

*Zlata Šundalić*SECONDARY GENRES IN MARULIĆ'S *JUDITH*

The genre of Marulić's *History of Saint Judith* has been designated as epic poem, or *epos*. Taking this designation at its face value, the author turns her attention to a less overt problem of the genres inserted in his epic, trying to find out whether their employment on the part of the poet relied on some implicit hierarchy (meaning that some genres were preferred over the others) and — if this proves true — with what particular scope in mind. A thus defined subject-matter has dictated a tripartite division of the article. In the first part she provides a brief survey of literature related to the subject of her inquiry. The second part focuses on the three interpolated genres, all of them coming from oral traditions (prayer, speech and blessing). The third part summarizes the results of such a reading.

Taking as her chief criterion frequency, the author discusses first the sermon, as it occurs, as a title, in the annotations in the margin far more often than the other two, thus pointing to the supreme importance of the related epic passages. Yet, before answering to the question of the manifestations of the genre of prayer in *Judith*, she considers three other texts by Marulić, *The Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary* whose prayers are determined, in terms of content and form, by the set scheme of daily prayers, the *Slavić (The Nightingale)*, where prayer is the assigned genre solely in terms of composition, and the *Molitva suprotiva Turkom (The Prayer Against the Turks)*, which in more than a simple prayer, as it exhorts to political action. The author claims that all of the three have found their way into *Judith's* prayers and transformed under two types, the textually overt prayer, and the covert, textually unconfirmed prayer. In the first case the genre designation — prayer is confirmed on three levels (title in the margin, prayer-gesture and the verse text itself). In the second case the genre remains textually unconfirmed but is implied by prayer-gesture and the related morphological form of the verbs »to pray« and »to praise«. In practice, we have dozens of textually unconfirmed yet implied prayers, such as praise, thanksgiving or petition prayers, fruitful or fruitless prayers, prayers offering an argument on behalf of truth and confidence in God, or simply prayer as a component of a figure of poetics. In Marulić's epic prayer functions as a »speech act« (J.L. Austin), rounded-off by its locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions, and potentially anticipating — at least in the case of begging — the future course of events.

Following the prayer, the focus shifts to *govoren'je* (speech), or statements whose designated genre is *govoren'je*. Namely, every time a character talks the margin is marked with the word *govor*, or *govoren'je*. *Govoren'je* is customarily associated with the tradition of church oration, or sermon, and the semantic meaning of sermon is covered by the Croatian words *predika*, *pridika*, *prodeka*, *prodeštvo*, *besjeda*, *povidanje*, *pripovijedanje*, *razgovor*, and *govorenje*. In *Judith govoren'ja*

or speeches are determined by the position of the speaker or the epic addressee (a male), and the content of the statement (elaboration of an aspect Christian creed). The scope of the content of *govoren'je* is to persuade or warn, and to exhort to Christian life. Where this scope is not achieved, it signifies the ways and the world of the enemy (Holofernes and his army), and, conversely, where it works, it means the Christian world (Bethulians). Thereby the content of *govoren'je* and its reception on the part of the addressee in the epic enhance the confrontation of the two world views.

The third of *Judith's* genres coming from the church literary tradition is blessing. It occurs in the epic in its primary as well as in its transposed sense (imprecation). In the first sense, it is associated with Judith and her actions, in the second with Nebuchadnezzar and his envoys; the first implies good, the second evil. Thus blessing, as a secondary genre, also helps build up two ostensibly different worlds held apart by their unappeasable standards of conduct and value systems.

In the end the author summarizes the results of her reading of *Judith* in terms of the three non-dominant genres: prayer, speech and blessing, which, with their religious import to the genre designation of the epic as Christian-Virgilian, strongly affirm the Christian attribute. Their functions are as follows: 1. persuasive (to teach and persuade the Christian reader to embrace a moral life); 2. axiological (as the analyzed genres have the additional function of evaluating the epic characters, i.e. the epic world); 3. communicative (by which annotations in the margin, with genre designation – prayer, speech, blessing, suggest a familiar reading even to a less accomplished reader, and help him get through the text, which, otherwise, because of the new and the unfamiliar he may find annoying and frustrating. It was exactly the new and the unfamiliar, concludes the author, that Marulić tried to explain in the better part of his glosses.