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Jan Stoiński's "Shrovetide Songs" – a Comeback

The paper presents Jan Stoiński's carnival songs, which were known to the old-time historians and now are considered lost. They were found in Andrzej Lubieniecki's silva (Remonstrants' Library in Rotterdam, MS 527, pp. 682–691). They are entitled "Shrovetide songs" there and are accompanied by a description of circumstances of creation thereof (in Lithuania, in Łostaje, in madam Koszkielowa's house, in 1650). The cycle consists of six works written in eight-syllable verse, in preacher-like rhetoric. The paper presents the review of their subjects and citations of selected fragments.

Key words: Jan Stoiński, Arians, rhetoric, Shrovetide customs, Arian poetry, manuscript

Jan Stoiński, Arian minister, polemist and writer (died in 1654) is not an unknown person. The most obvious proof of this is an extensive biographical note devoted to him developed by Adam Matuszewski in the forty fourth volume of *Polski słownik bibliograficzny*. Presenting the eventful life of Arian preacher the author states:

Later [i.e., after 1644 – M.B.] Stoiński was for some time the minister of Protestant community in Czarkowy at Moskorzowski's; it is possible that his *Shrovetide songs* (lost) dated by Sandius at approx. 1650 were created there.¹

¹ A. Matuszewski, "Stoiński (Stojeński, Statorius) Jan h. Kotwica," in: *Polski słownik bibliograficzny*, vol. 44 (Kraków and Warszawa, 2006), p. 639.

The aforementioned songs by Stoiński are one of the numerous literary works of Polish Baroque, the existence of which was confirmed by sources, but which is not known today. The information about them was provided by Christopher Sandius in his *Bibliotheca antitrinitariorum*. He mentioned it in Stoiński's bibliography list completing his biographic note:

Cantiones Carnisprivii, quibus excessus qui hoc tempore fieri solent perstringuntur: compositae anno 1650.

Pol. M.S.²

The Arian historiographer not only precisely determined the date of creating Polish literary works which he knew from manuscripts, but also provided a general mention about their subject and character: they were supposed to upbraid bad Mardi Gras practices. The information provided by Sandius was repeated in identical words by Fryderyk Bock.³ In the light of the repeated information about the manuscript form of the message, the statement by Hieronim Juszyński, who noted that Arian preacher: "supposedly published songs, which I do not know"⁴ is unclear. Most probably, in 1845 Michał Wiszniewski did not see this work either, since he nearly repeated Sandius' sentence in Polish:

Stoiński (Jan) wrote "Shrovetide songs", in which he upbraids Shrovetide frolic. 1650. In Polish. Manuscript.⁵

It was described almost identically in 1867 by Wincenty Kraiński.⁶ But Karol Estreicher, referring to Bock's opinion, formulated only a supposition as to the existence of Stoiński's Shrovetide songs ("he reportedly also left in manu[script]").⁷ Recently, the works which Stoiński reportedly left in manuscripts, among them "Shrovetide songs

² Ch. Sandius, *Bibliotheca antitrinitariorum*, introd. L. Szczucki (Warszawa, 1967; Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych, vol. 6), p. 122.

³ F.S. Bock, *Historia antitrinitariorum maxime socinianismi et socinianorum*, vol. 1, Pt. 2 (Regiomonti and Lipsiae, 1776), p. 946.

⁴ H. Juszyński, *Dykcjonarz poetów polskich*, vol. 2 (Kraków, 1820), p. 210. He could also refer to *Hymnus in Symbolum Apostolicum* mentioned by his predecessors, published, according to Bock, in Raków, in 1610 and 1625.

⁵ M. Wiszniewski, *Historia literatury polskiej*, vol. 7 (Kraków, 1845), p. 19.

⁶ W. Kraiński, *Historia literatury i oświaty narodu polskiego* (Wrocław, 1867), p. 149: "Stoiński wrote Shrovetide songs in which he upbraided Mardi Gras frolic 1650".

⁷ K. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, Pt. 3, vol. 18 (Kraków, 1901), p. 226.

from 1650", were recalled by Katarzyna Meller, who characterized his "Reverent prayers". She ended enumeration thereof with a significant statement: "These texts have been to date covered by secret".⁸ It seems that at least a bit of this secret may be revealed and the existence of the Shrovetide poems can be confirmed.

