

Magdalena Komorowska  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7078-9543>

Jagiellonian University in Kraków  
magdalena.komorowska[at]uj.edu.pl

## The “Lublin Old-Polish Library” Series\*

(vol. 1: S. Klonowic, A. Trzeciecki et al., *Żale nagrobne na śmierć Jana Kochanowskiego*, ed. R. Montusiewicz, Norbertinum, Lublin 2005, 94 p.; vol. 2: P. Ciekliński, *Hymny na święta Panny Najświętszej*, ed. R. Montusiewicz, Norbertinum, Lublin 2005, 57 p.; vol. 3: J. Lubelczyk, *Pieśni, psalmy i wiersze polskie*, ed. K. Meller, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2007, 78 p.; vol. 4: B. Czarliński and S. Giżycki, *Książę Janusz Wiśniowiecki (1598–1636) w lubelskich kazaniach pogrzebowych*, ed. M. Kuran, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2007, 117 p.; vol. 5: S. Twardowski, *Satyr na twarz Rzeczypospolitej w roku 1640*, ed. S. Baczewski, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2007, 105 p.; vol. 6: M. Bembus, *Kometa, to jest pogróżka z nieba na postrach, przestrozę i upomnienie ludzkie*, ed. S. Baczewski and A. Nowicka-Struska, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2009, 118 p.; vol. 7: J. Lubelczyk, *Wirtdarż krześcijański pięknie przyprawiony*, ed. K. Meller, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2009, 105 p.; vol. 8: A. Kochanowski, *Kazania lubelskie*, ed. A. Nowicka-Struska, UMCS Publishing House, Lublin 2010, 117 p.)

---

\* Publication of this paper was financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland under the grant 643/P-DUN/2018. Polish version: M. Komorowska, “Seria «Lubelska Biblioteka Staropolska,»” *Terminus* 25/14 (2012), pp. 265–268.

Last year, the eighth volume of Lubelska Biblioteka Staropolska (“Lublin Old-Polish Library”) was published. It is an edition of *Kazania lubelskie* (The Lublin sermons) by Andrzej Kochanowski with critical apparatus. The aim of this fast-developing series initiated in 2004 is to present literature “created in the historical area of the Lublin Region from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century” (vol. 1, p. 5), not widely known today despite its diversity and abundance. The first two volumes in this series were edited by Ryszard Montusiewicz and published by the Norbertinum publishing house: *Żale nagrobne na śmierć Jana Kochanowskiego* (Epitaphs on the Death of Jan Kochanowski) (vol. 1) and *Hymny na święta Panny Naświętszej* (Hymns for the feasts of Holy Mary) by Piotr Ciekliński, a poet connected with the environment of Chancellor Jan Zamoyski (vol. 2). In 2007, three more volumes appeared under the auspices of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Publishing House: *Pieśni, psalmy i wiersze polskie* (Songs, psalms and Polish poems) by Jakub Lubelczyk selected and arranged by Katarzyna Meller (vol. 3); *Książę Janusz Wiśniowiecki (1596–1636) w lubelskich kazaniach pogrzebowych* (Prince Janusz Wiśniowiecki (1596–1636) in Lublin funeral sermons), which contains sermons of Bonawentura Czarliński and Marcin Czarnocki edited by Michał Kuran (vol. 4); and *Satyr na twarz Rzeczypospolitej* (Satire/Satyr on the face the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) Samuela Twardowskiego edited by Sławomir Baczewski (vol. 5). In 2009, the series was extended by *Kometa, to jest pogróżka z nieba* (Comet, i.e. a threat from heaven) written by Mateusz Bembus, edited by Sławomir Baczewski and Anna Nowicka-Struska (vol. 6), as well as *Wirydarz krześcijański* (Christian Viridarium) and *Apoteka Ducha świętego* (Pharmacy of the Holy Spirit) of Jakub Lubelczyk edited by Katarzyna Meller (vol. 7). In 2010, the last of the hitherto existing volumes was published—the aforementioned *Kazania lubelskie* by the Carmelite Andrzej Kochanowski, edited by Anna Nowicka-Struska (vol. 8). The critical editions of occasional predicatorial works are a particularly important initiative because publications of this kind are still rare, despite the undeniable artistic merits of sermons and their value as historical sources.

The reader of the Lublin series receives texts provided with a historical literary introduction, as well as the necessary historical and linguistic commentary (which includes dictionaries of more difficult old-Polish words). The character of the studies is half-way between popular and scholarly editing, but they also include critical editions (*Wirydarz krześcijański* by Twardowski and *Żale nagrobne na śmierć Jana Kochanowskiego*).

As the editors' prefaces show, transcription rules were based on those proposed for commented and modernised editions (type B) by the authors of *Zasady wydawania tekstów staropolskich* (Rules for publishing old-Polish texts) (ed. K. Górski et al., Wrocław 1955), although in the case of some volumes this is not obvious, because some editorials contain only references to unspecified “generally accepted” rules (vol. 6, p. 110; vol. 8, p. 23). The commentary on the possible deviations from this code of practice, as well as on the detailed solutions used in the preparation of the individual volumes, in most cases leaves some room for elaboration, although this can be explained by the purpose of the series.

