SENTIMENTAL TEARS AND RHETORICAL TEACHINGS IN LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SWEDISH FUNERAL POETRY

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This article discusses the transformation of Swedish occasional poetry that took place in the late eighteenth century, and how some of the changes that occurred can be related to the introduction of literary Sentimentalism in Sweden. The Swedish historian of literature Carl Fehrman has argued that, although strands of sentimentalism – as opposed to rationalism and intellectualism – had influenced Swedish cultural life since the middle of the eighteenth century, an expressive Sentimental style was not found in Swedish literature until 1783.[1] The introduction of this new style was due to the

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[1] See Fehrman 1954, p. 91. Hansson 1991, pp. 276-298, shows how the intimate style of the early strands of Sentimentalism in Sweden is related to the style of devotional and meditative texts. Neumann 1999 discusses Sentimentalism, friendship, and the intimate address in conversations and letters. Fischer 2002, 2004, and 2007 examine the influence of Sentimentalism in Swedish poems from the mid-eighteenth century and

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translation into Swedish, in that year, of Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774) and other 'sentimental' texts, and to the publication, at the end of 1783, of the Swedish poem, "Grefwinnan Spastaras död" ('The Death of Countess Spastara'), written by Bengt Lidner (1757-1793). Embodying the novel style, the poem was met with prompt disapproval from the leading critics, who favoured traditional classicism.

However, the emotional approach and poetical techniques of the Sentimental style were soon adopted by Swedish writers of occasional poetry and adjusted to their specific needs. In what follows I show how a group of funeral poets who published work in Swedish newspapers in the 1780s and 1790s, employed the specific feature of a Sentimental 'poetic I' to avoid accusations of aesthetic vanity and to defuse criticism of their poems' literary quality. Paradoxically enough, the arguments used by the writers in defence of their poems included both an explicit repudiation of classical rhetoric and, at the same time, an extensive use of rhetorical tropes and figures traditionally recommended to influence the reader's emotions.

Occasional Poetry and the Newspapers

In late eighteenth-century Sweden the custom of celebrating official ceremonies and events with occasional poetry extended beyond the nobility, the clergy, and the university professors to less prominent members of the bourgeoisie such as civil servants and local merchants.[2] As Swedish daily newspapers burgeoned in the 1770s, occasional poetry – especially the genre of

in letters and poems by the prominent Swedish writer, Thomas Thorild; cf. also Otto Fischer's contribution to the present volume.

[2] On the spread of the writing of occasional poetry to broader social circles, see Ekman 2004, pp. 109-110.

funeral poetry – became popular like never before.[3] Whereas the separately printed poems that were presented at the funeral ceremony only reached a limited number of readers, the newspapers provided the poets with a larger audience and contributed to an even wider dissemination of the praise of the deceased. Throughout the 1770s, on average one poem was published in every second issue of the papers, and two thirds of those published were occasional poems, primarily funeral poems.[4]

This surge in the printing of occasional poetry was supported by the new Swedish regime. In August 1772, a little more than a year after his coronation, King Gustaf III seized power in a coup d'état and declared that his reign would be one of 'enlightened despotism'. Virtually overnight all political discussion in poetical form – until then a regular feature in the newspapers – disappeared and was replaced by occasional poetry. A considerable amount of this new poetry praised the new regime, its supporters among the nobility, and the high-ranking representatives of Gustavian society. There is even evidence that representatives of the new regime wrote and published occasional poetry in the newspapers as political propaganda.[5]

The Decline of Occasional Poetry

Royalist panegyrics peaked at the time of the birth of Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf in the autumn of 1778. Shortly thereafter the number of printed poems fell dramatically and by the end of the century occasional poetry seemed to have outplayed its formerly prominent role in public life. There are, as I see

[3] The development of the Swedish newspapers in the late eighteenth century is discussed in Sylwan 1896 and Oscarsson 2000.
[4] On the number of occasional poems published in the newspapers, see Arvidson 1989, p. 207; and Ekman 2004, pp. 105-107.
[5] On occasional poetry as political propaganda in Sweden in the 1770s, see Boberg 1951, pp. 153-155.

