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## Communication in the Face of Death: the Meaning of Funeral Sermons in the Old Polish Epoch

Komunikacja w obliczu śmierci, czyli znaczenie kazań pogrzebowych  
w epoce staropolskiej – reformackie kazania funeralne

**ABSTRACT:** This article is an analysis of four funeral sermons. Their authors are the Franciscans of Primitive Observance: Józef Drohojowski (the sermon for Stanisław Skarbek Ankwic's funeral); Karol Kwinta (the sermon for Stanisław Dłużewski's funeral); Benedykt Roszkowski (the sermon for Wojciech Opaliński's funeral); Franciszek Parażyński (the sermon for Józef Grodzicki's funeral). From the analysis of the funeral sermons, two closely related messages emerge: the vision of death, and the necessity of a good life, which conditions salvation. The recipient of the funeral sermon undoubtedly had to pay attention to these two issues because they were the most important in evangelistic considerations. Everyone who heard the priest's words at the funeral knew that one should virtuously imitate the deceased to achieve the desired salvation. This pedagogy of dying in the Old Polish epoch was an extremely important element from the point of view of the eschatological future. A good, happy death guaranteed good dying and salvation and, as Drohojowski emphasises, residing in the realm of the living. Communication in the face of death was one of compositional elements of the Old Polish epoch *artis bene moriendi*, that is, the art of a good death.

**KEY WORDS:** Franciscans of Primitive Observance, funeral sermon, communication, death, life after death, old polish epoch

**ABSTRAKT:** Artykuł jest analizą czterech kazań pogrzebowych. Ich autorami są franciszkanie reformacji: Józef Drohojowski – kazanie na pogrzeb Stanisława Skarbaka Ankwicza, Karol Kwinta – kazanie na pogrzeb Stanisława Dłużewskiego, Benedykt Roszkowski – kazanie na pogrzeb Wojciecha Opalińskiego, Franciszek Parażyński – kazanie na pogrzeb Józefa Grodzickiego. Z analizy kazań pogrzebowych wyłaniają się dwa ściśle ze sobą powiązane przesłania, to jest wizja śmierci oraz konieczność dobrego życia, która warunkuje zbawienie. Odbiorca kazania pogrzebowego bez wątpienia na

te dwie kwestie musiał zwrócić uwagę, bo to one były w kaznodziejskich rozważaniach najważniejsze. Każdy słuchający na pogrzebie słów duchownego wiedział, że należy naśladować cnotliwe życie zmarłego, by osiągnąć upragnione zbawienie. Ta pedagogika umierania w okresie staropolskim była elementem niezwykle istotnym z punktu widzenia przyszłości eschatologicznej. Dobra, szczęśliwa śmierć gwarantowała dobre umieranie i zbawienie, jak to podkreśla Drohojowski – „przebywanie w ziemi żyjących”. Komunikacja w obliczu śmierci stanowiła jeden ze składowych komponentów staropolskiego *artis bene moriendi*, czyli sztuki dobrego umierania.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: franciszkanie reformaci, kazanie pogrzebowe, komunikacja, śmierć, życie po śmierci, epoka staropolska

## Introduction: Communication in the Old-Poland epoch and the meaning of funeral sermons

Without doubt, communication covers several fields of human existence. We communicate in many different ways, using various codes. Throughout history, we encounter diverse ways to exchange thought, opinion, and emotion. While penetrating the distant worlds of human experience, we notice the multiplicity and diversity of communication schemes, which demonstrates the validity of the need to examine that reality. The Old-Poland era had a few forms of communication that penetrated the receivers' consciousness in appropriate circumstances. Among them, we can mention sermons.

As highlighted by Filip Wolański, 'sermons in the reality of Old Poland culture functioned on two levels: as a unique, unrepeatable, oratory act of a sermoniser, and simultaneously, as a text, available in print or in manuscript.'<sup>1</sup> The sermons transmitted religious content, thus constituting a source of information about God, Jesus, Mary the Mother of God, and the Saints. They served as guideposts to moral questions, and they were doubtless the kerygmatic foundation of the Church in those days.<sup>2</sup> A special kind of sermon is the funeral sermon, which has panegyric features characteristic of the Baroque era. This epoch was a golden age for the funeral sermon, both in quantity and

