Łukasz Cybulski / Kristina Rutkovska (eds.)

Beyond Devotion

Religious and Literary Communities in the 16th and 17th Century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth



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Texts and Contexts

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

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Introduction

The collaboration of authors contributing to this volume began centuries after the disintegration of the union of the Polish Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). Just as *Res Publica Utriusque Nationis* – the Commonwealth of Both Nations – was in its day a unique socio-political and cultural phenomenon, so is, we could say – *toutes proportions gardées* – this meeting of scholars today from the modern nations to explore together their shared heritage. A bold claim to start with, perhaps, but the uniqueness of such a collaboration exempts us to some extent from the obligation of modesty.

What makes this endeavour of ours important is not its scope – quite narrow, if one takes into account the literary culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in its vibrant totality – but the will to overcome the frontiers and strains of the modern world that push us towards exploring separateness instead of the realities of deep mutual interdependency. To achieve this end, it was crucial to focus on what is felt to be at the heart of that culture and, most importantly, literature. Religion being one of the sources of aesthetic inspirations, religious writings of that time were thus part of the sphere of private devotion, of expressing personal and communal identity and tastes, but also of public statements. Religious literature therefore served as a bond between the Commonwealth's diverse inhabitants. But even if described in such terms, it was not a homogeneous monolith. Parallel to the unifying trends there were centrifugal tendencies creating internal tensions between matters private and public, local and global, religious and secular, literary and utilitarian, and so forth. Consequently, in defining the thematic scope of this volume it seemed necessary to broaden our investigations beyond purely religious and devotional matters and include other domains as well.

The array of subjects that appear vital to us, and still call for further exploration, is vast: it includes manuscript and textual studies, studies on translations and adaptations of works of various status and origin as well as their contribution to shaping the national languages, and diversity of topics and ways of writing about them. The present volume stems from those interests. It is dedicated to secular and religious writings of secular authors as well as those belonging to the clergy and religious orders. Our main interest lay in exploring the different genres of early modern Polish and Lithuanian sermons and novels, and in tracing this heritage to its social and literary context through the works' material presence in manuscript form and in print. Other papers in this volume have looked into the origins of vernacular translations of the Holy Scriptures and the controversies surrounding them, as well as into the written testimonies of religious devotion and conversions.

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The aim has been not only to confront different kinds of texts and experiences, but to situate this heritage in its social and confessional context.

In face of such diversity, this volume contains detailed research papers on selected issues rather than a detached synthesis of knowledge on religious literature as such. Recently, Jakub Niedźwiedź proposed the term 'multiscripturality' for describing the complex textual culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, thus stressing the number of complexities that still demand our attention. As editors of this volume, we believe that it brings us closer to achieving this goal in the future.

Kristina Rutkovska, Łukasz Cybulski
Vilnius – Warsaw, 2021

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Mirosława Hanusiewicz-Lavallee (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin)

Denominations and Poetics. Confessional Profiles of Polish Renaissance and Baroque Religious Poetry

In his widely read work *Icon animorum* (1614) the famous Scottish writer John Barclay wrote about Poles:

> They are wedded strangely to their own fancies; nor do they take to themselves a greater licentiousness in manners and uncivil conversation than in opinions of religion and heavenly matters, of which every man without any fear will both think and speak as himself listeth. […] From hence it is that their minds at this day are divided into so many schisms and have among them all the heresies which polluted former times (Barclay: 2003, 187).

This image of citizens of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, engrossed in numerous theological disputations and discussions, although somewhat exaggerated, was not unfounded. The coexistence of religions and denominations was characteristic of the pre-Reformation heritage of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Both countries, united by a personal union at the end of the fourteenth century (which led to the full political union creating the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569), were inhabited by Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians, Armenian Monophysites, Jews, Muslims and Karaites. From the beginning of the 1530s, Reformation ideas began to seep into Poland-Lithuania. The nobility mainly leaned towards Calvinism, from which the radical and dynamic Minor Reformed Church of Polish Brethren (the Arians, Antitrinitarians) emerged in the mid-1560s, whereas Lutheranism exerted the strongest impact on burghers in Royal Prussia and Greater Poland, where the Unity of Czech Brethren also appeared in 1548. In Ruthenia, both in the part belonging to the Crown and the other in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Orthodox Christianity traditionally held the dominant position, yet Calvinism also won significant support there in the second half of the sixteenth century. The Union of Brest (1596), by which some of the Ruthenian Orthodox bishops – while maintaining the Byzantine rite – recognized the authority of the Pope and Catholic dogmas, dramatically complicated the religious situation.

Although religious pluralism as such was by no means an exception in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, it should be emphasized that the Polish-Lithuanian experience differed from others by long-lasting traditions of peaceful coexistence of religions, as well as by the weakness of any uniformist claims, which

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started gaining some strength in the second half of the seventeenth century. The statute of general toleration, known as the Warsaw Confederation (1573), though frequently violated by competing denominations, became a permanent element of the political order of the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania, confirmed by successive rulers (Kłoczowski: 2000, 90–96; Ó hAnnracháin: 2015, 75–78).

Relatively liberal attitudes until the end of the sixteenth century and the evenly balanced coexistence of several denominations created a situation in which none of the congregations had to resort to clandestine forms of literary expression. Church censorship – both Catholic and Protestant – was rather a pastoral recommendation, without any significant practical consequences (Buchwald-Pelcowa: 1997, 238). Those writing for their fellow believers usually collaborated with specific printing houses, which benefited from the support of powerful patrons (e.g. the Calvinist press in Brest, patronized by the Radziwiłł family; the Orthodox publishing house in Ostrog, founded by Konstanty Wasyl Ostrogski; publishers working for the Czech Brethren in Leszno and supported by the Leszczyński family; the printing house in Łosk, producing Anti-Trinitarian books and operating under the patronage of Jan Kiszka, etc.). However, it used to happen sometimes that business motives prompted dissident printers to publish Catholic works (Kawecka-Gryczowa: 1974). The inter-confession boundaries were insignificant, especially with regard to poetry; its possible denominational characteristics usually escaped the watchful eye of the censor.

Religious poetry, by its very nature, "mediates between public and private expression of belief" (Cummings: 2002, 286), and vernacular poetry, due to its persuasive and community-building force, was an important tool in shaping religious identities in the times of the great Christian reforms. It served the purpose of religious teaching, though the doctrine was not always articulated directly; a theologically motivated aesthetic ideal was no less important.

The purpose of this essay is to examine how and to what extent the features of different confessional identities contributed, in the blossoming Polish vernacular religious poetry of the Renaissance and Baroque, to the diversity of its immanent poetics, and how they determined distinct stylistic characteristics and attitudes towards literary tradition. I will focus exclusively on poetry written in Polish, although of course members of Christian Churches operating in the Commonwealth used many languages in their literary works: Latin, German, Church Slavonic, Lithuanian, and Ruthenian. Nevertheless, the dynamics of a historico-literary process is always a correlate of a given linguistic tradition.

In religious poetry written by Polish Protestants, stylistic and formal differences between particular creeds appeared to be irrelevant, therefore I am going to address their poetry as a whole. It should also be remembered that unification tendencies amongst Polish Protestants were very strong (excluding only the Polish Brethren), and were expressed, among others, in the Sandomierz Agreement (1570), during the

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synod in Leszno (1645), which led to the actual unification of the Czech Brethren and the Calvinists, or in the initiative of *Colloquium charitativum* (1645). These efforts to unite Protestant creeds established conditions conducive to certain textual community, which is clearly visible in the repertoire of hymns. Therefore, one should certainly speak about Protestant rather than Lutheran or Calvinist literary aesthetics in consideration of the works of Polish writers representing Reformed creeds.

