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The Elegiac Qualities of Jan Kochanowski's Amorous *Foricoenia*. Ovidian Models Part 2: Translations from Greek, *Dives amator*, Ovid and Catullus, Pholoe*

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to find Classical references in Jan Kochanowski's amorous *foricoenia*, which have not yet been systematically studied. Scholars have focused on the meaning of the title *Foricoenia* (Szatyńska-Siemion) or on the ancient references (e.g. the presence of Terence in some epigrams or translations from Greek, researched by Głombiowska), but have not studied the amorous epigrams as a whole.

At the beginning I point out some *topoi* that are common to elegiac poetry (*recusatio* or the heroes treated like elegiac lovers). Firstly, I show that Kochanowski uses elegiac material and *topoi* in his epigrams, presenting to the reader a little epigrammatic *Ars Amatoria*, based on Ovid's model. Secondly, he argues that even when Kochanowski translates epigrams from Greek, he chooses those that are more appropriate to his literary project, i.e. the "elegisation" of the epigrams. Conclusions: Kochanowski "elegises" his epigrams, first of all presenting a small *Ars Amatoria* and then writing his texts according to the elegiac tradition, both in terms of *topoi* and textual imitations.

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After singling them out, I propose an interpretation of Kochanowski's choices: I argue that he engages in a long-distance dialogue with Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and more generally with the whole ancient amorous-elegiac tradition, which he sometimes denies. I give a few examples, starting from a comparison between Kochanowski's epigram XVI and Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* 501–502 and *Ars amatoria* I 45–48 (i.e. the hunter caught in his own nets). Epigram V, *In puellas venetas*, introduces a specific Ulysses, described as amorous, a lover rather than an epic hero, exactly as Ovid presented this character. Furthermore, writing epigram LXIX to his friend Torquato, Kochanowski assures him he can make people fall ill with love, as well as cure his friend of such a "disease"; similarly, Ovid teaches how to make people fall in love (*Ars amatoria*) and how to recover from love (*Remedia amoris*).

Keywords: Polish neo-Latin poetry, Renaissance poetry, Jan Kochanowski, *Foricoenia*, Ovid, elegy, love poetry, epigrams

1. Translations from Greek

Kochanowski imitated Krinagoras' epigram (AP VI 244) in his Latin epigram XXI Ad Lucinam, in which he introduced a significant change in relation to the original. This change shows what Kochanowski thought of a specific literary project, to which he subordinated the choice of texts for translation—also with regard to the translation of Greek epigrams.

Ἥρη, Ἐλεθυιῶν μήτηρ, Ἥρη δὲ τελείη καὶ Ζεῦ, γινομένοις ξυνὸς ἅπασι πάτερ, ὠδῖνας νέυσαιτ' Ἀντωνίῃ ἵλασι ἐλθεῖν πρηείας μαλακαῖς χερσὶ σὺν Ἠπιόνης ὄφρα κε γεθήσειε πόσις μήτερ θ' ἑκυρή τε· ἡ νηδὺς οἴκων αἷμα φέρει μεγάλων.

[Hera, the mother of Ilithyia, and thou, Hera Perfectress, and Zeus, the common father of all who are born, hear my prayer and grant that gentle pangs may come to Antonia in the tender hands of Hepione, so that her husband may rejoice and her mother and her mother-in-law. Her womb bears the blood of great houses.][1]

[1] *The Greek Anthology*, vol. 1, transl. by W. R. Paton, London–New York 1916, p. 429.

XXI *Ad Lucinam*
Iuno Lucina aut, si mavis, Illithyia,
Quae gravidis uterum solvere, diva, soles,
Haec tibi serta Acmon patula sospendit ab orno,
Praesens nitenti tu, dea, sis Crocali.
Illa quidem, lepores dum captat credulus Acmon,
E Zephyri non est flamine facta parens,
Sed tu, diva, tamen non omnia nosse labore,
Nam si infans non est hic meus, illa mea est.

[**XXI *To Lucina***
Juno Lucina, or if you prefer—Ilithyia,
the goddess who helps the pregnant to break free from the burden, for you did Acmon hang these garlands on the patulous ash tree, so that you, oh divine one, were at the side of Crocallis when she was giving birth.
Although she did not become pregnant with a gust of Zephyr, when naive Acmon was hunting hares,
but you, oh divine one, do not try to know everything:
because despite the fact that this child is not mine, she is!]

