Sigismundus Lauxmin (1596/97–1670) and his *Praxis oratoria sive praecepta artis rhetoricae* (1648)

Sigismundus Lauxmin (lit. Zigmantas Līauskminas) was one of the most prominent and famous professors among Jesuit theologians and rhetoricians at Vilnius University in the 17th century. Lauxmin was born in 1596 (or 1597) into a Lithuanian noble family in Low Lithuania (lat. Samogitia, lit. Žemaitija)\(^2\). For this reason he used one more surname (the cognomen) – Lauxmin Samogita. In 1616 Lauxmin joined the Jesuit Order (the Society of Jesus – *Societas Iesu*). Lauxmin began his studies in Polock (1618–1619). In 1619–1622 he studied philosophy at Vilnius Academy (Vilnius University) and gained the degree of a doctor of philosophy in 1638. In 1625–1629 he continued his studies in Vilnius, where he gained a degree of a doctor of theology in 1642. After the studies Lauxmin taught rhetoric in Polock and in Nesvyžius (pol. Neswież, nowadays Nesvizh, Belarus). In 1635 he returned to Vilnius to become a professor of philosophy. In 1644 he went back to Polock and from there to Braunsberg, where he worked as a professor of theology. At the Jesuit assembly 1652 in Rome he was the Lithuanian deputy. Afterwards he returned to Vilnius. Besides his academic work, Lauxmin was rector of the Polock Jesuit college (1650), vicerector of Vilnius University (1655–1657) and rector of the Kražiai Jesuit college (1661–1665; located in Low Lithuania, this was a famous Jesuit centre of Lithuania). In the last years of his life Lauxmin was pro-chancellor of Vilnius University (1665–1670). He died in 1670 and was buried in Vilnius.

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1 This article is based on the paper, held at the 6th international colloquium on Vulgar and Late Latin in Helsinki (29.08–2.9.2000).
Lauxmin's scientific legacy embraces several theological works as well as textbooks of the Greek language, music and rhetoric. His most important contribution to rhetoric is the textbook *Praxis oratoria sive praeccepta artis rhetoricae*. The book is based on a rhetoric course, which Lauxmin taught at the Jesuit college of Nesvizh in 1631–1635. *Praxis oratoria* was first published in 1645 in Braunsberg. This edition still remains unknown and is only quoted from secondary sources. The copy preserved at the Tübingen University library (TUUB, Sign.: Dh 8) has recently been identified as the one from 1648 and not from 1645 as was thought before. It is possible that a parallel edition appeared in 1645 in Vilnius. The only copy, which currently is preserved at the St Petersburg University library (SPb. UB, Sign.: E. I. 746) and which is supposed to be the one from Vilnius, is defective and lacks the title page. Therefore it is also possible that it is one copy of the Braunschweig edition. In 1648 *Praxis oratoria* was reissued in Braunschweig, this time with the permission of Simon Blonesis: "Ego Simon Blonesis Praepositus Provincialis Societatis JESU per Provinciam Lithuaniam [...] permittit, ut Praxis Oratoria à P. Sigismundo Lauxmin Societatis nostri communicet, & ab aliquot Theologis ejusdem Societatis revisa, & approbata, Typis mandetur. Vilniae Anno Domini 1648, Julii die 8". The same approbation is repeated in all later editions of the book. Until 1732 the *Praxis* was edited thirteen times, as follows: 1658 (Munich); 1665, 1666 and 1675 (Frankfurt on Main); 1680 (Cologne), 1682 (Frankfurt on Main), 1690 (Würzburg), 1705, 1707 (Cologne), 1710 (Prague), 1717 (Cologne), 1720 (Vienna), 1732 (Kosice). It occupies an important place not only in the history of teaching in Lithuania but also in European culture generally.