The time scope of the analysis presented here will mark, on the one hand, the mid-sixteenth century as a period of differentiation of confessions, stimulated by the impact of Reformation ideas, and on the other, the second half of the seventeenth century, when Polish Protestantism fell deeply into regression. The most important Polish-Ruthenian Orthodox intellectuals left Poland-Lithuania, and "belated Catholic confessionalization" became the most significant cultural characteristic of the Commonwealth (Kriegseisen: 2010, 533–660).

1.

When Protestant Reformation ideas began to reach Poland, the tradition of religious poetry in Polish was rather modest and depended mostly on the repertoire of melic chants. Although the oldest vernacular texts, representing various genres of liturgical poetry, date back to the fourteenth century, it was the Franciscan Observants' missionary activity, initiated around the 1450s, that contributed to a significant increase in the number of religious hymns in Polish in the following decades. The poems combined catechetic functions with lyrical expression, served the purpose of strengthening bonds in the ecclesiastic community and were linked to liturgical and paraliturgical forms of devotion.

The use of vernacular languages as a means of religious expression was at the center of controversy between Protestant Reformers and defenders of the existing Church order. The main dispute concerned the use of the vernacular in liturgy and in theological writings, yet it also had consequences for poetry. The Protestant promotion of native languages is, in fact, a correlate of the Gospel idea, according to which the "babes" who had been deprived of their voice and language, were called by Christ himself to possess the truths hidden from "wise and prudent" men full of worldly pride (Matt 11:25). To reject the wisdom of this world, the wisdom of scholars (and theologians), to become unschooled in order to possess true wisdom, to remember that the apostles "were unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13) – this was an important axiological thread in the Protestant teaching. *Pieśń nowa, w której jest dziękowanie Panu Bogu wszechmogącemu, że malućkim a prostakom raczył objawić tajemnice Królestwa swojego* [A New Song of Thanks to Almighty God, Who Revealed the Secrets of His Kingdom to Babes and the Unlearned] (1556),

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whose author – according to the testimony of Stanisław Lubieniecki – was the first Polish poetess, Zofia Oleśnicka, echoes the words of Mary's canticle *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46–55) and praises the Lord who "hid the secrets of the eternal Kingdom" from philosophers and "proud sages", but "dziatki maluchne nas raczył powołać, / A nieprzebrane skarby łaski swej okazać" [deigned to call us, the little babes / And showed us the treasures of His grace] (Oleśnicka: 1556, Aiij v.).

The ideal of simplicity is usually commended, as opposed to what is learned, courtly, or decorative. Jakub Lubelczyk, a Calvinist and the author of the first metrical Psalter in Polish (*Psałterz Dawida* [David's Psalter], 1558), the volume expanded with a collection of canticles and "songs", emphasizes in his preface that readers should not expect any "courtly things" in his work, because everyone is called to praise the Lord "in the simplicity of his spirit" (Lubelczyk: 2010, 69). Erazm Otwinowski, an Anti-Trinitarian poet, while recommending his *Przypowieści Pana naszego Jezusa* [Parables of Our Lord Jesus] (1599), proposes the opposition of hypocritical "sophists", unable to understand God's parables, and common people who have intuitive knowledge of the truth: "Co z tych podobieństw Jego prostak pojmie snadnie, / a chytre sylogizmy sam sofista zgadnie" (Otwinowski: 1999, 113) [While a simple man will understand His [Jesus's] parables easily, / only a sophist will guess cunning syllogisms]. Aesthetic simplicity reveals moral and theological truth and has clear religious connotations, ornamentation and complexity being attributed to religious opponents and openly disavowed (Meller: 2004, 162–184). Prejudice against rhetorical embellishment is a correlate of the popular Protestant belief that idolatry is the most serious sin of the 'papists' and the root of all evil. The aesthetic opposition results from the theological condemnation of Catholic religious culture, presumed to be overburdened with unnecessary and illusive embellishment, which, moreover, masks moral rot (Shell: 1999, 23–56).

In the Orthodox Church, the liturgical language was Church Slavonic, which – like Latin in the Western Church – from the mid-sixteenth century was in opposition to the vernacular as a proposed medium for the expression of sacred matters, including religious poetry. However, in this context the vernacular language did not mean Polish. Orthodox Christians living in Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were mostly Ruthenians, and therefore it was the Middle Ruthenian language, or so-called 'prosta mova' [simple speech], which stood in opposition to Church Slavonic, commended by its most extreme defenders, such as, for example, Ivan of Vishnia, as a language particularly beloved by God (Chynczewska-Hennel: 2017, 67; Wiemer: 2003, 111; Moser: 2017, 121–122). Amongst the Orthodox, the choice of Middle Ruthenian became an equivalent of the Protestant strategy aimed at entrusting religious discourse to 'commoners'. In fact, Orthodox religious poetry written in Polish was not to develop until the seventeenth century, after several decades of ardent disputes and religious polemics,

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in which Ruthenian writers adapted Polish to the needs of their own religious discourse (Romanowski: 2018, 157–192).

2.

Protestant hymns, so often created by pastors, were part of the same universe of texts in which printed versions of vernacular Bibles, sermons and pamphlets circulated (Dyrness: 2019, 84–85), and thus they were entangled in the Protestant understanding of the role of preaching and doctrine transmission. In fact, they constituted a part of this process.

Philip Melanchthon, in his treatise *De officiis concionatoris* (1529), which was highly valued and well known in Poland-Lithuania, added and discussed a new kind (*genus*) of rhetorical presentation, especially designed for effective church teachings, the *genus didascalicum*. Preparing a sermon required identifying the thesis, its reference to a specific point of the catechism, the use of previously collected *loci*, and applying the thesis to the listeners' existential experience. Preaching was meant to combine teaching with admonition (Kolb: 2016, 248). This was due to a certain understanding of Biblical rhetoric, which – as it was assumed – does not rely on pure persuasion, but gives the word a practical dimension, changing the life of the recipient and prompting him to act (Millet: 1992, 195–250). Similarly, Calvin, who applied Cicero's three offices of the orator (*docere – conciliare – movere*) to the Bible, indicated that the Divine Word teaches, convinces, and attracts the reader with the power of the Holy Spirit. He believed that the Scripture employs rhetorical figures, such as irony, hyperbole, personification, which do not serve, in his opinion, the purpose of embellishment, but rather remain subordinated to the principle of effectiveness and Biblical energy (Dyrness: 2019, 94–95). Decorative elocution had no place in Calvin's sacred rhetoric (Millet: 1992, 292–349).

Sixteenth-century Polish Protestant hymns seem to follow similar rhetorical principles. They reflect catechetic and didactic intentions, and clearly many of them served as a means to explicate and memorize the basic prayers or principles of religious doctrine. And thus, for example, in *Oratio Dominica* from the Lutheran hymn book *Pieśni duchowne a nabożne* [Spiritual and Devotional Hymns] (1547) by Jan Seklucjan, the subsequent petitions of the Lord's Prayer can be found in seventeen stanzas, with interpretations and applications to the everyday experience of the faithful. An explication of the Lord's Prayer is also offered in the Calvinist hymns of Andrzej Trzecieski and Michał Hey-Stawicki, as well as in anonymous works from the manuscript *Kancjonał zamojski* [Zamość Hymn-Book] (1558–1561). In the latter, even the very titles of the hymns inform of the goals of the catechesis, e.g. *Decalogus, to jest Dziesięcioro przykazanie Boże* [Decalogus, i.e. the Ten Commandments of God] or *Przykazanie Boże z tymi błogosławieństwy i przeklęctwy*

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[God's Commandment with Blessings and Curses] (Kacprzak: 2015, 189–195). More specific elements of the doctrine of justification by faith are also introduced:

> Możnie-ć ten Pan swą wielmożność nad nami objawił,
> Przebaczywszy naszę sprośność, że nas k temu sprawił,
> Iż kiedy weń uwierzemy,
> Syny Jego być możemy.
> (Trzecieski: 1558, Aiij v.)
>
> [The Lord revealed His mighty power over us
> By forgiving our filthiness and making us
> Believe in Him
> So we could become His sons]

This is how Andrzej Trzecieski teaches his brothers in *Pieśń nowa o krewkości wielkiej każdego człowieka* [A New Song on the Great Fragility of Every Man] (1558). Amongst the Protestant hymns of the second half of the sixteenth century only metrical psalms or Biblical canticles introduce truly lyrical tones, and only in these cases a lyrical self becomes individualized. Most often, however, the ecclesiastic 'we', the teaching voice of the congregation, resounds in Protestant hymns, while their ostentatious simplicity, renouncing any literary embellishment, is meant to reflect the declared poverty of the Lord's flock.

