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Horatian Metrics and Topics in the Latin Odes of Jan Kochanowski

Abstract: In my article I analyse the Latin odes of Kochanowski in relation to the odes of Horace. I compare metres and semantic references. My main observation is that while Kochanowski imitates metrics quite precisely, he only loosely uses the motifs. Now and then, the Polish poet uses almost identical lines as Horace did, but due to a different context, words gain new meaning. In conclusion I bring up the question of arrangement of the poems in the collection.

Key words: Kochanowski, Horace, metrics, topics, ode, political ode, tradition, reception

The subject of my deliberations in this article is a collection of the lyric poems of Jan Kochanowski, *Lyricorum libellus*, containing Latin odes by this poet.

For the Renaissance a key category was *imitatio*. This meant that the poems of the time were to imitate outstanding classical models. This does not mean that the poetry of the movement was entirely unoriginal. Originality was simply understood differently than today. *Imitatio* was not in conflict with this peculiarly perceived originality in so far as metrical patterns and manner of performance, and not the performance itself, were the elements to be imitated.

On the other hand, modern literary studies (up to postmodernism), “inherited” the 19th-century Romantic concepts, according to which literary value can be held by a poem that is “inspired,” wholly innovative, as if created *ex nihilo*. The notion of convention was ascribed solely to so-called popular literature. In the 16th century, literary convention was a category very much in keeping

with the general poetics of the period. Renaissance artists made use of known formulas in the creation of new quality. The essence of the matter is the fact that fundamental “building blocks” for new structures already existed. The task of the poet was the use of these to build an outstanding structure. “Mastery consisted therefore in arranging the bouquet of flowers of ancient poetry such that the so-called *loci communes* – ‘commonplaces’ – up to and including literal repetition of expressions taken from ancient poetry, were easily recognizable in a new text.”¹

In the Latin odes of Jan Kochanowski (a typically Renaissance poet) *imitatio antiquorum*² plays a vital role. This is to say that he attempted to reconstruct classical models as faithfully as possible. It does not mean, of course, that there were no differences. Differences, due for instance to a change in realities, do occur.

I will begin with a quantitative analysis of the odes of Horace in metrical terms as a point of reference for the metrics of Kochanowski:

Table 1. Odes of Horace from the metrical viewpoint

| Metre name | Number of odes written in the given metre | Percentage of the whole represented by poems in the given metre* |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Alcaic stanza | 37 | 35 |
| Lesser Sapphic stanza | 26 | 25 |
| Third Asclepiadic stanza | 12 | 11 |
| First Asclepiadic stanza | 9 | 9 |
| Second Asclepiadic stanza | 7 | 7 |
| Greater Asclepiadic verse | 3 | 3 |
| Lesser Asclepiadic verse | 3 | 3 |
| Alcmanian stanza | 2 | 2 |
| Greater Sapphic stanza | 1 | 1 |
| Hipponactean stanza | 1 | 1 |
| First Archilochian stanza | 1 | 1 |
| Fourth Archilochian stanza | 1 | 1 |
| Ionic decameter | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 104 | 100 |

* The percentages in all tables are approximate values.

¹ W. Wałęcki: “Jan Kochanowski – poezje łacińskie.” In: *Lektury polonistyczne. Średniowiecze – renesans – barok*, vol. 2. Eds. A. Borowski, J. Gruchała. Kraków 1997, p. 126.

² See Z. Głombiowska: *W poszukiwaniu znaczeń. O poezji Jana Kochanowskiego*. Gdańsk 2001, p. 5.

Kochanowski was naturally not the first imitator of the Horatian odes. Preceding him (or writing at more or less the same time) were the Italian humanists. Worthy mentioning here are names such as Francesco Filelfo, whose odes Carol Maddison described as “tedious,”³ Cristoforo Landino and Antonio Campano, whose formal inspiration was Catullus, Michele Marullo Tarcaniota, Pietro del Ricio, who with the use of Horatian form translated Greek poems, Benedetto Lampridio, who put Horatian vocabulary in Pindaric metre, Giovanni Francesco Quinziano Stoa, who wrote odes medieval in spirit but classical in terms of metre, Marcantonio Flaminio, Julius Capilupus, Ludovico Ariosto (a poet *de facto* Italian; his Latin poems were more of a *iuvenilia* type), Torquato Tasso and, most renowned in this circle, Giovanni Giovano Pontano, with his collection *Lyra*.

Nor was Kochanowski a pioneer on Polish soil. Horatian lyric metres appear, for instance, in the poems of such authors associated with Poland as Philippus Callimachus Experiens (1437–1496) and Conradus Celtes (1459–1508), as well as that of Paweł Krosno (Paulus Crosnensis Ruthenus, died c. 1517), Jan of Wiślica (Ioannes Visliciensis, born c. 1490) and Jan Dantyszek (Dantiscus, 1485–1548).

