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JANICKI'S LOVE FOR THE HOMELAND AND HIS PATRIOTIC POETRY: TRIBUTE ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POET'S BIRTHDAY (1516–1543)

Tolle, Polone, caput, satis est iacuisse malignis
Hactenus in tenebris; tolle, Polone, caput!
(*Var*. 1, 101–102)[1]

ABSTRACT. Lewandowski Ignacy, Janicki's Love for the Homeland and His Patriotic Poetry: Tribute on the 500th Anniversary of the Poet's Birthday (1516–1543).

The paper aims to present some aspects of Janicki's poetry devoted to some Various existence problems of that times, i. e. social status of the poor, the education opportunities for them, and insisting on the greater care of the country from the nobility.

Keywords: Klemens Janicki; patriotism; education; nobility.

Klemens Janicki or Janicjusz (Clemens Ianicius)[2] son of a peasant from Januszkowo near Żnin, having completed his studies at the Lubrański Academy in Poznań in 1536, found himself outright in the centre of great politics conducted by two authorities, the Church and the State – institutions that closely co–operated with each other at that time. Both at the Primate's court in Gniezno, and later on at residences of the Cracow Voivode on Wawel, or in Wiśnicz near Bochnia, he was undoubtedly a clever observer of what was going on in Poland. As a peasant's son, however, he didn't stand a great chance of becoming a very

[1] The following abbreviations will appear in the text: *Tr. – Tristium liber; Ep. – Epigrammatum liber; Var. – Variarum elegiarum liber; Arch. – Vitae archiepiscoporum Gnesnensium; Reg. – Vitae regum Polonorum; Proc. – Ad Polonos Proceres; Quer. – Querela Reipublicae Regni Poloniae"; Coll. – Carmina et epigrammata ex diversis libris manu scriptis et typis excusis collecta ; Epith. – Epithalamium.*

[2] For the life and work of Janicki, see the prefaces to the editions: Klemens Janicki, Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie. 1966; *Clementis Ianicii poetae laureati Carmina*. 1930; Klemens Janicki, *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie*. 1966. Vide also: Cytowska 1962–1964; Teresińska 2001; Kubiak 1993; Lewandowski 2016.

creative participant, even if he lived longer, above his 26 years. He probably did not care about this either. He came to love the muses too much, and that – as he put it himself – leaves little time for other occupations.[3] But as a talented poet, raising great hopes, he was drawn from the beginning into political matters by his patrons who realised the importance of the knack for the written word in creating social consciousness, forming civic and patriotic attitudes, pursuing immediate internal and external policy, or only adding splendour to entire families or just individual personalities.

During Janicki's life, i.e. in the first half of the 16th century, after cracking down on Moscow at Orsza in 1514, two particular political problems came to the fore in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. One of them was the frustration and demoralisation of the nation, which manifested itself in the fierce fighting of the gentry for the so–called enforcement of rights, i.e. retention or increase of privileges, and the other one was first of all the Turkish threat and problems with Wallachia.[4] Janicki was not indifferent to these issues in any genre of his output, be it elegy, epigram, complaint, political satire or nuptial song (*epithalamium*). In any case, the entire courtly atmosphere he found himself in did not allow him to be indifferent. So, beside numerous references of a political and patriotic nature scattered across the whole of his output, he also created works devoted exclusively to these topics. And although they concerned the reality back then, they would reach far beyond it, as befits the real poetry, to virtually any epoch and any society, including events going on before our eyes, in Poland, in 2016, i.e. five hundred years after this congenial poet was born.

NATIVE LAND AND HOME COUNTRY

The poet came from a northern region of Wielkopolska, called Pałuki, and from his early years he came to live far from his home area. So, many a time he would longingly reminisce about the village "by the Żnin swamp", which he never saw again after he graduated from the Lubrański Academy in Poznań in 1536.[5] Over time and with growing fame he got farther and farther away from it. After one year at the Primate's court in Gniezno (May 1536 – May 1537) he took up residence at the house of the Voivode of Kmita in the capital city of Cracow, and his palace in Wiśnicz near Bochnia. For a long time, i.e. over two years, from autumn 1538 to autumn 1943, he dwelt in far–away Padova with its famous university. Than again Cracow and its environs until his death in early 1543. He had contact with his family in Pałuki only by letters through his acquaintances

[3] Cf. *Tr*. 3, 9–48.

[4] For these issues vide Nowak-Dłużewski 1966, 127–137 (chapter VIII), 93–118 (chapter VI).

[5] Lewandowski 2006, 18–31. The same in: Lewandowski 2007, 47–60.

and friends. His natural longing for his natural land was intensified by his disease, which prevented him from embarking on long journeys. He hoped, however, as he expresses it in one elegy, that there would come a moment when he could see the poor peasant's hut, step inside, greet his mother and brother, pray at the grave of his father who heartily desired to see him, and place on it an inscription as if his father's saying from behind his grave:

Hic tegor agricola obscurus, sed laude poetae,
Quem genui, per tot compita clarus eo. (*Tr*. 10, 59–60)

In his lyrical soul, Janicki not only preserved pleasant memories of his native land in Pałuki, which he loved as much as his beloved father, but also he took delight in the rural landscape near Cracow. He expressed it in an epigram to his friend, historian Ludwik Decjusz, owner of the village of Wola (coll. 5). In this village, he extremely liked his palace with a garden, and a nearby forest, as if it were roaming through the hills and lakes with clear water. In short, he was enchanted with the view of his native villages, and his native nature showing its face in different seasons. Descriptions of nature, and its impulsive symptoms in some elegies revealed the spiritual experiences of the poet and protagonists of his poems, especially when they found themselves in a state of happiness or sadness.[6]

