

Wedding day and wedding reception evening in the poetry from the Stanisław August Poniatowski period. An initial study*

BOŻENA MAZURKOWA

ORCID: 0000-0003-3546-6583

(University of Silesia in Katowice)

Works related to the wedding ceremony, similarly to other forms of poetry celebrating other major life milestones from one's birth to one's demise, are considered by researchers the so-called 'household muse'.¹ In Poland, it was started in early Renaissance by modern Latin poets from the royal court and academic circles, mainly Cracow Academy, and humanist middle schools operating in the north of Poland. They found inspiration in the works of Roman authors, mainly Catallus, Statius, and Claudian, and through them also in the Greek traditions.² Works written in celebration of the wedding of Sigismund I the Old and Barbara Zapolya in 1512 are considered the first epithalamia created in Poland at that time. Wedding poetry, mainly laudatory, had many Latin variations and only later, i.e., in the Renaissance and the Baroque, also in Polish – this in the 16th century was caused by the social elevation of marriage postulated in moralist dialogues and treatises

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1 See L. Ślękowa, "Poezja epitalamijna" [Epithalamial poetry] in: eadem, *Muza domowa. Okolicznościowa poezja rodzinna czasów renesansu i baroku* [Household muse. Occasional family poetry of the Renaissance and the Baroque] (Wrocław: 1991), pp. 84–122.

2 See K. Mroczek, *Epitalamium staropolskie. Między tradycją literacką a obrzędem weselnym* [Old Polish epithalamium. Between literary tradition and wedding rite] (Wrocław: 1989), pp. 7–26 (*Studia Staropolskie* [Studies in Old Polish], vol. 55); M. Brożek, "Epitalamia zygmunto-wskie" [Epithalamia of the Sigismund Period] in: *Łacińska poezja w dawnej Polsce* [Latin poetry in Poland of the Past], T. Michałowska ed. (Warsaw: 1995), pp. 40–43.

on the one hand³ and the revival of the secular panegyric in Europe on the other.⁴ It covered works with diverse titling conventions that were lyrical, narrative/descriptive or dramatic in nature – the last variety was particularly popular in the Baroque; in the 17th century the bucolic stream has also emerged.⁵ All until mid-18th century poetry was an indispensable element of the marriage ceremony and long wedding celebrations.⁶ This significant area of diversity in terms of their genres works by domestic authors has been discussed by many studies devoted to the poetry of that period, the relationships between nuptial works and the literary traditions of antiquity and with domestic customs, as well as with the mentality of the people of that time.⁷ Editions of Renaissance and Baroque wedding poems supplemented with introductions and commentary are also noteworthy.⁸

Men of letters of the Stanislaus period kept wedding poetry alive despite critical remarks about it by some, e.g., Adam Naruszewicz in *Pochlebstwo* [Flattery], Tomasz Kajetan Węgierski in *List do wierszopisów* [Letter to rhymesters], Ignacy Krasicki in one of his 'listy z prozą' ['letters with prose'], and Franciszek Ksawery Dmochowski in *Sztuka rymotwórcza* [The art of rhyme-making]. Their unfavourable opinions mainly applied to the authors' lack of moderation in developing laudatory images of heroes for marriage ceremonies, oftentimes of people that were not known to any wider audience.

3 See L. Ślękowa, "Wstęp" [Introduction] in: eadem, *Muza domowa...*, p. 8.

4 See K. Mroczek, *Epitalamium staropolskie...*, p. 31.

5 See the discussion of a dozen or so genres identified in wedding poetry from the 16th to mid-18th century by the author of the book on Old Polish epithalamial works (ibidem, pp. 66–137).

6 See P. Badyńska, "Model epitalamiów wydanych drukiem w pierwszej połowie XVIII wieku" [Model of epithalamia published in print in the first half of the 18th century] in: *Wesela, chrzciny i pogrzeby w XVI–XVIII wieku. Kultura życia i śmierci* [Weddings, baptisms, and funerals in the 16th–18th century. Culture of life and death], H. Suchojad (ed.) (Warsaw: 2001), pp. 157–166. The wedding poetry created in the 18th century in the town on the Motława river was discussed by Edmund Kotarski in a volume entitled *Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa XVIII wieku* [Gdańsk occasional poetry of the 18th century] (Gdańsk: 1998).

7 Apart from the above-indicated publications, see also, e.g., E. Kotarski, *Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa XVII wieku*, Gdańsk 1993, pp. 39–62; J.Z. Lichański, "'Mars z upominkiem na wesele'. Siedemnastowieczne panegiryki jako świadectwo mentalności" ['Mars with a wedding gift.' 17th century panegyrics as a proof of mentality], *Napis* [Inscription], issue 3 (1997), pp. 7–21; B. Stuchlik-Surowiak, *Barokowe epitalamium śląskie. Kobieta, małżeństwo, rodzina* [Baroque Silesian epithalamium. Woman, marriage, family] (Katowice: 2007). Old wedding gowns were also discussed in: *Wesela, chrzciny i pogrzeby w XVI–XVIII wieku...*, passim. The work by Małgorzata Trębska entitled *Staropolskie szlacheckie oracje weselne. Genologia, obrzęd, źródła* [Old Polish szlachta wedding orations. Genology, rite, sources] (Warsaw: 2008) (*Studia Staropolskie. Series Nova* [Old Polish Studies. The Nova Series], vol. 19 [LXXV]) is a compendium of knowledge on the Old Polish wedding speech, offering an impressively extensive study of the source material.

8 See *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce* [16th century Latin epithalamia in Poland], transl. and commentary by M. Brożek, ed. and intr. J. Niedźwiedz (Cracow: 1999); S. Twardowski, *Epitalamia* [Epithalamia], ed. R. Krzywy (Warsaw: 2007) (*Biblioteka Dawnej Literatury Popularnej i Okolicznościowej* [Library of Popular and Occasional Literature of the Past], vol. 1).

This discussion of wedding works by authors from the second half of the 18th century is based on a preliminary study of literary material spanning several decades. Its aim is to identify the main threads and topics raised in selected texts, as well as to focus on the diverse framing of corresponding compositional elements.

Most of the selected works focusses on praising the newlyweds, and specific stages or elements of domestic matrimonial etiquette. Such works were created not only by occasional poets, often publishing anonymously, or mediocre men of letters (e.g., Urban Szostowicz), but also by talented writers (Naruszewicz, Stanisław Trembecki or Franciszek Zabłocki). They were published as ephemera, in original collections of poetry, an in *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* [Pleasant and Useful Activities]. For moral reasons, texts which included sophisticated erotic accents or obscene element were circulated in manuscript copies.

Among the texts selected for a closer presentation, the blessing by Maria Sybilla Scheidemantel, included in the marriage rite, for her son Henryk Gotfryd and his wife Julianna Karolina Antonia Gottschalkin seems particularly distinct for its personal expression. Its translation received a special separate publication in 1773, and three years later it was published in *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne*.⁹ Nothing more about Maria Sybilla née Stengel's poetic aptitude is known, which may indicate that the occasional poem was commissioned, which in the case of wedding poetry was a standard practice in the centuries prior.¹⁰ The text was sent to the young couple from Warsaw as the mother did not participate in her son's wedding. She decided not to leave Poland during the turbulent time when the country was stricken by 'żałośny cios' ['piteous blow'].

9 See "Henrykowi Gotfredowi Scheidemantel, profesorowi na akademii jeneńskiej, synowi, i Juliannie Karolinie Antoninie Gottschalkin, małżonkom, macierzyńskie błogosławieństwo przysłane od Marii Sibilli Scheidemantel z Warszawy" [To Henryk Gotfred Scheidemantel, professor at the Jena Academy, my son, and Julianna Karolina Antonina Gottschalkin, spouses, maternal blessing sent from Maria Sybilla Scheidemantel], *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* 1776, vol. 13, part 2, pp. 407–414. Hereinafter, the periodical is referenced using the abbreviation ZPP. Elżbieta Aleksandrowska, author of the translation (presumably from German), assumed that it had been written by Jan Baudouin (see eadem, *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne 1770–1777. Monografia bibliograficzna* [Pleasant and Useful Activities 1770–1777. Bibliographic monograph] (Warsaw: 1999), p. 156, item 727). In its separate publication, the occasional work's title formulation includes a passage that the rhymed blessing *zostało z Warszawy przysłane 31 maja 1773* [was sent from Warsaw on 31 May 1773] (see K. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska* [Polish bibliography], vol. 27, publ. S. Estreicher (Cracow: 1929), p. 184).

10 See L. Ślękowa, *Wstęp...*, pp. 14–17. The poem could have been commissioned by Heinrich Gotfried's mother or his brother, Johann Jacob (1734–1777), a well-known figure in Poland's capital as he tended the local evangelicals. The Erfurt-born minister likely studied theology in Wrocław and in 1766 he became the Danish resident's preacher. He was the first pastor of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession parish of the Holy Trinity in Warsaw. See E. Szulc, *Cmentarz Ewangelicko-Augsburski w Warszawie. Zmarli i ich rodziny* [The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession Cemetery in Warsaw. The dead and their families] (Warsaw: 1989), p. 483; W. Kriegseisen, *Scheidemantel Johann Jacob* in: *Polski słownik biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 35 (Wrocław–Cracow: 1994), pp. 436–437. Hereinafter: *PSB*.

Maria Sybilla's emotional attachment to her son expressed in the work, as well as her joy and pride in his achievements have caused this poetic text to be filled with emotions. The authentic gentle lyricism of the poem is conveyed by the many warm, close and maternal love-filled apostrophes: 'synu mój' ['my son'], 'synu mój jedyny' ['my only son'], 'synu wdzięczny' ['graceful son'], and 'synu mój kochany' ['my dear son']. A similar function is fulfilled by a fragment resembling the poetics of a genethliacon, which in this case is focussed on what young parents hope for their children.¹¹ In this work this role is fulfilled by the maternal recollection of the son's childhood, during which he already showed signs of his future nobility, writing talent, and academic predilection:¹²

<p>Patrzałam ja na twój śmiech, na sprawki dziecinne, Z czego, jako życzliwa, nie mogłam ci inne Wróżyć słusznie zalety, jako co i z moim Zgadzać się mogło sercem, i z postępkim twoim.</p>	<p>I watched your laugh, your children's pranks, From which, kind-heartedly, I could not Foretell for you any other virtue that would counter My heart, or your deed.</p>
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The familial text, fitting for the marriage rite, also brings the figure of the father in its retrospective part. Volkmar Gottfried Scheidemantel, a physician by trade, had already been deceased at that time, which may be why the groom's mother expressed the words of the blessing for the newlyweds in the poetic.¹³ Maria Sybilla's occasional recollection of the father, seized by 'snem śmiertelnym wyroki niewsteczne' ['deadly slumber of irreversible judgement'] in the boy's infancy, who committed her and 'słodkie pachole' ['the sweet child'] to heaven's care, is marked by respect for her husband and great trust in the benevolent patronage of God over her widow's life and her children.