Jan Kochanowski is, however, the first of the Polish poets writing in Latin who so very thoroughly uses classical poetic metres.⁴ A significant characteristic of his metrics is what may be called their “reverse revolutionary” approach to medieval metrics. The use of some of the metrical solutions of the Middle Ages had been continued also by Renaissance predecessors of Kochanowski (e.g. Rej). Kochanowski went further, and at the same time took a step backwards in returning to classical models.⁵

It should be remembered that almost the entire literary world of the Renaissance, imitating what were regarded as outstanding classical models, was hindered in its task with regard to metrics for as clear a reason as the disappearance of vowel length in a majority of European languages. The prosody of Latin words, so evident to Roman poets, has become in the Renaissance period purely theoretical knowledge. Sixteenth-century humanists with a good understanding of Latin naturally have an awareness that in the language of Cicero the long and short syllables had existed, but they ordinarily did not hear this. The inability to hear vowel length in the case of syllables is less significant if a poet made use of ancient words. It was enough to check the poem of one of the poets for the occurrence of a given word. However, since the time of Horace for instance, around 1,500 years had passed. Realities had changed. Even with *imitatio antiquorum* so essential a criterion for the Renaissance, it would be absurd to assume that the language of Renaissance poetry should limit itself to the diction of classical poets.

³ See C. Maddison: *Apollo and the Nine. A History of the Ode*. Baltimore 1960, p. 42.

⁴ See M. Bohonos: “Zarys metryki polsko-łacińskich poetów.” In: *Metryka grecka i łacińska*. Eds. M. Dłuska, W. Strzelecki. Wrocław 1959, p. 205.

⁵ See J. Woronczak: *Studia o literaturze średniowiecza i renesansu*. Wrocław 1994, p. 185.

A thorough study of issues relating to distinctive length can be found in an article by Marcin Sas.⁶ The author also includes a list of Latin words unknown to the ancients and provides the distinctive length established for them.

The analyses conducted by Sas show that Kochanowski renders the proper distinctive length of Latin words reasonably well, although exceptions to classical principles of prosody do occur.

Besides new common words, there had appeared a number of proper names unknown to the ancient world. Beneficial to a degree was the fact that (in antiquity too) the relatively free treatment of the prosody of proper names was a widespread practice.

Although Kochanowski understood Greek sufficiently well not only to read ancient poems, but also to introduce Pindaric measures to his own poems, all of the metres used in the book of odes were taken by the Polish poet directly from Horace.⁷ Bearing testimony to this are, for instance, the metrical solutions which Kochanowski adopted.

The use of individual metrical measures in the collection is presented quantitatively in Table 2:

Table 2. The use of particular metrical measures by Kochanowski

| Metre name | Number of poems written in the given metre | Percentage of the whole represented by poems in the given metre |
|--|--|---|
| Alcaic stanza | 4 | 33 |
| Asclepiadic and Glyconic stanza (second Asclepiadic) | 3 | 25 |
| Lesser Sapphic stanza | 2 | 16 |
| Asclepiadic and Alcaic stanza (first Asclepiadic) | 1 | 8 |
| Greater Asclepiadic verse | 1 | 8 |
| Alcmanian stanza | 1 | 8 |
| Total | 12 | 100 |

As can be seen, the metre most readily used by Jan Kochanowski (and also by Horace) is the Alcaic stanza (four poems out of twelve). This derives from Greek lyric poetry. The metre is usually acknowledged as having four lines (a repeated Alcaic hendecasyllable, an Alcaic enneasyllable and an Alcaic decasyllable). The lack of a fixed diaeresis between the third and fourth lines, however, allows the

⁶ See M. Sas: "O miarach poematów łacińskich Jana Kochanowskiego i o ich wzorach." In: *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności. Wydział Filologiczny*. Kraków 1893, pp. 334–385.

⁷ See *ibidem*, p. 384.

supposition that this is in fact a three-line metre: the final two lines of the stanza would be *de facto* one line of two elements. For Kochanowski this metre was almost certainly made up of four lines, given that in the first edition of Latin odes the third and fourth lines were placed in separate lines, presumably owing not to the limitations of printing technology and being a division by the poet himself. Admittedly, in the third ode of the collection, between lines 35 and 36, and in the 10th ode, between the 15th and 16th lines, elision does occur, but this was present even in the poems of classical poets (e.g. Horace, *Carm.* II 3), although not very often, and there is no direct connection with potential line unity.

