Genethliakon A song in honour of life

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On the cover: Lucina, the Roman goddess of light and birth, hands a newborn to Venus, the goddess of love.

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Patri Meo Stephano Josepho Kopeć nonagenario dedicatum

To my father, Szczepan Józef Kopeć, on his 90th birthday with a special dedication to Wanda Półtawska for her inspirational lectures in Kraków

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List of abbreviations used in the text

Anth. Pal. - Anthologia Palatina - Palatine Anthology

BAV – Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

BN – National Library in Warsaw

BJ – Jagiellonian Library

BŚ – Silesian Library in Katowice

BUWr - Wrocław University Library

ICS – Institute of Classical Studies (University of London)

Oss. - Ossolineum

St.dr. - old prints

ZNiO – National Ossoliński Institute

Introduction

Birth of the world and man. Birthday poetry

I can have my hands crippled,
Crippled legs and hips;
My teeth can fall out;
I can have a hump on my back —
While life lasts — it is good.
Even if you were to spike me on the stake,
Save me, save my life!

A mong the ideas that make up the intangible and collective memory of is the idea of life a value? With this line of thought,

Poem by Mecenas (Gaius Cilnius Maecenas: 70–8 BC). Cf. *Muza rzymska*. *Antologia poezji starożytnego Rzymu*, selection, development, translation and introduction Z. Kubiak, Warsaw 1963, p. 72. Highlighting here and later (unless otherwise stated) B. Gaj. Extract translated by Maria Gaj.

Is the idea of life as a precious value a heritage simultaneosuly immaterial and material only for specific societies or is it global in scope? Should it be protected by, for example, UNESCO? One of the main criteria (so-called criterion P.2) by UNESCO of the recognition of any activities for the purpose of protecting an intangible cultural heritage goes beyond the national platform, placing such activities in a broader perspective at the subregional, regional and international levels. The search for a "common place" of cultural phenomena that go beyond regions, countries and even continents may encounter various obstacles due to the different treatment of traditions or of the world in different regions on Earth. An extreme example of such differences in the cultural approach, for example, towards the birth of the world, can be

this memory's spiritual and material expression can constitute literary works that praises life.

According to the Book of Genesis, the first people lost paradise and their original state of paradisal carelessness for breaking God's command. From that point on, their lives only deteriorated.³

comparison between the tradition of Mediterranean culture (including the biblical tradition) and the so-called myth of emergence characteristic of the people of North America. Cf. Article 2.1 of the 2003 UNESCO Convention. "Intangible cultural heritage' means practices, imaginations, messages, knowledge and skills - as well as related instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural space – which communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their own cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, passed down from generation to generation, is constantly reproduced by communities and groups in relation to their surroundings, to the impact of nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus contributing to the growth of respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, attention shall be directed exclusively to such intangible cultural heritage that is compatible with existing international instruments in the field of human rights, as well as to the requirements of mutual respect between communities, groups and individuals and the principles of sustainable development". Journal of Laws No. 172, item 1018, UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, drawn up in Paris on 17 October 2003, http://niematerialne.nid.pl/upload/me-dialibrary/11f/11febaccadedo83b8496eobc6229bca6. pdf (accessed: 13 August 2017). Translated by Maria Gaj.

Cf. excerpt from the Book of Genesis: Ch. 3, 16–19: "To a woman he said: 'I will give you an immense burden of your pregnancy, you will give birth in pain, you will direct your desires to your husband and he will rule over you'. And to the man [God] said: 'Because you have hearkened to your wife and ate from the tree, for which I gave you a resolution in the words: You will not eat of it – cursed be the earth for your sake: in distress you will have to gain food from it for yourself all the days of your life. Thorn and thistle will be born to you, although the crop constitutes your food. In the sweat you will have to obtain it until you return to the land from which you were taken; for thou art dust, and turn to dust!" Quotation based on: *Pismo Święte Starego*

Similarities can be found in the mythological message of Hesiod⁴ and Ovid⁵ about the four ages of man: gold, silver, bronze and iron. The main premise of this myth, which is still culturally relevant, when supplemented with successive stages of human development (such as the "plastic age"⁶), is the conviction of the **deterioration** of the quality of life on Earth in connection with the morality of people. Interesting analogies of this understanding of the birth and history of the world can be seen in Indian⁷ and Chinese⁸ mythologies also containing mythical plots of the gradual deterioration of life on Earth.

Meanwhile, according to the myth of the Zuni tribe from North America, centred around what is now New Mexico, and that of Hopi Indians from Arizona, is the birth of the world also included four phases (or layers) which had a completely different character and led to the gradual improvement of life on Earth and fate for human beings. People were supposed to live first in the lowest layer of the earth as blind larvae that mutilated each other and fed each other physiological secretions. The sun took care of them. In the second world, human beings became dogs, bears and coyotes, while in the

i Nowego Testamentu w przekładzie z języków oryginalnych [Biblia Tysiąclecia], third corrected edition, ed. by K. Dynarski, Poznań–Warsaw 1980, pp. 26–27. Translated by Maria Gaj.

⁴ Cf. Hesiodos, *Narodziny bogów (Theogonia). Prace i dni. Tarcza*, translated by J. Łanowski, Warsaw 1999, pp. 64–66 (lines 108–201).

⁵ Ovid, *Metamorfozy*, translated by A. Kamieńska and S. Stabryła, edited by S. Stabryła, Wrocław 1995, Book 1, pp. 7–8 (lines 9–150).

⁶ Cf. B. Gaj, Przejście, spełnienie, trwanie w pamięci. Mitologia śmierci w ujęciu komparatywnym, in: Śmierć w dziejach człowieka. Starożytność i średniowiecze, edited by M. Franz, K. Kościelniak, Z. Pilarczyk, Toruń 2016, p. 19.

⁷ M. Jakimowicz-Shah, A. Jakimowicz, Mitologia indyjska, Warsaw 1982, p. 147.

⁸ Cf. stories, especially about deity Pangu. M. J. Künstler, *Mitologia chińska*, Warsaw 1985, pp. 84–85.

⁹ M. K. Devinney, E. M. Thury, Introduction to Mythology. Contemporary Approaches to Classical and World Myths, Oxford 2009, p. 94.

third and fourth, thanks to the help of other super-creatures, they gained increasingly more functions useful to life, including fingers and toes. At the highest and last level, the best and real world, people achieved a paradisal state of balance, harmony and fulfilment: hozho. ¹⁰ Similarly, in the Caribbean, four epochs of the world history are told (the fifth epoch began with the arrival of Columbus, which at the same time marked the end of the present world) with the third being especially related to procreation; people became civilised and the women created at that time became sexual partners for men and mothers for children. ¹¹

Despite different assessments of the quality of the existing world, including its birth and development, there are common phenomena perceived by people as a value. Such is the birth of man and the custom of celebrating the day of one's birth, the rite of transition from birth into maturity, all anniversaries or naming rites. The custom of celebrating (sometimes boisterously) the anniversary of the day on which one was born is an important part of European culture. It has even permeated to other continents, although in a different cultural form. This custom is usually associated with making wishes and giving presents to the person who has a birthday/nameday/anniversary and with a delicious meal (a traditional element of birthday parties in European culture is a birthday cake decorated with a number of candles corresponding to the age of the person who blows them out, preferably all at once) and singing a special song,

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 95.

Unfortunately, the myth does not show how people appeared in the world in the first two ages. Cf. Mitologie świata. Bogowie. Przedstawienia. Motywy, ed. by A. Cotterell, translated by M. Boguta, M. Iwińska, S. Krasoczko, Ożarów Mazowiecki 2012, p. 261. On the subject of history and culture of the Caribbean, see also N. Hanna, E. Stanford, Karaiby. Przewodnik National Geographic translated by B. Kocowska, edition II, Warsaw 2012. On the subject of the myths of creation, see D. Adams Leeming, M. Adams Leeming, A Dictionary of Creation Myths, Oxford–New York 1995.

such as *Plurimos annos*, the English *Happy Birthday* (or Polish *Sto lat*). There are also wishes for good health and well-being, such as the German *Alles Gute zum Geburtstag*, or Spanish *felice compleanno*.

Are these customs only values to Western culture? Do they imply any changes in human mentality? Have they had and do they still have an impact on art and literature? The author intends to seek the answers to these and similar questions by analysing the origin and changes of the ancient (but still cultivated) literary genre of genethliacon or carmen natale, carmen natalitium as well as carmen genital in a broad cultural, European and non-European context. The raw materials of the analysis will be works in Greek and Latin created in different periods and constituting parts (generally not well known or unknown) of various national literatures. 12 Genethliacons have circulated in the vernacular literatures as part of the rhetorical heritage, and have been an important element in certain genres (genus demonstrativum)¹³ next to epithalamium and epicedium as well as epitaphium. The state of research on genethliacon is rather modest. There are admittedly a few works on the subject mentioned by an excellent encyclopaedia of research on antiquity Der neue

¹² Cf. a.o. I. R. Herrera, Genethliakon Isidorianum: miscellanea graeca, latina atque hebraica, Isidoro Rodríguez Herrera XIV lustra complenti oblata, Salamanca 1975; The Oxford Book of English Verse, ed. by Ch. Ricks, Oxford 1999; W. Bruchnalski, Łacińska i polska poezja w Polsce średniowiecznej, Kraków 1935, 1975; M. Korolko, Wstęp, in: Średniowieczna pieśń religijna polska, edited by M. Korolko, Wrocław 1980; J. Woronczak, Studia o literaturze średniowiecza i renesansu, Wrocław 1993; M. Włodarski, Wstęp, in: Polska poezja świecka XV wieku, edited by M. Włodarski, Wrocław 1997.

¹³ Cf. M. Korolko, *Sztuka retoryki. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny*, edition II extended, Warsaw 1998, p. 52. Cf. also definition "γεννητικὸν λόγου ἐννόημα", "an image turning into a word," in: H. Lausberg, *Retoryka literacka. Podstawy wiedzy o literaturze* translated, edited, and introduction by A. Gorzkowski, p. 811.

Pauly. Encyclopädie der Antike¹⁴, however, even there it can be seen that the subject does not garner a great deal of interest. Particularly noteworthy is the publication of essays by the well-known Canadian explorer of Greek poetry (who as a musician simultaneously feels the rhythm of it), Emmet I. Robbins, entitled *Thalia Delighting in Song*¹⁵, well illustrating the genre and cultural background of Greek genethliacon. Nonetheless, one would generally think that genethliacon is neglected today and that this impacted on the genre placing birthday poems among occasional pieces of literature considered to be less remarkable by some literary scholars.

It is worth juxtaposing, as once Roland Barthes¹⁶ did, the writing of people who are mentally different and who write different texts in order to show the same skeleton of text construction, the same rhetoric formation acquired by them in the educational process, which did not limit them, and did not worsen because they discussed ordinary human topics. This also highlighted the creative freedom of the authors of genethliacon as they did not give up on rhetorical traditions. They cannot remain classified today as creators of "low literature" or unliterary graphographers, only because they remained faithful to rhetorical tradition, humanistic values and felt the urge to the poetical writing of wishes. Moreover, it is worth adding that these wishes were created not only for rulers but also for ordinary people, and thus honouring every human existence became worthy of poetry.

Occasional works also include wedding and funeral works, epithalamia and epicedia, epitaphs, funeral elegies; a great deal

¹⁴ Cf. Der neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike. Das klassische Altertum und seine Rezeptionsgeschichte, Hrsg. H. Cancik, H. Schneider, J. B. Metzler, Stuttgart 1996–2010, v. II, pp. 913–914.

¹⁵ Cf. E. I. Robbins, *Thalia Delighting in Song: Essays on Ancient Greek Poetry*, ed. by B. MacLachlan, Toronto 2013.

¹⁶ Cf. R. Barthes, Sade, Fourier, Loyola, translated by R. Lis, Warsaw 1996.

has already been written about them (and is still being written).¹⁷ Certainly the potential audience inclined to listen to an occasional literary work appeared (and appears) more often at weddings and funerals than at births and christenings. However, once all three of the mentioned genres of occasional art belonged to the same rhetoric and literary group and were intended not so much to be delivered on the spot but were rather meant for later reading. In addition, there is a great difference between the lesser interest in a given genre and an almost complete lack of information about it. Meanwhile, the contemporary reader or student will look in vain for the concept of "genethliacon" in Władysław Kopaliński's famed lexicon Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych z almanachem. 18 Instead, one might find "genealogy" defined as "lineage, family history; the science researching origin, family relationships, family history; origin, beginning of something, and genesis" and "genetic tree" defined as the "graphic representation of pedigree". The remembrance of the history of a given family asks for complementation with a genre that has so often served its commemoration, especially since several dozen pages earlier there is included²⁰ a definition of epithalamium and epitaphium...

Also, other dictionaries and encyclopaedias (such as *Stownik rodzajów i gatunków literackich* edited by Grzegorz Gazda and Słowinia Tynecka-Makowska) often do not even contain mention of genethliacons, which may be all the more surprising because they mention, for example, not only rare genres created in Mediterranean

¹⁷ Numerous works about funerals of not only nations or societies but even families and houses are being created. Cf. among others M. Jarczykowa, *Przy pogrzebach rzeczy i rytmy*. *Funeralia Radziwiłłowskie z XVII wieku*, Katowice 2012.

¹⁸ Cf. W. Kopaliński, Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych z al-manachem, Warsaw 2007.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 208.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 168.

cultures, such as propempticon but also, among others, long-gone extinct genres of Japanese or Indian literature.²¹ It is worth considering why this genre, alive to this day, is not remembered, not to mention the fact that the form occurs both in national languages and in Latin. Similarly, *Encyklopedia katolicka*, devoting attention only to "genealogy" and "genetics"²² as well as "genesis", ²³ does not include any information about genethliacon, even though the genre played a significant role in the creation of Christian works and patron saints.

Also, in the most popular English-language dictionaries concerning Greco-Roman antiquity (for example the Oxford Companion to Classical Literature ed. by M. C. Howatson, Oxford University Press 2013) there is no definition of the genethliacon

In the aforementioned dictionaries, the entry referring to the "inferior genre of Indian drama" from the Middle Ages, so-called *goshthi*, was conscientiously devised; unfortunately, only two pieces have survived. A lot of space was also devoted to the Japanese medieval prose called *monunki-tari gays*. Cf. *Stownik rodzajów i gatunków literackich*, ed. by G. Gazda, Warsaw 2012, pp. 365 and 372–373. Cf. also *Stownik rodzajów i gatunków literackich*, ed. by G. Gazda, S. Tynecka-Makowska, Kraków 2006, pp. 279 and 282–283.

²² Cf. Encyklopedia katolicka, v. V, ed. by L. Bieńkowski et al., Lublin 1989, pp. 939–948.

[&]quot;Genesia (Greek – genesios – 'relating to the birth') – in ancient Greece, the celebration of the birthday of the deceased (for example, the father of the family or outstanding individuals such as Hippocrates, Plato and Socrates). The birthday of a living person was called genethlia. The feast of Genesia in honour of the dead (combined with the feast of Gaia, who received them after death) was to be set by Solon. All the dead of the city and of the state were venerated in public at the Third Day of the Day of the Dead, in the so-called Antesterie. In private and public Genesia, wreaths and food sacrifices were laid on the graves of the dead. Later writers consider genesios and genethlios synonyms. In Greek Christian terminology, the name Genesia was used to refer to the birth of the Holy Virgin". Cf. ibid., p. 949 (entry ed. by Henryk Wójtowicz). Translated by Maria Gaj.

genre. Again, as in Polish, a better (but not full) explanation can be acquired on the internet.

There are, of course, glorious exceptions, such as a definition developed by Teresa Kostkiewiczowa and published in Stownik terminów literackich, which will later be discussed, as well as references to ancient sources of inspiration for Polish genethliacons from the eighteenth century called "name-day poems", in the study by Barbara Wolska, Bożena Mazurkowa and Tomasz Chachulski.²⁴ Also, noteworthy are the works of Edmund Kotarski: a monograph entitled Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa XVII wieku²⁵ and an article entitled Wśród uczniowskich i studenckich walet (from Osiemnastowieczna gdańska poezja okolicznościowa).26 Finally, exceptions include the work of priest Bogusław Nadolski dealing with name days and birthdays in the Christian tradition of Europe.²⁷ However, after discussing the feast of the day of one's birth, birthdays in a figurative sense and forms of Christian celebrations of "birth after death", the author focuses exclusively on the issue pertaining to which feast should be blissfully celebrated: one's birthday or name day or perhaps just the anniversary of one's baptism. On the other hand, the author does not look at the importance of birthday celebrations from the cultural angle, including literature, and does not analyse genethliacons themselves.

Genethliacons continue to be works locked in libraries and the genre itself escapes researchers. Nevertheless, the genre is very real, it continues in its classical form, also with many modifications

²⁴ Cf. Wiersze imieninowe poetów z drugiej połowy XVIII wieku, introduction, text choice and edition: B. Wolska, B. Mazurkowa, T. Chachulski, Warsaw 2011.

²⁵ Cf. E. Kotarski, Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa XVII wieku, Gdańsk 1993.

²⁶ Cf. E. Kotarski, Wśród uczniowskich i studenckich walet (z osiemnastowiecznej gdańskiej poezji okolicznościowej), "Napis", series III, 1997, pp. 22–72.

²⁷ B. Nadolski, *Imieniny i urodziny w tradycji chrześcijańskiej Europy*, Poznań 2007.

INTRODUCTION

and continues to have a significant impact, both culturally and for literary circles. It is high time for genethliacons to be released. Let us seek out this forgotten genre in order to get to know it better and discover that it really pervades our culture, perhaps even more now it seems apparent to anyone.

Dziewkowice, 8 September 2018 (Girls village) (my birthday)

Chapter I

Phenomenon of the birth of man in the cultures of the world

Why are people?²⁸ – over the centuries many people have asked this question, as well as Richard Dawkins of Oxford University, a student of the Nobel prize-winning ethologist Nikolaas Tinbergen, the famous antitheist and theoretician of biological evolution. The reluctance to religions proclaiming human immortality and a scientific and materialistic approach to the issues discussed do not interfere with the affirmation of "immortal coils",²⁹ of which a human being is made up:

"The genes are the immortals [...]. We, the individual survival machines in the world, can expect to live a few more decades. But the genes in the world have an expectation of life that must be measured not in decades but in thousands and millions of years. [...] Each individual is unique. [...] Genes, like diamonds, are forever, but not quite in the same way as diamonds. It is an individual diamond crystal that lasts, as an unaltered pattern of atoms. DNA The life of any one physical DNA molecule is quite short – perhaps a matter of months, certainly not more than one lifetime. But a DNA molecule could theoretically live on in the form of copies of itself for a hundred million years. Moreover, just like the ancient

²⁸ Why are people? is the title of the first chapther of Richard's Dawkins famous book *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford 1976, p. 1.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 21.

replicators in the primeval soup, copies of a particular gene may be distributed all over the world." [...].30

Immortality inherent in the nature and within its manifestations such as the emergence and birth of a new life, the individuality of each being, its uniqueness and significance for the community are issues probably harking back to the beginnings of human consciousness³¹ and yet still as new as every subsequent birth.

In different cultures of the world one can find convictions and rites related to birth. One of the better known celebrations, still present in the consciousness of Muslim societies, is name-giving (tasmijjd or agiqab), one week after birth, which differs among the religious tradition of given branches of Islam.³² Before this rite,³³ the mother receives presents from her child's father (these can only be objects useful in everyday life, but not silver or gold which could arouse her pride), and followed immediately by the ceremony of cutting the hair for the first time and the ritual sacrifice of animals (two goats or lambs in the case of a boy, one in the case of a girl) without violating their bones. The hair is weighed, and the money equivalent is given in gold or silver to the poor. Then, the parents are instructed on how to deal with the child, how to celebrate the birth and the name-giving day. Furthermore, the laws of the Koran are recalled including an obligation to breastfeed the child for two years. Between the seventh day after the birth and the name day at the age of 14, a male descendant should be circumcised, which is also

³⁰ Cf. Ibid., pp. 34–35.

³¹ It is especially worth noting the achievements of the archaic Greek philosophy of nature. Cf. W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, v. I: *Filozofia starożytna i średniowieczna*, Warsaw 1990, p. 17 and further.

³² W. Szturc, Rytualne źródła teatru. Obrzęd – maska – święto, Kraków 2013, p. 212.

³³ Information based on the chapter entitled *Matematyka gestów rytualnych islamu*. Cf. Ibid., pp. 207–218.

celebrated as a family holiday. When a child turns 4 years, 4 months and 4 days, the *Bismillah* (in the name of God) ceremony takes place,³⁴ which is the solemn inauguration of the teaching of reading the Koran. The Holy Day of the Holy Prophet,³⁵ celebrated on the twelfth day of the third month of the year, is also a great celebration for the Sunni branch of Islam. Then, also the birth of all boys and the wisdom of Allah are celebrated.³⁶

Among the lower social strata of Islam in Turkey, belief in in Al Basty (*al basma*) or Al Kardai (*al karısı*)³⁷ is popular. Female demons that threaten women in the puerperium period. To avoid this danger, therefore, a request for divine blessing and care is called for, the *Mashallah* (*ma shaa Allah*).³⁸ It seems that even this short wording, sometimes encapsulated with additional wishes of prosperity, could be the equivalent of the European genethliacon of Hellenistic and Hellenic origin.

In some cultures, a single birth is not a value in itself but it can be used for the common good. Such a custom belonged, among others,

³⁴ M. J. Żmichrowska, *Matżeństwo i rodzina w Chrześcijaństwie i Islamie. Wspólne tradycje*, Wałbrzych 1996, pp. 169–171.

³⁵ From the tenth century, beside the Feast of Victims (Eid al-Adha) and the Feast of the End of Lent (Eid al-Fitr), this is the third most important celebration in Islam. Cf. K. Banek, *Historia religii. Religie niechrześcijańskie*, Kraków 2007, p. 489.

³⁶ W. Szturc, op. cit., p. 214.

³⁷ Cf. Asian Mythologies compiled by Y. Bonnefoy, translated under the direction of W. Doniger, Chicago–London 1993, p. 322. Cf. also: W. Korsak, *Turcja. Praktyczny przewodnik*, Bielsko-Biała 2012, p. 58.

³⁸ The quoted phrase first of all serves to emphasise that all that is good and beautiful is the work of Allah and, secondly, protects against the feeling of jealousy because of the success that has happened to someone else. See. T. Gulevich, *Understanding Islam and Muslim Traditions*, foreword by F. S. Colby, Detroit 2005, pp. 209–211 and 434 as well as *Asian Mythologies...*, op. cit., and A. Wawrzyniak, *Çanakkale i północno-zachodnia Turcja. Przewodnik Globtrotera*, Poznań 2015, p. 25.

to the common legacy of south-east Asia, where even up until the nineteenth century offerings were made from the living, especially in the form of new-born children, for example by throwing them into a volcano or burying them under the gates and pillars of palaces and other important buildings.³⁹ These actions, though tantamount to murder, were aimed at increasing the vitality of the whole society, stimulating the forces of nature to greater fertility, i.e. more births. The magical formulas used in this regard concerned both a single death and the expected invigorating birth of all of nature. So, in essence, it was also a kind of glorification of birth, to which the road leads through death. Similarly, in the case of the Aztecs and other peoples of Central and South America, human life was not valued at the individual level. The Aztec god of vegetation and all-revival bore the name of Xipe Totec, meaning "Our Lord, the Flayed One" because he was dressed in skins stripped from human victims, who upon dying, bore resemblance, in the opinion of his followers, to young maize ejecting its outer layer.⁴⁰ In this context, death seems to be a continuation, a higher degree of participation in the constant renewal of the creative process of the world. However, Aztec poetry's main task, for the use of its own society, was to recruit prisoners so that the gods could derive from them that terrible nectar of life. It often refers to the issue of birth, a unique value. Considering terminological reservations concerning the terms "general literature" or "world literature", 41 the following poetic prayer sung during childbirth can be called genethliacon with a high degree of accuracy:

³⁹ Mitologie..., op. cit., p. 211.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 289.

⁴¹ Cf. J. Heistein, Wprowadzenie do literaturoznawstwa porównawczego. Litera-tura awangardowa w świetle badań porównawczych, Wrocław 1990, pp. 10–23.

There in the house of the goddess sitting on the turtle.

She gave birth, a pregnant woman,

There, in this house, children are born.

There, where the house of the goddess sitting on the turtle is,

There, they see the light of a pearl, wonderful feathers.

There, he comes into the world, there he is born.

Come here, come!

Come here new-born, come here!

Come here, come here, baby, you pearl, you great feather!42

The goddess Tlazoltéotl⁴³ is mentioned in the song "devouring impurities", and is portrayed as a woman giving birth, the patron of women and confession, that is, of confessing all evil deeds and of purifying. The birth of a child was also associated with the restoration of cleanliness, the beginning of something new and unblemished. Shortly after the birth of a child, he or she was given a name and a horoscope was prepared.⁴⁴

On the other hand, in the twentieth century, a 16th-century lullaby was sung to children:

In a cradle made of shields I will carry on my back

Son of a thriving war.

Tambours and I will cry:

O my son, son of a thriving war...45

To understand this lullaby, one should know that the purpose of a "thriving war" was not wealth or foreign lands but sacrifices

⁴² Quote from: M. Sten, *Dialog z Coatlicue*, Warsaw 1963, p. 108. Translated by Maria Gaj.

⁴³ K. Banek, journal, quote, p. 427.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 430.

⁴⁵ Cf. M. Sten, journal, quote, p. 100. Translated by Maria Gaj.

that could please the deity. Thanks to this, its followers would be acknowledged in the next life, the only true life:

We only came to rest, We only came to dream, It is not true, It is not true that we came, To live on earth⁴⁶

In turn, Zoroastrianism, striving in its ideas for a state of perfect purity, has a symbol (and formulas dedicated to it) named Faravahar. It depicts the path of the human soul from the moment of birth to death. Particular veneration was given to the birth of Zoroaster, whose birth was thought to be miraculous.⁴⁷ The Sumerian tale of Ninlil, who constantly follows the god Enlil, still conceiving and giving birth to consecutive children, is a praise of both fertility and birth.48 Also, interesting are Siberian and Arctic myths and stories about the reincarnation of the human soul: the soul leaves the body of the deceased and remains homeless until it proclaims its procreation in a given tribe then the soul returns to live in the body of the newborn and to pass on some (positive!) features. 49 The doctrine of karma in Buddhism, speaks of the taming of the invisible world of spirits, in some way differentiates the value of birth; the birth of the enlightened ones seems to be more important to the world.50 It is different in Japanese shintō, where "every individual is an element in the chain of universal pursuit of the perfection of the world".51 In the Australian Aboriginal religion, the central

⁴⁶ From the anonymous Aztec poetry. Cf. Ibid., p. 5. Translated by Maria Gaj.

⁴⁷ Cf. K. Banek, op. cit., p. 127.

⁴⁸ Mitologie..., op. cit., p. 17.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 139.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 168.

⁵¹ K. Banek, op. cit., p. 259.

element is fertility, which aims to maintain the power of the rebirth of the cosmos. An important part of the beliefs, especially in the central part of the continent, was the story of the Old Woman and the Rainbow Snake who crept into her womb, thanks to which ancestors' ghosts can bring life to people who are born today.⁵²

African myths devote a lot of attention to eternal life. In one version of the myth of eternal life destroyed by some mistake, the chameleon tells people that they would live forever. Because it walked slowly, a faster lizard came up to tell the people that they would die. This myth says that death has admittedly emerged victorious but in various versions it tells of the possibility of eternal life, which can be the subject of a song of praise.53 The poetic story of African singers about the life that was to last forever is also the myth of the Yoruba people from Nigeria.⁵⁴ According to this myth, death broke into life devoid of crying and disease. Heaven, when asked what to do with the deceased, informed the worm sent by the humans that the body should be stimulated to life by hanging on a tree and throwing mush at it. The Agadzagadza lizard disturbed the transmission of the correct message. Speaking out loud, it gave people the command to bury the body and in this way it brought eternal death to the world. It is worth noting that the Yoruba are one of the few African peoples who believe in passing to the land of the dead after death and receiving reward or punishment for their earlier life.

Most Africans⁵⁵ believe in the life of the deceased and death of the body is not considered real death for the next few generations. The African lives as long as the memory of him is alive. The state of the body's death is defined by the notion of memory.⁵⁶

⁵² Mitologie..., op. cit., p. 241.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 257.

M. K. Devinney, E. M. Thury, op. cit., p. 109.

⁵⁵ Cf. H. Scheub, *A Dictionary of African Mythology: The Mythmaker as Storyteller*, Oxford 2000, p. 48.

⁵⁶ Cf. B. Gaj, op. cit., pp. 12-23.

The memory of a man also turns out to be a very important form of living for the Indians, the inhabitants of Japan, Egypt and Mediterranean culture. Building huge buildings, such as pyramids, Celtic dolmens, Japanese kofuns or the mounds of the American Adena culture⁵⁷ are evidence of understanding death as a stage or state identified with still being alive or reborn memory. There is no opposition of birth-death but there is birth and memory, present side by side in literary creation.

According to Nordic beliefs, it is not death but only birth that is a real concept. For example, mistletoe embodies the external soul,58 which continues despite the deaths of people who have been given souls successively. To document the beliefs of old peoples related to ever-dying and simultaneously still-living nature, James Frazer investigated many Indo-European myths that support the belief in the passage of the "external soul" from object to object. The "outer soul", ghosts living in trees, are, according to modern researchers⁵⁹ a signal of transition from animism to polytheism. This passage is present in all mythologies of the world but it has only been well documented in Indo-European material. The above-mentioned views, referring to the concept of the "outer soul" and permanently present and affirmed life, often use modern fantasy literature, and even science fiction. A novel by the well-known Scandinavian author of children's literature, Astrid Lindgren, entitled The Lionheart Brothers (published in 1973, it aroused a great deal of controversy and now, in Poland, is a set reading in the fourth grade of primary school) faces the subject of death in the spirit of old beliefs. The posthumous world depicted in it appears to still be inadequate and at the same time as a world into which man is born, dying. Death is also an uneven phenomenon according to Orson Scott Card, the

⁵⁷ M. Kerrigan, *Historia śmierci*, translated by S. Klimkiewicz, Warsaw 2009, p. 42.

⁵⁸ E. Csapo, Theories of Mythology, Malden, Oxford, Carlton 2005, p. 41

⁵⁹ Cf. a.o. K. Banek, op. cit., p. 359.

author of the well-known saga about Ender. In the book entitled *Speaker for the Dead*, 60 he places his hero on a planet called Lusitania. Its inhabitants are thinking creatures hatching from larvae. These, in turn, transform into trees, growing out of the tormented corpses:

Come and sit in my shadow. Look at the rays of the sun piercing through my leaves. Put your back on my trunk. [...] Tell people how I was conceived on the bark of my father's tree and how I was born in the dark devouring my mother's body. Tell, how I left the darkness behind and went out into the half-light of the second life [...] and then my friend opened the way to my third life, full of light, let me to grow into the sky and to give life to ten thousand children. [...] I will really live forever. 61

Life, or rather its explicit beginning, or birth, shown in a poetic way, are acknowledged in many world literatures, if only as part of a cycle that unites them inseparably with death. In turn, the Mediterranean desire to commemorate every child's life (this desire has its roots in ancient Greece; was developed in the Hellenistic period, passed on to Rome and throughout Europe and was then enriched by the Christian tradition) can be documented with the whole set of magnificent children's sarcophagi⁶² from the Roman times. Often, they depict small children raised to the status of heroes,⁶³ as if to confirm the thesis that even their short life, despite dying close to birth, is worth the memory.

There are, however, rituals which emphasise the importance of the moment of birth in a special way. Although, they occur

⁶⁰ O. S. Card, *The Speaker for the Dead*, Warsaw 2013. Translated by Maria Gaj.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 343-344.

⁶² F. Cumont, Recherches sur le Symbolisme funéraire des Romains, Paris 1942, pp. 469–473.

⁶³ H.-I. Marrou, *Historia wychowania w starożytności*, translated by S. Łoś, Warsaw 1969, p. 526.

in different cultures, they have a similar purpose and even direction. In Asia: China, Japan and Korea, birthdays have been celebrated from at least the tenth century AD by giving the person in question seaweed soup as a special dish, probably the first meal he or she received after being weaning off the mother's breast. Interestingly, birthdays are often celebrated collectively and on selected anniversaries (in Japan the third, fifth and seventh birthday of the child's during the Shichi-Go-San festival; in China the important dates are entering adulthood and depending on the region it can be the thirteenth, sixteenth or eighteenth birthday).⁶⁴

Many contemporary rituals that accompany births⁶⁵ can be considered close to the old Greek *choreia*,⁶⁶ an extraordinary merging of dance, sound and words. Through the rite of *choreia*, people have expressed for centuries the unity of the human community as a condition for encountering a deity, an epiphany of which was sought via the *choreia* of prayer, as well as the drama of life and death (the transition from the hidden to the open) in the so-called *choreia* of passage.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Cf. Aiko, *Urodziny po azjatycku*, aikoword.blogspot.com/2015/03/82-urodziny-po-azjatycku.html (accessed: 15 July 2017).

^{65 &}quot;For many peoples, even African, the rituals associated with the birth of a child are long-term and begin long before he or she is born. Children are a treasure and not having any is the greatest curse, therefore, great importance is attached to the rituals related to birth while ensuring the greatest possible protection for the unborn child." Cf. Misyjne.pl, *Afryka: obrzędy przejścia*, http://misyjne.pl/misja/ afryka-obrzedy-przejścia (accessed: 21 July 2017). Translated by Maria Gaj.

⁶⁶ According to Tadeusz Zieliński, at the foundation of all humanistic sciences is a religious and psychological approach, also related to art (see the definition of a "triune choreia, i.e. a merging of dancing movement, sound and word"). See T. Zieliński, *Historia kultury antycznej w zwięzłym wykładzie*, v. 1, Warsaw 1922, p. 1 and further.

⁶⁷ E. Zwolski, *Choreia*, in: *Antropologia antyku greckiego. Zagadnienia i wybór tekstów*, ed. by W. Lengauer, L. Trzcionkowski, P. Majewski, Warsaw 2011, pp. 379, 383 i 390.

