

Toil in vain or expression of emotion? Notes on pattern poetry of modern-era.

1. General aspects

In the modern-era the development of forms belonging to what is called by poetics *poesis artificiosa* has been influenced by a few factors. One of them was a tradition that continued almost ceaselessly since the antique and that became reinforced in the Middle Ages. Turning anew *ad fontes*, humanists became fascinated with the exquisite forms connected with the broadly understood *ars rhetorica*, including the Greek visual forms (technopaegnia) and the riddles connected with them¹ (aenigmata). During the Renaissance interest in visual literary forms was sparked also by emblematics and the advent of iconology. Various experiments concerned with the way a text was written down were also affected in the modern-era by the development of Mathematics, especially combinatorics, which can be observed e.g. in the legacy of Juan Caramuel y Lobkowitz.

The various ways in which the modern authors have taken from the output of the antique and medieval authors of pattern poetry, assimilating their patterns, have repeatedly been of interest to such scholars as Giovanni Pozzi, Ulrich Ernst, Dick Higgins, Elizabeth Cook, or Piotr Rypson in Poland. The following work is merely an attempt at synthesizing the issue and showing the paths taken by the authors of the Latin pattern poetry in the modern era, focusing especially on what's particular for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

To begin with, it is worth mentioning that in the Renaissance there emerges, next to the literary practices connected with patterns, theoretical thought. For instance, Francesco Robortello, when describing in his *Poetics* epigrammatic works lists acrostics over which, as he says, *multi nostrae aetatis homines laborarunt*² but he himself is not interested in them. A very clear polarization of judgment of pattern poetry by literary theorists can already be observed in the 16th century. Julius Caesar Scaliger in his second book of *Poetics* publishes a poem in the shape of a small egg which could be, according to him, a nightingale egg and a poem in the shape of a big egg, which could be that of a swan³. He deems them to be worthy examples of poetic endeavors. Scaliger lingers for a bit longer by other kinds of *poesis artrificiosa* (serpentinum, cancrinum, versus correlativi, concordantes, intercalares)⁴. According to him, echo is *facetum genus, quod frigide Graeci, Latini acutius exercuere*⁵. He believes, however, that one should only reach for such forms in the punch line that rounds off the epigram⁶. Scaliger was also deeply interested⁶ in riddles, to which he devoted chapter 57 in his first book of *Poetics*. He was also one of the most prolific Renaissance authors of Latin riddles, often bawdy, basing mostly on puns. It is worth noting that literary riddles as a form of entertainment gained extreme popularity in the 16th and 17th century⁷. The authors of the modern-era found their basic model in the compilation of one hundred riddles written in the three-verse hexameters by

Symphosius and published about a dozen times in the 16th and 17th centuries in various editions⁸. An Italian humanist Lilio Giraldi (Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus) devoted a separate work entitled *Libellus, in quo aenigmata pleraque antiquorum explicantur*⁹ to Greek and Latin riddles. Another fan of poetic games, a Silesian lawyer, diplomat and poet Nicholas Reusner (1545-1602), published an anthology of riddles entitled *Aenigmatographia sive Sylloge Aenigmatum et griphorum convivalium*¹⁰. In this volume he included enigmas of many modern-era authors, such as Angelo Poliziano or Joachim Camerarius among others. The latter participated in the discussion concerning enigma as a figure of thought and was interested in the prophecies in the form of enigmas¹¹, although he was very strict in his assessment of the pattern poetry. Indeed, Camerarius found visual poems to be *non adeo digna res*¹². In the same vein, a great thinker of the 16th century, Michel de Montaigne, called the Greek technopaegnia “trifling and vain subtleties”¹³ and, developing his negative assessment, wrote that “it is a curious testimony to our poor judgment, that we are drawn to things for their rarity or novelty, or again difficulty, although there is no good or use to be found in them¹⁴.” Generally, however, pattern poetry did not arouse too much interest of the Renaissance humanists. Both in the above mentioned though scarce theoretical pronouncements and in literary practices, they seem to have been treated as a kind of novelty whose main function was to provide literary fun and entertainment¹⁵. Linguistic witticisms based on modifying inflexion, creating neologisms, and using harmony had been constantly present in the literary culture ever since the antique.

Returning to the visual forms, it needs to be mentioned that the term used in the modern-era – *technopaegnia* – referring to Greek visual poetry could suggest, according to Rypson, that antique works might have served as direct example for the Renaissance authors¹⁶. Thus, their creation of visual forms would have been a conscious reference to tradition. For example, a volume of pattern poetry of Janus Tyrigetes compiled by Mikołaj Lubomirski (died 1617?) and published in Krakow in 1598 was entitled *Technopaegnion sacropoeticum*.

More volumes with pattern poetry appeared all around Europe in the 17th century. Researchers link this phenomenon with the growing network of schools following the curriculum initiated by Johannes Sturm in the gymnasium in Strasburg¹⁷. In the 17th century, a similar model was observed in Protestant gymnasiums and Jesuit colleges alike. Assigned memory and focus training exercises were supposed to facilitate practical learning of classical languages, especially Latin. Creating pattern poetry was thought to be an excellent ingredient of *ars memorativa*. According to Seraina Plotke, they were linked with the need to create, memorize, and to practically use rhetorical concepts¹⁸. The verbal-visual structures could have been used as a kind of a mind map.