The novelty of Kochanowski's take is impressive right from the first verse. *Poeta doctus* speaks directly with the goddess, winking meaningfully to her and to the reader: "Juno Lucina, or if you prefer—Ilithyia" may be paraphrased in the following way: "Please, Juno, choose yourself how I shall call you because for me this matter is trivial: I am perfectly fluent both in Latin and Greek." Thus, the poet exhibits his *doctrina*. In the first verse of Kochanowski's version, Juno/Hera's husband—Jove/Zeus—disappears. The characters include Crocallis and Acmon, and not Antonia and the "groom" or "mother-in-law." There is also no mention of οἶκος μεγάλος (the major family) or the midwife-goddess Epione.

The epithet *Ilithyia* is a translation of Ἐλεθυιῶν μήτηρ. Here, Acmon is not directly identified as Crocallis' husband. He spends his time hunting hares and his part in the procreation is limited only to hanging votive garlands on an ash tree. And the poet—*dramatis persona*—comes forth to the foreground and speaks with irony: "Let

the fool go and safely hunt his hares! A gust of Zephyr does not suffice to conceive a child."[2]

The last distich confirms the poet's playful game: "You, goddess, do not try to know everything; even if the child is not mine (the poet's, *dramatis persona*), at least she is—she does not belong to Acmon alone."

What formed the family context in the Greek epigram, in the Latin one becomes "adultery" (which is typical of elegy and consistent with Ovid's provisions). What is more, the poet consents to share the girl with other lovers.[3]

It seems that Acmon follows the rules stipulated in *Am.* II 19, 1–4 such that the girl will stay faithful to him:

> Si tibi non opus est servata, stulte, puella,
> At mihi fac serves, quo magis ipse velim.
> Quod licet , ingratum est; quod non licet, acrius urit:
> Ferreus est, siquis, quod sinit alter, amat.
>
> [Fool, if you do not want to guard her for yourself as you ought to,
> At least guard the girl for me, so that I will love her even more honestly!
> The admissible is unpleasing, but the prohibition alone bethralls;
> A loving man is made of steel when someone gives him consent.][4]

We should not forget that the Ovidian argumentation is to some extent dialectic, which means that any conduct is allowed: if a hus-

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[2] In her commentary *ad locum*, Z. Głombiowska justly recalls the episode with mares impregnated by Zephyr in Vergil's *Georg.* III 272–279. See J. Kochanowski, *Carmina Latina, cz.* 3: *Komentarz*, oprac. Z. Głombiowska, Gdańsk 2013, p. 797.

[3] See *Am.* II 10, where the poet loves two girls; in *Am.* III 14, 1–2 the poet accepts the fact that his lover has another admirer: "Non ego, ne pecces, cum sis formosa, recuso, / Sed ne sit misero scire necesse mihi." We should also read v. 15–16 of the same elegy: "Quae facis, haec facito; tantum fecisse negato / Nec pudeat coram verba modesta loqui."

[4] *Rzymska elegia miłosna (wybór)*, tłum. A. Świderkówna, oprac. G. Przychodzki, W. Strzelecki, Wrocław 1955.

band is too jealous, a lover will take his wife away[5]—after all, a forbidden fruit tastes best; however the same may also happen if the husband is not vigilant enough. A woman will be attractive to her lover if she stays faithful to him, but even otherwise he shall not object to her making love to others. Nothing is subject to fixed rules because everything is allowed.

I have just quoted this elegy of Ovid because there (v. 27–30) we can find mythical *exempla* of "guarded" girls (Danae and Io) who nonetheless became Jove's captures.[6] And Danae is one of the mythical examples[7] used in the Latin epigram XXII *Ad Corinnam*, which is a translation of Bassus' epigram (AP V 125):[8]

> Οὐ μέλλω ῥεύσειν χρυσός ποτε· βοῦς δὲ γένοιτο ἄλλος χὠ μελίθρους κύκνος ἐπηόνιος.
> Ζηνὶ φυλασσέσθω τάδε παίγνια· τῇ δὲ Κορίννῃ Τοὺς ὀβολοὺς δώσω τοὺς δύο, κοὐ πέπταμαι.

