

Goethe's Lyrical Discourse in the 5th Poem of 'Römische Elegien'

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Abstract

The discourse is generally meaningful, with essential potential in the field of communication as an indisputable feature of the society. Meanwhile, the lyrical discourse, as a segment of mass discourse, marks a specialized communication in poetic literary works, namely in the conversational plane between the giver and the recipient. The most specified element of this literary genre is the lyrical 'Ich-Form', which, among other text-building signs, is the most analyzed and discussed one of the 5th poem of Goethe's lyrical-elegiac work, 'Römische Elegien'.

The study lyrical discourse in the 5th poem of "Römische Elegien" presents the composition of the lyrical song in general, built and structured by the multitude of textual components and typical elements of the lyrical song. The organization of all signs in the text is laid out and arranged with precision and deep philosophy, building thus an unprecedented lexical, syntactic, semantic and stylistic unity. As a master of words, thoughts and poetic expressions in the discussed poem, Goethe has realized a source with different directions of linguistic and aesthetic flows, through which the recipient receives a lot of information marked with arrhythmic pulses. This study will be an initiative for analyzing some stylistic issues in the lyrical discourse and its elements in this well-known German poem, as issues that have not been explored yet.

Keywords: *lyrical erotic-elegiac poems; the poetic-lyrical genre; Ich-Form; lyrical discourse; poetic style.*

Introduction

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's erotic-elegiac poetry takes an important space in the repertoire of his work. With its stylistic dimensions, it also takes a special place in German literature, and even in the world literature. Goethe's work style includes a culminating style of expression that is long in time and wide in space.

His lyrical style discourse is designed with delicacy. It has excellent expression power, a careful flow of episodes and an integrative and balancing relation between the aspects of his theme, deeds of lyrical characters and all the natural interweaving of his poems in general. These components of Goethe's figurative speech realize the poetic-lyrical genre in the discourse of 'Römische Elegien'[The Roman Elegies].

'Römische Elegien', previously known as 'Erotica Romana', is a literary tribute to eroticism. This work summarizes a circle of 24 elegies, whose content, in their genesis,

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focuses on the elegies of classical Roman writers such as: Tibullus, Propertius and Catullus. Goethe's lyrical erotic-elegiac poems reflect his trip to Italy. They were written during 1788-1790. Most of them were published in 1795. Some of them were published in 1914. They were censored when published because of their erotic content (Purton, 2011).

In this study, efforts have been made to identify the most expressed text-building constituents in the lyrical poetic discourse of the 5th poem from the circle of erotic-elegiac poems of 'Römische Elegien'. This study will be an initiative for analyzing some stylistic issues in the lyrical discourse and its elements in a well-known German poem, as issues that have not been explored yet, but that will be supplemented and expanded in the future by other researchers.

Structuring of methods in the study

The study 'Goethe's lyrical discourse in the 5th poem of 'Römische Elegien' required a long and extensive research to enter the ranks of fruitful linguistic-literary studies. Initially, efforts have been made to find and collect the poems of 'Römische Elegien' in order to do a contrastive work between the 5th poem and other poems. The collection method and the contrastive method were applied in this regard. They helped in the investigation of text-building elements among the poems of this work.

The next methodological element, which has contributed to the realization of this study, is the analytical method. This method was used in the study to analyze stylistic constituents of the texts of the poems and, therefore, we focused on texts with more highlighted emotional colors, especially with the 5th poem, which is permeated by turns, breaks and sensuality transformations.

All these methods have been applied in detail and step by step, so that this study would be productive and organized in its structural and semantic aspect.

The selection of said methods in the study has been done with increased care, trying not to create collisions with primary issues and not to go from one problem to the other one without including some small issues, but which are of special importance to be shed light into.

Study strategies

Goethe's colossal work is generally featured with a special style, which the decoder cannot decode that easily sometimes. It is built with a deep philosophy, not only with a Faustian philosophy, but also with a philosophy that intertwines eroticism and elegy. Therefore, being consolidated by these attributes and absorbed by a philosophical depth of thinking and literary expression, Goethe's work captures the highest peaks of German and world literature.