To have education in arts was to have the ticket to the *res publica litterarum*. The similar formation of authors and readers of the pattern poetry, shaped by the skills acquired in schools allowed them to easily encipher and decipher the encrypted messages. Not only the creator but also his audience was learned in the art of creating poetry and was aware of the conventions of the message. Thus, in these circles it wasn't a secret knowledge but rather a mean of cultural and social communication¹⁹. The recipient of the message

had to know and accept the rules of the game – if he did not, then he was unable to decipher it. No wonder pattern poetry can be found in the publishing frame of the academic thesis. Marcin Wadowski in his *Quaestio de hypostasi aeternae foelicitatis*, which was published in Krakow, includes a chronostich with a day named for a public discussion:

DoCtoruM numerVm qVando VadovIvs ornat:

BI s denos vernans MARTIVS egit equos.

The brochure is crowned with an epigram, whose title is an anagram of the Latin version of Wadowski's first and last name:

MARTINVS VADOVITA

Anagrammatismus:

VIRTUTI, DO VOTA AMANS.

Si commune bonum specto, privata recedant

Commoda, sum MATRIS fidus alumnus ego.

Artis AMANS; DO VIRTVTI mea VOTA sacratae,

*Doctores doctos docta Academia amat*²⁰.

Similar pattern forms were also created in other academic communities, e.g. a few volumes of acrostics and anagrams came out of the printing house in Zamość²¹.

Pattern poetry appears then to be an intellectual game which requires active involvement of the reader. The Polish scholar Hanna Dziechcińska sees this active reception as, in a way, creation. Solving a riddle, decrypting a date encrypted in a chronogram, discovering an acrostics or a palindrome in a text – all of it was fun and at the same time gave satisfaction and a feeling of belonging to the elite²². Accepting or rejecting pattern poetry was naturally also connected with the individual tastes of teachers and students and with the specialization of schools. And so, for example, the Jesuit college in the Czech Olomuniec was flooded with Poles who during three royal elections (those of Henry of Valois, Stephen Bathory and Sigismund III Vasa) sided with the Habsburgs. The local community, excelling in the literary techniques of the patterns, must have influenced the young people studying there. It needs to be remembered that the visual forms were happily used in the Habsburg court circles up until the 18th century²³.

On the other hand, what needs to be stressed, is the relationship between the ample turnout of the pattern poetry and the upbringing in the spirit of the Christian religion. Analyzing and interpreting pattern poetry was supposed to teach the students to commune with God. Conveying religious messages through the means of verbal and visual structures becomes especially poignant, when one considers the limitations of the inadequate human language to convey God's greatness.

The ubiquitous interest in *poesis artificiosa* in the 17th century was also enhanced by figurative thinking dominating this era. Pattern poetry was especially admired by the authors of literature occasional of the modern-era²⁴. Their works were usually meant to be viewed and contemplated repeatedly and in company during various ceremonies of both state and private, religious and secular character.

2. *Poesis artificiosa* in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

Already in the middle ages certain kinds of pattern poetry were created in Poland, but for the authors of the early and actual Renaissance they were of little interest, although among the works of the bishop and poet Andrzej Krzycki (1482-1537) one can find for instance acrostic with his name in the epigram *Ad lectorem* which preceded *Epithalamion* written on the occasion of the wedding of the Polish king Sigismund I with Bona Sforza²⁵. Acrostics appear also in the edition of poems²⁶ of Grzegorz of Sambor (ca. 1523-1573). A true European, well educated king's secretary and poet Stanisław Niegoszewski (1565-1599), was famous for his pattern poetry included in the copperplate representing the Venice coat of arms. This visual and verbal composition preceded the second volume of the works of Cicero dedicated to the Polish chancellor Jan Zamoyski and published by Aldus Manutius²⁷. This work, aside from grid poem and acrostic includes two palindrome verses:

Si bene te trades sedes sed arte tenebis

Et si se retro feret utere forte resiste.

Andrzej Zbylitowski (ca. 1565 - ca.1608), at the end of his poem praising the victory of Jan Zamoyski at Byczyna over the Habsburg army, put a *cancrinum* whose real message can only be read backwards:

Octostichon cancrinum sive retro gradum

Ambitio parit haud virtus nunc splendida regum

Nomina nam pretio dant bona caelicolae.

Divitiis via fit non est spes altera, Regna

Perdita sunt valeat non nisi largitio,

Auxilio Deus est cupidis nec munera damnat

Regia conantis, ducit in imperium.

Deficiet sacra vis aequi non praelia victor,

Prospera divinis haec aget auspiciis²⁸.