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[5] See eg. *Am.* II 2, 11–14: "Vir quoque non sapiens: quid enim servare laboret / Unde nihil, quamvis non tueare, perit? / Sed gerat ille suo morem furiosus amori / Et castum, multis quod placet, esse putet." A husband too jealous of his wife guards her to much, but nevertheless—or maybe precisely because of that—she becomes an easy conquest for a lover.

[6] Let us compare verses 28–29 of the same elegy "Si numquam Danaen habuisset aenea turris, / Non esset Danae de Iove facta parens" with verse 6 of Latin epigram XXI: "E Zephyri non est flamine facta Arens."

[7] The remaining two are Europe and Leda.

[8] In his monographic study of Kochanowski's poetic output in the European context, a German scholar, Jörg Schulte, astutely discussed the translations of Greek epigrams in *Foricoenia*, including the text discussed here (see J. Schulte, *Jan Kochanowski i renesans europejski. Osiem studiów*, tłum. K. Wierzbicka-Trwoga, red. M. Rowińska-Szczepaniak, K. Wierzbicka-Trwoga, Warszawa 2012, pp. 137–138). He demonstrates that Kochanowski, translating from Greek, verified the heretofore existing translations, competing with them and striving to improve and perfect them. According to Schulte, in this case Kochanowski was probably familiar with Ottmar Lascinus' version reprinted by Cornarius: *Selecta epigrammata Graeca Latine versa, ex septem epigrammatum Graecorum libris* […] recens versa, ab A. Alciato, O. Luscinio, J. Cornario, Basileae 1529.

[I am never going to turn into gold, and let someone else become a bull or the melodious swan of the shore. Such tricks I leave to Zeus, and instead of becoming a bird I will give Corinna my two obols.][9]

XXII *Ad Corinnam*
Aureus imber ego latitantem nolo puellam
Fallere nec sim bos, nec fluvialis olor,
Haec ludicra Iovi sint curae, ego bina Corinnae
Aera dabo nec erit, cur volitare velim.

[**XXII *To Corinna***
I do not wish to deceive in the form of golden rain
a girl in hiding, or to be a bull or a river swan—
may Jove enjoy such playthings.
I will give two copper coins to Corinna and will not have to go after her.]

The Latin translation is quite accurate. When it comes to the swan, Kochanowski chooses the latter of the two epithets: μελίθρους and ἐπηόνιος. *Volitare* is well rendered into Greek as πέπταμαι and it is not precluded that he chose this verb also due to its metaphorical meaning, that is "cocking one's nose, riding a high horse," which is not present in the Greek original.

This epigram and the previously discussed one form a diptych, being a kind of dialogue with Ovid, the author who influenced the composition of the epigram on Crocallis and Acmon. In Latin epigram XXI, the poet jauntily accepts the fact that the girl sleeps with another man. Here, in turn, he renounces metamorphoses as a method of seduction, settling for a simpler and more trivial means: money. This confirms the "dialectic" of which I wrote with reference to Ovid.

[9] *The Greek Anthology*, p. 187.

2. *Dives amator*

A reflection on the dependence between love and money appears mostly in epigrams VIII *Ad Callistratum* and XXXI *De Lyco*. The poet does not miss the opportunity to use another topos very common in elegies: the topos of contention with a wealthy rival (*dives amator*,[10] which appears in *AP* V 113):