it, two main reasons for the genre's sudden decrease in popularity: first, the change of the regime's attitude towards occasional poetry; second, the introduction of a new kind of literary criticism, which targeted inferior writers and their bad occasional poetry.[6]

Gustaf III and his 'enlightened despotism' only experienced a few years of popularity. By the beginning of the 1780s, political opposition had become a problem to the regime and was met by increasingly harsh countermeasures. This new situation affected the press as well: freedom of speech was restricted and the repression of critical voices led to the closing down of newspapers and magazines – under the threat of heavy fines, imprisonment, and even death. Since elements of the press had published poems that were ostensibly occasional poems but actually contained attacks on the politics of the regime,[7] measures were also taken to remove occasional poetry from the newspapers, thus making space for 'more useful information'.[8]

The second factor behind the sudden decline of occasional poetry in newspapers was the appearance of a new kind of critique, introduced by the most influential national newspaper, *Stockholms Posten* ('The Stockholm Post'), and directed against 'rhymesters' and – what the critics considered –

[6] A number of scholars have noted this decline of occasional poetry, but the factors behind the slump are still being debated. For a summary of the different interpretations, see Ekman 2004, pp. 176-178.

[7] An example of the politically charged occasional poetry is Thomas Thorild's poem to Gustaf III, on the King's return from a visit to France and Italy in August of 1784. The narrator of the poem addresses the King and draws his attention to the tears shed by his subjects. As it turns out, the tears are not signs of joy at the King's return, as would have been the case in an ordinary occasional poem, but those resulting from hunger, anger, and despair. The poem was published in the last issue of Thorild's journal *Den nye granskaren* ('The New Observer'), nos. 19-20, August 1784. Arvidson 1993, pp. 149-154, points out how Thorild closed down the journal before the authorities could do so and prosecute its editor.

[8] Vegesack 2001, pp. 91-92, offers a discussion of the regime's official reaction towards poetry in newspapers.

their juvenile and hackneyed occasional poetry. In a series of contributions dating from the period 1778-1783, the paper's leading critic, Johan Henric Kellgren attacked the exaggerated language of poems written in praise of prominent men, the sole purpose of which was clearly to further the poetaster's career. Kellgren's critique was a novelty in so far as it was delivered in the form of satire, divulging the names of the poets targeted, citing and ridiculing poorly written passages, and hailing these as the product of genius.

The satire apparently created a sense of community amongst those who shared the opinions of Kellgren and *Stockholms Posten*. They belonged to the well-educated middle-class living in the capital, who appreciated the art of conversation and had a keen eye for the witty and tasteful. *Stockholms Posten* also made fun of 'the art of rhetoric', which it ironically defined as nothing other than hyperbolic praise and metaphors overloaded with ornamentation.[9] The editorial staff of the paper consisted of a group of intellectuals who were committed to the ideas of the Enlightenment and neoclassical poetics. Their attacks on the so-called rhymesters were only the first in a string of campaigns conducted in the name of Enlightenment and good taste.

The conditions were therefore difficult for those who continued to write occasional poems and wanted their work to be published in the newspapers at the beginning of the 1780s. The risk of being mocked was great if the author did not fully master the requisite poetical craftsmanship. In spite of the various obstacles, however, occasional poetry – and funeral poems in particular – was still being published in the newspapers in the last two decades of the eighteenth century.

[9] Kellgren's negative attitude toward the way rhetoric was taught in contemporary schools is discussed in Burman 1988, pp. 31 and 199; cf. also Skuncke 2004, p. 78.

Sentimental Poetics

Bengt Lidner's "Grefwinnan Spastaras död" was published in the fall of 1783. The poem demonstrates how the Sentimental mode and style could be poetically expressed in the Swedish language. It features a 'poetic I' who does not – as the neoclassical doctrine would prescribe – portray his feelings metaphorically or as reflected by nature. Instead, the narrator of Lidner's poem is by his own account overwhelmed by emotion and interrupts himself as he invokes Heaven, sighs, and goes silent, as exemplified by verses 39-51:[10]

Men, hårda mänskligheten lag!
Af andras nöd alt hvad jag får ärfara,
Min blod til is, hvar puls til marter gör.
Jag kan ej säll i himlen vara
Om där jag jordens klagan hör – –
Och då, Gudomliga SPASTARA!
Et kärleks offer du imellan lågor dör;
Jag skulle mina känslor spara?
Jag bli så hård, som – – – Himlen är?
Vid bugten utaf denna källa
Jag dig et skyldigt offer bär.
Här jag min Luta tar, här vil jag tårar fälla,
Jag kan ej mer; och mer din skugga ej begär.