Birth ended the generational cycle: grandfather-father-son or grandmother-mother-daughter and became a kind of visualization of the forces of nature, constantly pulsating with life. Not always and not everywhere was birth desirable but has always meant facing nature, and contact with mystery. Even, around the birth of unwanted creatures, intricate psychological and literary plots were created in ancient Greece and Rome, to mention only the mythological Oedipus, abandoned by parents, or numerous dramatic-comedic stories (by Menandra, Plautus and Terence) on the subject of wonderfully found children after years. There, however, where the new-borns were wanted from the beginning or where the community made a decision about their community affiliation, the birth of children was celebrated in the rite of the Amphidromia, 68 which Edward Zwolski describes as follows:

The rite of entry was called Amphidromia, because its main act was the father's or female caretaker's run around the hearth with an infant in their arms. Probably they were accompanied by relatives and friends. Few sources mention music but in the realm of religion; running and dancing are phenomena of a similar nature. On the seventh or tenth day after the birthday, the child was given a name. As a result, women performed nightly rituals, including dances, with prizes in the form of sacred cakes.⁶⁹

The ancient analogies between the Greek notions of sight and birth: "born to see the light of day" were extremely interesting and

⁶⁸ This was a ceremony which saw the child accepted into the family on the fifth day after its birth. It was not concerned with the manifestation of power over life or death of the descendant as in Ancient Rome where *ius vitae et necis* applied. Cf. *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. by B. Rawson, Malden, Malden and Oxford 2011, p. 336.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 390. Translated by Maria Gaj.

often used in birthday-related works. Hence, there is only a step towards using metaphors of brightness in genethliacons and referring to Phoebe-Apollo or the goddess Lucina, which comes next.

⁷⁰ F. Frontisi-Ducroux, Oko, wzrok, spojrzenie – kilka greckich wyobrażeń, in: Antropologia antyku..., op. cit., pp. 422 and 428.

Chapter II

Genethliacon – birth and development of the genre⁷¹

The so-called house muse in European culture is commonly associated primarily with the Renaissance and although there have been many new studies showing the ancient genesis of the epithalamium or epitaphium, birthday songs were never developed in Poland. According to Ludwika Ślękowa⁷² poems honouring the birth of a descendant were created by design provided by the ancient tradition, which "was not rich in this respect".73 Let us, therefore, briefly review the ancient literature since the birth of the genre in the Hellenistic era, through the Latin literature, to its modern reception, in order to see whether the statement about "unfinished antique literature" in this regard is indeed legitimate. Γενεθλιακόν μέλος or γενεθλιακόν ἄσμα are precisely, according to the most general and basic definition of Der neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der *Antike...*⁷⁴ commemoration of one's birthday in the form of a poem "γενέθλιος ἡμέρα, γενέθλιον ἦμαρ" with or without handing a gift. Callimachus from Cyrene is indicated as the precursor of the genre. Καλλίμαχος ὁ Κυρηναῖος (around 310-240 BC) wrote an iamb

⁷¹ Cf. B. Gaj, "Genethliakon" – a Religious and Humanistic Poem-Song in Commemoration of Life or Rhetorical Approbation of Poetry? In: "Religious and Sacred Poetry: An International Quarterly of Religion, Culture and Education", v. 2, no. 1, 2014, pp. 45–60.

⁷² L. Ślękowa, Muza domowa: okolicznościowa poezja rodzinna czasów renesansu i baroku, Wrocław 1991, p. 63.

⁷³ Ibidem.

⁷⁴ Der neue Pauly..., op. cit., p. 913.

for a friend celebrating the birth of his daughter. The opportunity to write this iamb was for the aforementioned Amphidromia feast which involved running with a newborn child around the hearth in the presence of friends bringing gifts. Amphidromia took place on the seventh day after birth. For Callimachus, it was the seventh day that was particularly important because his patron was Apollo. It should be added that in ancient Greece there were two or three celebrations connected with the birth of a child. They were celebrated on the fifth day after birth (welcoming of a child into the family), the seventh under the patronage of Apollo (giving gifts to family and friends) and the tenth (giving the name).⁷⁵

According to researchers⁷⁶ on Callimachus (among others, Benjamin Acosta-Hughes), his genethliacon (iamb twelfth), has a casket construction, a tale in a story, a story about the divine birth of little Hebe. This story, like the parable of the first iamb, contains an educational message for those who lived in the poet's times.⁷⁷ This poem can be considered by looking at the internal structure of the iambs, which the poet would have deliberately placed in this order so that the twelfth would be a continuation and complement the first. Both in the first and twelfth iambs, the gift and symbol of the gift are at the centre of the narrative⁷⁸ according to Acosta-Hughes. The first iamb tells the story of Bathycles who is just on the verge of completing his happy life and of his son, Amphalces, setting off with a cup to each of the so-called "Seven Wise Men"⁷⁹ on his

⁷⁵ Cf. The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World, ed. by J. Evans Grubbs, T. Parkin and R. Bell, Oxford 2013, p. 209.

⁷⁶ Cf. especially *Brill's Companion to Callimachus*, ed. by B. Acosta-Hughes, L. Lehnus, S. Stephens, Leiden–Boston 2011, p. 17.

⁷⁷ B. Acosta-Hughes, *Polyeideia: The Iambi of Callimachus and the Archaic Iambic Tradition (Hellenistic Culture and Society)*, Berkeley 2002, p. 7.

⁷⁸ Ibidem, p. 18.

⁷⁹ The ancients, considered the number 7 as sacred and a symbol of perfection, created the canon of the seven wisest people: the first philosophers. Among the

Father's orders. It is a journey in the search of perfection as the goal and content of a sage's life but also a journey deep into Greek history. The golden cup serves ultimately as a votive gift offered at the temple of Apollo.

In turn, the twelfth iamb is in itself a gift for the daughter of the poet's friend juxtaposed with the gift of Apollo for the newly born Hebe, which was a song and piece of poetry. The divine gift becomes a model for the poet, whose work – thanks to this treatment – can be assessed as more valuable, divine.

The intertextual parallel of both iambs is the more attractive because both of them narrate mythical events, even those less known, both are metaphors of human creative activity, both appeal to the educated reader, for whom the concept of wisdom is important: $\sigma o \phi i \alpha$. Both are also addressed to two actually existing contemporary authors: the first song to Ptolemy Philadelphus, the twelfth to a friend of the poet.

As Apollo's hymn was more valuable than all the gifts to the newly born Hebe from the other gods, the circumstantial song of Callimachus dominates over the other presents. The story of the divine birth juxtaposed with the birth of man gives literature's first preserved genethliacon a special meaning, a didactic purpose, raising the value of human birth and poetry at the same time. What is more, Callimachus rejects the strict dependence on the deity that the mortal-creator was bound to and turns it into direct identification of the poet with his divine counterpart and equates human birth with the divine. Although, this iamb has been fragmentary, the poet's declaration: "I will sing, Muse, to the tiny new-born" ("ἀεισομαι Μοῦσα τῆ μικκῆ") precisely defines the genre of a birthday song that

[&]quot;Seven Sages" were Thales of Miletus, Pittakos of Mytilene, Brias of Priene, Solona of Athens, Periander of Corinth, Kleobulos of Lindos and Chilo of Sparta. Cf. i.a. P. Wietrzykowski, *Mare nostrum, czyli śródziemnomorskie korzenie Europy*, Opole 1998, pp. 41–42. Cf. Ibid., W. Tatarkiewicz, v. I, op. cit., pp. 19–21.

did not have a similar direct equivalent in the previous (preserved) Hellenic or Hellenistic literature and, therefore, is worth quoting in the Greek original⁸⁰:

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Callimachus, Fragment 163 [202 PF] 
Ἄρτεμι Κρηταῖον Ἀμνισοῦ πέδον
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τε Δικτ ( τιμίη. (
σε του. ( i]στίη λ. (
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* * *

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...). γάρ (...). αινοι πόλεις
....)κου μο(..).. οὔρεα βλέπει
....). μες ὧ κά(λ)λιστα νήθουσαι μυ(
....)ουρειησι. (...).. χθονός
..) θετ' οὐχ 'ὑμὴν' ἀ(
καὶ θέμιν καὶ πα[
τῶνδ' ἄναξ. υδ'οι(. ..)..(.)ουσ(
φαυλ...β.. (.)ι. ναποι.. (.) . (..).ους
ἔστιν οικ(...). ι ...ἀψευδέα λέγων
καὶ τάφο(ν τὸ)ν Κ(ρ)ῆτα γινώσκειν κενόν
φησὶ καὶ πατρῷ(ο)ν οὐ κτείνει Δία:
τούνεκ' ἀντήσ(αιτε) πρηεῖαι, θεαί,
τῆσδ' ἐτῆς' εὐχῆ(σ', ἐγ)ὼ δ' ἀεισομαι
Μοῦσα τῆ μικκῆ τι τε..ηναι μελ[
ἡνίκ' ον(...)υ(.)α τὴν γενεθλίην
έβδόμην ήρ(η) θ[υγ]ατρός ἡμέρην
η(..)ν οἱ δ' Ὀλυμπον ητ.σ.....οι
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⁸⁰ Due to the fragmentary conservation of the texts and the archaic, often debatable, forms of the record of the first Greek genethliacons, their translation was abandoned. On the other hand, these fragments, which were preserved in their entirety and do not raise any doubts, have been quoted. Detailed descriptions of the content have also been deployed.

η(...). (.) τις παι. (.καλ)λίστη δόσει π. (..). α τιμήσει τ(...).....ερο.(
Ζεὺς πατὴρ οὐ φαυ....(....)..(
πολλὰ τεχνήεντα ποικ(ίλ)α γλ(υφῆ παίχν(ια) Τριτωνὶς ἤνεικεν κόρ(
πολλὰ καὶ Ἀπίου πυλωρὸς αὐχένο(ς ἔκ τε τῆς....(.)...(.)....(.)ης ἀλός (...)⁸¹

One modification of this genre was made by Leonidas from Alexandria (Alexandrinus). First of all, it was a formal modification because the poet used an equal-vowel type of poem. Secondly, there was a change in the addressee and circumstances: the work became a gift for the emperor "in the birthday hours" (γενεθλιακαῖσιν ἐν ἄραις). Therefore, the opportunity to celebrate is not the birth of a new life, but the anniversary of birth:

Θύει σοι τόδε γράμμα γενεθλιακαῖσιν ἐν ἄραις, Καῖσαρ, Νειλαίη Μοῦσα Λεωνίδεω· Καλλιόπης γὰρ ἄκαπνον ἀεὶ θύος. Εἰς δὲ νέωτα, ἤν ἐθέλης, θύσει τοῦδε περισσότερα⁸²

Leonidas' poems are also called *versus echoici*, in which the last syllable can be repeated like an echo. From this poetic form, which became one of the important formal proposals of later Latin elegies both antique (Ovid, Martialis), Renaissance as well as Baroque (Ianus Secundus, Erasmus from Rotterdam, Wacław Potocki),⁸³ and from which derived the aforementioned Callimachus and Parmenion.

⁸¹ Cf. *Anthologia Graeca*, Hrsg. H. Beckby, München 1965, pp. 1–6. All Greek texts quoted as fragments of *Antologia Palatyńska* were excerpted from this edition.

⁸² Cf. Leonidas Alexandrinus, Anth. Pal. VI, 321.

⁸³ Cf. A. Łuka, *Lacińskie renesansowe versus echoici i ich rzekoma nieprzekład-al-ność*, in: *Studia Classica et Neolatina XII. Przez stulecia...*, ed. by Z. Głombiowska, Gdańsk 2014, pp. 182–200.

In the works of the latter, one can find descriptions of gifts that could be birthday gifts, although, without any clear reference to the celebration. However, it is Leonidas who deserves the name of the second "birthday poet" after Callimachus. In the other genethliacon, he mentions "birthday gifts of wealth" (" $\pi\lambda$ ουτου δῶρα, γενεθλίδια") such as crystal and silver as well as expensive yellow and green stones. He juxtaposes them with two distiches, which he puts together and which won in an informal contest for best gift because they were more willingly accepted than material gifts and even envy (from probably the other donors) would not change that. The next "birthday songs" are, therefore, a kind of special birthday gift, although sometimes it is only a complementary gift. For example, the poet Krinagoras gives Proclus a silver stylus ("κάλαμος"):

Αργύρεόν σοι τόνδε γενέθλιον ές τεὸν ἦμαρ, Πρόκλε, νεόσμηκτον δουρατίην κάλαμον, εὖ μὲν ἐυσχίστοισι διάγλυπτον κεράεσσιν, εὖ δὲ ταχυνομένην εὔροον εἰς σελίδα⁸⁴

On the other hand, Simon's son was given a birthday bottle, an oil bottle, made of bronze, according to genethliacon no. 261 from the sixth book of the Palatine Anthology. It is worth noting, that in this poem it is most likely that we are seeing for the first time, what is conventionalised and present in almost every congratulation, and that is a "wish from the heart, cordial" – Greek "σὺν φρενί":

Χάλκεον ἀργυρέω με πανείκελον, Ἰνδικὸν ἔργον, ὅλπην, ἡδίστου ξείνιον εἰς ἐτάρου, ἦμαρ ἐπεὶ τόδε σεῖο γενέθλιον, υἰὲ Σίμωνος, πέμπει γηθομένη σὺν φρενὶ Κριναγόρης.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Cf. Krinagoras, Anth. Pal. VI, 227.

⁸⁵ Cf. Krinagoras, Anth. Pal. VI, 261.

However, the bride was given roses on her birthday (and wedding at the same time), which during these ceremonies specifically saw the acceleration of the opening of their purple buds on the head of the (so-called) beautiful girl, even though, it was winter. On the day of this birthday, she should be doubly pleased since soon she will also find herself in the marriage bed:

Εἴαρος ἥνθει μὲν τὸ πρὶν ῥόδα, νῦν δ' ἐνὶ μέσσῷ χεΐματι πορφυρέας ἐσχάσαμεν κάλυκας σῆ ἐπιμειδήσαντα γενεθλίη ἂσμενα τῆδε ἠοῖ, νυμφιδίων ἀσσοτάτη λεχέων. Καλλίστης στεφθῆναι ἐπὶ κροτάφοισι γυναικὸς λώιον ἢ μίμνειν ἠρινὸν ἠέλιον.86

Roses simultaneously become a gift and a donor, as well as an excuse to create a real gift or a neat genethliacon, just like the five lyrical books of Anacreon donated to a certain Anthonia along with the genethliacon crafted for this occasion by Krinagoras:⁸⁷

Βύβλων ή γλυκερή λυρικῶν ἐν τεύχεϊ τῷδε πεντὰς ἀμιμήτων ἔργα φέρει Χαρίτων. Άνακρέοντος, πρέσβυς ᾶς ὁ Τήιος ἔγραψεν ἢ παρ' οἶνον ἢ σὺν Ἱμέροις· δῶρον δ' εἰς ἱερὴν Ἀντωνίη ἤκομεν ἠῶ κάλλευς καὶ πραπίδων ἔξοχ' ἐνεγκαμένη⁸⁸

^{86 &}quot;Once, we, the roses, bloomed in spring, but now, in the middle of winter, we open our bright buds to smile happily on the morning of your birthday and your wedding day. It is better to be seen on the head of the most beautiful of virgins than to wait for the sun of spring." Translated by Beata Gaj (Greek – Polish), Maria Gaj (Polish – English).

⁸⁷ Krinagoras, Anth. Pal. IX, 239.

^{88 &}quot;Here we are, a sweet pentad of lyrical poetic books full of unparalleled grace; here the works of Anacreon of Teos, which the old man wrote, whether

After careful analysis of the content, songs about gifts and offerings to gods often turn out to be birthday songs. "Receive a birthday gift, o Lady," says the poet Diodor of Sardis to the goddess Hera ("δέξο γενεθλιδίους, πότνα, θυηπολίας"). 89

Antonios Thallos, in turn, wishes the ruler (Caesar) – on his "high birthday" or in general for coming from a "high family" (" $\alpha i \theta \epsilon \rho (\eta \nu \gamma \epsilon \nu \epsilon \sigma \nu \nu)$) – undisturbed rule in the east and in the west as well as wishes for him to be a shield for his subjects year on year.9°

Γενεθλιακός λόγος was also an important part of the epideictic rhetoric as is evidently seen in the works of Aelius Aristides (117-c.181 AD)⁹¹ and Himerios (310/315-385/386 AD).⁹² Aristides concentrates on the nature of this branch of rhetoric, whose main goal is not so much spectacular speech as the indication, individualization as well as emphasis on something special and desirable of the rhetorical persuasion. Therefore, on the occasion of the birth of a man, the parents of the child should be distinguished and the special circumstances of the birth should be characterised. Himerius shows this pattern, among others, using the example of Heracles' praise in the fifth oration:⁹³

Καὶ γίγνεται δὴ ὅυτως Ἡρακλῆς συνεργὸς τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὕπαρχος τῷν ὑπο τὸν τῆς σελήνης πόλον, καὶ τὰ σημῷα εἰδὺς ἠκολούθησεν

under the influence of wine or love; we come as a gift on this special day for Antonia, endowed with immense beauty and mind." Translated by Beata Gaj (Greek – Polish), Maria Gaj (Polish – English).

⁸⁹ Diodorus of Sardes, Anth. Pal. VI, 243.

⁹⁰ Antonios Thallos, Anth. Pal. VI, 235.

⁹¹ The preserved works of Aristides include 55 orations and declamations, and two rhetorical treaties. Cf. *Der neue Pauly...*, op. cit., p. 914.

⁹² Twenty-four orations of this author have remained to this very day. Cf. Ibid.

⁹³ Quote based on Aristides Aelius, ex recensione G. Dindorfii, Lipsk 1829, p. 31.

[...] Πατὴρ μεν τα πρῶ τα τῶν ὄντων, μήτηρ δέ ἤν ἐκεῖνος ἐξ ἁπασων προύκοινε 94

The genre of songs for the anniversary of birth was, therefore, somehow absorbed by the rhetoric. It must have been extremely widespread since both Menander Rhetor (third century AD) and the earlier Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c.60-7/5 BC) devoted a great deal of attention to it and the treaties modelled on their works enjoyed unflagging success. Let us look at what is *méthodos genethliakón* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, described in particular in the third book of *Sztuka retoryczna* (Τέχνη ἡητορική 3, 1–15).⁹⁵

Each speech deserves a proper beginning, a stylistic choice of articles and some kind of originality, freshness, and lack of artificiality. Dionysius, known especially for the *metathesis* technique or rereading of texts, applies it first and foremost in order to regain or obtain the naturalness of a work because rhetoric for him is a "practical ability of convincing words in the public activity, aiming to speak well". ⁹⁶ That is why he does not disdain works of practical application

⁹⁴ Himerius, Declamationes et orationes 4.39–7.37. Cf. Himerii sophistae quae reperiri potuerunt videlicet eclogae e Photii myriobiblo repetitae et declamationes e codicibus Augustanis, Oxoniensibus et Vaticanis, recensuit, emendavit, Latina versione et com-mentario perpetuo) illustravit, denique dissertationem de vita Himerii praemisit Gottlieb Wernsdorfius, Leipzig 1790. Cf. Ibid.: Philostratorum et Callistrati opera, Eunapii vitae sophistarum, Himerii sophistae declamationes, ed. A. Westermann, J. F. Boissoade, F. Dübner, Parisiis 1849; A. Colonna, Himerii declamationes et orationes cum deperditarum fragmentis, Rome 1951; Man and the Word: The Orations of Himerius, translated, annotated, and introduced by R. J. Penella, Berkeley 2007.

⁹⁵ Cf. Διονυσίου Άλικαρνασέως Τά ἡητορικά, opera Friderici Sylburgii Veterensis, Francofurdi 1586, p. 67. Cf. Ibid. J. van der Vliet, *Studia Critica in Dionysii Halicarnassensis Opera rhetorica*, Leiden 1874, p. 14 and further.

⁹⁶ Cf. H. Cichocka, Z najnowszych badań nad Dionizjuszem z Halikarnasu – na pograniczu gramatyki i retoryki, in: "Forum Artis Rhetoricae", no. 1/2012, pp. 69–72.

(and thus to a certain extent public and social ones) or marginalise them. Quite the contrary: he appreciates them and thinks it is worth giving specific guidelines to their potential creators.

In the opinion of Dionysius, poem-speech-birthday wishes are primarily praise, in which the social purpose is revealed once again. They should start with the praise of the family and homeland, then proceed to physical and spiritual qualities and end with a prayer for a good future and long life. In the case of a speech on the birth of a child, first of all, its origin and the day when the newborn was born should be emphasised. It should be added that Dionysius is not only a theoretician but also a practitioner of the birthday-related work. In the discourse *O zestawianiu wyrazów* he treats the first "adult" birthday of his student, Ruphus Metilius as a gift:

"I, too, my beloved child, bring a gift for you," says Helena, in Homer's work, giving the gift of hospitality to Telemachus. "Today is your first birthday since the time when you were counted as an adult citizen and for me the nicest and the dearest feast. However, I do not send you the work of my own hands as Helena, who said the above words, giving the robe to the young man [...] I give you the work and the fruit of knowledge and of my soul. Let it become your permanent property and help in all matters of life that require the art of pronunciation".97

In the times of Dionysius, that is at the turn of the centuries before and after Christ, genethliacon ceased to be an independent genre. It became a part of the larger whole, a dedication combined with a gift that could have been another, larger work (also written in prose). A good example is attributed to Lucian from Samosata (c.120-c.190 BC) or to a Pseudo-Lucian work entitled Μακρόβιοι

⁹⁷ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, O zestawianiu wyrazów, 1–10. Cf. Trzy stylistyki greckie. Arystoteles. Demetriusz. Dionizjusz, translated and edited by W. Madyda, Wrocław 1953, p. 150.

(meaning Long Lives or Cases of Longevity), dedicated to a man named Quintillus as a birthday present. The formula "prosfero soi doron" (προσφέρω σοι δῶρον), meaning "I offer you a gift" (lat. donum do) will become for many centuries a basic form of dedication. The author of the song wishes Quintillus and his children (and his second child has just been born) a happy life. He considers Quintillus' birthday a special circumstance, firstly because of the possibility of making a gift, and secondly because of its content: a story about long-living people and ways of living for a long time. Lucian (or Pseudo-Lucian), therefore, summons Nestor's casus to justify the need to look after the body. Then, he enumerates examples of compliance with a proper diet because it is no coincidence that the priests and philosophers of Egypt and India were long-lived. He also mentions the Chaldeans who live more than a hundred years as well as the people of Seres, 98 some of whom lived to their 300th birthday. The Roman examples are not as spectacular because they mention only the 80 years of Numa Pompilius ("the happiest of the Roman kings"), of Servus Tullius and of the exiled Tarquinius Superbus. The author also gives many examples of longevity, dividing "long-living" into certain social and professional groups (philosophers, grammarians, rhetoricians). Democritus of Abdera, Sophocles, Anacreon and Eratosthenes of Cyrene, mentioned last, lived a long life. The work ends with a renewed wish for longevity and health.

The work Μακρόβιοι was an inspiration for living in the third century AD Latin compiler, Censorinus. In 238 AD he dedicated a work entitled *The Birthday Book* (*De die natali Liber*) to his guardian, the nobleman Quintus Caerellius (for his birthday). He included in it everything he considered important⁹⁹ when it came to the

⁹⁸ Seres, Serica, Sera, that is "Silk Country" or "Silk People", are terms used in ancient Rome regarding China. The name comes from the Chinese word for silk or the name of the first Qin dynasty (pronounced Sin).

⁹⁹ Cf. H. N. Parker, *Preface*, in: *The Birthday book. Censorinus*, translated by H. N. Parker, Chicago 2007, p. IX. Cf. Ibid.: Polish translation of Censorini

theme of birth. In the first, second and third parts of *The Birthday Book* we learn how happy the day of birth is, how to worship the deity caring for a given person (because this day is also the feast of that particular guardian angel) and what kind of atmosphere should prevail. Subsequent chapters (4-7) discuss issues of fertility, conception, pregnancy, foetal development and then links between astrology and birth in the context of Pythagorean philosophy: the harmony of the body and mind as well as of music and the universe. Finally, the last part of the work refers to the so-called 'crisis years' in human life; issues of time and eternity are discussed in light of world history with even the calendar being discussed: years, days and hours.

Concluding this short review of the Hellenistic genealogy of the Greek genre termed genethliacon, it should be noted that all of its variations present later in Latin and New Latin literature were already fully formed in the Greek culture of the Hellenistic era and the empire. Genethliacon was, of course, subject to various modifications due to its purpose and form: it was an independent genre or a distinguishable part of other genres; it referred to different patterns – more rhetorical (with a social purpose), poetic (with the best Apollonian connotations) and even philosophical (issues of the essence of being, birth and life).

Liber de die natali ad Quintum Caerellium. Księga o dniu narodzin dla Kwintusa Caerelliusza, translated, edited and commented by B. J. Kołoczek, Poznań 2014.

Chapter III

Carmen natale - Latin birthday song

Meanwhile, works praising birth in ancient Rome should be regarded not so much as the epigonian continuation of the Greek genethliacon, but as a quite independent genre, inspired by both Greek achievements in this field and by native traditions. Carmen natale is closely related to such concepts as dies natalis and (especially) Genius natalis. In Roman beliefs every life, place, and even phenomenon had its own Genius. Each Genius was born with a new life, entering into it as a divine element, a symbol of non-material life. In ancient Rome, the guardian spirits of men were Geniuses and the guardian spirits of females were different forms of Juno. Human Genius was born with a man and died with him. That is why on a day of birth sacrifices were offered to this personalised guardian deity. The ideas of Genius and Juno remained alive even in Latin phrasemes, for example in the phrase from the borderline of abstract and specific expressions Genium/Iunonem suum/suam vino placare. It meant not only making sacrifice to the deity but also indulging in one's own whims, and it can be explained as "to indulge yourself with wine" or "to relish wine". Too Since the seventh and the sixth centuries BC sacrifices were offered to guardian deities corresponding to one's birth; the altar of the deity was then decorated; incense, wreaths, flowers, cakes and the aforementioned wine were prepared. The whole celebration can be summarised in a few

¹⁰⁰ A. Krokiewicz, M. Pąkcińska, *Praktyczna stylistyka łacińska*, Warsaw 1992, p. 7.

words: sacrifice, request, feast, games and games as a manifestation of family holidays, so-called *feriae privatae*.¹⁰¹

The birthday celebrated in Rome was, like in the days of Callimachus, inseparably combined with an offering of literary gifts, especially by scholars or even those who wished to prove their erudition and sympathy for the birthday boy or girl as well. Besides from Alexandrian patterns, Roman birthday works were associated with the so-called Roman subjective elegy, which according to Felix Jacoby's theory¹⁰² developed from the Greek epigram, expanded with motifs from other literary genres such as the new comedy, idyll and the objective Alexandrian elegy. 103 The Roman elegy is an original creation, an expression of self-awakened individualism and self-knowledge which became themes no longer of small pieces but of artistically composed books. Furthermore, the topos of birth is one of the most important themes of this elegy. The first to 5 example of a Roman birthday elegy is the work of Tibullus for Messala: Elegia I 7 – genethliacon meant for Messala's birthday who on the day of his birthday beat Aquitaines, a victory thanks to which he was awarded a triumph:

¹⁰¹ В. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁰² F. Jacoby, *Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie*, "Rheinisches Museum" 60/1905, p. 82 and further.

^{103 &}quot;F. Jacob regarded Latin elegy as an enlargement and development of Greek epigram, from which it will have derived its subjective character, its situations and motifs". Cf. G. B. Conte, *Latin Literature: A History*, translated by J. B. So-lodow, Baltimore 1999, p. 322.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. H. C. Bowerman, *The Birthday as a Commonplace of Roman Elegy*, "The Classical Journal" Vol. 12, No. 5, Feb. 1917, pp. 310–318 and E. Cesareo, *Il carme natalizio nella poesia latina*, Palermo 1929. Cf. Ibid. G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy*, London 1959.

¹⁰⁵ Der neue Pauly..., op. cit., p. 913.

Hunc cecinere diem Parcae fatalia nentes Stamina, non ulli dissoluenda deo,

Hunc fore, Aquitanas posset qui fundere gentes, Quem tremeret forti milite victus Atax.

Evenere: novos pubes Romana triumphos

Vidit et evinctos bracchia capta duces;

At te victrices lauros, Messalla, gerentem Portabat nitidis currus eburnus equis.

Non sine me est tibi partus honos: Tarbella Pyrene Testis et Oceani litora Santonici,

Testis Arar Rhodanusque celer magnusque Garunna, Carnutis et flavi caerula lympha Liger.

An te, Cydne, canam, tacitis qui leniter undis Caeruleus placidis per vada serpis aquis,

Quantus et aetherio contingens vertice nubes Frigidus intonsos Taurus alat Cilicas?

Quid referam, ut volitet crebras intacta per urbes Alba Palaestino sancta columba Syro,

Utque maris vastum prospectet turribus aequor Prima ratem ventis credere docta Tyros,

Qualis et, arentes cum findit Sirius agros, Fertilis aestiva Nilus abundet aqua?

Nile pater, quanam possim te dicere causa Aut quibus in terris occuluisse caput?

Te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres, Arida nec pluvio supplicat herba Iovi.

Te canit atque suum pubes miratur Osirim Barbara, Memphiten plangere docta bovem.

Primus aratra manu sollerti fecit Osiris Et teneram ferro sollicitavit humum,

Primus inexpertae conmisit semina terrae Pomaque non notis legit ab arboribus.

Hic docuit teneram palis adiungere vitem, Hic viridem dura caedere falce comam; Illi iucundos primum matura sapores Expressa incultis uva dedit pedibus.

Ille liquor docuit voces inflectere cantu, Movit et ad certos nescia membra modos,

Bacchus et agricolae magno confecta labore Pectora tristitiae dissoluenda dedit.

Bacchus et adflictis requiem mortalibus adfert, Crura licet dura conpede pulsa sonent.

Non tibi sunt tristes curae nec luctus, Osiri, Sed chorus et cantus et levis aptus amor,

Sed varii flores et frons redimita corymbis, Fusa sed ad teneros lutea palla pedes

Et Tyriae vestes et dulcis tibia cantu Et levis occultis conscia cista sacris.

Huc ades et Genium ludis Geniumque choreis Concelebra et multo tempora funde mero:

Illius et nitido stillent unguenta capillo, Et capite et collo mollia serta gerat.

Sic venias hodierne: tibi dem turis honores, Liba et Mopsopio dulcia melle feram.

At tibi succrescat proles, quae facta parentis Augeat et circa stet veneranda senem.

Nec taceat monumenta viae, quem Tuscula tellus Candidaque antiquo detinet Alba Lare.

Namque opibus congesta tuis hic glarea dura Sternitur, hic apta iungitur arte silex.

Te canit agricola, a magna cum venerit urbe Serus inoffensum rettuleritque pedem.

At tu, Natalis multos celebrande per annos, Candidior semper candidiorque veni (Tibullus, *Elegiae* I 7)¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Text based on: A. Tibulli Elegiae liber primus, in: The Latin Library, http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/tibullus1.html (accessed on 16 June 2017). Cf. The complete poems of Tibullus. An en face bilingual edition. Tibullus. Lugdamus

Praise for the Egyptian god Osiris as the inventor of agriculture and the benefactor of human beings is woven into the above birthday song. Osiris and Bacchus are to arrive to celebrate the birthday of Messala, who has probably already been sitting in a wreath with hair moistened with balsam. The poet wishes him solace in his sons and for them to exceed their father's deeds. These achievements include not only war merits but also foundations of the road to Tusculum and Alba, for which every peasant in the area adores him. The work ends with a call to the god of birth, to come visit, every year more wonderful.

According to Francis Cairns, author of songs modelled on Hellenistic poets, especially on the works of Callimachus (!), him alone being above all a "Hellenistic poet in Rome", 107 who seeks analogies 108 between many Greek names and habits in his own surroundings. One such analogy may be the decision to introduce a birthday song to Roman ground with the addition of a native colour, the colour being the worship of the god of birth.

Interestingly, among others, Polish researchers did not see the first Latin genethliacon in song for a long time, but noticed its other qualities and uniqueness. For example, Kazimierz Morawski admitted this elegy of Tibullus to be an interesting song that gives an overview of all Tibullus's motifs ("an eloquent specimen of Tibullian inspirations"), ¹⁰⁹ whereas Michał Swoboda considered this literary work primarily a historical source, important for determining

Sulpicia, translated by R. G. Dennis and M. C. J. Putnam, with an introduction by J. H. Gaisser, Berkeley–London–Los Angeles 2012, p. 30. Cf. Ibid. *Tibullus, Elegie mitosne*, translation, introduction and commentary by A. Arndt, ed. A. Ibek, Kraków 2015, pp. 183–198 and *The Poems of Tibullus, with the Tibullian collection*, translated with an introduction by P. Dunlop, Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1972, p. 30.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. F. Cairns, Tibullus: A Hellenistic Poet at Rome, Cambridge 1979. p. 37.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., chapter III entitled Analogy as learning, pp. 64-86.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. K. Morawski, Zarys literatury rzymskiej, Warsaw 1922, p. 196.

the date of Messala's expedition to the East, and invoked for this purpose discussions by historians of antiquity, including Theodor Mommsen and Rudolf Hanslik.¹¹⁰ Swoboda does not pay any attention to the birthday character of the work, at least formally; he only mentions the call to Genius and the occasional wishes that do not appear until the middle of the work. Meanwhile, the clear frame of a birthday song, just like the gifts and praise of all of Messala's activities, are marked by the first and last verses of the song. In one of the latest Polish translations (by Aleksandra Arndt)¹¹¹ the first Latin genethliacon – *carmen natale* is as follows:

The Fatal Sisters did this day ordain, Reeling threads no god can rend, Foretelling to this man should bend The tribes of Aquitaine; And 'neath his legions' yoke Th' impetuous torrent Atur glide subdued. All was accomplished as the Fates bespoke; His triumph then ensued: The Roman youth, exulting from afar, Acclaimed his mighty deeds, And watched the fettered chieftains filing by, While, drawn by snow-white steeds, Messala followed on his ivory car, Laurelled and lifted high! Not without me this glory and renown! Let Pyrenees my boast attest! Tarbella, little mountain-town, Cold Ocean rolling in the utmost West, Arar, Garonne, and rushing Rhone,

¹¹⁰ Cf. M. Swoboda, Albius Tibullus. Poeta elegijny, Poznań 1969, pp. 17–19.