The elevated nature of the nuptial celebrations and the very rite of marriage is emphasised in occasional poems mainly by the laudation of the newlyweds, which falls into harmony with the sacramental nature of the event, over which God himself held patronage, though he was seconded by the common interests of two families. In the wedding odes that were most popular for such occasions, it was

11 Cf. L. Ślękowa, "Wiersze uświetniające narodziny potomka. Ze studiów nad poezją okolicznościowo-rodzinną renesansu i baroku" [Poems celebrating the birth of a child. From the studies of occasional and family poetry of the Renaissance and the Baroque], *Pamiętnik Literacki* [Literary Memoir] 1990, set 2, pp. 13–15.

12 Heinrich Gottfried Scheidemantel (1739–1787) was a thoroughly educated person and a professor of theology at the Academy in Jena. He worked on, e.g., the codification of the law of the Protestant Church in Poland and in Lithuania. In this matter he wrote letters regarding Polish issues (1778), but most of all he developed a code, which was published in Warsaw in German (1780) and French (1781). See K. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska...*, pp. 183–184.

13 During the wedding reception blessings from parents (as well as from matchmakers and other guests) were generally intended for the bride. See J.S. Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajów w dawnej Polsce. Wiek XVI–XVIII* [History of customs in Poland of the past. 16th–18th century] (Warsaw: 1994), pp. 86–87; M. Trębska, *Staropolskie szlacheckie oracje weselne...*, pp. 141–143.

not reduced, as some critical voices suggested, to stressing the young couple's social status and familial connections.

For example, laudations in poems derived from familial ties were devoid of the bane of flattery or exaggeration. In the discussed *Błogosławieństwo...* By Maria Sybilla Scheidemantel, the emphasis is placed on the patronage of Minerva over the intended recipient of the occasional lyrical composition, which perfectly harmonises with the contemporary high importance of intellect and well-rounded education. This part of the work opens with a praise of the education, knowledge and European reputation of the 'czciciel prawdy' ['devotee of truth'], who brings pride, joy and deep emotions to those closest to him:

Wnosiłam nieobludnie, że cię oblubięcem
Mając swym, Muzy winnym skroń obwiodą
wieniecem;
Że będziesz towarzyszem uczonego świata,
Że ozdobna twej cnotcie nie minie zapłata. [...]
O mój synu! Możeszli pojnować w swej myśli,
Co za radość w swym sercu brat i matka kryśli!
Nurzają się w radosnym lez potoku oczy,
Które radość i miłość z obfitości toczy.

I assumed sincerely, for you were the favorite
Of the Muses, they would place a merited wreath on your
brow;
That you would be the companion of the learned of the world,
That the decorative to your virtue reward would not pass. [...]
Oh, my son! Can you comprehend your thought
What a joy your brother and mother have held in their hearts!
They plunge their eyes in the joyous stream of tears
That happiness and love shed profusely.

When thanking God, the happy mother also referred to her son's life's companion: 'Cnotliwa i ze wszech miar wabna Julianna' ['Chaste and absolutely graceful Julianna']. When blessing the 'miłe dziatki' ['kind children'], she entrusted their fate to Jehovah Supreme 'który wszystkim włada' ['who rules all']. The mother's blessing for the newlyweds is also expressed in the statement of affection and unwavering memory, and in her wishing good fortune, harmonious family life, lifelong marital love, as well as many future children. This is an example of strictly familial poetry where the genuine emotional engagement of the originator is motivated by motherly love, as well as a blood relation, without any signs of flattery or artificiality.

The situation was different for men of letters marking in writing the wedding day of people to whom they were not related or who wrote poems not related to any specific wedding. In the former case, the authors usually emphasised the pedigree of the newlyweds and their virtues, which resonated with the virtues and attitudes valued at that time, including civil and patriotic ones. In the marriage image of Róża Węgleńska and Feliks Olędzki, matched by Wacław Rzewuski, Krakow voivode, Urban Szostowicz emphasised their moral qualities and the virtues of their civil spirit.¹⁴ He argued to the newlyweds:

14 See U. Szostowicz, "Oda na dzień weselny W.J.P. Feliksa Olędzkiego, kasztelanica chełmskiego z W.J.P. Różą Węgleńską, chorążanką chełmską" [Ode for the wedding day of His Grace Feliks Olędzki, son of the Chełm castellan and Her Grace Róża Węgleńska, daughter of Chełm standard-bearer], *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* 1775, vol. 12, part 1, pp. 55–59.

Bardziej was jednak własne cnoty zdobią,
Bo do służenia ojczyźnie sposobią.

Yet you are graced more by your virtues
As they have prepared you to serve your motherland.

Naruszewicz utilised laudation in wedding poems in various ways. In an ode commemorating the ‘akt weselny’ [‘wedding act’] of Józef Radzicki with a much younger Teresa Krajewska, the images of the newlyweds are almost entirely devoid of any personal traits.¹⁵ The remark about the set of ‘wszelkie cnoty’ [‘all virtues’] and beauty of the daughter of Jan Chryzostom, Płock castellan and crown prosecutor, and Krystyna née Czosnkowski, daughter of the Warsaw deputy cupbearer, carries the features of a conventional compliment. In Naruszewicz’s work, she is perceived almost exclusively as a representative of her family and a participant of the wedding ritual. Her future happiness is supposed to be created by the declared by the author though not specified virtues of the husband given by the kind God and by the values she herself had brought into the house of the Zakroczym cupbearer:¹⁶

Za tobą pójdą droższe nad klejnoty
w dom Radzickiego: zgoda, pokój złoty
i uszczęśliwić cokolwiek sownie
ma jego życie.

You will be followed by thing more valuable than jewels
Into Radzicki’s house: harmony, golden peace
And whatever should
delight his life.

Similarly, in an occasional work commemorating the wedding of 1768 of Józef Niesiołowski and Katarzyna Massalska, daughter of Michał Józef, Great Lithuanian Hetman and Franciszka née Ogiński, daughter of the Troki castellan,¹⁷ Naruszewicz reassured the Nowogród castellan of the happiness he would enjoy ‘do zgonu’ [‘until death’] with ‘przyjaciół’ [‘friend’] given to him by the Creator.¹⁸ He empha-

15 See A.S. Naruszewicz, “Na akt weselny Józefa Radzickiego, cześnika zakroczymskiego z Teresą Krajewską instygatorką koronną” [For the wedding act of Józef Radzicki, Zakroczym cup-bearer and Teresa Krajewska instigator Regni] in: idem, *Poezje zebrane* [Collected poems], publ. B. Wolska, vol. 1 (Warsaw: 2005), pp. 135–137 (*Biblioteka Pisarzy Polskiego Oświecenia* [Library of the Writers of Polish Enlightenment], vol. 4).

16 Son of Antoni Radzicki and Kunegunda née Żabicki was very active in the socio-political field, though mainly restricting his focus to the Zakroczym lands. He was a fervent supporter of Stanislaus II Augustus, which is why he was quickly promoted to cupbearer (1760), pantler (1768), and, eventually, the Zakroczym chamberlain (1773). He was one of the first people to receive the title of crown chamberlain (1765), and two years later he was promoted to deputy cupbearer (see D. Szczygielska, W. Szczygielski, “Radzicki Józef” in: *PSB*, vol. 30 (Cracow: 1987), pp. 39–41). The title form of the occasional poem indicates that the wedding occurred prior to Radzicki’s nomination to pantler – ca. 1765, as assumed by Barbara Wolska (see “Komentarze” [Notes] in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...* [Collected Poems], p. 290).

17 See Z. Zielińska, “Massalski Michał Józef” in: *PSB*, vol. 20 (Cracow: 1975), p. 143.

18 See A.S. Naruszewicz, “Na akt weselny Józefa Niesiołowskiego, kasztelana nowogrodzkiego, z Katarzyną Massalską, kasztelaną wileńską i hetmanówną Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego” [To the marriage act of Józef Niesiołowski, Nowogród castellan, and Katarzyna Massalska, daughter of Vilnius castellan and of the Great Lithuanian Hetman] in: idem, *Poezje zebrane...*, pp. 69–72.

sised the glory flowing from the noble princely blood brought to his house by Katarzyna, her father's hetman baton, and the senator chair of her brother Ignacy, bishop of Vilnius. He did not fail to mention the wealth of the bride – he compared her dowry to the Tagus, in which 'obfite nurty czystym złotem ciekną' ['profuse currents flow with pure gold']. And surely those assets brought substantial profit, though only after an armed seizure by Niesiołowski, as bishop Ignacy Massalski had refused to pay out the due dowry as he did not consent to his sister's wedding – even though the Nowogród castellan has had previously been accepted by both, the father and the brother of the bride.¹⁹ Conscious of the fact that the times when crest splendour, title, and property are no longer the most important thing ('nie swoim się szczyli, / kto tylko złotem i herbami świeci' ['they boast things that are not theirs / those who flash gold and crests']), the poet supplemented the bride's noble birth and fortune with the radiance of her respect and invariability of her virtuous heart. Per the contemporary hierarchy of value, he praised the spouses for:

równie spokojny umysł i łaskawy,
pobożność dawną, powagę bez dumy,
w obu rozsądek i bystre rozumy.

mind equally calm and kind,
old piety, gravity without pride,
common sense and bright minds in both.

Naruszewicz, similarly to his contemporaries who created wedding poems, devoted the least space to the emotional bonds between the newlyweds. He did mention the 'nierozewralne ogniwa' ['onbreakable links'], 'słodkie pęta' ['sweet binds'], and 'miła swoboda' ['pleasant freedom'], but the laconic mention of love that was 'równie żywa' ['equally alive'] treated not as much as a virtue in itself but rather a kind of safety against a 'zła chwila' ['bad moment'] pales in comparison to the other praises.