<sup>1</sup> F. Wolański, *Kaznodziejstwo bernardyńskie w staropolskim systemie komunikacji społecznej u schyłku epoki saskiej. Studium kształtowania wyobrażeń i postaw*, Toruń 2012, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> See also: K. Panuś, *Zarys historii kaznodziejstwa w Kościele Katolickim*, part. 2: *Kaznodziejstwo w Polsce od średniowiecza do baroku*, Kraków 2001; J.A. Drob, *Trzy zegary. Obraz czasu i przestrzeni w polskich kazaniach barokowych*, Lublin 1998; R. Kościelny, *Kazanie barokowe jako źródło do badań nad mechanizmami kształtowania postaw mieszkańców Rzeczypospolitej*, "Nasza Przeszłość" 97 (2002), pp. 89–124.

in quality, while ceasing to be authentic personal testimony of the speaker on the rostrum.<sup>3</sup> As the funeral sermon by definition is of panegyric character, it represented an epideictic type of preaching, englobing enunciation regarding contemporary times. The death of the protagonist of the sermon was, however, from the standpoint of the living, his entrance to the 'world of memory.'<sup>4</sup>

Panegyrics were already known in ancient Greece, for the creator of the genre is considered Gorgias. The Christian variant of the literary genre was formed from the praise of martyrdom. Later, praise of martyrs adopted a special form and entered the canon of ecclesiastic speech. Among the creators of the most beautiful panegyrics are Saints Ambrose and Basil. The Baroque writers took a particular liking to this form because it allowed room for free play with imagination and fantasy. Handbooks teaching how to write panegyrics were written in that time, both for ecclesiastic and laic needs.<sup>5</sup>

It is worthwhile to draw our attention to the communicative role of the panegyric in Old Poland culture. It was not solely, as Kazimierz Maliszewski noted, a bond between the laudator and the addressee or the hero of the praise but also it gained the dimension of a mass phenomenon, becoming an important element of social practice, exchange of values, a permanent element of the public life and one of the forms of sociotechnical and persuasive acts. The panegyric, as part of the verbal communication system, turned out to be a part of a multi-systemic pan-semiotic performance that used all available means of human communication, including gesture, motion, and occasionally architecture within the funeral ceremony. Thus, it was not only an expression of the literary culture but also a general culture of the society of states, with its acceptance of hierarchy, respect for laws, exchange of moral norms, and principles of ethics.<sup>6</sup> What is more, these elements were also present in funeral sermons, whose construction is described by Bogdan Rok:

<sup>3</sup> W. Pazera, *Kaznodziejstwo w Polsce. Od początku do końca epoki baroku*, Częstochowa 1999, p. 36.

<sup>4</sup> W. Pawlak, *Karmelitańskie kazania pogrzebowe*, "Barok–Historia–Literatura–Sztuka" 16 (2009), no. 1(31), p. 159.

<sup>5</sup> M. Brzozowski, *Teoria kaznodziejstwa*, [in:] *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, vol. 2: *Od Odrodzenia do Oświecenia*, part. 1: *Teologia humanistyczna*, M. Rechowicz (ed.), Lublin 1975, pp. 408–409.

<sup>6</sup> K. Malczewski, *Z dziejów staropolskiej kultury i cywilizacji*, Lublin 2010, p. 79.

typical sermons were based on a three-part epicedium pattern: they contained a part praising the deceased, followed by mourning, and concluded by consolation of the remaining relatives. Additionally, Catholic clergymen also preached the faithful, participants of the funeral service, about the necessity to reflect on the problem of the four last issues, above all, the subject of death.<sup>7</sup>

There was then rich literature around the theme of the death. One of its expressions were manuals called *artis bene moriendi* or occasional mourning texts. Rok divides them into four categories: condolences, descriptions of funerals, funeral sermons, and funeral speeches.<sup>8</sup> Because the funeral ceremonies could have been extremely complex, many funerals had few circumstantial sermons. More often than not, preachers' orations were published in print right after the funeral. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, most probably a few hundred of them were published.

This article is an attempt to analyse the content of four funeral sermons. Their authors are Minor Friars: Józef Drohojowski, Karol Kwinta, Benedykt Roszkowski, and Franciszek Parażyński.