III Cf. T. C. Williams, *The Elegies of Tibullus*, Boston and New York Houghton Mifflin Company 1908; *Elegy the Eighth* (Book I).

CARMEN NATALE - LATIN BIRTHDAY SONG

Will bear me witness due;

And valleys broad the blond Carnutes own,

By Liger darkly blue.

I saw the Cydnus flow,

Winding on in ever-tranquil mood,

And from his awful peak, in cloud and snow,

Cold Taurus o'er his wild Cilicians' brood.

I saw through thronged streets unmolested flying

Th' inviolate white dove of Palestine;

I looked on Tyrian towers, by soundless waters lying,

Whence Tyrians first were masters of the brine.

The flooding Nile I knew;

What time hot Sirius glows,

And Egypt's thirsty field the covering deluge knows;

But whence the wonder flows,

O Father Nile! no mortal e'er did view.

Along thy bank not any prayer is made

To Jupiter for fruitful showers.

On thee they call! Or in sepulchral shade,

The life-reviving, sky-descended powers

Of bright Osiris hail,

While, wildly chanting, the barbaric choir,

With timbrels and strange fire,

Their Memphian bull bewail.

Osiris did the plough bestow,

And first with iron urged the yielding ground.

He taught mankind good seed to throw

In furrows all untried;

He plucked fair fruits the nameless trees did hide:

He first the young vine to its trellis bound,

And with his sounding sickle keen

Shore off the tendrils green.

For him the bursting clusters sweet

Were in the wine-press trod;

Song followed soon, a prompting of the god, And rhythmic dance of lightly leaping feet. Of Bacchus the o'er-wearied swain receives Deliverance from all his pains; Bacchus gives comfort when a mortal grieves, And mirth to men in chains. Not to Osiris toils and tears belong, But revels and delightful song; Lightly beckoning loves are thine! Garlands deck thee, god of wine! We hear thee coming, with the flute's refrain, With fruit of ivy on thy forehead bound, Thy saffron vesture streaming to the ground. And thou hast garments, too, of Tyrian stain, When thine ecstatic train Bear forth thy magic ark to mysteries divine. Immortal guest, our games and pageant share! Smile on the flowing cup, and hail With us the Genius of this natal day! From whose anointed, rose-entwisted hair, Arabian odours waft away. If thou the festal bless, I will not fail To burn sweet incense unto him and thee, And offerings of Arcadian honey bear. So grant Messala fortunes ever fair! Of such a sire the children worthy be! Till generations two and three Surround his venerated chair! See, winding upward through the Latin land, Yon highway past, the Alban citadel, At great Messala's mandate made, In fitted stones and firm-set gravel laid, Thy monument forever more to stand! The mountain-villager thy fame will tell,

When through the darkness wending late from Rome, He foots it smoothly home.

O Genius of this natal day,
May many a year thy gift declare!

Now bright and fair thy pinions soar away,—

Return, thou bright and fair!

The author of the above translation in the attached commentary mentions only birthday distiches of this work, that is, verses 1-2 and 55-64, somehow distinguishing them from the whole, although simultaneously admitting that the work is a syntactic whole. The Meanwhile, the entire poem should be definitely treated as a genethliacon, a genethliacon referring to the best Hellenistic traditions, where ekphrases and digressions were desirable rhetorical elements of many works. Here, Tibullus expresses his erudition, the abovementioned "flow of inspiration", which is able to revive the genological range of even a genre considered in a certain sense to be of occasional-applied type and to elevate it to literary heights. The traits of the triumphal poem interwoven into the work do not, however, deprive it of the primary genethliacon code, but rather testify to the (successful) attempt to modify the genre, which in its framework may not only accommodate wishes and birthday symbols or a description of permanent elements of the celebrations but also refer more broadly to the idea of life, recalled here, amongst others, through the figure of recurrent Osiris and images of nature being still reborn. Osiris symbolises an inseparable connection between life and death, but it should be added that this is not the only connotation intended by the poet. Why was Osiris "invited" to the birthday of Valerius Messalla Corwin? He was a significant politician (one of the most influential of this period, in fact)¹¹³ who

¹¹² Cf. Tibullus, Elegie mitosne, op. cit., p. 187.

Valerius Messalla Corvinus as a major public figure and the patron of a literary circle) – Cf. S. Morton Braund, Latin Literature, London and New York 2002, p. 123.

as a consul took part, along with Octavian, in the battle of Actium in 31 BC. As is widely known, the battle determined Rome's authority over Egypt. Messalla was also a patron of the literary circle for nearly two decades with members including Horace and Ovid as well Tibullus. It should not come as a surprise then that as the patron and special benefactor of these poets, Messalla became worthy of comparison with the benefactor of humanity, Osiris.

Aleksandra Arndt agrees with the thesis that at least the fragments extracted by herself are the oldest preserved genethliacon in Latin literature, 114 which was not noticed by the above-mentioned Tibullus researcher Michał Swoboda, although in his book on Propertius 115 he devotes some attention to the genre of genethliacon itself. Against the backdrop of the ancient poetics of this genre, Swoboda presents Propertius's poetic elegy III 10 and juxtaposes it with the renaissance-comedy patterns of Menander as well as with three other Tibullus elegies: II 2, III 11 (IV 5) and III 12 (IV 6) (IV 6). 116

Among the Tibullus pieces mentioned by Swoboda, elegy II 2 deserves special attention because it describes the arrival of the god of birth and conveys the solemn atmosphere of the ceremony – those present are asked to remain solemnly silent while making incense offerings, finally a prayerful call to Genius follows and its description:

Dicamus bona verba: venit Natalis ad aras:
 quisquis ades, lingua, vir mulierque, fave.
urantur pia tura focis, urantur odores
 quos tener e terra divite mittit Arabs.
ipse suos Clenius adsit visurus honores,
 cui decorent sanctas mollia serta comas.
illius puro destillent tempora nardo,
 atque satur libo sit madeatque mero,

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ M. Swoboda, Sextius Propertius. Szkice krytycznoliterackie, Poznań 1976.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 74.

adnuat et, Cornute, tibi, quodcumque rogabis.
en age (quid cessas? adnuit ille) roga.
auguror, uxoris fidos optabis amores:
iam reor hoc ipsos edidicisse deos.
nec tibi malueris, totum quaecumque per orbem
fortis arat valido rusticus arva bove,
nec tibi, gemmarum quidquid felicibus Indis
nascitur, Eoi qua maris unda rubet.
vota cadunt: utinam strepitantibus advolet alis
flavaque coniugio vincula portet Amor,
vincula quae maneant semper dum tarda senectus
inducat rugas inficiatque comas.
haec veniat, Natalis, avis prolemque ministret,
ludat et ante tuos turba novella pedes¹¹⁷

The above work, referred to in the works as "elegy for birthday", ¹¹⁸ translates into English as follows:

Burn incense now! and round our altars fair With cheerful vows or sacred silence stand! To-day Cerinthus' birth our rites declare, With perfumes from the blest Arabian land. Let his own Genius to our festal haste, While fresh-blown flowers his heavenly tresses twine And balm-anointed brows; so let him taste Our offered loaf and sweet, unstinted wine!

¹¹⁷ Cf. A. Tibulli Elegiae liber secundus, in: The Latin Library, http://www.thelatin-library.com/tibullus2.html (accessed 30 June 2017). Cf. Ibid.: Tibullus. Elegies, translated by A. M. Juster with an introduction and notes by R. Maltby, Oxford–New York 2012, p. 192. Cf. Ibid. The complete poems of Tibullus..., op. cit., p. 170.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 261.

To thee Cerinthus may his favouring care Grant every wish! O claim some priceless meed! Ask a fond wife thy life-long bliss to share Nay! This the great gods have long since decreed! Less than this gift were lordship of wide fields, Where slow-paced yoke and swain compel the corn; Less, all rich gems the womb of India yields, Where the flushed Ocean rims the shores of Morn. Thy vow is granted! Lo! on pinions bright, The Love-god comes, a yellow cincture bearing, To bind thee ever to thy dear delight, In nuptial knot, all other knots outwearing. When wrinkles delve, and o'er the reverend brow Fall silver locks and few, the bond shall be But more endeared; and thou shall bless this vow O'er children's children smiling at thy knee¹¹⁹.

The description of the sacral setting of the birthday celebration appears here along with the motive of a certain contempt for material desires while honouring marriage and family values. The poet persuades notion his friend Cornutus of this. Cornutus is often identified with Cerintus, the lover of Sulpicia¹²⁰ (which, however, has not been confirmed in any ancient sources), while in terms of composition, the prophetic, didactic and nuptial parts can be distinguished.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Cf. T. C. Williams, *The Elegies of Tibullus*, Boston and New York Houghton Mifflin Company 1908; *Elegy the Second* (Book II).

¹²⁰ Sulpicia the Elder, the daughter of the poet Servius Sulpicius Ruphus and Valeria, a Roman poet from the Augustinian period, the author of elegy, about which below.

¹²¹ Cf. Tibullus, Elegie mitosne, op. cit., p. 263.

In turn, elegy III π (IV 5)¹²² contains praise of the birthday of Gerinthus-Cerinthus, a desire for reciprocal love (strengthened by another phrase: a request for faithful love, addressed directly to the lover), an appeal to the god of birth and offerings along with the prayer to hear requests:

Qui mihi te, Cerinthe, dies dedit, hic mihi sanctus atque inter festos semper habendus erit: te nascente novum Parcae cecinere puellis servitium et dederunt regna superba tibi. Uror ego ante alias: iuvat hoc, Cerinthe, quod uror, si tibi de nobis mutuus ignis adest; mutuus adsit amor, per te dulcissima furta perque tuos oculos per Geniumque rogo. Mane Geni, cape tura libens votisque faveto, si modo, cum de me cogitat, ille calet. Quod si forte alios iam nunc suspiret amores, tunc precor infidos, sancte, relinque focos. vinctus uterque tibi vel mea vincla leva; sed potius valida teneamur uterque catena, nulla queat posthac quam soluisse dies. Optat idem iuvenis quod nos, sed tectius optat: nam pudet haec illum dicere verba palam.

At tu, Natalis, quoniam deus omnia sentis, adnue: quid refert, clamne palamne roget?¹²³

¹²² Usually, the editions and translations of Tibullus's works contain all elegiac works preserved in three books, i.e. *Corpus Tibullianum*. However, only elegies from the first two books are attributed to Tibullus. Works from Book III have different authors. Cf., among others, *Albius Tibullus*. *Elegie*, translated by J. Sękowski, L. Winniczuk, Warsaw 1987.

¹²³ Cf. text of elegy III 11 in the portal *The Latin Library*: http://www.thelatin-library.com/tibullus3.html (accessed 26 August 2017). Cf. Ibid.: *The complete poems of Tibullus...*, op. cit., p. 118.

That day which gave me you, Cerinthus, This one will I always consider a festival. Along with your birth, the Parcs have foretold A new captivity for girls and gave you a proud kingdom. However, I burn above all, and it will come in handy, If you do not have the fire of reciprocity for us. It's good that I am burning, if you too are burning towards me with a mutual fire. May mutual love be fulfilled, for secret sweet loves, For your eyes and for your god's birthday, I am begging you. Stay, Genius, welcome the incense and foster, So that if he thinks of me, he burns, If, by any chance, he sighs to others, Then, please, give up these uncertain altars with sacrificial fire, 124 Show justice, Venus, let each one of us divide the slavery of love, Or take my ties off me. But rather, let's both of us be tied up with a strong chain,

But rather, let's both of us be tied up with a strong chain,
Which, henceforth, no day would be able to loosen up.
This young man desires the same as me, but more cautiously,
For he is ashamed to say these words openly.
And you, Natalis, if you understand everything as God,
Give a sign of consent, because it does
not matter whether he asks secretly or explicitly.¹²⁵

The last of the Tibullus elegies listed by Swoboda, III 12 (IV 6), concerns the woman's birthday and the desire to awaken her faithful love. The initial apostrophe is, therefore, addressed not to Genius, but to Juno, and contains a subtle description of the girl who makes

¹²⁴ I.e. "Do not be conducive if he does not want this love."

¹²⁵ If not otherwise stated – translated from Latin to Polish by B. Gaj. Translated from Polish to English by Maria Gaj.

offerings on the day of her birthday and of the goddess of birth, who is reminded of prayers for mutual love in exchange for donated offerings:

Natalis Iuno, sanctos cape turis acervos, quos tibi dat tenera docta puella manu; tota tibi est hodie, tibi se laetissima compsit, staret ut ante tuos conspicienda focos. Illa quidem ornandi causas tibi, diva, relegat; est tamen, occulte cui placuisse velit. At tu, sancta, fave, neu quis divellat amantes, sed iuveni, quaeso, mutua vincla para. Sic bene compones: ullae non ille puellae servire aut cuiquam dignior illa viro. Nec possit cupidos vigilans deprendere custos fallendique vias mille ministret Amor. Adnue purpureaque veni perlucida palla: ter tibi fit libo, ter, dea casta, mero; praecipit et natae mater studiosa, quod optat: illa aliud tacita iam sua mente rogat; uritur, ut celeres urunt altaria flammae, nec, liceat quamvis, sana fuisse velit. Sis iuveni grata ac, veniet cum proximus annus, hic idem votis iam vetus exstet amor126

Birthday Juno, accept these piles of incense, Which gives you an educated girl with a youthful hand. She's all for you today, she's dressed up for you so full of joy,

¹²⁶ Tibullus, elegy III 12. Cf. *The Latin Library*, http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/tibullus3.html (accessed: 26 August 2017). Cf. Ibid.: *The complete poems of Tibullus...*, op. cit., p. 120. If not otherwise stated – translated from Latin to Polish by B. Gaj. Translated from Polish to English by Maria Gaj.

To stand in front of your altar and attract your eyes.

It is true that she could, goddess, present you with the other reasons for the festive outfit

Because there is someone to whom she want to be appealing secretly...

And you, saintly, be favourable to them, so that nothing divides them

And in terms of the young man, please, secure the bonds of reciprocity,

Lay them down well so that he would not be the servant of any other girl and that the watchful guard would not catch them lustful of each other

Let Cupid equip them with a thousandth way of deception.

Give a sign and come in a purple luminous cloak,

Thrice you will receive a sacrificial cake, thrice I will make a liquid offering.

And, though, the mother watches carefully what her daughter should ask for,

She makes other requests in her thoughts.

She burns just as violently as the flames surrounding the altar.

Although, she could, she does not want to be sound.

And you, Juno, be kind to the young man, so that next year you could

Find in their prayer the same, consolidated love.

The two above-cited works, though they are considered to be by Tibullus, come from this part of *Corpus Tibullianum*, in which the poet placed works by other authors of his poetic circle, among them Sulpicia the Elder, the sister of Valerius Messalla. A new study of Sulpicia's works has been made recently (2000)¹²⁷ and some of the

¹²⁷ Cf. The Poems of Sulpicia, translated by J. Heath-Stubbs, London 2000.

elegies so far attributed to Tibullus¹²⁸ have been considered pieces of her authorship. Without going into the details of the arduous establishment of authorship, one should also recognise this woman from the Augustan era as the creator of genethliacons. She was also the only woman from that period whose works have survived to this day and testify to a high level of literary technique which is at least equal to Tibullus's skill, if not surpassing it. Poems III 14 and III 15 belong to Sulpicia's birthday works (in these cases the authorship of Sulpicia is not subject to discussion), which should be looked at both in the original and in the translation by Joanna Pypłacz. This will not only help us refer to the issue of the possible authorship of Sulpicia¹²⁹ in terms of elegies III 11 i III 12¹³⁰ but also, above all, to appreciate the artistry and the modification experiment undertaken in the field of the discussed genre:

Elegia III 14

Invisus natalis adest, qui rure molesto
Et sine Cerintho tristis agendus erit.
Dulcius urbe quid est? An villa sit apta puellae?
Atque Arretino frigidus amnis agro?
Iam, nimum Messalla mei studiose, quiescas:
Non tempestivae saepe, propinque, viae.
Hic animum sensusque meos abducta relinquo
Arbitrio quamvis non sinit esse meo.

¹²⁸ Cf. J. P. Hallett, The Eleven Elegies of the Augustan Poet Sulpicia, in: Women Writing Latin in Roman Antiquity, Late Antiquity, and the Early Christian Era, ed. by L. J. Churchill, P. R. Brown, J. E. Jeffrey, New York and London 2002, p. 61 and further.

¹²⁹ Cf. Women Writing Latin..., op. cit., pp. 64 i 314.

¹³⁰ Krzysztof Witczak calls the author of these elegies "the promoter of Sulpicia" and identifies with the elegist Servius Sulpicius. Cf. K. T. Witczak, *Rzymski elegik Serwiusz Sulpiciusz: znany czy nieznany?*, "Collectanea Philologica 1", 1995, p. 114.

Birthday's here and I hate it —
of all the days to be spent in gloom
out in the dreary country without Cerinthus.
What is sweeter than the city?
A house in the country
on the banks of that frigid stream in the Arretine country,
any place for a girl?
Now Uncle Messalla, do take a rest —
you've always looked after me too well.
There are times, you know, when travel's a bad idea.
I've been kidnapped. I've left behind my mind, my feeling,
But even they don't let me be my own mistress.

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Elegia III 15

Scis iter ex animo sublatum triste puellae? Natali Romae iam licet esse meo. Omnibus ille dies nobis natalis agatur, qui nec opinanti nunc tibi forte venit.¹⁵²

You know the dreary trip contemplated for a girl? Now I can be at Rome for your birthday. May that day be celebrated by us all, which now comes, perchance, as no surprise to you.

In the first of the cited works of Sulpicia, it turns out that the author loathes her birthday. She reluctantly refers to the area where

¹³¹ Cf. Sulpicia, *Elegie*, translated by J. Pypłacz, "Nowy Filomata" 20 (2016), notebook 1, pp. 135–136. Translated (from Polish to English) partially by Maria Gaj with the help of the following website: http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/sulpicia-anth.shtml (accessed 27 February 2019).

¹³² Corpus Tibullianum, Elegy III 15. Cf. http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/tibullus3.htm (accessed 30 August 2017).

she is supposed to spend this time as well as to her brother and birthday celebrations, which do not even allow freedom in thinking about the abandoned beloved.

Considering the popular rhetorical progymnasmata (π po γ o μ vá σ μ a τ a) in contemporary education, i.e. primarily the exercises consisting in describing the same situation from two different points of view, it is not difficult to imagine how Sulpicia's feast would look like if her beloved one were present. The next work, III 15, is indeed such an (rather modest) addition; it presents this desirable opposite situation. At the same time, it shows the power of a poetic request, the previous work fulfilled its purpose: the girl was allowed to return from the "sad journey" and to celebrate her birthday the way she wanted. In addition, according to the Italian researcher on Sulpicia, Paolo Paolucci both these works are antitheses in relation to each other, along with many individual words with antithesis being the poet's favourite stylistic measure. ¹³³

As mentioned above, in Elegy III 10, Propertius celebrated the birthday as well, most probably encouraging his beloved Cynthia to celebrate it in the bedroom. It is worth adding that this work starts as a beautiful description of the birthday morning. We can almost see a surprised poet who has just awoken, in front of whom, in the light of the morning sun, stand the Camenae (Muses) in order to remind him of his birthday:

Mirabar, quidnam visissent mane Camenae, ante meum stantes sole rubente torum. natalis nostrae signum misere puellae et manibus faustos ter crepuere sonos. transeat hic sine nube dies, stent aere venti, ponat et in sicco molliter unda minas. aspiciam nullos hodierna luce dolentis,

¹³³ Cf. P. Paolucci, Sulpicia e l'antitesi (Sulpicia and the Antithesis), "Myrtia" no. 28 (2013), p. 135.

et Niobae lacrimas supprimat ipse lapis; alcyonum positis requiescant ora querelis; increpet absumptum nec sua mater Ityn. tuque, o cara mihi, felicibus edita pennis, surge et poscentis iusta precare deos. at primum pura somnum tibi discute lympha, et nitidas presso pollice finge comas; dein qua primum oculos cepisti veste Properti indue, nec vacuum flore relinque caput; et pete, qua polles, ut sit tibi forma perennis, inque meum semper stent tua regna caput. inde coronatas ubi ture piaveris aras, luxerit et tota flamma secunda domo, sit mensae ratio, noxque inter pocula currat, et crocino nares murreus ungat onyx. tibia continuis succumbat rauca choreis, et sint nequitiae libera verba tuae, dulciaque ingratos adimant convivia somnos; publica vicinae perstrepat aura viae: sit sors et nobis talorum interprete iactu, quem gravius pennis verberet ille puer. cum fuerit multis exacta trientibus hora, noctis et instituet sacra ministra Venus, annua solvamus thalamo sollemnia nostro, natalisque tui sic peragamus iter (Propertius III 10)134

"I wondered what the Muses had sent me, at dawn, standing by my bed in the reddening sunlight.

¹³⁴ Sexti Propertii Elegiarum liber tertius, in: The Latin Library, http://www.the latinlibrary.com/prop3.html#10 (accessed: 30 June 2017). The underneath English translation excerpted from the following website: https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/PropertiusBkThree.php#anchor_Toc201112465 (accessed: 28 February 2019).

They sent a sign it was my girl's birthday, and clapped their hands three times for luck.

Let this day pass without a cloud, let winds still in the air, threatening waves fall gently on dry land.

Let me see no one sad today: let Niobe's rock itself suppress its tears.

Let the halcyons' cries be silent, leaving off their sighing, and Itys's mother not call out his loss.

And oh, you, my dearest girl, born to happy auguries, rise, and pray to the gods who require their dues.

First wash sleep away with pure water, and dress your shining hair with deft fingers.

Then wear those clothes that first charmed Propertius' eyes, and never let your brow be free of flowers.

And ask that the beauty that is your power may always be yours, and your command over my person might last forever.

Then when you've worshipped with incense at wreathed altars, and their happy flames have lit the whole house, think of a feast, and let the night fly by with wine, and let the perfumed onyx anoint my nostril with oil of saffron.

Submit the strident flute to nocturnal dancing, and let your wantonness be free with words, and let sweet banqueting stave off unwelcome sleep, and the common breeze of the neighbouring street be full of the sound.

And let fate reveal to us, in the falling dice, those whom the Boy strikes with his heavy wings.

When the hours have gone with many a glass, and Venus appoints the sacred rites that wait on night, let's fulfil the year's solemnities in our room, and so complete the journey of your natal day."

The above Elegy III 10 written by Propertius for Cynthia's birthday is uncritically classified by the researchers as genethliacon, a genre which both in Rome and in Greece was simultaneously considered the poetic and a rhetorical genre λόγος.¹³⁵ Among others, the above-mentioned Michał Swoboda does so, pointing out that the rhetorical poetics of the birthday work is scarce, but the work of Propertius is interesting through the use of a playful punchline (the scenery of the final birthday celebration in the bedroom). Such an ending and the embodiment of the evoked deity in beloved Cynthia (instead of the feminine equivalent of Genius, Juno) can be considered an interesting modification of the genre.

In addition, even a cursory reading of the poem leaves an impression of, firstly, dissimilarity when juxtaposed with other birthday works and, secondly, unusual atmosphere and charm. The description of the day of the birthday opens with a scene of awakening among the nymphs, called the Camenae or guardians of sources, often identified with the Greek Muses. Indeed, they are somewhere on the verge of dream and reality, which reminds the poet of the anniversary of the beloved's birthday. They carry a good omen (three-fold clap) and become an inspiration to plan the whole birthday day along with nightly love rituals in honour of Venus.

Moreover, Ovid placed two birthday works in *Tristia*. These are poems III 13 and V 5, quoted below in the archaic, as it was created at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as the suggestive translation by Jacek Idzi Przybylski: 136

III 13

Ecce supervacuus – quid enim fuit utile gigni? – ad sua Natalis tempora noster adest.

¹³⁵ Cf. M. Swoboda, Sextius Propertius..., op. cit., p. 73.

¹³⁶ Jacek Idzi Przybylski (1756–1819), professor at the Kraków Academy. His translation of Ovid's elegy is still considered a valuable one. Attention is also drawn to the fact that the life of the Polish philologist was similar to that of Ovid's, and it is postulated that the translation be resumed. Cf. K. T. Witczak, *Autobiografia Publiusza Owidiusza Nazona*, in: "Nowy Filomata" (2) 1999, pp. 101–102.

Dure, quid ad miseros veniebas exulis annos? debueras illis inposuisse modum. Si tibi cura mei, vel si pudor ullus inesset, non ultra patriam me sequerere meam, quoque loco primum tibi sum male cognitus infans, illo temptasses ultimus esse mihi, inque relinquendo, quod idem fecere sodales, tu quoque dixisses tristis in urbe «vale». Quid tibi cum Ponto? Num te quoque Caesaris ira extremam gelidi misit in orbis humum? Scilicet exspectas soliti tibi moris honorem, pendeat ex umeris uestis ut alba meis, fumida cingatur florentibus ara coronis, micaque sollemni turis in igne sonet, libaque dem proprie genitale notantia tempus, concipiamque bonas ore favente preces. Non ita sum positus, nec sunt ea tempora nobis, adventu possim laetus ut esse tuo. Funeris ara mihi, ferali cincta cupresso, convenit et structis flamma parata rogis. Nec dare tura libet nil exorantia divos. in tantis subeunt nec bona verba malis. Si tamen est aliquid nobis hac luce petendum, in loca ne redeas amplius ista, precor, dum me terrarum pars paene novissima, Pontus, Euxinus falso nomine dictus, habet.

Otóż próżno (bo jakiż zysk, że się kto rodzi?)
Dziś dzień moich urodzin z kolei przychodzi!
Srogi! na cóż ci zjaśniać wygnańcze rocznice?
Winieneś im był pewną położyć granicę.
Gdybyś był dbały o mnie lub wstyd miał na czole;
Nie szedłbyś był z Ojczyzny za mną w dzikie pole.
Tam, gdzie się źle poznałeś na mnie niemowlątku,

Starałbyś się być dla mnie ostatnim z początku. Smutny w Rzymie, jak moi sąsiedzi zrobili, Byłbyś rzekł: "bądź zdrów"! w samej rozstania się chwili; Czy gniew Cezara ściga i ciebie? Jesteś w Poncie? Czy cię wysłał w mroźnego świata mieszkać kącie? Czekasz, aż ucztę w zwykłym sprawię ci obrzędzie? Rychło biała z mych ramion szata wisieć będzie? Rychło ustroję dymny ołtarz w wieniec wieszczy I w świetnym ogniu szczypta kadzidła zatrzeszczy? Rychło dam urodzinne pierniki za ciebie I przez dobre życzenia gładko ci podchlebię? Nie tak mi dobrze! nie tak miła pora życia! Bym mógł być szczerze wesół z twego tu przybycia. Mnie pogrzebowy ołtarz z cyprysem przystoi I stos drewek z płomieniem dla zewłoki moi. Ni się chce kadzić, gdy to Bogom nie przymila, Ni mnie na dobre słowa stać wśrzód złego tyla. Jeżeli mi jednak o co dziś prosić zostaje, Proszę cię, byś mi więcej nie wracał w te kraje. Precz, póki ja w tej ziemi, ostatecznej prawie; W Poncie, fałszywie zwanym Euksynem, wiek trawię. 137

V_5

Annuus adsuetum dominae natalis honorem exigit: ite manus ad pia sacra meae. sic quondam festum Laertius egerit heros forsan in extremo coniugis orbe diem.

¹³⁷ Cf. Owidego Nazona wiersze na wygnaniu pisane to jest Rzeczy smutne, Klątwa na Ibisa, Listy z Pontu, translated by J. Przybylskiego, Krakówi802, pp. 77–78. English translation available at the following source: https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/OvidTristiaBkThree.php#anchor_Toc34217046 (accessed: 28 February 2019).

Lingua favens adsit, nostrorum oblita malorum, quae, puto, dedidicit iam bona verba loqui: quaeque semel toto vestis mihi sumitur anno, sumatur fatis discolor alba meis: araque gramineo viridis de caespite fiat, et velet tepidos nexa corona focos. da mihi tura, puer, pingues facientia flammas, quodque pio fusum stridat in igne merum. Optime natalis! Quamvis procul absumus, opto candidus huc venias dissimilisque meo, si quod et instabat dominae miserabile vulnus sit perfuncta meis tempus in omne malis; quaeque gravi nuper plus quam quassata procella est, quod superest, tutum per mare navis eat. Illa domo nataque sua patriaque fruatur (erepta haec uni sit satis esse mihi) quatenus et non est in caro coniuge felix pars vitae tristi cetera nube vacet. Vivat, ametque virum, quoniam sic cogitur, absens, consumatque annos, sed diuturna, suos. Adicerem et nostros, sed ne contagia fati corrumpant timeo, quos agit ipsa, mei. Nil homini certum est. Fieri quis posse putaret, ut facerem in mediis haec ego sacra Getis? Aspice ut aum tamen fumos e ture coortos in partes Italas et loca dextra ferat. Sensus inest igitur nebulis, quas exigit ignis: consilio fugiunt aethera, Ponte, tuum. Consilio, commune sacrum cum fiat in ara fratribus, alterna qui periere manu, ipsa sibi discors, tamquam mandetur ab illis, scinditur in partes atra favilla duas. Hoc, memini, quondam fieri non posse loquebar, et me Battiades iudice falsus erat:

omnia nunc credo, cum tu non stultus ab Arcto terga vapor dederis Ausoniamque petas.

Haec ergo lux est, quae si non orta fuisset, nulla fuit misero festa videnda mihi.

Edidit haec mores illis heroisin aequos, quis erat Eetion Icariusque pater.

Nata pudicitia est, virtus probitasque, fidesque, at non sunt ista gaudia nata die,

sed labor et curae fortunaque moribus inpar, iustaque de viduo paene querela toro.

Scilicet adversis probitas exercita rebus tristi materiam tempore laudis habet.

Si nihil infesti durus vidisset Ulixes, Penelope felix sed sine laude foret.

Victor Echionias si vir penetrasset in arces, forsitan Euadnen vix sua nosset humus.

Cum Pelia genitae tot sint, cur nobilis una est? Nempe fuit misero nupta quod una viro.

Effice ut Iliacas tangat prior alter harenas, Laudamia nihil cur referatur erit.

Et tua, quod malles, pietas ignota maneret, implerent venti si mea vela sui.

Di tamen et Caesar dis accessure, sed olim, aequarint Pylios cum tua fata dies, non mihi, qui poenam fateor meruisse, sed illi parcite, quae nullo digna dolore dolet.

Trzeba uczcić rocznicę urodzin mej Pani! Nuże, do świętych ofiar, moje ręce, dla niej! Tak bohatyr Laertczyk święcił w dawne lata Dzień urodzin swej żony gdzieś na kraju świata! Język, klęsk zabaczywszy,¹³⁸ niech obrzęd zachowa

¹³⁸ I.e. "zapomniawszy" (English – having forgotten)

CARMEN NATALE - LATIN BIRTHDAY SONG

Choć już (zda mi się) odwykł dobre mówić słowa. Szata, co na mnie tylko raz w roku bywała Niech różnie od mych losów odzieje mnie biała! Tu niech zielony ołtarz z świeżych darni stanie. Na nim uwity wieniec da ogniom wiązanie. Podaj, chłopcze, kadzidło, co tchnie tłuste dymy. Wnet w ognisku syczące wino usłyszymy. Dobry dniu! Choć opodal, ja tu schne przez żale, Zyczę, przydź czysty, memu niepodobien wcale! Niech Pani, jeśli przykra dojęła jej rana, Będzie odtąd na zawsze z mych klęsk wywiązana! Niech łódź od burzy więcej niż strzaskana ongi Płynie z resztą przez morza spokojnego ciągi! Domem, córa, Ojczyzna niech się cieszy Żona! Dość, że jest mnie jednemu Ojczyzna wzbroniona. A jako nie jest w lubym małżonku szczęśliwa, Niech jej reszta wdowiego życia bez chmur spływa! Niech żyje i mnie kocha, gdy musi, z daleka! Niech jej wiek w czerstwem zdrowiu, lecz długo ucieka! Dałbym z tych lat, lecz losów zarazy się boję, By tych, co ona pędzi, nie skaziły moje. Czegóż jest pewien człowiek? Komuż w myśl wpadłoby? Ze ja świętować będę wśród Gietów tej doby? Patrz! W powietrzu te dymy z kadzideł wzniesione Prosto do miejsc italskich w prawą dążą stronę! Więc mają czucie z ogniów wychodzące pary! Reszta niemal zawodzi me dalsze zamiary. Tak stawa ołtarz z wspólnej umowy dwóch braci, Z których każdy braterskiej ręki życie straci. Tam czarna sama sobie przeciwna perzyna Na dwoje się, jak od nich wysłana, przecina. Wczora zda mi-ś mówiłem, że to być nie może, I że Batczyka w kłamstwa podszedłem utworze. Dziś wierzę, gdy tu para z umysłu się wznosi

Dażac ku Auzonii od lodowej Osi. Więc to dzień, bez którego wschodu nie przyszłoby Nieszczęśliwemu widzieć żadnej święta doby! Ten godne Bohatyrek wydał obyczaje, Jakim był Eecyjon lub Ikary daje. Dziś się wstydliwość, cnota, wiara urodziły! Lecz rodziny wesela na tym dniu nie były: Byt nie wart obyczajów! Kłopoty i praca I żal na wdowie łoże słusznie dziś popłaca! Tak poczciwość wśrzód losów przeciwnych igrzyska W smutnym czasie powody do zalet uzyska. Gdyby był twardy Ulis nie doznał nawały, Penelopa byłaby szczęśną, lecz bez chwały. Gdyby był Mąż wziął zamki echijońskie siłą, Ledwie imię Ewadny w kraju znane było. Czemuż z Cór Pelijasza tylu słynie jedna? Bo przez zamęźcie z biednym sama była biedna. Niech kto piasków ilijskich tknie przed Mężem nogą. Cóż o Laodamii ziomki mówić mogą? Ty w cieniu, cobym wolał, nie miałabyś chwały, Gdyby przyjazne wiatry w me żagle dmuchały. O Bogi i Cezarze, co wnidziesz w ich grono! Gdy ci liczba lat pilskich¹³⁹ będzie dopełnioną! Nie mnie, który wyznaję, żem zawinił siła, Tej oszczędźcie, co cierpi, choć nie zawiniła. 140

Work III 13 is particularly concerned with a certain pessimism on the poet's side who even asks Genius, with a note of pretence,

^{139 &}quot;Lat pilskich", i.e. "lat starca z Pylos" ("pilskie years", i.e. "old man from Pylos' years).