Among the few Polish towns mentioned in his poetry, although he got to know many while wandering across Poland with his patrons' courts, one that aroused the greatest admiration in him was the capital Cracow, where he spent three years of his adult life. He mentions it with exotic affection and unconcealed pride:

Est, fateor, locus hic, qui delectare vel ipso
Aspectu quem vis et recreare queat;
Est populus, quem iure probes, est copia rerum,
Sunt fora, sunt magni plurima templa Dei.
Fama recens semper variis a partibus orbis,
Hac et longinquum qui facit hospes iter.
Incumbunt urbi colles turresque Vaveli,
Vicina mugit Vistula raucus aqua. (*Tr*. 10, 9–16)

So, the poet loved his country, its towns and villages, landscapes and people. A real humanist, sensitive to the charms of nature and the whole paradise on earth, this specific earth, which he feels he must untimely leave by a stroke of fate. He also noticed his compatriots' flaws, which he expressed and condemned in his epigrams. In a fictitious epitaph on the example of Krzysztof Biskupski, a fifty–year–old clergyman in two presbyteries, he stigmatises drunkenness. (*Ep*.

[6] Vide e.g. *Tr*. 4, 17–39; 10, 17–24; *Var.* 2, 35–64; 3, 31–84; 4, 91–103.

54). He is to blame for the death of a man who dies only because he refuses to participate in a revel with his drunk companions. The dead man himself gives the reason of his death, and in an exclamation he condemns a custom obtaining in Poland ("quos inter, ut optet, / Non impune aliquis sobrius esse potest!"). The punch line is ironic and contrary:

Ebrietas dat amicitias, dat nomen, honores
Cumque opibus titulos. Qui sapis ergo, bibe!

He condemns greed and luxury (*Ep*. 6; 38; 69), pride and conceit (25), trials, quarrels and intrigues (61), but overall he does not reproach his compatriots for many flaws in his epigrams. Much more about those will be mentioned in his strictly political poetry.

His attitude towards the great homeland was most emphatically presented by Janicki in his elegy to Stanisław Sprowski, Voivode of Podole, by making neat comparisons with Italy, heir to ancient Romans and Greeks, seat of regenerating arts and sciences, a country generally adored and visited by elites from across the whole of Europe. He, a Sarmatian poet, low–life, from a peasant's family, was exceptionally fortunate to be in Padova from spring 1538 to autumn 1540 among those elites. He felt great admiration for the homeland of Virgil, and like many other European poets, he also lauded this land of Saturn abounding in all crops. At some point, this admiration took him too far. However, he soon reconsidered it, and confessed the truth about his feelings towards his country:

Parce loquar patriae, quanto felicior essem,
Haec me tam felix si genuisset humus!
Non tamen idcirco, quoniam sic fata tulerunt
Provida, Sarmatiae filius esse queror.
Nulla sub immenso telus est talis, ut illam
Fas mihi sit terrae praeposuisse meae.
Italiam miror, patriam venerorque coloque,
Afficit illius me stupor, huius amor.
Altera blanditiis animum tenet, altera magno
Iure, haec hospitium dat mihi, at illa larem. (*Var*. 7, 79–88)

Enthusiastic joy and satisfaction is expressed by the poet also because, thanks to enlightened leaders, like for example Primate Krzycki with his literary talent, Poland's fame is growing in Europe, as a country of high culture and civilisation, as up to that time Sarmatia had only enjoyed warlike renown among the nations, but since then its name becomes great thanks to the peaceful arts looked after by all the muses. And also in this respect, it neither yields to Italy nor the western countries. Thus, he calls on his fellow compatriots in a specially constructed (so–called epanaleptic) poem which I took the liberty to put at the beginning of this article:

Tolle, Polone, caput, satis est iacuisse malignis
Hactenus in tenebris; tolle, Polone, caput! (*Var*. 1, 101–102)

Janicki made no secret of his patriotic feeling. On the contrary, he often revealed it in his poems expressing his concern in matters of its peace and external security, as well as stability of its rule and social order. He could not fail to be affected by these public matters – as I said – in the very centres of the political powers. As a court poet, he travelled across Poland, first with the Primate's court of Andrzej Krzycki, experienced politician, and then with a group of influential magnate Piotr Kmita, Grand Crown Marshall and Voivode of Cracow. At that time he met many mighty of this world, and listened to their conversations and comments. He observed turbulent Sejm sessions of Cracow (1536–1537 and Piotrków (1538–1539) and saw with his own eyes how the aristocracy and gentry's levy en mass behaved at Lvov during the so–called "Hen War" (August – September 1537). Using his talented writing, while serving for his patrons, as a man with good sense of poetic independence and the poet's role as a mentor, to some extent he expressed his own views. He made this clear in his most important output, i.e. elegies and epigrams, whose subject matter was very diverse.[7]

As indicated earlier, the homeland's external peace at that time was disturbed by the Turks and Wallachians. The former were particularly dangerous. After all, they posed a threat to the whole of Europe. Like many other Polish and European poets and writers, Janicki addressed this issue at length in his output, particularly in three elegies of "Tristium liber": the sixth one addressed to Italian teacher Bonamicus, theeighth one to his doctor and friend Antoninus, and the ninth one to Seweryn Boner, court banker of king Sigismund the Old. He heartily called on Europe's Christian princes to concord and a common fight against Muslim incursions conquering ever new territories of the followers of Christ. In these three elegies, not without great emotion, the poet presents the sad and ever more tragic advances of the Turkish conquest, and particularly deplores the seizure of fraternal Hungary. In the sixth elegy he warns Christian rulers against feuds and splits that provide favourable conditions for aggression, and in the eighth elegy, with epic effusiveness and desperate words of the personified capital of Hungary, Buda, he provides a moving description of the conquest, ravages, manslaughter, material destruction, and profanation of Christian religion. He prophesies a similar fate to other countries. Finally, in the eighth elegy, mourning for the death of heroic Hieronim Łaski, considered as an expert in Turkish affairs, he presents the quite real threat of a Turkish conquest of Poland, if the latter fails to set off with aid to friendly Hungary. He exclaims loudly:

[7] I base my analysis of texts on the following edition: Klemens Janicki, *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie*. 1966 (vide Bibliography).