He was more emphatic in developing a laudation to commemorate in verse the marriage of Michał Hieronim Radziwiłł and the eighteen-year-old Helena née Przeddziecka – the ceremony was held on 3 April 1771. He enclosed the laudatory part with perfect modality and levity within four stanzas, though he had many reasons to extend this part of the poem, i.e., the high social position and considerable wealth of the newlyweds and the extensive political influence of their families.²⁰

19 In 1770, Ignacy Massalski began in the Lithuanian Tribunal a campaign against Niesiołowski. As a result, the Nowogród castellan was accused by the Tribunal (part of which was bribed by the Vilnius bishop) and sentenced to the tower. He did his time and in 1771 Tribunal lifted his condemnation. See L. Żytkowicz, "Niesiołowski Józef" in: *PSB*, vol. 23 (Cracow: 1978), p. 53. Cf. also B. Wol-ska, "Komentarze" in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...*, p. 254.

20 See A. Naruszewicz, *Oda na wesela J.J. OO. ks[iążąt] Ich Mościów Michała i Heleny z Przeddzieckich Radziwiłłów* [Ode to the wedding of Their Graces Michał and Helena née Przeddziecki Radziwiłł], *ZPP* 1771, vol. 3, part 2, pp. 297–302. Reprint of the work in the first volume of *Dziela* was entitled:

He basically only outlined the flattering image of the daughter of the Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania. He ‘z obecnych rzeczy przyszło wnosił chwile’ [‘deducted future moments from the present things’] in the occasional divination. He avoided any lofty, adulatory tone and instead used the indirect method devoid of the bane of panegyricism. He mentioned the virtues of the ‘szacowna połowica’ [‘estimable other half’] of the sword bearer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, congratulating him on the decree of God himself. The laudatory part of the work, constructed on the figure of omission, is conveyed through the reflection on ‘czegoż w ukochanej [...] brak Helenie’ [‘what the beloved Helena may lack’]. Among the bride’s virtues he listed: ‘Świetna z obu krew rodziców’ [‘excellent blood from both parents’], careful upbringing under the care of her aunt (actually maternal aunt, wife of the hetman, Aleksandra Ogińska), beauty, grace, the qualities of her soul and body, genuine and kind mind, noble manners, and ‘dowcip ojca żywy’ [‘father’s wit lively’].

One might raise the large number of the virtues, but the poet was not exaggerating. The beautiful heiress of the Wiśniowiecki family was the daughter of Katarzyna née Ogiński, wife of the Troki Voivode, and Antoni Tadeusz Przeddziecki, the closest confidant of Michał Czartoryski, Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, ‘człowiek inteligentny, bystry, (a nawet przebiegły)’²¹ [‘an intelligent, bright, cunning even man’], valued by Stanislaus II Augustus for his ‘znakomita znajomość praw litewskich i orientację w życiu sejmikowym Litwy’²² [‘excellent knowledge of Lithuanian laws and ability to navigate the sejmik life of Lithuania’]. The bride-to-be was ‘jedna z głośnych piękności i sławnych sawantek polskiego Oświecenia’ [‘one of the famed beauties and well-known savants women of the Polish Enlightenment’], who later founded the nationally-renowned sentimental and Romantic park in Nieborów near Łowicz.²³ The poet left but a mention of the groom’s virtues by concluding that he was ‘ze wszelkiej godzien pochwał miary’

Na akt weselny księżęcia Michała Radziwiłła, miecznika W. Ks. Lit. z Heleną Przeddziecką, podkomorzanką lit. [To the wedding act of Duke Michał Radziwiłł, swordbearer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Helena Przeddziecka, daughter of the Lithuania chamberlain] (*Oda* II, 17). The poem ‘został odczytany przez autora w obecności króla Stanisława Augusta w dniu 14 IV, na spotkaniu towarzyskim o charakterze literackim, zorganizowanym przez wujenkę Heleny, Aleksandrę Ogińską, hetmanową litewską, w jej pałacu w Warszawie przy ul. Rymarskiej’ [‘was read by the author in the presence of king Stanislaus II Augustus on 14 April during a social gather of a literary nature organised by the maternal aunt of Helena, Aleksandra Ogińska, wife of the Lithuania hetman, in her palace in Warsaw in Rymarska St.’] (B. Wolska, “Komentarze” in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...*, p. 304).

21 Ibidem, p. 305.

22 J. Dygdała, “Przeddziecki Antoni Tadeusz” in: *PSB*, vol. 29 (Cracow: 1986), p. 53.

23 See B. Wolska, “Komentarze” in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...* See also: M. R[adziwiłł], *Ostatnia wojewodzina wileńska (Helena z Przeddzieckich ks. Radziwiłłowa)* [The last wife of the Vilnius Voivode (Helena Radziwiłłowa née Przeddziecki)] (Lviv: 1892).

['praiseworthy in every extent']. He suggested indirectly that he must have been carrying flattering qualities since he 'dobrał pomyślnie godnej siebie pary' ['found a befitting other half']. In thus joined couple he considered the compatibility between the newlyweds in the most important matters, i.e., respectability, age, mind, reason, and 'kochanie' ['love'] the marriage's main virtue. In just a few years' time this flattering opinion was put to the test.²⁴

In contrast, the marriage concluded on 27 December 1772 between Ignacy Potocki, son of Eustachy and Marianna née Kątski, and Elżbieta Lubomirska, daughter of Stanisław and Izabela née Czartoryski, was harmonious, happy, and justly considered a role model. Naruszewicz commemorated their marriage in an elevated serious bucolic that featured elements of an epithalamium song.²⁵ He wrote about the 'żądaný' ['desired'] night realising the political significance of the major event.²⁶ It gave people hope that the two major yet divided magnate houses, i.e., the 'Familia' monarchist faction and the Potockis republican faction, would

- 24 Not long afterwards, the spouses showed their true natures. Michał Hieronim Radziwiłł (later a member of the Targowica plot) proved a traitor and a man driven by greed. During the Partition-time Sejm (1773–1775), he served without any moral qualms the three partitioning courts in return for major sums of money (1,000 ducats). It was also thanks to them that he became Marshal of the Lithuanian Confederation. 'Był człowiekiem zapobiegliwym w budowaniu swej fortuny, z czasem coraz bardziej zachłannym, skąpym i despotycznym' ['He was industrious when it came to increasing his fortune, becoming even more greedy, parsimonious and oppressive']. In the case of the princess and wife of voivode, despite marrying for love, a fact that was not that common at that time in the upper echelon of the society, she failed to remain faithful to her husband (see B. Wolska, "Komentarze" in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...*, pp. 304–305).
- 25 See A. Naruszewicz, "Wesele. Pasterka z okoliczności ślubnego aktu Jaśnie W. JMci pana Ignacego ze Złotego Potoka Potockiego, generałowicza artylerii W. Ks. L. z księżniczką JMcią Elżbietą Lubomirską, marszałkówną wielką koronną" [Wedding. Pastoral for the occasion of the marriage act of His Grace Ignacy Potocki of Złoty Potok, son of the general of artillery with duchess Elżbieta Lubomirska, daughter of the Marshal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania], *ZPP* 1772, vol. 6, part 2, pp. 386–400. The work was reprinted in its original form in two editions: 1. *Sielanki polskie z różnych autorów zebrane, a teraz świeżo dla pożytku i zabawy czytelników po trzeci raz przedrukowane i poprawione* [Polish bucolics by various artists, collected, and now for the benefit and enjoyment of readers reprinted for the third time and amended] (Warsaw: 1778; 2. in the third volume of *Dzieła* by Naruszewicz of 1778 as *Sielanka II* [Bucolic II]).
- 26 Another wedding with a political dimension was concluded in 1775 between Ludwik Skumin Tyszkiewicz, ciwun [land clerk] of Vilnius and Great Scribe of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Konstancja Poniatowska, niece of Stanisław August Poniatowski, daughter of a former chamberlain of Kazimierz. 'The Tyszkiewiczzes,' according to Magdalena Ślusarska, 'supported the party of Stanisław August Poniatowski in Lithuania, and Konstancja and Ludwik remained loyal to the monarch until the end of reign.' The nuptial ceremony and Kazimierz Poniatowski's arrival in Vilnius became the topic of many a poem written by the local monastery circles. The welcoming celebrations were accompanied by, e.g., a occasional publication of a mainly propaganda character. It included a panegyric narrative poem in which the marriage of Tyszkiewicz and Poniatowska was for Felician Wykowski, its author, a 'pretekst do prezentacji pozycji przedstawicieli dwóch znanych w państwie polsko-litewskim rodów [...] [a pretext to present the figures of the representatives of two families very well known in the Polish-Lithuanian state] (eadem, "Felician Wykowski (1728–1784) – zapomniany poeta z wileńskiego środowiska pijarów litewskich" [Felician Wykowski (1728–1784) – a forgotten poet from the Vilnius community of Lithuanian Piarists], *Napis* issue 5 (1999), p. 71).

reconcile, which in turn would lead to a national reconciliation and tackling the outcomes of the first partition. Hence the bucolic convention of the harmoniously mixture of laudations of the couple and their families. The praise of harmony had also a philosophical basis in the work as it emphasised its significance as one of the main principles of nature.²⁷

This particular marriage also encouraged Stanisław Konarski to seize his pen. His extensive work that included a praise of the married couple so perfectly, according to the author, matched in terms of their age, heart, fortune and stature of their houses, is dominated by dramatic in nature patriotic reflections by the poet on the historical and political reality associated with the first partition of Poland.²⁸ A translation of the work was preceded by the following comment:

Dzieło to przed samą prawie śmiercią Autora w czasie ogłoszonego podziału Polski napisane; żal uczynił je nad zamiar dłuższe, przeto na trzy części jest podzielone.

This work just before the death of the Author during the partition of Poland was written; grief made it longer than intended which is why it is divided into three parts.

The argumentative function is fulfilled by the following sentence which summarises the contents of the extensive poem:

Wahają się niepewne Muzy między dnia szlubenego weselem, z ciężarem żalu osadzone; smutek z powszechnej klęski przerywa wesołe pienia. Nieco w ogólności o mocarstwach.

Uncertain Muses waver between the joy of the wedding day and the gravity of the sorrowful event; the sadness in the national demise interrupts merry chants. A somewhat general remark on the partitioning powers.

It was not the only wedding poem at that time in which the occasional laudation of the newlyweds precedes the sorrowful reflection on the tragic events in the country. Szostowicz thus embedded the marriage of Feliks Olędzki and Róża Węgleńska in the historical context:

W wieku w okropne nader dziwy płodnym,
W którym prawdziwej cios zadany wierze,
Sąsiad, kraj dzieląc sposobem niegodnym,
Przynagla z krzywda zawierać przymierze,

In this age of too many terrible events,
In which a blow was dealt to true faith,
A neighbour divided the country in an unworthy way,
Urges to sign a detrimental pact,

27 See J. Platt, *Sielanki i poezje sielskie Adama Naruszewicza* [Adam Naruszewicz's bucolics and bucolic poetry], Wrocław 1967, pp. 125–126 (*Studia z Okresu Oświecenia* [Studies in the Enlightenment Period], vol. 6); B. Wolska, "Wprowadzenie do lektury" [Introduction to reading] in: A. Naruszewicz, *Sielanki*, introduction by B. Wolska, texts edited by students of Polish Philology, Faculty of Philology, University of Łódź, attendees of the editing minor under the direction of B. Wolska, A. Petlak, illustrations K. Przybylak (Łódź: 2007), pp. 21–22.