¹⁴⁰ Owidego..., op. cit., pp. 115–117. **English translation** available at the following source (accessed: 28 February 2019): https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/OvidTristiaBkFive.php

whether it was worth being born. However, at the end they both have to share a difficult fate of exile. In the second elegy (V 5), on the other hand, the author mentions his wife's birthday which he celebrates away from her. He likens himself to Odysseus who must have felt similarly thinking about his wife on days such as these. This genethliacon, although it concerns a birthday celebration, is actually a mourning song, a continuation of a heart-rending farewell to his wife on the last night in Rome when his beloved spouse wanted to be exiled with him:

Nie można nas rozłączyć, razem stąd pójdziemy! Pójdę za tobą i będę wygnanką męża wygnańca [...] Tobie każe gniew Cezara ustąpić z ojczyzny, mnie miłość małżeńska; ta miłość będzie dla mnie rozkazem Cezara.¹⁴¹

Ovid cannot fulfil the wishes of his wife, who remained in Rome for his own good, but tries to celebrate his beloved's birthday as if he were next to her. The declaration of a birthday celebration turns out to be a form of the poet's resistance to the merciless autocrat who banished him from Rome. Even this punishment, the most painful

¹⁴¹ P. Ovidius Naso, Przemiany. Z kalendarza. Żale (ostatnia noc w Rzymie), translated by J. Michalewski, Łodź 1932, p. 128. Cf. Ibid., Ovidius, Tristia, Ultima nox, in: P. Ovidius Naso, Heroidy. Fasti. Tristia, Teksty Filomaty, no. 7, Lviv 1937, p. 36:

[&]quot;te sequar et coniunx exulis exul ero. Et mihi facta via est, et me capit ultima tellus Te iubet a patria discedere Caesaris ira, Me pietas, pietas haec mihi Caesar erit".

[&]quot;We cannot be parted, we will go away together!

I will follow you and we will become outcasts together [...]

You are forced by Ceaser's anger to leave your homeland,

I am forced by wifely love;
this love is my Caesar's command." (English translation by Maria Gaj).

for someone who had cultivated his whole life in the ideal of *cultus* (refinement and good taste), opposing it to *rusticitati* (simplicity, lack of taste and roughness), ¹⁴² did not break his poetic aspirations. The response to the punishment of silence, banishment away from libraries were 96 elegies, i.e. about seven and a half thousand lines. ¹⁴³ The call to celebrate the birthday almost as if Ovid were in Rome is probably one of the strongest declarations of rebellion against Octavian.

Horace, in turn, in the 11th song of book IV creates a kind of expanded birthday invitation. Of course, he wants to celebrate the birthday of Maecenas. On this day, all worries must be rejected, everyone is in a hurry (cuncta festinat manus) so that the ceremony be truly unique. In particular, the third and fifth stanzas (emphasised in the text) deserve special attention just like the beautiful rhythm of Horace's song (time quantities are marked in the quote) which is not that common in genethliacons: the third stanza perfectly reflects the mood of the birthday bustle, while the fifth raises the importance of the birth of Maecenas almost to the rank of the most important annual event from which the next years of his life (ordinat annos). Although, the life of every Roman, including the poet's, was measured by chronological benchmarks (successive anniversaries of one's birth), Maecenas' birthday, however, is more important to Horace than his own. To ensure this, the poet gives a special tribute to his both a principal and a friend:

Carm. 4 11

Est mihi nõnum superantis annum plēnus Albānī cadus, est in hortō, Phyllī, nectendīs apium corōnīs, est hederae vīs multa quā crīnis religāta fulgēs,

¹⁴² S. Stabryła, Owidiusz. Świat poetycki, Wrocław 1989, p. 284.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 285.

rīdet argentō domus, āra castīs vincta verbēnīs avet immolātō spargier agnō;

cuncta festinat manus, huc et illuc cursitant mixtae pueris puellae, sordidum flammae trepidant rotantes vertice fumum

ut tamen nōrīs quibus advocēris gaudiīs, Idus tibi sunt agendae, quī diēs mensem Veneris marīnae findit Aprīlem,

iūre sollemnis mihi sanctiorque paene nātālī propriō, quod ex hāc lūce Maecēnās meus affluentis ordinat annōs.

Tēlephum, quem tū petis, occupāvit nōn tuae sortis iuvenem puella dīves et lascīva tenetque grātā compede vinctum.

Terret ambustus Phaéthōn avārās spēs et exemplum grave praebet āles Pēgasus terrēnum equitem gravātus Bellerophontem,

semper ut të digna sequare et ultra quam licet spërare nefas putando disparem vītës. Age iam, meorum finis amorum

(nōn enim posthāc aliā calēbō fēminā), condisce modōs, amandā vōce quōs reddās; minuentur ātrae carmine cūrae¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Cf. text of this work in the article: The Power of Poetry: Est Mihi Nonum: IV: 11, Horace et Al., http://jamesrumford.blogspot.com/2010/01/

Wino z Albańskich Gór, dziewięcioletnie, Pieni się w dzbanie. A w ogrodzie rośnie Mnóstwo opichu – możesz z niego wieńce Upleść, Fillido.

Nie brak też bluszczu (gdy włosy nim wiążesz, Ślicznie wyglądasz). Dom się srebrem śmieje. Ołtarz, werweną zdobny, krwi baranka Ofiarnej czeka.

Dokoła krząta się kto żyw. Biegają We wszystkie strony chłopcy i dziewczęta. Tańczą płomienie. W górze dym się kłębi Gęsty i czarny.

Pytasz, na jaką zapraszam cię radość? Będziemy Idy kwietniowe święcili Dzień, który świta nam w środku miesiąca Morskiej Cyprydy.

Dzień uroczysty i świętszy mi prawie Od moich własnych urodzin. Mecenas, Przyjaciel drogi, w tym dniu rozpoczyna Nowy rok życia.

Przyjdź tu, Fillido. Myślisz o Telefie? Jego spętała urokiem dziewczyna Szczęśliwsza. Lubi te więzy i śmiech jej Lubi, i złoto.

power-of-poetry--est-mihi-nonum-ivII.html (accessed: 30 June 2017). Cf. Ibid.: Horace, *The Odes*, ed. with introduction, revised text and commentary by K. Quinn, Houndmills 1987, p. 230 and *Quinti Horati Flacci carmina*, ed. R. Ganszyniec, Leopoli 1937, p. 187.

Przypomnij sobie, jak spłonął w przestworzach Faeton, Pegaz jak nie mógł udźwignąć W swym locie jeźdźca zuchwałego z ziemi, Bellerofonta.

Oni cię uczą, byś zawsze pragnęła Tego, co w twojej doli jest zawarte. Nie smuć się, przyjdź tu do nas, ty z miłości Moich ostatnia.

Ja już nie będę więcej dziewcząt kochał. Naucz się jeszcze tej nuty. Tak pięknie Śpiewasz, Fillido... Mniej nas będą trapić Troski posępne.¹⁴⁵

It is also worth noting that in the above-quoted work, Maecenas is not the only birthday person. In a sense, the birthday also celebrates "wine from the Albanian Mountains, nine years old" with the number nine (among others due to the nine Muses) entailing all associations with the festival of poetic creativity. The joyful celebration is also accompanied by some anxiety about further creativity, perhaps even the fear of death, which is symbolised by the black and dense smoke ("sordidum fu-mum") over the trembling flame. Moreover, the poem is meant to be a remedy for grim, dark worries ("atrae curae") which accompany the poet while, as he declares, experiencing probably his last love.

¹⁴⁵ Piece translated by Zygmunt Kubiak. Cf. Kwintus Horacjusz Flakkus, *Dzieła wszystkie*, v. I, *Ody i epody*, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1986, p. 352. Cf. Ibid. translation by Stefan Gołębiowski: Horacy, *Pieśni*, translated S. Gołębiowski, footnotes and appendices G. Pianko and L. Winniczuk, Warsaw 1972, pp. 395 and 397. Cf. Ibid.: Horacy, *Dzieła wszystkie*, translated and edited by A. Lam, Warsaw 1996. **English translation** available at the following source (accessed: 2 March 2019): https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/HoraceOdesBkIV.php#anchor_Toc40764112.

In a sense Virgil also, this "non-classical classicist", 146 contributes to the development of a birthday song thanks to the famous fourth eclogue which contains a prophecy about a mysterious child born of a virgin. Eclogue IV, the most famous piece by Virgil (due to later Christian interpretation in the messianic spirit), heralded the revival of the world, the return of the golden age (aurea aetas) with peace and universal happiness.¹⁴⁷ Putting aside discussions related to the alleged prophecy (this is one of the most controversial ancient works), one should notice the style of Virgil being different from other pastorals, a style which addresses "more serious" issues ("paulo maiora") than ordinary bucolic matters seen quite realistically, unlike the creator of the genre, Theocritus. 148 Noteworthy are also constituents of the genethliacon genre, above all information about the birth and prophecies and wishes (especially in the initial part of the work, here: the first quotation) and a direct call to the new-born child (at the end of the poem, here: second quote):

Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas; magnus ab integro saeclorum nascitur ordo. Iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna, iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto [...]. Teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te consule, inibit, Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses; te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri, inrita perpetua solvent formidine terras¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ W. Fitzgerald, *How to Read a Latin Poem: If You Can't Read Latin Yet*, Oxford 2013, p. 141.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. M. Cytowska, H. Szelest, *Historia literatury starożytne*j, Warsaw 2007, p. 218.

¹⁴⁸ W. Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 143.

¹⁴⁹ *P. Vergilii Maronis Ecloga Quarta*, in: The Latin Library, http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/vergil/ec4.shtml (accessed 20 August 2017) lines 4–7 and 11–14.

Oto nastała ostatnia pora wieszczby kumejskiej:
Wielki szereg stuleci rodzi się teraz od nowa.
Już powraca Dziewica, wraca królestwo Saturna
I z wysokiego nieba nowy zstępuje potomek.
Tylko ty chłopięciu, które się rodzi, by wieki
Ustały żelazne i powstał na całym świecie ród złoty,
Czysta sprzyjaj Lucyno! Już twój Apollo króluje.
Za twego to konsulatu wiek ten wspaniały nastanie,
Polionie, wtedy się zacznie pochód wielkich miesięcy.
Za twoich rządów, cokolwiek zostało z naszej zbrodni,
Będzie zmazane, krainy wyzwolą się z trwogi odwiecznej.
On boskie życie przyjmie i zmieszanych z bogami
Będzie widział herosów, i sam wśród nich się ukaże,
Rządząc światem cnotami ojca uspokojonym¹⁵⁰

[...] Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem; matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses. Incipe, parve puer. qui non risere parentes, nec deus hunc mensa dea nec dignata cubili est¹⁵¹

Zacznij, chłopczyku, matkę rozpoznawać uśmiechem: Ona wiele cierpiała przez dziesięć długich miesięcy. Zacznij! Do kogo rodzice nie uśmiechnęli się, tego Bóg nie zaszczyca stołem ani bogini łożem.¹⁵²

Cf. Ibid.: Wergiliusz, *Bukoliki: Publii Vergili Maronis Bucolicon liber*, translated by K. Koźmian, introd. and footnotes by J. Wójcicki, Warsaw 1998, p. 52.

¹⁵⁰ Translated by Z. Kubiak. Cf. Kwintus Horacjusz Flakkus, op. cit., p. 352. English translation available at the following source: https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilEclogues.php#anchor_Toc533239265 (accessed: 2 March 2019).

¹⁵¹ Ibid., lines 60-64.

¹⁵² Ibid. **English translation** available at the following source: https://www.poetry-intranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilEclogues.php#anchor_Toc533239265 (accessed: 2 March 2019).

Eclogue IV, also known as the "messianic eclogue" written in the manner of a prophecy (by referring to the famous prophet Sybil of Cumae), refers both to specific political events, i.e. the peace which was to prevail after the reconciliation of Octavian (represented by Maecenas) with Antonius (whose representative was mentioned in the work of Asinius Pollio, consul of the year 40) as well as to the mythical golden age which is supposed to prevail in the world after the birth of a virgin's mysterious child. Disputes about the allegorical or real meaning of the nameless child already existed in antiquity. Apart from the figure of Christ, the descendants of Mark Antonius or of the daughter of the emperor Julia were also mentioned. 153 However, in the context of the discussed genre, what is most important seems to be the poetic elevation of the birth which may even be the beginning of a new era in history as well as association with a state of unhampered happiness in the golden age of mankind.

Birthday works were also written by Statius and Persius. *Silvae* by Publius Papinius Statius, an outstanding poet of the Flavian period,¹⁵⁴ are a unique collection of occasional pieces of a different content, also birthday-related ones (Statius *Silvae* 2, 3). Their title was eagerly referred to in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (the concept of *silva rerum*)¹⁵⁵ and the popularity of Statius in this period has certainly contributed to the renaissance and baroque growth of interest in birthday works.

The third work from the second book of *Silvae* is quite extensive because it contains as many as 77 verses; let us quote excerpts

¹⁵³ Cf., among others, M. Cytowska, H. Szelest, *Literatura rzymska*. Okres augustowski, Warsaw 1990, pp. 76–78.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Publiusz Papiniusz Stacjusz, *Sylwy*, introduced, translated and footnotes by S. Śnieżewski, Kraków 2010, p. 5.

¹⁵⁵ Research combined the concept of *silva* with the Greek $\partial \lambda \eta$, which translates as "the material from which something is made". More on this subject in the chapter on genethliacon in the culture of renaissance Europe.

about birthdays, or rather a birthday dedication, because the work entitled *Arbor Atedii Melioris* (*Atedius Melior's Tree*) is a birthday gift. It is about a tree that grows over a pond. This has a mythological justification: here, the nymph Foloe warned by the goddess Diana, escaping from the Lord, jumped into the pond and became entangled in seaweed. A beautiful plane tree grew over the pond, planted by the hand of a disappointed would-be lover. Animated by God's love of fire, the tree leans towards the water. A charming picture explaining eye-catching nature ends sees the poet ending with the following dedication:

Haec tibi parva quidem genitali luce paramus [...]156

I prepared this little gift for you for your birthday, but – I hope – it will last for immeasurable ages. Your kind heart found a place of endearing dignity, joyful but also being a serious virtue, active rest, righteous control over people, decent desires and a golden mean between what is honest and pleasant. You are an infinitely honest man, you have not experienced any anxiety of the spirit, you lead your life openly to all, you easily despise gold and at the same time you are the best administrator of wealth and allow light to your possessions. For so long, blossoming with the youth of spirit and morals, may you equal iliac old men and may you exceed the years that your father and mother brought to Elysium.

¹⁵⁶ Quotes from Statius's *Silvae* according to Itinera Electronica in: Université catholique de Louvain. Cf. http://agoraclass.fltr.ucl.ac.be/concordances/stace_siluae_02/texte.htm. Cf. Ibid.: Publius Papinius Statius, op. cit. English translations (except from the first piece "I prepared...brought to Elysium" translated by Maria Gaj) come from the following source (accessed: 2 March 2019): https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/StatiusSilvaeB-kII.php#anchor_Toc314490532.

The work *Silvae*, written *ex tempore* above all in the phalaecius poem, was also intertwined with prose which is reflected in the latest Polish translation by Stanisław Śnieżewski. ¹⁵⁷ An even longer work (II 7 – 135 lines) comes from the same second book of *Silvae*, considered to be a "brilliant combination of epicedion and genethliacon". ¹⁵⁸ The poem created for the anniversary of the birth of the poet Lucan is dedicated to Polla Argentaria, widow of the poet forced to commit suicide by Emperor Nero in 65 AD, who even after the death of her spouse honoured his birthday, on 3 November. Here are excerpts of the work *Genethliacon Lucani ad Pollam*:

Whoever on Venus' hill, Acrocorinth, has drunk Pirene's Pegasean waters, with heart moved by poetic frenzy, let them attend: it is Lucan's birthday. [...] Hush now: for it is Lucan we celebrate; and favour us Muses, this is your day, when he is honoured who honoured you in both the arts free and chained, verse, prose; priest of the Roman choir. [...] Calliope took him on her kind lap. Then setting mourning aside at last, eased of long lament for Orpheus, she spoke: 'Dedicated to the Muse, soon to surpass the immortal bards, it is not Thracian trees or creatures that you will move with your quill, but Seven Hills, Mars' own Tiber, in eloquent song, cultured knights, and their senators in purple robes. [...] I'll not grant bright poesy alone, but with marriage torches give, a wise girl to grace your genius. [...] Oh you Fates, too harsh and cruel, ever denying the noblest long life! Why is the highest chance's toy, greatness, doomed to die young? [...] Be here in splendour at Polla's call, beg a day, pray, from those gods of the silent; their gate may open for a husband's return to his bride. [...] Let dark mourning yield, eyes be wet, let sweet tears flow, and festal grief celebrate all that for which it wept.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 55-57, 63-67.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Ibid., p. 10.

In turn, one piece from the third book (III I) and another from the fourth (IV I) can be both considered metaphorical genethliacons. The first fragment emblazons the "birth of the altar" with genethliacon being interwoven into the work in honour of Hercules. At the climax of the offering, Hercules himself appears and preaches a birthday speech. The second of the metaphorical genethliacons celebrates 16 January, that is the consulate of Germanicus. Two more works from the fourth book refer to the birth; the seventh work is devoted to the need to avoid childlessness. It bears the *Lyric Ode to Vibius Maximus* and pictures the characteristics of genethliacon by referring to the birthplace of Pindar which must also be honoured with a song.

Whereas *Silvae* IV 8 is a reference to the tradition of the first genethliacon which expresses the joy of the birth of a child, in fact a girl, like Callimachus. Congratulations on the birth of the third child are directed to Julius Menecrates. This is the original type of genethliacon, the poetics of which is focused on the joy of the birth of a child, a new human, a new hope for the family and for the community in which she comes into the world.

However, in the context of the development of the genre, the second of the six surviving satires of Persius, a kind of birthday philosophical diatribe showing the immorality of human wishes to the gods, deserves more attention.

Dedicated to Macrinus on his birthday, it refers to prayers while giving offerings to Genius. Macrinus can say his prayers aloud while many others pray for immoral things on this day, for example, let the rich uncle give up his spirit as soon as possible. Interesting is a passage devoted to superstitious women who, with the middle finger (of a protective power), mark saliva marks on the forehead of the child articulating wishes:

[...] Ecce avia aut metuens divum matertera cunis exemit puerum frontemque atque uda labella infami digito et lustralibus ante salivis expiat, urentis oculos inhibere perita; tunc manibus quatit et spem macram supplice voto nunc Licini in campos, nunc Crassi mittit in aedis: 'hunc optet generum rex et regina, puellae hunc rapiant; quidquid calcaverit hic, rosa fiat'[...]¹⁵⁹

[...] Behold some grandmother or aunt, in awe of the gods, lifts a boy-child from his cradle, purifies his wet lips and brow, first of all, with her middle finger, and propitiatory saliva, she being skilled at warding off that evil eye that withers; then rocks him in her arms and, with a prayer of entreaty, points her meagre prospect towards Licinus' estates or at Crassus' palace: "May some king or queen choose him for a son-in-law, may the girls grab at him; wherever he treads may there be roses." [...]

Here, Persius hides a genethliacon in a genethliacon, just like Callimachus did in the twelfth iamb on Hebe's birth and birthday gifts. The reference in birthday works to the initiation rite, in turn, will become a fairly willingly used motif in 16th century genethliacons.

On the other hand, Martial (38/41-104 AD), famous for his occasional works, shows the meaning of birth most often in a jocular tone. Among his epigrams, ¹⁶⁰ one of the most interesting is work

¹⁵⁹ Persius, *Diatryba* II, 30–38. **English translation** obtained from the following source: (accessed: 2 March 2019) https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/PersiusSatires.php#anchor_Toc286822115.

¹⁶⁰ So far, there has been no full Polish translation of the epigrams of this glittering poet, also called the father of the Latin epigram (he left behind 1,550 in fifteen books). We have a few selective translations, from the oldest but also the most complete one from 1908 by Jan Czubek, through to the translation by Stanisław Kołodziejczyk, to the one isolating only the works by Marcin Loch.

XII 67, which is the memory of Virgil's birth in connection with his merits in terms of dissemination of knowledge about the Roman mythological tradition:

Maiae Mercurium creasti Idus, Augustis redit Idibus Diana, Octobres Maro consecravit Idus. Idus saepe colas et has et illas, Qui magni celebras Maronis Idus.

May's ides, you gave birth to Mercury, In August's ides Diana returns, October's ides Maro himself graced. You often worship the first and second ides, You, who are celebrating Great Maron's ides.

The idea of celebrating anniversaries, though not condemned, is treated somewhat jokingly here, almost mocked. It may appeat that, after all, there will be days' worth honouring each month and too frequent celebrations may take away all the joy and uniqueness of the occasion. Another work that mentions the actual birth is work for from the same book:

Martis alumne dies, roseam quo lampada primum Magnaque siderei vidimus ora dei,
Si te rure coli viridisque pudebit ad aras,
Qui fueras Latia cultus in urbe mihi:

Da veniam, servire meis quod nolo Kalendis, Et qua sum genitus, vivere luce volo.

Natali pallere suo, ne calda Sabello Desit; et ut liquidum potet Alauda merum, Turbida sollicito transmittere Caecuba sacco:

¹⁶¹ Martialis, Epigrammata XII 67. English translation by Maria Gaj.

Atque inter mensas ire, redire suas;
Excipere hos illos, et tota surgere cena
Marmora calcantem frigidiora gelu:
Quae ratio est, haec sponte sua perferre patique,
Quae te si iubeat rex dominusque, neges?¹⁶²

O day, nursling of Mars, on which I first beheld the rosy light of Aurora, and the broad face of the sun, should you feel shame at being celebrated in the country, and at an altar of turf who are used to being celebrated by me in the city of Rome, be indulgent, if I am unwilling to be a slave upon my own birthday, and if I wish to live, on the day on which I received life. To grow pale with anxiety on one's birthday, lest Sabellus should not be supplied with hot water, and Alauda not have clear wine to drink; to strain turbid Caecuban anxiously through linen filters, and to run to and fro among one's tables; to receive this guest and that, and to be getting up all dinnertime from one's place, and treading upon marble pavement colder than ice; what is the reason that you should endure all these annoyances of your own choice, when, if a rich friend and patron were to impose them on you, you would refuse to submit to them?

Here, Martial discusses a certain coercion of the tradition of celebrating birthday in Rome, although he does not deny the need to celebrate the birthday and even agrees with the oldest, religious-reflexive element of tradition, that is giving offerings (maybe even alone) in front of the home altar in a traditional Roman rural villa. From the next lines it follows that until now he has been spending his birthday at noisy events in the city and he has now gone to the countryside specifically to avoid it. The description

¹⁶² Martialis, Epigrammaton liber XII, 60. English translation obtained from the following source (access 02.03.19): http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/martial_epigrams_book12.htm.

of the actions the birthday boy escapes from, going on a quiet holiday from celebration, gives information about the course of such a feast. The guests are taken care of by the person celebrating his birthday, although, he is the main character of the ceremony, which reminds us a little of the tradition of Roman Saturnalia with the exchange of roles of masters and slaves, the host and the birthday guests. Martial does not want such a birthday; he believes that he should enjoy himself this special day in the first place.

This shows Matial in a somewhat perverse manner, the actual birth in the so-called *Book on the Spectacles*, that is works such as *De apro praegnante per cuius vulnus excidit partus (About a pregnant sow through the wound of which the foetus escaped).* ¹⁶³ The motif of a pregnant wounded sow that gives birth to offspring, dying, uses the poet in a three-part poetic cycle (compositions XII-XIV), showing the closeness of birth and death. Martial compares the scission of the abdomen of the hunted sow, leading to a premature birth, to the birth of Dionysus-Bacchus, whom, as a post-mortem foetus, after the tragic death of his mother, Semele, Zeus-Jupiter placed in his thigh. The first of the three works, beginning with the words: "Inter Caesareae discrimina saeva Dianae fixisset", ¹⁶⁴ translates into English as follows:

Epigram XII

When in the throes of imperial dangerous hunts, he pierced the sow with the spear of a light arrowhead, from the wound of the unfortunate mother, the foetus lunged out.

Oh, cruel Lucina, was it a childbirth? From more wounds she would prefer to die,

¹⁶³ Cf. Marcjalis, Księga widowisk, translated by K. Różycka-Tomaszuk, introduced and commented by A. Klęczar, M. Zagórski, in cooperation with B. Burliga, Wrocław 2015, p. 93.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Liber de spectaculis Epigrammaton Libri XIV Marci Valeri Martialis, iterum recensuit Caesar Giarratano, Paraviae 1951.

as long as her death be the window of life for her offspring! Who denies that the birth of Bacchus was his mother's funeral? As the animal was born, so did god.¹⁶⁵

It is worth paying attention to the word *discrimina* used in the first work instead of the usual *venatio*. The imperial hunts turn out to be dually dangerous, just like the pronoun term "double Diana" ("*utriusque Dianae*") signalling the dual function of Diana as the caretaker of deliveries and huntress, and thus the dual causative force of nature.

On the other hand, in the fourteenth epigram, the poet's other message is the most powerful: the power of the natural instinct of life, both divine and human, is so great in the universe that it overcomes all obstacles. The juxtaposition of a dying and life-giving sow, representative of one of the most despised animal species, and the goddess, patron of life and death, draws attention to the universal power of the spiritual and physical life.

Below follows the content (in Polish translation)¹⁶⁶ of two other epigrams (XIII and XIV) of the entire three-part cycle:

Epigram XIII

A pregnant sow wounded, when the arrow pierced her, in an instant she managed to lose and give life. How confident this hand, which the weapon has pushed with gusto!

By hand, I believe of Lucina, was sent this arrow.

Dying, the sow tasted double-faced goddess Diana: one brought birth to the mother, the other brought death to the animal.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Marcjalis, Księga widowisk, op. cit., p. 93. English translation by Maria Gaj.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 94-95. English translation by Maria Gaj.

Epigram XIV

A sow pregnant, becoming mother by way of the wound, has released her foetus, a sign of a mature womb.

The piglet did not lie without moving: when the mother fell, it fled. Thus the unexpected fate awakens the inborn wisdom!

Works reminiscent of birth or its explicit praise were probably also written by eminent politicians from the third century AD (unfortunately, no examples have survived). Among the occasional poets of their time were Celius Balbinus, the temporary emperor from 238 AD and Numerian (emperor from 284 AD).¹⁶⁷

Birthday threads can also be found in *Duodecim Panegyrica Lat-ini*, which consist of seven orations: from the fifth to the eleventh speech of the general collection. These speeches constitute a separate and perhaps, as Mieczysław Brożek believes, ¹⁶⁸ an original part of it as *panegyrici diver-sorum VII* from 289–311 AD. The author of the sixth panegyric in honour of Constantine on his birthday in 310 AD is Eumenius (260–311 AD) from the Celtic Aedui (Augutodunum, Autun), ¹⁶⁹ the imperial secretary with the title of *magister memoriae*. It is worth noting that he also created a panegyric for a birthday in a figurative sense, for the fourth anniversary of the appointment of Constantine as a Caesar. Panegyrics of Eumenius' authorship expressing a birthday character include *Panegyricus Constantino Caesari Augusto dictus* and *Panegyricus Constantino*, *Constantii filio dictus*. ¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ M. Brożek, *Historia literatury łacińskiej w starożytności*, Wrocław 1969, p. 464. 168 Cf. Ibid., M. Brożek, p. 470.

 ¹⁶⁹ R. Rees, Layers of Loyalty in Latin Panegyric: Ad 289–307, Oxford 2002, p. 139
 170 C. Plinii Caecilii Secvndi, Epistolarvm Libri X; Eiusdem Panegyricus Traiano dictus/ Cum commentarijs Joannis Mariae Catanaei [...]. Multis Epistolis cum illarum interpretatione adiectis. Adiuncti sunt alii, ad alios Cæsares, Panegyrici, ad fidem vetusti exemplaris emendati, Genewa 1600. BJ St. Dr. 932707 II.

O felix beatumque ver novo partu, iam non amoenitate florum, nec viriditate segetum, nec gemmis vitium, nec ipsis tantum Favoniis, et luce serenata laetum atque venerabile, quantum ortu Ceasarum maximorum! O tempus quo merito quondam omnia nata esse cre-dantur, cum eodem nunc confirmata esse videamus! O Kalendae Martiae sicut olim annorum volventium, ita nunc aeternorum auspices Imperatorum!¹⁷¹

Oh the unspeakably happy spring of new birth! No longer because of the beauty of flowers or the green of plants, bright, cheerful and respectable, not so much thanks to the favonian wine grapes or bright light as much as due to the birth of the greatest Sovereigns! Oh the time when, as they rightly believe, everything was born, and what now, as we see, has been confirmed. Oh March calends, as once the designations of successively passing years, ¹⁷² now a good guiding divination of eternal rulers!

While writing a speech for Constantine, in turn, Eumenius combines the threads of life and death. The pain after death of the first ruler is relieved by the sense of continuity of the family. It seems that the first of the rulers is still alive, because his works are immortal, but also the successor will still be giving great gifts to Rome and to the state:

Dolemus, quod Constantius excessit a nobis, sed dum te cernimus, illum excessise non credimus. [...] cuius immortalia facta vivunt [...] dabis munera, constitues privilegia [...].¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Eumenius, Panegyricus Constantino Caesari Augusto dictus, w: C. Plinii Caecilii Secvndi, Epistolarvm Libri X..., op. cit., pp. 103–104. English translation by Maria Gaj.

¹⁷² March calends, that is I March, were for the Romans the first day of the New Year.

¹⁷³ Eumenius, Panegyricus Constantino Constantii Filio dictus, in: C. Plinii Caecilii Secvndi, Epistolarvm Libri X..., op. cit., pp. 91–102.

We regret that Constantine has left us, but as long as we see you, we do not believe that he has gone [...] he, whose immortal achievements are alive [...] And you will give away gifts, establish privileges [...].

Eumenius also refers to Apollo, whom he sees as the spirit, as the driving force (Genius?) of Constantine, who can still live in the consciousness of the next ruler:

Deum vidisti enim (credo) Constantine, Apollinem tuum.¹⁷⁴

For you saw god, Constantine, your Apollo.

Another metaphorical panegyric is Mamertynus' written for Rome's birthday (panegyric 10. from 289 AD). The same author also wrote the classic birthday praise of both the city and of the ruler, celebrating the birth anniversary of Emperor Maximian (panegyric 11. from 291 AD).¹⁷⁵

O quanto nunc Imperatores, illa civitas esset augustior, quanto magis hunc natalem suum diem coleret, si Vos stipato vestro Senatu in illa Capitolini Iovis arce conspiceret.¹⁷⁶

How much, Rulers, would the City be more wonderful, how much more it would celebrate its birthday if it saw you in this famous temple of Jupiter on the Capitol Hill surrounded by your Senate.

Interestingly, Mamertynus perceives the so-called *dicendi* munus,¹⁷⁷ meaning "gift of pronunciation", both as the right to vote

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 101.

¹⁷⁵ M. Brożek, op. cit., p. 471.

¹⁷⁶ Claudius Mamertinus, *Panegyricus Maximiano Augusti. Genethliacon*, in: *C. Plinii Caecilii Secvndi, Epistolarvm Libri X...*, op. cit., p. 128.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 130.

at such solemn moments and as a personal gift to the ruler. In his speeches, he gives a demonstration of a learned rhetorical art which, in accordance with the rhetorical theory of genethliacon writing, contains not only a call to celebrate and highlight the atmosphere of the birthday but also the praise of parents and of the whole family ("deinde praecipue vestri parentes, qui vobis et nomina et imperia tribuerunt")¹⁷⁸ as well as the accomplishments of the person in question and telling their fortune, as indicated by the extension of the title of speech by term *genethliacus*.¹⁷⁹

The art of writing panegyrics and not only "products of learned art" can be recognised firstly in the strict application of the disposable rules, and secondly in skilful stylistic manipulation. The birthday-congratulatory panegyrics also remain a genological modification of genethliacon, in accordance with the Hellenistic assumptions, reserving special rhetorical rules for genethliacons. According to these rules, the genre was not limited to poetry. Thus, there was also room for panegyric talks and later dedications for other literary and scientific works.

In the context of rhetoric and its role in public space, it is necessary to at least mention a change in understanding the art of pronunciation during the times of the empire. Quintilian, who had already gathered all the experience of Greek and Roman theories and rhetorical practice and tried to present them as one construction, was aware of the dangers that the times of disappearance of civic activity brought to the speech.¹⁸¹ In the oratorical realizations of the main goals of rhetoric, a gap was created that only the rhetoric of demonstration and declamation (*genus demonstrativum*)

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

¹⁷⁹ An adjective *genethliacus*, *a, um* means: "predictive, horoscopic", a noun *genethliacus*, *i* – astrologist. Cf. A. Jougan, *Słownik kościelny łacińsko-polski*, Sandomierz 2013, p. 280.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 470.

¹⁸¹ Cf. J. Ziomek, Retoryka opisowa, Wrocław 1990, p. 38.

could fill. However, it was the demonstrative rhetoric – as the only available part of the centuries-long tradition – that has absorbed many characteristics of judgmental and counselling speeches (*genus iudiciale et deliberativum*), going beyond the words into gestures and celebratory symbols with a large rhetorical charge.