Commoda Pannoniae sunt commoda vestra, Poloni,
Sarmata communi fertur et illa rate.
Dum fuit incolumis, vallum fuit illa Poloni,
Vallum Teutonici nec minus una soli.
Ut cecidit, quae non et nos ventura timemus?
Sed tacet augurii lingua timore mali.
Lingua tacet, mens nescio quid resque ipsa minatur;
O meus in ventos hic timor omnis eat! (*Tr*. 9, 139–146)

No poet in Poland had presented so pessimistic a vision of Europe and Poland facing the dangerous Ottoman Empire. Janicki did this successfully, not only in literary terms, but also substantively with his images strongly appealing to the reader. His utterances about this on other occasions prove that he expresses his own convictions and feelings independent of his patrons' views. In one of the epigrams placed, incidentally, on an anti–Turkish book by Staniław Orzechowski, he is doubtful about a European coalition against the Turks, as "Sed mallet decies rex Gallicus ante perire, / Quam socius magni Caesaris esse semel" (Coll. 7). The poet's anti–Turkish concerns correspond to the views of the adherents of the Habsburg party in Poland seeking closer cooperation with the Austrian Empire attacked by Turkey.[8]

Janicki's love for his homeland also manifests itself in his concern for historical consciousness of the Poles. He was very keen for his fellow countrymen to know their past, and pass it down to posterity and other nations in prosaic or poetic works. He regretted that the Homers, Virgils, Herodotuses, and Liviuses who would protect the events and works of native heroes from oblivion appeared so late in Sarmatia.[9] For this task, however, the homeland needs to have writers, and care for them. He asks a rhetorical question:

Dic modo, qui Musas contemnis et utile docto
Nil patriae a calamo posse venire putas,
Cur tantum historiae nobis perit? (*Reg*. 2, 9–11)

For this reason, the poet took up historical topics, and created two collections of biographies, and – what's more – not without the influence of his politically active patrons. The first collection, composed at the court of Primate Andrzej Krzycki (1536), included four–verse biographies of Gniezno archbishops (*Vitae archiepiscoporum Gnesnensium*, published in print in 1574), the other one was written later on (1538), but printed earlier than the first one, in 1563 in Antwerp, contains biographies of Polish kings. In the introduction, the publisher, Wilhelm Silvius, gave fine witness of Klemens: "Marcus Ambrosius Nissensis…dumque haec refert legenda dedit pererudita doctissimi viri Clementis Ianicii Poloni

[8] Vide also Ćwikliński 1934, 6–9.
[9] Cf. *Var*. 1, 89–96; 6, 29–34.

Epigrammata, quibus antiquissimas historias ac res gestas Regum Poloniae eleganti ordine per quam compendiose est complexus. Quae cum supra modum placerent, non potui facere, quin, ne apud nos tantorum principum res preclare gestae ignorentur, illa sub amplissimi nominis tui auspicio in lucem darem…."[10]

According to Janicki – following the study of history – the best form for the homeland to rule is monarchy in the hands of a man "qui sua calcet / Commoda, subiectae commoda gentis amet" (*Reg*. 3, 11–12). It is he who is responsible for the condition of civil consciousness and patriotic spirit. In the mentioned works, the word "homeland" appears quite often, as a value everybody should care for, and particularly rulers, as he expounds on in his nuptial song.

2. THE HOMELAND'S COMPLAINT AND CALL FOR RECOVERY

Completely devoted to the internal affairs of the state are particularly two works: *Querela Rei publicae Regni Poloniae* and *Ad Polonos proceres*. They are believed to be written in early 1538, and they concern events related to the mentioned gentry rebellion, called the "Hen War" and turbulent Sejm sessions in Piotrków. In both events, Janicki participated at the side of Marshall Piotr Kmita. As a keen observer and talented writer, he described these events in poetic terms, arguably at the request of his patron who played quite an ambiguous role in the dispute between the king and the gentry. For safety reasons, however, at first he distributed his poems anonymously. These writings appeared in print with the author's surname, but without the place or date, so they could appear after he had left to Italy in spring 1538 or even only after his death in late 1542 or early 1543.[11]

Both of these works are usually referred to as political satire. The author himself, however, noted that the first one is the complaint (*querela*), that is – let me remind – a variety of ancient elegy, in which complaints and sorrows are uttered by a dead or dying person, or a personified object, most often a homeland–mother (e.g. in a famous speech against Catiline by Cicero, widely read at that time). In this case, Janicki has the reader hear out his painful statements of the personified Polish Kingdom Republic complaining about its sons, i.e. the gentry, who by their despicable behaviour are leading it straight towards disaster. Poland says:

Desine Romanos narrare, Polone, tumultus
Et plenas misera seditione dies!
Nascuntur graviora domi magnisque resurgunt
Viribus in proprium praecipitanda caput.

[10] Klemens Janicki. *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie*. 1966, 210.
[11] Ćwikliński 1893, 49; Jezienicki 1933, 152.