28 See S. Konarski, "Pieśń XXV. Na dzień ślubny Jaś. Wiel. Ignacego Potockiego, dziś pisarza wiel. Wiel Księż. Lit. z J.O. Elżbietą księżniczką Lubomirską, marszałkówną w. k. 1772" [Song XXV. In celebration of the marriage day of His Grace Ignacy Potocki, today Great Scribe of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Her Grace Duchess Elżbieta Lubomirska, daughter of the Marshal in year 1772] in: idem, *Wiersze wszystkie, z łacińskich na polskie przetłóżone* [All poems, translated from Latin to Polish] (Warsaw: 1778), pp. 136–145.

Cnota przemocy staje się ofiarą, Virtue becomes the victim of violence,
 Wchodzisz w małżeński stan, nadobna paro. This when you enter the marriage state, oh you graceful couple.

A literary, and even a social, peculiarity were three poems by Stanisław Trembecki and Naruszewicz about an event which... never happened. I am referring to the planned marriage of Franciszek Ksawery Branicki and Dorota (Teodora) Jabłonowska.²⁹ The authors had assumed that the marriage would be based on the hetman's engagement with the daughter of Antoni, Poznań Voivode, by the end of 1773. Despite Branicki's efforts, who would have benefited from the marriage consolidating his position in the country, the marriage planned for the spring of 1774 did not come to be.³⁰ The heroic creation of the hetman as a guardian and ruler of the 'ojczyzna broń' ['native force'], protected by Mars, Bellona and the stalwart Alcides, was most probably driven by the hope of both poets to garner the respect of the influential at that time statesman. The panegyric epithalamium brought better outcomes for the royal chamberlain as it he who received the profitable position of army commissioner.

The laudatory elements, sometimes even exaggerated, were limited to some extent in the wedding poems mainly by dint of the emotional ties between the authors and the newlyweds or other participants of the wedding celebrations, as well as specific creative intentions realised in said works. When composing *Skoropism na wesele przyjacielskie* [An ad hoc poem in haste for a friendly wedding], Zabłocki referred only to the wisdom, reason and love of Piotr entering the marriage in a mature age.³¹ Franciszek Dionizy Kniaźnin in his ceremonial wedding songs, which were mostly strictly literary in nature, most often used conventional laudatory motifs. In contrast, he included a reverse laudation in *Epitalamion* on

29 See S. Trembecki, "Epitalamion Fr. Ksaweremu Branickiemu, hetmanowi w. kor. i Teodorze księżniczce Jabłonowskiej" [Epithalamium to Ksawery Branicki, crown hetman, and Duchess Teodora Jabłonowska] in: idem, *Pisma wszystkie*, J. Kott (ed.), vol. 1 (Warsaw: 1953), pp. 33–38; A.S. Naruszewicz, "Na spodziewane zameście księżniczki Doroty Jabłonowskiej, wojewodzianki poznańskiej, z Fr[anciszkiem] Ksawierem Branickim, hetmanem w[ielkim] koronnymi" [For the anticipated marriage of Duchess Dorota Jabłonowska, daughter of Poznań Voivode, and Franciszek Ksawery Branicki, Great Crown Hetman], "Do Franciszka Branickiego, hetmana wielkiego koronnego, przy dedykacji 'Anakreonta' polskiego" [To Franciszek Branicki, Great Crown Hetman, by the dedication of the Polish Anacreon] in: idem, *Poezje zebrane...*, vol. 2 (Warsaw: 2009), pp. 77–81, 131–132 (*Biblioteka Pisarzy Polskiego Oświecenia*, vol. 9). According to Roman Krzywy, Naruszewicz's second poem resembles Trembecki's panegyric epithalamium within its creative layer but not the genological (see idem, "Rokokowe epitalamiony Stanisława Trembeckiego wobec tradycji gatunku" [The Rococo epithalamia by Stanisław Trembecki in comparison to the genre's tradition], *Wiek Oświecenia* [The Age of Enlightenment] 2004, vol. 20: *Stanisław Konarski (1700–1773)*, p. 130).

30 See B. Wolska, "Komentarze" in: A.S. Naruszewicz, *Poezje zebrane...*, vol. 2, pp. 241–242.

31 See F. Zabłocki, "Skoropism na wesele przyjacielskie", *ZPP* 1774, vol. 9, part 2, pp. 335–341.

the wedding of Epimachus and Clymene (IV, 2).³² By using the mythological calque, he mocked the elderly groom, referencing the figure of Tithonus with whom the beautiful Eos had shared a bed for centuries. Książnin developed a detailed description of the physical defects of the old spouse of the youthful Eos following the model used by authors from earlier centuries when referring to literary portraits of repulsive figures. However, he selected the external signs of old age and deformity in a less drastic manner than they would have.³³ The description is equivalent to what one should say about Epimachus' advanced age but what is unacceptable in the convention of the epithalamium as a laudatory wedding song or a panegyric.³⁴ That is why the poet did not directly mock the elderly figure in the wedding ceremony by deforming his image but instead did it through allusions, concretising the figure of Tithonus for whom Eos, in love with him, succeeded in pleading Zeus for eternal life for Tithonus yet forgot to also ask for eternal youth. In Książnin's words, 'kontenta' ['content'] Eos 'Już to wieków tyle / Żyje z nim mile' ['So many centuries now / Lives pleasantly with him']:

Choć kark ugina jemu wiek sędziwy
I twarz już zmarszczki poorly brudne,
Choć włos na głowie opęta mu siwy
I kroki niesie starość nieochludne.

Though his old age has bent his neck
And his face is filled with dark wrinkles,
Though his head is wrapped in grey hair
And old age makes sloppy steps.

The portrait of the senile man eagerly entering into matrimony with the young lass which 'ze sromu rumieni' ['blushes in embarrassment'] has a humorous undertone in the poem and it is a clear sign of poetic play. This poem fits well in traditional Polish ludic stream of wedding poetry, which often contains elements that are not only offensive but obscene even.

While focusing on the protagonists and guests and the course of the marriage ceremony, poets emphasised its elevated and ceremonial nature. They made perfect use, just as the authors of wedding poetry of the previous two centuries did, of appropriately selected and poetically attractive facts from ancient Greek and Roman mythologies – conventional and thus clear for most.³⁵ They inserted Venus, Cupid and other gods among the participants of the wedding celebrations, and they ascribed to them the fact of matching the couple and sometimes even entrusted the

32 I quoted Książnin's work from the edition: *Erotyki* [Erotics], part 1–2 (Warsaw: 1779). Roman numerals reference books while Arabic numerals reference works within those.

33 See D. Ostaszewska, *Postać w literaturze. Wizerunek staropolski. Obrazy – konwencje – stereotypy* [Figure in literature. The Old Polish image. Images, conventions, stereotypes] (Katowice: 2001), pp. 123–129, 175–178.

34 See K. Mroczek: *Epitalamium staropolskie...*, pp. 43–44, 84–87; R. Krzywy, *Rokokowe epitalamiony Stanisława Trembeckiego...*, pp. 130–136.

35 Cf. e.g. K. Mroczek, *Epitalamium staropolskie...*, pp. 70–77; M. Brożek, *Epitalamia zygmontowskie...*, pp. 43–60.

gods in the poems with the task of delivering the laudation of the newlyweds. Such a device was used by, e.g.: Trembecki in the already-mentioned epithalamium for Branicki and Jabłonowska; Dominik Tomaszewski in a translation of a bucolic poem written in celebration of a wedding of 2 June 1776 between Stanisław Kostka Potocki and Aleksandra Lubomirska (sister of his sister-in-law Elżbieta, wife of Ignacy);³⁶ Książnin in his *Epitalamion* [Epithalamium] devoted to Ismena and Koryl in the *Erotyki* collection (I, 30).

Poets entrusted Hymen arriving at the ceremony with his entourage to sing the ritual song. This situational plan, embedded within a ‘radosny’ [‘joyous’], ‘wesoly’ [‘merry’] or ‘luby’ [‘loving’] evening, recurred in some of Książnin’s *Epitalamia*. Despite the fact that they drew from the ancient model of the ceremonial song called *hymenaios*, these poems were not intended for oral delivery.³⁷ Related invocations updated the referenced model to the ‘wdzięczny’ [‘graceful’] (I, 17) or ‘słodki’ [‘sweet’] (I, 30) Hymen, which sometimes formed a compositional bracket for the poems. In similar variations the poets also formulated in their works a request to the mythical figures to sing ceremonial songs – they were asked to ‘brać się do lutni’ [‘grab the lute’], ‘trzymać się’ [‘hold onto’] it, and ‘nucić słodkie pieśni’ [‘hum sweet song’] (I, 17; II, 5), ‘błogie nucić uszczęśliwienie’ [‘hum blissful delight’] and ‘godowe przygrywać pień’ [‘play nuptial chant’] (I, 30), and sometimes ‘zanucić’ [‘sing’] ‘weselne’ [‘wedding’] chant (VI, 24). The newlyweds and young guests decorated in ‘zawite wieńce’ [‘woven wreaths’] (II, 15) was encouraged to focus on the special guest arriving in ‘godowy błękit’ [‘nuptial blue’] and listen to his song. The Cypriot told the former, quite understandably, about the importance and the consequences of tying the nuptial knot. By referring to obvious phenomena and aspects of nature he informed the others about the superior laws that govern human life, laws which are the outcome of the inevitable passage of time, which ‘wszystko niszczy i porywa’ [‘destroys all and takes away all’], ‘Tocząc przed sobą pojazd niepowrotny’ [‘Moving in front an irreversible vehicle’] (I, 17).