[But, hard law of humanity!/ All that I learn about other people's suffering/ makes my blood turn to ice, makes each beat of my heart a torture./ I cannot be blissful in Heaven/ if I hear the cries there of earthly pain …/ And then, divine Spastara!/ A sacrifice of love you are dying in the flames./ Should I spare my feelings?/ Should I become as unrelenting as … Heaven?/ At the bend of this creek/ I bring you the sacrifice that is your due./ Here I pick up my lute, here I shall shed my tears;/ I cannot do more, and your shadow demands no more.]

[10] The verses are quoted from the modern edition of Lidner's collected works; see Lidner 1937, pp. 129-140. All English translations of the Swedish texts used in this article are mine.

The dashes, question marks, and exclamation points (typo-)graphically convey the picture to the reader of a narrator in the midst of speech, trying to express himself while in the grip of overpowering emotions. In depictions like this of an oral performance, the classical rhetorical figure of *aposiopesis* is translated, by way of dashes or dots, into the *points de suspension* that were a trademark of the so-called *style coupé*, the elegant emotional style of eighteenth-century European belles-lettres.[11]

However, what clearly distinguishes Lidner's poem from contemporary poetical practice is his introduction of a 'poetic I', who is the emotional focus of the narrative situation.[12] By employing this subjective mode of address, Lidner emphasizes his own reaction to the bereavement as well as his personal relation to the deceased. And clearly, when the purpose is to mediate 'true feelings' from one person to another, poetical and rhetorical prescriptions do not apply. As Lidner put it himself, upon having been criticized for not observing the rhetorical rules in his work: 'A single verse, mighty enough to bring forth tears, is infinitely more important than all the rules of Aristotle. Condemned to remain forever a schoolmaster is he who weighs his words when he has the opportunity to cry.'[13]

This sentence expresses the very core of Sentimental poetics – and earned Lidner the complimentary sobriquet of 'the poet of tears' – but there is, importantly, an additional dimension to Lidner's ideas about the relation

[11] On the definition and use of emphatic *aposiopesis*, see Lausberg 1990, pp. 438-439, §888c. The use of the *style coupé* in late eighteenth-century Sweden is discussed in Engdahl 1986, pp. 120-121.
[12] On Lidner's innovative use of the 'poetic I' in Swedish literary Sentimentalism, see Engdahl 1986, p. 120.
[13] "En enda rad, som är mägtig att prässa tårar, betyder oändeligen mer, än alla reglor i Aristoteles. Till Schol-Mästare blifve den för evigt dömd, som väger ord, då han har tilfälle, at gråta!"; Lidner 1937, p. 283. The quotation is from the preface to Lidner's libretto of the opera *Medea* (1784).

between the poet and the reader. Lidner's words are addressed only to those who share his emotional disposition, that is to say, those who have also embraced the ideas of Sentimentalism: 'I write, fuelled by emotions, only for those who have the heart to feel what I feel.'[14] A leading spokesman for the Sentimental style, Lidner rejected the teachings of rhetoric and poetics, and considered poetry as a direct transfer of strong emotions to sentimentally attuned readers.

Furthermore, the reference to Aristotle and the ill-fated schoolmaster can be seen as a reaction to Kellgren's brand of classicizing critique.[15] According to Lidner, anyone who approached and criticized his work from an intellectual, aesthetic point of view automatically disqualified himself as a reader. Rather, the reader was supposed to be open and receptive to the emotions that were mediated through the text and dramatized through the affected 'poetic I'.

Sentimentalism and Critique

One group of poets that particularly appreciated this anti-classicizing and pro-emotional stance were the writers of occasional poetry. As can be seen in a number of funeral poems published in Swedish newspapers from the end of

[14] "Jag skrifwer af känslor eldad, för dem endast, som äga hjertan, at känna det samma, som jag." The quotation is from Lidner's reply – published in *Tryckfriheten den Wälsignade* on 22 January, 1784, and entitled "Til den Christliga Witterhets-Älskaren" ('To the Christian Man of Letters') – to critique of his poem "Grefwinnan Spastaras död".

