

THE ORIGINS AND POETICS OF POLISH RENAISSANCE
AND BAROQUE SONNETS

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The first Polish sonnets were created in the second half of the 16th century by Jan Kochanowski, one of the greatest poets Poland has had during its long literary history. Kochanowski was an outstanding renovator of poetry: he repudiated the old medieval tradition of versified didactic dialogues and treatises as well as songs with religious content. Enormously talented and highly educated – at the universities of Cracow, Padua and Bologna – he introduced to Polish poetry new aesthetic and stylistic values, new literary genres and forms, mostly lyrical ones that were meant to be read, not sung or recited to music as was a rule both in the Middle Ages and in early Renaissance poetry.

In their first publication, just before Kochanowski's death in 1584, none of his three sonnets has a graphic pattern characteristic of the sonnet, although none of them is written in stichic verse: the sonnets entitled *Do Franciszka (To Francis)* and *Do Stanisława Wapowskiego (To Stanislas Wapowski)* are arranged with two 4-line and one 6-line stanzas each, the sonnet *Do Paniej (To the Lady)* consists of three 4-line stanzas and one 2-line stanza. For this reason probably, the fact that these three poems are sonnets was not noticed for nearly three centuries. Another reason could be that Kochanowski's sonnets are scattered in his large cycle called *Fraszki (Trifles)*. Only in the second half of the 19th century scholars investigating Kochanowski's writings began to talk about his two poems, *To Francis* and *To Stanislas*, as sonnets, emphasizing that each of them consists of 14 lines and has a rhyme scheme typical of a sonnet. In the first decades of the 20th century this opinion was already established in Polish literary history and the third piece – *To the Lady* – was recognized as a sonnet.

However, there was not then and there is not even today agreement of opinion concerning the sources of inspiration Kochanowski drew upon when introducing the sonnet into his poetry. In the second half of the 19th century there existed already two attitudes as far as the patterns of some of Kochanowski's new (i.e. not connected with ancient literature) topics and forms are concerned: "Italian" and "French". Scholars sharing the second attitude based their belief in the French influence on Kochanowski's writings on two facts: 1. his several-month-long journey across France on the way back from Italy, during which he spent some time in Paris, and 2. the words he wrote in one of his early Latin elegies: "Ronsardum vidi". In 1924 the "French" attitude was supported by the proof driven from the rhyme scheme of two of Kochanowski's sonnets: Władysław Folkierski put forward the thesis that only the sonnet *To Francis* is based on Italian patterns, having one of Petrarchan typical rhyme schemes, while *To Stanislas* and *To the Lady* are of French origin as each of them ends with two lines rhymed together, forming a sort of couplet. According to Folkierski in Italian sonnets the rhyme scheme with the couplet at the end was extremely rare and evidently avoided, even treated as "heresy". On the contrary, he wrote, the rhyme couplets in sextets were frequent in early French sonnets, and Marot often put two successive lines rhymed together inside of the sextet, and his contemporaries and followers, St Gelais and Peletier – at the end of the sextet. In conclusion Folkierski affirmed that the sonnets *To Stanislas* and *To the Lady* present "the types of so called Marotian (marotyyczny) sonnet".¹ These arguments and this designation, evidently incompatible with Marot's own poetic practice, were repeated in the preface to an anthology of Polish sonnets edited by Folkierski in 1925 which soon gained popularity among scholars and students. It certainly contributed to the fact that his opinion – deriving the form of two Kochanowski's sonnets from the French source – has been adopted by many literary historians and those who followed them: the authors of school handbooks. Some of them even "stretched" these French origins, ascribing them to all three Kochanowski's sonnets!

In the long period of seven decades which have passed since Folkierski's anthology was published there have been some voices

¹ Władysław Folkierski, *Sonet polski XVI w. a francuska Plejada*, "Przegląd Warszawski" 1924 n. 33

arguing for Italian patterns in all Kochanowski's sonnets. In 1928 Tadeusz Sinko wrote that Kochanowski's announcement "Ronsardum vidi" was merely a figure of speech, having no more substance than Ovidius's "Vergilium vidi tantum" and being a homage paid to the famous French poet.² There is no evidence that Kochanowski could talk or read in French, Sinko noticed, moreover, the rhyme scheme of those two sonnets with the couplets at the end can be found in Italian literary tradition, namely in some sonnets by Serafino dall'Aquila. In 1973 Wiktor Weintraub pointed to Italian poets whose sonnets could have influenced Kochanowski as regards their rhyme schemes: Fazio degli Uberti, Benedetto Varchi, Torquato Tasso. He added that sonnets built like two Kochanowski's "atypical" ones were allowed by some Italian experts in prosody, as Antonio da Tempo in his *De ritmis vulgaribus* (edited in 1509). "To speak in 1970 of French influence on Kochanowski's poetry – concluded Weintraub – is an anachronism".³