Sigismundus Lauxmin belonged to the generation of native-speaking Lithuanian academics at Vilnius University, who knew the first half of the 17th century started to replace foreign professors (note that many of whom knew Lithuanian as well). In the first half of the 17th century up to 40 percent of the Jesuits at Vilnius University were of Lithuanian origin. This created a basis for a new scientific level at the *Alma Mater Vilnensis*. Many original textbooks and studies were prepared by Lithuanians. Partly they were perfect compilations of the European scientific heritage. On the other hand a significant part of these textbooks marked the beginning of new research fields in Lithuania. Among them was the first Lithuanian Grammar, written by the Jesuit theologian Constantinus Syrvid (lit. Konstantinas Sirvydas, pol. Syrzyw, 1578/81–1631) approximately in 1621–1630. This grammar has been mentioned in several works of Jesuit historians under the title *Clausiae linguae Lithuanicae*, although the book itself has not been found until today.

Quotations in this article will be given according to the edition of 1666 (which is based on the Braunschweig edition, as the edition Georg Heinrich Frommin put in his preface [E. A.]), the full title is the following: *Praxis* || ORATORIA. || SVE || Praecepta Artis Rhetoricae. || quae ad componendum Orationem || scire necasari sunt, tarn separati || singula, quam omnia simul exempla || expressa, || ad emulationem E[loq-] || gumenta, Significa pro-posita. || [A] || P. SIGISMUNDO LAUXMINI || a SOC. JESU. || T. D. || Edidit Novum || cura Praefatione & Indice || necasari. || Cum Gratia & Privilegio Elect. Sacram. || FRANCOURTII ad Monstrum., || Impressi GEORGI HENRICI || FROMMINI BANNI Lippisens. || ANNO M. DC. LXVI. [117 p.], 333 p., [7 p.]

In the second half of the 16th Bishop of Vilnius Valerijonas Pranasovicius (lit. Valerijonas Pranasovskis, 1504–1579) invited the Jesuits from Braunschweig namely to organize a Jesuit higher school in Lithuania. In 1645 Lauxmin himself lived and worked in Braunschweig, so he could take care of the editing of his book.

12 I express my thanks to Dr. Sigita Narbutas and Dr. Daiva Nabutienė for this information.

13 The Zedler Encyclopedia indicates incorrectly 1618 as the year of the first edition of the *Praxis oratoria* (Zedler, vol. 16, 1216). This mistake originates from one of the sources of the Lauxmin article in Zedler — *Bibliotheca scriptorum Societatis Jesu* by Pedro de Ribadeneyra, Philippe Aegamphe and Nathanael Soerwell from 1676: "Edidit latiné [...] Praxis Oratoriae & praeccepta artis Rhetoricae. Braunsbergiae 1618, in 12." (p. 740). In Martin Lippens' *Bibliotheca realis philosophica* (1682), which also was a source of the article on Lauxmin in Zedler, the year 1618 is attested as well: Lauxmin, *Samogitii-Poloni*; S. I. Praxis Oratoria, s. Praecipita Artis Rhetoricae, *Braunsbergiae 12. 1618. Monachi. 12. 1658. Lips. 12. 1665." (p. 1061). The mistake in this case is evident, since Lauxmin at that time had not even started his studies.