36 “Klaudiusza Klaudian Palladiuszowi i Cellerinie epitalamium. Na dzień ślubu J. W. JMci pana Stanisława Potockiego i J. O. księżniczki Jej Mości Aleksandry Lubomirski” [Epithalamium for Klaudiusz Klaudian Palladiusz and Cellerina. On the wedding day of His Grace Stanisław Potocki and Her Grace Duchess Aleksandra Lubomirska], transl. by D. Tomaszewski, *ZPP 1776*, vol. 13, part 2, pp. 390–406. By marrying the daughter of Stanisław Lubomirski and Izabela Potocka née Czartoryski, he entered the circle of the “Familia”, and his wife’s huge dowry enabled him to tackle his financial problems. See B. Grochulska, “Potocki Stanisław Kostka” in: *PSB*, vol. 28 (Cracow: 1984–1985), p. 159. It was a successful marriage. The well-known politician, later a writer and art patron, shared a strong and lasting emotional bond with his wife. A beautiful, publicly witnessed, expression of the love between the spouses was a dedication letter intended for Aleksandra Potocka, ‘żona ukochana’ [‘beloved wife’], which Stanisław Kostka Potocki placed at the beginning of the first part of his work *O sztuce u darowych, czyli Winkelman polski* [On the art of the former or Polish Winkelman] (1815).

37 See K. Mroczek, *Epitalamium staropolskie...*, pp. 81–84.

In the fifteenth work in the second book of *Erotyki*, Książnin included this message making the signs of ageing a visible and unpleasant symptom of time passing:

Biegną nam lata, zmykają godziny,
Traci swe wdzięki uroda;
Pierwiastki słodkie, nim je czas upłynny
Następanej goryczy poda.

Years run past, hours flee,
Beauty loses its charm;
Sweet beginnings, before the running time
Turns them bitter.

The thought emerging from these warnings is the encouragement intended for young lasses and lads to use their ‘chwila wesoła’ [‘joyous moment’], i.e., from the delights of youth passing quickly and irrevocably, before ‘starość kogo swym śrzonem ubieli’ [‘before old age whitens someone with its frost’] (I, 17). The sounds of the music playing are a sign that the time has come to ‘skoczyć w radosne tany’ [‘leap into merry dance’] (II, 15).

The poets included clear, consolidated within the literary traditions, symbolism of the props supposedly brought for the wedding rituals by the heavenly guests: a bow and arrows of divine love, a wreath woven by the Charites, and Hymen’s insignia of a flaming torch, two gold arrowheads and a ‘węzeł nierozjęty’ [‘lasting knot’] placed on the hearts of the spouses. In his ode *Na akt weselny Józefa Radzickiego z Teresą Krajewską* [For the marriage act of Józef Radzicki with Teresa Krajewska] Naruszewicz naturalised the mythological realities and asked Hymen being a guest at the wedding ceremony to fuel the flame of love in the spouses with his wedding torch, offer them their wedding rings, weave a flowery garland, and spread fragrant flowers on the spouses’ clothes. Clearly, this dramatisation device relates the wedding ceremony to the ritual elements of the wedding rite consolidated in the poetry of ancient Greek and Roman poets, as well as in the works of authors of the Old Polish period.

Naruszewicz also mentioned garlands decorating the ‘gładkie czoła’ [‘lovely foreheads’] of fair spouses in a bucolic celebrating the wedding of Ignacy Potocki and Elżbieta Lubomirska. However, it was not any of the mythological gods whom he made the witnesses of the joining of the hearts and souls of the couple but ‘Bóg żywy’ [‘living God’] and it was to his temple that he directed the spouses clearly subjecting the outlined images to the process of dramatisation. I am referring to Elżbieta’s leaving ‘Pańskie przybytki’ [‘Lord’s tabernacles’], putting ‘bieluchne stopy’ [‘snow-white feet’] before her and taking her at the side of her husband-to-be, as well as to ‘rówiennice’ [‘female peers’] bidding a teary-eyed farewell to the daughter of the crown marshal leaving the maiden flock. He also devoted some attention to the dignified and eminent guests related to the young couple, who added splendour to the wedding ceremony. In emphasising the political significance of the newly established bond, he made the king the ‘czoło

ozdoby' ['prime decoration'], and then indicated the Nestor-like 'dwie podpory' ['two linchpins'] of Poland whom he found in the heads of the two joining families. He also mentioned the great-aunt and the parents of the bride, the beautiful and respectable aunts leading the young relative in 'koło' ['a circle'], 'godni wujowie' ['dignified uncles'], and 'innych się / Krewnych imion' ['multitude others / Names of relatives']. The refrain call: 'Postępuj w dobrą chwilę, paro ukochana!' ['Advance in the good moment, oh beloved couple!'] may suggest a march of the wedding procession. This suggests one should also seek, according to Julian Platt, 'w anakreontycznym obrazku nawiązującym do pochodów Wenerzy'³⁸ ['in the Anacreonic image referencing Venus' procession']:

Płochymi wiosły ptactwo trakt powietrzny rzeże,
Bawiąc lud zadziwiony ciekawym widokiem.
Leci pomiędzy krasnym rączych piór obłokiem
Dwoje jasnych gołąbków, które w winnej dani
Lotny orszak prowadzi dla Cyprijskiej Pani.

Birds cut the air tract with their fickle oars,
Amusing the folk mystified by the curious sight.
Between the beautiful cloud of nimble feathers there fly
Two white doves, which in a rightful gift
Lead an airy procession for the Cypriot Lady.

Dramatisation also seems to have been applied to the vision of the joint path of the newlyweds represented by an extended metaphorical image of a river that flows calmly and slowly enriching villages and groups on its way.

Similar in nature and almost identical in terms of their wording are the ritual elements included in a poem celebrating the wedding of Stanisław Kostka Dunin and Juliana Leduchowska née Bętkowska published anonymously in *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne*.³⁹ This work also references 'szlubne wieńce' ['wedding wreaths'] decorating the heads of the couple, their stride towards to the 'świątynia Boża' ['God's temple'] where the bride's relative and serious 'pasterz' ['pastor'] clad in ceremonial robes awaits them. The witnesses of the eternal weddings included, according to the author, the relatives, friends and 'gościnnych siła' ['multitude of guests'] gathered in the church. The similarity between not only the realities but also the methods of depicting them in the poem, with motifs that appeared in previously-mentioned works, inclines one to be cautious in trusting these poetic accounts. As do the already prospective epithalamia by Trembecki and Naruszewicz, which were devoted to weddings-to-be that never became true.

The praise of the personal qualities of the newlyweds, the splendour of their houses and honourable familial ties, and the entire setting of the nuptial ceremo-

38 J. Platt, *Sielanki i poezje sielskie Adama Naruszewicza...*, p. 126.

39 See "Oda na dzień szlubny Wielmożnego Stanisława Kostki hrabi Dunina, podkomorzycza inflanckiego z Wielmożną Julianną z Bętkowskich Leduchowską, chorążycową łomżyńską" [Ode to the wedding day of His Grace Stanisław Kostka Count Dunin, son of Livonia chamberlain, and Her Grace Julianna Leduchowska née Bętkowska, daughter of Łomża standard-bearer], *ZPP* 1773, vol. 8, part 1, pp. 35–45.

ny with the presence of celebrated guests together formed the laudatory part of the poems. In most wedding works their authors also raised other matters that used to be the subject of separate nuptial works of a moralising nature.⁴⁰ They formulated their observations regarding the matching of the couples and reflections on marriage itself. Naruszewicz discussed this topic in almost every occasional poem discussed up to this point. In the poem to the ‘wedding act’ of Józef Radzicki and Teresa Krajewska he smoothly listed the ‘najpewniejsze prognostyki’ [‘the most certain augury’] of marital happiness: ‘mądrość, rozsądek, wstyd, umysł niedziki, / statek, poczciwość’ [‘wisdom, reason, modesty, non-wild mind, / stability, integrity’]. Naruszewicz also filled seven stanzas, which was over half, of the poem celebrating the wedding of Wincenty Potocki, son of Stanisław, Poznań Voivode, with the king’s niece Urszula Zamoyska,⁴¹ with reflections on the proper choice that requires prudence and time of one’s wife – a good ‘przyjaciel’ [‘friend’] and ‘towarzysz’ [‘companion’], with whom ‘znośniejszy smutek’ [‘sadness is more tolerable’] and ‘słodsze wesele’ [‘happiness is sweeter’]. He argued that ‘Pierwszy punkt szczęścia, mieć drugiego siebie’ [‘The first step to happiness is to have another self’]. He also meticulously specified what should connect spouses, which also meant what guaranteed happiness in ‘małżeński stan’ [‘the marital state’]:

Równe z obojej strony urodzenie,
Z równym, wzajemnej miłości, dowodem,
Równe przymioty, wiek, dostatków mienie,
Szczególnym, stronom, mają być powodem.

Equal birth on both sides,
With equal, mutual token of love,
Equal qualities, age, property,
Exceptional reason for both parties.⁴²

In a poem celebrating the wedding of Józef Niesiołowski and Katarzyna Masalska, Naruszewicz devoted as many as eighteen stanzas (nearly two-thirds of the whole) moralising about the lamentable consequences of choosing one’s wife based on her looks or dowry instead of her virtue, as well as tendentiously criticised, in an exaggerated manner as if in a satire, contemporary marriages and juxtaposed them to what marriage used to be:

40 See L. Ślękowa, *Poezja epitalamijna...*, pp. 90–97.

41 A. Naruszewicz, “Na dzień zaślubienia J.W. JMci Pana Wincentego Potockiego, podkomorzego w. koronnego z J.W. JMci panną Urszulą Zamoyską, wojewodzianką podolską” [On the wedding day of His Grace Wincenty Potocki, the grand chamberlain of the Crown, and Her Grace Urszula Zamoyska, daughter of the Podolia Voivode], *ZPP* 1776, vol. 13, part 2, pp. 227–230.

42 Despite the fact that Naruszewicz wished Potocki to ‘Z równie dobraną towarzyszką szczęścia’ [‘With equally chosen companion happy life’] spend ‘w czerstwości lata niezmierzone’ [‘innumerable years with vigour’], the latter’s ill-matched marriage to Zamoyska fell apart soon afterwards. Though maybe Potocki did embrace the poet’s directions and advice as when travelling abroad he never ceased searching for an appropriate life partner. Already in 1778 ‘w czasie kolejnego pobytu w Paryżu ubiegał się o «przyjaźń» 15-letniej Heleny Massalskiej, przyszłej, trzeciej z kolei swej żony’ [‘during yet another visit to Paris he sought the «friendship» of the 15-year-old Helena Massalska, his future third wife’] (W. Szczygielski, “Potocki Wincenty” in: *PSB*, vol. 28 (Cracow: 1985), p. 227.

Srogie zawiści, zajadłe niezgody,
oziębłe serca, skwapliwe rozwody,
niewierne łóża, potomstwo podrzutki –
te to są teraz naszych małżeństw skutki.