Against this contrasting background the repertoire of medieval hymns and religious songs in Polish, though not large, seemed quite attractive, as it employed more complex lyrical and narrative forms, subtle images and metaphorical expressions. These old (quite often Franciscan) songs were well rooted in popular piety, and the Protestant Reformers' attitudes towards them were marked with ambivalence. A significant part of this repertoire was contested for doctrinal reasons, including all Marian and hagiographic lyrics. Yet the gesture of renunciation did not target vernacular forms of devotion as such, but rather the Latin rituals and 'idolatric' paraliturgy. The attack was rendered with satire and the grotesque, which can be seen, for example, in the works of the first truly great Calvinist poet, Mikołaj Rej. In his *Figliki* [Little Pranks] collection (1574) he included poems ruthlessly mocking the liturgy and paraliturgy of the 'papists', scornfully laughing at the Catholic mass and celebrations of the Passion (Stępień: 2013, 68–138). The very titles of these epigrams speak for themselves, e.g. *Pies u Bożej Męki jajca pogryzł* [A dog ate eggs at the Lord's Passion], *Co na krzyżu chłopy posrał* [The one who shat on men from the cross].

Nonetheless, not 'novelty' but 'antiquity' was desired to legitimize the truth in religious culture (Gordon: 1996, 1–23), and thus the Polish adaptations of selected

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medieval Latin hymns, as well as those of the old vernacular songs that had positively passed doctrinal censorship, made their way into Protestant hymn books. In the extensive work of Piotr Artomiusz, *Cantional to jest pieśni krześcijańskie ku chwale Boga w Trójcy jedynego* (first edition 1620) [A Hymn Book, that is Christian Songs for the Glory of God in the Trinity], including nearly four hundred hymns, we can also find a number of slightly adapted medieval Polish songs, and even a dozen Latin ones (Fijałkowski: 2000, 138–139). Artomiusz explained this by invoking didactic goals and his respect for the ancient tradition: "łaciński język się tu do końca nie odrzucił, w którym przedniejsze a pospolite (mogę rzec: *sanctam antiquitatem redolentes*) piosneczki się wsadziły, a to dla żaczków i dziatek w języku tym początki jakiekolwiek mających" [The Latin language is not completely rejected here, while the first and the most common (I can say: *sanctam antiquitatem redolentes*) songs in this language have been included, and this is meant to serve students and children beginning their studies in this language] (Artomiusz: 1640,):(iiij r.-v.). However, the intention in Protestant religious culture of promoting national languages encouraged the re-interpretation of this *sancta antiquitas*. Elements of the medieval Church's past that had not been of first importance in their time were now emphasised and brought forward, as for example the Slavonic liturgy of Orthodox Christians, the fifteenth-century Benedictine foundation of the Slavonic rite in the St Cross Church in Kraków, and above all – to use Artomiusz's words – "zwyczaj Kościoła pierwszego chrześcijańskiego, w którym […] każdy w języku swym Pana Boga chwalił" [the custom of the first Christian Church in which (…) everyone praised the Lord in their own language] (Artomiusz: 1640,):(iij r.)[1].

This small mention in Artomiusz's discourse seems to echo the occasional alliance that for some time brought together Protestants and Orthodox Christians in Poland-Lithuania. It happened despite the dramatic doctrinal differences, which in 1576 were emphasized by the Patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah II. In his letter to Lutheran theologians from Tübingen (written as a response to the Greek translation of the Augsburg Confession sent to Constantinople twenty-five years earlier), Jeremiah laid out the points of contention between the two denominations, accusing his adversaries of undervaluing the role of works in the pursuit of salvation, renouncing their reduction of the sacraments, their overly pragmatic approach to the liturgy, and the underestimation of its mystical value. In addition, iconoclastic tendencies amongst the Protestants along with their rejection of the cult of the Virgin Mary and the saints seemed to exclude any possibility of agreement (Michalski: 1993, 99–168).

1 It was founded by Władysław Jagiełło and Queen Jadwiga in 1390. The Slavonic rite in this Benedictine monastery ceased around 1480. The very idea of the foundation probably had to do with mission plans directed at Orthodox Russia. See Kanior: 1994, 23–30.

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Nevertheless, at the end of the sixteenth century, Orthodox Christians in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for some time regarded cooperation with Protestants as a chance to reform their education system and to renew religious culture, as well as to protect their own rights. The main supporter of this project was Prince Konstanty Wasyl Ostrogski, a Ruthenian magnate who gathered at his court in Ostroh a group of Protestant writers, encouraging them to put their pens to the service of the Orthodox Church (Kempa: 2008, 321–341). The interpenetration of both Eastern ideas and Western rhetorical styles is clearly visible in the writings of the most outstanding Orthodox writer of the time, Meletij Smotryc'kyi (who converted to the Uniate Church around 1627), educated at Ostroh, at the Jesuit Vilnius Academy and at German Protestant universities (Frick: 1995). His excellent *Threnos, to jest Lament jedynej ś[więtej] apostolskiej wschodniej Cerkwie z objaśnieniem Dogmat wiary* [Threnos, or the Lament of the Only Holy Apostolic Eastern Church with an Explanation of Dogmas of Faith] (1610), written in lyrical, rhythmic poetic prose in Polish, is a moving complaint of the "ragged and stripped" Mother Church for the wrongfulness of her children who abandoned their mother. The prophetic tone refers to the Byzantine-Ruthenian tradition, yet at the same time seems to have a lot in common with Biblical rhetoric in the interpretation of Melanchthon (Babicz: 2004, 16) and Calvin who made the rhetoric of prophets a model of preaching (Millet: 1992, 293–349). What is more, in the later parts of the work, the sublime tone gives way to the polemical and satirical, with use of anti-Catholic themes of Protestant provenance. Smotryc'kyi also adds a small anthology of his own translations of anti-papal poems, including Petrarch and Battista the Mantuan (Miszalska: 2005, 445–454).

However, the Protestant-Orthodox alliance, treated by the Uniate Christians as a betrayal to the Orthodox Church and true faith, had no chance of succeeding, not only due to deep theological differences, but also on account of the Orthodox culture's ritual forms and the sacred Church Slavonic language. Whereas the intense experience of novelty, despite all reservations, was in fact essential in the Evangelical approach, Orthodoxy relied on the tradition of doctrine and worship, allowing vernacular lowliness only in polemical writings. Adam Hipacy Pociej, defending Greek Catholic positions and one of the main designers of the Brest Union, in the poem *Parenetica jednego do swej Rusi* [Parenetica of One to His Ruthenia], which was attached to his memorial *Poselstwo do papieża rzymskiego Syksta IV w roku 1476* [Deputy to the Roman Pope Sixtus IV in 1476] (1605), urged the Ruthenians to abandon "fraternizing with the Arians" and "overt heretics" against "their own" who had united in an act of brotherly love, which in itself constituted proof of the living presence of God.