An excellent opportunity for such a "visual" extension of rhetoric were the ceremonies related to the ruler and to the state, including the birthday ones, as it is clearly seen in the example of the above-mentioned panegyric art of Eumenius and Mamertynus. Celebrations of rulers' birthdays were treated as gaudia publica, obligatory holidays. Disregarding participation in die natali of the emperor was considered crimen laesae maiestatis, an insult to the majesty. This charge was often made against Christians. They, in turn, regarded such celebrations as lascivia, i.e. outrageous behaviour, which is expressed by, amongst others, Tertullian: "the showcase of bad morals is to be a tribute to him (the emperor), just as the opportunity to luxury be considered a religious act". 182 For Christians, however, not only too playful celebration but also the very fact of sacrificing victims to pagan deities (and the characters of Genius and Juno were regarded as such) were unacceptable. Furthermore, all verbal or written discussions about future human fate in connection with the circumstances of someone's birth, i.e. genethlialogy, were not compatible with new ideas, as expressed by Bishop Nicetas of Aquileia in writing the treatise Contra genethlialogiam. 183 For this reason, birthday celebrations, and the genethliacons themselves, could have disappeared with the victory of Christianity. Why this did not happen will be explained in the next chapter.

However, before we think about the fate of genethliacon in Christian Europe, let us get acquainted with the last antique

¹⁸² Cf. B. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 30. Cf. Ibid.: Tertulian, *Apologetyk XXXV*, translated by J. Sajdak, *Pisma Ojców Kościoła w Polskim Tłumaczeniu*, v. 20, Poznań 1947, p. 144.

¹⁸³ A. Jougan, op. cit., p. 280.

example of this genre. The last non-Christian genethliacon is the work of Decimus Magnus Ausonius for his grandson, preserved among the minor works of this poet from the fourth century AD (he lived between 310-393/4). Ausonius, the tutor of Emperor Gratian, also felt particularly predisposed to educational activities for his own grandson (daughter's son), Censor Magnus Ausonius. He devoted two specific works to him: Protrepticon ad nepotem Ausonium184 and underneath cited the birthday work Genethliacon ad Ausonium nepotem.¹⁸⁵ He tries in Protrepticon to encourage the boy to learn, keeps track of his progress and dreams of a great future for his grandson. At the same time, he shows a good knowledge of the child's psychology, he understands the difficulty that a young person may experience while shifting from the gentle care of mother or nanny to a teacher's management, who may, on the other hand, also be gracious and give the child a wonderful knowledge of poets and writers. 186 For his grandson's birthday, he writes:

Carmina prima tibi cum iam puerilibus annis traderet adsidui permulcens cura magistri imbueretque novas aures sensusque sequaces, ut respondendas docili quoque murmure voces emendata rudi perferret lingua palato, addidimus nil triste senes, ne cura monendi laederet aut dulces gustus vitiaret amaris. At modo, cum motu vigeas iam puberis aevi, fortiaque a teneris possis secernere et ipse admonitor morumque tibi fandique videri, accipe non praecepta equidem, sed vota precantis

¹⁸⁴ Protrepticon ad nepotem Ausonium, in: Opere di Decimo Magno Ausonio, a cura di A. Pastorino, Torino 1971, p. 388.

¹⁸⁵ Genethliacon ad Ausonium nepotem. Por. Opere..., op. cit., p. 396.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. T. Krynicka, Maturam frugem flore manente ferens. Pochwała starości w poezjach Auzoniusza, "Vox Patrum" 31 (2011), v. 56, p. 6.

et gratantis avi festum ad sollemne nepotis.

Adnuit, ut reducem fatorum ab fine senectam sospes agam festumque diem dubitataque cernam sidera, deposito prope conclamatus in aevo. Hoc, mellite nepos, duplicato faenore partum natali accedente tuo, munusque salutis plenius hoc nostrae, quod iam tibi puberis aevi crescit honos iuvenemque senex iam cerno nepotem. Sexta tibi haec primo remeat trieteris ab anno, Septembres notis referens natalibus idus. Idus alma dies, geniis quoque culta deorum. Sextiles Hecate Latonia vindicat idus, Mercurius Maias, superorum adiunctus honori, Octobres olim genitus Maro dedicat idus: idus saepe colas bis senis mensibus omnes, Ausonii quicumque mei celebraveris idus. Vale nepos dulcissime¹⁸⁷

Once in your childhood, the first poems were given to you Thanks to the diligent care of an urgent teacher And susceptible ears and senses were filled with new knowledge. Then when he responded with a learned tone And he brought corrections to the untrained language

(as an old man, I did not add anything sad so that the bitter concern of admonition will not offend or spoil the sweet tastes).

¹⁸⁷ Ausonii Decimi Magni, Genethliacon ad Ausonium nepotem, XXI, in: Omnia quae extant. Quote based on: http://www.intratext.com/IXT/LATo574/_P79. HTM (accessed: 27 August 2017). English translation by Maria Gaj.

And now, as time passes, you mature into adulthood, and you can separate what's important from trivialities,

You can also consider yourself ready to admonish morals and speech,

Therefore, accept not so many orders as wishes of Grandfather praying and grinning on the occasion of the solemn holiday of the grandson.

[...]

He agreed,¹⁸⁸ so that I could escape the old age of fate, And happy he could celebrate and get to know uncertain stars, Although I have been almost already called to retire. This, my dear grandson, is like a double profit, that with the advent of your birth the gift of my health becomes fuller. Because, when you are already entitled to a mature age, I, the old man, recognise in my grandson a young man. Here is the beginning of the sixteenth year of life.¹⁸⁹ Since you arrived in the ides of September, Oh the life-giving day of ides, worshiped even by the Geniuses of the gods: Hekate, daughter of Latona, attributed herself the ides of August. In the ides of May, Mercury has divine worship, the ides of October, in turn, once worshiped Maro.¹⁹⁰

You worship all the ides often and some twice, For my and Asonius' you solemnly celebrated.

¹⁸⁸ Literally "adnuit", "gave the sign", a verb used to describe Genius present during the birthday celebration.

¹⁸⁹ Literally "sexta trieteris remeat" – "the sixth three-year comes back", i.e. begins. The young man began at age 16 (finished 15).

¹⁹⁰ Cf. the day of birth of Publius Vergilius Maron, i.e. 15 October 70 BC, and the above-mentioned work by Martialis on the subject.

In the genethliacon written for the 16th birthday of a grandson, the author puts a teaching goal in the foreground. In the poem, nonetheless, there is no shortage of the grandfather's joy, who is glad that, despite diseases, he saw his grandson's entry into manhood. Genologically, the work is a reference not so much to the Latin birthday song *carmen natale*, as to the Callimachian tradition of genethliacon, and even the epyllion, as the works of Ausonius were called by the Renaissance humanist Józef Scaliger. A characteristic feature of the epyllion, treated at the beginning of the genre as a small poem, were erudite digressions, ¹⁹² to which Asonius, although modestly (for example, by the description of the teacher's work in the cited work), alludes.

As pointed out by the researchers, Ausonius is difficult to classify in a clear-cut fashion. His works show that he was familiar with Christianity, but he had pagan views and a lifestyle. César Vidal Manzanares thinks that Ausonius could treat the object of the cult of Christians as one of many deities, and therefore, in the interest of celebrating the birthday of his grandson, he sought grace even from the god of the Christians.¹⁹³

At least until the end of the second century AD, there are no testimonies of Christians rejecting the celebration of the day of birth, ¹⁹⁴ and then, above all, celebrations understood as the cult of a deity or a man (emperor) in a divine role were denied. However, the very form of the birthday song, since now intertwined with the Latin elegy, turned out not to be so weak as to disappear, but on the contrary, quite strong in surviving thanks to subsequent modifications.

¹⁹¹ Ausonii Epylia. Cf. D. Magni Avsonii Bvrdigalensis V. C. Opera, ex recognitione Iosephi Scaligeri Ivl. Cæs. F., Leyden 1612. BJ St.dr. 0004455.

¹⁹² Cf. one of the simplest definitions of epyllion in: *Mata encyklopedia kultury antycznej*, ed. Z. Piszczek, Warsaw 1988, p. 234.

¹⁹³ C. V. Manzanares, *Pisarze wczesnochrześcijańscy I–VII v.*, translated by E. Burska, Warsaw 2001.

¹⁹⁴ B. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 29.

THEOLOGICVM.

plinæ, dedignamur etenim sed nó dedignantes, desperant non desperantes, persequutionem comouent, sed amantes.

Zonam auream circa mammillas habere, est cunstos mutabi lium cogitationum motus per solius iam amoris uinculo refringere. Greg. Zona castitatis, NAZIEN.

Z ona aurea fides. Vnde scriptum, Fides cinstorium renú eius. GREG. Eadem circa pestus fide potitum esse. ADDIT.

Z ona aurea, amor religionis & iustitiæ, ea præcingitur lesus ad mammillas. BERN.

GENETHLIACON

MVNDI, EODEM IANO A SVOLA Equite, ac lure confulto authore.

Rincipio causas rerum fatumos renascens Et mundi, quod cernis opus, auig recursus Si iuuat, & fluxas seclorum prendere sortes Nosce patrem, arbitriog patris congesta putato Cuncta Dei, ac nostris quicquid uariabile rebus Ne dubita auspiciis V E R B I constare potentis Hos etenim Genitor mundum fabrefecit in ulus Vt uentura pares (tantum sub imagine prima) Monstrarent formas rerum, similesq figuras Secula, fic dictata olim per mystica Moses Longæuum deduxitopus, sex ille dierum Ab numero, prælaga dabat cum ligna per orbem Totag formaci statuebat munia Verbo, Vtg; idem haud ueros orfus fabulofag; princeps Ludicra, & ingentis construxerat ominasecli Sic duplici totum constat discrimine Verbum, Legifero & Mose & uatum conscripta per ipsa Qualia iam nostro quod restituenda sub æuo Admonuit magni Christus mens alma parentis

Que Dei con gnitio-

Mystică fuisse creationem +

Exameron .

Lex & Prop

Chapter IV

Christian celebration of birth for heaven

As the influence of Christianity on the culture (including literature) of the Roman Empire increased, the importance and manner of celebration of *diei natalis* changed. The Greek term *genethliacon* ("birthday") or *hemera genethlia* ("the days of birth") already present in *Martyrium Polycarpi*, one of the oldest Christian hagiographies," is used in the sense of the anniversary of a martyr's death and the further evolution of this term shows attempts of specific inculturation through the linking of meaning and experiencing birth in relation to the rite of baptism (including "baptism from blood", i.e. martyrdom). The baptismal speech of Gregory of Nazianzus, delivered at Constantinople on 7 January 381, in which the speaker distinguishes birth from the body, baptism and resurrection (the condition of the latter is death), could have influenced such a way of understanding birth and its celebration:

The first birth takes place in secret, it is characterised by captivity and succumbing to passions, the second takes place in light it is characterised by freedom and liberation and leads us to the

¹⁹⁵ Bishop Policarp of Smyrna suffered a martyr's death in 155 or 156. The text of *Martyrium* was probably created a year later in the form of a letter with biblical and liturgical references (comparison to the sacrifice of Christ) and was addressed to the Christian commune in Filomelion. Cf. J. M. Kozłowski, *Ptonąt ogniem, a nie spalat się... Analiza i interpretacja "Martyrium Polycarpi"*, Warsaw 2014, p. 6.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. B. Nadolski, op. cit., pp. 52–53. English translation by Maria Gaj.

supernatural life. The third birth is terrible, it happens in a moment and suddenly puts all creatures in front of the Creator, so that they will be aware of the local captivity and way of life. 197

One of the more interesting and less well-known pagan-Christian authors, Firmicus Maternus (the only one whose views both before and after conversion to Christianity can be compared on the basis of preserved works from both periods), 198 seems to understand the ancient connection of death and life, but does not accept the ritual that accompanies it:

How ripe fruits are harvested to sustain human life, and separated from the community-family-land are sown before the winter again, so it is also with the death of Osiris, which they believe is symbolised by the sown seed and by finding him, when the seeds, germinating in the fertile wrapper of the earth, begin to birth again in the next cycle of begetting. Accept that this is a true explanation of these rites, accept that the deities are given offerings because of the harvest. Will you add to that an incestuous adultery and a misfortune of a regrettable consciousness? What evil example do you showcase through your acts to people who err and are simply prone to sin? A rational explanation derived from the nature you refer to, however, covers that. 199

Firmicus, like many enlightened citizens of the empire, condemns above all the Eastern ritual, foreign to Roman culture and

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ J. R. Bram, *Preface*, in: *Ancient Astrology: Theory and Practice. Matheseos Libri VIII by Firmicus Maternus*, translated by J. R. Bram, Park Ridge 1975, p. VII.

¹⁹⁹ F. J. Maternus, De errore profanarum religionum, ed. K. Ziegler, Lipsiae 1907, II 6–7. Cf. Firmicus Maternus. Jak nieświadomi błądzą w wierze, translation from Latin and Greek, introduction and comment B. Gaj, Warsaw 2015, p. 49. English translation by Maria Gaj.

sometimes shocking to Romans (including the cult of Osiris in the quotation above). However, he does not hesitate to condemn native cults, including sacrifices, which were part of Roman birthday rituals:

Also to you, people who do not know the truth, this disrespected Deity speaks and complains about your wandering away from the path. Through the same prophet He says the following words: "You poured out libations and offered sacrifices to them and I will not be neglected?" says the Lord. 200

Could genethliacon as *carmen natale* or even as a rhetoric speech survive in such circumstances? As it appears, it survived thanks to specific adaptations and modifications. The oldest preserved works of Christian poetry are from the third century AD, however, in the fourth and fifth centuries, high-performance works have appeared, including works by Ambrose, Paulinus from Nola and Prudentius.²⁰¹

Aurelius Ambrosius (339-397 AD),²⁰² saint (Catholic and Orthodox), doctor of the Church, became famous mainly thanks to his speeches, theological and exegetical writings and hymns

²⁰⁰ F. Maternus XXVIII 11. Cf. Ibid., p. 137. English translation by Maria Gaj.
201 M. Starowieyski, Wprowadzenie, in: Muza łacińska. Antologia poezji wczesnochrześcijańskiej i średniowiecznej, ed. M. Starowieyski, Wrocław 2007, p. XI.

²⁰² Ambrose, born in Trier, came from an aristocratic Roman family (he was the son of the prefect of Gaul). After his father's death, he studied in Rome and in about 370 was appointed governor of Liguria and Emilia with a residence in Milan, and soon, although he was still a catechumene, he proved to be the most suitable candidate for the bishop of this city (a compromise for Arians and Catholics). He fought against the pagan cults, and was respected among the faithful and emperors, especially by Theodosius the Great. Cf. H. Fros SJ, F. Sowa, *Księga imion i świętych*, v. 1, Kraków 1997, p. 138.

used till this day by Christians. The hymns written by Ambrose himself and formed in his circle were characterised by iambic dimeter, called Ambrosian rhythm.²⁰³ One of the works from the Ambrosian Circle, *Jesu corona Virginum* (Luigi Biraghi²⁰⁴ considered this poem an authentic piece by Ambrose), carries the features of a genethliacon because it contains information about the circumstances of Jesus' birth, offerings made to him and praising epithets:

Jesu corona Virginum, Quem Mater illa concipit. Quae sola Virgo parturit: Haec vota clemens accipe.

Qui pergis inter lilia, Septus choreis Virginum, Sponsus decorus gloria, Sponsisque reddens praemia.

Quocumque tendis, Virgines sequuntur, atque laudibus post te canentes cursitant, hymnosque dulces personant.

Te deprecamur supplices, nostris ut addas sensibus, Nescire prorsus omnia corruptionis vulnera.

Virtus, honor, laus, gloria Deo Patri cum Filio,

²⁰³ Muza łacińska, op. cit., p. 28. 204 L. Biraghi, *Inni sinceri e carmi di s. Ambrogio*, Milano 1862, p. 20.

Sancto simul Paracleto In saeculorum saecula. Amen.²⁰⁵

As mentioned above, the Christian authors celebrated the day of death as a birth to a new life and this type of creativity has started

205 *The Liber Usualis, Solesmes 1961*, p. 1211. Cf. translation by Dominik Rudnicki SJ; **English translation** by Maria Gaj.

Jesus, the maiden crown, the eternal adornment of the martyr, this Mother brought you who was and is Virgin.

Your toy in the lilies In pure maids' company, You are the Betrothed, Eternal wreath you give to Virgins.

Wherever you bring yourself, A pure regiment is flying behind you, Alive flow these lilies, Humming sweet melodies.

You will accept humble tears from us, So that our unruly senses, Just like your flawless Virgins Do not know the sins of the plague.

Bow and glory let it be With the Father and with the Son And with the Holy Spirit Forever reigning.

Based on: Muza łacińska, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

a poet, Paulinus from Nola.²⁰⁶ Paulinus was a worshiper of Saint Felix, who suffered a martyr's death on 14 January 260. A series of poems devoted to him for the subsequent anniversaries of "birth for heaven" is a harbinger of a phenomenon of Christian agonism: the patron saint's day becomes an occasion for poetic and later rhetorical speeches by various authors who, praising the saint, compete with each other in finding new arguments, metric and content solutions (13 centuries later, many saints were sung about in this way across Europe, for example Saint Catherine in Neo-Latin Silesia). Paulinus' works in different metres praise the beauty of the patron saint's day and are a story of deeds and miracles, worshipping the power of the saint as a manifestation of God's power, as in this formal declaration of the poet, in Song 29 where he subordinates everything to God ("maior mundi sator, ipse deus rex").207 The songs of Paulinus for Saint Felix's day with the characteristic title Natalicia, referring to carmen natale, are full of charm. Song 23, written in hexameter, reflects the unusual mood of joyful and almost spring-like holidays (despite the winter). Mid-January, the patron saint's day (that is the anniversary of his death) is early spring time in the Mediterranean climate, the awakening of spring, to which Paulinus equates the revival of his own spiritual life:

Spring is stirred up by birds singing. But for my song St. Felix's Day is the spring: in brightness

²⁰⁶ Paulinus (353 – c. 431) is considered the chief early-Latin poet in the West and one of the founders (along with Prudenius) of Christian poetry in Latin. There are 33 of his poems extant, one of the earliest Christian wedding songs and 51 letters addressed to many eminent contemporary personalities, such as Saint Augustine, Hieronim and Ambrose. Cf. *Poems of St. Paulinus of Nola*, translated and annotated by P. G. Walsh, New York 1975, p. 15. Cf. Ibid., K. Ościłowski, *Ideał chrześcijanina i jego realizacja: studium pism św. Paulina z Noli*, Kraków 2009.

²⁰⁷ Cf. K. Ościłowski, op. cit., p. 28.

Even winter flourishes when the people rejoice. The very centre of a cold season. Frosted grey fields. But on this day, the prayerful joy around us Spreads the refreshing spring. Worries are banished from the soul, The earth has broken anguish, this winter of mind, And dark clouds of sadness. Just like friendly days Recognise a swallow and a bird shining with black And a respectable turtledove Goldfinches and all that silent among the rough Scrubs are wandering birds, in the new spring To pray and sing not less differently, Than their wings are shimmering, so I recognise This day, my own spring, every year back, When I celebrate the rites of the great Felix. The rebirth of my soul is celebrated with a new song, A new prayer. God, come down to my heart And fill my hunger with heavenly food, Christ!208

Paulinus composed as many as 14 songs in honour of Saint Felix; he wrote them every year between 395 and 409 for the patron saint, celebrated, as mentioned above, on 14 January. The contemporary scholars of Paulinus' work, as in, for example, the study of his writings by Krzysztof Ościłowski, call these works literally "birthday songs" and demonstrate their connection with the genethliacon tradition.²⁰⁹ The similarities with ancient genethliacon, defined here by the dictionary *Dizionario di Antichità Classiche*,²¹⁰ are a praise of the day of birth, an invitation to participate in the festival and expression

²⁰⁸ Work translated by Zygmunt Kubiak. Cf. Z. Kubiak, *Literatura Greków i Rzymian*, Warsaw 2013, p. 71. Cf. Ibid., *Muza łacińska*, op. cit., pp. 74–75. English translation by Maria Gaj.

²⁰⁹ K. Ościłowski, op. cit., pp. 56–59.

²¹⁰ Cf. W. Duff, *Genethliacon*, in: *Dizionario di Antichità Classiche*, N. G. L. Hammond, H. H. Scullard, ed. M. Carpitella, Milano 1955, p. 1010.

of joy with the words of prayer as well as jubilee songs as a votive gift. Among the new, strictly Christian elements, the following are mentioned: understanding the concept of *diei natalis* as the day of birth for eternal life and placing a noble, holy birthday celebrator in the place and role of Genius. The nature of the feast also changes, which is not limited only to family and friends, but extends to all Christians. However, the last argument could be slightly undermined because public celebrations do not show the original Christian idea, but a clear influence of previous celebrations in honour of emperors.

Songs in honour of Felix, like genethliacons in Greek and Roman antiquity, are embedded in rhetoric: they are of a panegyric and even sympathetic-anacreontic character²¹¹ (they are a call to celebrate). In Paulinus' works, the rhetorical goal of docere, didacticism in the service of Christianity, stands out first. The first birthday songs (carmina 12 and 13) are prayers to the saint, song 14 describes the patron saint itself, including pilgrims from all over Italy and songs 15 and 16 also have hagiographic features because they tell of the life, activity and death of Saint Felix. Song 19 celebrates faith in the saints and cult of the relics, and the parallel to it, song 21, describes the joy of the poet of such faith of relatives and friends who came to Nola. Most songs are dedicated to the miracles that happen through the intercession of a saint (carmina 18, 20, 23, 26, 27, 28). Whereas the last, 29th song, resembles the short Hellenistic birth songs: it is a request to Saint Felix to inspire Paulinus and to give testimony that God works in the world through the intercession of saints. It is worth noting that in the other songs, Paulinus refers to the non-genethliacon genres of a rhetoric-occasional background, namely consolationem (carmen 31), epithalamium (carmen 25) and propemptikon (carmen 17).212

²¹¹ Cf. S. Bär, Composition, Voices and the Poetological Programme in the Carmina Anacreontea, "Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium Greacae et Latinae" XXVII/1 2017, pp. 17–38.

²¹² Cf. D. E. Trout, Paulinus of Nola. Life, Letters, and Poems, in: The Trans-formation of the Classical Heritage XXVII, Berkeley 1999, p. X. Cf. Ibid.: J. L. Smith,

The cult of saints, especially of martyrs, along with the cult of their religion was a phenomenon in Christianity (at least from the fourth century AD), which led to the formation of a new type of religiosity, important later for the Middle Ages.²¹³ All passiones and acta martyrum, as the supreme form of following Christ and ensuring union with him, became an important element of these memorial ceremonies of the "birth for heaven" of many different martyrs from various parts of the empire. According to historians of the Church, the epic of the martyrs was not an "episode closed in history, but an important event in the history of the Church, which ennoble and sanctify the magnificent characters, including Polycarp, Cecilia and Blandina"214 while adaption to its celebration and description of the tradition of birthday celebration and of the genethliacon genre turned out to be an idea that conveyed the traditions of such a celebration to the culture of Europe in later centuries. The custom of lauding the saints was deeply rooted in the Christian hagiographic tradition²¹⁵ and, drawing directly from the genologic development of genethliacon, it could offer to Christian culture a new rite, combined with literary output. On the eve of the patron saint's days of the more popular saints, that is during the annual celebrations of their heavenly birth, for instance, literary

The Natalicia of Paulinus of Nola and the Embodiment of Authority at the Shrine of St. Felix, Indiana 2004 and M. Roberts, Rhetoric and the "Natalicia" of Paulinus of Nola, in: "Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica", vol. 95, no. 2 (2010), pp. 53–69.

²¹³ Cf. R. Wiśniewski, *Narodziny kultu relikwii i jego najwcześniejsze świadectwa*, in: *Początki kultu relikwii na Zachodzie*, ed. R. Wiśniewski, translation from Latin and commentary by P. Nehring et al., Warsaw 2011, p. 11.

²¹⁴ Cf. H. Daniel-Rops, *Kościół pierwszych wieków*, translated by K. Ostrowska, Warsaw 2013, p. 163.

²¹⁵ B. Gaj, Postać św. Jacka na tle laudacji innych świętych w nowołacińskim orator-st-wie śląskim XVII i XVIII wieku, in: Święty Jacek i dziedzictwo dominikańskie, ed. E. Mateja, A. Pobóg-Lenartowicz, M. Rowińska-Szczepaniak, Opole 2008, p. 250.

competitions were organised. This was even the case during the celebration of St. Jack's Day, for whose glory poems were being written. Miguel Cervantes, among others, took part in such a competition many years later.²¹⁶

Also many epitaphs of Christian inscriptions testify to the acceptance and support of Christians of the first centuries for the birthday celebration itself, fairly faithfully modelled on the Roman tradition (excluding sacrifices to Genius), as evidenced by song XVII for Ommatius from the collection of Carmina by Sidonius Apolinary²¹⁷ and his invitation for a birthday destined for a married couple. 218 In the context of genethliacon's story, a versed invitation to that friend of Ommatius seems more interesting, most likely (also referring to the famous wine from Falerno) referring to Horace's pattern, full of new solutions. For example, the traditional call to the god of birth: Veni rogo ("come, please") replaces the apostrophe to the expected guest and instead of the description of the sacrifice being made, there are characteristics of a richly set table. This description, though, with the use of rhetorical confirmation of modesty and amplificatory modifications, which are denials of the luxurious character of the party, and seems to make them even more worthy of participation:

> Four days before the first day of the July fire, Before it, in turn, raises its spike-bearing head, Sixteenth birthday will be celebrated. And you are also welcome to this day of happiness. You will not be served dishes on pearl tables

²¹⁶ J. Woroniecki, Św. Jacek Odrowąż i wprowadzenie Zakonu Kaznodziejskiego do Polski, Katowice 2007, pp. 277–278.

Gaius Sollius Modestus Sidonius Apollinaris (430–489 AD) was a diplomat, bishop and a Christian poet. Cf. Sydoniusz Apolinary, *Listy i wiersze*, translated M. Brożek, Kraków 2004, p. 8.

²¹⁸ B. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 28.

Nor the Assyrian snail will give you a couch

Nor in the numerous drillings on the shiny table. Black silver weights will not be allowed in here. You will not get a golden metal cup to squeeze its winding handle with an inlaid side.

Treats are also mediocre with us and not so well done that art would enrich their price to a great extent. Nor will Galla get your village table or Bread, which is used to grow in Libyan Sirt, and there are no wines from Gaza, from Chios, or Falerno so that you could drink vine of Sarepana. There are no mugs decorated with the name of the village, which our own triumvir put on the fields. Nevertheless, come, please. All things will be given to us by Christ, who made me here my homeland through your kindness.²¹⁹

The importance of the birthday celebration in the awareness of Christians of the first centuries is also emphasised by some apocryphal texts. The Proto-Gospel of Saint James from the second half of the second century, with special biographical and dogmatic features, ²²⁰ proves that such a celebration of the birthday was allowed, in this case the anniversary of the birth of the Mother of Jesus, Mary:

And her months were fulfilled, and in the ninth month Anna brought forth. And she said to the midwife: What have I brought

²¹⁹ Sidonius Apollinaris, op. cit., p. 45. Cf. Ibid.: B. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 28. English translation by Maria Gaj.

²²⁰ Here Mary's virginity is shown before, during and after the birth of her Son. The Proto-Gospel was to connect the Old Testament with the New and to show the birth of Christ at the centre of history. There are fragments describing the birth of Jesus in the cave, his human development (for example, the infant suckles on the breast of his Mother), but Mary is also located in history: the story of Mary's birth, her origin and magnificence of the chosen year are recorded here. It was also mentioned that after the birth of Mary, Joachim was supposed to throw a great birthday feast, to which he invited the high priest and many celebrities.

forth? and she said: A girl. And Anna said: My soul has been magnified this day. And she laid her down. And the days having been fulfilled, Anna was purified, and gave the breast to the child, and called her name Mary. And the child grew strong day by day; and when she was six months old, her mother set her on the ground to see whether she could stand, and she walked seven steps and came into her bosom; and she snatched her up, saying: As the Lord my God liveth, thou shall not walk on this earth until I bring thee into the temple of the Lord. And she made a sanctuary in her bed-chamber, and allowed nothing common or unclean to pass through her. And she called the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and they led her astray. And when she was a year old, Joachim made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations.221

In addition, many liturgical texts quoted amongst others by Bogusław Nadolski, contain prayers to God on the occasion of one's birth, which with genethliacon combines at least one phrase: a request to the deity for life and health for the following birthday and for prosperity and blessing, as well as information about the sacrifice being made:

 "et annos famuli tui illius quem de maternis visceribus in hac vita prodire iussisti" ("give many happy years to Your servant, whom you have allowed to enter from the womb of the mother

²²¹ Text based on the translation of M. Starowieyski. Cf. http://www.antoni. agmk.net/pliki/ewangelia-dziecinstwa.pdf (accessed: 12 September 2017). English translation obtained from the following source (accessed: 3 March 2019): http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/infancyjames-roberts. html.

- into this earthly life" *Oratio in natale genuinum* lib. III LIII oration 1458);
- "hanc igitur oblacionem, domine, famuli tui illius, quam tibi offeret ob diem Natalis suis caelebrans genuinum, quo die de materna visceribus in hunc mundum nasci iussisti" ("graciously receive the gift of your servant, which he offers you on the occasion of his birthday, in which you called him from the mother's womb to this world" *Oratio in natale genuinum* lib. III LIII oration 1459).

As the second, more important birth, Christians also celebrated baptism. 222 Baptism prayers indicate God as the giver of life, which in religion is synonymous with existence, the highest perfection of being and salvation, therefore, among the oldest liturgical texts one can find those that concern the so-called piety of baptism, baptismal anniversaries. 223 Pascha annotinum or annotina (Greek equivalent: epeteion, perisinon²²⁴— "from the last year") is the term of the Paschal Eucharist, during which the baptism of new members of the Church took place, understood as "birth from water and the Holy Spirit". Anniversaries of such births, the heathen sources of which were well-known (let us recall, for example, Durandus' testimony from the thirteenth century: "[...] if anyone celebrates every year the day of his or her baptism, which may be borrowed from the pagans who celebrated the day of their birth, then, during the baptismal celebration the Passover should be sung"), 225 left some poetic-musical traces in the culture, as evidenced by, for example, the breviary with fragments of musical notation (WaN 1304), which

²²² Cf. Chrzest – nowe narodziny z wody i Ducha: Pismo Święte, liturgia, prawo kanoniczne, ed. Z. Cieślak, K. P. Kowalik, D. Kwiatkowski, Poznań 2014.

²²³ B. Nadolski, op. cit., pp. 38 and 73-89.

²²⁴ The term: ἐπέτειος means "annual", the other term: πέρνσιν – means "the last year".

²²⁵ B. Nadolski, op. cit., p. 75.

is one of the oldest monuments of musical writing preserved in the National Library in Warsaw. It is characterised by the original Sanctgonian notation, so-called notation in *campo aperto* without the use of a line, containing neumas (musical signs that existed before the formation of notes). ²²⁶

There was also one special birthday and one special baptism, the celebrations of which were initially treated as mere memories in the liturgical calendar became popular after the Council of Nicaea (AD 325). Of course, we are speaking of the birth of Christ (Christmas) and the Epiphany (the Revelation of the Lord). ²²⁷

It is to these two events that Aurelius Prudentius Clemens²²⁸ devotes two (hymns XI and XII) out of 12 logically arranged works in the collection *Cathemerinon liber* ("Book in Accordance with the Hours"). In the first one, he describes the birth scene at Bethlehem and the mystery of the incarnation, in the second, the kneeling of the Magi and the death of innocent babies as well as the baptism of Jesus.²²⁹ Let us quote the fragment of the second hymn: in the description of the Epiphany, stars and adventuring sages, there is a vivid atmosphere of the birth of the Child under the roof over which the star shines. The following stanzas are like a reversal of genethliacon: it is due to the extremely realistic description

²²⁶ Cf. Cz. Grajewski, Formuły dyferencyjne psalmodii brewiarzowej w źródłach polskich, Toruń 2004, p. 10.

²²⁷ Cf. J. Naumowicz, Prawdziwe początki Bożego Narodzenia, Warsaw 2014.

²²⁸ Aurelius Prudentius Clemens was born in 348 AD to a wealthy family in northern Spain. He received a thorough rhetoric education, took up the work of a lawyer, and then as a high official responsible for imperial correspondence, proximus scrinium libellorum. He stayed, among others, in Milan and Rome. He died between 410 and 404/405 (according to some sources 413). Cf. M. Starowieyski, Wstęp: Życie i dzieło Prudencjusza, in: Aureliusz Prudencjusz Klemens. Wieńce męczeńskie, translated by M. Brożek et al., ed. M. Starowieyski, Kraków 2006, pp. 42–47.

²²⁹ J. Naumowicz, *Pierwsze wczesnochrześcijańskie świadectwa o święcie Bożego Narodzenia*, "Colloquia Litteraria" 8/9 2010, p. 104.

of the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem, where the listener or reader must think of the ordinary activities of a small child who has been banned from breathing, eating, experiencing joy and a proper care:

> Bodies twitching in the depth Catches the cruel man with a laugh The little throat is choking, The water in it fights with the breath

Greetings, martyrdom's flowers! You barely reach the threshold Life's enemy of the Christ Destroys you like storm the roses²³⁰

[.....]

Such a bad law ruled there Mothers who protected offspring in the womb By giving birth Had to abandon their precious fruits

The context of birth is the most important in the entire work. There is even a midwife who hides the child against the will of the tyrant.

At the end of this review of early Christian attitudes towards birth, let us quote one more work from the end of antiquity, bringing together all antique motifs and their Christian modifications so far signalled. This includes the extensive work of Romanos Melodos (the so-called Melodist) entitled *Kontakion on the Nativity of Christ*.

²³⁰ Prudentius, *Hymn na Święto Epifanii*, translated by M. Bednarz, in: A. Bober, *Światła ekumeny. Antologia patrystyczna*, Kraków 1965, p. 564. English translation by Maria Gaj.

The text is cited in its entirety to make genre transformation more visible, from short, several-line works in the Alexandrian era, through elegy, to the type of vast epic, additionally dramatized and interspersed with orations and prayers. Roman Melodos (490 – c. 555 AD), a poet from Syria, created the most popular Christmas song in 18 stanzas, which was sung at least until the 12th century, and which even today is one of the favourite Greek carols. Combining the best traditions of genethliacon with all the achievements of ancient literature (in the song we have elements of epic, drama and lyrics), Melodos describes Christmas like this:

Bethlehem has opened Eden, come, let us see; we have found delight in secret, come, let us receive the joys of Paradise within the cave.