Severe envy, fierce disagreements,
cold hearts, eager divorces,
unfaithful beds, and offspring become foundlings –
these are now the outcomes of our marriages.

A similar harsh tone was used by the author of the ode to the wedding of Stanisław Kostka Dunin and Julianna Leduchowska to expose the practice of matching couples solely based on their material means. He directed his accusations at fathers condemning their daughters to unhappy lives without love, as well as calculating husbands abusing their wives. The poem includes a compassion-filled reflection on the sad and difficult fate of women in unsuccessful unions into which they were forced. The author is similarly critical about the outcomes of concluding marriage without having any positive emotional bonds:

Czy jeden bogactw blaskiem złudzony,
Młodziuchną córkę wydaje
Za starca? który miał cztery żony,
Ostatnią męczy i łaje.

Has there been only one who, drawn by the glimmer of riches,
Gave away his young daughter
To an old man? Who had four wives,
Torments and beats the last one.

Iż z niej potomstwa nadziei nie ma,
A wielkie dobra dziedziczy,
Że ją szczęśliwą uczynił, mniema,
Ona dni we łzach swe liczy.

That from her there is no hope for offspring,
Yet inherits great assets,
That he made her happy, he assumes,
While she counts her days in tears.

Małoż widzimy takich zamęścia,
Które nie miłość jednoczy,
Lecz interesa honorów, szczęścia,
Co łudzą serca i oczy?

Haven't we seen enough of such marriages,
Not bound by love,
But by the interest in honours, happiness,
That delude hearts and eyes?

Stąd też widzimy straszne bezprawia,
Niechęci, kłótnie, niezgody,
Jedno drugiemu zasadzki stawia,
Stąd częste bardzo rozwody.

This is also the cause of great anomie,
Aversion, quarrel, disagreement,
Both set ambushes for the other,
Hence the very common divorces.

As per the established custom, on the wedding day newlyweds also received cautions, recommendations, warnings, prognostications, and well-wishes for their further married life. People focussed on marital obligations and relations between spouses. This area appears in almost every poem celebrating the weddings of specific persons. In the latter half of the 18th century, people still associated mainly reproductive goals with marriage, which was why they mainly wished many children with various virtues. Possibly due to the tragic fortunes of Poland at that time authors of such wishes mainly accentuated patriotic issues. By referring to the qualities and contributions of their parents, living relatives, and famous ancestors (mainly of paternal line), they projected future devotion of the newlyweds to king and country. That was Tomaszewski's intention in directing these words to Stanisław Kostka Potocki and Aleksandra Lubomirska:

The poem also mentions the merry play and free atmosphere in which the wedding guests spent their time with the pleasant sounds of ‘Piszczalki, flety, skrzypce i multany’ [‘Fiddles, flutes, violins, and panpipes’], as well as young people enjoying themselves in dance, and other guests indulging in ‘swywolne humory’ [‘frivolous humours’] of their choice:

ten pije, ów gra, ów się pieści,
Inny, jak może i jak się domieści.

this one is drinking, that one plays, other smooch,
Another still, however he can and if it happens.

Other wedding poems referenced specifically do not include such descriptions, which might indicate that they were written before the nuptial ceremony or that their authors were not among the feasting guests.

The authors of wedding poems optimistically projected the harmonious lives of the newlyweds, including their compatible relations in bed. The nature of the latter, referring mainly to the grand finale of the wedding ceremony awaiting the newlyweds, varied considerably between poems, both in terms of detailing and linguistic shape. The poem *W dzień weselny* offers only elliptical references to the charms of the marital bed crowning the wedding reception. The subtext of the entire poem conveys clear allusions that are erotic in nature. The author suggests them by referring to the ‘tajemnice’ [‘secrets’], which are repeated six times, as well as in the refrain calls, and the subject of the host’s toasts during which he eagerly empties his ‘śklenica’ [‘glass’]. Like the strikes of a father clock, they remind everyone of not only the passage of time but also the experiences culminating the wedding ceremony, awaited impatiently by the ‘złączona para’ [‘bound couple’]. In the context of such pursuits the desire expressed in the beginning of the poem becomes clear, i.e., for the sun’s ‘świeca’ [‘candle’] to extinguish and with the coming of the awaited night, which spreads its grey wings over the world, the darkness, so welcome for the newlyweds, would last as long as possible. At the thought of the experiences to come, the young couple’s ‘płoną lice’ [‘cheeks blaze’] with emotions. No wonder then that:

Pan młody woła, zamknij okiennicę,
By ta noc trwała, są w tym tajemnice.

The groom calls, close the shutter,
So that the night could last, secrets lie in it.

The author of the poem did specify what secrets he meant in the final call:

Lecz że noc mija, krzyczą tajemnice,
Niechaj co prędzej otworzą łóżnicę.

But the night is ending, the secrets are shouting,
May they open the bedroom immediately.

Thus, the continuing feasting, play, and dance during the wedding are considered attractions pleasant only for the guests, wastefully reducing the time the newlyweds wished to spend in the night’s shadow on the enjoyment of the wedding night.

The matters of married life, beginning with the wedding evening, were raised in wedding poems regardless of whether a work was solely literary, or an author was inspired by the marriage of specific people. Poets allowed themselves much more freedom in works of the former kind of wedding poems, though, as well as in texts that applied to weddings of well-known figures to their contemporaries which circulated among a small circle of readers in a manuscript version.

It is noteworthy that Naruszewicz, who wrote obscene narrative poems⁴⁴ with ease, almost never discussed the topic of the secrets and the charms of marital bed in his wedding poems. Within the realm of pious hopes, with considerable generalisation, he associated his hopes for a harmonious conjugal life of Michał Hieronim Radziwiłł and Helena née Przeddziecka. That was the poet's plea to the Almighty when he wrote:

[...] Zdarz to tylko, Boże,
by tak zgodne do zgonu życia było łożę!

[...] Make it happen, God,
for the bed to be this harmonious until life's end!

In a similar tone he assured Teresa Krajewska that in 'śłodkie pęta' ['sweet binds'] that she accepted voluntarily in marrying Józef Radzicki, special values are hidden: 'wiara, statek i co czynić może / szczęśliwym łożę' ['faith, wealth, and whatever can make / the bed happy'].

Trembecki approached this thread more boldly yet with humour in two spicy epithalamia. In both poems, inspired by the weddings of well-known people at that time, the poet described the unfolding and charms of the wedding night.⁴⁵ For moral considerations, both circulated only in copies in manuscripts all until mid-20th century.

The poem entitled *Epitalamion Dorantowi i Klimenie, czyli miłość stateczna*⁴⁶ [Epithalamium to Dorant and Klimena, or abiding love] was written for the wedding of Duke Janusz Modest Sanguszko, the youngest son of Paweł Karol and Barbara née Dunin, and Karolina Goźdzka, daughter of Stanisław Bernard and his second wife Barbara (or Salomea) née Małachowski, daughter of the Oświęcim staroste.⁴⁷ The marriage, concluded on 6 May 1773 by the calculating Krzemieniec staroste

44 See B. Wolska, "Poematy obsceniczne przypisywane Naruszewiczowi jako adaptacje wzorów obcych" [Obscene narrative poems ascribed to Naruszewicz as adaptation of foreign models] in: *Literaturoznawstwo* [Literature studies], book 1, R. Jagodzińska (ed.) (Łódź: 2007), pp. 41–70.

45 Both poems have been discussed in more detail by Roman Krzywy in the already-indicated study: *Rokokowe epitalamiony Stanistaw Trembeckiego...*, pp. 124–130, 134–139. I shall refer to his remarks further in my discussion.

46 See S. Trembecki, "Epitalamion Dorantowi i Klimenie, czyli miłość stateczna" in: idem, *Pisma wszystkie...* pp. 31–32.

47 See R. W. Wołoszyński, "Nassau-Siegen Karolina" in: *PSB*, vol. 22 (Cracow: 1977), p. 595.

returning from abroad with a dowered maiden with an interest in theatre, ended in divorce five years later.⁴⁸

Trembecki's 'nieobyczajny' ['salacious'] poem, in one copy assigned the title "Łożnicopiew Dorantowi i Klimenie" [Marriage bed-song to Dorant and Klimena], is related to ancient Roman Fescennine Verses and Old Polish tradition.⁴⁹ The poet chose from the whole 'dzień weselny' ['wedding day'] the culminating moment preceding a 'Beilager song'. A high-paced account of the wedding night is the central part of the poem, starting with the concerns of the frightened bride that 'Idzie ciągniona między prześcieradła' ['Walks drawn between the sheets'] and crowned with the conjugal act repeated six times, unequivocally indicated by intentionally selected mythological realities:

Klimena, grotem Kupidy na pchnięta,
Podnosi w niebo zemdlone oczęta.

Klimena, struck by Cupid's arrowhead,
Raises into the sky her swoony eyes.

Enumerations, repetitions, and anaphora perpetuate the expressive hastened narration. Trembecki's witty account refers to the knightly convention as he discusses scenes and participants of 'krwawej i nieznannej wojny, / Bez sekundanta, bez tarczy, bez broni' ['a bloody and unknown war, / Without a second, or a shield, or a weapon']. The contrast between the behaviours, sensations, and actions of the spouses produces a comical effect. On the one hand, there is the confused Klimena, on the other, Dorant – 'swawolny chłopiec' ['frolicky boy'] who, upon quickly completing foreplay, quickly and unceremoniously moves to executing his marital rights. The humorous undertone is also visible in the comparisons that utilise elements of the natural world and many diminutives. The poet's references to cooing pigeons or ivy wrapping around a tree are not surprising, but his original comparison between the spouses' bodies wrapped around each other with a sea creature produces a creates humorous taint:

Ani ostryga tak ściśle zamknięta,
Jak ściśle wasze splecione nożęta.

No oyster is so tightly closed,
As your leggings are intertwined.

The discussed devices indicate Trembecki's playful distance to the scene he described. In the work emphasis has been placed exclusively on the sensual side of the corporal act between the newlyweds in bed, i.e., on the hedonistic aspect of marriage. (This approach might have been, as argued by Roman Krzywy, a re-

48 See M. Czeppe, "Sanguszko Janusz (Jan) Modest" in: *PSB*, vol. 34 (Cracow: 1993), p. 492.

49 According to Roman Krzywy this poem is 'odbitym przez wyobraźnię poety, dalekim echem' ['a reflection off the poet's imagination of a distant echo'] of the Klaudian's fourth Fescennine Verse written for the wedding of Emperor Honorius and Maria, daughter of the famous Stilicho (idem, *Rokokowe epitalamiony Stanisława Trembeckiego...*, p. 127).

flection of the libertine attitude of Duke Sanguszko who was the prototype of Dorant). Trembecki's finesse and wit helped him avoid the trivialisation of the erotic layer of this epithalamium. What also helped was the use of the shorthand technique in the most edgy moments of the poetic account. The poem does not contain any allusions to the spouses' reproductive plans and instead wishes for them to fill their life with such experiences and passion as those which they shared during their first night as a married couple. The considerable freedom Trembecki gave himself while describing the experiences of the newlyweds during their wedding night could be explained by his affinity for spicy erotic poetry and also, to some extent, by the fact that the libertine duke was his distant relative.