Parere discamus, Tyrannumque
Imperiosum animo exuamus.
(*Lyr.* 3, 35–36)

Nec flabra pernicious Favonii
Aethereos moderantis aestus.
(*Lyr.* 10, 15–16)

In accordance with the pattern from the odes of Horace, Kochanowski consistently applies a long third thesis⁸ in the Alcaic hendecasyllable and enneasyllable. In Greek poetry this thesis was metrically neutral.

In line 89 of the 12th ode (*Dic machinarum horrenda tonitrua*) an atypical diaeresis appears following the second iamb forming the first element of the line (a hypercatalectic iambic monometer). According to custom, a diaeresis should appear in this line following the third thesis, in a shortened iamb. Exceptions to the rules occur even in the ode of Horace (*Carm.* I 37, 14; IV 14, 17), yet in Kochanowski elision also appears in this position.

Kochanowski departs several times (e.g. in the 32nd line of the 12th ode) from the classical principle according to which long vowels were not elided. Moreover, in Kochanowski monosyllabic words sometimes undergo elision (e.g. in line 85 of the 12th ode), which was, according to classical canons, regarded as a certain form of aesthetic indiscretion.

In the metrics of Jan Kochanowski the Latin word *cui* is monosyllabic. Since the particle *-ui* elides in the 21st line of the first ode (*Sceptrum, feroces Litavi cui et potens*), it is unlikely that the iota underwent consonantalization. We have here therefore either synizesis or a fixed combination of sounds in a diphthong. It is difficult to decide unequivocally which of the possibilities it is. Since the occurrence of a diphthong, which would be pronounced [ui̯], is dubious (W. Sidney Allen provides no example),⁹ synizesis seems more likely. It should be noted, however,

⁸ I use the terminology as H. Sądejowa did and name the thesis a non-ictic part of the foot and the arsis an ictic part.

⁹ See W.S. Allen: *Vox latina. A guide to the pronunciation of classical Latin*. Cambridge 1965, pp. 62–63.

that in the part of his article devoted to synizesis in Jan Kochanowski, Sas does not mention the word *cui*.¹⁰

The main caesura of the first two lines of the stanza is always *πενθημιμερής*, as in Horace. The main caesura is absent once only (*Lyr*: 12, 89).¹¹

Kochanowski applied the Asclepiadic and Glyconic stanza almost as often. This metre observes Horatian norms. There is one elision of a long vowel (*Lyr*: 8, 16: *Vecturae in pretium horridae*) and one elision between lines

Sic o sic libeat prodigere hunc diem,
Et curis animum solvere tristibus!

(*Lyr*: 5, 31–32)

but these occurrences should by no means be treated as exceptions to the rules established in the poetry of Horace.

The lesser Sapphic stanza, except for one line with no caesura (*Lyr*: 4, 6: *Est datum, o, concordia, dulce amoris*), is a faithful fulfilment of classical norms. There are less typical caesurae (*Lyr*: 4, 15; 9, 6; and 9, 23), but these have their predecessors in the poetry of Horace. The caesura, with three exceptions, when *κατὰ τρίτον τροχαῖον* appears, is *πενθημιμερής*.¹² Moreover, in the 9th line of the 9th ode (*Lyr*: 9: *Celsa cum curru residens in aureo*) synizesis appears.

One poem (the sixth) was written in the Asclepiadic and Alcaic stanza. In the 15th line the fourth iota in the word *iniiciat* underwent consonantalization. This is not a metrical exception per se, but rather a phonetic one for the purpose of observing precisely the principles of metre.

The greater (sic!)¹³ Asclepiadic verse constituting the poetic metre of the seventh poem in the collection has a classical metrical form. The sole less typical solution is the elision of the long *e* in the second word of the fifth line (*Nostris te interea cura subiit vel minima, ut fores*).

The diaeresis following the first and second line appears in Kochanowski without exception. In the case of Horace there is one instance in which the diaeresis following the second line is not retained¹⁴ (C I 18, 16).

The final metre in the Latin odes of Kochanowski is the Alcmanian stanza. Maria Bohonos names this measure the “Alcmanian system” and states that another name is “first Archilochian system.” This is a statement requiring a certain clarification. The terms are not synonyms within a uniform system of metrical terminology. It is possible to assume the existence of three models of Archilochian stanza and define descriptively the metres of the 11th and 13th epodes of Horace,

¹⁰ See M. Sas: *O miarach poematów łacińskich...*, p. 352.

¹¹ See *ibidem*, p. 366.

¹² See *ibidem*, p. 365.

¹³ In “Zarys metryki...” mistakenly “lesser.”