14 The grammar is mentioned without the year of edition in *Bibliotheca scriptorum Societatis Jesu* by Pedro de Ribadeneyra and Philippe Aegamphe from 1643: "Scriptum idioma
a Polish-Latin-Lithuanian dictionary Promontarius dictionum Polonicarum, Latinarum et Lituanicarum, edited ca. 1620 (the edition of 1642 and later ones are called Dictionarium trium lingvarum; altogether five editions are known)¹⁵. Also worth mentioning is the Lithuanian history by Albertus Wituš-Koialowicz (lit. Albertas Vijkūs-Kojalavičius, 1609–1677) Historiae Lithuaniae pars prior (Danzig, 1650) and pars altera (Antwerp, 1669). Before the appearance of this book the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had remained untaught as a subject in its own right at Vilnius University. This was the first history of the State of Lithuania in Latin¹⁶. It also became the standard text for historians in their studies on Eastern Europe up to the 19th century¹⁷. One of the main sources for history of the Church in Lithuania was his Miscellanea verum ad Statum Ecclesiasticum in Magno Lithuaniae Ducatu pertinentium (Vilnius, 1650). The brother of Albertus, Casimir Wituš-Koialowicz (lit. Kazimieras Vijkūs-Kojalavičius, 1617–1674), also a professor at Vilnius University, wrote two manuals of rhetoric: Institutionum rhetoricarum pars prima et secunda (Vilnius, 1654) and Modi LX sacrae orationis variae formandae (Antwerp, 1668). These textbooks on rhetoric did not excel the one by Laximin and were less popular in the neighbouring countries (generally only one subject – how to arrange a speech – is distinguished). Among the exact sciences the following theoretical works published by Lithuanians in the first half of the 17th century should be mentioned. After a course taught at University, the professor of mathematics Janonis Rudomina Dusiatski (lit. Jonas Rudamina Dusetliakis, 1615–1652) prepared his Illustratio theorematum et problematum mathematica (Vilnius, 1633). This was the first book on the exact sciences published in the Academy. The student of physics and mathematics Albertus Dyblinski (lit. Albertas Diblinskiškis) published Centuriae astronomiae in alma Academia et universitatis Vilnensis Societatis Iesu (Vilnius, 1639), the first book on astronomy in Lithuania. The Lithuanian nobleman and student of philosophy Nikolaus Casimirus Białkowski (lit. Mykolas Kazimieras Białkowski) edited Theoreometriae sive Mathematicae de punctis et centris considerationes in alma Academia Vilnensi Societatis Iesu (Vilnius, 1644, 1690). The Lithuanian nobleman and professor of astronomy Janonis Począpski (lit. Jonas Począpskis) edited Universa meteorologiae (Vilnius, 1643). Albertus Wituš-Koialowicz also joined this field of studies and in 1648 published a book on optics Oculus ratione correctus, id est Demonstratio oculis (Vilnius). Parts of these studies, which were edited in Vilnius, were accepted as manuals or were at least known at foreign universities as well¹⁸.

Such studies and a considerably high scientific level at Vilnius Academy were not accidentally gained. Several circumstances led the University to become one of the most flowering centres of education in Europe of that time. Here I would like to briefly recall the main aspects of the history of Vilnius University as well as of the Latin tradition in Lithuania. In the 16th century the Reformation began to spread in Lithuania. In 1539 the Protestant Abrahamus Culvensis (lit. Abraomas Kulvietis, ca. 1509–1545) opened the first secondary school in Vilnius. After the pressure of the Counter-Reformation the school was closed in 1542 and Culvensis himself accepted an invitation from Duke Albertus of Prussia (1490–1568) to move to Prussia, i.e. Lithuania Minor (the Lithuanian-speaking part of the Duchy of Prussia in the North-East of the country). Starting with 1545, Prussia became an important bastion of the Reformation. After the Council of Trent (1545–1547, 1551–1552, 1562–1563) the Counter-Reformation strengthened its forces in Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (i.e. Lithuania Major)¹⁹. Meanwhile in Protestant Prussia education in vernaculars was promoted²⁰ whereas in Lithuania Major it was mainly based on the Latin language. In 1544 Duke Albertus opened Königsberg University (so called Albertina resp. Universitas Regiomontana), which replaced the former elementary school founded in 1541. As a response to the foundation of this Protestant University and as an affirmation of Catholicism, a Jesuit college was instituted in Vilnius in 1570, by dispensation from the Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland (1548–1572), Sigismundus Augustus (lit. Zigmantas Au-

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¹⁵ Petrauskienė 1976, 265 f.
¹⁶ The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was a Jesuit province until 1608.
¹⁷ Note the first printed book in Lithuanian was prepared and published in the Duchy of Prussia in 1547 – Cathedchism by Martinus Mosvidius (lit. Martynas Mažvydas, ca. 1520–1563). For a chronological table of Lithuanian writings in Prussia and in Lithuania see the online catalogue of the exhibition „Die Litauische Poseid (1973): Dokumente der litauischen Reformation“, which took place at the Herzen August library in 09.03–01.06.2005: http://www.hab.de/ausstellung/posiele/
Protestant scholar Gerhard Johann Vossius (1577–1649) were used as representative. Nevertheless the most significant influence on the history of rhetoric in the 17th century generally was that exercised by the Jesuits. Up to the middle of the 17th century professors of the Academy published several original books on poetics and rhetoric which were met with a broad response at other European universities. At Vilnius University, besides the above mentioned textbook by Casimirus Wituł-Koikowicz Institutiones rhetoricae of 1654, which basically concentrated on the composition of oratorical speeches, a printed course of lectures on poetics by professor Matthias Casimirus Sarbievius (lit. Motiejus Kazimieras Sarbievius, 1596–1640) De acuto et arguto liber unusice sive Seneca et Martialis was of great importance.