They have been preserved in Andrzej Lubieniecki's silva (Remonstrants' Library in Rotterdam, MS 527), written down in four columns on pp. 682–691 (the whole manuscript has 1154 pp.). This source has been known for a long time and used by many scholars, but frequently only in fragments.⁹ The first one to use it for research purposes was Stanisław Kot, who published the catalogue of Arians' disputations and provided the basic characteristic of the historical treasure:

manuscript 4°, no. 527, libraries of Remonstrant community in Rotterdam, not paginated manuscript, filled with very small writing, of approximately one thousand pages and about 170 different-content works attentively copied by the owner. It is *silva rerum*, one of the most interesting for the history of intellectual life and their fates in the seventeenth century.¹⁰

The scholar looked for the manuscript as early as in 1914, but he only managed to find it after the First World War. Later, literature historians also used the notes of the Arian. Janusz Pelc, as the monographer of Zbigniew Morsztyn, considered Lubieniecki's silva to be one of the three (besides *Muza domowa* and *Wirydarz poetycki*) most important sources of his poems.¹¹ It also became an important source for completing Hieronim Morsztyn's works dispersed in manuscripts; the collection of the poet's two-verse maxims published by Paulina Buchwald-Pelcowa comes from this silva.¹² For decades, Polish

⁸ K. Meller, "Modlitwy nabożne' Jana Stoińskiego," in: eadem, *Słowa jak ziarna. Reformacyjne idee, książki, spory* (Poznań, 2012), p. 129.

⁹ Cf., for instance: J. Tazbir, *Stanisław Lubieniecki, przywódca ariańskiej emigracji* (Warszawa, 1961), p. 19; J. Domański, L. Szczucki, "Miscellanea arianica," in: *Studia z dziejów ideologii religijnej XVI i XVII w.* (Warszawa, 1960), pp. 243–244; A. Kossowski, "Materiały do dziejów Lubienieckich w Lubelskiem w latach 1648–1650," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 5 (1960), p. 186.

¹⁰ S. Kot, "Dysputy braci polskich katalog z rękopisu Andrzeja Lubienieckiego młodszego," *Reformacja w Polsce* 9/10 (1939), p. 457. Based on the author's note, the scholar also stated that this was the second volume of silva.

¹¹ J. Pelc, *Zbigniew Morsztyn. Arianin i poeta* (Wrocław, 1966), p. 10.

¹² P. Buchwald-Pelcowa, "Nieznane i zapomniane wiersze Hieronima Morsztyna," in: *Miscellanea staropolskie*, vol. 4, ed. R. Pollak (Wrocław, 1972), pp. 276–278, 291–292.

researchers had access only to the negative of microfilm of the historical treasure,¹³ which is now kept in the Library of Erasmus University in Rotterdam.¹⁴ It is worth mentioning here that its dissemination in digital version would be most welcome.

Stoiński's poems, found after the years of oblivion, have the following title: "Shrovetide songs by Jan Stoiński, created in anno Domini MDCL in Lithuania, in Łostaje, in the house of Lady Koszkielowa Skopówna. Tandem [Later] the wife of Albr[ycht] Arciszewski". Instead of expected "Mardi Gras" expression there is its synonym, but the information provided by Sandius about the date of creating the work is confirmed. The place is also clearly indicated: Lithuanian Łostaje, which could mean a place located in the south-east part of the former Oszmiany district (circa 40 km from Oszmiany); these properties belonged to the Lithuanian Tartar families.¹⁵ Therefore, connection of Lady Koszkielowa, who probably hosted the Arian minister, with this particular place is unclear. The surname Koszkiel (Kosküll, Koschkull) was the surname of noble Livonian family of its own coat of arms.¹⁶ Its representatives appeared in the circle of Krzysztof Radziwiłł's acquaintances. Urszula Augustyniak, who documented the phenomenon of military clientele of Lithuanian hetman, mentioned Jerzy and Albrycht who were in military service.¹⁷ In Lithuanian documents different Koszkiels¹⁸ appear, but it was not possible to find out, whose wife was from Skop family, coat of arms Trąby.¹⁹

¹³ As A. Kossowski stated (op. cit., p. 186), microfilm 68a-c is kept in Warsaw, Ośrodek Bibliografii i Dokumentacji Naukowej PAN (Pałac Staszica).