## The righteous life of Count Stanisław Ankwicz in the sermon by J. Drohojowski

Father Józef lived from 1739 to 1811. Apart from his work as a sermoniser in the province of Małopolska, he also worked on the territory of the Custody of the Holy Land, where he fulfilled the function of a definator.<sup>9</sup> Drohojowski's sermon analysed in the article is the *Sermon during the funeral of the Honourable Stanisław Skarbek Ankwicz*<sup>10</sup> Count from Postawice, former Sandecki Castellan, Knight of Polish orders, in the Church of XX Krakow Franciscans of Primitive Observance (...) on the day of the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 1785. The work is divided into three

<sup>7</sup> B. Rok, *Człowiek wobec śmierci w kulturze staropolskiej*, Wrocław 1995, pp. 21–22.

<sup>8</sup> F. Wolański, *Radziwiłłowskie uroczystości funeralne w XVIII w. na tle zwyczajów pogrzebowych w Rzeczpospolitej*, <http://etalpykla.lituanistikadb.lt/fedora/objects/> [access: 1.01.2019]; B. Rok, *Druki żałobne w dawnej Polsce XVI–XVIII w.*, [in:] *Wesela, chrzciny, pogrzeby w XVI–XVIII w. Kultura życia i śmierci*, H. Suchojad (ed.), Warsaw 2001, pp. 187–201; B. Rok, *Człowiek wobec śmierci...*, op. cit., pp. 15–18.

<sup>9</sup> A. Szteinke, *Polscy bracia mniejsi w służbie Ziemi Świętej 1342–1995*, Poznań 1999, pp. 70–71; H. Wyczawski, *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich*, vol. 1, Warsaw 1981, pp. 422–423.

<sup>10</sup> Stanisław Walenty Ankwicz z Postawice herbu Habdank (b. 1720, d. 1784). *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 1, W. Konopczyński (ed.), Krakow 1935, p. 117.

parts and is provided with introduction and conclusion. In the introduction (dedication missing), we read that there are two burial sites: in the grave and in human memory.<sup>11</sup> 'What were his merits for when the cruel earth infects his corpse, people of friendship will keep his spirit in their memory, where he may rest for eternity.'<sup>12</sup> This memory also keeps the souvenir of the entire noble lineage of Ankwicz, to whom the virtuous Stanisław joined by his death:

has left the world One of the most Significant men in the Nation, and he's among the living no more. You're asking about Him in grief, you're looking for Him in detriment, you seek Him in loss, that He's not here, only the regret of the loss remains, and the memory of His virtue (...). Stanisław Ankwicz, Count from Postawice, died as faithful, buried as a nobleman, remains in the memory of the living as a friend of everyone. The first circumstance recommends him in front of God. The second gives him honour in the row of his Family. The third gains him respect among the living.<sup>13</sup>

In the first part of the sermon, the Franciscan highlights that the death concludes human life, but the one who is righteous and virtuous has no need to fear the future beyond the border of life, as 'God's favours' await him there.<sup>14</sup> While describing the figure of the deceased, the speaker underlines that superstition disgusted him, as he was a man of earnest faith who did good to others, and 'all of his trust was placed in God (...), his prudence was courageous, his continence judicious, his prowess watchful, his justice practiced (...) and humble heart faithfully accomplished religious duties.'<sup>15</sup>

In the second part, we can read the following characteristic of the Count: 'he was among the most worthy in the Nation, this worthiness was not only taken after his Ancestors but he also multiplied it by his particular merits as an Emulator of the virtue and glory of his Ancestors.'<sup>16</sup> Drohojowski searches for the beginning of the noble family in 999, and he mentions their numerous honours and merits: 'Few were the chairs the Ankwicz did not possess.'<sup>17</sup> He

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<sup>11</sup> J. Drohojowski, *Kazanie podczas pogrzebu Jaśnie Wielmożnego Stanisława hrabi z Postawic Skarbka Ankwicza bywszego Kasztelana Sandeckiego polskich orderów kawalera w kościele Krakowskiem XX Reformatów dnia 10 marca 1785*, Krakow 1785, p. 9, 12.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, pp. 10–11.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, pp. 16–19.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 21.

also pays attention to the various monasteries and churches created due to the generosity of the bounteous founders.<sup>18</sup> No sooner than after the general introduction and relaying the characteristics of the Ankwicz family, does the author describe more in detail the figure of the very Stanisław, mentioning, for example, that he served August the III: ‘delegated to set Convents at the luckiest Election of our Highness Stanisław August, today, the King.’<sup>19</sup>