> Ἠράσθης πλουτῶν, Σωσίκρατης, ἀλλὰ πένης ὢν οὐκέτ' ερᾷς· λιμὸς φάρμακον οἷον ἔχει.
> δὲ πάρος σε καλεῦσα μύρον καὶ τερπνὸν Ἄδωνιν Μηνοφίλα νῦν σου τοὔνομα πυνθάνεται· "Τίς πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν; Πόθι τοι πτόλις;" Ἦ μόλις ἔγνως
> τοῦτ' ἔπος, ὡς οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν ἔχοντι φίλος.
>
> [You fell in love, Sosicrates, when rich; now you are poor, tou are in love no longer. What an admirable cure is hunger! And Menophila, who used to call you her sweety and her darling Adonis, now asks your name. "What man art thou, and whence, thy city where?" You have perforece learnt the meaning of the saying "None is the friend of him, who has nothing."][11]
>
> **VIII *Ad Callistratum***
> Dives amasti olim, sed inops, Callistrate, factus Non item amas: habet haec pharmaca pauperies Quae te blanda suum nuper vocitabat Adonim, Menophile, nomen nunc rogat illa tuum:
> « Tu quis es? Quid vis tibi? » Num satis illud Nostri tritum: « Inopi nullus amicus erit? »
>
> [**VIII *To Callistratus***
> You have once loved as a Dives, Callistratus, but since you grew poor, you do not love the same: this is the poison of poverty.
> Menophile, the one who until recently called you tenderly her Adonis, today asks your name:

[10] Tib. I 5, 47–48: "Haec nocuere mihi. Quod adest huic dives amator, / venit in exitium callida lena meum."

[11] *The Greek Anthology*, pp. 181–183.

"Who are you? Where did you come from? What do you want?" Don't you know this phrase well enough that a poor fellow shall not find any friend?]

Here, Kochanowski uses the Greek epigram of Marcus Argentarius (*AP* V 113) as his model. As we may notice at once, the first verse changes the addressee of the text from Sosicratus to Callistratos.[12] But the most interesting places in this translation are in the last two distiches. The fragment "[…] σε καλεῦσα μύρον καὶ τερνὸν Ἄδωνιν / Μηνοφίλα νῦν σου τοὔνομα πυνθάνεται" is rendered as "te blanda suum nuper vocitabat Adonim / Menophile, nomen nunc rogat ille tuum." The word τέρπνος, which in the Greek original refers to Adonis, means 'pleasant,' while in the Latin translation it concerns Menophile and is replaced with the word *blanda*, which may mean 'pleasant,' but more often it describes someone's seductive character, which is the case here.

In the fifth verse, we may observe another change introduced by Kochanowski: in the Greek text, Menophile asks, "Τίς πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν; Πόθι τοι πτόλις,"[13] while in the same place in the Latin text, there is the question "Tu quis es? Unde venis? Quid vis tibi?" Let us take a look at two other differences: the Greek μόλις, literally 'with difficulty,' was changed into the Latin *satis*—'sufficiently.' Secondly, the Latin epigram, contrary to the Greek one, ends with a mocking rhetorical question asked of the interlocutor: "did you understand

[12] This name appears only in Martial's V 13, IX 95/95b, XII 35, 42, 80. What is more, epigram V 13 is the only one in which the character is described by his wealth contrasted with the poverty of the poet, whom, nonetheless, his art gives fame, which is enjoyed by few: "Hoc ego tuque sumus: sed quod sum non potes esse; tu quod es, e populo quilibet esse potest." In other epigrams, apart from the problematic IX 95/95b, Callistratus is presented in a less than complimentary or encouraging way. In XII 35 and 42, he is a sodomite; in XII 80, a hypocrite, who for the sake of a peaceful life praises everyone, regardless of whether they deserve it or not: "Ne laudet dignos, laudat Callistratus omnes. / Cui malus est nemo, qui bonus esse potest?"

[13] An epic phrase, e.g. *Od.* X 325: "Τίς πόθεν εἰς ανδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες; […]."

well enough that a poor fellow has no friend?" Kochanowski enriches his epigram with meanings, enforcing it: "greacious" Adonis becomes "seductive." The questions that Menophile asks Callistratus in verse 5, as compared to the Greek original, are more dynamic and casual, as if the girl wanted to quickly get rid of a scoundrel. This epic construct, itself hyperbolic in this love context, becomes matter-of-fact (and faster): *Tu quis es*. The word πτόλις disappears replaced with a more general *unde venis*, but the most casually sounding *Quid vis tibi?* does not appear in the original at all. The last question, easy to overlook, is in fact a skilful manoeuvre of the poor lover-poet, who by asking his unfortunate rival this scoffing question (in the Greek text there is only a simple statement of facts) repays his past humiliations with sarcasm.