Goethe's lyrical inspiration is also his philosophical habit. Our study, which aims to shed light into the lyrical discourse put on paper by the Goethean pen, will be based on several strategic pillars, which contribute to the study of the criteria and stylistic modalities in the text of the 5th poem of 'Römische Elegien'.

The expressiveness of 'Ich-Form', or autorole, in the lyrical discourse of the 5th poem – The autorole, or 'Ich-Form', is present in all erotic-elegiac poems of this work. The autorole, respectively the first-person singular form, is an essential criterion that differentiates lyrics from the epic literary genre. The main character's deeds, as an unidentified character, structure the poems' topics till their end. His actions, as the subject, have a goal or a romantic and admiring message vis-à-vis a character, who can be an active or passive interlocutor, but as a valuable element of the poetic and artistic composition (Hamburger, 1980 & Link, 1974).

Relations of lyrical discourse actors – The reciprocity and the communicative chain between 'lyrisches Ich' and the other characters of 'du, ihr, and sie-Form' (Eichendorff, 1970) in the 5th poem is not spared at all. Therefore, the message of the poem creates a powerful sensibility at its recipient. At this point, the task of the recipient starts to become more difficult, because he will be curious to sort out the opinions of 'X' and 'Y', which are elaborated from the beginning of the poem onwards. His feelings, entering as deeply as possible into the text of the poem, raise emotional pulses, and he inevitably wakes up the anxiety of how the event will end. Goethe's poems have elegiac consistency, whereby the recipient's emotional state is transformed from inspiring to destructive. So, the recipient is unwillingly touched and often gets angry with the antagonist of the event, whether he is the bearer of any character in the text or an external phenomenon that build the poetic topic (Spinner, 1975).

'Ich-form' – a poetic dictate in the text of the 5th poem

Goethe's verses are distinguished by the dense presence of the lyrical 'Ich' (Weinrich, 2007), which is used with emphasized authority in his elegiac poetics. This unidentified (Fricke & Stocker, 2000) personifying form is dressed with special characterological features. What element distinguishes the 'Ich' character of Goethean poetics? - The enchanting word. This happens because the more powerful the poet's word is, created and built from textual units with semantically systematic intertwining, with enigmatic approaches, with inter-character conflicts, the more the emotionality of the recipient will move into the rise-fall axis and vice-versa. This phenomenon holds hostage the level of interest until the entire poetic fiction ends, regardless of its metric length. The enigmatic 'Ich-character', laid out in Goethe's poetics, is a positive character that stands in front of the elegiac poetic identity, on the one hand, and the most adored character of its recipient, on the other hand. The 5th poem of this work is a typical example of the empirical 'Ich' of Goethean (Martinez, 2002) lyric poetry. Throughout the poem, except the rhetorical-stylistic form of the 'Ich-character', its missing form, which does not show semantic voids in the poetic text, has also been identified, and it is filled with the verb forms in the first person singular of the present tense (Werlich, 1974):

'(ich) ... durchblättere die Werke ...'

'(ich) sche mit, (ich) ... fühle ...'

'... und denke (ich) ...'

'... liese (ich) ...'

Together with the poetic 'Ich-character' that stamps the elegiac lyricism, the text-building signs in the discourse of the 5th poem are linked in a chain manner, creating strong and stable semantic links with each other, aiming to raise the poem to an elite artistic level.

The positioning of the 'Ich-Form' in verses is highlighted as another feature. Goethe places the 'Ich-Form' in mid positions. In ordinary texts, it is mainly placed in initial positions of the sentence. This displacement of the most important element of this genre is done because of the stylistic function.