¹⁴ My warm thanks to Dr. Adrie van der Laan for help in the search of the historical treasure and for making it accessible to me.

¹⁵ L. Kryczyński, *Dobra łostajskie (1600–1789)* (Wilno, 1930), pp. 7–8.

¹⁶ A. Boniecki, *Herbarz polski*, vol. 11 (Warszawa, 1907), p. 283.

¹⁷ U. Augustyniak, *W służbie hetmana i Rzeczypospolitej. Klientela wojskowa Krzysztofa Radziwiłła (1585–1640)* (Warszawa, 2004), p. 343.

¹⁸ E.g., „Inwentarz poddanych majątności nowodworskiej Połobia leżących w powiecie upitskim”, which in 1654 was signed by Jan Koszkiel and his wife Halszka Magdalena Medonówna Koszkielowa (paneveziomuziejus.lt/files/krasto_istorija/Krincius_PKM%20senuju%20dokumentu%20rinkinys.pdf, 30 IV 2016).

¹⁹ Skop family, coat of arms Trąby, connected with Wiłkomierz district of the Great Duchy of Lithuania. Niesiecki mentions – from the seventeenth century – Felician Skop, Wiłkomierz magistrate writer, and Zygmunt in Oszmiany district and Jerzy, see K. Niesiecki, *Herbarz polski... powiększony dodatkami z późniejszych autorów...*, ed. J.N. Bobrowicz, vol. 8 (Lipsk, 1841), p. 382. Felician Skop married to Konstancja Izabella Esperyeszanka, see: *Urządnicy Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. Spisy*, vol. 1: *Województwo wileńskie XIV–XVIII wiek*, ed. A. Rachuba

Nevertheless, her subsequent husband, mentioned by Lubienicki, could be Albrycht Arciszewski, mentioned as the first cousin of the famous traveller Krzysztof Arciszewski in his court confirmation of nobility of 1620.²⁰ It is possible that the mention from Piotr Kochlewski's letter recommending Sir Koszkiel to Prince Krzysztof Radziwiłł as a zealous evangelic "with his wife, also very zealous"²¹ refers to her. Lubieniecki repeated the information about the circumstances of creation of songs at the end, where he also mentioned that: "This Man of God wrote this [- -] in the house of Lady Koszkielowa on the occasion of sir Wolan, evangelic and big drunkard". Wolan family, which was famous mainly because of Andrzej Wolan, was at that time very large in Lithuania,²² and since the vice of abusing alcohol was very popular, also this – once upon a time quite clear – guideline remains unclear. Alas, a note on the margin, which probably contains description of place and time of writing down poems, is illegible ("I wrote it down in Krynica[?] and finished..."). The last entry in silva is from 1667, so its author must have written down Stoiński's poems a few years earlier.

"The Shrovetide Songs" consist of six numbered poems, which, nevertheless, neither have a melic character, nor are concise and strophic, which is considered to be the distinguishing features of this genre.²³ Several hundred verses long, written in the paired rhyme eight-syllable verse, these texts are ruled by rhetoric. They could be treated almost like rhymed sermons, in which the lecture on faith truths and moral rules is linked with the desire to emotionally arouse the recipient and to influence his will. The very construction of the speaking subject has the rhetoric and preacher character; it persuasively goes from appellative forms 'you' [plural] (e.g.: "Christians", "poor things") or even

(Warszawa, 2004), p. 444. One of the members of the Skop family is the hero of four epigrams by Daniel Naborowski: *Na pana Skopa, Respons Skopów, Replika na ten respons* and *Sprawa Pana Skopa w Trybunale Wileńskim anno 1629*; idem, *Poezje*, ed. J. Dürr-Durski (Warszawa, 1961), pp. 56–58; the editor did not explain, who this person was.

²⁰ A. Kraushar, *Dzieje Krzysztofa z Arciszewa Arciszewskiego*, vol. 1 (Petersburg, 1892), p. 308.

²¹ U. Augustyniak, "Dwór i klientela Krzysztofa II Radziwiłła," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 38 (1994), p. 74, fn. 86.