With even more freedom the poet depicted a similar scene in *Epitalamion Hipolitowi i Belinie, czyli miłość nowych małżonków*⁵⁰ [Epithalamium for Hipolit and Belina, or the love of new spouses]. The subtitle of a manuscript copy of this poem specified its content and the persons hidden under the conventional names: "Napisane na pierwszą noc J.O. księcia Radziwiłła, wojewody mińskiego, z J.W. panną Ostroróżanką" [Written for the first night of His Grace Prince Radziwiłł, Minsk Voivode, and Her Grace Miss Ostroróżanka]. The groom was Józef Mikołaj, the oldest son of Marcin Mikołaj Radziwiłł, 'krajczy' (*structor mensae*, incisor) of Lithuania, and his first wife Aleksandra née Bełchacki. The bride was Wiktoria, daughter of Izydor Ostroróg, the Czernsk pantler, a student at the cadet school in Luneville, and Anna née Boski, daughter of the Ostromecko Staroste, Bienkowska from her first marriage, wojska (a tribune) of Nur.⁵¹ The marriage was concluded on 1 April 1782, only seven and a half months after the death of the Minsk Voivode's first wife, Antonina née Miączyński (who died on 14 August 1781).⁵²

In his salacious poem saturated with sensuality and eroticism Trembecki intentionally avoided any conventional laudatory elements. With his 'lekki pędzlik' ['light brush'] he painted the pleasures of the wedding bed describing how Belina's virginity 'gubi szkarłaty' ['is losing its crimson'] thanks to the lustful 'pełny płomienia' ['flame-filled'] Hipolit. He wittily conveyed the sexual drive and almost boundless energy of the groom who executed his marital rights several times. He meticulously reproduced the wedding night of the title couple carefully monitored by mythological gods: Venus, Diana, Cupid and Petrunda – the ancient personification of the first encounter of the two sexes. The witty descriptions of Hipolit's sexual acts as, however, devoid (as emphasised by Roman Krzywy) a direct obscenity as

50 See S. Trembecki, "Epitalamion Hipolitowi i Belinie, czyli miłość nowych małżonków" in: idem, *Pisma wszystkie...*, pp. 71–76.

51 See M. Czaplinska, "Ostroróg Izydor" in: *PSB*, vol. 24 (Cracow: 1979), p. 500.

52 See H. Dymnicka-Wołoszyńska, "Radziwiłł Józef Mikołaj" in: *PSB*, vol. 30 (Cracow: 1987), pp. 238–240.

Trembecki used allusive circumlocutions and generalisations, and focussed on the circumstances and results rather than on the course of erotic activities of the insatiable newlyweds. Consider one of the comparisons regarding Hipolit's actions he undertook several times towards Belina:

Z jaką żwawością gwałtem się wdziera
Między skaliste szczeliny
Wąż młodociany, gdy się rozbiera
Z swej przeszłorocznej łupiny,

Just as briskly and urgently a young snake rushes
Between the rocky slits
As he drops
His last year's shell,

Z taką Hipolit mocą pragnienia
Wszystkie swe siły natęża,
Sprawuje przykrość, słyszy syknięcia
I z wielkim trudem zwycięża.

So does Hipolit with his desire's force
Strains all his powers,
Causes unpleasantness, hears whimpers
And with great difficulty he is victorious.

Also in stanzas regarding Belina, who for the first time is seeing the details of male anatomy, the images unequivocally emanate eroticism despite the allusive nature of the descriptions. At the sight of the naked man the woman becomes embarrassed, but she is also curious and drawn to it:

Pierwszy raz wtedy Belina widzi
Ciekawy przymiot człowieka,
Oko niewinne patrzeć się wstydzi,
A kryć go nie chce powieka.

For the first time Belina sees
The interesting human attribute,
Her innocent eyes are embarrassed to look,
But the eyelids refuse to cover them.

The Polish and French footnotes seem significant for emphasising the eroticism of the frivolous poem – in them Trembecki used unrefined ambiguity and obscenity.⁵³ This way the main flow of the poem is sophisticated and light. In line with the presumed poetics, Trembecki gave the groom his final wish, or rather a prediction. He recommended the latter to have more control over his erotic appetite in the future as he needs to have enough strength for the rest of his life.

Kniaźnin also wrote about the erotic experiences of newlyweds during the wedding night in epithalamia that related to the model of the 'Beilager song' in *Erotyki* – witty and humorous yet without any spicy details or emphasising the corporeal nature of sensual associations. He usually used conventional love metaphors but he also tried to convey the emotional experiences triggered in the woman by the ritual act of love and its setting. In six out of the ten wedding poems he mentioned the 'sforny' ['harmonious'] course of the events unfolding in intimate circumstances, and the fact of confirming 'oblubieńcze śluby' ['wedding vows'] as the wedding night arrived.

53 This is not the only work in which a royal chamberlain used footnotes as a kind of tool for developing his literary play. See J. Ryba, "Stanisław Trembecki – mistrz przypisu" [Stanisław Trembecki, master of notes] in: *Autorów i wydawców dialogi z czytelnikami. Studia historycznoliterackie* [Dialogues of authors and publishers with readers. Studies in the history of literature], R. Ociczek (ed.) (Katowice: 1992), pp. 41–51.

Epitalamion about Epimach and Klimena (IV, 2) is completely filled with erotic allusions. This reading of the story of the mythological spouses is unequivocally specified by two maxim-like formulations that precede this reference:

Po swoim każdy miarkując się plecu,
Za to się bierze, co wytrzymać może.
I w starym, mówią, Kupid pali piecu;
Dobrze zagrzewa letni Tyton łożę.
Zna Eos, iż ma dosyć jej mąż miły
Ognia i siły.

Each having gauged their strength,
Takes up what he can do.
Cupid burns the fire even in an old furnace, they say;
It's a good thing aged Tyton is warming the bed.
Eos knows her kind husband has had enough
Fire and strength.

The song's opening call to the collective happiness in the 'nowe wesele' [ambiguous, can be read either as 'new wedding' or 'new joy'] has a humorous undertone. One would be pressed not to notice the jocular intention of the author in the encouragement directed at the maiden to overcome her embarrassment and bring the old man 'na ofiarę / Miłość i wiarę' ['in sacrifice / Love and faith']. Similar in nature is the attempt to calm Klimena's worries, as at the thought about the impending night she must spend with her groom, which is badly marked by old age, she blushes and cries. By utilising the mythological calque, the poet foresees for her bedside attractions by which she will be surprised and delighted during their wedding night by the visually repulsive yet lustful groom:

I ty, Klimeno! co się teraz płonisz,
Chłubić się będziesz z Epimacha mocy.
Po cóż te z oczu łzy wątpliwe ronisz?
Ucieszy pierwszej doświadczenie nocy,
Kiedy twój, pięćkroć pokonany snadnie,
Wieniec opadnie.

And you, Klimena! who is blushing now,
Will take pride in Epimach's strength.
Why do you shed those doubting tears from your eyes?
The experience of the first night will please you,
When your five times easily defeated,
Flower drops.

Z Klaudianiana [From Klaudian] (V, 27) also emanates eroticism; in it Książnin described the 'słodkie chwile' ['sweet instances'] and 'słodkie momenty' ['sweet moments'] with which Mirtyl and Klimena would finalise their wedding night. In a paraphrase of the Fescennine verse of a Roman author the mentor provides the inexperienced lad recommendations on the location, time and method how to fight in his first love's battle.⁵⁴ The poetic text updates the chain of heroic associations: call for action, warning against show of weakness, and encouragement to charge resolutely. The outcome of the battle is predetermined as the other side is a virgin, whose weapon in the struggle will only include tears, anxiety, and embarrassment. The passage, serious in its tone, starting with the recommendations regarding the already started 'gra wstępna' [foreplay] and all the way to the description of the tri-

54 In the case of this work by Książnin one cannot talk about a 'dalekie echo' ['distant echo'] (like in Trembecki's works) but rather a poetic paraphrase and in some parts with a rather verbatim translation of Fescennine verse of the Roman author. Cf. Claudian, 'Fescennine Verses in Honour of the Marriage of the Emperor Honorius' [IV] in: *Epitalamia antyczne, czyli antyczne pieśni weselne* [Epithalamia from antiquity, or wedding songs from antiquity], transl. and editing by M. Brożek, suppl. and additional print prepared by J. Danielewicz (Warsaw-Poznań: 1999), pp. 118–121.

umph of the lad's male pride as he proclaims his victory to the whole world the next morning wearing a mirth wreath, has eventually a humorous undertone. That is because the projected scene of the fight in 'miętkie pierze' [soft down] of the bed has Venus and not Mars as its patron. By utilising a similar stylisation in yet another *Epitalamion* in *Erotyki* [Erotics] (VIII, 17), the poet foresees a ritual triumph of another actor of bedside struggles. This is what Hymen portends 'śpiewając swobodnie' [singing freely] about the newlyweds whom he 'ogniem natchnął i przeżegnał' [infused with fire and blessed]:

Krwawa przychodzi potyczka bez boju,
Tryumf w swobodnym nastąpi pokoju.
Kupid grot mierzy, a Wenus się śmieje:
Przegra ktoś, padnie, i krew swą wyleje.

Bloody battle without a fight comes,
Triumph shall come in unrestrained peace.
Cupid aims his arrow, Venus laughs:
Someone will lose, will fall, and spill their blood.