There the unwatered root whose blossom is forgiveness has appeared.

There has been found the undug well from which David once longed to drink.

There a virgin has borne a babe and has quenched at once Adam's and David's thirst.

For this, let us hasten to this place where there has been born a little Child, God before the ages.

The mother's Father has willingly become her Son, the infants' saviour is laid as an infant in a manger.

As she who bore him contemplates him, she says,

"Tell me, my Child, how were you sown, or how were you planted in me?

I see you, my flesh and blood, and I am amazed, because I give suck and yet I am not married.

And though I see you in swaddling clothes,
I know that the flower of my virginity is sealed, for you preserved it when, in your good pleasure, you were born a little Child, God before the ages."

"High King, what have you to do with beggars? Maker of heaven, why have you come to those born of earth? Did you love a cave or take pleasure in a manger? See, there is no place for your servant in the inn, I do not say a place, not even a cave, for that too belongs to another.

To Sara, when she bore a child, a vast land was given as her lot. To me, not even a fox hole. I used the cavern where willingly you made your dwelling, a little Child, God before the ages."

As she spoke such words in secret and entreated the One who knows what is hidden, she heard the magi seeking the babe.

At once, the Maiden cried to them, "Who are you?" They answered her, "And you, who are you, that you have borne such a Child?

Who is your father, who is she who bore you, that you have become mother and nurse of a son without father?

On seeing his star we understood that there had appeared a little Child, God before the ages."

"For Balaam laid before us precisely the meaning of the words he spoke in prophecy, when he said that a Star would dawn, a Star that quenches all prophecies and auguries; a Star that resolves the parables of the wise, and their sayings and their riddles, a Star far more brilliant than the star which has appeared, for he is the maker of all the stars, of whom it was written of old, 'From Jacob, there dawns a little Child, God before the ages.'

CHAPTER IV

When Mary heard these amazing words, she bowed low and worshipped the offspring of her womb and with tears, she said, "Great, my Child, great is all that you have done for me in my poverty; for see, magi are outside seeking you.

The kings of the East seek your face, and the rich among your people beg to see you, for truly your people are those to whom you have been made known as
a little Child, God before the ages.

"So, since they are your people, my Child, bid them come under your roof, that they may see rich poverty, precious beggary.
You I have as glory and pride, therefore I am not ashamed.
You are the grace and beauty of my dwelling and of me. Nod and let them enter.
My poverty does not worry me;
I hold you as a treasure that the kings have come to see, for kings and magi know that you have appeared a little Child, God before the ages."

Jesus the Christ and truly our God secretly touched his mother's mind saying, "Bring in those I have brought by my word, for it is my word which shone on those who were seeking me.

To the senses it is a star, but to the mind a power.

It accompanied the magi as my minister, and still stands fulfilling its service and showing with its rays the place where there has been born

a little Child, God before the ages.

"Therefore now receive, holy Lady—receive those who have received me, for I am in them as I am in your arms;
I did not leave you and yet I came with them."
She opens the door and receives the company of the magi.
She opens the door—she, the unopened gate through which Christ alone has passed.
She opens the door—she who was opened and yet in no way robbed of the treasure of her purity.
She opened the door, she from whom was born the door, a little Child, God before the ages.

The magi at once hastened into the room and, seeing Christ, they trembled as they saw his mother and her betrothed.

And in fear they said, "This is a son without ancestry.

And how is it, O Virgin, that at this moment we see your betrothed within your house?

Was your conceiving blameless?

Will people not find fault at Joseph's living with you?

You have a multitude of jealous people enquiring where there has been born

a little Child, God before the ages.

"I will tell you", Mary said to the magi,
"why I keep Joseph in my house:
to refute all those who slander me.
He will tell what he has heard about my Child.
For in his sleep he saw a holy angel
who told him how I had conceived.
In the night a fiery vision told
the creature of thorn about the things which grieved him.
That is why Joseph is with me, to show that there is
a little Child, God before the ages.

CHAPTER IV

"He proclaims clearly all he has heard.

He declares openly all that he has seen

in heaven and on earth:

the story of the shepherds, how beings of fire sang praises with ones of clay,

that of you, magi, how a star hastened before you,

lighting your way and guiding you.

And so, leaving aside all that you said before,

now recount to us what has befallen you.

Where have you come from, how did you understand that there had appeared

a little Child, God before the ages?"

When the Shining One had spoken thus, the lamps of the East said to her,
"Do you wish to learn from where we have come here?
From the land of the Chaldeans, where they do not say,
'The Lord is God of gods'.
From Babylon, where they do not know who is the maker of the things they reverence.
From there it came, the spark from your Child, and raised us from the Persian fire; we have left an all-devouring fire and see a fire which brings dew: a little Child, God before the ages.

"Everything is vanity of vanities.

But there is none among us who thinks this,

for some deceive while others are deceived.

Therefore, Virgin, thanks be to your Offspring, through whom we have been freed.

not only from deception but from hardship in all the countries through which we passed, of nations unknown, of tongues incomprehensible, as we wandered through the earth and searched it, with the lamp of the star seeking out where there had been born a little Child, God before the ages.

"But while we still had this lamp
we journeyed through all Jerusalem,
fitly fulfilling the words of the prophecy.
For we had heard that God had threatened to search her thoroughly,
and with the lamp we wandered,
wishing to find a great judgment.
But it was not found, because her Ark
had been taken away with all the good things It had held before.
The things of old have passed away, for he has renewed all things
a little Child, God before the ages."

Mary, Scripture says, said to the faithful magi,
"So, have you journeyed through all Jerusalem,
that city which slays prophets?
How did you pass unharmed through the city malevolent to all?
How did you avoid Herod,
who breathes out murder, not justice?"
But they answered her, "Virgin,
we did not avoid him, we mocked him.
We met them all and asked where there had been born
a little Child, God before the ages."

When the Mother of God heard this from them, she said to them, "What did King Herod and the Pharisees ask you?"
"First Herod, then, as you said, the leaders of your nation inquired of us exactly the time of this star which is now visible.
And when they knew, as though they had not learned, they had no desire to see the one of whom they sought to learn

because, for those who seek, there must be seen a little Child, God before the ages.

"They thought us mad, the fools, and asked, 'From where have you come and when? And how have you journeyed by unseen paths?' But we in turn asked them what they already knew, 'But how did you of old journey through the great desert which you crossed? He who guided those who came from Egypt himself now guides those who come to him from Chaldea; then by a pillar of fire, now by the star which shows a little Child, God before the ages." "Everywhere the star travelled on ahead of us just as Moses once carried a staff before you a lamp shining with knowledge of God. Of old the manna nourished you, and a rock gave drink as for us, hope of Him has made us full. Nourished on joy of Him we could not tarry in Persia; we took in mind to travel the trackless road desiring to see, to worship, and to glorify a little Child, God before the ages."

These things were spoken by the unerring magi, and they were all sealed by the holy Virgin.

And what both had said was confirmed by the infant; he left her womb unsullied after childbirth, and showed their mind, like their steps, unwearied after their coming.

For none of them had undergone toil, as Avvakum had not been wearied when he came to Daniel.

For he who appeared to the prophets was the same who appeared to the magi,

a little Child, God before the ages.

When they had told all their story,
the magi took the gifts in their hands and worshipped
the Gift of gifts, the Myrrh of myrrh.
They brought Christ gold and myrrh and then incense
and cried, "Accept our triple gift,
as you do the Thrice Holy Hymn of the seraphim.
Do not reject them like those of Cain,
but embrace them like Abel's offering,
through her who gave you birth, and through whom you have
been born for us,
a little Child, God before the ages."

When the blameless Virgin saw the magi bringing new and radiant gifts and worshipping, the star showing him, the shepherds praising him, she implored the Maker and Creator of all these, saying, "Accept, my Child, a trinity of gifts, grant her who gave you birth three requests. I pray to you for the seasons and for the fruits of the earth and for those who dwell on it. Be reconciled to all, because through me you have been born a little Child, God before the ages.

"For I am not simply your mother, compassionate Saviour; it is not in vain that I suckle the giver of milk, but for the sake of all I implore you.

You have made me the mouth and the boast of all my race, and your world has me as a mighty protection, a wall and a buttress.

They look to me, those who were cast out of the Paradise of pleasure, for I bring them back.

May all things understand that, through me, you have been born

a little Child, God before the ages.

"Save the world, O Saviour. For this you have come. Set your whole universe aright. For this you have shone on me and on the magi and on all creation. For see, the magi, to whom you have shown the light of your face, fall down before you and offer gifts, useful, fair and eagerly sought.

For I have need of them, since I am about to go to Egypt and to flee with you and for you, my Guide, my Son, my Maker, my Redeemer, a little Child, God before the ages". ²³¹

²³¹ Text obtained from: L. Małunowiczówna, Antologia modlitwy wczesnochrze-ścijańskiej, Lublin 1993, pp. 322–326. Cf. http://przemijapostac. blogspot.com/2012/12/roman-piesniarz-hymn-na-boze-narodzenie.html (accessed: 20 October 2017). English translation comes from the following source (accessed: 3 March 2019): http://jbburnett.com/resources/romanos_nativity. pdf

Chapter V

Genethliacon in the culture of medieval and humanistic Europe

In the Middle Ages, the events of the night at Bethlehem were one of the important (though not the most important²³²) elements of both cult and art (including literature). Cult mingled with legend and a relatively homogeneous plot about the birth of Christ was created, originally present only in poetry and speech, then it was dramatized by the 'theatricalization' of the offices, i.e. insertions in the liturgy.²³³ One of the first such solutions was the paschal²³⁴ paraphrasing of the dialogue: "Whom do you seek, women?" (by default: "in an empty grave"), which read: "Whom do you seek, shepherds?" From the eleventh century, especially in Italy and France, such compositions increasingly enriched the Christmas liturgy. Officium pastorum, expanded in the thirteenth century with new

²³² The dominant cult was the cult of the Passion and Resurrection and Christ as the Lamb, Pantocrator, Good Shepherd and Gate of Salvation. Cf. J. Le Goff, *Kultura średniowiecznej Europy*, Warsaw 1970, p. 160 et al. On the subject of attitude to religion, spirituality and birth cf. ibid., R. Fossier, *Ludzie średniowiecza*, Kraków 2009, p. 356 et al.

²³³ Cf. J. Okoń, Wstęp, in: Staropolskie pastorałki dramatyczne. Antologia, ed. J. Okoń, Wrocław 1989, p. VI.

²³⁴ The documentation of the Paschal office is also rich in Poland, and four of its variants are distinguished: processio in ramis palmarum, mandatum, elevatio crucis, visitatio sepulchri (from which the paraphrase comes from). Cf. Liturgiczne łacińskie dramatyzacje Wielkiego Tygodnia XI–XVI w., collection, introd. and commentary by J. Lewański, Lublin 1999, pp. 33–90.

characters, above all angels (who would chant *Gloria in excelsis Deo*), midwives, witnesses of the slaughter of innocents and of the escape to Egypt, achieved the peak of dramaturgy via the activity of Saint Francis who in 1223 started the tradition of the so-called live crib. Such forms of procession and displaying the annual celebration of the anniversary of a birthday can be considered a specific modification of genethliacon, in which the economical but usually poetic Latin forms are complemented by the pantomime, popularised for the people. The continuation of this phenomenon will be numerous dramatizations for school use, which were created in the Baroque in both Catholic (especially Jesuit) and non-Catholic schools. They played an important didactic and social role.²³⁵

However, Latin medieval literature provides also several other examples of the specific continuation of the genre, which glorifies birth: *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Latin Literature*²³⁶ gives examples of works that praise fertility and parenthood (admittedly ascetic only). Among others, Reginald from Canterbury,²³⁷ a Benedictine monk-hagiographer from the end of the 11th century and the author of a romantic piece of fiction entitled *Vita sancti Malchi*,²³⁸ based on the example of the ant community, expresses his fascination with reproduction or spiritual procreation:

²³⁵ J. Budzyński, Paideia humanistyczna, czyli wychowanie do kultury. Studium z dziejów klasycznej edukacji w gimnazjach XVI–XVIII w. (na przykładzie Śląska), Częstochowa 2003, p. 30.

²³⁶ Cf. *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. by R. J. Hexter, D. Townsend, Oxford 2012, pp. 433–435.

²³⁷ Reginald of Canterbury is a French monk from the Benedictine order, who moved to the Abbey of Saint Augustine in Canterbury around 1100. He was the author of many short poetic pieces, which can sometimes shock the reader due to their intricate style. The hagiography of Saint Malachy was developed on the basis of Saint Jerome. Cf. S. Echard, *Reginald of Canterbury* w: *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*. 1–2. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb619/full (accessed: 31 August 2017).

²³⁸ Cf. The Oxford Handbook of Medieval..., op. cit., p. 433 et al.

Pars parit arte nova spem prolis; pars fovet ova. Edendo coitu pars instat perpetito ritu. Corporis et motu generat pars compote fotu²³⁹

Part of the community is giving birth to a new spiritual way, the hope of the new generation, the other part looks after the young and warms up the eggs while the last part is intimate and by the set tradition begets the offspring participating bodily.

Similarly, Baudri of Bourgueil values the company of women and children, but without involvement in procreation:

Sitque soror mulier carum partitura nepotem Qui mihi post annum sit iocus et chitara. Perludat vacua mihi parvulus Iulus in aula Quem soror atque meus villicus ediderint. Sit mihi casta domus, mens casta, cubile pudicum, Deturpet thalamum nulla libido meu.²⁴⁰

Let the sister be the woman who will give birth to the dear descendant.

This one, after a year, will be my company in jokes and music.

Little Julus will play at my empty court, whom my sister and my administrator will beget.

Let my house be clean and a table, and a spotless bed, no lust will make my bedroom obnoxious.

In both quoted examples, the authors do not shy away from taking up the subject of fertility or even sexual intercourse, but they

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 435. English translation by Maria Gaj.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 440. English translation by Maria Gaj.

certainly prefer the spiritual acquisition of offspring for this form of procreation, for example by forming a relationship with someone else's offspring, based on art, literature or music. Although, the above-mentioned works cannot be called genethliacons, it is fun, indeed, or a celebration with a child who has lived one year ("after a year, will be my company in jokes and music") that brings to mind the tradition of celebrating at least the first anniversary of birth, which was mentioned while discussing the still popular Proto-Gospel of James in the Middle Ages, especially in the East.²⁴¹

Furthermore, it is assumed²⁴² that certain features of genethliacon may carry fragments of the gospel approved by the Church, above all the Gospel according to Saint Luke, such as the canticle of Zachary,²⁴³ spoken after the birth of his son, John the Baptist (the

²⁴¹ J. Okoń, op. cit., p. VII.

²⁴² Genethliakon, in: M. Bernacki, M. Pawlus, Stownik gatunków literackich, Warsaw–Bielsko-Biała 2008, p. 62.

²⁴³ Cf. Luke, 1, 65–80: "His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: 'Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has visited his people, he has set them free, and he has established for us a saving power in the House of his servant David, just as he proclaimed, by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient times,

that he would save us from our enemies and from the hands of all those who hate us, and show faithful love to our ancestors, and so keep in mind his holy covenant. This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant us, free from fear, to be delivered from the hands of our enemies, to serve him in holiness and uprightness in his presence, all our days.

And you, little child, you shall be called Prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare a way for him, to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the faithful love of our God in which the rising Sun has come from on high to visit us, to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow dark as death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace'. Text obtained from the following source: https://www.catholic.org/bible/book.php?id=49 (accessed: 4 March 2019).

famous *Benedictus*), the canticle of Symeon²⁴⁴ and the words of the angel²⁴⁵ directed to the shepherds.

The figure of Mary as the Mother of God (*Mater Salvatoris nostri*) is, in turn, the theme of the work by Elisabeth of Schönau (Saint Elizabeth of Hesse), which is a dialogical meditation on the subject of Mary-the-Mother and thus is a reference to genethliacon.²⁴⁶ Similar, however, the atmosphere of celebrating the birth of God through His Mother have all the works related to the hour service, once popular both in France and in England, especially in conjunction with extremely suggestive painting. To this day, one can admire the fifteenth century editions of Étienne Chevalier's *Hours* with the extraordinary paintings of Fouquet or Jean le Maingre²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Cf. Luke 2, 29–32: "Now, Master, you are letting your servant go in peace as you promised; for my eyes have seen the salvation which you have made ready in the sight of the nations; a light of revelation for the gentiles and glory for your people Israel". Text obtained from the following source: https://www.catholic.org/bible/book.php?id=49&bible_chapter=2 (accessed: 4 April 2019).

²⁴⁵ Cf. Luke 2, 10-14: "An angel of the Lord stood over them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Look, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And all at once with the angel there was a great throng of the hosts of heaven, praising God with the words: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace for those he favours". Text obtained from the following source: https://www.catholic.org/bible/book.php?id=49&bible_chapter=2 (accessed: 4 April 2019).

²⁴⁶ Both *Visiones* and *Liber viarum Dei*, containing the mystical experiences of Elisabeth, were edited and published by her brother, Abbot Egbert, after the mystic's death. Cf. *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval...*, op. cit., p. 476.

²⁴⁷ J. Fouquet, *The Hours of Étienne Chevalier*, preface by C. Sterling, introduction and legend by C. Schaefer, London 1972.

and The Rohan Book of Hours248 with annotations based on the Golden legend of Jacob de Voragine, including Christmas, the Escape to Egypt, Adoration of Shepherds and Mages. Everything is provided with wonderful drawings - one of the most interesting being the birth of St. John the Baptist, 249 where the view of Elizabeth (along with the midwife during the act of pouring water for his first bath) and Mary in the centre of the picture perfectly introduces the joy of birth in the home of Zachary. Much of Marian piety (including Magnificat or the antiphons created between the tenth and twelfth centuries: Salve Regina, Alma Redemptoris Mater, Regina Caeli, Ave Regina Caelorum²⁵⁰) is part of the genethliacon tradition by reference to extraordinary births, a call to joy and the celebration of the chief characters of this event. Officium parvum Immaculatae Conceptionis BMV, the fifteenth-century work that has gained so much popularity in Poland, was based on the poetic components of the Marian and Akathist litanies, 251 also related to genethliacon. Each octostich began with the anaphor "Welcome" (as "Come" has once before been directed to Genius/Juno), then followed by a series of anastomoses ("auroral star"). In Hours, moreover, there were sentences describing biblical events, for example:

Welcome, the city of escape, the strengthened fortress With the tower of David and the power equipped! You, at your conception, beat the power of hell, And on the Chort's head you stepped.²⁵²

²⁴⁸ *The Rohan Book of Hours*, introduction by M. Meiss and commentaries by M. Thomas, London 1973. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. MS. Latin 9471.

²⁴⁹ J. Fouquet, op. cit., p. 29.

²⁵⁰ Cf. R. Pannet, *Maryja w Kościele i świecie*, translated by A. Liduchowska, Kraków 1995, p. 10.

²⁵¹ Cf. W. Sadowski, *Litania i poezja. Na materiale literatury polskiej od XI do XXI wieku*, Warsaw 2011, p. 208.

²⁵² Ibid., p. 209.

Traces of genethliacon could be seen in the works of medieval *vagantes* (also called goliards), whose Latin poetry was highly valued by Helen Waddell,²⁵³ the first researcher of these issues almost a century ago. The twilight of the Medieval, "the age of unnamed vagrants": future priests of the Church, wandering priests, and sometimes disappointed scholars, is full of frolicking works, referring to love, life and annual celebrations. Perhaps, one of these scholars was Aelred from Rievaulx,²⁵⁴ a Cistercian monk who willingly connected the metaphors of birth and death.²⁵⁵ This sensitivity to the humanistic values of human life and its connection with poetry can, therefore, be already seen in this first European humanism of the twelfth century.

Certainly, there are many more direct and indirect references to genethliacon in the whole, still not fully researched European literature, which, based on Latin or at least on the rhetorical and poetic values transferred from the ancient Latin tradition of the Middle Ages, is wonderfully characterised by Ernst Robert Curtius. ²⁵⁶ This assumption would, however, require many years of arduous searches in all European libraries, a detailed analysis of thousands of old manuscripts not only in Latin but in each of Europe's vernacular languages. The whole presentation of European literature, even if

²⁵³ H. Waddell, *Średniowiecze wagantów*, translated by Z. Wrzeszcz, Warsaw 1960, p. 175 et al.

²⁵⁴ Aelred (Ailred) was a Cistercian abbot, whose feast was inscribed in Roman Martyrologium on January 12. Although, he has never been canonised, he is regarded a saint of the Catholic and Anglican Church. Author of several famous books on spirituality (*Speculum caritatis*, *De spirituali amicitia*, *De anima*) and seven works on history, advising Henry II of England on how to be a good king, a descendant of the Anglo-Saxons. Cf. A. Hoste, *Bibliotheca Aelrediana*, Steenbrugis 1962, https://www.deon.pl/imieniny/imie,62,aelred-aelret-elret. html (accessed: 15 September 2017).

²⁵⁵ The Oxford Handbook of Medieval..., op. cit., p. 474.

²⁵⁶ Cf. E. R. Curtius, *Literatura europejska i łacińskie średniowiecze*, translated and edited by A. Borowski, Kraków 1990.

written in Latin, has not yet taken place even to the great humanist mentioned above (despite the undoubtedly accurate indication of certain ways of interpretation and metaphor), although it is worth quoting the fragment (like Curtius) of John of Hauville poetry with regard to genethliacon inspiration:

O longum studii gremio nutrita togati ingenii proles, rudis et plebea libelle, incolumis vivas.

Live long-fed with work, the child of my mind, the modest and simple book, and in the group of scholars (unscathed) survive.²⁵⁷

Using a personal metaphor, in the convention of wishes submitted seemingly to a child, the poet turns to his own literary work and this type of metaphor becomes popular at the beginning of the Renaissance: Agrippa d'Aubigné addresses his work as he would address a child, in Shakespeare's sonnets there is a mention of a spiritual parent, Cervantes writes about Don Quixote: "the child of my mind", and Bacon addresses the important words to Queen Elizabeth: "Generare et liberi, humana, creare et opera, divina" ("To give birth to children – human; to create works – divine"). Such a way of perceiving literary creativity, "born" often in burden, became in the following centuries, starting from the Renaissance, the basis of many poetic and prose dedications on the "birth" of a work and thus another modification of genethliacon.

According to Andrzej Borowski²⁵⁸ in the most simplified representation of Renaissance culture, there is no lack of emphasis on the aspect of historical consciousness and literariness. The first aspect (using the picture of birth, development and maturation

²⁵⁷ Quotes from ibid., p. 142. English translation by Maria Gaj.

²⁵⁸ Cf. A. Borowski, Renesans, Kraków 2002, pp. 9–10.

that is close to every human being) resembled the ancient myth of "centuries of humanity" and the rebirth of nature and culture, emphasising the special role of man on the world stage of history. A good example of such a view of the world via the lenses of the genre of birth songs is *Genethliacon mundi*, a natural-theological treatise from the beginning of the 16th century by the Moravian lawyer and humanist Johannes Volscius (Janus a Svola, Jan Zvolský, 1505–1546), 259 which begins as follows:

Principio causas rerum fatumque renascens...²⁶⁰

The creation of the world and its development along with the history of salvation are told on nine pages of an old print in a fairly correct hexameter, with the most important theses of the treaty being outlined in the margins. The author refers to the ancient *carminis natalis* by introducing the figure of Genius, identified with the Christian God ("Ipse potens mundi Genius") and by a certain mystic birthday ("Natalis mundi mysticus").

In turn, the literary nature of thought and speaking is in other words the poetics and rhetoric which Renaissance artists adhered to, referring to the tradition of Greek-Roman antiquity.²⁶¹ Genethliacons have also been discovered in their classical form in the Renaissance. Renaissance humanists, having a greater awareness of this genre than Middle-Age poets, created genethliacons or

²⁵⁹ Janus a Svola, Genethliacon mundi, Haganoae 1531.

²⁶⁰ Phototype version in this issue. Cf. J. Zvolsky, Genethliacon mundi, in: Alphabetum theologicum siue Tropi, Veteris perindeque Noui Testamenti, è Dionysio Areopagita, Gregorio Magno, alijsque probatissimis ueterum summa fide collecti. Inest opusculo praefatio commoda, & poemation Heroicum, quod author Genethliacon mundi inscripsit, 1530. St.dr. Oss.

²⁶¹ It is worth taking a look at, among others, the arrangements regarding the understanding of elegy by Renaissance humanists. Cf. G. Urban-Godziek, *Elegia renesan-sowa. Przemiany gatunku w Polsce i w Europie*, Kraków 2005.

used their fragments and modifications in other works or dedications. When Lucrezia Borgia gave birth to Ercole II (eldest son of hers and Alfonso d'Este) on 4 April 1508, who later became the prince of Ferrara, her trusted courtier-humanist, Ercole Strozzi, celebrated the birth of such a wonderful heir in a poem entitled *Genethliakon*,²⁶² in which he expressed the wish that this heir be modelled on his uncle Caesar Borgia and grandfather Rodrigo de Borja (Pope Alexander VI). Models for the young prince would also become: Camillus, a Roman leader from the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries, the conqueror of Veii, dubbed the "second founder of Rome" thanks to the numerous war victories, as well as Scipio Africanus the Elder, Hannibal's conqueror.

Wishes on the birth (or successive anniversaries of the birth) of rulers have again become a fashionable gift, a way to attract the attention and kindness of powerful parents. Considering the mortality rate among new-borns, some of the tracks may have been forgotten and destroyed, but the celebration of subsequent anniversaries was also successful. About 150 years after the discovery of the ancient genethliacons by the Renaissance Europe, Daniel Georg Morhof (1639–1691) in the first attempt of a systematic review of European literature entitled Polyhistor sive de auctorum notitia et rerum commentarii²⁶³ lists a number of such works. It should also be taken into account that the works mentioned by him have already been somehow chosen from among others, because they are only those that are suitable for school use, for young people: "aliquam ΰλην inventionum poeticarum in iuventutis usum". ²⁶⁴ Hyle ("ὕλη") of these poetic inventions turns out to be very diverse, just as the invention is ("varia est inventio"). Then, after a brief introduction

²⁶² M. Bellonci, Lukrecja Borgia, Warsaw 1988, pp. 562–564.

²⁶³ D. G. Morfoh, Polyhistor sive de auctorum notitia et rerum commentarii quibus praeterea varia ad omnes disciplinas Consilia et subsydia proponuntur, Lubecae 1688.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 110.

to the principles of genethliacon formation (praise of the ancestors, birth time, description of the birth itself, feasts, greetings, the season, information about the evolvement and diversity of further praise in view of a new-born child's sex or the person celebrating anniversary).

Morhof divides genethliacons into written:

- "in gratulatione de natali primo", 265
- "in gratulatione de natali anniversario". 266

Among the first group, as an example, Morfoh lists the works of artists from all over Europe, written for new-born descendants of various European courts: Scottish, French, Danish, Polish and the German, Dutch and Italian principalities. As authors worthy of following in this genre, he points out, among others: Jacob Balde, Zevecotius (Jacob van Zevecote), Georgius Buchanan, Wallius, Neubusius, Jovianus Pontanus, Jacopo Sannazaro, Keuchenius, Brunon Mengelmoes, Joachim Pastorius and Vitus Beringus. In the second group, apart from some repeated authors, such as Pontana, Keuchenius and Zevecote, he lists the following surnames: Bannin, Nicolaus Heins, Vincentius Fabricius, Hugenius, Bonifacius Bisselius, Johannes Secundus, Becanusa, Caldenbach, Grotius, Lotichius, Hugenius, Barlaeus, Gudberlethius, Albertus ab Ines, Antonius Chanutius, Justus Lipsius.

Some of these names are difficult to unambiguously confirm in bibliographies, but it should be recognised that Morhof has collected the most significant authors of genethliacons from three centuries: from the fifteenth to the seventeenth. He considered the works equally worthy of imitation regardless of whether they concerned male or female descendants. Of particular interest to Morhof are those written celebrating birth, which occurred on a special day, for example for the birth of a daughter ("filiola") of the palatine,

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 117.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 119.

Wilhelm Philippe, on the feast of the Magi (a work by Jacob Balde), or an epigram on a double occasion – simultaneous birth and baptism of the French dolphin (Zevecotius song). On the other hand, anniversaries of birthdays are more eagerly sung if they refer to famous people (Queen Christine), friends (Joseph Scaliger) or a special "crisis" age, such as the 60th birthday ("In annum suum 60 exactum Rosinae Melistae").

The modern, starting from the Renaissance, stylistic-intertextual interpretations of genethliacons indicate a return to the Callimachus tradition, and thus to the celebration of the birth of a child in connection with the praise of poetry. An excellent example of such a work can be preserved in the manuscript Epicharma Encomiasticon of the poet Abschatzius' authorship. Abschatzius, that is Hans Aßmann Freiherr, wants to express feelings of happiness and joy, called in Greek τὸ ἐπίγαρμα (tò epícharma), because of the birth of a daughter, here called "Filiola Abschatziana", 267 born on 19 February 1680. A manuscript piece, placed at the end of the collection of occasional pieces issued in print, both in Latin and German, is also mixed language-wise: a few lines of a German poem were written down in the Latin title to return to the final Latin conclusion. The German poem is dominated by vocabulary associated with light and sun, sunrise ("das Licht, die Sonne"), and the main cause of paternal happiness is Apollo ("Phaebus"), who in his own person ("Dir sollte Phaebus selbst") contributed to bring such a wonderful creature to earth. There are other mythological figures in the text, namely Pegasus and Tethys. The metaphorical origin of the new being is neatly combined with the Latin expression of the bonds that connect the father with the child. Virtus of the father, along with all his good heritage, passes on to the child: not only to his

²⁶⁷ Epicharma Encomiasticon in natalem nobilissimae Filiolae Abschatzianae, d. 19 Febr. A. 1680 natae, BUWr, Manuscript at the end of a block, reference number 362504. 8.

son, how once Ulysses' assets have awakened in Telemachus, but also to his daughter:

Multum habere momenti in Virtutis Gymnade, exemplo Telemachi confirmat Plutarchusque, cui Ulissis patris virtutibus una cum semine, ut Homerus loquitur, quasi instillata fuerit: non aliter, ac si paterna Virtutis Bona ac paucas sanguinis guttas una confluxerint²⁶⁸.

The encomiastic (or laudatory) work, referring to Phoebe-Apollo and sung for a tiny daughter, clearly refers to the creator of the first genethliacon, Callimachus.

The form of the genethliacon-epigram-song, rediscovered by the humanists, is still used in songs about the birth of Jesus, such as the famous *De partu Virginis* from 1526. These are three books written in the hexameter by Jacop Sannazar. Genethliacon gains an epic form here. The poet, while patterning himself on Homer, intends, however, not to express anger but birth from the Virgin. It is worth adding that the humanistic biblical epics of Sannazar found many followers in Europe. In Central Eastern Europe Grzegorz Czaradzki, ²⁶⁹ among others, who dedicated his work entitled *Rytmy o porodzeniu przenaczystszym* to the city council of Poznań in 1614.

One of the most interesting aspects of birthday-related work on the threshold of modernity were also astrological genethliacons, i.e. collections of opinion and advice for people born in different months and days, based on astrological material with reference to theological and natural treatises²⁷⁰. They were a kind of gift writ-

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Cf. G. Czaradzki, Rytmy o porodzeniu przenaczystszym Bogarodzice Panny Maryjej, ed. E. Buszewicz, R. Mazurkiewicz, Warsaw 2009.

²⁷⁰ Astrology was neither a specialty of the Middle Ages, nor Renaissance humanism, but it has remained a peculiar legacy of antiquity that still remains.

ten in prose on for the birthday and contained several dedicatory poems. Examples of this include the work of Johann Rothmann entitled *Chiromantiae theorica practica concordantia genethliaca vetustis novitate addita*, ²⁷¹ published in Efrurs in 1595, and written half a century later by Tobias Wagner *Astrologia genethliaca ex theologicis ac physicis prin-cipiis ipsisque astrologorum penetralibus destructa* [...] ad disputandum proposita. ²⁷²

Genethliacon, associated in both works with astrology, seems a worthy birthday gift. It is intended to help adhere better to the cosmic rules governing the world and people. The first of the issues discussed is the explanation on the predictions about the predisposition and fate of a given person ("quaestio an ex dextra vel sinistra iudicandum"). The author of "theoretical and practical chiromancy" does not agree with the view that more information about the fate of a man is contained in his right hand, and of a woman in her left hand, but recommends looking at both hands in both sexes: the lines of one which are more clearly marked will be the decisive hand. But what if the fingerprints of both hands are poorly marked (literally "clear and indistinct" ("clarae et obscurae")? Then, the decisive element turns out to be the moment of one's birth: whoever was born during the day ("die qui ex matris utero prodiit") is subject to the

Medieval theologians accepted the theory that the planets have an impact on human events and the psyche, and an even greater impact on plants and minerals. The Church did not fight against such views, but against astrological determinism which influenced science to the point of excluding free will, and against the profitable practice of prophecies based on astrology and the cult of planets (planetolatry). Cf. C. S. Lewis, *Odrzucony obraz. Wprowadzenie do literatury średniowiecznej i renesansowej*, translated by W. Ostrowski, Kraków 1995, p. 103.

²⁷¹ J. Rothmann, *Chiromantiae theorica practica concordantia genethliaca vetustis novitate addita*, Erphordiae 1595.

²⁷² T. Wagner, Astrologia genethliaca ex theologicis ac physicis principiis ipsisque astrologorum penetralibus [...] destructa [...] ad disputandum proposita; respondente Johanne Brandio, Stuttgardiae 1656.

male planet and signs informing is about his or her fate should be sought on the right hand. In contrast, those born at night are subject to the power of the female planet ("planet feminini dominentur"). In the case of both hands with clearly marked lines, the influence of connected male and female powers is taken into consideration.

The second work is more concerned with the day of the birth of a man and the consequences associated with it, as for example in one of the chapters entitled *De Planetis*:

Planetae quoque suis a locis censuram haude levem suppeditant. Hi si felices ac benevoli sunt, bona significant, sin infelices ac contumaces, tunc mala inferunt.