In spite of this evidence the hypothesis of French patterns of Kochanowski's two or all three sonnets can be met even nowadays, and in quite serious works, such the handbook *Renesans* by J. Ziomek or *Słownik Literatary Staropolskiej*. The prospect of Kochanowski drawing his artistic forms not only from antique and Italian literature but also from French sources, the vision of him talking to Ronsard and reading his sonnets etc. is really very attractive. But it cannot be maintained any longer, as the arguments for the Italian origins of all Kochanowski's sonnets intensify if we once again take into consideration their rhyme scheme, and if we add to it other features of their poetics.

Besides the poets named by Sinko and Weintraub, the rhyme scheme with a couplet at the end was popular with many other authors of Italian sonnets of the 13th – 16th centuries. It was used already in the oldest sonnets. Petrarch left a few sonnets with such rhyme scheme.⁴ It was employed by so called Perugian poets who wrote 64

² Tadeusz Sinko, "Ronsardum vidi". *Padwa i Paryż w rozwoju Jana Kochanowskiego*, "Przegląd Współczesny" 1928 n. 69.

³ Wiktor Weintraub, *O przerzutniach Kochanowskiego i ich włoskim wzorcu*. In: *Rzecz czarnońska*. Kraków 1977, p. 332–334.

⁴ Leandro Biadene, *Morfologia del sonetto nei sec. XIII e XIV. Studi di filologia romanza IV*, Roma 1889, p. 27–30.

sonnets in this structure, by Pietro dei Faytinelli, Niccolo de Rossi, and the poets belonging to the literary school of the cardinal Bembo.⁵ Sonnets having two last lines rhymed together were treated as not violating the rules not only by Antonio da Tempo, but also by Francesco da Barberino or Gidino da Sommacampagne.⁶

On the other hand, in French Renaissance sonnets the rhyme scheme with a couplet at the end was not used as eagerly as it has been presented in Polish studies. Marot never employed it, while Ronsard used it only in 8 sonnets of his 627.⁷ It is worth noting that the similar way as taken by Kochanowski, of using "non-canonical" rhyme scheme of Italian sonnets, can be encountered in the 16th century in other literatures, e.g. English and Croatian.⁸

There is another feature of the poetics of the sonnet, namely the metrical structure, which demands that the researcher treat Kochanowski's sonnets as connected not with French but with Italian literary tradition. The metre he employed in all three sonnets is 11s, i.e. 11 syllables long with the caesura after the 5th syllable, or as it happens to be designated in Polish versology, 11 (5+6). This metre could earlier be found in Poland only in a few religious songs which were probably adopted from medieval Latin. The fact that Kochanowski used this metre freely in many lyrical poems, epigrams and in the rhymeless verse of tragedy demonstrates influence of Italian poetry in which 11-syllable metre was then the most popular one. It is clear that Kochanowski made 11s originating from Latin, the Polish equivalent of the Italian 11-syllable metre without caesura. On the other hand, the 11-syllable metre was not unused in French poetry after Pléiade. Marot and his colleagues wrote their sonnets with 10-syllable metre, while Ronsard, after the early period when he used the same metre, introduced the alexandrine as the form of his sonnets.

Kochanowski's sonnets, all of them absolutely original as regards their contents, are of various character: it is most probable that their author, experimenting with a form of the sonnet, experimented also

⁵ Walter Mönch, *Das Sonett. Gestalt und Geschichte*, Heidelberg 1955, p. 26.

⁶ Leandro Biadene, *Morfologia del sonetto nei sec. XIII e XIV*, cit., p. 36.

⁷ Walter Mönch, *Das Sonett. Gestalt und Geschichte*, cit., p. 19.

