftlers im lateinischen Vers***

Descartes, Galileo oder William Harvey: Zusammen mit dem Gegenstand wird in der wissenschaftlichen Dichtung nicht selten auch dessen Erfinder oder Entdecker gefeiert. Die Metaphorik des Lichtbringers, der die Dunkelheit aufhebt und die Menschheit zur Erkenntnis der wahren Ursachen der Dinge führt, ist dabei den Lobgesängen auf Epikur in *De rerum natura* entlehnt. Kaum ein Wissenschaftler wurde in diesem Zusammenhang leidenschaftlicher zelebriert als Newton, dessen Entdeckungen schon Zeitgenossen dazu verleitet hatten, ein neues Zeitalter einzuläuten. Wir wollen die Lobpreisungen einiger der damaligen Koryphäen der Wissenschaft miteinander vergleichen, um zu sehen, wie diese Wissenschaftler in Szene gesetzt werden und von welchen antiken Vorlagen dazu Gebrauch gemacht wird. Ebenfalls soll untersucht werden, wie sich Nationalität des Autors und dessen institutionelle Affiliation auf das Lob auswirken. Zum Schluss wollen wir anhand der pathetischen Ehrerweisungen zeigen, dass es Newton war, mit dem man sich definitiv im Zeitalter der modernen Wissenschaft angekommen sah.

Sara Miglietti (London)

Environmental Apocalypse in the Alps:

J.J. Scheuchzer's Use of Seneca in his Manuscript 'De portione' (1707/1708)

This paper examines how the Swiss natural historian J.J. Scheuchzer (1672–1733) appropriated and reshaped Seneca's flood narrative (NQ 3) in a manuscript sent to the Royal Society in the winter of 1707/1708 ('*De ignis seu caloris certa portione Heleuetiae adsignata*'). In this manuscript, rediscovered and published in 2016, Scheuchzer proposes a thought experiment about climate change in the Alpine region, describing how the melting of glaciers would lead to ecological devastation all over Europe. In this paper, I will focus on Scheuchzer's strategic use of pathos (in dialogue with sources such as Seneca, Ovid, Lucretius, and Virgil) to capture his readers' imagination and provoke in them a deep conversion from a human-centred, short-sighted, utilitarian perspective to a cosmic-centred, holistic, and quasi-divine one. The goal for him, I argue, was at the same time scientific, moral, and spiritual, in line with the approach that he would later adopt in his better-known *Physica sacra* (1731–1735).

Bernd Roling (Berlin)

Über die Tarantel: Lateinische Debatten und Gedichte zu Spinnenbissen und Raserei

Die seltsame Allianz aus Arachnologie und Psychiatrie, die sich mit der Tarantel und der durch sie angeblich hervorgebrachten Tanzwut verbindet, hat im 17. Jahrhunderte eine ganze Reihe von lateinischen Traktaten hervorgebracht und sogar Lehrgedichte aus dem Umfeld der Royal Society. Einige Beispiele, die für die Affektdebatten der Frühen Neuzeit aussagekräftig sind, möchte ich vorstellen und in einen größeren Kontext einordnen.

Richard Serjeantson (Cambridge)

Oratory and Emotion in Francis Bacon's *Instauratio* of Natural Philosophy

For twenty years before he finally published his *Instauratio Magna* (1620), Francis Bacon was persuaded that he had a vision for the restoration of natural philosophy which had the potential to change the world. The new science he had to offer, deriving from experience, natural history, and a new *via ac ratio* of discovery would systematise and take forward the chance discoveries which had already resulted in the invention of the compass and the printing press in his own age. But how to express his vision? For twenty years Bacon framed and re-framed his ideas: sometimes as a sober treatise — yet written in the voice of an pseudonymous Roman deity; sometimes as a scholastic

discourse; sometimes as a stately inaugural oration delivered to an audience of Parisian dignitaries; sometimes as a reinterpretation of Greek fables; eventually as a succession of disconnected aphorisms. Yet within each of these different frameworks the rhetorical appeal to *pathos* vies with and perhaps supersedes the scientific appeal to *logos* in shaping and giving expression to his vision. This paper will explore Bacon's appeal to the passions in the articulation of his natural philosophy, with particular attention to what may be his single most ambitious scientific rhetorical performance: the (so-called) *Redargutio philosophiarum* of 1608–9.

Peter Sjökvist (Uppsala)

Pathos and Paratext in Uppsala Dissertations

As a scientific genre, the academic dissertation probably played a greater role in Sweden than in many other European countries in the early modern period. Partly because of the small domestic book market, university professors often published their scholarly ideas and discussions in dissertations, while a student had to defend it publicly as an exercise or in order to win the degree. And already in the first printed dissertation of 1602 paratexts were an integral part of the publications. In titles, dedications, congratulatory poems and prefaces the reader then meets expressions of praise and wonder in different shapes and with varying functions. In this paper, my intention is to discuss the reasons and purposes of such statements in their context, but also how they were presented to the readers.