In partes sum scissa duas pluresque, quod unum
Exitio multis gentibus ante fuit. (*Quer*.1–6)

Hungary is its current example. The Poles, however, do not care for the existing split between both the gentry and the king, and the aristocracy, and they are blind to the goods received from their own homeland: the rights, offices and riches they were granted. They are only chasing after their own benefits. Therefore, the homeland, like a mother – the poet is keen to use personification in his poetry – appears before them and admonishes them to care for their freedom, virtues and common sense, not to use violence, and settle any disputable matters in the sejm of the gentry and the senate of the magnates, and appeal to the king, who has "a good and fair hand" (v. 44). However, the situation is different; instead of defending their homeland, they foment rebellions against the authorities; although the Wallachian enemy Petruła has just managed to destroy her sister Ruthenia, they sow discord and cause injustice, and impose punishment for preaching the truth on its advocates, take away properties and titles, some of which, notably, were acquired through foreign powers. In this tragic situation, Poland prays to God for rescue:

Consilium Regis moderare et vota senatus
Et sanos scissi fac animos populi!
Hosque, mei qui sunt iustissima causa doloris,
De caelo missi fulminis igne crema,
Ut sint exemplo reliquis matremque, quod ipse
Iussisti, quivis discat amare suam. (*Quer*. 101–106)

Strong words for this otherwise gentle and understanding poet! Using an apostrophe, this young poet, in his second patriotic work, now quite personally, turns to the second part of the citizens of the split Poland, to "mighty Polish lords" – *Ad Polonos proceres* – i.e. the magnates. They are hit by the author's words in an even harsher tone than when he previously struck against the gentry through the utterance by Poland. What we are dealing with here is satire in the strict sense, as it is clearly made up of expressions full of irony, sarcasm and bitterness. Before the reader's eyes appear ominous ancient deities of vengeance, the Erinyes, safeguarding the integrity of blood relations, called Furies by the Romans, who chased wrongdoers not only on earth, but also in Hades (hell). Janicki calls them in general Megaeres in Greek, after the worst of them, Megaera. He exclaims excited:

Quae vos tam dirae stimulant ad tanta Maegerae
Dissidia, in proprium sollicitantque malum,
O proceres, illustre genus, Lechaea propago,
Gloria Gradivi maxima, magna togae!
Quis furor aut cuius vos fert insania fati,
Aut quis vos Stygii numinis error agit? (*Proc*. 1–6)

Again, strong words for this naturally lyrical and melancholic poet! They also impact Kmita, his patron! Could the mighty voivode have at that time already taken the side of king Sigismund the Old, conciliatory to the gentry, and not to his wife Bona? After these words there comes a list of the worst magnate vices: discord, self–interest, hypocrisy, dissipated life, false friendship, lies, lack of responsibility, anger, doggedness, violence, searching for benefits, etc., whereas only one thing is needed – concord, personified here by the Roman deity Concordia, a factor of incalculable value, a truly creative force, managing the universe, nature, stars, the entire development of mankind. It it's lost, everything collapses; the state and its citizens decompose, and not only ordinary people are lost, but also those who are at the highest levels of power:

Vos quoque, quis dubitet, quae sunt lugenda, videtis,
Sed pietas ad vos non habet ulla viam.
Publica calcatis, quibus et privata trahuntur,
Cum simul hoc solvi cuncta necesse modo.
Credite, discordes animi, quod et ista ruina
Non minus in vestrum est corruitura caput;
Idem etenim Boreas, imam qui verrit arenam,
Robora silvarum frangere summa solet (*Proc*. 91–98)

The poet spoke here with pathos by citing the Bible without names, mythology and ancient authors, and he included maxims and used rich rhetorical means. He followed a good substantive and stylistic model of his master and patron, Andrzej Krzycki, who was the first in Poland to speak in the tone of moralist and prophet predicting the state's fall if its manners are not improved. In *Religionis et Rei publicae querimonia* (1522), this great dignitary with an excellent satirical knack felt indignant with the luxury, lust for power and riches, self–interest, and discord of the ruling classes, that is the class he belonged to. In Krzycki, however, personified Poland, because of its glorious past, does not lose its hope for salvation, which it places in the God–fearing ruler, work of the sejms, and the divine help of Christ. Janicki followed in the footsteps of his master, but he used his own style, and was much more severe in the judging of the reality. Nevertheless, it is hard to tell in good conscience to what extent these poems reflect the views of the young, peasant poet, who in his short life – as results from his entire output – was guided by great moral sensitivity and patriotic feelings, and how far they convey the thoughts and aspirations of such an experienced and cunning politician las Kmita. However, it was not Kmita, but Krzycki, master of satire, who was the teacher of the clever student from Januszkowo. So, there is no reason to attribute this satire to another author.[12]

Since then, works full of care for the fortune of the state due to decay of morals and loss of the civil sense will appear quite often in 16th century poetry. And the

[12] Vide Nowak-Dłużewski 1966, 137.

one closest in time to the Wielkopolska poet will be Mikołaj Rej of Nagłowice, who at the end of his famous *Krótka rozprawa między Panem, Wójtem i Plebanem* (1543) written in Polish will also introduce personified Poland to give his memorable work a broad political overtone and the characteristic features of ancient poetry which he allegedly knew poorly. Also Jan Kochanowski in *Zgoda* will make reference to this type of work fulfilling an important function in political journalism.

3. WHERE HAVE THE ANCESTORS' MORALS GONE?

Janicki's text with a Latin title *In Polonici vestitus varietatem et inconstantiam dialogus* is a political satire, in which the author ridicules the dress and uniform of Polish military during the reign of king Sigismund the Old. Poles are getting rid of their native dress, and put on bizarre foreign garments borrowed from different nations: Italians, Germans, French, Hungarians, Turks, and Tatars.[13] What's more, with the change of dress they seem to alter their mentality and first of all their fortitude. And this becomes very important for the state, not to say dangerous.