[15] Engdahl 1988, pp. 165-172, points out that, to Lidner's contemporaries, "Grefwinnan Spastaras död" was a revolt against classicizing, prescriptive poetics. Kellgren did not take part in the debate that ensued after the publication of the poem. However, in a private letter to his friend Nils von Rosenstein, Kellgren claimed that Lidner's poem lacked both structure of thought and good taste, and that the author had mistaken vertigo for imagination, convulsions for sentiments, and big words for big thoughts; see Kellgren 1922-1923, pp. 128-129.

1783 and onwards, Sentimental poetics – as exemplified in Lidner's "Grefwinnan Spastaras död" – provided the poets with a means of asserting themselves and refuting the criticism they had recently been exposed to.

In the introductory part of these poems, the 'poetic I' is frequently presented as having difficulties controlling his feelings, and in several cases this expression of emotion is combined with an outspoken renouncement of all aesthetic pretence.[16] A salient example of such a grieving 'poetic I' is found in the first stanza of an anonymous poem written upon the death of Anna Maria Swedera and printed in *Götheborgska Nyheter* ('Gothenburg News') on 14 August 1784:

> Hwad känsla i min Själ! hwad swall uti min blod!
> Nej tysta sorg bryt ut, bryt ut i strida tårar!
> Ack hwad det wällust är at uti tårars flod
> Få gjuta ut det qwal, som öma hjertat sårar!

[What emotion in my soul! What rushing of my blood!/ No, mute grief, break out, break out into heavy tears!/ Alas, what release it is to shed, in the flood of tears,/ the misery that hurts the tender heart!]

The emphasis in the poem on the shedding of tears reflects the extent of the loss that has befallen the narrator. Moreover, the expression of grief is lent a therapeutic function as an outlet for both physical (the rushing blood) and emotional (the stricken soul) pressure, which is so redeeming that it openly evokes sensations of release. By presenting the emotional outbursts

[16] As shown in Ekman 2004, pp. 74-79, a 'poetic I', expressing the author's personal feelings of loss and grief, may also be found in funeral poems written prior to 1783, but then the 'poetic I' took the role of a close relative of the deceased and in the address did not dramatize the expression of emotions in the tearful, Sentimental fashion. See also Ekman 2002 for a discussion of the different ways of expressing feelings of loss and grief in a suite of poems published in the Gothenburg press in the 1770s.

through a 'poetic I' and by letting this personally engaged narrator didactically point out the wholesome effect of crying on those who mourn, the author aims to touch the feelings of the reader, inviting her or him to participate in the grieving process.

The very writing of Sentimental funeral poetry is sometimes described in the texts by the 'poetic I' as the equivalent of the tears that are shed over the deceased. Just as crying brings comfort to the mourner, so the poem represents a way for the writer to overcome his grief. This parallel is succinctly expressed in an anonymous poem of 1784, upon the death of the Royal Chaplain Gustaf Rosén: 'You men of learning share out your praise, whereas I share out my tears!'[17] The meta-poetical comment is clear, but the verse can also be read as a disavowal of the hyperbolic panegyrics that had been the object of many an ironical comment from the critic Kellgren in the previous years. Thus, the description of the learned men's endeavours to extol the intellectual, social, and religious achievements of the deceased underscore, through contrast, the anonymous poet's focus on tears and mourning.

Sentimentalism and Friendship

Whereas the mentioning of grief and tears in Swedish funeral poems of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries represented the public mourning at a national, regional, or even local level,[18] the tears of the late eighteenth-century 'poetic I' represent the author's *personal* grief. The more grief and the more tears, the greater the author's sensibility and the closer the friendship between the author and the deceased.

[17] "I lärde strön beröm: men jag strör mina tårar!". The poem consists of a single stanza, published in *Stockholms Posten* on 6 November 1784.
[18] On the representative function of late seventeenth-century Swedish funeral poetry, see Hansson 1975, p. 75.