In this treatise, whose final version was prepared in 1626–1627, Sarbievius examines the theory of the rhetorical concept (actum). Generally based on the ancient rhetorical tradition, for the first time in Lithuania the poetics dealt with the new style of Baroque. Sarbievius created the theory of the moderate and harmonious language (concors discordia or discors concordia).

He wrote four more treatises: Characteres lyrici seu Horatius et Pindarus; De virutibus et virtutis carminis elegiaci seu Ouidius; De figuris sententiariis and De perfecta poesi sive Vergilius et Homerus. At the beginning of the 17th century the profressors of rhetoric took into account the practical needs of their students. Almost all the manuscript lecture courses in rhetoric at Vilnius university show that practical advice in teaching of eloquence increased at the expense of theory.

This was the context in which the publication of Lauxmin’s Praxis oratoria should be seen. Which features helped the Praxis to withstand a competition in the stream of already existing and widely recognized works? The preface of the manual, Praefatio nova ad lectorem, written by the editor Georg Heinrich Frommann, partly answers this question. The editor stresses that almost all contemporary rhetorics are based on the Vossianian tradition: “hodié praee caeteris regnare Vossianas [Institutiones]” (f. A2v), whereas in the present book one can find some new things (Accedit, quod in multis peculiare quid, quoque penes alios | Rhetores frustra quaeris, in hac Praxi

27. Vossius published four works on rhetoric: Institutiones rhetoricae (1606), De rhetoricae naturae et constitutione (1621), Rhetorices constructae, sive partitionum oratoriarum libri V (1621), Elementa rhetoricae (1626).  
29. For his poetry Sarbievius was crowned with laurels by Pope Urbanus VIII. For his odes written following Horace he was called Horatius Sarmaticus. His Lyricorum libri quarti, Liber epodon, Liber epigrammatum et Poemata (starting with 1625 altogether 34 editions in the 17th century) were known and imitated by many authors (Ultinaitė 1995, xix–xxvi).  
Compendiosum docetur [f. A2v–A3r], particularly that the author starts his teaching with a detailed explanation of the syntactical periods and their usage: „Et primo quidem loco doctrinam de conquadrantis, & ut sic loquar, conceptrandis periodis proposit, quae quin necessaria sit ad eloquentiam germanam comparandam“ (f. A3v). Fromm seems to be convinced that only a proper syntactical structure helps to achieve a harmonious language31. And in this aspect Lauxmin fulfills the task:

„Detinde nec illud tacendum erat. Lauxmin in Eloctuone facem vel locudissimam omnium praefere. Multi alia multa concordant praecerta, de Confirmatione, quae primiceria Orationis pars dicsenda venit. egregiae expolenda, quae argumenta & et ex quibus quasi capsulis ahilhenda, quibus coloribus sit utendam. At Lauxmin noaster, praeterquam quod in praecipitis breviter & aperi proponendis tantum non omnis est, practice etiam in quibusdam ostendit exemps, quomodo argumenta velut in acie quadam loci, & quam facile extendi quaerit atque adeat“ (f. A3v)