The character of the next epigram, XXXI, is Lycos, desperate to such an extent that he is satisfied with Chione's urine:

XXXI *De Lyco*
Formosam Chionem, denos nisi solveret aureos, Infelix cum non posset habere Lycus,
Hoc unum precibus multis contendit ab illa, Ut saltem in pelvim meieret ipsa suam.
Quod cum impetrasset, remo salsa aequora verrens, "Ius ede, nam cara est"—inquit—"amice, caro."

[**XXXI *On Lyco***
As unfortunate Lyco was able to possess beautiful Chione
only for ten dinars,
what he obtained by insistent begging was that she passed water into a bowl.
Having achieved this, working his paddle in the sea, he said: "Eat, my brother, a soup because meat is too expensive!"]

Contrary to Callistratos, Lyco is not a rich man who fell from grace but a poor enamoured man who does not have the ten coins… This epigram is a reference to Latin epigram XXII *Ad Corinnam*, where the poet said: "[…] ego bina Corinna / Aera dabo nec erit, cur velitare velim" (3–4).

I would like to stop at the last two verses. Let us begin with their content: the metaphor of "bitter waters" will become clear in the context of verse 6 where Lyco will eat an unenviable meal… But this is not all; the metaphor of sailing frequently appears in the context of love, while in *Ars amatoria* it symbolises an accomplished love act.[14] Thus the "salty sea" (*salsa aequora*) assumes this particular meaning if we take into account the topoi used beforehand. Lyco's sailing did not succeed. With regard to style, verse 6 with its alliterations ("cara amice caro") reminds one of the references to Catullus, who often used similar playthings (Catull. XXXVI and XCIV). This device appears later in Martial's epigram III 78, which Kochanowski may have had in mind despite the different tone and situation:

> Minxisti currente semel, Pauline, carina. Meiere vis iterum? Iam Palinurus eris. [You have pissed once, Paulinus, from a sailing ship. Do you wish to piss again? You will become Palinurus.]

3. Ovid and Catullus

There is still one more poem to discuss before I close the section on erotic epigrams—epigram XXV:

[14] See G. Baldo, in: Ovidio, *Ars amatoria*, a cura di E. Pianezzola, Milano 2007, p. 273, a commentary *ad loc.* reminds of the relation between sailing and love, referring to *Ars.* II 9–10 ("Sed non, quo dederas a litore carbasa, vento/ utendum, medio cum potiere freto"); he later adds *Ars.* II 725–726 and 731, which tell of an unsuccessful love relationship. He also recalls the fact that the metaphor could also mean poetical creation (in *Ars amatoria* it was related to successful love, let us bear in mind the didactic aspect of the poem). On the metaphorical association between sailing and poetic creation, see E. R. Curtius, *Literatura europejska i łacińskie średniowiecze*, tłum. i oprac. A. Borowski, Kraków 2005, pp. 136–139.

XXV *In Cypassim*
Solam invitavi, tu hircis comitata duobus
Venisti ad cenam, fusca Cypassi, meam.
Quid vestem obtendis, caecas quid comprimit alas,
Improba? Sentit eos nasus adesse meus.

[XXV *On Cypassis*
I have invited only you, and you came to me for dinner accompanied by two goats, dusky Cypassis.
Why do you cover yourself with a dress? Why do you squeeze your concealed armpits, you despicable one? Why, my nose smells their presence!]

Thanks to Ovid, *Am.* II 8, where an identical adjective describing Cypassis appears in verses 21–25, we know the literary identity of this character. It is a bondmaid of Corinna, seduced by her mistress' lover:

Pro quibus officis pretium mihi dulce repende
Concubitus hodie, fusca Cypassi, tuos.
Quid renuis fingisque novos, ingrata, timores?
Unus est a dominis emeruisse satis.

[So, Cypassis, you black girl, your blissful hugs shall pay me for the moments of affright!
Why do you resist, oh ungracious one, and fear in vain?
You have sneered your mistress and now you wish to sneer me?]