The majority of those mourned in the Sentimental funeral poems belonged to the bourgeoisie, more specifically to the increasing number of civil and military servants. Since true friendship was presumed to build on equality of class and education,[19] we may infer that the poets – including those whose poems were published anonymously or only signed with the author's initials – belonged to the same middle-class circles as their addressees.[20]

Literary Sentimentalism was linked closely to what the Swedish historian of literature Martin Lamm termed a 'cult of friendship', in which the relationship between the friends was often described in a near-erotic fashion.[21] This is clearly exemplified by a funeral poem – signed "L" and published in *Stockholms Posten* on 5 April 1784[22] – which features a 'poetic I' who appears even more overwhelmed by grief than the narrator in the poem mourning Anna Maria Swedera, discussed above. The emotion could very well have been that of a grieving spouse, were it not for the telling address 'My friend!'. In this poem, written upon the death of the nobleman, Samuel Sandels, the distraught narrator is presented as a close friend of the deceased:

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[19] On friendship as a topic in eighteenth-century Swedish literature, see Lamm 1918, pp. 359-387.

[20] By contrast, the poems published in Swedish newspapers in the 1770s were mainly addressed to the gentry and written by authors belonging to a lower social stratum than the addressee; cf. Ekman 2004, pp. 215-218.

[21] For the 'cult of friendship', see Lamm 1918, pp. 373-377; cf. also note 19 above. The critic Kellgren was no stranger to expressing his feelings towards friends in this near-erotic fashion, as appears from the final lines of a private letter to Abraham Niclas Clewberg: "Ach Clewberg, att jag hade dig i min famn och finge vattna dig med mina tårar!/[…] /Farväl min ömma vän; Älska mig, om det är möjeligt, så mycket som du är älskad af din JHK." ['Alas, Clewberg, would that I held you in my arms and could water you with my tears! /[…] /Farewell my tender friend; love me, if possible, as much as you are loved by your JHK']; Kellgren 1922-1923, p. 70.

[22] Hanson 1953, p. 99, suggests that the poet may have been Joakim Vilhelm Lilliestråle, and shows that a separate version of the poem was printed on 2 April 1784, the day before the funeral and three days before its publication in *Stockholms Posten*.

Hwad sorgepost! – – Mit hjerta häpnar –
Min Wän! – – den nyß jag slöt uti min famn –
Är nu ej mer! – – Hwad? – blott et älskadt namn!
Mot detta slag mit mod sig fåfängt wäpnar.

O mänskjolif! – hur uselt jag dig finner!
Et lustsken, som förgår – en bläddra hastigt tryckt!
En skuten skäktas fart – den snälla swalans flygt
Uti bestånd dig öfwerwinner! – –

Är då förjäfwes alt? – at kunskaps fält bewandra,
At gå från högd til högd af Snillets fackla ledd:
At, hugfull, driftig, snäll – bli mogen, bli beredd
Til Fosterlandets tjenst, til hjelp och stöd för andra?

[What grievous news! … My heart gasps …/ My friend! … whom I held just now in my arms … / is no more! … What? … only a beloved name!/ Against this blow my courage takes up arms in vain.// O human life … how miserable I find you!/ A passing mirage … a blister swiftly squeezed!/ The speed of a crossbow bolt … the flight of the swift swallow/ vanquish you with their persistence! … // Is then everything in vain? … to wander the fields of knowledge,/ going from height to height following the torch of genius;/ full of intent, energetic, swift … becoming mature, becoming prepared/ to serve the fatherland, in order to help and support others?]

The beginning of the poem dramatizes the grief that has struck the ‘poetic I’ to such a degree that it is impossible for him to present a traditionally formulated introduction. In the first stanza, which focuses on his feelings and on the monumental proportions of his loss, the narrator can neither think nor speak clearly: he stops up over and over again, and interrupts himself with questions and exclamations. The second stanza, on the short span of human life, is characterized by the same – emotionally fraught – mode of narration. Finally, in the third stanza, which deals with the topos of *vanitas*, the discourse becomes coherent.