Among the literary games of the greatest poet of the Polish Renaissance, Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584) we can find cancers (*cancrinum*) and acrostics as well as Latin riddles (*gryphus*). This poet was also an author of *carmen macaronicum: De eligendo vitae genere²⁹*. This movement of poetry was born in the humanistic Padua, and one of its best known representatives was Teofilo Folengo (1491-1529). The point of this writing was to combine words from one's native language with Latin grammar endings. These were supposed to provide scholarly entertainment to the reader. To the same end Kochanowski wrote, in the greater asclepiadeic meter, a Latin ode, seventh in the volume *Lyricorum libellus* which was dedicated to an elderly

vixen who, dumped by other lovers, is now pursuing the poet. In this work we find a ribald, though only partial, acrostic.

Pattern poetry found a much greater admirer in Kochanowski's peer, Andrzej Trzeciecki (ca.1530-1584), a poet linked to the inter-faith circles. Among his Latin poems we can find chronostics, tautograms and acrostics. The following poem that includes a six-time acrostic of the name of the Polish king Henry of Valois consists of 8 hexameters³⁰:

Horror	Hyperboreis	Henricus	Hic	Hostibus	Heros
Excellens	Erit	Exornabit	Et	vehet	Eius
Nobilitate	Nova	Numen	Nunc	Nobile	Nomen
Rex	Regimen	Rectum	Russorum	Rege	Ruente
Inclitus	Imperia	Incipiet	Iove	Iusta	Iuvante
Christum	Corde	Colet	Christo	Curante	Coronae
Victrici	Vt	Vigeat	Valesia	Vivida	Virtus
Sauromatum	Semper	Se	Sorte	Sequente	Secunda

The very existence of such poems in the literary circulation in the 16th century was, according to the Polish Scholar Teresa Michałowska, "one of the signals of the emerging interest in various pattern techniques"³¹.

Towards the end of that century the aforementioned Jesuit college in Ołomuniec became an important center which taught how to write pattern poetry and which Polish students and teachers were connected with. From here came Mikołaj Lubomirski, who left interesting volumes containing pattern poetry. His compilation *Hymenaeus, vel carmen nuptiale*³² published on the marriage of prince Janusz Ostrogski to Katarzyna Lubomirska contains visual poetry in the shape of a tree, chalice and rings, acrostics, *cancrinum* and permutation verse entitled *Optatianum*, which refers to one of the poems of Publilius Optatianus Porphyrius. In his volume *Sertum Academicum Sive Corona Laurea*³³ dedicated to Krzysztof Rottendorf, Lubomirski included a cryptographic poem, anagrams and chronostics. And in his panegyric that is a tribute to the Krakow bishop Piotr Tylicki we can find a hieroglyphic poem³⁴. Another interesting poem whose author was connected with the Ołomuniec college was a rebus poem *Poema Hieroglyphicum* by Jakub Krasicki (?-1607) published in 1593 and given to *Encyklopedia staropolska (Old-Polish Encyclopedia)* by Zygmunt Gloger. It is a poem which consists of fifteen hexameters composed as a tribute to the Polish king Sigismund III Vasa. It is exceptional for its author's creativity and meticulousness with which the pictures are done. It is worth mentioning that it was at the college in Ołomuniec that the first deeper theoretical literary reflections on *poesis artificiosa*³⁵ took place.

Another active author of this time who created original volumes including pattern panegyrics was a Polish Jesuit, preacher and mathematician Wawrzyniec Susliga (1570-1640). His collection of poems written upon Franciszek Łącki's reception of bishop's anointment was published in 1598³⁶. Visual poems in the shape of bishop's insignia can be found there.

However, it wasn't until 1600 that a visible interest in pattern poetry became noticeable in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. At the same time, new kinds of it appear. These forms were carefully classified and described by Piotr Rypson. Besides the popular in Poland since the Middle Ages acrostics or the popular

in the Renaissance enigmas, now there appear grids, space-linear and labyrinth verses in greater numbers. Sometimes in the publications Latin was combined with Polish.

But it was at the end of the 17th century that the pattern forms really flourished. These times are the pinnacle of the culture developed by the Polish and Lithuanian nobility (*szlachta*) and called Sarmatism (*sarmatyzm*) but it is also the time of slow decline of the democracy of the nobility. Some pattern forms such as anagrams or echo found their place in the political poetry created prolifically in difficult and unstable times. They were sometimes connected with a prognosis of a good rule of the successive kings. In 1669 when Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki ascended to the throne, Marcin Kuczwarczewicz published in Warsaw *Prognostica optativa Serenissimo Michaeli Dei gratia Poloniarum Regi*, written in a eulogical style, where one can find the following anagrams:

IN MICHAELE
LECHI ME[AE]NIA
habebunt

or:

CUM MICHAELE
eveniant
MECVM LECHIA
Rex Serenissime
Tibi sibi que
Optat et precatur³⁷.

The authors from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth seem to have been less eager to compose rebuses than their colleagues from the German regions. There were also relatively few permutation forms.