²² Wolanowie, coat of arms Lis, see: S. Konarski, *Szlachta kalwińska w Polsce* (Warszawa, 1936), pp. 319–322.

²³ The term 'song' could in the old times mean lyric poetry in general, see: L. Ślękowa, "Pieśń," in: *Słownik literatury staropolskiej*, ed. T. Michałowska with participation of B. Otwinowska, E. Sarnowska-Temeriusz (Wrocław, 1991), p. 566.

stronger 'you' [singular] ("man" "you do not love", "you will cheat yourself", "do not live like a pagan") to inclusive 'we' (e.g.: "so let us struggle with the help of faith", "save us"), applying the whole range of rhetoric figures. It concurrently teaches, encourages, praises and resents, upbraids, accuses, but always for the sake of good, with hope to achieve the effect of improvement. Biblical topics is frequently used, since the author assumes that his Christian recipient knows stories and parables (e.g. on the wedding banquet, Mt 22:1–14; on the workers in vineyard, Mt 20:1–16; on the ten virgins, Mt 25:1–13). Four songs are consistently ended up with a prayer and these are the only parts in which lyricism prevails over loud rhetoric.

The first, clearly shorter song has an introductory character. It begins with a flaming call to "frolic Christians" to improve, and Stoiński mainly refers to mendacious and unrepentant sinners, who "[– –] indulge in sweet sleep / and are lenient / to themselves and their sins [– –]". A particular group of the above mentioned is drunkards and this "distinction" is probably a literary trace of indignation felt by the Arian preacher during his meeting with Mr. Wolan, who was a notorious drunkard. In fact, Stoiński is interested in a more general issue: reminding the necessity to deserve eternal happiness by way of practicing virtues and good deeds and warning against devious speculations and abusing God's mercy:

Summa: bez świętobliwości
 Nie dojdziem takiej radości,
 Żeby Pana tak świętego
 Oglądać w pałacu Jego.
 Wielkieć miłosierdzie Boże,
 Ale tem nic nie pomoże,
 Którzy się na nie spuszczać,
 Złości sobie pozwalając,
 Ubezpieczają się na to,
 Że im nic nie będzie za to
 I w nadzieję tego grzeszą,
 W żarty, karty, ludzi śmieszają,
 Chcąc się nieba dotańcować
 I tamże delicyjować.

(p. 682)

In Song II the poet juxtaposes weak and superficial faith with true faith. This first one is manifested by those who, in spite of it, continue their sinful addictions. It is compared to steam, which symbolizes impermanence:

Choć pozorna jest ta wiara,
 Temczasem [?] jest jako para,
 Która tak z ust wylatuje,
 Z głowy prędko wyparuje,
 W sercu nic nie operuje
 Ani tam właśnie króluje,
 Ale tylko w mózgu rada
 Stolicę [?] swoją zasiada.
 Z fantazyją uprzedzoną
 I subtelnością upstrzoną
 Dyskursy foremne stroi,
 Lecz się jej diabeł nie boi.
 Łacwiej bowiem dysputować
 Niżeli z grzechem wojować.
 (p. 683)

To present "live" and "true" faith Stoiński uses the topos of Christian knight, developing it in several dozen verses. From it, he passes to the praising presentation of the reigning Christ, and next he consistently reminds unrepentant sinners that they should fear the anger of such a powerful Master and Judge. And only in the final part summing up the message of this reasoning there appears reference to Mardi Gras circumstances which inspired the author to write this poem:

Wczas się tedy obaczajmy
 Ani dnia tego czekajmy,
 W który już nie będzie czasu
 Wyczyścić [sic] starego kwasu.²⁴
 Teraz jest czas polepszenia,
 Oto jeszcze dzień zbawienia,
 Jeszcze stoją drzwi otworem,
 Okryjmy się onem worem
 Żałobnem, siedząc w popiele,
 Bośmy nagrzeszyli wiele.
 Tem popiołem potrząsujmy,
 Serca nasze posypujmy
 Nie tylko kiedy Popielec,
 Ale choć na stole cielec
 Utuczony, w mięsopusty
 Położony, w dzień rozpustny,
 Gdyż to przyszło na szyderstwo,
 Co ludzie za nabożeństwo

²⁴ Cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7.