Sentimentalism and Feeling Hearts

Another novel element to be found in many funeral poems published in newspapers from the 1780s and thereafter, is the explicit repudiation of all poetical aims and presumptions.[23] Several poems exemplify how this topos of modesty, which was yet another means of forestalling criticism, could be combined with the introduction of a Sentimental and emotionally expressive 'poetic I'. In these poems, the narrator explicitly states that his text is not aimed at the reader's intellect and therefore not suited for critical scrutiny from an aesthetic point of view; on the contrary, it is meant as an expression of the poet's personal and intimate feelings. The poem is aimed at a reader possessing the same emotional disposition as the poet, so the 'poetic I' argues, in accordance with the Sentimental poetics of Lidner, which I have discussed earlier in this article.

It clearly cannot be a coincidence that these meta-poetical comments appear in the poems written in the aftermath of Kellgren's critique of bad poets and feeble occasional poetry in *Stockholms Posten* in the period 1778-1783. The risk of being exposed to critique and ridicule was a real threat, not to be taken lightly. The best way of avoiding it seems to have been for the writer of occasional poetry to make a point of her or his lack of poetical ambition. This strategy is clearly illustrated by the first stanza of an anonymous poem published in *Stockholms Posten* on 13 April 1784:[24]

[23] Examples of these poems are found in *Stockholms Posten*, 7 April, 13 April, 28 May 1784, and 14 February 1788; in *Götheborgska Nyheter* ('Gothenburg News'), 22 November 1788 and 22 December 1792; in *Götheborgs Allehanda* ('Gothenburg Miscellanea'), 28 October 1788; and in the Stockholm paper *Dagligt Allehanda* ('The Daily Miscellanea'), 7 March 1792.

[24] The poem was published with the title "Vid Öfverste Lieutenantens och Riddarens Högwälborne Grefvens Herr CARL GUSTAF MÖRNERS Graf" ('At the grave of Lieutenant-Colonel, Knight and honorable Count Carl Gustaf Mörner').

I hjertan, I som känslor hafven,
At sörja när en dygdig dör,
I veten sjelfve bäst, hvarför
Cypresser strös på denna grafven.
Blott förd af vänskaps öma bud,
Jag teknar den förlust mig sårar.
Ho kan förtryta mina tårar,
Hvem lastar mina klago-ljud?

[You hearts, you who have feelings/ and mourn when a man of virtue dies,/ you yourselves know why/ cypresses are spread upon this grave./ Guided only by the tender command of friendship,/ I sketch the loss that hurts me./ Who can be offended by my tears,/ who can disapprove of my lament?]

The 'poetic I' directly addresses the heart – not the intellect or good taste – of his readers, that is, the select few who are able to feel what the poet feels and therefore understand the rationale behind the poem. They will be able to testify that it was written with the sole purpose of reflecting and expressing the poet's personal grief and the loss caused by the death of a dear friend. The answer to the question that concludes the stanza is clearly 'nobody', for no human being with a 'feeling heart' (cf. 'You hearts, you who have feelings') can deny the poet the right to mourn a deceased friend, even if his lament is presented in an unorthodox and modest form.

Sentimentalism and Rhetoric

Several of the funeral poems published in the newspapers in the 1780s and 1790s thus contain expressions of grief dramatized, in line with Lidner's Sentimental poetics, by an emotional 'poetic I'. Furthermore, some of these poems exemplify and thematise Sentimental ideas on how to mediate feelings through the written word. These novel features generally appear in the first part of the poems, whereas the second part of the poems, which focuses on the deceased, tends to be composed as prescribed in the rhetorical textbooks,

that is, first and foremost, divided into the three sections of laudation, lamentation, and consolation.[25] Even in the traditional sections of the poems, however, we can point out minor changes that can be explained both with reference to the introduction of the Sentimental style and to the critique presented in *Stockholms Posten* and targeting the hyperbolic praise contained in inferior occasional poetry. Thus, in the funeral poems that subscribe to Sentimental poetics there is very little focus on the deceased person's birth, breeding, and success in society. On the contrary, right from the beginning of these poems the 'poetic I' underlines that his relationship to the deceased was based on friendship, and the laudation of the deceased accordingly focuses on her or his qualities as a friend.[26]

This change of practice clearly did not agree with the rhetorical prescriptions that had hitherto guided the writing of occasional poetry. Thus, whereas traditional funeral poetry focused on praising the deceased in terms of her or his birthright and social position, the new, Sentimental, funeral poetry focused on the private and intimate sphere. Moreover, in the poems written in accordance with Sentimental poetics, the focus is placed on the 'poetic I' taking an active part in the mourners' grief – in fact, in a few of the poems the 'poetic I' does all the crying. By contrast, in many of the funeral poems from the 1770s, the narrator did not express his own grief, but instead described the mourning of the close relatives, who were standing by the grave, crying.[27]

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[25] On the composition of late seventeenth-century Swedish funeral poetry in accordance with the prescriptions found in rhetorical and poetical textbooks, see Hansson 1975, pp. 56-75; and Johanson (Lucidor) 1997, pp. 22-24.