He put a conversation on this into the lips of king Jagiełło, wearing a sheepskin, and Stanisław Stańczyk, the royal jester known to the poet, who in this way was featured for the first time in literature, and since then he will appear in it for centuries. King Jagiełło, the hero from Grunwald, was raised from the dead by the poet, to support Poland by his wise advice in the times when it was threatened by Turkish conquest. This situation, according to the king, is more difficult than defeating the Teutonic Order. In *Dialogus*, in whose background there constantly recurs the hostile Turk, the king takes the side of tradition both in dress and spiritual attitude, calling on Poles to return to the morals of their ancestors both in the military and civil spheres. Meanwhile, Stańczyk, strangely dressed, defends the present state of affairs, that is the prevailing fashions, as over time, by necessity, also the fashion world around us changes. Clownlike, just like that, he refutes the allegations of the king who is watching the current reality with his eyes from a past century. The conversation sees uncourteous words: "you fool" – uttered by both of them, as if there were no difference in their status! The king says: soldier's gear and arms have changed, senators' dress has changed: one wears cut shoes now, others wear light armour, short mantles and low shoes, they put on magnificent chains and glittering rings. Jagiełło dislikes all this so much that tears well up in his eyes at this sight. But Stańczyk mockingly comforts him that despite the visible change of dress and soldier's gear, the heart and spirit of Poles remain as they used to be. The

[13] At that time, similar allegations about dress were made to other nations: French, English, Germans, and Italians; vide Judkowiak, Sienkiewicz 1991: 97.

interlocutor, cross–questioned by the king, admits that he is a jester, but claims to be a soldier, and his jester's dress is a shield to protect him from blows. Then the king ends the discussion with a significant question: "Num vera loquentes / A vestris baculum praemia ferre solent." Thus, the poet takes the side of the king as one who praises past times and the morals of the ancestors living at the beginning of the rule of the great Jagiellonian Dynasty, and seeing the Turkish threat the way he sees it during the reign of Sigismund the Old.

The above satire originates from late 1541 or early 1542. It's an ingenuous and quite new approach to this subject in Polish literature because of the use of dialogue with a dead person. Although conversations with the dead was known as early in ancient literature,[14] and Renaissance Italian or German writers used it, in Poland the poet from the area around Żnin was also a pioneer. His dialogue written in elegiac distichs unfolds very animatedly, being both compact and funny. The characters are concrete, presented plastically, with clear views of Sigismund's reality. Choosing the character of Stańczyk to be the king's interlocutor does not surprise us, because he was among the poet's close friends from Cracow.[15] This satirical treatment of the subject related to a quite real Turkish threat that was not liked by his contemporary, writer Andrzej Lubelczyk, who argued that this type of work only depreciated this dangerous threat for the homeland in the eyes of society.[16] Apparently, Lubelczyk did not know of Janicki's anti–Turkish statements in his elegies, where he repeatedly warned his compatriots in strong words against the Turkish threat and unfolded catastrophic visions not only for Poland, but also for the entirety of Europe.

The versatile fashion in the Republic of the Gentry as something controversial will be addressed somewhat later by Mikołaj Rej in *Żywot człowieka poczciwego* (1558), and Łukasz Górnicki in *Dworzanin* (1566), as well as Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, Marcin Bielski or Piotr Rojzjusz. In particular, the famous work by Rej *Krótka rozprawa między Panem, Wójtem i Plebanem* has much in common with Janicki's satire. One can suppose that Rej knew not only this work of the poet from Wielkopolska and took advantage of its ideas, but also he could have known him personally and have been one of his acquaintances or friends.

4. NUPTIAL SONG IN THE HOMELAND'S SERVICE

Paradoxically, his political works must also include Janicki's nuptial songs devoted to king Sigismund Augustus and his father, Sigismund the Old. It was a custom of neo–Latin poets in Renaissance Europe that also in epithalamia

[14] E.g. Lucian of Samosata of 2nd century A.D.

[15] Vide Krzyżanowski 1958, 301–2; 349–50.

[16] Vide Klemens Janicki, *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie.* 1966, 403.

the power and glory of rulers was preached, and Various political views were expressed.[17] To some extent, a part of this trend is an epithalamium by Andrzej Krzycki, master and patron of the poet from Januszkowo. *Epithalamium* (*epithalamion)*, nuptial song, was a quite popular genre in the literature, practised in all the epochs beginning from high antiquity. In Poland, this song appeared in the early Renaissance; following Paweł of Krosno and Jan Dantyszek, who wrote Latin works for the wedding of Sigismund the Old and Barbara Zapolya, also Krzycki composed in dactylic hexameter a work in honour of this king's wedding with duchess Bona Sforza (*Epithalamium divi Sigismundi primi regis et inclitae Bonae reginae Polonae* 1518).[18] To be more specific in terms of this work's genre, it must be said that it is an epic epithalamium, as the poet went beyond the wedding ceremony itself, and extolled in it above usual measure the king's greatness and his troop's bravery. Therefore, two parts are clearly distinguished in it. The first one includes a story of Erato, muse of lyric love poetry, about the ruler's plight, due, among other things, to his wife's death and numerous wars from which Mars and Venus let him emerge victorious. In the second part, described as lyrical hymenaios,[19] mythological deities lead to the marriage of the Polish ruler with the princess from Bari.