The next phenomenon includes the apostrophizing of the verb forms of the first person singular of the present tense used with the 'Ich-Form'. Meanwhile, verb forms given in the first person singular of the present tense without the sentence instructor (ich) are chosen by the verb ending '-e', respectively the verb conjugation system of the German language. The author chooses the apostrophized clichés to contribute stylistically to his poem. In the poetic text (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981), these forms are:

empfind'ich, ich beflog', werd'ich, belehr'ich, versteh'ich, ich denk', lieg'ich, hab'ich

The lyrical form 'Ich' in the poetic text under consideration is expressed with substitutive forms. In the poem, these forms include the declined pronouns 'mich' and 'mir' through

which the recipient receives the text in the first person singular. Such forms have been noticed in the following cases:

„Vor-und Mitwelt spricht lauter und reizender mir?

„Aber die Nächte hindurch hält Amor mich anders beschäftigt;’

„Raubt die Liebste den gleich mir einige Stunden des Tages’.

„Gibt sie Stunden der Nacht mir zur Entschädigung hin’.

„Und es durchgeblühet ihr Hausch mir bis in Tiefste der Brust’.

Meanwhile, the first person singular ending is also another substitution form of the lyrical ‘Ich’, used without a pronoun: *durchblättere, vergleiche, sehe, fühle, denke, spähe*.

The connection of the logical thought in the constitution of a valid textual unit is another issue that should be discussed. The author, Goethe, managed to realize his text as a constituent unit of a high level in the grammatical, syntactic, lexical, semantic and stylistic viewpoint, placing a precious treasure in his reader’s hands. He makes the connection between the verses by means of the coordinating conjunction ‘und’, conditional conjunction ‘wenn’, adversarial conjunction ‘aber’, temporal conjunction ‘dann’, as well as *interpunctuation marks*, in order to avoid successive connector recurrences in the text. Logical connections based on different connector variants add stylistic weight to an indisputable extent.

On the other hand, the organic intertwining between the ‘Ich-character’ and the ‘Präsens’ of the verb are empowering elements of the poem’s content. The author has done this for two important reasons:

- because both elements are integral parts of the lyric (sometimes Präsens-Gegenwart is carried over to Vergangenheit in the lyric, but not in Goethe’s poems),
- and because the author has chosen to establish simultaneousness (Gleichzeitigkeit) in his poetic texts. But why did he make this choice? Because his aim was that his poems, whenever they are read, should be extended to the present for their recipient.

With that said, it can be concluded that: the missing forms of the lyrical ‘Ich’; its positioning in verses; the apostrophizing and not apostrophizing of verb forms in relation to the use of ‘Ich’pronoun; variants of logical connections between the verses of the poem; and the organic intertwining between the ‘Ich-character’ and the present tense of the verb - are indicators of Goethe’s deep stylistic philosophy.

The multiplicity of text-building signs in the 5th poem

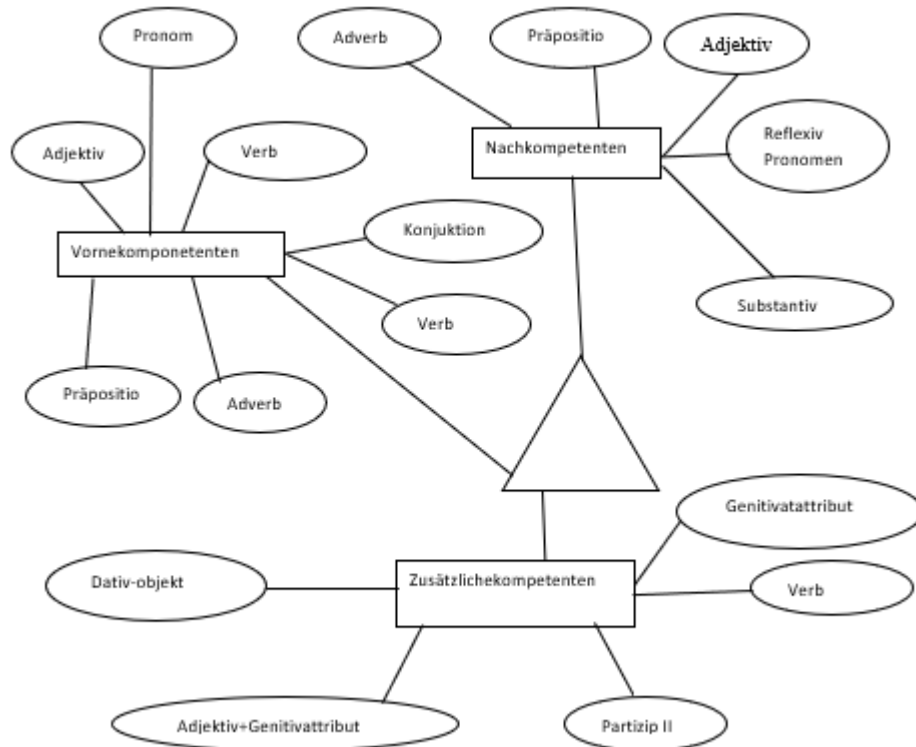
The 5th poem of ‘Römische Elegien’ is built from a multiplicity of textual signs, which we structured this way:

1. Passivische Konstruktionen [Passive constructions]: *‘werd’ich auch halb nur gelehrt*, *‘Wird doch nicht immer geküsst, es wird Vernünftig gesprochen’;*
2. Perfektive Konstruktionen [Perfective constructions]: *‘Oftmals hab’ich auch schon in ihrem Armen gedichtet;*
3. Adjektivische Beispiele [Adjectival examples]: *froh, klassischem, geschäftiger, menem, lieblichen, fühlenden, sehender, fingerder, lieblichem;*
4. Possesivpronomen [Possessive pronouns]: *ihrem, Ihr, seinen;*
5. Personalpronomen [Personal pronouns]: *sie, es, sie, sie, es, er;*
6. Adverbien [Adverbs]: *lauter, reizender, täglich, anders, halb, doppelt, recht, gleich, immer, oftmals, bis ins Tiefste;*
7. Präpositionen [Prepositions]: *auf, mit, hindurch, mit, mit, mit, auf, in ins, zur;*

8. Nomen [Nouns]: *Boden, Vor – und Mitwelt, Rat, Werke, Alten, Hand, Genuß, Nächte, Amor; Busens, Formen Hand, Hüften, Marmor; Aug, Liebste, Stunden, Tages, Entschädigung, Schlaf, Armen, Hexameters, Maß, Rücken, Schlummer; Hausch, Tiefste. Lamp, Zeiten, Dienst, Traumvirn;*

9. Definite Artikel [Definite articles]: *den, die, der, des, den, der, der, das, den, der, der, den;*

10. Undefinite Artikel [Indefinite article]: *einige Stunden*



Schematische Angaben der Textkomponenten von dem 5. Gedicht des Werkes „Römische Elegien“

From this entire collection of textual signs, that are decently matched among themselves, we can conclude that the 5th poem of 'Römische Elegien' is among the richest in terms of the multiplicity of textual signs. These analyses, discussions and conclusions ascertain that Goethe leafed through and selected the entire linguistic inventory of German for the realization of this poem, transmitting a standard and compact discourse on paper, whereby he conveys to the reader, through ideo-emotional and artistic connotations, a poem with a special style, which, after being detected, will remain forever in his memory.

Annex: 5 Gedichte von der 'Römische Elegien'

Froh emfind'ich mich nun auf klassischem Boden begeistert,

Vor – und Mitwelt spricht lauter und reizender mir. Ich befolg' den Rat, durchblättere die Werke der Alten.

Mit geschäftiger Hand, täglich mit neuem Genuß. Aber die Nächte hindurch hält Amor mich anders beschäftigt;

Werd'ich auch halb nur gelehrt, bim ich doch doppelt beglückt.

Und belehr'ich mich nicht, wennn ich des lieblichen Busens.