⁸ Svetozar Petrović, *Problem soneta u starijoj hrvatskoj književnosti*, Zagreb 1968, pp. 113, 143.

with its theme and style. The most "Petrarchan" is the sonnet *To the Lady*. In the words full of court gallantry Kochanowski praises the beauty and virtue of the (unknown) addressee, this praise however being only a pretext to emphasize the power of poetry and the poetical talent of the author. The sonnets *To Stanislas* and *To Francis* are cast as poetical letters to friends. The first of them is often quoted as an expression of Kochanowski's yearning for a once more powerful although poorer Poland and his concern for the public spirit of his fellow-citizens. The second one, using motifs of ancient literature to construct a joke, is written in a playful tone often employed by Kochanowski in his "trifles". Such diversity of themes and styles is in agreement with the rules formulated for the sonnet by Italian poets and theoreticians, according to which it could express any feelings. Some of them considered the sonnet as a sort of epigram, with a fixed number of lines and a typical rhyme scheme as distinguishing marks.⁹ Placing his sonnets in the cycle *Fraszki* which comprises many epigrams, Kochanowski displayed evidence of knowing all these views.

Besides the characteristics conforming to the poetics of Italian sonnet, there are some other features which can be attributed to Kochanowski's own inventiveness. These manifestations of artistic freedom apply first of all to the relations between the division of the poem into lines and its syntactic segmentation. In Kochanowski's sonnets some situations occur when two sorts of segmentation diverge, sometimes in a dramatic way, i. e. with the use of sharp *enjambement*.¹⁰ In two of his sonnets, *To Francis* and *To Stanislas*, Kochanowski does not follow the strong tendency, typical for Petrarchan sonnets, to the syntactic separateness not only of the octet and sextet but also of every quatrain and every tercet.¹¹ Nor does he follow the tendency to use *enjambement* extremely rarely; in Petrarchan sonnets it occurs exclusively within quatrains and tercets. In *To*

⁹ Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago 1961.

¹⁰ The free usage of *enjambement* was one of the most important elements of Kochanowski's reform of versification, allowing him to break away from the domination of syntax on the flow of the verse, characteristic of earlier poetry.

¹¹ Fernando Figurelli, *L'architettura del sonetto in F. Petrarca*, in: *Stil – und Formprobleme in der Literatur*, Heidelberg 1959, pp. 177–180.

Francis Kochanowski joins two quatrains by *enjambement*. In *To Stanislas* he intersects the three different sorts of segmentation present in the poem: the syntactic division does not agree with the division into lines and with the rhyme scheme, causing the tenseness of intonation that permeates the whole sonnet.

As Kochanowski's own modification of the regular structure of the sonnet can be also treated the rhyme scheme of the octet in *To the Lady*: abba cddc, unknown to the Italian (or to the French) poets.

The metre Kochanowski employed, i.e. 11s, became one of the determinants of the sonnet in Poland for several decades (with one exception I will speak later on). It is not quite certain, however, whether one should see in the direct influence of Kochanowski's sonnets. The next sonnets, written by Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński, "the first poet of old Polish literature after Kochanowski",¹² were published in 1601, twenty years after their author's death. Szarzyński knew Italian and could have chosen the metre for his sonnets independently of Kochanowski, although relying of course on his poetic achievement in a general way. There is no formal evidence of his knowledge of Kochanowski's sonnets. But as Szarzyński most probably wrote his six pieces in 1579-1581,¹³ Kochanowski's sonnets, circulating among his literary audience as it was customary in those days, could have been known to him. An additional proof could be the rhyme scheme of all Szarzyński's sonnets, which is the same as the one used by Kochanowski in his sonnet *To Stanislas*: abba abba cdc dcc. It is because of this scheme that not only Kochanowski's but also Szarzyński's sonnets have up to the recent times been presented as "realizing the pattern of the French sonnet, so called Marotian".¹⁴

The other features of the poetics of these six sonnets are in most cases very different as compared with the sonnets written by Kochanowski. Even the distinctive character of the sonnet as a form of lyrical poetry was not taken by Szarzyński in the experimental way:

¹² Jan Błoński, *Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński a początki polskiego baroku*, Kraków 1996, II ed., p. 241.

¹³ As Błoński supposes (p. 30).

¹⁴ *Słownik Terminów Literackich*, II ed., Warszawa 1988. See also A. Rysiewicz, *Zagadnienia retoryki w analizie poezji polskiej przetomu XVI i XVII w.*, Wrocław 1990.

above each of his six pieces he put its name *sonet* (with one n). Thus Szarzyński showed that he was “poetically aware” and coined a new literary term which since that time will be generally employed.