Lauxmin rejected the traditional scheme of rhetoric teaching, which usually started with the very definition of rhetoric, its main subject, functions and aims32. According to the author himself it is especially the capacity to create the rhetorical (i. e. syntactical) periods that determines the harmony, the beauty and the convincingness of eloquence. According to him this method corresponds to nature: „Posito Natura nihil repentem agit, sed petentem, & ex intus. Nam exercitatio primam in rebus expolientiis potest; et cedam augeat sensum: nec nisi cum tempore, ununquodque opus ad destinatam perfectionem perducit. [...] Similit similitudinem est de Eloquenti Scientia“ (f. A4r) – as he says in his preface to the book („Praefatio ad Eloquentiae candidatos“). Furthermore, Lauxmin admits that these thoughts as well as his practical work with students have forced him to rearrange the classical rhetoric, and to start his teaching with syntax:

„Ejusmodi me ratio permovit non paucis ab hinc annis, cum ad erudientes in Oratorio facultatis Tyrones Societatis nostrae destinatus essem, ut immutarem consuetum docendi modum. Usitatum enim est alius, ab Inventione ordini Doctrinam dicendi, quod est pars intima & fundamentum Orationis: ego raman a COMMATIS, MEMBRIS & PERIODIS, quae in extima veluti facie Orationis apparent, initium docendi sumpsit: quod facilis, nec minus fructuose hab in parte Juvenes occupari posse animadveri.“ (f. A5r)

He claims that purely theoretical considerations of the matter produce no appreciable result and are too complicated for students to comprehend; besides they are useless for practical purposes:

„Alii de locis Dialecticos, modis inventionis, acumen argumentandi, & his similibus copiost disserunt: ego haec paucis attingi propere, quod plerque ex his subtilia magis, quam utilia esse viderem. Praecepta [ ali] duntaxat, idque ea, quae majoris momenti esse putant, scripto exponunt: ego minuta etiam collegi, exemplisque doctrinam confirmavi, ac ad Praesum deduxi, ut in uno conspectu & Doctrina & Usus doctrinac adaperer.“ (f. A5v–A6v)

Lauxmin acknowledges the inductive method of teaching: „Principium enim ducetur, quemadmodum dictum est, à faciilius: inde paulatim, sine magno labore, ad ipsam Orationem pervenienda“ (f. A6r). Generally the manual by Lauxmin is concerned with style. It is to be concluded that he wanted eloquence to return to the Ciceronian rhetorical model from which it had receded in Baroque times. In other words, Lauxmin’s work shows a return to classical functional rhetoric in which a logical exposition of the given material is not drowned by boundless aphorisms and unnatural metaphors. He is no doubt opposed to the macaronic style, the useless word-play and the sacrifice of matter to form. In fact it is a textbook of perfect sentence-arrangement leading step by step to the matters of form, action and affection. It is not without reason, one can assume, that the tenth part of the Praxis is called „De actione Oratoria“ (f. A9v) in the summary, although later in the text it appears as „De affectione Oratoria“ (p. 250). The Praxis consists of ten parts:

Caput I. De Incisio, Membris, Periodis, & quae ex his constat.
Caput II. De Argumento & Argumentatione.
Caput III. De Amplificatione.
Caput IV. De Sententia, Transitione, Digressione.
Caput V. De Quaestione, Statu, Causa, Clasimone.
Caput VI. De paribus Rhetoricae, Officio Oratoris, & Paribus Oracionis.
Caput VII. De Genere seu Characterie dicensi.
Caput VIII. De Dispositione Orationis.
Caput IX. De Elucutione Oratoria.
Caput X. De actione Oratoria, Quae est unica. Quis sit observandum Oratori, ut bene agat.

(f. A6v–A9v)