I have quoted these two distiches because apart from the character's name and the adjective describing her, the conversation develops according to the same schemes as in Kochanowski's poem, beginning with rhetorical questions. Let us also note the same asking adverb in the same position, the position of the adjectives *ingrata* and *improba* is also the same—at the beginning of the last verse, and the last word of the question divided into two verses.

While Ovid's poem provides an interpretative key for this epigram, Catullus supplies the motif of a bad smell emitted by a women who neglects personal hygiene. The motif of a "goat" in the armpits appears in Catull. LXIX (*caper* v. 6) and LXXI (*hircus* v. 1). Kochanowski, however, reverses the situation. It is not the lovers who smell like a "goat," but the girl so desired by the poet. Nonetheless, the situ-

ation does not end here as Kochanowski also refers to the advices of *magister amoris*, Ovid, who in *Ars.* I 522 admonished his disciple to take care of his hygiene. Girls will not fall for a lover that smells. Ovid gives similar advice to girls in *Ars.* III 193: "Quam paene admonui ne trux caper iret in alas."

4. Pholoe. Παρακλαυσίθυρον

The other group of poems begins with a diptych (L and LX), a real gem, the most beautiful in the whole collection due to its delicacy and the aptness of the images evoked. They tell the story of a night tryst divided into two poems. The rendezvous does not take place and the structure of the story resembles the motif of paraclausithyron known e.g. from Roman theatre and elegies. Let us begin with epigram L:

L *Ad Pholoen*
Ad vitam revocata Venus Titane perempto
Cum fuerit, mihi te sistere pollicita es.
Nec nostras, Pholoe, fallas, oculissima, speres,
Nam sine te magna sum miser in rutuba.

[**L *To Pholoe***
You have promised that you will come to me
as soon as Venus returns to life after Titan's death.
Do not fear, Pholoe, the apple of my eye, I shall not lie because without you
I am miserable and live in torments!]

There are a number of sophisticated lexical forms here that are worthy of more attention. Let us take a look at *oculissima*. In poetry the adjective *oculissimus* may only be found[15] in Plautus' *Curculio*

[15] http://mizar.unive.it/mqdq/public/ricerca/query/check/started (accessed: 20 August 2011).

(*Cur.* 15 and 121). When it comes to the word *miser* in reference to love, we come across it for the first time also in a Plautus' work,[16] namely in *Asinaria* (*Asinaria* 617): "Miser est homo qui amat,"[17] while the only trace of the word *rutuba* meaning a "torment" is to be found in fragment 488 of Varro's *Menippean Satires*.[18] The most meaningful words here are *oculissima* and *rutuba*. They are evidence of the erudition, attention to detail and curiosity of the poet, who might be described by d'Annunzio's self-definition: "a master of the art of words, a hunter of antiques" ("spulciatore di vetumi").

We should take a closer look at the word *oculissima*, which will enable us to present not only the topos of paraklausithyron, but also Kochanowski's method of *imitatio* and his considerable consciousness in his choice of hypotextual references.[19] Zofia Głombiowska[20] notes the references to Plautus. What seems most interesting in the light of epigram LX is the fact that verse 15 of *Curculio* includes words used by Phaedromus when he addresses the door of his beloved one: "huic proxumum illud ostiumst oculissimum." In verse 121, on the other hand, the maiden named Planesium uses the same word when she addresses Phaedromus: "Salve, oculissime homo."

We have reached the point when we can read the ending of the story, which began in Latin epigram L:

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[16] Thesaurus linguae latinae, http://refworks.referenceglobal.com/Xaver/start.xav?SID=unipadova305380183233&startbk=deGruyter_TLL&bk=deGruyter_TLL&start=//*[@attr_id=%27N0x20e90a0.0x1cf9bf60%27]&startSkin=english (accessed: 14 May 2011).

[17] I would also like to remind Verg. *Aen*. IV 429, where Dydo speaking with her sister asks: "Qui ruit? Extremum hoc miserae det munus amanti."

[18] Bibliotheca Teubneriana Latina, http://refworks.referenceglobal.com/Xaver/start.xav?SID=unipadova305380183233&startbk=deGruyter_BTL&bk=deGruyter_BTL&start=/*[@node_id=%2777522235%27]&startSkin=english&anchor=el#xaverTitl eAnchore (accessed: 14 May 2011).