Kochanowski’s sonnets could be justifiably contained within the framework of “optimistic” Renaissance literature. The sonnets written by Szarzyński (which are the best part of his poetry) open and superbly realize absolutely new prospects. With the exception of sonnet VI, which is a masterful panegyric, they touch upon metaphysical problems, emphasizing the inevitability of death, the vanity of earthly aspirations, the often tragic fight with passions which takes place in the human soul and which can find its solution only in eternal peace, in God. Such contents are modelled according to the conceit of spiritual and intellectual drama expressing itself in the chain of opposite notions. To render this conceit of thought the conceits of “language in verse” are used. The sonnets characterize themselves by the extreme dynamics: they are bursting with antitheses and antonyms, they are dense with epithets, apostrophes and hyperbolic metaphors. To this dynamic style contribute sharp *enjambements* causing sometimes a semantic ambiguity, and complicated inversions comprising often a couple of lines or even more. This does not allow for a smooth reading of one line of a poem after another. The syntax is sometimes additionally complicated by digressive parenthetical clauses in brackets. Such means of organizing poetic text can be found of course in many baroque poems but in a sonnet, as a short, strictly limited and distinctly structured piece, they manifest themselves with particular strength and vividness.

In the development of the thematic line, in the composition of the motifs in Szarzyński’s sonnets one cannot observe any division between the “narrative” or “descriptive” part contained in the octets and the “reflective” part contained in the sextets – a division which is one of the determinants of a sonnet, according to many theoretical opinions. But in all five metaphysical sonnets there is another division: the last two lines are distinctly marked not only by the rhyme scheme, as they always form a couplet, but also because they contain the point of the poem. It is well known that the point in the baroque poetics became one of the fundamental artistic means. Thus Szarzyński’s choice of the rhyme scheme with the couplet at the end for his sonnets was most probably caused by its role in reinforcing the point of the poem.

Metaphysical problems and analyses of the human condition in the context of religious belief, expressed with the aid of artistic means typical of baroque poetics, are also characteristic of the sonnets included in the poetry collection which royal courtier and diplomat Sebastian Grabowiecki published in 1590 under the title *Rymy duchowne* (*Spiritual Rimes*). However, in his preface he did not reveal that this poetry is fully (or mostly, as has yet to be determined) translated from *Rime spirituali* by Gabriele Fiamma. In any case all sixteen poems, which under the Polish name *sonet* Grabowiecki placed in two volumes of his *Rymy duchowne* are certainly translated, more or less faithfully, from Fiamma's book. For his translation Grabowiecki used the same metre 11s which Kochanowski made the equivalent of Italian *endecasillabo*, and it is evident that here he followed the poet who was already very popular among the intellectual elite and held in high esteem. But where did he take from the Polish name *sonet* which he placed instead of Italian *sonetto* (in Fiamma) above each of those sixteen pieces? This question cannot be answered unambiguously. Either Grabowiecki invented the name by himself or – which is more probable – he had read Szarzyński's sonnets in manuscript.

In the poetics of Fiamma's sonnets Grabowiecki made but slight changes. They hardly concern the domain of artistic imagery: he renders nearly all Fiamma's poetic figures and never adds new ones. He follows the rhyme scheme used by Fiamma strictly enough, only sometimes changing them in the sextets. E.g. the sextet of the *Sonnet XXXV*, which in Fiamma's is rhymed cde cde, has in Grabowiecki's *Sonet 4* the form cde edc (also known from the Petrarchan tradition). It should be added that neither in Fiamma's sonnets nor in their translations are there any schemes with the couplet at the end which could help to emphasize the culmination of the semantic course of the poem, i.e. the point. But in Fiamma's *Rime spirituali* the point, not only in sonnets, is not treated as an obligatory or even important figure of thought and style.

Some differences between Fiamma's and Grabowiecki's way of organizing the sonnet can be seen as far as the relations between syntactic division and the division into lines are concerned. At the end of each quartet and tercet Fiamma never violates the syntactic boundary by enjambement and Grabowiecki imitates him accurately. His sonnets, however, are often more expressive and more dynamic, because he uses sharp *enjambements* inside quartets and tercets more frequen-

tly than Fiamma, following in this Kochanowski's or perhaps also Szarzyński's example.