Mają. We wtorek szalejąc
 Zapustny, a w brzuch swój lejąc
 Jak w beczkę, gdy przyjdzie Środa
 Wstępna, z nich jak z gęsi woda.
 (p. 684)

So indeed, according to the message of the old-time historians, the tone of criticism regarding Shrovetide frolic appears. Subject references to Shrovetide frolic are present in all texts, although with different emphasis. The strongest are accusations in Song III, which begins with a dramatic call: “Why don’t you come to your senses, / Why don’t you abandon anger / Oh, you, who do not think about your salvation?” (p. 684). Warning addressed to sinners is most dramatically expressed in two contrasted Christ’s speeches (*sermocinatio*): one addressed to a faithful servant, whom Saviour invites to the wedding banquet, and the second to a “useless servant”:

Wyrzucicie go do ciemności,
 W której nie tylko radości
 Żadnej nigdy nie zażyje,
 Co tak źrze hojnie i pije.
 Bo też jako świnia ryje
 I jako wilk z wilki wyje
 Na kompaniją składając,
 Ich przyjaźni wygadając,
 Na mię się nie oglądając,
 Ani łaski mej żądając.
 Bo gdyby kto w niej korzystał,
 Z takim by smakiem nie chłystał,
 Odważywszy duszę swoją,
 Wzgardziwszy naukę moją.
 Niechże żnie, co nasiał sobie,
 Gdyż tego czas o tej dobie.
 Już czas minął pijatyki,
 Tańców, igrzysk i muzyki,
 Teraz jest czas narzekania,
 Nieutulonego łkania.
 Przedtem był czas zbytowania,
 Rozlej, nalej wykrzykania,
 A teraz łez wylewania,
 Nadto zębami zgrzytania.
 (p. 684)

Rhetoric of fear, reminding about inevitable judgement and examples of severely punished sinners during the flood and “in Lot days”

dominates until the end of the song. Christians who are "naughty" on Shrovetide resemble them, and they should expect similar fate:

Toż wam będzie chrześcjanie,
 Którzy Boże rozkazanie
 Tak lekce sobie ważycie,
 Że dni szalone święcicie
 Pogańskiemu Bachusowi
 Raczej niżli Chrystusowi.
 Jedząc, pijąc, bankietując,
 Od wesela wyskakując
 Cieleśnego, sromotnego,
 W którym pełno grzechu tego,
 Jakiem za czasu Noego
 Drażnili Boga wielkiego
 Ludzie aż do dnia onego,
 Kiedy do korabia swego
 Wszed Noe, aż potop wszystkie
 Zalał ludzi sprośne, brzydkie.
 (p. 684)

The tone of violent rebuke of drunkenness also occurs in Song IV, but there also appears the strategy of refutation of arguments used as excuse by the indulging Christians, which dominates in Song V and Song VI. In the preacher's opinion, the most dangerous thing is cheating oneself. Its example is such an opinion refuted by extensive argumentation:

Mówią, że gdyby tak mało
 Do nieba się nas dostało
 Jako mało jest wybranych,
 Lubo jest wielu wezwanych,
 Niebo by więc spustoszało
 Abo i pustkami stało.
 (p. 685)

The second opinion relates to referring to the saints, who sinned, but still they deserved eternal life. The poet consistently shows the difference between their sins committed "by accident" and audacious allowing oneself to sin counting on God's mercy ("You turn God's mercy / into lechery") and stubborn living in sin ("But under a warm duvet / you spread your limbs and indulge in laziness / and you do not avoid anger"). Discussing this problem leads Stoiński to reference to the situation of sick and dying people, who, seeing the "register of sins",

confess their blames but do not have time for improvement and apology. In the summary the poet applies allegory, but using a common sense argumentation he states that to slide down, to hell, one “sin pony” suffices, and since an upward road leads to heaven, sometimes even six horses-virtues is not enough. The final prayer also using the motif of the road is connected with it: at the moment of death, “when you order to get in”, let us not be burdened with sins and let God offer us time: “to look into ourselves, and to improve our ways”.