[26] For a discussion of the *laudatio* section in Swedish funeral poetry, see Ekman 2004, pp. 43-49.

[27] This way of reporting from the funeral, using the technique of *evidentia*, clearly suited the newspaper medium well; cf. Ekman 2004, pp. 53-55 and 127.

Despite the Sentimentalists' alleged breach with the teachings of rhetoric, it is obvious that their method of constructing the emotionally overwhelmed 'poetic I' as a means of communicating their personal feelings of grief to the readers of their poems, was not completely new. Thus, contrary to his own claims, in underlining the importance of a mutual understanding between writer and reader, Lidner to a certain extent appropriates the conventional rhetorical wisdom that persuasion is best acquired through affective argumentation, that is, based on the rhetorical principles of *ethos* and *pathos*.[28] Furthermore, the variety of tropes and figures used to influence the audience by mediating feelings of anger, despair, or sorrow were well known from the handbooks of classical rhetoric.

In the prescriptions for the funeral speech that are found in the second of the two Greek epideictic treatises (from the second or third century AD) attributed to Menander Rhetor, exclamations, rhetorical questions, and apostrophes are presented as efficient ways to emphasize feelings, reinforce lamentation, and move the audience towards grief.[29] Menander Rhetor's treatises strongly influenced the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century textbooks on poetics and rhetoric written by, among others, Julius Caesar Scaliger, Johannes Pontanus, and Gerhardus Johannes Vossius, which remained popular in Sweden throughout the eighteenth century.[30] Thus, in his brief seventeenth-century primer, *Elementa rhetorica*, Vossius recommends the

[28] As pointed out in Cullhed 2002, pp. 84-85 and 94, Lidner's ideas on how to affect the reader are similar to those proposed in Horace's first-century *Ars poetica* and in eighteenth-century French poetics.
[29] See Menander Rhetor 1981, pp. 173-177 and 204-205.
[30] On the influence of Menander Rhetor's epideictic treatises on Renaissance rhetoric and poetics, see Harsting 1995 and 2002. Vossius's *Elementa rhetorica* was used in the schools in Sweden from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century; cf. Vossius 1990, pp. 5-6. On the importance of Scaliger's and Pontanus's treatises at the Swedish universities in the seventeenth century, see Ström 1994, pp. 53-54.

use of such figures as exclamation, personification, and apostrophe in the composition of texts in the grand style, such as funeral speeches.[31]

There is, however, a significant difference between the teachings of the classicizing rhetoricians, on the one hand, and the ideas of the Sentimentalists, on the other. The former describe how the composition of a text requires structure and planning as a means of achieving an overall convincing effect.[32] By contrast, the Sentimental writers of late eighteenth-century Sweden did not recognize the persuasive power of rhetoric. As appears from their theoretical considerations and literary practice, Lidner and his fellow poets regarded texts such as funeral poems as the products of emotional eruptions and as a means of mediating the poet's 'pure feeling' to the equally feeling heart of the reader.[33] By discarding the conventions of school rhetoric and employing the technique of a Sentimental 'poetic I', the late eighteenth-century occasional poets endeavoured to adapt to contemporary literary ideals and, at the same time, prolong the tradition of funeral poetry.

[31] See Vossius 1990, p. 35. On Vossius's recommendations regarding the apostrophe, see also Tua Korhonen's contribution to the present volume.
[32] On this instrumental attitude towards emotions, see Stone 1967, p. 64; and Vickers 1988, p. 79.
[33] This 'anti-rhetorical' attitude is summed up in Stone 1967, pp. 71-72: "The writer's 'passion' […] is expressed not through its effects but through its cause".

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