Although unoriginal, Grabowiecki's sonnets could nevertheless be important for the evolution of the Polish sonnet. They established religious meditation as one of the topics of the sonnet, they introduced some rhyme schemes not used up to that time and the rhymeless sonnet (masterfully rendered in Polish). They would have probably been of greater influence if Grabowiecki's translation had a more even artistic quality. But beside high poetic achievements in some sonnets, as pointed above, there are other pieces in which the course of the sentences is too complicated to understand the contents properly; sporadically they even violate the rules of syntax. It is quite possible that the form of a sonnet was not easy for the translator. From this point of view another fact seems to be significant: Grabowiecki did not render all the sonnets contained in *Rime spirituali* in their proper form, i.e. that of a sonnet. Six of Fiamma's sonnets in his translation are shaped as poems built with four 4-line stanzas which were the most popular stanzaic form in lyric.

In the period of early Baroque, in which Szarzyński's and Grabowiecki's poetry was written, there was no further interest in the sonnet. Such interest arose later on, when baroque poetics was in the full bloom. At this time appeared the first Polish translations of a few Petrarch's sonnets: 132, 133 and 134 in *Canzoniere*. The brilliant and renowned poet who did the translation, Daniel Naborowski, did not employ as the metre the 11^s, as his predecessors had done. Instead, he chose 13⁷, the metre which was the most popular in the Renaissance, but which at the time of the mature baroque gave way in the exclusive, "high" poetry to the 11^s. It is the more strange as Naborowski was broadly educated (among others in Padua) and certainly noticed that among contemporary Polish poets having high literary ambitions Italian literature had been treated as the main source of artistic patterns, including verse forms, i.e. also 11^s syllable line as a metre of sonnets.

However, for Naborowski's choice of 13⁷ some artistic motifs can be found. He favoured this metre in all his writings, both original and translated, he even changed *endecasillabo* into 13⁷ in terza rima while translating Petrarch's *Triumph of Love*. It seems possible that knowing well French literature of those times he could have been influenced by the Alexandrine, which dominated it and was used as a metre of sonnets: Naborowski was the first Polish poet to employ 13⁷

as the equivalent of the Alexandrine in his translation of a poem by Du Bartas and in his 20-line paraphrase of a sonnet written by Laugier.

In his translations of Petrarch's sonnets Naborowski changed also, and to a large extent, the rhyme schemes. All three of them are rhymed according to one of the "canonical" types: abba abba cde dce, while each of Naborowski's sonnets has its own rhyme scheme, unknown to the Petrarchan tradition. In the octets there are always three rhyme endings (*abba acca*) and in two sonnets they are linked to the sextets by the common rhyme scheme. But as far as the contents of the sonnets and their style are concerned, Naborowski's translation can be regarded as optimal. It is characteristic that Naborowski chose for his translation three of Petrarch's sonnets, which look and sound as purely baroque works: they are based on the conceits of thought and style, and built with the sets of contrasting notions, antitheses, oxymorons. All such semantic and stylistic oppositions, all anaphoric constructions, rhetorical questions, even the growing or weakening intensity of intonation are rendered by Naborowski perfectly with only a few amplifications and rare changes, and probably not without the help of the freedom which he allowed himself in the field of versification.

To his translations from Petrarch's sonnets Naborowski gave the common title *Próba trzech sonetów* (*The attempt at three sonnets*) and presented them (in 1630) with other poetic works translated by him from Italian and French to King Władysław the Fourth who was a great patron of the arts and literature. In the introductory part he placed his unique original sonnet, being an ingenious panegyric and written also with 13 $\bar{7}$ syllable metre. However, in spite of the high artistic value of Naborowski's sonnets, his idea of writing them with a longer syllabic metre had not been followed. Jan Andrzej Morsztyn, the most outstanding lyrical poet of the 17th century, in all twenty five sonnets used 11 $\bar{5}$, the metre which predominated in all his writings. But the freedom of rhyme scheme introduced by Naborowski left its traces in Morsztyn's sonnets. In some of them he went even further, using alternating rhyme in octets, which was then extremely rare in Polish poetry, and has never been employed by Morsztyn in his other lyrical poems. In the sextets he freely used both "canonical" and "non-canonical" rhyme schemes.