Apart from the information regarding the involvement in political and social life,<sup>20</sup> the sermoniser evokes the deceased’s spouses: Salomea and Tekla, as well as his children, Tadeusz, Józef, Kunegunda, Anna, Elżbieta. He also quotes, by name, the large group of grandchildren who can’t find consolation in their grief after the dearest granddad, and who will never forget his cuddles and blessings.<sup>21</sup> The suffering family would be ready to give up their health and life to enjoy more time with their ‘inestimable Father.’<sup>22</sup>

In the third part, the perspicacious sermoniser points at the Ankwicz’s features of character and his disposition:

unobserved were in him weirdness nor wildness, the flaws that make one unbearable for the others. In His innate mildness, he didn’t provoke others’ grunting. His lordly humour attracted friendly hearts for whom he did not wish to be a slave of stinginess. He simply knew how to estimate people according to their degree and office, so he would be always reciprocally estimated by them.<sup>23</sup>

This part is then also a praise, a laudation on the theme of a noble deceased whose traits of character are given as an example to follow.

What seems only natural and obvious in this type of texts, the Franciscan strongly accentuates the inevitability of death. Apart from the panegyric features, the funeral sermons also contained elements of the didactics of death. It

<sup>18</sup> I.e. S. Zydek, *Rola magnatów w kształtowaniu kultury prowincjonalnej w ośrodkach kultu reformatów w Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII w.*, [in:] *Fundator i mecenas. Magnateria Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII*, E. Dubas-Urwanowicz, J. Urwanowicz (eds.), Białystok 2011.

<sup>19</sup> J. Drohojowski, *Kazanie podczas pogrzebu Jaśnie Wielmożnego Stanisława hrabi z Poławic Skarbka Ankwicza bywszego Kasztelana Sandeckiego polskich orderów kawalera w kościele Krakowskim XX Reformatów dnia 10 marca 1785*, Krakow 1785, p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Having fulfilled the duties of a tender citizen when still alive, he recommended himself to the citizens, once in the public interests, and a second time in private life,’ *ibidem*, p. 33. An active social attitude, considered to be desired and noble, is visible here quite clearly.

<sup>21</sup> J. Drohojowski, *Kazanie podczas pogrzebu Jaśnie Wielmożnego Stanisława...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–39.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 35.

would be hard to imagine a sermoniser speaking to the crowd gathered around the deceased's coffin without touching on this fundamental thread. It is also important to note that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, death was perceived differently than today. Every Catholic's task was to rightfully prepare to pass through the gate of life. The preachers of the day perceived death in two ways. It could have been a blessed, happy, and good experience on the condition that a man was properly prepared for its encounter. If a man died without the right disposition, without the Sacraments, in a state of sin, he could only count on condemnation and an eternal stay in Hell. That was the knowledge of the eschatological future that was spread from the rostrum of the church in the Old-Poland era.<sup>24</sup> And the funeral ceremony, in its arrangement, also through the sermon, was an extremely important factor in the preparation; it was a channel of communication about the absoluteness of death. 'Who happened to be born, will inevitably have to die.'<sup>25</sup> In the conclusion of his sermon, Drohojowski speaks in a very decisive manner, as if he was in possession of certain information as to the posthumous destiny of the Count Stanisław: '(...) he has already appeared in front of the face of the King of Ages, and it's from this frontier he pays his respects at Your Highness' Throne.'<sup>26</sup> He also evokes the figure of Primate Michał Poniatowski, Bishop Potkański, the Senate of the Polish Kingdom, and for a second time, the man's wife Tekla and their children.<sup>27</sup> He concludes his sermon with these words:

The Christian faithfulness brought here by bonds of family, friendship and love for the sake of help of the soul of our lord (...). Let's take this lesson: such life, such death (...). Dear God, count this man, full of merits for his fatherland, among those who surround your throne in the land of the living.<sup>28</sup>

As for the language the sermon was written in, we must notice that the Franciscan applied a clear, communicative code, limiting the use of Latin. When using Latin, he places an explanation in a footnote, thus keeping the perception of a text undisturbed.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The preachers devoted much attention in their sermons to the theme of death, the last things, eschatological visions. This reality was depicted very vividly and almost sensually.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40 (reference to the Letter to Hebrew).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 41.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 42–45.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 45.

<sup>29</sup> See also: *ibidem*, p. 18.