[19] G. Genette, *Palinsesti. La letteratura al secondo grado*, trad. di R. Novità, Torino 1997, pp. 7–8.

[20] Z. Głombiowska, "Ślady lektury komedii i rzymskich w *Foricoeniach* Jana Kochanowskiego," *Slavica Wratislaviensia* 28 (2008), pp. 101–111.

LX *In culicem*
Quid mihi, parve culex, immiti saucio amore Tristis ad ingratas occinis auriculas?
Ad Pholoen potius querulos converte susurros
Atque haec oblita blandus in aure cane:
« Ianus te, o Pholoe, manet, at tu, ferrea, dormis Et iuvenem lenta conficis usque mora. »
Quod si forte tuo surrexerit excita cantu
Atque in complexus venerit illa meos,
Vergiliana, culex, tibi praemia scito parata,
Ut numquam in chartis emoriare meis.

[**LX *On a mosquito***
Why do you, little mosquito, hum sadly to the reluctant ears of a man hurt by a cruel love? Address your mournful whispers rather to Pholoe
and to her forgetful ear sing insinuatingly:
"Ianus waits for you, Pholoe, and you sleep like a stone
and endlessly torment the young man with your deferment!"
And if by chance she stands up awakened by your singing
and runs straight into my embrace,
be sure, my mosquito, that a Vergil's prize awaits you because you will never die on the sheets of my books.]

According to Jadwiga Czerniatowicz,[21] the model for this poem was Meleager's epigram (AP V 152):

Πταίης μοι, χώνοψ, ταχὺς ἄγγελος, οὔασι δ' ἄκροις
Ζηνοφίλας ψαύσας προσψιθύριζε τάδε·
«Ἄγρυπνος μίμνει σε· σὺ δ', ὦ λήφαργε φιλούντων, εὕδεις." Εἶα, πέτευ·ναί, φιλόμουσε πέτεν· ἥσυχα δὲ φθέγξαι, μὴ καὶ σύγιοιτο ἐγείρας κινήσῃς ἐπ' ἐμοὶ ζηλοτύπους ὀδύνας.
Ἦν δ' ἀγάγῃς τὴν παῖδα, δορᾷ στέψω σε λέοντος, κώνωψ, καὶ δώσω χειρὶ φέρειν ῥόπαλον.

[Fly for me, mosquito, swiftly on my message, and lighting on the rim of Zenophila's ear whisper thus into it: "He lies awake expecting thee, and thou sleepest, O thou sluggard, who forgettest those who love thee". Whrr! away!

[21] See J. Czerniatowicz, *Recepcja poezji greckiej w Polsce w XVI–XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1966, p. 60.

> yea, sweet piper, away! But speak lowly to her, lest thou awake her companion of the night and arouse jealousy of me to pain her. But if thou bringest me the girl, I will hood thy head, mosquito, with the lion's skin and give thee a club to carry in thy hand.][22]

Apart from this reference, in his poem Kochanowski makes an allusion to the pseudo-Vergilian *Culex*. I shall, however, confine myself only to emphasising those aspects of the text that are directly related to this paper.

Unlike the pseudo-Vergilian model, the mosquito is not killed. It may be very useful for the poet in persuading Pholoe to come and meet him. The insect will be awarded immortality. We should note the marvellous ambiguity of the phrase "in chartis emoriare meis." Here, a sheet with which one can kill the bothersome insect serves its immortalisation. This subject is frequently picked up in elegiac poetry—the immortality granted to a woman praised in poems. The insect appears here as a mediator between the lovers (the role of a servant in a comedy). Comedy also provided the slightly altered scheme of paraklausithyron: what is the mosquito's task if not to persuade the girl to come out of her house?[23] Moreover, the name Ianus is no accident: it comes from the word *ianua* and is related to the name Ioannes (or Polish Jan).

Before we turn to a more detailed analysis of individual distiches, I should point out the possible relationship of verse 6 "Et iuvenem lenta conficis usque mora" to Ovid's *Ars*. II 455–456:

> Si spatium quaeras, breve sit, quo laesa queratur, ne lenta vires colligat ira mora.
>
> [How long will you allow this maiden to mourn? Shortly; so that the anger does not accumulate strength over time.]