The whole Song V is of a polemic character, which is announced at its beginning:

O mizernyż to nieboras,
 Który się zaślania co raz
 W swych postępkach ladajakich
 Cudzemii przykłady, takich
 Zbierając po świecie grzechy,
 Z których sobie czyni śmiechy.
 (p. 687)

The examples which are supposed to justify sins of the contemporary are figures from the Old Testament: Noah, Lot, and, first of all, king David (Stoiński tells about his intrigue against Uriah). But it turns out that the most important person in this dispute is the good villain. His figure has already been referred to in the previous song, but now the detailed analysis of the specifics of his situation – to show ineffectiveness of hoping for similar mercy for those who earlier knew God’s orders and did not take a chance to improve – is several dozen verses long. The figure of the good villain somehow imposes the thought about death. This time, an analysis of the situation of a sinner in face of death by referring to the parable about workers in the vineyard, is best impersonated in the figure of a drunkard:

Gdy się tak z śmiercią pasujesz,
 A na on świat się gotujesz,
 Już to w ten czas wybijana,
 Gdy twoja głowa pijana
 Jedenaście naliczyła,
 Lecz się barzo omyliła.
 Oślyszaleś się chudzino,
 Szumić to wczorajsze wino.
 Strach cię słusznie opanował,
 Bo się wnet będziesz rachował.
 [– –]

Sameś truciznę zgotował
 Duszy twojej barzo słodką,
 Ale teraz bardziej gorzką.
 Im to gorzkość przykrzsza bywa,
 Gdy się po słodkiem używa.
 Ten ocukrowany trunek
 Obrócił ci się w piołunek.
 Takci to więc rado bywa,
 Gdy kto rad świata zażywa.
 Piłeś, grałeś, tańcowałeś
 I w rozkoszach swych bujałeś.
 A toż tobie teraz za to,
 Coś się więc upijał na to.
 Temuć ja to chcę zabieżeć,
 Aby, kiedy przydzie leżeć
 Na śmierć, do desperacyjej
 Nie przyszło. Nie daj niczyjej
 Zwodzić się oracyjej,
 Choć pozornej [– –].²⁵
 (pp. 688–689)

It not only elicits the need to caution but also a tone of irony and leniency ("I pity you, poor thing / the student of a would-be school!"). This time the song does not finish with a prayer but with encouragement to improve.

The last, sixth song is the only one which directly refers to the time circumstances and most extensively, in its first part, deals with the subject of Shrovetide:

Jużci przyszły dni szalone
 W chrześcijaństwie uchwalone,
 Żeby na urząd pustować,
 Jako najbardziej zbytować,
 A po trzech dniach zaś guzować,
 Wrzкомо swe ciało mordować.
 Teraz by się najeść mięsa,
 Nie miarkując się by kęsa,
 Bo potem już tylko ryby
 Jeść się godzi albo grzyby.
 Wszakże jednak to nie chybi,
 Że też *da bibere tibi*.
 Trzeba dostatek nalewać,

²⁵ Here one may ask if this refutation trend of the text was not connected with a particular situation, maybe some speech by a preacher or a speech on a certain occasion?

Bo ryby chcą zawsze pływać.
 Trzeba i duszę zakrapiać,
 I kufle spore obłapiać.
 (p. 689)

This is the only time when Stoiński's indignation changes into the denomination polemic against Catholics. It is not only the bad example of drunken priests and "monastery monks"; the preacher is most agitated about the scrupulous observance of fast as not eating meat:

[– –] a jest to dziwna
 I w głowę jemu przeciwna,
 Że przez ten post wymyślony,
 Kto by jadł mięso – zginiony,
 Zwłaszcza bez indultu, wara,
 Bo tak katolicka wiara
 Uczy. Ale przecz, dla Boga,
 Nie padnie na ludzi trwoga,
 Że kościelne rozkazania
 Więcej niżli przykazania
 Boże ważą pospolicie.
 Czego dowód znamienicie
 Jasny w tem jest, że pijanych
 Pełno poście zawołanych,
 Co gorzałeczkę chłystają,
 Przy tem wszetecznie śpiewają,
 A drudzy i zabijają,
 Choć sumnienia z to nie mają,
 Żeby mięsa co ukusić.
 Choćbyś chłopa chciał przymusić
 Do tego, wolałby stracić
 Żywot, niż z mięsem się bracić,
 Lecz do pijaństwa przynuki
 Nie trzeba mu i nauki.
 (p. 689)

