

RHETORIC AND POLITICAL ACTION

The articles collected in this issue are devoted to various aspects of rhetoric understood as a political action. If the essence of politics lies in the reconciliation of various policy interests and the negotiation of political objectives, rhetoric is becoming one of the main ways of political action. The language of politics covers both the speeches of politicians and the commentaries of journalists who describe political life. This duality of political rhetoric is also reflected in the articles featured in the current issue of *Forum Artis Rhetoricae*.

Rhetoric is a political action when it helps to gain political goals: garnering support, enforcing compliance, persuading to embrace positions or courses of action, justifying commitments, negotiating compromises. Cezar M. Ornatowski's article *The Idea of Politics in "Political" Rhetoric* claims that the question of language and rhetoric in politics always involves reflection on what is meant by "politics".

Rhetoric is a political action when it serves as a tool to interpret the reality. Jakub Z. Lichański's article *Rhetoric and Politics: Sir Bertrand Russell and... rhetoric – a case study* shows the process of constructing beliefs in order to strengthen the community, describe the current socio-political situation and help in designing further action. The analysis demonstrates on what argumentative grounds the speaker may build his judgments relating to policy issues.

Rhetoric is a political action when it decides on the perception of political actors. A mere quotation may become a tool in a public debate, which is demonstrated by Ewa Modrzejewska in her article *Lógos, éthos, pathos in the media-political practice. Means of persuasion in the cited utterances of political opposition*. An individual example of the use of rhetoric to build a self-image of an effective and responsible politician is presented by Krzysztof Grzegorzewski in his article *Rhetorical strategies of self-presentation: Zbigniew Ziobro's televised statements in the years 2008-2009*.

Rhetoric is a political action, even when used as a tool to describe and explain processes or political phenomena. This directs us towards political journalism and the two texts devoted to this topic. Barbara Bogołębska's article *The persuasion in the press genres of politicians' statements* explores in detail various forms of genres characteristic of rendering political declarations in the opinion-making newspapers and magazines. The author demonstrates which rhetorical

choices in the domains of imagery, evaluation and mechanisms of captatio benevolentiae serve as tools of antagonistic political discourse. The procedures for establishing the credibility of the sender are the topic of Anna Tryksza's article entitled "*Polityka*" about politics and politicians. *The rhetoric of journalism*. Discussing the selected texts written by leading columnists in the weekly magazine Polityka, the author shows the structural and argumentative solutions, which lie at the core of the trust bestowed upon the journalists and reinforce the persuasive message of their texts.

The fact that rhetoric is often seen only as a tool of manipulation stems from a mistaken assumption that - as Isaac D'Israeli wrote - politics means governing by fraud. That is why it is so important to reflect upon rhetoric which is the essence of political action. It may in fact help to make a precise distinction between objectives and tools.

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