The implementation of postulates regarding the modernisation of orthography and punctuation varies from volume to volume. Apart from editions prepared with great care, such as the funeral sermons in honour of Prince Janusz Wiśniowiecki edited by Michał Kuran, there are also editions that would require certain corrections (and re-proofreading). In Mateusz Bembus' *Kometa*, for example, attention is attracted by conjectures that sometimes seem to be unnecessary. For instance, page 86 reads as follows:

“Jedenasty grzech jest nieznośne a głosem wielkim w nieba wołające ubogich poddanych ‘szkody’, które od panów własnych cierpią bezprawie i krzywdy”.<sup>1</sup> Here, the addition of publishers should

---

<sup>1</sup> “The eleventh sin is the unbearable wrongdoing and detriments that poor subjects suffer ‘damages’ [sic] from their masters and loudly lament about asking heaven for help”— all the quotations herein were translated for the purpose of this study by K. Szymańska.

be regarded as incorrect, since the subject of the main sentence is “bezprawie” (wrongdoing). It is defined by the relative clause “które od panów własnych cierpią”,<sup>2</sup> which is put in an unusual place. Another unnecessary conjecture was made on page 40: “żaden mądry chyba ‘nie’ dla pływania po wodzie okrętu nie zwykł budować”<sup>3</sup>—instead of emphasising the meaning with commas: “żaden mądry, chyba dla pływania po wodzie, okrętu nie zwykł budować”.<sup>4</sup> The publisher’s amendment on page 52 is also redundant: “Aza ‘nie’ raz bywają zimne lata, . . . że się i zboża prze niedostatek ciepła ledwie dostać mogą?”<sup>5</sup> In Andrzej Kochanowski’s *Kazania lubelskie*, on the other hand, there are mistakes, which seem to result from not correcting obvious printing errors (for example, on page 71: “A sam Wielmożny małżonek dziękuje za takie jego duszy obmyślone subsydia: za taką liczbę mszej świętych, za te wielkim sumptem odprawioną pogrzebną pompę” instead of: “za taką liczbę, za . . . odprawioną pogrzebną pompę”).<sup>6</sup>

It seems that it was particularly difficult for editors to modernise punctuation (as confirmed by the examples presented above). This is actually one of the most difficult tasks for the publisher, especially when undertaking the unquestionable challenge of editing old-Polish prose.

In the series discussed, editors’ commentaries on the topic of punctuating are few and far between, so the reader needs to assume that punctuation has been modernised in accordance with the recommendations of the *Zasady wydawania tekstów staropolskich*. In most cases, however, this modernisation is neither consistent nor complete. Since the editors have not made more detailed explanations on this

<sup>2</sup> “that poor subjects suffer from their masters”.

<sup>3</sup> “no wise man would build a ship except ‘not’ for sailing on water”.

<sup>4</sup> “no wise man would build a ship, except for sailing on water”.

<sup>5</sup> “Do cold summers happen ‘not’ rarely, . . . so that even crops can barely rise due to the lack of warmth?”

<sup>6</sup> The corrections discussed pertain to declension endings that indicated the right case—here accusative—difficult to render in translation into English. The proper sense of the sentence is as follows: The Honourable spouse himself gives thanks for the subsidies paid for the sake of his soul, including the many masses and the very costly funeral ceremony—K. S.

issue, it is impossible to guess whether this inconsistency is a conscious act or a result of insufficient care (this applies in particular to the *Kometa* and *Kazania lubelskie*, whose editors claim that they have modernised punctuation, although the distribution of punctuation marks in many places differs from the contemporary norm). Michał Kuran was the only one to include a more extensive commentary on punctuation in his edition of funeral sermons in honour of Prince Janusz Wiśniowiecki, drawing attention to the need to preserve the rhetorical characteristics of old-Polish prose. In his edition, he declared his aim “not to obliterate the structure of archaic expressions by artificially dividing multi-element sentences built with the use of the free-running style (Pl. *styl nizany*)” and, at the same time, to avoid “situations in which the preservation of the old-Polish distribution of punctuation marks would obstruct the reception of the text by the contemporary reader” (p. 101; transl. by K. S.). Both of these aims have been achieved.

It is a pity that the editors of the series did not attempt to formulate consistent rules for all of the volumes, which would have made it easier, perhaps, to maintain the same quality of editions. The series would also undoubtedly benefit from the introduction of a uniform composition of volumes. In the earlier ones, there is no permanent place for linguistic commentary, which sometimes appears in the form of footnotes, and in other volumes takes the form of a dictionary, while it also happens that the latter simply reproduces the words commented in footnotes (*Kometa* and *Kazania lubelskie*). Similarly, explanations of historical realities and more difficult parts of the text are sometimes at the bottom of the page and, sometimes, at the end of the volume. Editor’s remarks are put in different places too. It is also worth noting that there is no information about the editor on the title page of each volume. We learn about the fact that Katarzyna Meller edited *Pieśni, psalmy i wiersze polskie* by Lubelczyk only from the note on the back page of the cover of the next volume in the series. In the case of *Satyra na twarz Rzeczypospolitej w roku 1640* by Twardowski and funeral sermons in honour of Prince Janusz Wiśniowiecki, the reader intuitively identifies the author of the introduction with the

editor of the volumes, and this conjecture is finally confirmed only by the notes on the covers of the following volumes.

Despite these faults, which occur, it should be stressed, only in some volumes, the “Lubelska Biblioteka Staropolska” is worthy of recognition as an editorial undertaking. By presenting the old-Polish literary artefacts of various types and ranks, it draws attention to the elements of the literary landscape of this era that have hitherto been overlooked. This series, like the Warsaw „Biblioteka Dawnej Literatury Popularnej i Okolicznościowej Okresu Renesansu i Baroku” (Library of Old Popular and Occasional Literature of the Renaissance and Baroque Period), focuses above all on small works related to a specific historical moment, but at the same time, by limiting the territorial scope of the texts presented, it allows us to see the real richness of the cultural life of the Lublin region. It remains to be hoped that more volumes will be published in the years to come.

*Translated from Polish by Kaja Szymańska*