He also condemns tricky excuses that drinking at night is not treated as drunkenness. And here an unexpected turn takes place: the poet abandons the subject he developed from the beginning of the song and goes back to the polemic with those, who, referring to the example of the good villain, let themselves sin and hope to be forgiven. In several dozen verses he once again discusses the villain's exceptional situation, power of faith and humility, and he stresses – in a way explaining the secret of God's will:

Wolno Mu do swego domu
 Tak świętego łotra puścić,
 Byle prawa nie upuścić
 Do oddalenia radości
 Od tych, którzy trwają w złości.
 (p. 690)

He also teaches that the example of the villain is supposed to support those who committed a cardinal sin but did it once ("He killed someone in self-defence / or somewhere / he did something awful"), so that having understood their blame they could hope for forgiveness. From the example of the villain the author goes to exemplum of the very Christ, who was given as the most perfect guiding light ("And he himself was a guiding light / in his life and in his death"). It results in the Christian recommendation to carry one's cross every day. The song is ended by the most extensive, penitential-suppliant prayer, the fragment of which is an evidence of real lyricism equal to the songs known from Arian collections of religious songs:²⁶

Do czego nam pomóż Panie,
 Przypuść to nasze wzdychanie
 Do uszu Twych miłościwych,
 Według obietnic prawdziwych,
 Na które się my spuszczaemy.
 Z radością Cię wyglądamy,
 O grzechy swe przeprasząc,
 Z nimi się wiecznie żegnając,
 A światu wypowiadając
 Przyjaźń. Tobie oddawając
 Duchy, dusze, ciała nasze,
 Aby z Twej niebieskiej pasze
 Wdzięcznie będąc obczerstwione,
 Tobie całe poświęcone,
 Zostawały zachowane
 I bez przygany oddane.
 (pp. 690–691)

"Shrovetide Songs" seem to be the texts written on the spur of the moment; the strong message seems to be more important for the author

²⁶ Stoiński is the author of a song with incipit: "Wierzymy z serca w Boga Ojca wszechmocnego", published with the initials J.S. in the collection *Pieśni na credo abo wyznanie wiary apostołskiej*, published in Raków ca. 1620, see A. Kaweczka-Gryczowa, *Ariańskie oficyny wydawnicze Rodeckiego i Sternackiego. Dzieje i bibliografia* (Wrocław, 1974), p. 248. My thanks to Mr. Ireneusz Trybulec for making the copy of the source accessible to me.

than a subtle elaboration of words aimed at finding the appropriate literary expression. Therefore, we notice see a certain persistency of persuasion and due to repetitions and too extensive development of certain subjects the whole reasoning becomes boring. Subjected to the dynamics of short verses, these poems (unless, obviously, at least partly, this is the fault of the form of message) sometimes have inaccurate rhymes, which are monotonous, and perforce often used enjambements rarely give the impression of the purposeful artistic tool. On the other hand, there are also very live fragments surprising the reader with apt enunciations and brave use of different stylistic forms. Rhetoric chosen by Stoiński was probably not surprising for his contemporaries, since it resembles Shrovetide sermons known by general public and delivered by representatives of different denominations.²⁷ Calling the final days of the carnival “the crazy days” or referring to Bacchus being the patron of these days was accompanied by similar complaints about pagan practices, which ruled Christians during Mardi Gras days.²⁸

²⁷ Examples from preacher sermons (mainly from the eighteenth century) were used in the characteristics of the “sinful time of the carnival” by Krystyna Moison-Jabłońska (see eadem, *Obrazowanie walki dobra ze złem* [Kraków, 2002], pp. 525–529).