The first part of the book describes the syntactic structure of a sentence and different sentence-types. As Lauxmin says, the matter was analysed widely by Cicero and other ancient authors, although it is neglected by his contemporaries: „Doctrinam hujus Capitis Ciceroni & alii priscis Oratori-
bus fuisses perspectissimam: nostro tamen aequo communitur negligi, nescio quo errore” (p. 1). Any orator needs to study the subject exhaustively because every educated man should speak as well as write in strict accordance with grammatical rules. Lauxmin starts with the explanation of the least notional syntactical unit, “Laetent Incisum, et Pars Orationis brevissimia, sensum aliquem exhibent” (p. 2), a word group or syntagmeme which consists of at least two notional words related by an immediate syntactic relation (e. g., “Actum est, Faustum Troes” [p. 2]). Afterwards he turns to the simple sentence — Colon seu Membrum Oratium” (p. 3), a logical word combination which expresses some thought (”Latine Membrum, et Portio orationis verbis absoluta, sensum aliquem exhibent” [p. 3]). A word group (Comma) and a simple sentence (Colon) differ only in the number of syllables; the latter should according to Lauxmin consist of more than ten syllables (“Colon habet plura verba, ut etiam extendatur ultima virginitas syllabas: descendere autem non potest infra decem. Nam infra decem non est Colon, sed Comma” [p. 3]). Further on the rhetorical or syntactical period is described [35]. Here Lauxmin gives the Aristotelian definition: „Periodus est Oratio, cuius Principium et finis in consecute est, et uno intuitu facile spectari potest” (p. 5). In the chapter „Quotuplex sit Periodus?” (p. 7—16) he explains what causes diversity of the rhetorical periods (i. e. sentences). Three causes are pointed out: 1) number of the constituents, 2) their proportionality and 3) the way they should be organized (”Diversitas Periodorum ex triplici capitae oritur. Ex numero membrorum, ex aequitate vel inaequalitate corundum, & ex modo collocatio” [p. 7]).

1. The first type of sentence, the monoclos or unimembris, is the simple (usually expanded) sentence with a specific sequence of its constituents. It has inverted word order, which helps to create a varied theme—theme structure. The other three types — diclos or binembris, triclos or trimembris and

33 „Nam esse unice necessarium Oratori indit patri, quod nihil unquam culte & ordinatæ à quoquam scribi aut dicit potest, nisi juxta hos decimodi modos.” (p. 1)
34 „Doxi sensum aliquem, qua Colon aliquando compositi Periodum, & tunc non habet perfectum sensum” (p. 3).
35 „PERIODUS a Medicis dicitur festi-illum ille circuitus, qui stare die ad aegrum revertitur. Apud Graecos etiam illi, qui Olympia, Pythia, Isthmia, Nemesea vincebant, dicebant Periodo vincere, quod ills celebrabat ubique vincendo circumirent. [...] a Latinis scriptoribus vocatur Circulus, Ambitus, Circumscriptio, Comprehensio, Continuatio.” (p. 4—5)
36 A sequence of words in a sentence is determined by the communicative intention. In this respect a sentence consists of two parts of a communicative structure, the theme and the rhyme. The theme carries information already supplied by the context and the rhyme carries a new information. The theme—the rhyme structure does not necessarily coincide with the syntactic structure and can be altered by changing the word order in a sentence. Lauxmin explains the word order as follows: “Nos expectamus quotidian Tabellarius vestros. Erit membrum simplex: quam nullum habet flexum circa finem. Sin autem

tetralcos or quadrariumbris — deal with the composite sentence. The second period, binembris ("Cujus Proposito membro uno, altero Reddito absolvitur" [p. 8]), is characteristic of moral speeches; such sentences are logical ones, having a statement and its concise explanation (clauses are connected with subordinative or semantic conjunctions, which could also have the intensity of postpositive particles”), e. g., "Si septies percurretis terram, Delebiti Syriam" (p. 9; note it is a rearranged simple sentence expanded by a participial phrase “Septies percurretis terram, Delebiti Syriam” [p. 10]). The third (trimembris) and the fourth (quadrariumbris) type of sentences represent complex sentences with more than one dependent clause. The subordinate attributive clauses are ascribed to the trimembris period (“in qua aut bimembri propositioni unimembris respondet redditio, aut unimembris Prothesi bimembris oppositor Apodosia” [p. 10]). The quadrariumbris period in which "cum duabus propositionibus duae redditiones respondent" (p. 11) is represented as a composite sentence consisting of two main clauses, each having a subordinate clause of its own.

2. According to Lauxmin one should maintain a proportional length of clauses in a sentence. Here he divides the periods into isoclos ("quando utrumque membro est inter se aequale numero syllabarum"), macrocos ("posterius membro est longum" [p. 12]) and microcos ("cum posterius est brevis" [p. 13]). The three-part sentence (trimembris) could be composed in two ways: either with clauses of roughly the same length (isopleuros), or with the third clause considerably shorter (isopleuros) (p. 13).