The planets can, therefore, be happy and unhappy, which means, among other things, that those born under the influence of Mercury have mathematical and merchant skills. Other fingers also reveal the character of a man, for example, the index finger, the so-called *index*, on which there are straight lines, for a woman means content ("merositatem"), and for a man, bitterness in speech ("linguae amarulentiam"). The woman whose fingerprints are star-shaped ("stella") is preannounced to be shameless and unloving ("impudica et lasciva").

This type of birthday divination, however, did not overshadow the popularity of birthday song, usually called *carmen* or *geneth-liacon* (sometimes also elegy or another name, such as *epicharma* cited above). In the Renaissance and Baroque, it remained popular throughout Europe, from Italy through France, Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic²⁷³ to Sweden and Estonia.²⁷⁴

²⁷³ Cf. i.e.: G. Galli, Genethliacon Pariterq[ue] Epitaphium De re-pentino obitu primogeniti Filioli ... Ctiborij Witanowsky de Wlczkowicz, Prague 1614; J. Tesák Mošovský, Genethliacon Christi Theantropi, Prague1606.

²⁷⁴ K. Viiding, Gratulationgedichte zum Antritt in das Rektoramt an der Academia Gustaviana und Academia Gustavo-Carolina im 17. Jahrhundert, w: "Colloquium Balticum V", Lund, 30-31 October 2005.

Chapter VI

Genethliacons in Poland and Silesia

When trying to write a short description of genethliacon in Poland, the association with Bogurodzica, the oldest Polish religious song and simultaneously the oldest Polish poetic text from the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries, comes to mind. After all, the word Bogurodzica is the equivalent of Latin *Dei genetrix* or Greek $\Theta \varepsilon o \tau \acute{o} \kappa o \varsigma$ and because of the very reference to the birth of God, is a germ of a genethliacon. Certainly, even the oldest Polish carol relics are part of the tradition of this genre, such as various editions of medieval carol songs. ²⁷⁵ Its content varies depending on the location, but it is always preceded by Latin stanzas, which are an integral part of the work:

Nunc Dabienses domini et omnes pueruli, date laudem Cristo nato, Nato, nato, nato, nato, nato Domino ²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ The text uses the so-called the *dębski message* of a medieval Polish-Latin carol from the '20s or '30s of the 16th century, written on the title card of the incunabula *Biblia pauperum* by Nicolaus de Hanapis (Strasbourg 1490), which source was found in the Bernardine Library in Kraków. Cf. W. Wydra, W. R. Rzepka, *Chrestomatia staropolska. Teksty do roku 1543*, Wrocław 1984, p. 256.

²⁷⁶ Cf. Ibid. English translation by Maria Gaj.

Now, the Men of Debica and all children, give glory to the new-born Christ, born, born, born, born, born Lord.

The subject of genethliacon is also associated with modern carols and with dramatic works exhibited in Jesuit colleges in the 16th century such as, for example, *Dialogus in Natali Domini* i *Ecloga de Nativitate Domini*.²⁷⁷ Rhetorical relationships also connect genethliacon with congratulatory orations on the birth of a descendant. The reference to the Renaissance and Baroque literature of Ludwika Ślękowa, recalled in the introduction, also draws attention in Polish genethliacons to frequent references to initiation and liturgical rites, wishful formulas, such as, for example, in *Zachariae Gregorii Orsacii filiolii genethliacon* by Andrzej Trzecieski. In contrast, the well-known limerick III 65 by Jan Kochanowski *Mate[m]u wielkiej nadzieje Radziwit[towi]* refers more to the tradition of the epideictic genethliacon, recommending to the "little Michnik" the continuation of the Radziwiłł family tradition.²⁷⁸

There are many such works in Old-Polish literature that bear features of genethliacon or birthday-related rhetoric without any date or name-day/birthday, but with allusions to such a time of gifts or the Christmas and New Year period. Worthy of mention are a collection of speeches called "carols" with dedications and Latin quotes entitled Kokosz wprzód PP. Krakowianom w Kazaniu za kolędę dana po tym nowemu Jaśniewielmożnemu a mnie Miłościwemu Stadłu I.M.P. Janowi Mikołajowi z Zurowa Daniełowicowi, Podskarbiemu

²⁷⁷ *Dialogus in Natali Domini* i *Ecloga de Nativitate Domini*, edited and translated by J. Ziabicka, Warsaw 2001.

²⁷⁸ L. Ślękowa, op. cit., p. 63.

²⁷⁹ This is a gift in the form of a carol offered on Christmas, and also a literary carol gift, which is to be a form of expressing gratitude for the former.

Wielkiemu Koronnemu, Samborskiemu, Przemyskiemu etc. etc. Staroście z Jey M. P. Zofią z Tęczyna Danie-towicową, Podskarbiną Wielką Koronną, Samborską, Przemyską etc., etc., Starościną na Gospodarstwo drukiem po śmigurście ofiarowana²80 written by Father Jacek (literally Hyacinthus) Mijakowski, a Dominican friar, Prior of the Holy Trinity church. The title "Kokosz" turns out to be both a "bird that is benevolent and useful on the farm" and (as deduced from the dedication) often offered to the poor monks, as well as an equally useful collection of works.

On the feast day of St. Stephen 1637 AD, Father Mijakowski cites in the pre-carol sermon the following words from the Gospel of Saint Matthew: "Quoties volui congregare filios tuos, quemadmodum gallina congregat pullos suos sub alas". 281 It shows what value a family can become, in which the young generation comes into the world. The care for them is entrusted to both parents and relatives as well as to priests; the eponymous kokoszka (waterhen) teaches us how to rid the heart of this world's vanities. Subsequent carols concern individual states; there is, therefore, a noble carol, "Mighty Lord Mayor and Soviet", academic, a carol of young damsels and students, a city carol, "married ladies" carol, a carol of "orphaned widows" and the last one, a maiden. Each state receives a warning and a wish at the same time. The nobility are told that truly noble

²⁸⁰ J. Mijakowski, Kokosz wprzód PP. Krakowianom w Kazaniu za kolędę dana po tym nowemu Jaśniewielmożnemu a mnie Miłościwemu Stadłu I.M.P. Janowi Mikołajowi z Zurowa Daniełowicowi, Podskarbiemu Wielkiemu Koronnemu, Samborskiemu, Przemyskiemu etc. etc. Staroście z Jey M. P. Zofią z Tęczyna Daniełowicową, Podskarbiną Wielką Koronną, Samborską, Przemyską etc., etc., Starościną na Gospodarstwo po śmigurście drukiem ofiarowana, Kraków 1638, BŚ sygn. 229528 I. Cf. Ibid. new edition: J. Mijakowski, Kokosz panom krakowianom w kazaniu za kolędę dana, ed. R. Mazurkiewicz, Biblioteka Dawnej Literatury Popularnej i Okolicznościowej, v. III, Warsaw 2008.

²⁸¹ Cf. Mat. 23, 37: "[...] how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing".

heritage is the heavenly Jerusalem ("caelestis enim Hierusalem [...] sperata haereditas"), the municipal administrative authority receives a call to good work, non-adherence to adversity and governance by doing good, not by spreading fear ("praelatus magis amari a vobis appetat, quam timeri"). The warning for the academic community is meant to be the fate of Seneca, the teacher of Nero, and of the orator Libanius, from whom Julian Apostate was to be infected with paganism; the speaker draws attention to the ease of spreading evil, and therefore, the need for a good example by academic teachers, as well as the need to maintain higher ethical standards, because this environment is often willingly imitated ("ad imitandum prona expedita est improbitas: nec quidquam tam facile, quam malum fieri"). Students receive a carol gift, a quotation from Ovid, clearly referring to genethliacon:

Editus in lucem, iacuit sine viribus infans Mox quadrupes rituque tulit sua membra ferarum; Paulatimque tremens, et nondum poplite firmo Constitit, adiutisque aliquo conamine nervis, Inde valens veloxque fuit²⁸²

Born into the light, the infant lay there, powerless: but soon it scrambled on all fours like a wild creature, then, gradually, helped by a supporting harness, it stood, uncertainly, on shaky legs. From that point, it grew strong and swift.

Therefore, young people are encouraged to develop actively so that their interests do not revolve around food, wine, entertainment and debauchery, so that they are vigilant ("vigilandum"), focused on reflection ("cogitandum et suspirandum"), abstinence ("abstinendum voluptatibus") and shaping the strength of the spirit ("incitanda vis animi").

²⁸² Cf. Ovid, Metamorphoses XV, 221-227.

For married women, the preacher wishes, above all, fertility ("faecunditas"), piety and goodness, which like laurels ("laurus") never fades. For orphans and widows, it is advisable to fully rely on God's protection ("beatus, cuius Deus adiutor et protector est"), who would grant them consolation, and for their offspring, well-off partners in the future (including girls getting their dowry wishes). The last Christmas carol was released in a new edition by Roman Mazurkiewicz,²⁸³ but it is worth noting that the main Latin clue for virgins is the concept of *remedium*, prevention, protection and counteracting evil, which could endanger the virtue of virginity.²⁸⁴

Finally, there are genethliacons in Old-Polish literature that more fully implement the assumptions of the genre, also written in Latin, both in prose (fulfilling the rhetorical assumptions of Dionysius of Halicarnassus) and in poem. An example of this is the birthday speech by someone named Byczkowski for Andrzej Tarła from Szczekarzowice, 285 the Castellan of Nowy Sącz and the Canon

²⁸³ The carol is also available on a website devoted to Old-Polish literature. Cf. http://staropolska.pl/barok/Varia/Mijakowski.html (accessed: 12 November 2017). Online version is based on: J. Mijakowski, Kokosz panom krakowianom w kazaniu za kolędę dana, op. cit.

^{284 &}quot;You know what this 'remedy' is for? Best with the young lady to the pen, let her sit in the house with eyes open and on guard. 'Omnis enim publicatio virginis castae, stupri passio est'. Any presentation of the young lady, especially public, what smells? Let someone else teach you what is 'stuprum'. Oh God, what can be understood about these ladies, who at home are like on awl, with itchy heels when they do not surround streets, churches and the market, who lament on a mother who doesn't take them there herself and who pulls her neck out of the window like a finch from the cage when 'sola publicatio stupri passio est'". Cf. Ibid.

²⁸⁵ M. Byczkovius, Andreothesia Genethliaca illustris ac reverendi admodum domini Andreae Tarlo e Szczekarzowice castellanidae Sądecen.[si] canonici Crac.[oviensi], eccelsiae collegiatae Tarnovien.[sis]: praeposituram faeliciter cum solenni apparatu capessento, litteratorum virorum fautori et patroni consecrata illustrissimo principi, ac Reverendissimo Domino, D.[omino] Martino Szyszkowski, episcopo Cracovien. [si] cancellario academiae, et supremo protectori: amplissimis autem capituli Crac.

of Kraków (supporting scholars), on the occasion of the annual renewal of the Provostry of Tarnów collegiate church. A dedication was also attached to the Kraków bishop Marcin Szyszkowski, and the speech was delivered to the academic community of the canons of Kraków Cathedral. It is actually a collection of several birthday songs. The longest of them *Applausus Tartonum*,²⁸⁶ is a birthday drama, in which all Muses, Apollo himself and "gratulabunda vox populi" are meant to praise the Tarłowski house, in addition to the wonderful occasion of Saint Andrew's Day, with at least three family members carrying that name.

The congratulatory collection described above and written for Saint Andrew's Day formally fits in with the tradition of genethliacon and the subsequent praise of saints during patronal holidays (so-called *festa patrocinalia*). It is also a manifestation of the living tradition of celebrating name-day celebrations in Poland (often at the same time as the birthday). It is worth noting that in both cases the source of antique inspiration is the same and that an additional element combining these two varieties of occasional poetry were anniversary congratulatory writings, the fact of which determines the similar content and composition of wishes, the selection of laudatory motifs and the relationship between the authors of compliments and the person in question.²⁸⁷

[[]oviensis] viris, generis et factorum claritate, pietatis et doctrinae praestantia, omni prudentia et authoritate illustribus ac reverendis admodum dominis, cathedralis ecclesiae Crac.[oviensis] et canonicis dicata. At vero et venerabili viro M. Matth. Buczkovio, Philosophiae doctore in Academia Crac.[ovieni] contubernii Ierusalem Seniore, honoris ergo ipso die s. Andreae Apostoli, facta, ac per applausum charitum Cal: lanu: per modum Xenii reverenter exhibita, Cracoviae 1619.

²⁸⁶ Andrzej Tarło (died 1532) from Szczekarzowice, a Polish nobleman of the Topór coat of arms, ensign of Lviv; son of Andrzej, who also had a son named Andrzej who founded the town of Tarłów in 1570. The piece is devoted to the third of these mentioned Andrzejs. Cf. K. Maleczyński, *Urzędnicy grodzcy i ziemscy lwowscy w latach 1352–1783*, Lviv 1938, p. 108.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Wiersze imieninowe..., op. cit., pp. 13-14.

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the real birth ("ad genethliaca festa") of the later Bishop Nicholas Oborski of Obory (Domini Nicolai de Obory Oborski),²⁸⁸ and the cathedral cantor and secretary of the Kraków protonotary Casmirus Dmosicki, Doctor of Philosophy, a prefect of the Kraków seminary offers his speech-treatise, dedicated to the priesthood. *Idea pontificum*²⁸⁹ by Kazimierz Dmosicki²⁹⁰ concerns the Church, the Republic of Poland and the special value of the priesthood and is offered with wishes of health and honours in their service.

Also *Icon heroicae virtutis*²⁹¹ dedicated by Jan Cynerski-Rachtamowicz to young Jan Dembieński, the son of Franciszek a "Dembiany Dembieński", is such a laudatory work which although it was not

²⁸⁸ Mikołaj Oborski of the Pierzchała coat of arms (born in 1611, died 16.04.1689 in Kraków) was an auxiliary bishop in Kraków and earlier a cantor of the Poznań chapter of the cathedral, and the secretary of the protonotary. Cf. M. Pukianiec, Organizacja i funkcjonowanie poznańskiej kapituły katedralnej w XVII wieku, PhD work, p. 26, http://docplayer.pl/31754818-Mikolaj-pukianiec-organizacja-i-funkcjonowanie-poznanskiej-kapituly-katedral-nej-w-xvii-wieku.html (accessed: 15 November 2017).

²⁸⁹ Idea Pontificum aureo liberalitatis Pontificiae stylo in D. Nicolao episcopo Myrensi exarata et ad Genethliaca festa perillustris ac reverendi domini Nicolai de Obory Oborski, Cracoviae 1650. Cf. K. Estreicher, Bibliografia Polska: stólecie XVIII. Spis chronologiczny, v. 9, Kraków 1888, p. 721.

²⁹⁰ Kazimierz from Dmosic (Dmosicki) was a deputy to the Crown Tribunal. In 1687 he became a canon of Płock and royal secretary and in 1697 an archdeacon of Płock. Cf. association's website "Nasze Dmosice", http://www.irp-fundacja.pl/dmosice/o_nas.php (accessed: 30 September 2017).

²⁹¹ I. Cynerski-Rachtamovius, Icon heroicae virtutis generoso ac magnanimo iuveni, Perillustris ac Magnifici Domini D. Francisci à Dembiany Dembieński vexilliferi ter-rae Cracoviensis etc., etc. inclyto filio, Ioanni Dembieński, avitae paternaeque gloriae haeredi faelicissimi dum excellenstissimus et admodum reverendus dominus Matthaeus Casimirus Woiaszowic, artium et pilosophiae doctor, parochus Grembozoviensis praeben-dumque primum Deo Optimo Maximo offerret Missae Sacrificium, Cracoviae 1639.

offered on the occasion of birth (or at least we do not know anything about it), it bears the features of both the speech praising *genus* (lineage of the recipient) and the recipient himself, as well as being a laudatory work on the same subject. Already in the title, attention is paid to the rich family heritage: the addressee is the "heir of father's and grandfather's happy glory" (these most important ancestors are "Maiores Franciscus et Jacobus"), whose reference to the cult of Tritopatores, ²⁹² the Three-Fathers is so important for many genethliacons. Young Dembieński learns that he should imitate the characteristics of his ancestors ("ad imitation"), their love of freedom ("libertas") and the best features of "virtus". The whole "virtus" in "Dembieńsca" is similar to "fama", "gloria", "eloquentia" and "auctoritas".

Probably the most interesting story of the flowering of a Latin birthday song or birthday oration in Central Europe, in close relation to Polish culture, can be traced back to the example of a Silesian case study. A dense network of schools, libraries and printing houses, which ensured the permanent circulation of the printed word, and a large group of educated people including the extent of their foreign contacts, favoured Neo-Latin creativity in Silesia. In particular, Wrocław from the end of the 15th century was a wellknown centre of "humanistic ferment" and during the Habsburgs even against the background of the whole monarchy it turned out to be extremely buoyant culturally.²⁹³

^{292 &}quot;Birth was a transition from the hidden to the public [...]. It closed the three-part cycle of human life, defined by the terms: grandfather, father, and son. The grandfather was reborn in his grandson; they both often bore the same name. The myth, in principle, dealt with the three generations of characters that Nestor personified. Above the grandfather, the ancestors formed an amorphous group of the 'Three-Fathers', Tritopatores, to whom the Athenians on the occasion of nuptials were praying for the birth of a child". Cf. E. Zwolski, *Choreia narodzin*, in: *Antropologia antyku greckiego*, op. cit., pp. 390–391.

²⁹³ N. Davies, R. Moorhouse, *Mikrokosmos. Portret miasta środkowoeuropejskiego*, Kraków 2002, pp. 191 and 208.

The issues of fertility, birth and the celebrations connected with it were a frequent subject of oratory works in Silesia. Among others, Daniel Vechner²⁹⁴ discusses the subject of human fertility in the famous school of Złotoryja. The ability to procreate is God's gift and an "abundance of offspring is the result of God's blessing and the guarantor of the welfare of the state". Silesia experiences (and will continue to experience) this "extraordinary boost of offspring" of its citizens ("insolita et inaudita eluvio catti Silesiorum"). The issue of the fertility of specific groups of people, for example Jews, was willingly addressed both at schools and during public orations; in a public rhetorical spectacle entitled An et quomodo Iudaei in civitate ferendi a certain Closius analyses the extraordinary vitality of Jewish communities²⁹⁵ The interest in the subject of birth and fertility has also translated into the development of science in this area; a Wrocław scholar Caspar Neumann (1648-1715) was particularly interested in demography. He kept city population statistics used for research on the length of human life, as in Edmond Halley's work entitled Ocena stopni śmiertelności rodzaju ludzkiego na podstawie osobliwych Tablic Narodzin i Pogrzebów w mieście Breslau, and to this day he is known as the "father of demography".296

Certainly, the unusually spectacular example of the genethliacon, historically confirmed, ²⁹⁷ is the public appearance of a teenage girl Elisa Winkler during Christmas.

²⁹⁴ D. Vechner, De insolita et inaudita eluvione catti Silesiorum, quae fuit IV. Non. Junii A. MDCIIX oratio habita in illustri Aurimontana, Lignicii 1608.

²⁹⁵ Cf. J. Budzyński, *Czy na dawnym Śląsku był antysemityzm? Przyczynki szkolne do historii Żydów w XVII i XVIII w.*, "Rocznik Łubowicki, Lubowitzer Jahrbuch, Lubowická Ročenka", v. 1, 2003, p. 106.

²⁹⁶ Cf. N. Davies, R. Moorhouse, op. cit., p. 206.

²⁹⁷ J. Budzyński, *Paideia...*, op. cit., p. 288. Cf. Ibid.: B. Gaj, Ślązaczka. *Pomiędzy rustica grossa i Pallas Silesiae – portret kobiety w literaturze łacińskiego Śląska*, Opole 2010, pp. 185–186.

Elisa was the daughter of Andrzej Winkler, the rector of a Elizabethan Gymnasium, and in December 1537 she delivered a speech in the church in Wrocław entitled *On Baby Jesus (Oratiuncula puellae de puero Iesu Christo in ludo litterario Vratislaviae dicta).*²⁹⁸ Ambroży Moiban, a Silesian religious reformer, attached this speech at the end of his *Katechizm*, perhaps because of his friendship with the girl's father, but also, as he writes himself, to stimulate boys from junior high school to more intensive humanities studies against the example of such diligence and talent.

The work is not long. It perfectly fits in with the genethliacon convention because it is written in both prose and poem form. It remains correct in terms of rhetorical composition, it is pattern-wise scholastic, but it also contains remarks that may be a testimony to the individual feelings or thoughts of the girl.

At the outset, Elisa anticipates the argumentation of the possible opponents of her speech, which does not fit in with the contemporary convention: a teenage girl dares to speak, and what is more she dares to do so in church. She claims that this speech takes place not so much because of her talent (a certificate of modesty: "causa ingenioli mei"), as much as thanks to the admirable grace of Christ. Then, Elisa speaks of her education which for a few years of her life was apparently co-educational ("ut me et pueros, cum quibus aliquot annos litterarum rudimentis operam dedi"), with her main school being the school of Christianity in which she was born and brought up ("Christiani sumus nos omnes, Christiana nostra schola in qua et nata et educata sum"). In the neat *propositio* the author of the speech gives a clear scheme of her reasoning: "primum nativitatis

²⁹⁸ A. Moibanus, Catechismi capita decem, primum quibusdam thematis, deinde etiam colloquiis puerilibus illustrata iuventuti Vratislaviensi proposita. Accesit et puellae cuiusdam Oratiuncula, in nativitate Iesu Christi publice dicta, cum piis quibusdam precatiunculis. Cum praefatione Philippi Melanchtonis. Recognita omnia ab ipso Authore, Vratislaviae apud Andream Winglerum 1537, preface 1538, BUWr, sign. 310 374.

historiam deinde quantum utilitatis": firstly, she will discuss the story of the Nativity, and then its benefits for humanity ("laetitia nobis"). The orator often uses repetition (for example, "natus est ex Maria virgine"), biblical quotations ("scriptum est"), the principle of diversity and the elocutive selection of names given to Jesus ("Emmanuel puer nobis est natus [...] vocatus: Mirificus, consiliarius, Gigas, fortis, Pater in aeternum, Princeps pacis "), a whole series of rhetorical questions ("Quis non libenter gestabit [Christum puerum] in sinu?"). "Ego puella," she says about herself, and this ego is manifested in perhaps the most feminine desire to hug the small baby Jesus and in the description of the Christmas scenery, where the final fragment (34 lines) resembles the poetical carol which according to Elisa's declaration is also of her authorship ("Itaque audite me puellam puero Iesu pueriles occinentem versiculos"):

Tu datus est nobis, tu missum ab aethere summo Immanuel nobis, ex bonitate Patris.

You have been given to us
Sent from the sheer heavens
"God is with us",
thanks to the goodness of the Father.

At the end, next to the classic recapitulation ("Pueriliter demon-stravimus [...] facti simus nati regis filii Dei"), there are many calls to Christmas joy, expressed by the hortative coniunctivus, and addressed to young colleagues: "agite igitur, pueri optimi, amemus, discamus, agamus totum vitae cursum, in quo est vera pax et solidum gaudium. Dixi." ("Let's love, let's learn and spend the whole course of life with the one in whom there is real peace and lasting joy") says a young Silesian woman in the church in the first half of the 16th century and regardless of whose inspiration a female appearance

in the church took place, it must be considered the first publicly delivered genethliacon by a woman in this part of Europe.

Elisa's speech was also referred to later on. Among other things, the record a catechism dialogues emphasising the importance of this event for the Wrocław Lutheran community ("in nostro ludo Vratislaviensi nativitatem Iesu Christi audivi te pulcherrimam celebrantem et orantem") suggesting that Elisa should continue the story of the birth of Jesus, now speaking about his resurrection. A man named Chilianus Metzler reports that the girl is going to make a speech to the pious virgins congregated in the monastery ("scio te iam meditari orationem alteram de gloriosa resurrectione Christi, quam in coetu piarum quarundarum virginum in coenobio dictura es"). In addition, he is sure that Elisa spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit and with a great knowledge and skills in each of the five divisions of rhetoric, but above all, in disposition and elocution ("quoniam vix credo tibi omnia ex animo excidisse [...] structura orationis illius vehementer mihi placuisse erant enim omnia apte distincte, ornateque collocate"). Elisa herself also refers to the celebration of Christmas by the Lutheran community in this dialogue with Chilianus: she was here through the grace of Christ against the kingdom of Satan, and therefore even the deficiencies in her education (in the face of so many educated listeners) did not prevent this speech ("ego indocta puella in tanta corona hominum doctorum tanti regis et domini nostri Jesu Christi causa contra regnum satanae suscipere ausa fuissem").

The time of the Silesian Renaissance is characterised by the abundance of Latin occasional literature, which can be described as familial. Mutual wishes, evidence of courtesy on the occasion of publishing another medical book, poem or treatise of a humanist colleague appear almost as often as wishes related to family events, weddings or births of children and consolations in the event of death of a family member. One²⁹⁹ of the most famous humanists writing

²⁹⁹ Study of Cunradus' genethliacons (pp. 105–108) based on the article by B. Gaj, *Od narodzin do śmierci. Literackie curriculum vitae Ślązaczki na*

occasional pieces was Caspar Cunradus³⁰⁰ (Cunradi, 1571–1633), born in Wrocław, poet and doctor, befriended by other poets of this period, among whom his biographer, Johann David Wolf, mentions Janus Lernutius, Janus Gulielm and Valens Acidalius.

Caspar was known by his contemporaries (not only in Silesia) primarily as a translator of the *Psalms of David* (1607), author of *Epigrams* (1609) and *Parody* (1611), modelled on Horace. He also wrote *Gnomologiam Latino-Germanicam* (1616), *Pratum evangelicum* (1621) as well as *Theatrum symbolicum* (1625).³⁰¹ However, like many of his contemporaries, he left behind occasional pieces, usually written on the occasion of birth or death, for friends or powerful sponsors. Out of all of his legacy, these works best illustrate the views and feelings of a man at the outset of modern times.

In the collection of old prints belonging to the Jagiellonian Library there is an interesting group of poem-wishes of his authorship, bearing a common title and dedicated to a friend, Daniel Rindfleisch, who according to contemporary fashion adopted the Latin agnomen: Bucretius, probably referring to the name.³⁰² Caspar Cunradus treated his *Miscella*,³⁰³ in principle a collection of various texts, as a kind of a New Year's gift for a friend. The central part

progu nowożytności, czyli filiola Anonyma, dilecta sponsa, mater alma animi, in: "Kwartalnik Opolski" 2010, 4, pp. 33–36.

³⁰⁰ Cf. B. Gaj, Caspar Cunradus o kobietach z rodu Bukreadów. "Pieśń na urodziny" i inne wiersze, in: Fortunniejszy był język, bo ten i dziś miły, Colloquium Neo-latinum IV, ed. I. Bogumił, Z. Głombiowska, Gdańsk 2010, pp. 244–251.

³⁰¹ J. D. Wolf aus Neudorf den Lignitz, Casparis Cunradi Silesii Philosophiae Et Medicinae Doctoris Prosographiae melicae Millenarius I. II. III., Vratislaviae 1615, Briegae 1764.

³⁰² J. H. Zedler translates the word "Rindfleisch" as "caro bubula". Cf. J. H. Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon Aller Wissenschafften und Künste*, band Rei-Ri, Leipzig und Halle 1742, p. 1637.

³⁰³ Bucreadum Casparis Cunradi medici et poetae miscella pro strena feliciter ineuntis anni MDCVII Olsnae Sil. Sub iucunde Typographica Joannis Bössemesseri, Olsnae Silesiorum 1607.

of the collection dedicated to Bucretius is placed as the seventh of the thirty pieces, but the longest, probably the most interesting and emerging in *Miscella* is the thread of birth celebration and its anniversaries, *Carmen genethliacon* for the birth of the first (after three daughters) son of Bucretius, Theodor. "Theodoro Bucretio, Danielis Bucreti ex Emmelia Langia filio" ("To Theodor, the son of Daniel born of Emmelia"). This is the full title of this "birthday song" or rather "song for the birth" that is strictly related to birth and delivery in connection with poetry:

Emmeliae quartum gravefacta tumeret ut alvus, Coelicolas inter lis fuit orta Deas. Nata mari teneram roseo vult ore puellam: Daedala sed puerum Pallas habere cupit. Adsistunt Charites Veneri, parvusque Cupido: Palladi cum Melicis Laurifer adstat Herus. Illis se sociant Dryades, Chlorisque, Ceresque: Suada sed, et Sophia his ac Meditrina favet. Lis volat: haec puerum vult pars, pars illa puellam. Haeret in ambiguo res ea tota loco. Stat medias inter Divum Lucina catervas, Nec, cui pro voto gratificetur, habet. Iuppiter at: Cypris tu desine velle puellam: Natabus domus haec pullulat ante tribus. Nascatur suboles tibi mascula, Pallas Athene: Nascatur domui masculus huicce puer. Arridet Iuno, parientis et ocyus alvo Producit placito pro Iovis en puerum. Io bene! Io! gaudet Pallas: io! parte sub ista Congaudent hilari Numina cuncta Deae. Io gaudet genitrix quoque cum genitore, piaque Excipit optatum cum prece ventris onus, Ultroque efffatur: date tu mihi munere IOVAE, Parve puer, IOVAE munere nomen habe.

Sis Theodorus o usque mihi! Sis dos mihi IOVAE, Quem vovi, Domino, tu mihi, dante, venis. Conclamat Iuno, Tu pupule pumile cresce; Cresce sequens matre (m) moribus, arte patrem. Annuat optatis magnus IOVA, votaque firmet, Ac vivo hoc Nato vivat uterque Parens.³⁰⁴

The content of this epic genethliacon is first the dispute between goddesses (Aphrodite and Athena) about the sex of the child to be born (it is worth noting that the action takes place a moment before childbirth), which Jupiter decides upon, and then the childbirth and the joy and gratitude expressed by the parents in relation to God, eventually identified with Jupiter. During the aforementioned argument on the side of Aphrodite, there are the Charites and, of course, a small Cupid. The palladium is accompanied by the swift-footed Hermes. In subsequent stanzas, the dispute expands, and the following deities join the discussion: dryads, Chloris (the guardian of flowers and personification of spring), the goddess Demeter. Some want the birth of a boy and some a girl. The next line carries information that each of the two options is still possible, which could be considered the only mention of a medical nature in this work. The representative of this "medical" point of view seems to be Lucina, the goddess of light, the carer of birth and the patron of obstetricians, who is calm and ready to act among the discussing deities, like a midwife ready to cooperate with the forces of nature.

Discussions of deities are cut off only by Jupiter, turning to Venus, whom he forbids to want a girl ("desine velle puellam"), because this house has already welcomed female descendants three times: "Let a male descendant be born to this house"; and of course it

³⁰⁴ Cf. Ibid., C. Cunradus, *Carmen genethliacon*, op. cit. It is probably a reference to the poem by Jacop Sannazar, translated into Polish by Hieronim Morsztyn. However, in the works of both authors, a girl is born, while Bucretius depicts the plot differently. Cf. G. Czaradzki, op. cit., pp. 221–222.

occurs, the delivery going without complications. From the womb of the one giving birth, according to the will of Jupiter, a boy was released quickly ("parientis et ocyus alvo producit placito pro Iovis en puerum"). Juno smiles, Pallas Athena shouts aloud with joy. Then, all deities join in. Shouting with joy ("Io! Gaudet") is the mother-obstetrician herself, along with the father of the newborn. Then, the mother piously raises the craved burden ("piaque excipit optatum ventris onus") and – which is worth emphasizing – it is she who gives the child a name: "Give me this God's gift here! Little son, have a name from the gift of God. You shall be Theodor, God's gift, for you come to me as the fulfilment of my Lord's wish."

After the words of the happy mother, the action moves back to Olympus, where the newborn is bestowed with a blessing. Interestingly, it is not given by Jupiter, but again by his wife Juno and according to her words, the boy is supposed to grow, imitating his mother in her customs and father in his skills. And just as the father of the boy is only a passive observer of the birth and only a partner of motherly joy, so Jupiter-Jehovah, although he resolved the gender dispute, now only gives good wishes to the child ("annuat [...] votaque firmet").305 There were two more sons born after Theodor in the Bucretius family: Daniel and Philip Jacob, but the works devoted to them are rather short and conventional. It is completely different with the poems devoted to Daniel's daughters: Martha and Margaret. The most remarkable, however, are the poems dedicated to the two daughters of Ursula, one deceased: De obitu Ursulae Filiae Carissimae. Parodia ad Od. 15. Lib 3. Horat., and the other, born after the death of her sister: De Ursula Bucretia Danielis Filia nata 10. Octobris Anno 1605. They can probably be considered as an attempt to create an original cycle where life is contrasted with death. The poem containing the date of birth of the younger Ursula in the title is a continuation of the story of the formerly deceased Ursula (half of the birthday work was devoted to her memory).

³⁰⁵ Cf. detailed study of the work in: B. Gaj, Ślązaczka..., op. cit., pp. 213–215.

Of course, the cause of death of the older Ursula again reaches the heights of Mount Olympus: here Nemesis cannot accept the existence of three beautiful Charites born on an earthly field, born of an earthly father. Therefore, she sends personified Death, so that at least one of them dies from his arrow: "two Charites are enough on earth," she says recalling the two older daughters of the Rindfleisch-Bucretius family: Martha and Margaret. However, Juno, kind to the girls' father, turns bad fate away and causes a new third earthly Charis to be born. She receives the name of the previously deceased sister, while Cunradus remains in his prayers to the deities to keep his daughters healthy for their father and to also keep himself in health. Although, the inspiration for the new poem was simply another birth in the Bucretius family, Cunradus clearly seeks to put together the sadness of the deceased and the joy of the birth of a new being. After all, a poem about the "new" Ursula could have been placed where there were works about all the other surviving members of the Bucretius family, that is at the end of the collection. Cunradus did not do this, however, pointing out the stages of mourning: sadness, emotional letting go of the deceased", consolidating her memory and turning towards life.