Poring the Old Polish pattern volumes it is worth noting that also here deeper theoretical reflection was a few steps behind practice. Pattern poetry started to receive more space only in the poetics which were created in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 17th century³⁸. These forms were grouped into such categories as *epigrammata artificiosa*, *carmina artificiosa* or *ludus poeticus*³⁹. From among the theoretical works which devoted more room to pattern poetry one should mention a book *Attica Musa* published in 1669 in Krakow by Andrzej (Ignacy) Krzyżkiewicz (1640-1695). It bears stressing that the poetics were created mainly to be used in schools. Their authors, usually teachers themselves, registered the exercises assigned their students in order to pass to the next generations examples of speaking and writing, including creating pattern forms. Their students, in turn, competing against one another, developed pattern forms and this development was then reflected in the poetics textbooks. These then, on the one hand, registered the existing phenomena, and on the other, offered new tips on composing pattern poetry. The panegyrics and religious works created in accordance with the rules were analyzed, selected and suggested by the teachers as examples to follow.

The basic idea of pattern poetry was interactivity and playing with the reader, who had to be able to extract sense from the complicated structures. Thus it is difficult to disagree with the critics who claim that most of the poems created that way represent only more or less sophisticated and creative ways of using

tricks typical for pattern poetry and possess no literary value. On the other hand, according to the Polish scholar Dorota Gostyńska, it wasn't, at least not always, only an empty word play whose aim it was to make them devoid these words of meaning. On the contrary, often it was all about deep penetration of the meaning of words, a precise choice of them so as to make them be in harmony with the content⁴⁰. Atypical word order forced the reader to focus on their sense, provoked him to ponder the seemingly obvious claims which, it often turned out, were not so obvious. Nonetheless, it is difficult to deny that the renowned authors of these times reached for these forms only sporadically. Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595-1640), although he criticized anagrams⁴¹, referred in his poems to some of the fashionable trends. In one of his creations entitled *In stemma eiusdem [Ioannis Caroli Chodkiewiczii]: „W.”, Litteram duodecimam inversam* he used the similarity of the Abdank coat of arms to a letter M turned upside down⁴².

Also a great Polish poet Wacław Potocki (1621-1696) – did not scorn word play. A form which reached the height of popularity in the 17th century and whose creators showed sensitivity to the visual side was *elogium*⁴³. It wasn't practiced only by homegrown rhymesters, but also by such great individuals with sophisticated artistic tastes and enlightened minds as Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski (1642-1702). Connection with emblems, graphic layout of the Latin text, varied fonts, stylistic means used, such as antithesis, anaphora, epiphora, etymological figures, paranomasias and thought concepts make his volume *Adverbia moralia* a work that is one of a kind while at the same time realizing artistic postulates of the second half of the 17th century:

ADVERBIUM I
AD
Ad vos loquor,
O, mortales,
qui ad cognitionem conditionis
Humanae,
velut mutaturi ad fontem NARCISSI,
imo
Speculatores propriae vilitatis
ad Speculum laboriosae miseriae animo
acceditis.
En
Primus ad vitam accessus
Sufficiens ad mortem gradus
Est.
Non Prius
Ad Lucem quam ad Luctum,
ad intuitum quam ad planctum
oculos aperimus,
Infelicesque,
ad omne malum Nati
Per lacrimarum fluctus ad miseriarum mare
*devehimur*⁴⁴.

From among the writers of the first half of the 18th century it is easy to distinguish those who were especially fond of pattern poetry. Their legacy was usually passed down in cycles. It often happened that

such a cycle was the only literary output of the author. A typical volume of pattern poetry was opened by a elaborate title and a chronogram or a cabalistic poem with the date of publication. Dedication was preceded by a poem on the patron's coat of arms, i.e. stemma, which sometimes also took on the pattern form. The poems coming next could represent only one kind or be varied. Such homogeneity marks, for example, the works of Franciscan Ludwik Miske (1692-1768), who specialized in chronograms. On the other hand, reformed Franciscan Krzysztof Klimecki was known for his anagrams made up of the Latin words of the Hail Mary. More than that, his poems made acrostics. Volumes with Klimecki's anagrams were repeatedly published in Zamość and Lviv in 1690-1696.

Going on and on with chronostics or anagrams page after page could leave the reader feeling bored with the monotony. Bartłomiej Kazimierz Malicki (died ca. 1706), a doctor of Philosophy and a Krakow professor, created a volume praising a Lutsk bishop, Bogusław Leszczyński. His compilation entitled *Centuria anagrammatico epigrammatica* (Poznań 1688) contains one hundred Latin epigrams building on anagrams created from the bishop's name. A bit more imagination can be ascribed to Marian Sikorski (1713-1767), who was the author of, among others, panegyric in tribute to Jan Jabłonowski with a tautogram title *Fasces Franciae Floribus Floridi* etc, in which he included tautogram, labyrinth, cancer and rebus verses. The volume ends with an impressive labyrinth poem:

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                S
              S  I  S
            S  I  N  I  S
          S  I  N  I  N  I  S
        S  I  N  I  F  I  N  I  S
      S  I  N  I  N  I  S
    S  I  N  I  S
  S  I  S
S