Kniaźnin's *Epitalamion* from the penultimate book of *Erotyki* (IX, 18) differs from the previously discussed wedding songs, though the scene of confirming the nuptial vows outlined in the initial part contains similar ritual circumstances derived from antiquity and elements of knightly stylisation. After three stanzas of introduction, the author focuses not on the erotic actions of the man but on the experiences and sensations of the woman. He described her wedding metamorphosis, and to this end, he used a paraphrase of a well-known work in Sappho introduced elements of the 'pathography' of love to the literature of antiquity, i.e., a description of the physical signs of this emotion.⁵⁵

Charyna, whom on the wedding night is led by Hymen with a smile behind the bedroom drapes 'na pieszczoną mękę' ['for caressing torments'], is torn by conflicting reactions and emotions. She is filled with uncertainty but also curiosity of undiscovered experiences, a pleasant agitation of the senses, internal flame exposing the whole of her 'przyrodnie' ['innate'] female charms, and timidness and embarrassment manifested in her blushing and sighing. Her restless anxious thoughts churn in her mind which tries to tame the coming 'niedoznane gody' ['previously unexperienced bliss']. Her gentle sight notices previously 'tajne rzeczy' ['secret things'] of the marital bed. The richness of the sensations and emotions indicate the complexity of the female psychic and the emotional sphere, the dynamics of the mental and emotional aspect of her personality in the face of unknown erotic experiences.

55 See Sappho, 'Wydaje mi się samym bogom równy...' ['He seems to be equal to gods...'], transl. J. Brzostowska in: Alcaeus and Sappho, *Pieśni* [Songs], transl. J. Brzostowska, J. Danielewicz, introduction and comments by J. Danielewicz (Warsaw: 1989), pp. 63–64. Catullus' song LI is a poetic translation/paraphrase of this text. See idem, *Poezje*, transl. A. Świderkówna, J. Krókowski (ed.) (Wrocław: 2005), pp. 50–51 (BN II 105). However, it would be difficult to assert which source (Greek or Roman) was the basis for Książnin's paraphrase. I wish to thank professor Jacek Wójcicki for indicating to me the association between the poem by the author of *Erotyki* and the tradition of antiquity.

The barely outlined schematic image of the lad is drawn by the worn-out knightly convention. The strong, young Telesykrat armed with erotic desires awaits ready for the intimidated maiden – ‘Ta słaba, ten pełen mocy’ [‘She is weak, he is full of power’]. This image is clearly suggestive and unequivocal it takes the young woman only one glance to understand and feel what is coming:

Skoro na niego wdzięczne rzuci oko
I rzeczy tajnej dociecze,
Serce jej rana przesyje głęboko,
Żywy ją płomień upiecze.

Płata się język, ni się wytłumaczy,
Rumiane goreją lice,
Wzrok oczu bystry coś nowego znaczy,
Słabe się iskrzą źrenice.

Pot jej po ciele przesuwa się gwałtem,
A kroki niepewne płyną.
Widok ją nowym przeistacza kształtem:
Charyna nie jest Charyną.

Once she glanced at him gracefully
And noticed the secret things,
A deep cut runs through her heart,
And a live flame overcomes her.

The tongue twists, she can't explain herself,
Cheeks blush,
Keen eyes notice something new,
Weak pupils glisten.

Sweat violently moves down her body,
And her steps flow hesitantly.
The sight transforms her a new shape:
Charyna is no longer Charyna.

When compared to its prototype, this poem contains a much more developed description of external physical signs of erotic sensations that are experienced by the young woman for the first time during the wedding night. Those include: cheeks burning with emotion, ‘wzrok oczu bystry’ [‘keen eyes’] that ‘coś nowego znaczy’ [‘reveals something new’], glistening pupils, twisting tongue unable to put the experiences into words, sweat moving violently throughout her body, and her hesitant steps. By including in a wedding-related work the elements of ‘pathography’ taken from the model from antiquity Kniaźnin altered their meaning to some extent. He used them to present the great change of a young girl becoming a woman. He depicted this metamorphosis without overusing mythological erotic allusions and the already played love metaphors. He described the experiences and emotional sensations of a maiden given as prey to qualms, paralysing fear, compelling internal arousal, uncertainty of her intuitions, a shiver of pleasure, and, finally, fainting and loss of consciousness. In drawing the image of the woman perceived by the man during the act of sexual fulfilment, it was in the emotional sphere that he saw the causes of her external reactions and behaviour without applying to the scenes the previously distinct humorous stylisation – as he did in other epithalamia that raised the topic of the erotic experiences of newlyweds.

* * *

The poems referenced in the discussion fit differently in the tradition of nuptial literature while retaining solutions specific to the poetry of their time. Basically, one could identify two types of said works. The first covers poems related to weddings of specific people, sometimes assigned conventional names in the works. As a result of a huge promotion and dynamic evolution of the ode, this type of poems was usually used within the framework of the occasional variety of this genre.⁵⁶ It was less common to develop poems as bucolics, though this genre was also popular in all streams of poetry of the Stanislaus period. Panegyric is a genre that is influenced by and visible both in occasional wedding odes and wedding bucolics – mainly within the laudatory sections of the works.

The other stream included mainly cheerful poems related to the model of ritual songs of antiquity. Those were commonly translations and paraphrases of texts from antiquity or poems modelled based on this tradition. Usually, they were not developed as occasional works – their texts were related to the marriage ritual and the wedding celebrations were treated as a ritual of a social nature or an attractive topic or a literary motif. One should also include in this stream works that focussed on the erotic experiences of newlyweds, regardless of whether their protagonists were fictional characters or were prototyped on specific recognised people. In most of those poems, their authors followed the model of a 'Beilager song' in a witty and humorous manner.

In the case of wedding poems that constituted the object of this discussion, the limitation of the variety in terms of genre was a result of mainly the fact that they were not part of designed wedding scripts but rather completely independent works from the very moment of their creation, intentionally functioning among readers as complete wholes. That does not mean that their authors completely rejected the domestic matrimonial rites – they referred to them but in an indirect manner. By carefully selecting the setting, they emphasised the ritual nature of the scenes they depicted – either actual scenes described in the form of a report or only as projections. They accentuated the importance and the special atmosphere of the marriage ritual, and they raised topics discussed in different varieties of Old Polish epithalamium poetry. They devoted considerable attention to the newlyweds and wedding guests, as well as to selected stages and aspects of the domestic matrimonial ritual. Carefully chosen mythological material was an element of the poetic depiction used in both streams of wedding poetry of the Stanislaus period and something that clearly connected these two types of poems with the experiences of the poets' predecessors. In serious occasional works, they were mainly used for elevating the

56 See T. Kostkiewiczowa, *Oda w poezji polskiej. Dzieje gatunku* [Ode in Polish poetry. History of the genre] (Wrocław: 1996), pp. 180–190, 222.

very act of marriage, as well as the protagonists and participants in the event, while in wedding songs, it usually co-formed the joyous aura of play combining dance and song. It was also a way to introduce elements with erotic undertones to humorous, witty, and frivolous poems devoted to the experiences and sensations of the newlyweds during the wedding night.

In the discussed group of occasional works, certain characteristics of contemporary poetry were noticeable. First, the most prominent were references in laudatory sections to the values and attitudes highly appreciated at that time; those elements co-formed the flattering image of an enlightened person and a good citizen. Additionally, in poems addressed to specific people, the authors devoted considerable portions of the texts to reflections of a moralising and didactic nature that applied to the principles of selecting one's life companion and friend, as well as the very institution of marriage and the obligations of the spouses and compatible and harmonious relations between them.⁵⁷ The discussed works carry a kind of a stigma of the time, i.e., patriotic motifs and references to the dramatic seminal events in the Polish history.

In this group of texts, what seems most interesting are the spicy and witty epithalamia by Trembecki, Książnin's erotics, a mother's blessing for her son framed as a poem, and a work devoted to the wedding feast by an anonymous author. All those poems broke the limits of the socially and familiarly rooted model of nuptial works. Poems by Trembecki and Książnin maintained with the Roccoco convention stand out the most among the other texts. Both poets concretised in their poems similar scenes, yet they emphasised different aspects of the experiences and sensations of the newlyweds in bed inscribed in the wedding ritual. Trembecki's epithalamia are more morally unconstrained yet more refined, while Książnin's poems, despite his use of conventional poetic material, are more emotionally loaded. What both poets shared was their decision to abandon the convention of a serious the wedding song (like in works by Naruszewicz, Szostowicz or Tomaszewski) or the wedding panegyric, i.e., the model of nuptial poetry consolidated by, e.g., the collaborators of *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne*.⁵⁸ In Książnin's case, the decision resulted in several works in a broadening of section that is reflective in nature.

57 The authors of the latter half of the 18th century often focussed on the institution of marriage and the various related problems. Examples of that include works by Krasicki (*Małżeństwo* [Marriage]), Naruszewicz (*O małżeństwie* [On marriage]; *Małżeństwo szczęśliwe* [Happy marriage]; *Małżeństwo* [Marriage]); translations of French texts developed by Elżbieta Drużbacka, Józef Koblański, and Książnin published in *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne*, as well as a translation of Plutarch's *Coniugalia Praecepta*.

58 One should note that within the eight years when *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* was published (1770–1777), the periodical featured only ten works of the wedding poetry kind, including one translation and one poem for the occasion of a wedding anniversary.

It seems that it was the characteristics indicated in the wedding poems by the two Roccoco authors that offered an opportunity to refresh the sacrosanct, due to tradition and domestic morality, ritual/panegyric model of nuptial poems, which emphasised the social status and family connections of the newlyweds, and the reproductive objectives of the institution of marriage. Soon afterwards, those changes became necessary as a result of the slow demise of the panegyric and occasional/laudatory ode within the circle of the 'household muse'.⁵⁹ The decision to abandon the serious occasional nature and to turn to humorous and witty framing that in a sophisticated or spicy matter raised the topic which in the poem *W dzień weselny* [On wedding day] was alluded to in a toast by the host: 'Vivant złączonej pary tajemnice!' ['Cheers to the secrets of the joined couple!'] was a chance to extend the life of wedding poetry.

*Translated by Jakub Wosik
verified by Jerzy Giebuttowski*

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59 Cf. T. Kostkiewiczowa, *Oda w poezji polskiej...*, pp. 208–222; J. Platt, “Panegiryk” [Panegyric] in: *Słownik literatury polskiego oświecenia* [Dictionary of the literature of Polish Enlightenment], T. Kostkiewiczowa ed. (Wrocław: 1991), p. 393.

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this article is wedding and reception songs from the King Stanisław August Poniatowski period, which the author divides into two groups: the first

contains poems written on the occasion of the nuptials of specific, individually named couples, while the second gathers poetic texts of a universal character, referring to ancient models of wedding lyrical poetry. The Author identified predominant themes of this type of work: the first – comprises praise of the spouses and their families, while the second – descriptions of wedding ceremonies and ritual elements, advice and wishes addressed to the newlyweds, as well as depictions, some of them humorous, of the wedding night experiences.

KEYWORDS: occasional poetry, Polish literature 18th century, Enlightenment literature, epithalamium