3. The way of collocating clauses into a complex sentence displays two basic types of organization. The first one corresponds to the patterns of subordinate clauses described in the manual mentioned above ("Alia est, quae con-jugaret inter se junctae, & sibi oppositus membris, ut sunt illae

dicas. Nos Tabellarius vestros, homines diligentissimos, quotidian expectamus. Nam erit Periodus unico: que verbum expectamus, veluti interruptum, interjeictis incisis, redactus ad principium suum, quod vel opulente pronuntiatione facile constat" (p. 8).
37 „Necurrunt autem vocibus & verbis, quae includunt in se quanda conditionem, aut quae alii quasi reditiourum petunt. Prioris generis sunt illae particulae, Si etque est, cum, sequitum & similis. Posterioris verb genera sunt totae: ulla, qui, quamvis, quantum, &c: ut: totae, equalis, &c similis. Inserere verba operativi & conjunctivi modi, vellem facere &c. Talibus enim particulis & verbis plus inter se propositiones ita colliguntur, ut non nisi simul intelligibili potest: quae abstracta illis singulae per se perfectionem intelligatur" (p. 9). Note that here among the semantic conjunctions some e asmatic conjunctions as well as relative pronouns and adverbs characteristic of complete clauses are named.
38 Lauxmin quotes Dosthougoes as an example: “Quorum rerum gravissimae & pulcherrimae eius perfectionem obtinere: ista enim non superestavis. Nos, nosque, nosse: omni debet, id est, atque etiam eas inclinetur.” (p. 10)
39 Jotiumodi Periodus est valde elegans & apsippis ad comparandam copiam & elegancia timentibus, et ad variandam eloquentiam. (p. 11)
40 „Hac tamen Periodus, si habuerit ultimum membro valde breve, cuit virosque judicio Oratorum.” (p. 13)
omnes, quas supra posuimus" [p. 13–14]); the second type explains a chain subordination, in which a subordinate clause is superordinate to another, which in turn is superordinate to one more dependent clause ("Alia est in qua igitur permista membra, ut ex duobus vel pluribus membris, unum actum evadat, utque Periodus pauciorum quidem membrorum actu, potestate verò plurium" [p. 14]). Later on in the first part Lauxemin examines some types of complex sentences ("Sunt dicendi formae ex superioribus ordinatur" [p. 16]), namely the attributive clauses ("Schoenoteris est colon prolixam, quae in modum longi finis extusum" [p. 16]), which can also include various interrogated remarks. Several ways of constructing rhetorical periods are discussed, such as expressing opinions either in short simple sentences ("Periodica Circumdata [... ut Pater dat filiae. Prohibes [... Hic sunt quidem Protheses & Apodoses, sed neque ligantur simul; neque habent sufficientem membrorum longitudinem" [p. 18]); or in long complex sentences with several subordinated clauses ("pneuma vocatur illa Oratiois compositionis, quae multa Cola & Commota sic simul complectitur & concludit, & eique proponitur quod dicentur spiritus & latera perferre sic possunt" [p. 18–19]). The first way is useful in arguing, whereas the second can help in demonstrative speeches. Lauxemin concludes with the practical advice for his students to construct the rhetorical period from a short simple sentence which can be expanded according to the question-chain: "Quis! Quia! Ubis! Quibus auxilliis? [Super: Quamvis! Quando?" [p. 25].