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Also religious volumes showed more variety, including such forms as crosses or, in the poems dedicated to Mary – stars. Among these, are volumes by Maurycy Kielkowski. In his series of pattern poems dedicated to Saint Anthony and entitled *Hypomnema Franciscanum* he included such forms as acrostics, chronostics, anagrams, a poem in the shape of an obelisk, a musical rebus, a labyrinth and grid poem, space-line structures, versus rapportati. The volume is crowned by an enigma (*coronis aenigmatica*):

*Non existo creatura, haud existo Creator,
 Inter viventes non fueram, capior
 Inter mortiferos fateor sum mortua semper,
 Inque sepultura non queo habere locum.
 Sum Domini mediatrix, ast spernor honores;*

*Cum regnum capio, displicet aula mihi:
Mundi sum princeps, ignis me tellus et unda,
Non videt ac aer: sto tamen in medio
Ipsa elementorum; perfundor tempore quovis,
Palpebris propriis non tamen aspicio.
Praesens me nec habet, nec praeterito atque futuro
Haesi, non nascor, debeo prima mori:
Sum cum Daemonibus, me nunquam cernit avernus
Laetor in Empyreo, nonque beata vocor.*

Among the pattern poetry created within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth stand out the poems referring to the heraldic figures of the nobility. Such poem by Sarbiewski referring to the coat of arms Abdank was already mentioned. Ludwik Miske published a poem on the herb of Wojciech Waśniewicz, the canon of Gniezno and Poznań. The coat of arms consisted of three roses and two half-moons. Both the title and the six hexameter verses have the date 1725 encoded in them:

In aVItVM perILLVstrIs patronI DeCVs

Terris atqVe poLIIs fert DVpLeX *CYnthIa* Mores,
Ferre eX se rores, LVCeM bLanDosqVe faVores.
Et *Rosa* VItVtIs CVnctIs DIffVnDIIt oDores,
TriP LICItEr fLorens ViVos habet VnDIqVe aMores.
FaC *DeVs!* Vt *LVnae* pLenae eXtent seMper honore
PVrpVreOqVe *RosaM* eXornent CanDore Coronae⁴⁵.

The works on literary history created in the 19th and 20th century are definitely dominated by negative assessment of the Old Polish pattern poetry. None of the forms of pattern poetry gained respect of Hieronim Juszyński, the author of the *Dictionary of Polish Poets (Dykcjonarz poetów polskich)* published in 1820. The above cited palindrome by Niegoszewski is for the author of the Dictionary a “proof of laborious toil”⁴⁶. *Technopaegnion* by Mikołaj Lubomirski “testifies to daunting and useless work”⁴⁷. Anagrams by Bartłomiej Kazimierz Malicki are “a great work, and even greater waste of time”⁴⁸. And when talking about the work of Krzysztof Klimecki, Juszyński says, that only in times “when wit was wasted on such inventions, was such paltry work admired”, whereas today it only serves as proof of the toil and patience of the author⁴⁹. The above quoted Maurycy Kiełkowski was no more successful with earning Juszyński’s respect with his religious poetry⁵⁰.

Modern-day scholar Teresa Michałowska assessing Old Polish pattern poetry said that these authors “propagated an intellectually empty model of art, art devoid of idealistic values and at the same time bound by technical rules” and pointed to the “low level of artistic culture” of these times⁵¹. It is hard to deny that most of the pattern forms of the 17th and the first half of the 18th, created by inept poets, would not stand the test of time. But it might be worth pondering why this type of literature had, in the times when it was created, such great power and appeal. Shouldn’t we, when considering pattern poetry, consider the similarity between the meticulous and meant to amaze poems and the popular in baroque illusionistic and anamorphic painting? After all, the aim to amaze and stir the audience was common to all the forms of artistic expression

of these times. It is linked to the baroque theory of concept understood as a way of handling the topic using various forms of artistic expression⁵².

3. Pattern poetry and art

Poesis artificiosa along with emblematics and iconology are characteristic features of the culture of the 17th and the first half of the 18th century. Behind the creation of any hybrid forms combining word with picture and sound lay a search for universal message using various means of expression. Baroque culture of shows dominated by figurative thought assisted this search⁵³. Word, both written and spoken, was always accompanied by a visual and musical frame. The old homogenous culture, on the other hand, had roots of psychological nature - since emotions can be expressed more fully with the aid of picture and sound rather than bare words - and sociological – since the artist and his audience belonged to circles of similarly educated elites. This education provided them with access code to the encrypted messages of pattern poetry. *Poesis artificiosa* was mainly a domain of schools and universities, but also particular social and religious circles. Hence the popularity of this poetry among the graduates of Jesuit colleges as well as protestant and orthodox schools – mostly nobility but also rich burghers from Gdańsk or Toruń and graduates of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Pattern forms went beyond books – printed or handwritten. Chronostics and acrostics were for instance used in the art of making medallions. The obverse of the medallion of Wrocław signed by Johan Kittel⁵⁴ and minted to commemorate the victory in the battle of Vienna in 1683 shows a double sun with a sash above it on which it is written SOLE DUPLO and a moon underneath which there is an anagram of this expression – PLUS DOLEO. Another anagram of these two words was the name of the contemporary German emperor - LEOPOLDUS. The inscription on the reverse of this medallion ends with words containing a chronogram with the year 1683: *eX InsIgni hoC fortItVDInIs et persIstentIae eXeMpLo*. Both the graphic and the verbal elements appearing on this medallion were supposed to convince the audience of the greatness of this victory. The chronogram and the anagrams included in the inscription stressed the miracle of an important historical event which took place not without divine providence.