For Roman Catholics, defending tradition as a warranty of the doctrinal deposit was also an obvious position. The leading Jesuit writer of the post-Tridentine period, Piotr Skarga, listed "ancient constancy" among the most important *notae Ecclesiae*,

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commending the Roman Church as a refuge of stability and at the same time a reliable alternative to the voluntaristic proposals of the 'faddists' (Skarga: 1577, 17). Catholic antiquity also connoted the liturgy and paraliturgy of the medieval Church, both Latin and vernacular, and therefore the latter became an important issue in interfaith confrontation. Although resolutions of post-Tridentine synods in Poland-Lithuania treated vernacular hymns with some reservation as potential bearers of heterodox and improper content, this caution concerned only performing them in church and during the liturgy. Even then, however, "Catholic and ancient" songs (*cantilenae catholicae et antiquae*) in Polish were allowed and recommended (Bobowski: 1893, 10–17; Korolko: 1977, 22; Michałowska: 2000, 416–417). The promoter of the Tridentine reforms in the Commonwealth, Cardinal Stanisław Hozjusz (Hosius), indicated in his *Confessio fidei catholicae christiana* the need to maintain a uniform Latin liturgy for the whole Church, but emphasised the benefits of the fact that lay people can participate by singing songs in their native language, "ut hac quasi novitate mentes hominum magis etiam excitentur ad spiritualem laeticiam" [so this novelty could stimulate spiritual joy in human minds] (Hosius: 1553, 132). A significant paradox. 'Old', medieval vernacular songs in a new religious and cultural context appear as a 'novelty', which is marked by ambivalence. It inspires, "stimulates spiritual joy", but in this axiological constellation, the arbitrary and individualistic promotion of novelty does not cease to be attributed to the Protestant Reformers, while the Roman Catholics are entrusted to defend the eternally constant space of worship, free from any voluntarism.

Thus, the repertoire of vernacular Catholic hymns developed dynamically in post-Tridentine Poland-Lithuania, though only its 'ancient', time-honored part gained the signature of orthodoxy, whereas the fruits of invention of even the most faithful sons of the Church mostly served private devotion. In comparison to the Protestants, the Catholics definitely printed a smaller number of hymn books. Two of these, however, were quite extensive: the anonymous *Pieśni nabożne na święta uroczyste* [Pious Songs for Religous Celebrations] (1627), published several times, containing more than 140 songs, and *Pieśni katolickie nowo reformowane* [Newly Reformed Catholic Hymns] (1638) by Stanisław Serafin Jagodyński. All these hymn books present an interplay between 'antiquity' and 'novelty' that is characteristic of Catholic identity. When the latter serves as evidence of the writer's and publisher's commitment, the former is a kind of warranty for orthodoxy and a source of stylistic *gravitas*, indicated, above all, by language – the more archaic, the more, paradoxically, commendable, referring to the heritage of undivided Christianity. These are, as a Jesuit Walenty Bartoszewski stated in his preface to *Parthenomelica albo pienia nabożne o Pannie Naświętszej* [Parthenomelica, or Devotional Chants about the Blessed Virgin] (1613), songs "adjusted to the ecclesiastical sense" (Bartoszewski: 2019, 528), which is manifested, *inter alia*, in their close links with the tradition of

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Latin hymns, recognized as the voice of the universal Church and as a stabilizer of doctrinal sense.

In Catholic imaginative poetry, a specific literary program, displaying the tradition of the medieval Church, also had its first manifestations in the post-Tridentine period. Stanisław Grochowski diligently translated breviary hymns and liturgical sequences taken from the recently published Roman Missal (1570). He also composed extensive hagiographic poems, like *Żywot patrona polskiego, św. Stanisława* [Life of the Polish Patron, St Stanislaus], *Św. Cecylia, męczenniczka Chrystusowa* [St Cecilia, Martyr of Christ], and complained about degenerated contemporaneity, when readers demand vernacular translations of the Scripture and postils, convinced that *sola fides* and *sola Scriptura* are the foundation of Christianity: "A my, niestety, wiarą się chlubiemy / A Pismem […]" [And we, unfortunately, take pride in faith / and Scripture]. Thus, the idealised vision of the past embraces the image of ancient Poles whose faith was born *ex auditu* in the course of patriarchal preaching:

> Ta jedna była ich wiary tablica:
> Pacierz a Kredo i Bogarodzica.
>
> Ostatek pleban powiadał u fary;
> Taki był zwyczaj cnych Polaków stary
> (*Na też kazania*, Grochowski: 1607, 587–588).
>
> [This was the only source of their faith:
> Our Father and Credo, and the hymn 'Mother of God'.
> The rest was preached by the priest in the church;
> Those were the old ways of virtuous Poles.]

Strong liturgical inspirations are visible in the works of early Baroque poets, like Piotr Cieklinski, Kasper Miaskowski, and in the works of later authors, like the already mentioned Stanisław Serafin Jagodyński or Józef Bartłomiej Zimorowic, who paraphrased Church hymns and antiphons, especially Marian ones. Grochowski's contemporary, Sebastian Grabowiecki, built a significant part of his elaborate *Rymy duchowne* [Spiritual Rhymes] (1590) on liturgical and sacramental themes (especially the sacrament of penance and the Eucharist), as well as on Church prayers taken from a popular prayer book, *Harfa duchowna* [Spiritual Harp] (1585), written by a Jesuit, Marcin Laterna. The imagination of many Catholic poets was also inspired by rituals, flourishing paraliturgy, and popular services. It was here that the old forms of piety mixed with the new ones. The richness of forms of Marian worship was reflected in numerous poetic series and collections, such as the anonymous *Godzinki o Niepokalanym Poczęciu Najświętszej Maryi Panny* [Book

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of Hours on the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary] (ca. 1616), Jan Białobocki's *Wieniec ozdobny przedziwnej czystości naświętszej Matki Bożej* [Beautiful Wreath of Wondrous Purity of the Holy Mother of God] (1644), Wojciech Waśniowski's *Wielkiego Boga wielkiej Matki ogródek* [The Garden of the Great Mother of the Great God] (1644), but, above all, Wespazjan Kochowski's *Różaniec Naświętszej Panny Maryjej* [The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary] (1668) and *Ogród Panieński* [The Virgin's Garden] (1681) should be mentioned in this context (Nieznanowski: 1989, 45–72; Mazurkiewicz: 2011, 205–207). Pious practices, consisting in compassionate meditation on Christ's suffering and death, and originating in late medieval forms of devotion retracing the Lord's way of the cross in Jerusalem, were set and celebrated in the domestic space of so-called 'calvaries' (e.g. Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Kalwaria Pacławska, Kalwaria Wejherowska, etc.), while gaining popularity in Poland-Lithuania over the seventeenth century (Prejs: 2016, 161–180). Those 'calvaries' had their own poets, such as Abraham Rożniatowski, who wrote the first Polish Passion epic poem, *Pamiątka krwawej ofiary Pana naszego Jezusa Chrystusa* [Memorial of the Bloody Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ] (1610), for the needs of the sanctuary at Kalwaria Zebrzydowska near Cracow. Later Passion poems, including *Chrystus cierpiący* [The Suffering Christ] (1681) by Wespazjan Kochowski and *Rzewnosłodki głos łabęcia umierającego* [The Bitter-Sweet Voice of the Dying Swan] (1665) by Klemens Bolesławiusz, the latter being quite an unexpected Polish adaptation of the poem by the Anglo-Norman thirteenth-century John of Howden, *Philomela dulcisonos canens*, seem to serve both public devotion (the subtitle of Kochowski's piece informs that it was "displayed during Lent"), and individual compassionate meditation. The most prominent representation of the genre was probably *Nowy zaciąg pod chorągiew starą* [New Recruitment to the Old Banner] (1698) by Wacław Potocki, an extensive poem whose dynamics is shaped by the "increasing intensity of pious *compassion*", and involves the tools of allegorical Biblical hermeneutics (Czechowicz: 2019, 272, 280), which attest to the familiarity of this poet, converted from Arianism, with Catholic religious literature and preaching (Kowalczyk: 2017).