## ‘Sweet memory of him was awakened across the country’: Funeral sermon by K. Kwinta dedicated to Stanisław Dłużewski

Father Karol, the author of the second sermon, lived in 1716 to 1783. He joined the order of Franciscan of Primitive Observance in Małopolska Province, but since 1746, after Russ Custody was formed, he belonged to the latter. He worked in several cloisters, as sermoniser or novice magister. He was also a member of the province board as a secretary, definator, custodian or vice provincial and provincial. He died in the L'viv cloister.<sup>30</sup> He authored a very short funeral sermon: *Immortal glory in death fall rightly due the paid debt triumph of the death (...) of the mighty Sir Stanisław in Dłużew Dłużewski, Chief Warrant Officer of Chelski Land (...) offered to the hands of mighty Lady Teodora née Cieszkowska Dłużewska.*<sup>31</sup>

Kwinta, just as Drohojowski, refers to ‘life’ in the human memory that should be the deceased’s share as: ‘sweet memory of him was awaken across the country (...) and the constant thought of him allows him to live anew in the memory.’<sup>32</sup> The author also recalls the noble acts of the dead while evoking his respectful family,<sup>33</sup> ‘who served the fatherland faithfully and supported the Franciscan order (...) and granted many honours to the Sarmatian world.’<sup>34</sup> The dead himself, evidently deserved the praise and recognition as ‘various qualities and excellent virtues (...). Providence enclosed [in him], which everybody sees and recognises.’<sup>35</sup> The sermon praises Stanisław Dłużewski, but is clearly dedicated to the widowed wife to give her solace in her mourning:

To you then, Lady of noble qualities and high virtues, I write this work and deposit it in your charitable Hands, though it’s a meagre gift for You, as the dignity of both Families found shape in you, however the tiniest services of our Convent you used to respect in the Seraphic, and your father’s, benevolence.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup> H. Wyczawski, *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich*, vol. 2, Warszwa 1982, p. 489.

<sup>31</sup> K. Kwinta, *Sława nieśmiertelna w śmiertelnym upadku powinna należytość przy wypłaconym długu tryumf śmierci (...) wielmożnego Jegomości Pana Stanisława na dłuzenie Dłużewskiego Ziemi Chelskiej Chorążego (...) wielmożnej Jejmości Pani Teodory z Cieszkowskiej Dłużewskiej Ziemi Chelskiej Chorążyny w Dobroczyenne Jey Ręce podana*, Lwów 1749.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem (the printed sermon is paginated).

<sup>33</sup> See also: S. Baczewski, *Obraz śmierci w XVII-wiecznych kazaniach pogrzebowych*, “Roczniki Humanistyczne” 1 (2002), vol. 1.

<sup>34</sup> K. Kwinta, *Sława nieśmiertelna w śmiertelnym upadku...*, op.cit.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem.



Kwinta, just as his confreres, describes the deceased as a column of a house that has been destroyed and falls into ruin because of death, as it 'fell struck by death's fatal impetus.'<sup>37</sup>

The conclusion of the sermon seems to deviate slightly from the adopted code of funeral communication, as it refers to people who remain on earth and who gravitate more towards temporality than heaven. It is not, however, an isolated case, as dedicating sermon collections to the convents' benefactors was a widespread practice. Franciscans wishing to remain the beneficiaries of Dłużewski's family material assistance, 'used' in a manner of speaking the Castellan's death, thanked for his generosity while asking for further support. Thus, the situation, as it turns out, opened yet another possible communication sphere that may be called 'communication of gratitude and request,' as it's visible already in the dedication of the sermon. Pauper Franciscans couldn't express their devotion in any other way than through prayer or a testimony of faithfulness expressed in the words of the sermon. A generous benefactor departed to receive the well-merited price, but his family remained, and at the occasion of his death and funeral it could be humbly presented with a request of support similar to the assistance offered by the deceased.<sup>38</sup> Then, the ceremony at the catafalque became, apart from a farewell, also a manifesto of fidelity of the grateful Franciscans.

The language used by Kwinta contains numerous Latin references and interjections. The text remains clear, but in its linguistic layer, is akin to the language used by Parażyński.

## The noble life and dignified death of Count Wojciech Opaliński in the sermon by B. Roszkowski

Another author is Father Benedykt Roszkowski (1735–1791). He joined the order in 1750 in Osieczna and worked in the Wielkopolska Province as a town guard in Miejska Górka, Woźniki near Grodzisk, Kalisz, and Pakość. For more than 21 years, he was a sermoniser in Kalisz, Lutomiersk, Brzeziny near Łódź, and in the cathedral in Poznań. Few of his sermons were published in print.