Pattern forms were also used in architecture. The façade of the Warsaw Łazienki Palace which in the 17th century belonged to Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski has the following words written on it:

HAEC DOMUS

ODIT AMAT FUNDIT COMMENDAT ET OPTAT

TRISTITIAS PACEM BALNEA RURA PROBOS

Similar structures (*versus rapportati* or *correlativi*) had for a long time been used as inscriptions on various buildings throughout Europe, like the inscription similar to this one recorded in a volume *Proverbia Sententiaeque Latinitatis Medii Aevi*⁵⁵, but in the 17th century such practices became much more common.

4. Figuring the death

Pattern poetry also found its way into funeral verse. Chronostics crown a brochure entitled *Ecloga in funebre* and published in Poznań in 1593 and devoted to the deceased voivode of Poznań voivodeship Stanisław Górka. Then in the Lubrański Academy environment in Poznań *Epicedion* was published as a tribute to a deceased teacher Wojciech Dembicki. The brochure includes poems of students and colleagues of the late teacher. A poem in the shape of pyramid was placed on page Br and on page B3r there is an echo that starts in the following way:

Cur insers violenta manus? cur infligis ictus
Aevo florenti Parca Dębiccio? E. Io
Plaudis ovans et psallis Io cur perfida? E. fida.
etc.

The last four poems of his funeral cycle are chronostics including the year of Dembicki's death.

Jan Wojciech Janicki is the author of a funeral volume written on the death of starosta of Lviv and Field Clerk of the Crown Adam Hieronim Sieniawski (1623-1650). In it we find a funeral poem written in dactylic hexameters which at the same time is acroteleestic. The first and last letters of the verses communicate the name, official titles and functions of the deceased although this is not a *acrostichon purum* and in a few places the neighboring letters were also used: ADAMVS HIERONIMUS A GRANOV SIENIAVSKI IN SZKLOV ET MISSA COMES, NOTARIVS CAMPESTRIS REGNI LEOPOLIENSIS CAPITANEVS SAT VIXIT⁵⁶.

The synchrony of word and picture in the funeral ceremony and the brochures published on such occasions helped the better to understand the crossing of the line between life and death and accept the latter. Pattern poetry inspired deeper reflection on reality in the mourners, on the one hand showing the relationship between sensual perception and intellectual cognition, and on the other the relationship between body and soul. Thus they not only served mimetic function but also cathartic. The artists tried to show the human condition and the complexity of the world as well as aid the cleansing of the audience's souls.

5. Visual Reading

These examples of funeral works seem to be the best testimony to the fact that figural poetry was a space shared by logosphere and iconosphere. Utilizing the visual form of writing enhanced the linguistic message, but it also fulfilled the artistic ambitions of the author and his audience. Appraisal of work was not about linear reading but about spatial perception. Different pattern forms were vehicle of different information and functioned in the system of communication in a slightly way. Chronostics and anagrams referred more to logosphere whereas visual poems to iconosphere. But one cannot fail to notice that chronostics are also visual form or rather logovisual. To read poems that include e.g. acrostics without

paying attention to the first letters of the lines was to deprive them of their additional sense. Reception of chronostics required careful visual perception. In case of *carmina figurata* the literary message is complex and words and picture are in a particularly close relationship – they complete each other, shed light on one another and enrich each other with additional meaning. The message here is transmitted on two levels – through shape and language. Reception of such a text without visualization, although sometimes possible, was definitely incomplete. Among the pattern forms of the 16th-17th century we can find both - those that stressed only the semantic value of the text and completed its meaning and those that became the key to their interpretation⁵⁷.

The authors of the second half of the 18th century gradually lost interest in pattern poetry. In the second half of the 19th century works imitating shapes started to serve mainly parodistic and humoristic functions⁵⁸. Renewed interest in the visual as a form presenting many possibilities of expression is connected with avant-gardist and futuristic movement in literature and art of the first decades of the 20th century. One of the greatest modern poets whose works are associated with experimental forms was Apollinaire – a Pole by birth. From the futuristic circles came also Polish painter and poet who created visual poetry – Tytus Czyżewski (1880-1945). One of the greatest Polish poets of the 20th century, Julian Tuwim (1894-1953), was also interested in linguistic games and he was an author of a collection of pattern poetry *Pegaz dęba* (1950). He was also an author of children poems in which he put to practical use some of the tricks typical for pattern forms. Continuator of his passion, is a modern poet and translator Stanisław Barańczak, author of such works as *Pegaz zdębiał* (1995, second extended edition 2008). Stanisław Dróżdź (1939-2009) was however the father of concrete poetry in Poland. This movement still has many enthusiasts among contemporary authors who try to express the complex essence of reality in their works. Some solutions typical for *poesis artificiosa* can be observed in advertising slogans. Their authors, like the writers of old, juxtapose various forms of expression. There is a game between them and their audience, in which the latter cannot remain passive but has to actively seek the meaning of the message.