It should be stressed here that in Morsztyn's sonnets, as in nearly all his works, rhyme is an important poetic tool. Morsztyn, toge-

ther with several other poets, rejected full grammatical rhymes and instead, turned to the half-grammatical or even “non-grammatical” ones which allowed him to take full advantage of the semantic value of the rhyming words. In sonnets such a model of rhyming is more difficult than in simpler poetic forms, and therefore could be more highly regarded. Thanks to the rejection of grammatical rhyming one of the most favoured rules of baroque poetics could be realized in the domain of versification: this is so called *discordia concors*, when (in this case) rhyming words agree in the semantic respect but disagree in sound – or inversely. Similar semantic and sound play in rhyme occurs in many Morsztyn’s sonnets and is often enriched by such figures as *annominatio* and *poliptoton*.

Nineteen sonnets written by Morsztyn are almost certainly original. Six pieces he translated from Marino but with so many deviations regarding composition, syntax and rhyme scheme that they should rather be called paraphrases. Morsztyn, however, kept Marino’s typical conceits of dramatic comparisons and oppositions of thoughts, feelings and images, as well as his tendency to end the sonnets with a point. This way of constructing sonnets could have influenced his original writing.

As far as their themes and motifs are concerned, Morsztyn’s sonnets represent high variability. Most of them are love poems, and beside their structural rules they could be seen as madrigals which Morsztyn wrote eagerly shaping them as short pieces written with 11s or 13 γ stichic verse. Three sonnets are of a religious character. One is an obscene letter to a friend, another one blasphemous riddle in that way Morsztyn contrasted the “low” content of a sonnet with its “high” form. Still another sonnet is an threnody or rather a section of a large funeral poem in which the Muses sing successively their parts which are differentiated not only by their contents but also by their form: there is stichic verse written with 13 γ meter, a sonnet, a poem in 4-line stanzas, terza rima, canzone etc. From this point of view the whole poem is a laboratory of verse forms mostly taken from Italian literature. Such usage and such contexts of sonnets in Morsztyn’s poetry indicate that he had treated sonnet not as a genre but as a form. A similar attitude seems to be characteristic of the other authors of old sonnets.

The next sonnets dating probably back to the 1670’s or 1680’s were written by the magnate, scholar and eminent poet Stanisław

Herakliusz Lubomirski. He left only two sonnets: one of them is an eulogy to Tacitus, constructed in accordance with the rules of lofty panegyric style, another one, *Sonet na całą mękę Pańską* (*Sonnet on the Entire Lord's Passion*) shows the author's extraordinary virtuosity in developing a religious topic. It is rich in language and sound figures which serve to contrast notions and images and to condense quite severely the contents in order to surprise and amaze the reader. Both sonnets have a fully "canonical" rhyme scheme and are shaped with 11s metre.

Lubomirski's sonnets close the first epoch of the evolution of the sonnet. In the historical poetics of the Polish Renaissance and Baroque the sonnet was tightly connected with the Italian poetry which had been then treated as the most valuable source of literary patterns, and therefore held in highest esteem. When after a long period of neglect (in the 18th century) the sonnet was reborn, its rank was relatively lower and in later evolution it never reached its former top place in the hierarchy of the poetic forms. But some traces of this early aura of the highest artistic quality of the sonnet survived. It is characteristic and slightly touching, if not amusing, that even nowadays, when there is no differentiation of lyrical poetry and when regular verse hardly exists at all, nearly every young poet tries to compose a sonnet, a real one or – in most cases – a piece similar to a sonnet, e.g. written in rhymeless free verse, but having 14 lines divided graphically into two quatrains and two tercets and very often entitled "sonet". It is, of course, playing with literary tradition, but it also shows that sonnet is for its author a sort of evidence of being a poet.

JAN KOCHANOWSKI

Do Franciszka

Ani Ulisses, ani Jazon młody,	a
Choć o nich siła starzy nabajali,	b
Tak wiele ziemie snąć nie objechali,	b
Jako ty, który od Tybrowej wody	a

Szedłeś, Franciszku, przez różne narody	a
Aż tam, gdzie nigdy lata nie uznali	b
I ogniów palić ludzie nie przestali,	b
Prze mróz gwałtowny i prze wieczne lody.	a

Więc i w to nie wierz, aby w tej krainie c
Medea jaka i Circe nie była, d
Która by ludzi obracała w świnie. c
Tak się tu dobrze druga wyćwiczyła, d
Żeby tę samą, co tak bardzo słynie, c
W niedźwiedzia Circę łatwo obróciła. d