Passion devotion, like Marian piety, also inspires, especially in the second half of the seventeenth century and later, extensive lyrical and epigrammatic collections, which, although proposed as a matter of meditation, became at the same time a peculiar display of poetic *ingenium*. The motifs, themes, symbols, metaphors of Biblical, liturgical, and patristic origin, as well as those referring to nature, apocrypha, classical literature, science, become in these works a center of sometimes astonishing conceits, prompting to contemplate the miracles of God's intervention in the world. "Piecu – pojmuj rozumem sens słowa, człowiecze! – / w którym się chleb anielski snadź dla ciebie piecze" [Stove (man, grasp by reason the word's meaning) / in which the angels' bread is baked for you] (*Ogród Panieński* 6, 22) – this is Wespazjan Kochowski's 'witty' image of the Mother of God as *Clibanus intellectualis*

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(Kochowski: 2019, 126). The writers of epigrammatic meditations on the Lord's Passion were no less creative in discovering amazing coincidences, e.g. "Wiedząc, że człek chleb woli, mniej myśli o niebie, / Ty, chcąc mieszkać w człowieku, zamknąłeś się w chlebie" (Lubomirski: 1995, I 269: *Poezje postu świętego* 12) [Knowing that man loves bread, thinks less of heaven, / Longing to live in man, Thou lock'st Thyself in bread; transl. by Jean Ward; Wierzbicka-Trwoga: 2016, 90]; "Za łotry umierając, łotry towarzysze / Ma, od łotrów zabity, i ten łotr, co pisze" (Jabłonowski: 1700, G3 v.) [Dying for villains, He has villains as companions, / Is killed by villains, and the one who writes these words is a villain too].

The sources of such exploration of sacred mysteries – involving conceits and ignoring the requirements of *decorum* – should be sought in the rhetorical education that noble youth received in Jesuit colleges, in their literary exercises, and in the theories of *argutia* taught there from treatises like *De acuto et arguto* (ca. 1627) by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski or *Ars nova argutiarum* (1649) by Jacob Masen. The influence of the Jesuit education model at the *Collegium Kijoviense-Mohileanum*, founded by Peter Mohyla in 1633, inspired similar rhetorical tendencies in the Polish poetry of Orthodox writers associated with this excellent Academy, especially in the works of Lazar Baranowicz, rector of the Kiev College in the years 1650–1552 (Łużny: 1996, 128–140; Radyszewśkyj: 1996, I 145–204; Masluk: 1983, 36, 163). His poems from the volumes of *Lutnia Apollinowa* [Apollo's Lute] (1671), *Księga śmierci albo Żywot Chrystusow* [Book of Death or the Life of Christ] (1676) or *Apollo chrześcijański* [Christian Apollo] (1670), processing hagiographic and meditative tradition, follow a similar stylistic paradigm. They refer to epigrammatic and conceit literature by striving for an enthymematic punch line, and expose paradoxes of God's economy of salvation. Orthodox poetry, even more so than Catholic verse, explored its own liturgical tradition, with the majority of this kind of literature being written in the Church Slavonic language (Kuczyńska: 2003). Among the scarce Polish-language Orthodox liturgical poems, the most prominent achievement seems to be preserved in the manuscript of two juvenile works by Symeon of Polotsk – *Akaphist do Pana naszego Jezusa* [Akaphist to our Lord Jesus] and *Akaphist najświętszej Pannie* [Akaphist to the Holy Virgin] (1648); both these Akaphists reveal the strong influence of Polish Baroque poetics and the Renaissance *Psałterz Dawidów* [David's Psalter] by Jan Kochanowski (Łużny: 1989, 253–260; Marinelli: 1995, 239–278; Kozak: 2004, 7–19).

For doctrinal reasons neither Marian themes (although you may find adaptations of the *Magnificat* in the hymn books, such as the hitherto mentioned poem by Zofia Oleśnicka), nor meditative lachrymal poems commemorating the Passion of Christ appear in Protestant literature. In the model of Passion meditation recommended by Luther, there was no place for shedding tears of love and repentance (c.f. Luke 23:28) and visualising the Savior's suffering; the purpose of meditation was rather to inspire terror over our own sinfulness and bring *metanoia* (Stępień: 2017, 164–200).

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This difference is very clear, especially in the poetry of the Polish Brethren, in which moralistic and didactic tones always dominate over lyrical expression. The anonymous *Pieśń, w której się zamyka napominanie ku cierpliwości w krzyżu* [Song Containing the Admonition to Patience in the Cross] from the hymn book *Psalmy niektóre króla Dawida* [Some of King David's Psalms] (1625) develops meditation on Jesus's suffering in the context of the Sermon on the Mount and Christ's missionary speech from the Gospel by St Matthew. It does not at all put the Lord's suffering 'before the eyes' of the reader as an experience demanding his or her compassion, but rather makes it the starting point for parenetic discourse and a call to patience, humility and bravery. Arian religious poetry is almost invariably didactic, meant to strengthen Biblical knowledge and doctrine (e.g. *Piosnka o Wieczerzy Pańskiej* [A Song about the Lord's Supper] by Samuel Przypkowski from the aforementioned hymn book or *Gadki z Pisma Świętego rytmem pisane* [Riddles from the Holy Scripture in verse] written by Walerian Otwinowski and surviving in a manuscript).

3.

The aspirations of lay people, including lay Catholics, awakened by both the Protestant Reformation and the post-Tridentine renewal, could not be satisfied only by refreshing the old forms of piety, but required new spiritual currents and ways of experiencing faith so that proper religious identity could be shaped in their context, distinguishable both from other Christian denominations and from the heritage of "traditional Christianity" – as John Bossy described it (Bossy: 1985, 1–88). Religious poetry was one of the instruments of stimulating the interiorisation of piety and breaking the 'collective' Catholic identity, which was still recommended by preachers. Since the end of the sixteenth century, Spanish mysticism, gaining popularity in Poland-Lithuania, became an ally to these processes of individualising Catholic piety. The works of Louis of Granada were translated by Polish Jesuits, Stanisław Warszewicki and Jan Wuchaliusz Leopolita, and by a Carmelite, Hieronim Drzewiecki; moreover, Granada's influence is seen in the subtle lyrics of Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński and in Kasper Twardowski's allegorical poems. From the 1620s, Polish translations of the writings of St Teresa of Avila started being published, while translations of the works of St John of the Cross circulated in numerous manuscripts. The literary output of these two Spanish mystics inspired the original, but still insufficiently studied poetry of Polish Carmelite nuns who – like their sisters from Spain, Belgium or France – were composing poems as means of introducing *allegria* into the austerity of convent life (Hanusiewicz: 1999, 99–106). However, it was certainly Ignatian spirituality, with its school of imaginative and affective contemplation, that had the most significant impact on religious culture in Poland-Lithuania. It influenced other schools of spirituality (e.g. Benedictine and

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Carmelite), and above all modeled the piety of lay Catholics, as it was recommended in *Industriae ad curandos animae morbos* (1600) by General Claudio Acquaviva who urged the adapting of Ignatian meditation as a tool for popular evangelisation (Kapuścińska: 2015, 126). This intensity of Jesuit inspiration was of fundamental importance to the development of Catholic poetry in the seventeenth and even eighteenth centuries, both in Poland-Lithuania as well as in the rest of Europe (Martz: 1954). It resulted from the fact that a considerable number of writers and poets originated from or were at least educated by the Society of Jesus, and therefore they used poems to propagate certain models of devotion, but it also stemmed from the attractiveness of Jesuit rhetorical techniques allowing for the conceptualisation of spiritual experiences and facilitated the opening of the gardens of the five senses to godly readers. The Ignatian principle of the Application of Senses in the process of meditation, when employed in literature, prompted the intensification of such attributes of style as *enargeia* and *energeia*, saturating it with pictorial and sensory immediacy, so that the imaginary reality of the text could be 'placed before the eyes' of readers and made accessible to their 'spiritual senses', whether it be the terrifying scene of the Lord's Passion, the picture of hell itself, or a delightful space of mystical meetings with the Beloved.