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>38</sup> See also: S. Zydek, *Rola magnatów w kształtowaniu kultury prowincjonalnej w ośrodkach kultu reformatów w Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII w.*, [in:] *Fundator i mecenas. Magnateria Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII*, op. cit.

Among the ones that were, though, is a funeral sermon dedicated to (title page not preserved): *Her Excellency Mrs Teresa the Countess, née Potocka Opaleńska, Voievode of Sieradz, Matron of Bolesławiec, Lady, Benefactrice* (Poznań 1775).

In the sermon's introduction, the author praises the sharp mind of the virtuous noblewoman,<sup>39</sup> to whom he dedicates his preaching effort. Then, alike Drohojowski and Kwinta, Roszkowski notes that a man as noble as Wojciech Opaliński, having reached the end of his days, may count on the memory of him, kept in the hearts of his close ones.

In the narration of the sermon, a very interesting image of the deceased is sketched:

Nobility inherent to His mind avoided anything that could be called wickedness (...). This Lord, through (...) Christian exercises of the soul, comprehended and recognised two most notorious affairs of the essential happiness, that were always desired by his heart's intention in time and in eternity; what he desired in time was merit, and what he desired in eternity was reward.<sup>40</sup>

Thereafter, the Franciscan draws our attention to the fact that what truly mattered in Opaliński's life was not merits, wealth nor honours, but only what he owed grace, as it was the only thing that he boasted in. He was a good senator, citizen, and Catholic. A virtuous man,<sup>41</sup> humble, accepting God's will: 'His kind-hearted life for eternal memory and public example is set, not only to the youth, but to the Nation.'<sup>42</sup>

The death of Count Opaliński, despite being certainly a blessed event, cast a shadow over the life of his widowed wife Teresa: 'In the mighty Wojciech, the count from Bnin, Opaliński, a voivode of Sieradz, falls down the last pillar of yours (...). This unfortunate bullet, is an injury to your dignified life, may it last the longest age, your Highness...'<sup>43</sup>

Roszkowski does not recall any children in his sermon, which so willingly did Drohojowski and Parażyński, as Opaliński did not bear offspring. This is the reason why the preacher so poetically described the deceased as 'the last pillar' and last representative of the Opaliński family, with its coat of arms of

<sup>39</sup> B. Roszkowski, *Jaśniewielmożnej Pani Imci Teressie Hrabinie z Domu Potockich Opaleńskich Woiewodzinie Sieradzkiej, Starościnie Bolesławskiej, Pani, Pani Dobrodzice*, Poznań 1775, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> S. Zydek, *Radość człowieka cnotliwego, czyli o przyczynach radości w dobie saskiej*, "Logos i ethos" 40 (2016), pp. 93–103.

<sup>42</sup> B. Roszkowski, *Jaśniewielmożnej Pani Imci Teressie...*, op.cit., p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, pp. 18–19.

Łódzia.<sup>44</sup> Instead, he mentions the Castellan Rafał Gajewski, who becomes the deceased's successor. In this situation, the wife may feel double pain and grief as she realises that from now on, she's on her own and dependent on help and the compassion of strangers. Roszkowski, like his confrere Kwinta, evokes facts of voivode life, vividly inscribed in Franciscans' memory and still awakening their gratitude as they give impulse to continuously and humbly request and obtain support ('and dare to keep the convent in the founder's protection'<sup>45</sup>).

This Franciscan's rather short sermon is free from too much praise or panegyric form. The figure of the voivode is presented as good and noble, but devoid of excessive exaggeration that could evoke a near fairytale and unreal elements in the depicted image of the dead. Although, the author doesn't hesitate to compare the departed to the biblical David who searched for happiness in God only. Even in this motif, however, a certain distance towards the figure of the mourned man and moderation in the creation of his posthumous image appear to be observed. The language of the sermon is also very communicative, with not many Latin interjections.

### The death of the 'man of three virtues,' or the funeral sermon by F. Parażyński dedicated to Józef Grodzicki

Different in its expression and, in particular, in the linguistic layer, is the message of Father Franciszek Parażyński. We know little about the author of the sermon, other than the fact that he was an oratory preacher in the Poznań cathedral and worked in the Wielkopolska Province.<sup>46</sup>

The Franciscan penned the sermon: *Acting on the public Tract, to the glory of the Name of the Ancestors, on the land of Christian piety to the expeditious Gryfe of the Coats of arms of his Excellence Sir Józef Grodzicki, by his deadly remains (...) with this funeral sermon offered to the knowledge of the copious and distinguished Auditory (...) on the day of the 20<sup>th</sup> of January of 1755 in the Church of Reformers in Poznań.*<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Wojciech Opaliński was the last representative of this coat of arms in the Opaliński family lineage.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, p. 26.