Do St. Wapowskiego

Nie przez pochlebstwo ani złote dary, a
Jako te lata zwykły terazniejsze, b
Ale przez cnotę na mięcie ważniejsze, b
Godzisz, Wapowski, jako zwyczaj stary. a

Szczęśliwe czasy, kiedy giermak szary a
Był tak poćciwy jako ty dzisiejsze b
Jedwabne bramy co raz kosztowniejsze; b
Wprawdzieć nie było kosztu na maskary, a

Ale był zawsze koń na staniu rzeźwi, c
Drzewo, tarcz pewna i pancierz na ścienie, d
Szabla przy boku, sam pacholek trzeźwi. c
Nie szukał pierza wyspał się na sienie, d
A bił się dobrze. Bodaj tak uboga e
Dziś Polska była i poganom sroga! e

Do paniej

Imię twe, pani, które rad mianuję, a
Znajdziesz w mych rymiech często napisane, b
A kiedy będzie od ludzi czytane, b
Masz przed inszymi, jeśli ja co czuję. a

Bych cię z drogiego marmoru postawił, c
Bych cię dał ulać i z szczerzego złota d
(Czego uroda i twa godna cnota), d
Jeszcze bych cię czci trwałej nie nabawił. c

I mauzolea, i egiptskie grody	e
Ostatniej śmierci próżne być nie mogą;	f
Albo je ogień, albo nagłe wody,	e
Albo je lata zazdrościwe zmoją;	f
Sława z dowcipu sama wiecznie stoi,	g
Ta gwałtu nie zna, ta się lat nie boi.	g

MIKOŁAJ SĘP SZARZYŃSKI

Sonet V

O nietrwałej miłości rzeczy świata tego

I nie miłować ciężko, i miłować	a
Nędzna pociecha, gdy żądzą zwiedzione	b
Myśli cukrują nazbyt rzeczy one,	b
Które i mienić, i muszą się psować.	a

Komu tak będzie dostatkem smakować	a
Złoto, scepter, sława, rozkosz i stworzone	b
Piękne oblicze, by tym nasycone	b
I mógł mieć serce, i trwóg się warować?	a

Miłość jest własny bieg życia naszego:	c
Ale z żywiołów utworzone ciało	d
To chwając, co zna początku równego,	c

Zawodzi duszę, której wszystko mało,	d
Gdy ciebie, wiecznej i prawej piękności,	e
Samej nie widzi, celu swej miłości.	e

DANIEL NABOROWSKI

Sonet 83

(S'amor non è, che dunque è quel, ch'ì sento)

Jeśli nie masz miłości, cóż jest, co ja czuję?	a
Jeśli miłość jest, co to, przebóg, takowego?	b
Jeśli dobra, skąd skutku nabywa tak złego?	b
Jeśli zła, czemu sobie mękę tak smakuję?	a

Jeśli gorę sam chcęcy, skąd te łzy najduję?	a
Jeśli rad nierad muszę, na cóż me żałości?	c
O martwe życie! O ma bolesna radości!	c
Przez mię tyranizujesz, jeślić nie hołduję?	a
Jeśli na to pozwalam, niesłusznie styskuję;	a
Między sprzecznymi wiatry w niewarownej łodzi	d
Bez wiosła jestem wpośród morza głębokiego,	b
Która czczy wiadomości, pełna błędu chodzi,	d
Nie wiem, czego chcę ani czego potrzebuję,	a
Wśród zimy gorę, a drzę wśród lata samego.	b

JAN ANDRZEJ MORSZTYN

Do motyla

Sonet

Lekko, motylu! Ogień to szkodliwy,	a
Strzeż się tej świece i tej jasnej twarzy,	b
W której się skrycie śmierć ozdobna żarzy,	b
I nie bądź swego męczeństwa tak chciwy.	a
Sam się w grób kwapisz i w pogrzeb zdradliwy,	a
Sam leziesz w trunę i tak ci się marzy,	b
Że cię to zbawi, co cię na śmierć sparzy.	b
– Ach! Jużes poległ, gachu nieszczęśliwy!	a
Aleś w tym szczęśliw, że z pocałowaniem	c
I dokazawszy zawziętej rozpusty	d
Z twoją kochaną rozstałeś się świecą.	e
O! Gdybyż wolno równym powołaniem	c
Dla tej, której się ogień we mnie niccą	e
Umrzeć, złożywszy pierwej usta z usty!	d