Emblems played a special role in implementing this program. The works of Jesuit emblem promoters, such as Jan David, started reaching Poland very early; it was only a year after the first edition of David's *Paradisus Sponsi et Sponsae* (1607) that Stanisław Grochowski translated a part of it as *Pięćdziesiąt punktów rozmyślaniu Męki Pana Jezusowej służących* [Fifty Points Serving Meditation on the Passion of the Lord Jesus] (1608). However, the real breakthrough took place thanks to emblematic collections based on the famous engravings of Anton II Wierix *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum* (especially Étienne Luzvic's *Cor Deo devotum* from 1627), *Pia desideria* (1624) by Herman Hugo, and to a lesser extent Otto van Vaen's *Amoris divini emblemata* (1615), which almost immediately gained numerous readers in the Commonwealth. In the second half of the century, *Pia desideria* inspired two vernacular adaptations, one by Mikołaj Mieleszko (1657) and the other by an anonymous author, whose work survived in a Carmelite manuscript (ca. 1662); in the following decades, another two Polish translations were published by Aleksander Teodor Lacki (1674) and Jan Kościesza Żaba (1744). Series of copper engravings *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum* and some illustrations from the Vaenius collection served religious communities, including Carmelite and Norbertine nuns, as the basis for meditation. Existing pictures were gaining new (usually prose) subscriptions as the articulation of a personal dialogue of the soul with God (Grześkowiak: 2018, 169–218).

The emblematic books became an imaginary compendium for Baroque Catholic poetry, serving as "visual *topoi*" (Kroll: 2018, 203), setting both the stage and the main characters of the mystical and lyrical theater. A soul wandering in the

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wilderness or tasting the delights of flowering gardens, a soul flying to the heavens with *Amor Divinus*, resting in the shade of the tree on which he was crucified, breastfed by the Mother of God, were recognisable and sensuous images, derived from emblems, which became the code of Baroque meditative poetry. Despite their provenance, they crossed the borders of confessions.

It should be noted that in Poland-Lithuania emblematics did not influence Protestant literature as much as it did in other European countries; however, there are a few examples of its impact. The Calvinist *Cent emblèmes chrestiens* (1584) by Georgette de Montenay prompted an unknown poet to annotate a copy of the 1584 edition with handwritten poetic Polish subscriptions (Keferstein, Worczulanis: 1967, 518–522; Pelc: 2002, 161–172; Chemperek: 2015, 406). For the needs of the very pious Catholic Duchess Katarzyna Radziwiłłowa, the no less pious Anti-Trinitarian poet, Zbigniew Morsztyn, wrote an excellent series of emblems (*Emblemata*, ca 1679), based on the anonymous French emblematic cycle *Les emblèmes d'amour divin et humain ensemble*, using some subscriptions from *Pia desideria*. The latter collection must have also attracted the interest of other Protestant readers, who provided annotations in several of its preserved copies. In the eighteenth century, *Pia desideria* started gaining popularity amongst Orthodox readers; the adaptation titled *Ifika jeropolitika* was published in 1712 in Kiev, followed by two Russian translations in later decades (Grześkowiak: 2018, 202–203). In addition, emblems played an important role in education at the Kiev-Mohyla Orthodox College. Emblems, coats of arms or *symbola* were used as a starting point in the exercise of writing poems that offered a hermeneutic interpretation of the image (Kroll: 2018, 234). Interest in the mutual relationship of word and image is evident in Baranowicz's religious poems from his volume *Lutnia Apollinowa*. Moralistic and Biblical Polish epigrammatic series by Symeon of Polotsk: *Trojakie prawo, Trzy stany i ich powinności* and *Zaniedbanie duszy dla zbytniego o ciele starania* [Three Laws; Three States and Their Duties; Neglect of the Soul Caused by Excessive Care for the Body], surviving in a manuscript, reveal their emblematic nature in the context of Dutch engravings being the source of their inspiration (Grześkowiak: 2017, 190–216). Another Orthodox poet, Stefan Jaworski, wrote panegyric emblems in Polish that contained numerous sacred references (Kroll: 2018, 206–233).

4.

A belief that the Bible contained poetic parts, which were by no means inferior to the masterpieces of Greco-Roman poets, but also surpassed them in artistic perfection and truth, had been alive in Christianity since the time of Philo of Alexandria (Kugel: 1981, 162–163). In the following centuries, it inspired paraphrases and adaptations aimed at restoring the 'poetic' ontology of those parts, as it seemed to have been

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lost in the process of language transmission. Those literary endeavors, having an ancient tradition (some of them were recalled in re-editions and anthologies in the sixteenth century, such as *Poetarum veterum ecclesiasticorum opera Christiana et operum reliquiae atque fragmenta* by Georg Fabricius, 1562), gained popularity due to Christian humanism, resulting in many Latin and vernacular works of varying artistic quality (Modlińska-Piekarz: 2018, 84). However, the Protestant Reformation introduced a normative perspective to reflection on the literary dimension of the Scripture, presenting it as a paradigm of creativity and a rhetorical model for all religious poetry, which – as Calvin emphasised – should not be contaminated with human invention (Kiefer-Lewalski: 1979, 31–34). This belief led to the formation of specific 'Biblical poetics' in Protestant literature. On the one hand, it encouraged the imitation of genres and of Biblical rhetorical figures as they were interpreted, for example, by Melanchthon in *Institutiones rhetoricae* (1521) or by Matthias Flacius Illyricus in *Clavis scripturae* (1617). On the other hand, it admonished against the decorative dimension of elocution and against allegory (but upheld and even strengthened typological symbolism; Kiefer-Lewalski: 1979, 77–83, 117).

The scripturalism of Protestant religious poetry in Poland-Lithuania, being one of its most characteristic features, had – if seen in the long-term perspective – changing dynamics, and was moving swiftly from the rigorism typical of writers of the second half of the sixteenth century to an increasing imaginary freedom of the Baroque poets. Extremely 'Biblical' works of the early Protestant Reformation poets, which avoided any sophistication of verse or even distinct genre forms, were to serve catechetic and didactic goals, and in the case of metrical psalms or canticles, also community-building and mnemonic purposes. The metrical form of the latter was not meant to reveal their poetic character but to support memorising of the Psalter, which was commended by Luther as the 'little Bible', a compact summary of the whole Scripture and a prayer book for all of life's occasions. The value of those poems (usually songs) relied on their strict dependence on the Scripture, and the faithful were advised that their devotion should not be based "na not wdzięczności abo rytmów składności, abo nawet na ozdobnej polszczyźnie, jako na prostocie a szczyrości serdecznej" [on the charms of notes or elegance of rhythms, or even on ornate Polish language, but on simplicity and truth of the heart] (Rybiński: 1619,)?(VI r.). In religious poetry, literary artistry and free imagination heralded an unacceptable invasion of secular values, obscuring and deforming the Word of God, which was the only proper aesthetic criterion.