Well acquainted with the Polish and European literature, Janicki could not have failed to know his patron's nuptial song, all the more so as he was – of which there are many indications – as well as his librarian. When from the second half of 1542 preparations were underway for the ceremony of the wedding of Sigismund Augustus with Elisabeth, daughter of Ferdinand I, king of Bohemia and Hungary, he followed in the footsteps of his adored master, and decided to join in the literary current adding splendour to these nuptials. In Cracow, where most likely he was staying at that time, there certainly prevailed a wedding atmosphere escalating with the princess' coming arrival from Vienna set for 6th May 1543. This relationship was not accepted by a major part of the dignitaries. Neither was it accepted by his mother, queen Bona. The poet, however – as can be inferred from his work – supported again the political thought of Sigismund the Old, who attempted to unite the Jagiellonians more closely with the house of the Habsburgs, and with that in mind, with the last ounce of his strength, he composed in the second half of 1542, or possibly in early 1543, a long, two–piece, nuptial song. However, he did not wait until it was published, nor for the ceremony he had wanted to honour so much. After his death, his friends, Augustyn Rotundus and Jan Antoninus, executors of his will, found it among

[17] Vide Nowak-Dłużewski 1966, 5–18.

[18] Matters related to the epithalamium in old Poland were broadly discussed by Mroczek (1989).

[19] *Hymenaios* (Latin – *hymenaeus*), related to wedding deity Hymen, in ancient poetry, it was a nuptial song sung by the procession of the bride led into the groom's house, where the marriage feast took place.

other writings and considered it worthy of printing. In the preface to the edition they wrote: "magno quippe haec illius lucubratio constat, nam in gravissimo suo morbo ita ei intentus erat, ut prope modum pro confesso sit mortem eum sibi, cum valetudini non parceret, accelerasse."[20]

The first short characterisation of Janicki's nuptial elegy was provided in the preface to the edition by the publishers, Rotundus and Antoninus, seasoned connoisseurs of Latin literature. Namely, they noticed that it had been written according to different assumptions then those which are usually valid in this type of poetry, since it neither features mythological characters related to the wedding, like Venus or Cupid, nor does it include any descriptions of processions, plays, rituals or the course of the entire ceremony. The reason for this approach they saw in the tragic psychophysical situation the poet had been in for a long time. He knew – as they say – by virtue of his poetic premonition that he would die before he saw anything of the wedding splendour. So, he decided to turn his poetic splendour to the matters most important for both kings and their subjects, that is to issues of national significance, which in greatest measure depend on good monarchical power. Therefore, he first presented in all its greatness and glory a picture of the accomplishments of Sigismund the Great, father of the groom and father of the homeland (*pater patriae*), who as the king of the great state is happy about the success he's achieved so far, and is glad about his son's entering into marriage with a distinguished Austrian bride. What also results from this fact is the old king's hope for his son's much expected progeny. In the other part of the song, the poet turned to the king's son, Sigismund Augustus, whom he wished he could be as happy as his father by emulating him. So much for the Renaissance publishers who perceived the fundamental message of the work.

This two–piece nuptial work by Janicki by and large makes up a unity of composition, and is primarily a laudatory song (*enkomion*) in honour of both kings and the Polish state, written on the occasion of the wedding to come. The first part (*Ad Sigismundum primum Polonorum regem*), with 274 verses of elegiac distich, concerns almost entirely the father, and the second part, slightly shorter, containing 232 verses, refers to the son, with references to his great father. Whereas the part devoted to Sigismund the Old bears distinctive features of a panegyric in the best sense of the term, the other part assumes a more didactic nature with respect to the groom. In any case, the author himself in the introduction to the first part of the epithalamium specifies the manner of his approach to this event by saying outright to the king:

Dona canam a superis in te congesta; sed istud
Dum facio, vultu, pectore, fronte fave!
Non ut adulator de te cantabo; putamus
Debere a Musis hoc scelus esse procul,

[20] Klemens Janicki, *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie.* 1966, 183.

Sed memorare libet divum benefacta, Polonis
Quae per te fundunt accumulantque tuis. (*Epith*. 1, 17–22).

The character of the bride appears in both parts of the song, but far in the background. The poet, as the admirer – not to use the word panegyrist connoting flatterer – and mentor, turns in an apostrophe to the main characters mentioned, Polish king and his son, presents to the reader their uncommon characters and, understandably, presents their virtues, describes achievements, expresses praises, and gives friendly advice to the son. Rich content of these works has a transparent composition.

The introduction to the first part of epithalamium begins with a lofty apostrophe to king Sigismund the Old, calling him on to joy and gratitude to the heavens for present and past benefactions sent to the homeland by his intervention, which the poet will be reminding fairly, without flattery (v. 1–22). The first virtue that the Polish king received from the heavens is wisdom (*sapientia*), which was possessed by the biblical Salomon. Wisdom is the mother of his further virtues and achievements: justice, victories over enemies, riches, fame, subjects' love, and peace with the neighbours (23–40). Then, in an epical manner, the author informs about numerous victorious battles with the Tatars or Wallachians, and in particular with Moscow tsar Vasili (41–108). With a Polish citizen's pride, he especially relates the victory at Orsza in 1514, which the whole of Rome and many European Christian countries rejoiced over:

Fama volat facti terram vulgata per omnem,
Quae magnum Europae nomine nomen habet.
Tum etiam Decimum fautori egisse Leonem
Roma refert rates per sua templa Deo,
Collibus in septem laetos repetisse triumphos
Et festos aliquot continuasse dies. (*Epith*. 1, 97–101)

By using a rhetorical figure called omission (*praetermissio*), he continues the description of Sigismund's victorious march, speaking about establishing order in East Prussia, where power was exercised by his nephew Albrecht I (109–114). In further distiches, he exalts striving for peace, as this is the only thing that the king is after, when he takes hold of weapon. In quite a long fragment, he voiced a praise of peace by saying, among others, the following:

Ecce silent Mosci, Valachi Turcaeque Getaeque
Tot bellis pax est parta, Polone, tibi.
Pax tua rura colit, pax laetis erat in agris
Dives securum flore revincta caput,
Quaeque latrociniis loca quondam infesta fuerunt,
Ire iubet tutis mercibus, ire rotis.
Sic opibus patriam mirandis ditat et infert
Nostro fortunae munera cuncta solo (*Epith*. 1, 121–128)