Formen Spähe, die Hand leite die Hüften hinab. Dann versteh' ich den Marmor erst recht: ich denk' und vergleiche,

Sehe mit fühlendem Aug', fühle mit sehender Hand.
 Raubt die Liebste den gleich mir einige Stunden des Tages;
 Gibt die Stunden der Nacht mir zur Entschädigung hin
 Wird doch nicht immer geküßt, es wird vernünftig gesprochen,
 Überfällt sie der Schlaf, lieg'ich und denke mir viel.
 Oftmals hab'ich auch schon in ihren Armen gedichtet.
 Und das Hexameters Maß leise mit fingerder Hand,
 Ihr auf den Rücken gezählt. Sie atmet in lieblichem Schlummer
 Und es durchgeblühet ihr Hausch mir bis ins Tiefste der Brust.
 Amor schüret Lamp' indes und denket der Zeiten,
 Da er den nähmlichen Dienst' seinen Traumvorn getan (Goethe, 1914).

Conclusions:

Important issues in linguistic-literary directions have been raised and discussed in the study 'Goethe's lyrical discourse in the 5th poem of Römische Elegien'. These are issues that have not been tackled so far by other researchers.

The discourse is generally meaningful, with essential potential in the field of communication as an indisputable feature of the society. Meanwhile, the lyrical discourse, as a segment of mass discourse, marks a specialized communication in poetic literary works, namely in the conversational plane between the giver and the recipient. The most specified element of this literary genre is the lyrical 'Ich-Form', which, among other text-building signs, is the most analyzed and discussed one of the 5th poem of Goethe's lyrical-elegiac work, 'Römische Elegien', in this study. All analyzes and syntheses related to the lyrical 'Ich-Form', as well as its relations with other components of the text, have led to the following conclusions:

1. The 'Ich-Form' is used very frequently in the 5th poem of 'Römische Elegien'; it has a rhetorical character;
2. Verb forms used without the 'Ich-Form' have been identified throughout the entire poetic text. This is a phenomenon that does not create syntactic and semantic voids in sentence construction contours in verse form;
3. Being cognizant of the rule that the personal pronoun in the nominative case or in the role of the subject in demonstrative sentences, such as 'Ich-Form', is placed at the beginning of the sentence, it takes a mid-position in the lyrical verses of this poem. Goethe makes this shift because of the poetic style.
4. Another very important element that was noticed during the analysis of the poem, and which the author uses to contribute to stylistic issues, is the apostrophizing of verb forms used with the 'Ich' element, while verb forms used without it are presented with a verb ending, respectively with the first person singular ending of the verb grammatical system of the German language.
5. Verb signs are densely presented in the indicative mood of the present, as a sophisticated technique of the lyrical genre.
6. Logical connections of thoughts in the text in verses are realized mainly by the coordinating conjunction 'und' and less often by the conditional conjunction 'wenn', adversarial conjunction 'aber' and temporal conjunction 'dann'; and by successive interpunctuation marks in the text.

7. As a versified text, the 5th poem is also built from a variety of other signs, whose structuring is done starting from the signs with the highest frequency, immediately after the 'Ich-Form' and the verb, whereby it is established that Goethe's philosophical-stylistic expression in this poem is marked by: Nomen [nouns], Adjektive [adjectives], Adverbien [adverbs], passivische Konstruktionen [passive constructions], perfektive Konstruktionen [perfective constructions], definite Artikel [definite articles], Präpositionen [prepositions], Personalpronomen [personal pronouns], Possesivpronomen [possessive pronouns], undefinite Artikel [indefinite article].

From all these analyses, syntheses and conclusions, it can be ascertained that the 5th poem of 'Römische Elegien' is very rich in terms of words, although it is not a voluminous poem in terms of its length, and, as such, it is expressed with a multitude of textual signs, which realize a special style with a high-level philosophical content. Attention is needed to decode this poem, and it undoubtedly brings deep emotional movement to the decoder.

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