Nevertheless, the literary productivity of rigorously treated scripturalism was low. Even when it comes to metrical psalms, Protestant poets in Poland-Lithuania wrote relatively few of them, especially in comparison with other European countries. In the mid-sixteenth century, individual psalms were authored by Jan Seklucjan, Bernard Wojewódka, Andrzej Trzecieski, Mikołaj Rej and Cyprian Bazylik, whereas the Protestant camp as a whole issued only three full versions of a metric Psalter:

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the hitherto mentioned *Psałterz Dawida* (1558) by a Calvinist, Jakub Lubelczyk, *Psalmy Dawidowe z hymnami* [The Psalms of David with Hymns] (1605) written to the melody of the Genevan Psalter by Maciej Rybiński, a senior of the Unity of the Czech Brethren, and *Niektóre psalmy Dawidowe częścią poprawione, częścią znowu przełożone na stare noty* [Some of the Psalms of David partly corrected, partly retranslated in accordance with the old notes] (1614) by a Calvinist, Salomon Rysiński, although the last mentioned collection, as the title indicates, to some extent used older translations (Meller: 2015, 299).

Didactic and mnemonic, as well as exegetic and moralistic goals were, as mentioned above, particularly evident in Biblical poetry written by the Polish Brethren. Such was the purpose behind the previously mentioned *Summariusz wszytkiego Nowego Testamentu* [Summary of the whole New Testament] (1570), written in Polish alexandrine lines by Marcin Czechowic, and *Przypowieści Pana naszego Jezusa Chrystusa* (1599) by Erazm Otwinowski, who made over a hundred New Testament passages into parable-like poems that had features of a Biblical cento (Wilczek: 1994, 106–148). Another example of the radically understood 'Biblical poetics' was provided by Józef Domaniewski, also a member of the Polish Brethren congregation. Domaniewski rather summarised than paraphrased the Book of Proverbs, and in Lubcz published simultaneously two language versions of his work: the Latin *Proverbiorum Salomonis versio poetica* (1623), supplemented with extensive Biblical and theological commentaries, dedicated to voivode Rafał Leszczyński, and the simplified *Przypowieści Solomonowe* [Solomon's Proverbs] (1623) in Polish verse, dedicated to the voivode's wife, Anna.

Erazm Otwinowski dedicated his *Przypowieści Pana naszego Jezusa Chrystusa* to Prince Konstanty Wasyl Ostrogski, and this decision could be perceived as one of many manifestations of the previously mentioned short-lasting cooperation between Protestants and Orthodox Christians, patronised by the prince. The culture context of any encounter of Orthodox religious literature with 'Biblical poetics' was very different than the one in the West; in Ruthenia, "the very idea of 'sacred' and 'divine' books did not yet correspond to the theological idea of the 'Holy Scripture' as a God-inspired set of writings" (Negrov: 2008, 39). Nevertheless, Biblical philology developed dynamically in Orthodox Ruthenia in the sixteenth century (e.g. Ruthenian Biblical translations of Francysk Skaryna, or the Ostroh Bible and the Didactic Gospel in Church Slavonic by Ivan Fyodorov). Moreover, the Holy Bible probably began to perform non-liturgical functions for the first time in Orthodox Church history. The intensity of contacts, especially between the Polish Brethren and the Orthodox believers in Lithuania, influenced the development of Biblical literature in 'prosta mova', as manifested, *inter alia*, in the works of Wasyl Ciapiński and Walenty Niegalewski (Naumow: 2017, 124–133). However, these tendencies did not stir any vivid resonance in the relatively modest corpus of Orthodox religious poetry written in vernacular Polish.

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At the beginning of the seventeenth century, a gradual departure from rigorous scripturalism became evident in Protestant narrative poetry, dealing mainly with plots taken from deuterocanonical books, which, as not belonging to the sacred texts of the Hebrew Old Testament, seemed essentially less 'sensitive' to the brash practices of poets and could be versed more freely. Turned into epic poetry, they were offered primarily as moralistic and parenetic readings, but provided the opportunity for more ambitious literary exercises. For example, a Calvinist writer benefiting from the patronage of Radziwiłł princes, Samuel Dowgird, in his two volumes of Old Testament paraphrases, i.e. *Historyja o Zuzannie i o matce niektórej z siedmią synów od Antyjocha umęczonej* [The Story of Susanna and of the Mother Martyred with Her Seven Sons by Antiochus] (1624) and *Historyja o Józefie do Egiptu zaprzedanym* [The Story of Joseph Sold out to Egypt] (1625), still faithfully follows the Biblical text, but discreetly enriches imagery and elocution, reveals some epic aspirations, and thus goes beyond the paradigm of the duties of a moralist writer (Rusnak: 2015, 47–60).

The literary strategies of previously mentioned Rafał Leszczyński, a Calvinist and protector of the Czech Brethren, were even more interesting. His poem, *Judith*, was largely an adaptation of the famous *La Judit* (1574) by Guillaume Salluste Du Bartas. *La Judit* was the first French and Protestant Biblical epic poem indebted to the Virgilian and Ariostic tradition. It is distinguished by the vividness and abundance of its imagery, by bold transgression of the terse Biblical narrative, and by introducing a deep psychological analysis of the characters, more details of the action, rhetorical decor, numerous digressions (Llewellyn: 2016, 51–74). As the work of a Calvinist poet, *La Judit* obviously appeared as a genuine challenge to the scriptural rigorism dominating in early Polish Protestant literature. As such, Leszczyński's adaptation follows Du Bartas's poem only in the first three cantos, but even in those parts the Polish poet finds it appropriate to weaken the *enargeia* characteristic of the French original, its pictorial content, its sensuous imagery, romantic tensions, naturalistic elements, and digressions (Marczuk: 2015, 265–300). The last two cantos are more or less based on the Biblical narrative itself. The ideal of *sermo humilis* still seems to hold power over the poetics of Polish Protestant writers. Similar trends would be supported in the following decades, including the early Biblical epic by Wacław Potocki, especially his juvenile and unpublished poem (ca. 1650) *Judyta* [Judith].

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, in Polish religious epic, the Protestant type of rhetorically sparing, moralistic discourse focused on reproducing the Biblical plot, started being challenged by the new model – a Biblical epic poem requisitioning classical Virgilian and mythological material for Christian purposes (Houghton: 2019, 239). *Theologia poetica*, the idea that in the sixteenth century found the most distinguished literary expression in the works of Jacopo Sannazaro and Marco Girolamo Vida, sought to reconcile the intellectual heritage

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of Antiquity and Christianity, making the latter the key to understanding the former (Trinkaus: 1970, II 651–652). This belief, moreover, was strengthened and legitimised by the program of the Society of Jesus. Antonio Possevino discussed the recommended forms of alliance between Antiquity and Christianity in *De poesi et pictura ethnica, humana et fabulosa, collata cum vera et sacra* (1593), and Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski, known as the Polish *Horatius Christianus*, claimed in *De perfecta poesi* and in *Dii gentium* that though only a Christian may become a truly great poet, the literary beauty of Antiquity should be perceived as masked theology that required deciphering (Urbański: 2000, 29–37). Its charms reflect the highest truth.