Thanks to the peace, citizens became rich, and as never before, higher culture flourisher among them – as emphasised by the poet in exceptionally strong words[21] – which was marked by spreading the knowledge of foreign languages, change of the customs of every–day life , even the outward appearance of people, dress style, and law, and justice were enhanced in all regions of the Polish Kingdom (*Imperium Polonum*). And these goods not only embraced the upper classes, but also ordinary people. So much grandeur appeared at that time in the homeland, that the poet lost himself, as it were, in counting them. He will also mention the construction and furnishings of lots of churches, including the superb Wawel Chapel (195–214). The Poles can be proud of their homeland as "it is second to no other nation." In appealing to the king, called here "the homeland's father", to continue his current policy, Janicki passes on to present and praise his closest family: he mentions royal fathers and grandfathers, as well as brothers sitting before him on the thrones of Poland, Bohemia and Hungary, his brother holding the office of cardinal, and is brother who became a saint and is worshipped on a par with Saint James of Compostela or other saints in Rome. Numerous other members of his family, both male and female, were approached by Janicki with many rhetorical questions and comparisons with branchy oak from which springs up a dense forest which is impossible to embrace (215–252).

In the ending of this part of the nuptial elegy, the poet sums up the very successful rule of king Sigismund the Old, discribed as invincible ruler, whom he wishes many years of further reign. In referring to the wedding ceremony of his son, the poet heralds joy at his grandsons who will be born to him by a "maid who shines brighter than stars." The final verses are a call for joy and a reference of his future joy in heaven (253–274).

The other part of the nuptial song – *Ad Sigismundum Secundum Augustum Polonorum Regem* flows more along the tracks of conventional epithalamic topics. It begins – like the previous one – with an apostrophe to the groom (1–4). The verses that follow contain the characteristics of the bride who is on her way to Poland, and further on, they extol the beauty and good looks of the young man's body for whom such beauties well–known from mythology like Adonis, Nireus, Achilles or Ganymede are no match. Body beauty itself – perorates the poet – is not enough for the king, it must go hand in hand with the bravery of which Agamemnon and Ascanius, heroes of Homer's and Virgil's epics, area a model (19–40). These and other virtues are part of Sigismund Augustus' character. The poet reminisces about the prince's expedition to the fields of Chocim, and in relation to this expedition, he refers for comparison to the bellicose attitude of Leszek Biały, and the victorious Hannibal at Saguntum.[22] First of all, however,

[21] He somewhat comes back to his insights from the elegy to Krzycki, *Var*. 1, 99–110.

[22] August accompanied hetman Tarnowski all the way down to Chocim in August 1538; Leszek set off for the Rus in 1198; Hannibal, great Carthage commander, already as a young boy

he should contemplate the life and deeds of his great father, and even try to outdo him in this respect, like Alexander the Great outdid his father Philip of Macedon (41–95).

The physical and spiritual presentation of the groom is followed a series of wishes. These concern almost exclusively patriotic matters. First, the poet exhorts Augustus to foster justice and religion, and then to pay attention to choose right people to his royal council. He advises him not only to reject the rabble who can only drink wine, gorge themselves and serve Venus, but also to despise any flatterers, clowns and people urging him to do wrong (101–104). He recommends paying special attention to defenders of the homeland and seasoned veterans. Thus, in many distichs there appears a praise of soldiers and commanders, who, after their long military practice, can be entrusted with management of public affairs. The poet himself sees such a commander useful to the homeland for the time of war and peace, the current guardian of the Podolian border whose war seasoning he describes in a very plastic way (105–158). Although he does not mention his name, one can conjecture that it's Jan Mielecki, castellan of Wiślica, Voivode of Podole.[23]

Those brave and useful to the homeland are also among farmers, as once they were found in this social class by ancient Romans, as illustrated by the famous "plough dictator", Cincinnatus (159–172). When in the future, the king will be performing great deeds, he should also remember about academics, because – as he turns to the king once again –

Quidquid ages, scribent, totum se fundet in orbem
Laus tua in aeternam non moritura diem. (*Epith*. 2, 179–180)

Otherwise, everything will be drowned in the shadows of oblivion, in which the deeds of our first rulers, Lech and Krak, were buried. Whereas to this day there live in memory the ancient Greek commanders from Troy, great conquerors, Alexander of Macedon and Scipio Africanus, Roman kings and present–day rulers, Matthias Corvinus – king of Hungary, and Sigismund – the Roman Emperor of the German Nation, because all of them esteemed poets and historians (v. 181–193). According to the poet, the last[24] deserves special appreciation, as:

Quod tanto doctos complectebatur amore
Quanto sollicitus pignora cara pater.

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took part in the war expeditions of his father, Hamilcar; in 219 B.C.E. he conquered and destroyed Saguntum, a city in Spain.

[23] Vide Klemens Janicki, *Carmina. Dzieła wszystkie.* 1966, 388, footnote to v. 111–158.

[24] Sigismund I, king of Bohemia and Hungary, then German emperor (1410–1437), was Sigismund Augustus' grandmother's grandfather.