The fact that the message of concrete poetry is purposefully ambiguous, multi-dimensional and spatial is supposed to reflect limited and subjective reception of reality that man has. In many cases, just as it was in the 17th century, formal search seems to dominate the content. However, it might be worth pondering, if these visual messages sometimes do not speak more clearly than linear text to modern audience familiar with multimedia messaging. The effect must have been similar when words placed in an unusual context and poems encased in pictures affected participants of baroque culture of spectacle.

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- ¹ Eleonor Cook, *Enigmas and riddles in literature*, Cambridge 2006, p.48.
- ² Francisci Robortelli Utinensis in librum Aristotelis De arte poetica explicationes, Florentiae 1548, p.40.
- ³ Iulii Caesaris Scaligeri Poetices libri septem, Lugduni 1561, p.69.
- ⁴ Ibidem, pp.73-74.
- ⁵ Ibidem, p.170.
- ⁶ Ibidem, p. 171.
- ⁷ Josef Isewijn, Dirk Sacre, *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies. Part2: Literary, Linguistic, Philological and Editorial Questions (Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia 14)*, Louvain, 1998 p. 123-124. Dziechcińska Hanna, *Literatura a zabawa*, Warszawa 1981, p.146.
- ⁸ D.G. Blauner, *The Early Literary Riddle*, „Folklore” vol.78, No.1 (Spring 1967), p.49-58.
- ⁹ Basileae 1539.
- ¹⁰ Published in Frankfurt in 1599. Cf. Frederick Tupper, Jr., *The Comparative Study of Riddles*, *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan., 1903), pp. 1-8.
- ¹¹ E. Cook, op.cit, p. 50.
- ¹² Joachim Camerarius, *Epistolarum familiarum libri 6. Nunc primum post ipsius obitum singulari studio a fillis edita*, p. 378, according to Rypson Piotr, *Piramidy, słońca, labirynty. Poezja wizualna w Polsce od XVI do XVIII wieku*, Warszawa, 2002, p.53.
- ¹³ Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, *Les Essais*, (Ed. P. Villey et Saulnier, Verdun L.)p. 311 (129 v): subtilitez frivoles et vaines.
- ¹⁴ Ibidem, p.311: C'est un tesmoignage merueilleux de la foiblesse de nostre jugement, qu'il recommande les choses par la rareté ou nouvelleté, ou encore par la difficulté, si la bonté et utilité n'y sont jointes.
- ¹⁵ Rypson, 70.
- ¹⁶ Rypson, 70.
- ¹⁷ Cf. e.g. Rypson, 70.
- ¹⁸ Plotke Seraina, *Gereimte Bilder. Visuelle Poesie im 17. Jahrhundert*, 2009, p. 203.
- ¹⁹ Dziechcińska Oglądanie i słuchanie w kulturze dawnej Polski, 98. .
- ²⁰ *Questio de Hypostasi aeternae Foelicitatis, primoque medio Salutis, interno actu Fidei. A Martino Campio Vadovio: S. Th. Doctore: publice in alma Acad. Cracovien. ad disputandum proposita. Pro loco inter Doctores S. Th. assequendo*, 1617, k.Bv.
- ²¹ E.g.: *Acrostichis gratulatoria Joannes Christophor Falecki (1646)*, *Acrostichis gratulatoria Martinus Foltinowicz (1647)*, *Acrostichis votiva Andreae Kłopotcki oblata (1644)*.
- ²² Dziechcińska, *Literatura a zabawa*, p.145.
- ²³ Klecker Elisabeth, *Waffen der Tugend und der Poesie. Breslauer Figurengedichte für Ferdinand III.* in: Dáňová, Helena – Klípa, Jan – Stolarová, Lenka, *Slezsko – země koruny české historie a kultura 1300-1740*, Prag 2008 (2009), 245-261.
- ²⁴ Plotke, p.17-19.
- ²⁵ *Epithalamion cum aliis lectu non iniocundis*, [s.l. et a.]
- ²⁶ *Vigilantii Gregorii Samboritani Ecloga I, in qua est iucunda R[everendissimo] D[omino] Domino Stanislao Slomovio, in Archiepiscopum Leopoliensem electo, facta Gratulatio. Elegiae IX, in quibus sunt multa, ad Dei gloriam et clarorum virorum laudem, pertinentia. Epigrammata, quae Stemmata continent. Sylvula, mista habens elogia. Epitaphia, res funebres comprehendunt, Cracoviae 1566*