<sup>46</sup> K. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, part. 3, vol. 24, Warsaw 1977, p. 94.

<sup>47</sup> F. Parażyński, *Zabieg na publicznym Trakcie gornolotnemu sławę Imienia z Antenatów szybko biegnącemu cnot chrześcijańskich pobożności terenu Herbowemu Gryfowi w wielmożnym Imc Panu Józefowi Grodzickiemu przy śmiertelnych jego zwłokach nieodwołocznie pogrzebowym*

In his dedication, we can read a Latin formula praising the 'noble and honourable Sir Tomasz Grodzicki, the best of protectors,'<sup>48</sup> that is, the son of the deceased Józef. The texts we studied above contained dedications addressed to the wives of the departed noblemen, but here we observe the dedication of the sermon to the son.

Analysing the sermon, we discover that addressing it to the son was a type of manifesto: on one hand, the author addresses the world of the living and wealthy successors of the deceased man, and on the other, he touches on the eschatological and mythical, thus transferring the attention and emotions of the funeral's participants to the afterlife.

Parażyński, like Roszkowski or Drohojowski, in his attempts to create an image of the mourned ancestor, he describes the dead man as a fallen pillar of the great house of Grodzicki. In his sermon vision, he also becomes 'the Hector of Troy,'<sup>49</sup> or a nobleman devoted to his fatherland, immaculate hero, a perfect human. While depicting the deceased, Father Franciszek doesn't hesitate to reach out for other mythological figures, and so he compares Józef to Apollo. Similarly, there is no shortage of biblical references: 'the shine of the heroic acts as holiness of the ancient actions exploding from the fatherland's Nest like from the Moses's Burning Bush will terrify with brightness and sound.'<sup>50</sup> He also recalls the seven seals of the Apocalypse:

You sank not seven swords of pain in the loving hearts, not seven unfortunate cases of the just Joseph in one deadly fall did you betray, not seven from the dark shackles of grief on the great magnificence of the honourable house of the Grodzicki from the fatal and punishing hand.<sup>51</sup>

We don't find here as colourful visions as in the previously analysed sermons. The common element though is, evoked in every speech, the memory of the deceased that will last for eternity: 'God, who in His mercy crowns the deeds of mortal people, He makes no trouble in surrounding by the glory on earth, the one that will be granted eternity in heaven.'<sup>52</sup>

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*kazaniem liczno dystygowanemu Audytowi do wiadomości podany roku którego Bóg zabieg, zabieg zbawieniem ludzkim dn. 20 stycznia 1755 w Kościele ww oo. Ref. Poznańskich.*

<sup>48</sup> Dedication of the sermon.

<sup>49</sup> Ibidem, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem, pp. 11–12.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem, p. 14.

Hereinafter, he grieves Józef's death, he deplores the loss of 'the repository of dear talents, the treasure of inestimable qualities.'<sup>53</sup> Commemorated and mourned and lamented defunct was also, according to the preacher's words 'a man of thee virtues': faith, hope and charity. They shaped his character and accompanied his daily living, guiding him towards the true ideal of a Christian life. Particularly important was faith, which Grodzicki confessed fervently and sincerely. In further words, the Franciscan evokes the orphaned wife, Zofia: 'and here you've lost half your soul, half of your unconstrained life, mighty Zofia Grodzicka, née Tomicka,<sup>54</sup> and other members of the family: 'this house, that is, the Throne of Glory, Majesty of fortune and tabernacle of justice.'<sup>55</sup>

Much attention in the sermon is paid to the Grodzickis, a respectful family. Father Franciszek searches for its roots in the history of the first Piast dynasty, or even in the figures of Leszek and Popiel.<sup>56</sup> Like Father Parażyński who legitimised the family of Ankwicz, he describes the story in vivid colours and in details:

The wing of the Gryfe in the coats of arms of Grodzicki in the treaties between the Ottoman Empire and Polish Kingdom, after the tempestuous clouds of pagan onrush was prettily shining in the Rainbow of alliance, as it was publicly confessed in the Senate during already the Bolesław Chrobry's times.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the noble ancestors of the deceased had been all righteous people of values and devoted to their country, which evidently became a model to follow for him. Such it was as well for the deplored Józef Grodzicki.