The Polish reception of the master of the Virgilian Biblical epic, Jacopo Sannazaro, was therefore relatively early and quite significant, as attested to by the preserved sixteenth-century inventories of book stores and private libraries, but above all else by a successful adaptation of *De partu Virginis* (1526), published by Grzegorz Czaradzki as *Rytmy o porodzeniu przenaczystszym Bogarodzice Panny Maryjej* [Rhythms on the purest birth of the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary] (1613), and by a preserved fragment of another anonymous (and unpublished) translation from the second half of the seventeenth century (Mazurkiewicz, Buszewicz: 2009, 7–49). Above all, however, the model of 'classicised Christianity' triggered the imagination of Catholic poets, alluring them with epic sensuality and encouraging bold imaginary visions, e.g. like in *Rotuły na narodzenie Syna Bożego* [Poems for the birth of the Son of God] (1612) by Kasper Miaskowski, where Apollo with a retinue of Muses pays homage to the newborn Jesus.

In Polish Baroque Catholic poetry, the tradition of the Latin Virgilian Biblical epic interpenetrated with the literary conquest made by Torquato Tasso's famous heroic poems. His *Gerusalemme liberata*, published in an excellent translation by Piotr Kochanowski as *Gofred abo Jerozolima wyzwolona* (1618), established a highly recommended standard for Polish epic poetry in general. This tradition exerted significant influence on two extensive biblical epic poems ('mesjady'), aiming at retelling the entire history of salvation with Jesus Christ as the central heroic protagonist: Szymon Gawłowski's *Jezus Nazareński, Syn Ojca przedwiecznego wcielony albo Jeruzalem niebieska przezeń wyzwolona* [Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of the Eternal Father, or Heavenly Jerusalem liberated] (1686), and *Świata naprawionego od Jezusa Chrystusa […] historyjej świętej ksiąg dziesięcioro* [Ten Books of the History of the World Repaired by Jesus Christ] (1670) by Walenty Odymalski. Both works allude to Tasso as well as to Marco Girolamo Vida and his *Christias* (1535). The history of Salvation becomes an epic matter, hence carefully shaped *ottava rima*, as well as intertextual and stylistic references to Virgil, Vida (in Odymalski's poem even the initial invocation to the Holy Spirit bears features of a similar invocation in *Christias*), and Tasso. The classical and heroic setting does not eliminate apocryphal inspirations, and together they contribute to building the new epic quality, full of el-

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ements of Baroque sensuous aesthetics (Teusz: 2002, 211–236). The excellent poem *Tobiasz wyzwolony* [Tobit Liberated] (1683) by Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski is another example of a Catholic Biblical epic, modeled not only on Tasso, but also on works by Ariosto, Matteo Boiardo and Giambattista Marino (Brahmer: 1980, 200–202; Prejs: 2004, 165–181). The late Baroque *Daniel prorok* [Daniel, a Prophet] (1699) by Józef Jan Wadowski refers to Tasso's traditions too, although the epic tone is disturbed by extensive moralistic tirades, which would become characteristic of the huge Biblical verse paraphrases of the following century, including the works of Rafał Gurowski and Marcin Kurzeniecki.

5.

The rigors of scripturalism became relaxed much sooner in lyrics, and the strict formula of the metric psalms evolved towards free and original psalmodic lyrical poetry. *Psałterz Dawidów* [David's Psalter] (1579) by Jan Kochanowski, a leading poet of the Polish Renaissance, was a breakthrough in the history of Polish religious lyrics. In his youth, Kochanowski benefited from the patronage of the Lutheran Prince, Albrecht Hohenzollern, then from the support of Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł, a Calvinist, but he himself remained a Catholic to the end of his life (Nowicka-Jeżowa: 2015, 216–274). His poetic Psalter mirrors to some extent the creative conflict that the poet experienced facing the challenges of being faithful to the Scripture and the temptations of imaginative freedom. Following in the footsteps of George Buchanan, Kochanowski interpreted the Psalms as Horatian odes (though written in Polish verse), requiring a variety of metrical schemes, sophisticated forms of stanza, a rationalisation of imagery and enrichment of rhetorical ornaments. However, careful analysis reveals that these tendencies in his work remain in tension with the harshness of the original Biblical diction, which seems to hold power over the poet's imagination.

Buchanan's Horatian psalmody was also imitated by Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński; in his posthumously published volume *Rytmy abo wiersze polskie* [Rythms, or Polish Poems], 1601, four poems are exact translations of the lyrics from *Psalmorum paraphrasis poetica*. However, Sęp, probably inspired by the examples of Italian spiritual Petrarchism, also strived for the poetic re-creation of the psalm in modern genres, as in his *Psalm CXXX paraphrasis* arranged as *canzona*. Sęp was an ardent Catholic, though – according to some scholars – he hypothetically converted from Calvinism (Błoński: 1967, 17–24), and it is mostly in the Catholic confessional space that Polish poetry (predominantly thanks to Kochanowski and Sęp) developed its meditational and psalmodic lyrics, unlimited by the rules of paraphrase and breaking with the medieval pattern of poetic prayer understood as an 'invocation and petition'. The excellent sonnets by Sęp, sparkling with intertextual references to the

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writings of Louis of Granada, employing the rhetoric of paradox and disharmony, building up intriguing elliptic syntax, as well as his original "songs in the shape of psalms" are works in which the Biblical text, still intensely present, is subject to deep internalising and individualising reconstruction. Similar solutions might be noticed in *Rymy duchowne* [Spiritual Rhymes] (1590) by Sebastian Grabowiecki, also a Catholic, strongly influenced by Italian Petrarchists, who in his virtuoso poetic volume (the poet used forty-nine types of stanzas, including sonnets, *terza rima*, *ottava rima*, canzona, and others) on many levels and in a meditative manner processed and rewrote the Biblical text.

In the seventeenth century, the spread of this model of meditative and Biblical lyrics contributed to the blurring of confessional borders in Polish religious poetry in general. It appeared attractive, albeit to a very limited extent, to several Orthodox poets writing in Polish, such as Symeon Polotski (e.g. *Modlitwa w utrapieniu* [Prayer in distress]) or Joannicy Galatowski (e.g. *Pieśń o pokorze*, *Pieśń o śmierci* [A Song on Humility, A Song on Death]), although their lyrics gravitated more towards moralising discourse. Meditative lyrics inspired Protestant poets as well. *Pieśni pokutne* [Penitential Songs] by Olbrycht Karmanowski, an Anti-Trinitarian, differ significantly from the type of utilitarian poetry still dominating in his congregation. Based on Biblical verses and phrases borrowed from popular prayers, Karmanowski's poems take the form of imaginative quasi-psalms with a strongly marked, individualised subject. However, Catholic poets of the day wrote in a similar manner (e.g. Jan Gawiński, Wespazjan Kochowski), some of them even willingly referring to their original poems as 'psalms', although they lack any of the characteristics of a paraphrase.

Nevertheless, in penitential lyrics, which were seemingly quite homogeneous by their reference to the Biblical pattern, the confessional distinctions between Catholic and Protestant poets appeared on a different level. Catholic lyrical 'penitences', 'laments', or penitential 'elegies' – as the poets used to call them – usually have, unlike the Protestant poems of this kind, a structure correlated with sacramental confession and penance. These differences resulted from the Protestant and Catholic teachings on justification, which in turn was one of the most important points of the religious dispute. Luther's idea of justification as an unconditional gift of grace opposed the medieval rite of the sacrament of penance in the medieval Church, in which a sinner was required to examine his conscience, to be contrite, to confess, and to provide satisfaction for his wrongdoings (Cummings: 2002, 333–344). Poems by authors such as Kasper Miaskowski, Hieronim Morsztyn, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski or even Jan Andrzej Morsztyn, who converted from Calvinism, followed these catechism rules. As it turned out, contrition had considerable poetic potential. The tears of sinners, abundantly shed, became if not the subject (in this respect, Polish poetry kept a certain distance from the Italian *poesia lacrimosa*), then at least a valued motif of poetic imagery, easily generating

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