The closeness of life and death can also be seen in another Cunradus genethliacon in the collection of works written after the death of Christiana (the wife of the poet and the mother of his children) entitled *Ara manalis Christianae Tilesiae*.³⁰⁶ In the central part of the collection there is a moving elogium for an unnamed daughter, born and deceased on the same day. Just as his wife was the most important part of Caspar's heart ("Christiana mei pars maxima cordis"), so his daughter was the most desirable ("desiderata") descendant of a family in which seven sons had been born so far. Immersed in deep mourning ("moestissimus"), the father wants to immortalise

³⁰⁶ Casparis Cunradi Phil. Et Med. D. Ara Manalis Christianae Tilesiae coniugi meritissimae posita. Cum appendiculis Epicediorum duobus Liberis ante Matrem demortuis, a Fautoribus et amicis scriptorium, Olsnae Sil. 1626.

the daughter's coming into the world, though her life did not last long: it has been given and at the same time taken away already in the mother's womb ("cui in alvo Materna Vita et data et erepta"). Even though she is deprived of a name, she will not be deprived of the memory of her father and descendants who read the record in her honour. The memory of the unnamed daughter becomes the main motive for the creation of this special genethliacon entitled *Memoriae Filiolae Anonymae*.

The works of only one author were deliberately analysed to show the universality of the phenomenon because almost all Silesian humanists practiced this type of familial-occasional writing. The opportunity to express one's good wishes took place also at Christmas, however, works written for this occasion do not only continue the medieval admiration of Christmas but also refer to the antique genethliacon: an epigram addressing material and poetic gifts, a song celebrating the feast day or being a word of thanks.

In one collection of Tobias Aleutner³⁰⁷ from Zgorzelec there were seven such works, including six of his own authorship. The seventh poem, also Christmas-related, written by Martin Mylius, rector of the gymnasium in Zgorzelec, was a kind of praise for the very idea of submitting poetic-prayer gifts to the newborn Baby Jesus:

Aurea non omnes, non omnes thurea possunt, Aut tristis myrrhae munera ferre Deo. Voxque precum supplex corde profecta pio Sub cruce militibus Christi patientia digna Munera sunt complacitura Deo³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ T. Aleutner, Γενεθλιάκον sive Carmen natalicium in festo natali Servatoris Nostri factum, Gorlicii 1599. The Library of the Ossoliński National Institute XVI 3638.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

On the other hand, the author of the book, Aleutner, writes not only an occasional piece about the time of giving gifts to friends ("Tempus adest iterum, quo mittit amicus amico")³⁰⁹ but also $\Gamma \varepsilon \nu \varepsilon \theta \lambda \iota \acute{\alpha} \kappa o \nu$ in Greek and corresponding Latin *Carmen natalicium*:

Festa dies iterum laeto processit Olympo Natalem revehens, Christe puelle, tuum. Plaudite mortales: cum suavi iubila voce Edite: et ingratum pellite corde metum³¹⁰

In the final part of the collection, the author also includes *Gratiarum actio*, a special thanks to Christ for the gifts he gave him, and another Latin genethliacon entitled *Echo* in reference to the rhythmic-music-rhyming quests that were fashionable at that time. The "echo" type of poem, also of antique origin (*versus echoici* written, among others, by Martialis), consists of "appends" imitating the common acoustic phenomenon, with the word inserted in the line of the poem ("echo") not belonging to the line in terms of metrics (in the below case it is not included in the pentameter):

Ecce venit tempus, patulas quo lucus in oras produxit Christum virgo Maria. ECHO: pia. ergo sollicito cuncti vos solvite luctu Christicolae: cesset cura severa. ECHO: fera.

³⁰⁹ Tempus adest iterum, quo mittit amicus amico Aere graves pateras, aureolosque scyphos Haec quoque donna darem: sed fulvi gleba metali argentique mihi pondera decufiunt. Cf. Ibid., p. 3.

³¹⁰ Cf. the first four (out of 60) lines from *Carminum natalitium* in: T. Aleutner, op. cit., p. 5. Fragments of the text (and of the collection) available in this publication in the form of illustrations with the consent of the Old Prints Studio of Ossolineum in Wrocław.

It is worth adding that according to Urszula Wich,³¹¹ a researcher on this topic, this type of poem appeared only half a century later in Old-Polish literature and most often in works of a political and satirical nature,³¹² whereas in Latin works by Tobiasz Aleutner, it served to enrich occasional poetry, with the aim of increasing the artistry of genethliacon.

However, the return to the Greek genethliacon, so fashionable in the Renaissance, in the following centuries was replaced primarily by the rhetorical tradition of this genre: there were birthday speeches dedicated to the mighty as well as rhetoric and religious competitions on patron saint days (called *agon* or *certamen*³¹³) when several people gave speeches on the eve of "birth for heaven" of some of their favourite patrons. This last tradition, still in Latin, which is a kind of *locus communis* for Silesia and was continued even in the second half of the eighteenth century, especially in Jesuit circles, and the numerous proofs preserved in the old prints testify to the scale of this phenomenon.

In turn, Natali Friderici Magni Porussorum Regis Oratio, Dicta In Magna Aula Leopoldina Universitatis³¹⁴ is an oration established in the Jesuit milieu in connection with the birthday anniversary of the Prussian king Frederick. The panegyric character of the work, advanced to flattery, is sometimes ambiguous and ironic, for example, in the description of the Silesian activities of Frederick, who is so worried about Silesia, the "pearl of the Prussian crown" and who defends it against enemies and ambushes to be preserved in its entirety. Speech, interspersed with shouts in honour

³¹¹ Cf. U. Wich, *Echo – dzieje gatunku w literaturze staropolskiej*, in: "Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Litteraria Polonica" 2008, v. 10, pp. 45–66.

³¹² Ibid., p. 46.

³¹³ Cf. B. Gaj, *Tradycje retoryczne na dawnym Śląsku (XVI-XVIII w.*), Katowice–Opole 2007, p. 174.

³¹⁴ A. Goch, Natali Friderici Magni Porussorum Regis Oratio, Dicta In Magna Aula Leopoldina Universitatis, Vratislaviae 1779.

of the king ("Vivat Fridericus! Gaude Silesia, curae Regis pars maxima!"), ends with the long best wishes for the "Father of the Fatherland".

It seems that this birthday of King Frederic was celebrated in Silesia exceptionally solemnly, because, apart from numerous German orations, there is also a preserved speech in Latin from the same year, delivered in an Opole gymnasium. Deprived of the author's signature In natalem Friderici II Porussorum Regis oratio, habita in Gymnasio Oppoliensi³¹⁵ is a short panegyric, the core of which (besides the introduction and ending) can be divided into two parts: historic-narrative (about the king's deeds) and subsequently the right panegyric. The speaker presents (proponere) to the public a distinguished lineage of the king as well as Frederick himself as a great ruler. Further, he lists his merits in relation to Prussia and Silesia, which "almost entirely" is subject to Frederick ("provincia pene universa subiecta") and therefore was appropriately protected by him ("Silesia instructa coloniis, castellis plurimis erectis"). All provinces subordinate to Frederick are satisfied with this ("laetae"); many new buildings, bridges, canals and moats were built there (for example in Bydgoszcz: "Fossis coniuncta flumina: nunc insignis ad Bydgostiam, quam Germani Bromberg dixere"). It is clearly more difficult for a nameless speaker to praise Frederick's war deeds. Twice, when it comes to the description of these deeds, the speaker prefers to use the concealment figure: "Taceo, quae nota sunt; [...] pretereo facta belli tempore".

In the second part, the king is presented as a person definitely worthy of praise: thanks to the diligence and perseverance of the ruler, his power and authority increase, which can be seen especially in comparison with neighbouring countries. In the further part of the oration, the mood of the population is realistically rendered, which apparently has not always been full of praise for

³¹⁵ In natalem Friderici II Porussorum Regis oratio, habita in Gymnasio Oppoliensi, Vratislaviae 1779.

the ruler. Namely, before the final prayer to God to give good health to the king and victory to his troops, there is a large direct turn to the listeners, or even to his subjects, not to mourn their sons recruited to the army, because they would return as victors: "Filios, quos armis consecratis, non plorate; redibunt hi cum victoria, annonam, quam advexistis, non lugete; coelum eandem vobis restituet, terrores, quos pertulistis, abiicite, Regem, quem amastis, amate vehementius [...]".

Panegyric speeches in honour of Frederic were probably permanent, perhaps ordered for propaganda purposes, a "birthday gift" for the Prussian king. The last one, in Latin, comes from 1785³¹⁶ and, unusually similar to the previous ones, does not stand out with any original stylistic or thematic element. Similar birthday dedications and entire speeches also arose in connection with the anniversary celebrations of princes or other well-known persons, such as rectors of schools or pastors.

So were only the birthdays of famous people celebrated? Not only, because birth was an important event for every community. People present (and helping) at the birth of a child were particularly given attention. Assistance in childbirth has been the domain of women for centuries, but the beginning of modernity brought changes and the institution of "grandmother", "herbalist" also in Silesia survived only in the mountainous and less accessible areas.³¹⁷ Childbirth has become increasingly more an experience of passively subjecting the female body and mind to the masculine authorities and technology. Henceforth, the midwife has collaborated more with the male medic (and was often replaced by him) and it was him, indeed, who was responsible for all the joy of the birth of a new life, as

³¹⁶ I. Koerber, De bonarum artium in mores Utilitate, Oratio Dicta Natali Serenissimi Regis In Aula Universitatis Vratislaviensis, Vratislaviae 1785.

³¹⁷ Cf. K. Brożek, *Położnictwo i ginekologia ludowa górali Beskidu Śląskiego.* Z zagadnień kultury medycznej w ujęciu historycznym, "Archiwum Historii Medycyny" 1971, v. 34, no. 2, p. 204.

in epigram valued by Mikołaj Henel (Nicolaus Henelius),³¹⁸ written by the doctor from Opole, Elias Kuntschius (senior),³¹⁹ where the midwife accepts only a nascent foetus and the function of the medic (present at delivery at the wish of a prominent midwife) is raised to the rank of father:

Parturit ancipiti tibi nota puerpera nixu: Teque sibi medicum partui adesse iubet. Excipit obstetrix: Patris praesentia partum Difficilem facilem reddere saepe solet. Utriusque officio es functus? Medicine? Patrisne? Tu Medici dices: dicet at illa: Patris³²⁰

The description of the birth by Kuntschius differs greatly from, for example, Cunradus' genethliacon: once Aphrodite, Athena, Phoebus and Jupiter, now, at the dawn of the enlightenment, only the doctor and midwife accompany the new being coming into the world. However, birth is still accompanied by poetry.

³¹⁸ Cf. B. Snoch, Górnośląski Leksykon Biograficzny. Suplement do wydania drugiego, Katowice 2006, p. 49.

³¹⁹ Cf. W. Kaczorowski, Elias Kuntschius (1566–1623). Opolski lekarz i poeta / Elias Kuntschius (1566–1623). Oppelner Arzt und Poet, Opole 1997.

³²⁰ Quote ibid., p. 21.

Conclusion

Genethliacon in the formal-compositional aspect. Place of birthday songs in the culture of Europe

 ${\mathcal H}^{\rm s}$ in the case of genological research on litany, recently carried out by Witold Sadowski, 321 the gene concept will also be useful for genethliacon research. The gene,322 which is a "set of intersubjectively existing rules", taken from one species and used for the development of another, can be preserved or rejected at subsequent stages of the evolution of a given species. The cited concept of genetic theory in literature is similar to the natural-philosophical theories that were mentioned at the beginning of this book. Also, the literary gene turns out to be "immortal", it does not exist in isolation; later literary genres can be passed down individually or in bulk. It is subject to mutation that persists permanently or is rejected in subsequent modifications. In the synchronous and diachronic order of a given species, so-called inactive genes, which even if they remain only relics are always capable of reactivation. So what are the genes of genethliacon? Specified at the beginning of the creation of the genre and for the first few centuries of antiquity enriching with new ones, are, among others, two almost parallel genes: dedication on the occasion of birth and the anniversary of birth (whereby both, while transposing the genre for the needs of Christianity, began to relate metaphorically also to death). Subsequently, the original

³²¹ W. Sadowski, op. cit., p. 26 et al.

³²² Cf. definition of literary genre by Michał Głowiński in: *Słownik terminów literackich*, ed. J. Sławiński, Wrocław 1998. Cf. Ibid., W. Sadowski, op. cit., p. 26.

poetics and the later rhetoric of genethliacon, both of which are now not as natural as in many old communities, where the desire to retain certain phrases, history, memory of events and the desire to tell them anew overcame the discovery of writing.³²³ One of the genologic components of genethliacon was the idea of linking a material gift with a poetic work that itself became a gift. This idea, then, evolved into a further history of the genre in the form of only recalling information about material gifts, often on the principle of opposing the larger, poetic gift.

Another feature of genethliacon was the call to a specific mythological resource from the oldest, binding birth celebration to divinity of life, death, light, beauty and poetry, that is Apollo-Phoebus, to subsequent deities associated with birth, such as the giver of life Zeus-Jupiter or the patron of good birth Hera-Juno, Artemis-Diana or the Roman goddess of child-birth, Lucina. The reference to mythology was also a component of the genethliacon which could have been modified and expanded quite easily, as exemplified by, among others, the work of Caspar Cunradus. Rhetorical aspects, elaborated or adapted to genethliacon, have brought this genre closer to the works of prose and oration. This is how genethliacon began to be termed variously birthday speeches or scientific treatises written on the occasion of births or their anniversaries. Auto-thematic texts, a kind of a rhetorical set of rules on how to write a good genethliacon, in which the praises of parents, ancestors and the whole family should be recognised as important components of the whole, have become popular. Another thematic gene could be the description of the delivery itself, the circumstances surrounding it and even the season with properly assigned phraseology.

Another shift, the transfer of meaning, i.e. metaphor (Greek μεταφορά, "transfer") of the genre, has been the celebration of anniversaries of cities and even places and buildings. An important contribution to such an enrichment of the "genetic" genethliacon

³²³ Cf. A. S. Landy, The Heath Introduction to Literature, Toronto 1980, pp. 781–783.

was the Roman understanding of the world and nature, including assigning to everyone a place, and even activities collaterally to assigning a special protective spirit, the sexually diverse (Genius or Juno). The "dominant genes" successively made wishes, describes the ceremony or the invitation to the ceremony itself. Moreover, during the period of the particular interest in astrology (especially during Neoplatonism at the end of antiquity,³²⁴ but also later), the themes of forecasting the future of the newborn, including chiromancy, began to permeate genethliacon.

In the Middle Ages, while other literary genres functioned in limited forms and places, genethliacons were probably used most often and most widely because they became part of the worship of saints, including all anniversary celebrations in their honour.

The rediscovery of the classical, Greek-Roman genethliacon took place in the Renaissance and a century later the definitions of the genre based on the ancient rhetoric, like the one below by the aforementioned Georgius Morhof, could be found:

In gratulatione de natali inventio ducetur primo a personis, ubi sunt Maiores, Parentes, de quibus loci rhetorici consulantur, secundo a tempore, quod antecessit partum, ubi oracula, auguria, tertio a partu ipso, eiusque adiunctis apparatus varii, basia, cantilenae ad cunas, dies Festus, anni tempus, ver faecundum, solstitium vegetum, autumnus gravidus, hiems genialis. Ornamenta poetica addantur, de partu mirabili a spuma maris, cerebro, femore, Iovis, Chao: de educatione a columbis, a capra Amalthaea: allocutiones ad stellas, auroram, patriam, lucinam, bonam Deam etc. Quarto ab $\eta\theta\epsilon\sigma\iota$ seu votis ad infantem, ad parentes, de familiae incremento. Si masculus, gratulare de haerede felicitatis ac indolis patrice, de bellica virtute, de studiis, si foemineus, pulchritudinem, ingenium Martis in illo commenda.

³²⁴ Cf. J. R. Bram, op. cit., p. VII-X.

In anniversario natali inventiones a laude personarum additis ornamentis poeticis omne punctum ferent.³²⁵

In the case of birth day congratulations, the topic search begins with people, that is ancestors and parents, for whom laudatory rhetorical topoi can be found. Next, follows the time that precedes the birth; if there were any signs of prophecy. Then, the birth itself is discussed and its various circumstances; kisses and songs at the cradle, memories of this happy day, the season (like a fertile spring, flourishing summer, ripe autumn or Christmassy winter). Poetic embellishments about miraculous births from sea foam as well as the brain or thigh of Jupiter are added here; about being brought up by pigeons or by the goat Amaltea; speeches to the stars, dawn, homeland, good goddess, etc. Subsequently, wishes for the newborn and parents on the occasion of enlarging the family are attached. If it is a male descendant, then congratulations to the happy heir, wishing him fame in war or science; if it is a female descendant: wishing her beauty and good character. On the occasion of the birthday anniversary, themes come from the praise of people with poetic additions at every point.

The latest genological research and the recent rehabilitation of rhetoric, its majesty and almost inexhaustible utility, also directs our ponderings on genethliacon towards the principle of the rhetorical triangle, which also illustrates the three-part cycle of human life. The triad: birth – marriage – death has been rhetorically adapted and transposed into the literary triad genethliacon – epithalamium – epicedium. Since ancient times, birthday speeches, according to the classical rhetoricians, have belonged to *genus demonstrativum*, the so-called evaluative-spectacular kind. "Demonstrativeness" included

³²⁵ Cf. G. Morhof, Polyhistor, sive de auctorum notitiaet rerum commentarii, quibus praeterea varia ad omnes disciplinas Consilia et subsydia proponuntur, Lubecae 1688, pp. 117–119.

rhetorical statements containing praise (*laudes*) of both people and things as well as of different situations, events, values and in this case human life. This type had a special application in a spectacular-occasional oratory; it was a part of the lives of entire ancient and post-ancient communities.

Certainly, the birthday work, although not so rare in various European literatures, was not properly appreciated in contemporary literary theory. Already at the beginning of the modern era, it experienced a successive flourish,³²⁶ supported by the considerable literary and genological awareness of the creators, soon to fall into oblivion, even disappear from some dictionaries of literary theory and literary terminology. And at the same time it became extremely popular in the form of a reduced and for many clichéd birthday song, no longer in the literary language of Europe, Latin,³²⁷ but in the vernacular languages.

Simplified birthday wishes even in the Latin version of *Plurimos annos*, let alone heard the English *Happy birthday*, German *Herzliche Grüsse zum Geburtstag*, French *Joyeux anniversaire* or *Bonne fête à toi* in Canadian French, Spanish *Cumpleaños feliz* are almost never associated with genethliacon, an important epideictic genre and at the same time a part of lyricism or even triune choreia.³²⁸

³²⁶ Cf. the modern works available in many European libraries containing "genethliacon/genethliakon" in the title. For instance, Genethliakon uberreicht von der Graeca Halensis, Berlin 1910 for Robert Carl's 70th birthday or Genethliakon Wilhelm Schmidt zum siebzigsten Geburtstag, Stuttgart 1929, cf. BAV i ICSUI. They were created mainly in circles associated with the German idea of Altertumswissenschaft, i.e. comprehensive research on antiquity, but they were known throughout Europe, as evidenced by the library collections of many countries

³²⁷ Latin as a literary language survived long beyond the Middle Ages. Cf. E. R. Curtius, op. cit., p. 31.

³²⁸ Cf. the concept of "triune choreia" introduced by T. Zieliński. Cf. T. Zieliński, *Literatura starożytnej Grecji epoki niepodległości*, Warsaw–Kraków 1923, pp. 47–50.

Also, in Poland, the solemn birthday celebrations of children (along with the still-popular celebrations of the name-days of adults) is becoming a common phenomenon; it is a part of the mass culture and of intangible heritage, which especially thanks to the media has already reached most parts of the world, where the European tradition of celebrating birthdays has often met the native one, sometimes full of analogies, as in the Asian countries mentioned at the beginning. Although, the comparison³²⁹ between West and East aesthetics (Western thought being saturated with rationalism and logical abstraction versus Eastern with thinking, where aesthetic feelings are dominated by subjective and direct perception) shows some differences, it also confirms many common denominators, for example in the field of cultural archetypes. An extremely strong group of archetypes, distinguished independently of nationality, includes the following: husband, wife, child, father, mother, hero, danger, birth, death and resurrection.330

The transnational, or rather global, *Happy Birthday* is one of the best known (and simultaneously shortest) genethliacons. That is exactly how this genre, wiped from the textbooks, has paradoxically become the most common genre, present today almost all over the world. What is more, this genre has also become part of mass culture in a different way with the "birthday-style" celebrated even for the anniversaries of the founding of supermarkets and acquaintances on Facebook, as well as the 'birthdays' of cities, ³³¹ anniversaries of the establishment of villages, during which solemn monographs are

³²⁹ Han Shaogong, a Chinese thinker, believes for example that the "yellow soul" needs holistic aesthetics. Cf. L. Kasarełło, *Totemy życia... Chińska literatura poszukiwania korzeni*, Warsaw 2000, p. 88.

³³⁰ Cf. definition of archetype by C. G. Jung in: S. Žak, *Słownik. Kierunki*, szkoły, terminy literackie, Warsaw 1991, p. 25.

³³¹ Cf. an event under the slogan "city's birthday" organised by the City Hall in Katowice annually in September, rich in many cultural events, including literary ones.

issued.³³² The birthday dedications in the form of research work,³³³ as in the Renaissance, is still an important element of academic life; the 70th birthday of the person in question or his/her retirement are preferred dates.³³⁴

Despite the evidence of such vitality of the genre, as already mentioned, the definition of genethliacon is not to be found in every dictionary (even of literary terms), although the long-extinct varieties of genres from outside the European cultural circle can be found, on the other hand. A glorious, though modest, exception is a definition developed by Teresa Kostkiewiczowa over twenty years ago (and its contemporary versions):³³⁵

Genethliacon (Greek genethlios = birthday): in ancient poetry, a birthday poem, a form of occasional work, known amongst others from the writings of Statius, Ausonius and Vergil. The genethliacon-forming wishes for the birth or anniversary of the birth of a particular person are formulated in an extremely decorative style, with the use of many elaborate rhetorical figures. The motif of birthday wishes was often taken up in modern poetry referring to classical patterns (e.g. A. Naruszewicz, *Do Stanisława Augusta króla polskiego... w dzień urodzenia 1771*) and in the rhetorical prose modelled on antique birthday works.³³⁶

³³² Cf. P. Smykała, Rozmierz 1256–2006, Opole 2006.

³³³ Cf. Viator Pilsnensis neboli Plzeňský Poutník. Literárnímu vědci Viktoru Vik-torovi k sedmdesátinám. Kolektivni monografie, red. L. Martinek, Plzeň 2012.

³³⁴ Such ceremonies, announced by invitation, are an important part of academic life in Poland also. Recently, the author of this book also participated in the jubilee celebrations (preceded by the publication of a dedicated book) of Professor Maciej Włodarski from the Jagiellonian University (01.12.2017), during which wishes were also presented in Latin.

³³⁵ Genethliakon, in: M. Bernacki, M. Pawlus, op. cit., p. 62.

³³⁶ T. Kostkiewiczowa, *Genethliakon*, in: M. Głowiński, T. Kostkiewiczowa, A. Okopień-Sławińska, J. Sławiński, *Słownik terminów literackich*,

Popular sources of obtaining information by young people, for example Wikipedia or the suchlike, even if they do include the definition of the genre and see its connection with the contemporary mass culture, at the same time they state that it is an extinct genre:

Genethliacon – the praise of the birth of a child in a solemn, formal form, as we know it from the ancient sources, is now an extinct genre. As [sic!] its contemporary reminiscences we can recognise congratulatory cards on the occasion of the birth of a child as well as songs and birthday cards.³³⁷

Is a genre really to be deemed extinct, when its constituent genes, even in the form of aforementioned wishes and songs in all languages of the world, are today vividly present in different cultures beyond the European? Perhaps, the extraordinary career of this genre, which is derived from the Greco-Roman traditions of Europe and is thriving due to its universal-human and humanistic values, should rather be discussed? In addition, classic genethliacons in Latin are still being created around the world, like the one below, dedicated to the 70th birthday of a Polish scholar by a Neo-Latin poet from abroad:

Caeleste verbum, principium omnium rerum, Joannes discipulus dedit, sanctus Joannes, qui patronus auricomans tuus est, Joanna. Tuque a poetis, a sapientibus Graecis doceris, postuma filia,

ed. J. Sławińskiego, second revised edition, Wrocław 1989, p. 165. English translation by Maria Gaj.

³³⁷ Cf. the term *genethliakon* on Polish Wikipedia: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Genethliakon (accessed: 17 November 2017). English translation by Maria Gaj.

de rege scripsisti et poeta, indicat ut titulus libelli. Vernacula illa et verba patrum colis: versus Josephi ne pereant, timens semper tibi est cordi ruinas exstruere et renovare claras. Doctas, profestrix, gignere litteras non solum amasti: nuper erant tibi nati, decus matris quadruplex. Unus obit – taceantque laudes!338

Why, then, has genethliacon been forgotten in Polish or even European culture? Is this related to the attitude to new life in subsequent generations? Pessimistic opinions of well-fed societies about an overcrowded world, and at the same time a great will to procreate among nations often despised, underdeveloped, strongly emphasise their opposing reasons. Thus, literary and genological considerations inevitably lead to questions about ideas, about culture and its values. What will be the outcome of this dispute; will it be reflected in literature? Will the birth of a child still please someone enough to stand on the verge of poetry and sing like Callimachus to the "little newborn girl" or to prepare a witty epic poem like Cunradus for the birth of a son? Of course, the birth of a child can of course be enjoyed without a genethliacon or epic poem, but somewhere there is a certain regret for this lost tradition, a beautiful habit, for raising the rank of human birth to the divine land of poetry. Although, (the extremely reflective) theme of the birthday anniversary increasingly often appears in contemporary literature, including Polish literature, for example, Urodziny (Birthday) by Nobel Laureate Wisława Szymborska or the unfinished last performance

³³⁸ Cf. A. E. Radke, Genethliacon Joannae Rostropowicz septuagenariae dedica-tum, in: Antiquitate imbuti. Uczeni dawnych ziem pruskich w badaniach nad starożytnością i epokami późniejszymi, ed. B. Gaj, Opole 2014, p. 155.

by Tadeusz Kantor Dziś są moje urodziny³³³ (Today is my birthday). There are still Latin genethliacons being produced in the twenty-first century expressing the joy of the birth of a child as in the volume written on the occasion of the granddaughter's birth by the above-mentioned Anna Elissa Radke entitled *Iubila natalicia vel antithreni (contra threnos Iohannis Cochanovii).*³⁴⁰ The volume of ten Latin-German-Polish genethliacons is called "joyful songs" and a "triumph of life over death"³⁴¹ by the Marburg author herself, who is greatly fascinated by Polish culture. The volume was published in 2009 by the Foundation of Science and Culture in Silesia.³⁴²34² What is interesting is the fact that every genethliacon is a response to the threnody by Jan Kochanowski. It is significant that most modern genethliacons, expressing the joy of a child's birth in the context of connotations and literary disputes, specifically concern the culture of Germany and Poland.

³³⁹ Cf. i.a. M. Pieniążek, *Akt twórczy jako mimesis: "Dziś są moje urodziny" – ostatni spektakl Tadeusza Kantora*, Kraków 2005. Cf. Ibid., famous quote from the poem by Wisława Szymborska entitled *Urodziny*:

[&]quot;Na chwilę tu jestem i tylko na chwilę:

co dalsze, przeoczę, a resztę pomylę". Cf. W. Szymborska, *Urodziny*, in: https://literatura.wywrota.pl/wiersz-klasyka/40567-wislawa-szymbor-ska-urodziny.html (accessed: 27 December 2017). Apart from these two more significant titles, many examples taken from fiction can also be found, such as the Danielle Steel novel *Happy Birthday*, translated by P. Laskowicz, Warsaw 2012.

³⁴⁰ A. E. Radke, *Iubila natalicia vel antithreni (contra threnos Iohannis Cochanovii)*, Opoliae 2009.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁴² This is not the only volume of genethliacons by A. E. Radke. In 2012 Lanx satura memorabilium Anni MMXI (Opoliae 2012) was published in Poland. This volume contains, amongst others, a piece written for the birth of daughter of the President of France Nicolas Sarkozy and Carla Bruni entitled Genethliacum alterum cum nata est Julia, filia Carolae Bruni et Nicolai Sarkozy praesidis Francogalliae (m. Octobri).

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TENEONIAKON

730

Sine

CARMEN NATALITIVM

Factum

IN FESTO NATALI SERVA-

Tobl A ALEVINERO, Leobschuciensi Silesio.





GORLICII
Apud Iohan. Rhamba, Anno Christi

M. D. XCIX.

Vrea no omnes, no omnes thurea possunt,
Auttristis myrrhæ munera ferre Deo.
Pura side's auro decocto purior omni,
Voxá precum supplex corde prosecta pio:
Sub cruce militibus CHRISTI patientia digna,
Munera sunt vere complacitura Deo.

Talia qui scribit, qui talia Xenia mittit: Xenia non poterit nobiliora dare.

> M. Martinus Mylius, Scholæ Gorl, Rector,

XVI.gu 3638

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Aneks

Anna Elissa Radke

IUBILA NATALICIA VEL ANTITHRENI

(contra threnos Ioannis Cochanovii)



FREUDENLIEDER FÜR WERDENDES LEBEN PIEŚNI RADOSNE

Epilog

Do Karolka Opielki, noworodka

Nad dziećmi chce moje piórko chętnie zabawić, Wiekowi Twemu, Karolu, płoche rymy stawić: Przyszedłeś do rodziców i do siostry z raju, Witamy Cię, i dzięki – święty Mikołaju, Słodki chłopczyku, kolebkę Ci kołyszę, Twój śmiech radosny i okrzyki słyszę.

Epilogus

Ad Carolum Opielka recens natum²⁹

Nunc igitur mea penna libenter ludere parvis³⁰ Incipit, o Carole, et pangere versiculos. Advenisti aliunde parentibus atque sorori Iussu Nicolai, sancte patrone, tuo. Oscilloque tuas cunas, te, balbule dulcis, Te laetum clamantem audio, nate recens!

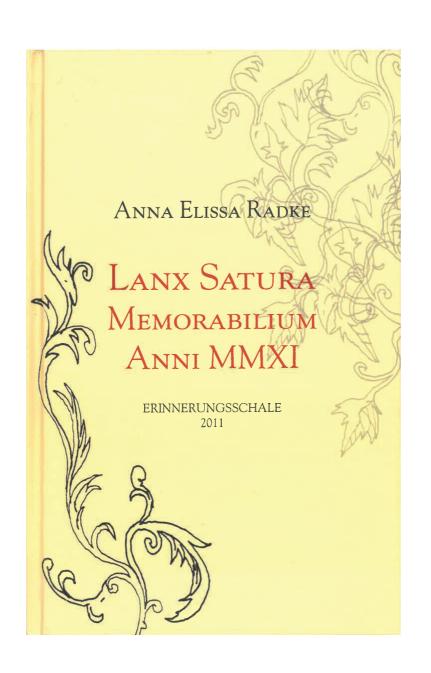
³⁹ Karol Opielka, filius Katharinae Opielka, meae magistrae linguae polonicae.
³⁰ Kochanowski, tren II,1-2: Jeslim kiey nad dziećmi piórko miał zabawić/a k' woli temu wieku lekkie rymy stawić...
Kniaźnin: Si quando infantum studio mea penna vacaret,/et levia huic aevo carmina danda forent...

Epilog

An den neugeborenen Karol Opielka

Also beginnt meine Feder für sie, die Kleinen, zu scherzen, einfachen Kinderreim auch mache ich, Karol, für dich. Du bist vom Himmel herab zu Eltern und Schwester gekommen: Sei uns gegrüßt, und auch dir, Nikolaus, sagen wir Dank. Min seuten Jung, deine Wiege, die will ich behutsam dir schaukeln,

höre dein Schreien und auch Lachen und Juchzen von dir.



Genethliacum alterum Cum nata esset Julia, filia Carolae Bruni et Nicolai Sarkozy praesidis Francogalliae (m. Octobri)

Mater Itala Galliaeque Caesar nunc te, Iulia, procreasse gaudent, pulchra filia pulchriorque matre.
Quid Parcae tribuent, quid et Sibylla?
Surgent saecula nunc beatiora?
Iusto tempore te vocant parentes, ut sis auxilium patri creando, non prisca edita gente Iuliana, fecere ambitio aemulatioque nec fatum, ut videaris hic, puella!
At Deus faveat tibi, misella!

Gegenstück zum ersten Genethliacum Als Giulia, die Tochter von Carla Bruni und Nicolas Sarkozy, Frankreichs Präsidenten, geboren wurde (Oktober)

Carla Bruni, die Große, Frankreichs Caesar freuen sich, daß du, Giulia, geboren, schöne Tochter, noch schöner als die Mutter! Was verheißen die Parzen, die Sibylle? Führst herauf du nun glücklichere Zeiten? Grad noch rechtzeitig rufen dich die Eltern, daß du Wahlhilfe leistest für den Vater, nicht entsprossen dem alten Stamm der Julier, dich erschufen der Ehrgeiz und das Streben, nicht das Schicksal, daß du hier mußt erscheinen! Möge Gott dich geleiten, armes Mädchen!

Summary

How is it possible that in the most popular Polish and English dictionaries of literary terms that define even long-extinct and individual genres, e.g. Japanese or Indian drama, there is no basic information about a genre in use in European literature (and not only) for at least 23 centuries right until this day? Genethliacon has been a genre since the times of Callimachus (third century BC), honouring the birth or the anniversary of someone's birth, sometimes of a lyrical, dramatised or rhetoric-epic nature, nowadays still cultivated in many languages of the world (and according to ancient tradition also in Latin). This monograph shows the progress of this genre in the European tradition juxtaposed with different cultures. The first birthday songs, most often recalling Apollonian connotations, connected the birth of a man with light and poetry. What is particularly interesting, the basic features (genethliacon's 'genes') have not undergone significant changes over the centuries. Celebrating birth, anniversaries or other jubilees is still associated with "wishes from the heart" (the phrase used in one of the first Greek genethliacons), offering gifts, including flowers and books, and the creation of poetry. Perhaps it is worth maintaining such beautiful traditions, giving someone a self-penned song or ... a book such as this one about genethliacons.