Hos in paecipuis semper numeravit amicis
Hos lateri voluit semper adesse suo. (*Epith*. 2, 201–204)

Moreover, this emperor paid no attention to the origin of the scholars. And when magnates accused him that he "is partial to the people of humble birth, fed on the milk from a poor mother in the middle of nowhere", he answered:

Quos ingenio natura Deusque
Praeposuit vobis praeposuitque mihi,
Hos ego praepono cunctis. Virtutibus illos
Aestimo; natalem quid mihi scire locum? (*Epith*. 2, 209–212)

And to such a king does the poet of Januszkowo exclaim in praise: "Those are words worthy of a Roman ruler, worthy of an Emperor, worthy of an ancestor of your grandmother!." On this occasion, the peasant's son has indirectly, in the nuptial song, revealed awareness of his own value in front of the Polish king, whom he tells to imitate the attitude of his distant ancestor, king and emperor with the same name as his: *Sigismundus Rex Augustusque*. The poet calls on bluntly to our Augustus:

Pieriis hoc esto viris, fuit ille quod olim,
Illum, quod decuit, nec tibi turpe puta! (*Epith*. 2, 219–220)

In the end, the poet places most ordinary greetings that are extended on the occasion of marriage, i.e. he wishes him all the blessing from God, and beautiful offspring, and he attaches a short imploring prayer for the heavenly creatures to be "generous, friendly, merry, and gracious" (v. 231) on this solemn day. The epithalamium discussed here, considered by some as a type of elegy,[25] despite its distinctness, preserves – particularly in the second part – a general generic pattern; in the beginning it contains a call for joy, then long praises, and finally numerous wishes and greetings for the spouses combined with an ending prayer to heavenly creatures for all prosperity to them. Although a modest amount of mythology only plays a stylistic function here, there isn't a description of fanciful wedding rituals, and there are many references to current Polish events, the reader does not get detached from the wedding background. It's also true that the poet places here a content that's distant from nuptial songs, and time and again he acts as a patriot. First, he establishes a literary monument to the real monarch, father of the homeland, and then eagerly instructs the young king, future ruler, to contemplate this model and follow it, as that's in the interest of the homeland. This nuptial song, a swan song of the poet who is sensing his imminent death, fully reveals his patriotic attitude, namely care for a properly established ruler, a

[25] Vide Stawecka 1966, 93.

monarch attending to the comprehensive good of his subjects. The peasant poet expresses quite frankly his egalitarian view on the matter of origin, the great role of citizens' education, knowledge of one's country's history, and the standard of material life of all social classes, and not only the chosen ones, as has been the case since the beginning of the state until then. The are no epithalamia in Old Polish literature that would so maturely propagate social and political thoughts with such strength, such literary charm, and – I would almost say – Homeric tone, as this twenty–six–year–old poet, son of a peasant from near Żnin, does. He will be slightly imitated by Andrzej Trzecieski in his *Dialog o małżeństwie Zygmunta Augusta* written five years later, in 1548.[26]

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From the legacy of Klemens Janicki, one can extract and develop against a broader backdrop no few thoughts and no few pictures proving his love for the homeland, and care for its good name among the nations, internal order thanks to the concord of all social classes, peace and security thanks to a far–sighted external policy. Let the reader consider for now sufficient this message and memory on the 500th anniversary of the birth of this remarkable poet, published at a time just as turbulent as back then, although not through armed aggression, but "migration of the peoples", the peaceful deluge of Europe by Muslim immigrants, and destruction of European identity from the inside by unspecified ideologies. Such associations irresistibly came to my mind during my reflections when reading the poems of the first peasant poet, whom I boast about because I come from the same beautiful Pałuki region.

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[26] *Dialogus de coniugio Sigismundi Augusti… anno 1548 factus*.

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DE IANICII AMORE PATRIAE IN EIUS CARMINIBUS EXPRESSO. MEMORIA POETAE QUINGENTESIMO ANNO NATALI REVOCATA (1516–1543)

Summarium

Clemens Ianicius (1516–1543), eximius renascentium litterarum poeta Latinus, agricolae filius, in vico Ianuszkowo prope urbem Snenam natus est. Studiis humanioribus Posnaniae in Academia Lubransciana exactis per breve tempus in aula Andreae Cricii, archiepiscopi Gnesnensis, Poloniae primatis versabatur (1536–1537), deinde post eius mortem inter domesticos Petri Cmitae, palatini Cracoviensis, Regni Poloniae mareschalci est receptus. A quo viro, auctoritate in Regno Poloniae plurimum valenti, missus est in Italiam, ut studiis subtilioribus artem suam poeticam perpoliret. Ibi in celeberrima Universitate Patavina honore artium et philosophiae doctoris atque poetae laureati a M. Antonio Contareno, imperatoris Caroli V comite palatino, est ornatus. Post reditum in Poloniam favor patroni de die elanguit. Ianicius totus musis deditus in rebus publicis politicisque active non participavit, at patriae suae caritatem multis carminum locis pulcherrime canebat. Terram enim natalem, vicos, urbes, incolas Poloniae magno adamavit amore eaque de causa eius civium non solum res gestas, victorias bellicas, studia et artes, cultum et humanitatem, sed etiam internos tumultus, mores corruptos, pericula ex hostibus imminentia in elegiis magni pretii (*Tristium liber*; *Variarum elegiarum liber*) et epigrammatis variis (*Epigrammatum liber*) in lucem protulit. Quaestiones praecipue ad rem publicam pertinentes eiusque classes politicas, nobiles, proceres, regem, peculiaribus tractat poematis ut *Querela Rei Publicae Regni Poloniae*, *Ad Polonos proceres*, *In Polonici vestitus Varietatem et inconstantiam dialogus*. Curae maximae fuerunt ei pericula Turcarum religioni Mahometanae adhaerentium, qui iam Budam occupaverunt et Vindobonam sunt aggressi. Non solum de seditionibus intestinis et bellis externis cives commonebat, verum etiam eis, ne rege Sigismundo Augusto quidem excepto (*Epithalamium serenissimo regi Poloniae, Sigismundo Augusto*), praecepta et consilia dabat prudentia utiliaque.