The second part of the book deals with the terminology of an argument or invention: "ideo cognita jam exteriori facie Oratiois, nunc interiori ejusdem constitutionem consideramus" (p. 35). Lauxemin admits that the invention of arguments is of no lesser importance than being able to construct various syntactical phrases and to handle them skillfully: "QVod ossa in corpore, & fundamentum in aedibus est; id sunt argumenta in dicendo; quibus universa Oratiois structura ininititur [... Argumentum est probabile inventum ad faciendum fidem" (p. 35). Here he turns from the sentence-types to the very structure of a sentence (Enunciation) and explains its parts starting with the predicate and the subject. The expansion of such a basic pattern should be logical, according to the dialectical rules (p. 39). This way the previously explained various syntactical patterns are filled with the necessary content (Ratiocinatio), which should be disposed in a proper sequence:

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44 The rhetorical theory of the disposition in the 17th century was understood and explained different by various authors. Soares for example distinguished four levels of the disposition: exordium, narratio, confirmatio, peroratio, whereas Lauxemin mentions six of them: exordium, propositio, narratio, confirmatio, refutatio, peroratio. Lauxemin interpreted the disposition in an original way: according to him the structure of any speech is twofold, consisting of the matter and the form. The first includes inventio and dispositio, the second elocutio: "CAPUT VIII. DE DISPOSITIOINE ORATIONIS. Cognitum Paribus Oratiois, tempus est, ut ad ipsum Oratiois veniat. Duo autem in Oratione distinguendae sunt. Unum vocari potest Materiae, & et Invenio & Dispositio tuid adhuc & incompta, sine ornatu & veluti forma verborum. Alterum Formatum. Ex quo oratio Elucido facta verbis selectis, & adhibitis omnibus iis, quae ad cultum & ornatum Oratiois requiruntur" (p. 111). The ninth part of the Praxis is devoted to the latter (p. 139–250). (More about disposition theories in the 17th century in: Ülimate 1984, 64–76.)

45 Ülimate 1984, 91.

46 Solent autem sententiae non solium à doctis & prudentibus viris, sed etiam à rudibus & pueris non rarò professis quavis ab eis, quid sint, non agnoscannt. [... Sententia est Enunciation quae imaginem de bonis expeditis & mali fu esiriendi, de DEO, Religione, Fortuna, Providentia & similibus, reddis utilibus, magnis admirandis, alit vitan hominum & mores pertinentibus" (p. 69–70); "TRANSITIO EST, quae quid dictum sit, pacius repetit & quid sit dicendum, breviter exponit, seu, Transitio vocatur illa portio Oratiois, qua Oratio transit ab una Oratiois parte ad alteram, vel ab uno Argumento ad alium" (p. 74); "DIGRESSIO est rei aliquae ad utilitatem Causae pertinentis extra ordinem exorabere tractatio" (p. 75).
Tyronibus satis fuerit, formâs et modos Transitionum ex Authoribus annotatâs. Digestio tiam exercitatio non differt ab ilis, qua de Argumentatione et Amplificatione diximus" (p. 79). In the fifth part of the book Lauxmin turns to the stylistical functions (the affects) of the amplification: "QVAES-TIO, STATUS, CAUSA, CRINOMENON ad Substantiam Orationis pertinent. Nam circa haec, ut circa propriam materiam, Orator occupatur" (p. 80). Only in the sixth part of his manual does Lauxmin give a detailed definition of rhetoric:


Lauxmin favours the inductive method of teaching at the end of his Praxis oratoria, concluding with statements with which other rhetoricians usually start their training. The characteristic feature of his textbook is a simple and methodological exposition. Such consistent teaching, a clear and precise style, and a logical sequence of narration could be interpreted as an answer of the Humanities to the exact sciences, which were becoming more widespread in the first decades of the 17th century. The rhetoric of Sigismundus Lauxmin marks a boundary between classical rhetoric, which is rational, meaningful and exact, and the Mannerian one, which becomes exalted, trivial and refined. He stresses not the formal (formale) or the material (materiale) side of the subject, but shows the way of combining both of them according to three speech-characters (Sumnum, Infimum, Mediocrite" (p. 104)): "Nullum ex his Characteribus alteri absoluto xcix praeferebatur esse. [..] Cognosci posse, sitne conveniens Characteri rei, si Oratio comparatur cum causa, et haec cum Fine; atque cum Eucharistias Locii, Temporis, Personae et si-milibus. Eadem enim res diverso fine, et in aliis atque aliis circumstantia ad dicendum assumpta, diversum exigit genus dicendi. [..] Rursus videndum est, Ubi, A quibus, Coram qui-bus dicatur" (p. 107–108).

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