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[22] *The Greek Anthology*, p. 201.

[23] The lover represented by his legate does not want to enter the girl's house (as usually happens in a comedy and later in elegies), but he wants the girl to come out because presumably someone else is sleeping next to her.

After these verses in Ovid's treatise, there comes *concubitus*, awaited by our Ianus. Pholoe does not submit to the recommendations of *Ars amatoria*. I have quoted this passus mostly because of the close correspondence of the two texts, although the situations described in them are different: Ovid speaks of betrayal, while the poet suggests the man does not linger with him asking for forgiveness. Commenting upon the "strategic disappearance" of the lover,[24] we may refer to distich 357–358, in which the lexis changes ("tuta mora"), but the concept remains the same. This time, the situation fits perfectly—do not leave your beloved one waiting too long, or else you will be forestalled by another suitor. This is a kind of a reversal of the model since Pholoe has Ianus in her hand.

The first four verses, which form the apostrophe to the mosquito, were used to present two different situations in which the lovers found themselves: Ianus, scourged by the "cruel love" (*immitis amor*) is aware that his ears are forced to listen to the song (*occino* meaning 'to praise' is ironic). When Pholoe enters the scene (v. 3–4), everything changes: the singing turns to whispering (the weakening of the concept), and a mournful whispering at that (*querulus*), but in verse 4, precisely through its singing, the mosquito becomes seductive (*blandus*). The poem is not only a simple request to the mosquito, but it also problematises the emotional relationship between the subject and the object—between "I" and the external world. In these verses, the poet seems to say that nature, the essence of what is beyond us, is conditioned by our perception of the external world. For Ianus tormented by love the buzzing of the mosquito is sad and his ears are reluctant, irritated. For Pholoe, on the other hand, the same buzzing is—if not seductive, as Ianus would wish—at least without significance. It is Ianus that interprets Pholoe's absence as purposeful and malicious (v. 4–6: "Ianus te, o Pholoe, manet, at tu, ferrea, dormis / Et iuvenem lenta conficis usque mora?"). But there is no evidence that could support this thesis. In fact, everything happens

[24] G. Baldo, in: Ovidio, *Ars amatoria*, p. 319 *ad locum*.

in "real time"; the character speaks exposed to his suffering, which means he is not credible as a narrator because he is deprived of the overall "bird's eye" perspective. This whole psychological development is a product of Kochanowski's imagination, as in the Greek text Meleager confines to describing Zehophila forgetting her lover…

Conclusions

The impact of elegiac poets and Ovid on Kochanowski's epigrams seems undeniable. The very manner in which Ulysses is treated in *In puellas venetas* reveals Ovidian influence. The elegiac design of the poet is also discernible in numerous remakes of the Greek originals selected with regard to certain requirements of the elegiac poetic strategy. Ovid is present not only in the direct references, but also when Kochanowski specifically adapts his "dialectic"[25] *modus operandi*, according to which various behaviours are allowed, even if contradictory to one another. Let us recall epigrams XXI and XXII. In the former, the poetic "I" assumes the role of a seducer, while in the latter, he seems bored with it and settles the matter with several coins.

Love epigrams are also marked by the presence of Catullus, who often appears in turns with Ovid, as in epigram XXV, with whom Kochanowski sometimes polemises. For example, in the Latin epigram LXV, not discussed in this paper, the poet rejects the Catullus'

[25] I mean the inconsistency of the behaviour of the lover in the Ovidian elegy. Slightly simplifying the matter, one could say that there is only one binding rule: to be aware that in love there are no rules. See e.g. the end of the first book of *Ars amatoria*. Since we are in the context of erotodidactics, let us note that *magister amoris* tells his disciple that every woman is different and one should behave in accordance with the character of a specific femme he faces.

phenomenology of love and appears to shout in Lesbia's face: "Do not think that I am like the others: the more rejected, the more they love."[26]

Translated by Kaja Szymańska

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[26] See A. Traina, *La poesia degli affetti*, introduzione a: Catullo, *I Canti*, Milano 2002, pp. 7–45. In detail, pp. 18–19 and footnote 20.

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