²⁸ Cf., for instance: K. Kraiński, *Kazanie na niedzielę dziesiątą po Bożym Narodzeniu*, in: idem, *Postylla Kościoła powszechnego apostolskiego słowem Bożym ugruntowana*, Pt. 1 ([Łaszczów, 1611]), fol. 108ver.: “Pogani mieli ten obyczaj, na każdy rok księżycy marca trzy dni święta święcić i obchodzić, ku czci bogu swemu Bachusowi. A jakoż je obchodzili? Żarli, pili, tańcowali, grali, w maszkarach chodzili, plugawe pieśni śpiewali, wszeteczeństwa się dopuszczali, szaleli, rzeczy szkaradę nosili, mężobójstwo popełniali i insze zbytki nieprzystojne i szkaradę bez wstydu i bojaźni bożej stroili. [– –] Tenże pogański obyczaj wkradł się i mocno zawziął, ach niestetyż, między chrześcijany [– –]. Widzimy bowiem na oko, co czynią w te dni szalone: żrą, piją, tańczą, grają, w maszkarach chodzą, plugawe pieśni śpiewają, wszeteczeństwa się dopuszczają, szaleją, mężobójstwo popełniają, i insze zbytki nieprzystojne i szkarade bez wstydu i bojaźni Bożej czynią, snadź obyczajami niezbożnymi pogany przechodzą” (“Pagans had such a habit that each year on March moon they celebrated a three-day holiday to worship their god Bacchus. And how did they celebrate it? They ate greedily, drank, danced, played, wore eyesore disguises, sang filthy songs, perpetrated fornication, got crazy, carried awful things, committed manslaughter and other indecent acts and did awful things without shame and God’s fear. [– –] This pagan custom slipped into and, alas, became popular among Christians [– –]. Because we see, what they do on these crazy days: they eat greedily, drink, dance, play, wear eyesore disguises, sing filthy songs, perpetrate fornication, get crazy, carry awful things, commit manslaughter and other indecent acts and do awful things without shame and God’s fear, thus taking over the indecent customs of pagans.)

"Shrovetide Songs" written by the Arian appalled by the drunkenness of a certain Evangelic and indignant about the Catholic observance of fast seem to be genetically involved in denomination disputes. This is why it is worth to end with a citation of one more fragment from Song III, which is addressed to all Christians:

A zaś świni dobrze w chlewie,
 Gdyż o bycie lepszem nie wie,
 Z którą, jeśli ty przestajesz,
 Nieprawdziwie się udajesz
 Za człowieka rozumnego,
 Rodzajuś jest bydlęcogo.
 Luboś ty katolik dawny,
 Luboś ewangelik sławny,
 Lubo chrystyjanin mowny,
 Jeśli żywot niebudowny
 Prowadzisz wedle reguły,
 Nic nie pomogą infuły,
 Ani spowiedzi, nadania,
 Sakramentów używania
 Ani dosyć uczynienie,
 Ani wodne ponurzenie,
 To, że w Trójcę Świętą wierzysz
 Ani to, że w Nię nie wierzysz –
 Bynamniej cię nie ratuje,
 Kiedy cnota twa szwankuje.

(p. 684)

This might be a starting point for the discussion on connections of Stoiński's Shrovetide songs with his lecture on faith and ethics. The poems presented here in only an introductory manner, coming back to the resources of Polish literature, certainly deserve a more thorough analysis of the Arian thought scholars.

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the lost Shrovetide songs by Arian preacher and writer Jan Stoiński. They were still known in the times of F.S. Bock or K. Sandius, but subsequent historians and bibliographers only researched them on the basis of the works of their predecessors. They have recently been discovered in Andrzej Lubieniecki's *silva rerum* (manuscript of the Remonstrant Library 527, p. 682–691). The songs were probably written down in Lubieniecki's book several years before 1667 and given the title indicating the detailed circumstances of the works's creation: in 1667, in Lithuania, Łostaje estate – the property of "Mrs. Koszkielowa" (Kosküll, Koschkull), who went on to marry Albrycht Arciszewski; the songs were written in reaction to the drunkenness of "Mr. Wolan," an Evangelical Christian. *Pieśni mięsopustne* is composed of six stichic poems in octosyllabic verse, written in preacher-like rhetorical form. Song I constitutes an introduction, with the poet addressing "Christians living in excess" and announcing that his mission is to remind them that eternal happiness needs to be earned through virtuous conduct and good deeds and to warn them not to engage in devious speculation or abuse God's mercy. The songs include references to Shrovetide customs, especially through harsh criticism of alcohol abuse. An important element of their persuasive character consists in debunking the arguments of sinners attempting to make excuses for their wrongdoings (e.g. by referring to the figure of the Penitent Thief), which is accompanied by condemnation of bad attitudes, preaching, and calling for repentance. Interestingly, despite criticism aimed at the Catholic approach to fasting, the songs do not condemn or scold any particular denomination.

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