- ²⁷ Ut esset perpetuum Stanislai Nyegossewii [...] in nomen Venetum Pietatis argumentum, tum vero cum Aldo Mannuccio dignum mutuae caritatis pignus [Veneziae 1584?]
- ²⁸ Andreae Zbilitovii De Victoria reportata anno D. M. D. Lxxxviii. die xxiiii. Ianuarii. Ad Invictissimum & Potentissimum Sigismundum III. Poloniae Regem, Magnum Ducem Lithuaniae &c. Epinicion. De eadem victoria, Illustris & Magnificae Dominae Griseldis de Somlio, Item & Authoris ad Illustrem & Magnificum Dnm. Ioannem de Zamoscie &c. Gratulatio, Cracoviae 1588, Cv.
- ²⁹ Editio posthuma, Krakow 1590.
- ³⁰ Andrzej Trzeciecki, Carmina. Wiersze łacińskie, ed. Jerzy Krókowski, Wrocław 1958, p.428.
- ³¹ Słownik literatury staropolskiej, p.635.
- ³² Hymenaeus Vel carmen Nuptiale [...] Principis [...] Ianussii [...] Ducis Ostrogiensis [...] Et Catharinae [...] Sebastiani Lubomirski [...] Filiae A Nicolao Lubomirski [...] conscriptum Cracoviae 1598.
- ³³ Sertum Academicum Sive Corona Laurea Virtute, Eruditione Morum[ue] Praestantia [...] Christophoro Rottendorff [...] a Nicolao [...] Lubomirski [...] decantata, Cracoviae 1599.
- ³⁴ Illustiss[imo] et Reverendiss[imo] D[omino D[omino] Petro Tylicki, Episcopo Cracovien[si] Duci Severiensi. Felicem Primum in sui episcopatus ingressum, Hieroglyphico Tetratechno. Gratulatur Nicolaus Lubomierski, Cracoviae 1607.
- ³⁵ Rypson, 67.
- ³⁶ Reverendissimo In Christo Patri [...] Francisco Łącki [...] Gratulatio A Laurentio Suslyga [...] Cracoviae 1598.
- ³⁷ Prognostica optativa Serenissimo Michaeli Dei gratia Poloniarum Regi, Typis Varsaviensibus 1669, [s.n.]
- ³⁸ T. Michałowska, Staropolska teoria genologiczna, Warszawa 1974 p.139.
- ³⁹ Ibidem, p.139-140.
- ⁴⁰ D. Gostyńska, Retoryka iluzji. Koncept w poezji barokowej, Warszawa 1991, p.101.
- ⁴¹ M.K. Sarbiewski, Wykłady poetyki (Praecepta poetica), ed. Stanisław Skimina, Wrocław-Kraków 1958, p.19: Haec vulgo anagrammata vocantur atque a quibusdam plus nimio celebrantur. quare mirari eos convenit, qui puerilibus hisce nugis excruciant ingenia, et nescio quos eculeos quaestionesque in libera indole experiuntur
- ⁴² Maciej K. Sarbiewski, *Epigrammatum Liber. Księga epigramów*, ed. and trans. Magdalena Piskała and Dorota Sutkowska, Warszawa, 2003, 76; M. Piskała, Boże miłości i wstydlive dowcipy. Studia nad epigramatyczną twórczością Macieja Kazimierza Sarbiewskiego i Alberta Inesa, Warszawa 2009, pp. 227-228.
- ⁴³ Barbara Otwinowska, Elogium, in: Słownik literatury staropolskiej, Warszawa 1990 p.159-161.
- ⁴⁴ Stanisława Herakliusz Lubomirski, Poezje zebrane, tom I. Teksty, ed. A. Karpiński, Warszawa 1995, pp.139-141.
- ⁴⁵ Światło Nowego Świata, i Kościoła Chrystusowego, znamenitemi wślawione cudami, Poznań 1725
- ⁴⁶ Juszyński Hieronim, „Dykcjonarz poetów polskich”, 1820, v.2, p.7.
- ⁴⁷ Ibidem, v1, 255.
- ⁴⁸ Ibidem, v1, p 174.
- ⁴⁹ Ibidem, v1, 171.
- ⁵⁰ Ibidem, v1, p 169.
- ⁵¹ Teresa Michałowska, Poezja kunsztowna in: Słownik literatury staropolskiej, Warszawa 1990, p.636.
- ⁵² D. Gostyńska, p, 99.
- ⁵³ Seraina Plotke, pp.161-167.
- ⁵⁴ Gabinet medalów polskich oraz tych, które się dziejów Polski tyczą począwszy od najdawniejszych az do konca panowania Jana III. (1513-1696). T. 2 przez Edwarda Raczyńskiego, Wrocław, 1838, p.310.
- ⁵⁵ *Proverbia Sententiaeque Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Carmina Medii Aevi Posterioris Latina)* II/2 bearb. von H.Walther, Goettingen 1964 p. 272 nr 10552:
Hec domus odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat:
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, iura, probos.
- Jakub Masenius, *Ars nova argutiarum eruditae et honestae recreationis*, Coloniae Agrippinae 1649, p .203.
- ⁵⁶ Luctuosa Sarmaticae lunae eclipsis, [Lviv] 1650.
- ⁵⁷ Dziechcińska, Oglądanie, p.90.
- ⁵⁸ Anna Martuszczyńska, Radosne gry, Gdańsk 2007, p.45.