The language used by the Franciscan is saturated with Baroque mannerisms. It contains a plethora of Latin interjections while its panegyric form is very developed. As for the linguistic layer, the text is quite challenging to comprehend and read easily. There is an apparent difference between the last sermon and the analysed texts penned by Roszkowski or Drohojowski. Those sermons were written later. Father Józef published his in 1785, so it features already certain tendencies typical of the Enlightenment. The sermon by Father Benedykt, only slightly older, created in 1775, is also written in a style that differs from the sermons from 1755 (Parażyński) or from 1749 (Kwinta).

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem, p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem, p. 12.

<sup>55</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Ibidem, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem, p. 22.

Despite those differences in the linguistic layer, the above-analysed sermons contain elements in common that may be considered constitutive of the literary genre, and no doubt, one of these elements is their panegyric character with very detailed and colourful descriptions, the presence of the figures of the dead, or dedications, present in three out of the four sermons (two addressed to the wives and one to the son). All the texts are also rich in a certain type of expression or sentences, present regardless of the time of writing, which demonstrates the universal character of the funeral sermon as a form with specific functions to play in society.

The sermons that comprise the data sources for this paper, contain one more similarity in the sense that they all concern laic men, which entails the presence of certain common elements, such as references to inheritors or descriptions of family coats of arms. Consequently, a contribution to this field of research would be to extend it to the study of sermons delivered at the funerals of women or clergy.

## Conclusion

From the analysis of the sermons, two tightly connected messages are revealed: a vision of death and the necessity of a good life, which conditions salvation. The addressee of the funeral sermon must have doubtlessly paid attention to these two aspects as they were the core of the preacher's considerations. Drohojowski, Kwinta, Roszkowski, and Parażyński, like many other funeral sermonisers, satisfied the demands of panegyric form, most and foremost praised the life of the nobleman and set him as an example. Everyone listening to the preacher's words at the funeral knew that the virtuous life of the deceased must be imitated to obtain the desired salvation. This pedagogy of dying in the Old-Poland era was an extremely important element from the point of view of the eschatological future. A good, blissful life guaranteed a good death and salvation,<sup>58</sup> as highlighted by Drohojowski: 'dwelling in the land of the living.' This communication in the face of death was one of the components of the Old-Poland *bene moriendi*, or the previously mentioned, art of dying. As stated earlier, a Catholic taking part in the funeral of a family member or a friend, found himself or herself in a situation in which he or she had to ask a question about his or her own death, had to have a thought about his or her

<sup>58</sup> See also: S. Zydek, *Strach i poczucie bezpieczeństwa jako elementy budujące polską mentalność w XVIII wieku w świetle kaznodziejstwa Antoniego Węgrzynowicza (1658–1721)*, Toruń 2018.

own life and, if necessary, revise it in order to deserve the laurel of honour and a panegyric laudation, consequently, to become an example to follow for his relatives. The principal value of this kind of communication was the reference to the receiver of this complex reality.

For the assumption is, as Filip Wolański highlights, that the preaching message should put the world image in order and integrate the community of the faithful around this vision. The symbolical character of the preacher's message, with its multidimensional communication, influences the auditory in a complex manner.<sup>59</sup>

That was the case for the four analysed sermons; the transmitted message was supposed to influence the way of thinking, change the attitude. Still, quoting Filip Wolański, it is worthwhile to remember the Harold Lasswell communication model that he analyses. According to the model, there are five important elements in the process of communication: transmitter, content, channel, receiver, and effect. These elements are derived from a simple and universal communication relation: who is speaking, to whom, and with what effect.<sup>60</sup> Lasswell's approach corresponds to the question of communication when faced with death as analysed in this article. Thus, the elements mentioned above are important: the message channel and the effect. The channel for the message here is the funeral sermon and its effect was a change of thinking, a change in mindset or the hierarchy of values, and the final preparation for death that is to be preceded by a good life. The figure of the preacher is not irrelevant either: he held the theological knowledge and experience in ministry, and therefore he could be sure of his authority among the listeners for whom his words were crucial for the reason of their eschatological destiny. Perceived in this way, the communication in the funeral situation was understandable by the receivers of the time and is also understandable by today's researcher.

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