¹⁴ See M. Sas: *O miarach poematów łacińskich...*, p. 359.

or it is possible to assume the existence of four models of Archilochian stanza and the existence of an Alcmanian stanza, in addition to which the numbers of the individual models of Archilochian stanza do not relate to the same metres in both systems. For the needs of my paper I assume four Archilochian stanza variants as well as suppose the existence of an Alcmanian stanza, and as part of this terminology the Alcmanian stanza is in the second line made up of three dactyls, a long syllable and an anceps syllable, while the first Archilochian stanza has in the second line two dactyls and an anceps syllable.

This metre displays a typical form. The sole instances of a less typical metrical solution in this ode are the monosyllabic word at the end of the 40th line and the elision of a long vowel in the 30th line. These are not, however, occurrences wholly alien to classical poetry.

The caesura is almost always *πενθημιμερής* or *έφθημιμερής*; an exception is the 39th line (*Lyr.* 11, 39: *Munera, ubi radiante reciprocus axe revertens*), when the caesura *κατὰ τρίτον τροχάϊον* appears.

Kochanowski imitates Horatian metres more or less faithfully. The rare exceptions to the rules of ancient prosodic poetics do not “spoil” the metre.

It may be supposed that the metrics of Kochanowski are not especially varied, with only six different metrical measures. It cannot be forgotten, however, that the six of these are used by Kochanowski in just 12 poems. It is easily calculated that this represents a mean average of one metre for every two poems. Horace wrote 104 odes (together with *Carmen Saeculare*) applying 13 different poetic metres. It is by no means my intention to suggest that the metrics of Horace are in any sense monotonous, particularly given that in the first 12 odes of the first book the Augustan poet makes use of as many as 10 different metrical measures. The point is made only to demonstrate that Kochanowski possessed a very broad range of abilities in versification.

The Latin odes of Kochanowski have been divided by Józef Budzyński into three groups, with this division relating to the content of the individual odes. The groups are: occasional and political odes, reflective odes and erotic odes.¹⁵ This division (as with all divisions) is simplified and does not include *de facto* a category such as the religious ode, on account of which I take the liberty of adding this category for the use of my paper.

The first group has the greatest numerical representation in the collection (six poems: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 12). Considering the distance in time which separates Horace and Kochanowski, it is possible to fall under the false impression *a priori*

¹⁵ See J. Budzyński: *Horacjanizm w liryce polsko-lacińskiej renesansu i baroku*. Wrocław 1985, p. 63.

that the Polish poet could adopt little from the Roman. It is erroneous to claim so because while Kochanowski wrote of different realities, this did not hinder in his borrowing of Horatian metaphors, manner of depiction and phrases.

The first ode in the collection is a request for the presence in the country of Henri de Valois. This ode clearly had its precursor in the fifth poems of the fourth book of odes by Horace (*Carm.* IV 5).

A fundamental difference can be seen in the presentation of the person of the ruler. Augustus, as a descendent of the gods (*divis orte bonis* (*Carm.* IV 5, 1)¹⁶), is almost worshipped by Horace. Henri is not worshipped and cannot be, since the religion of the Europe of his time is Christianity. Kochanowski, however, “offered him [Henri] no lack of highly panegyric expressions”¹⁷ such as *maximus regum* (*Lyr.* 1, l. 2) and *in Vulcaniis armis* (*Lyr.* 1, l. 31). The divergences are, therefore, not very significant and result from the external situation with regard to decisions *sensu stricto* literary.

In a manner analogous to that of Horace, Kochanowski described the expectations of the nation which will be fulfilled following the return of the ruler. The country is to enjoy a peace brought about by the respect of dangerous¹⁸ neighbours for a successor more powerful than they are.

Ad nomen, o rex magne, tuum ferox,
Moschus tumentes deposuit minas,
Scytaeque desuescunt rapaces
Podoliis equitare campis

(*Lyr.* 1, 21–24)

and Horace:

quis Parthum paveat, quis gelidum Scythen,
quis Germania quos horrida parturit
fetus incolumi Caesare? Quis ferae
bellum curet Hiberiae?

(*Carm.* IV 5, 25–28)

The Scythians of Kochanowski are rendered by modern translators as “Tatars.” The appropriateness of this translation raises no doubts. I would like only to draw attention to the fact that in the original version this is the same word as that used by Horace.

The description in both Horace and Kochanowski is quite elaborate. A fundamental divergence is the fact that in the case of Horace the expectations associ-

¹⁶ All quotations from Horace after: *Q. Horati Flacci opera*. Ed. F. Klingner. Leipzig 1970, 5th edn.

¹⁷ J. Budzyński: *Horacjanizm w liryce polsko-lacińskiej...*, p. 67.

¹⁸ Dangerous in the absence of Augustus and Henri.

ated with the arrival of Augustus have already begun to be fulfilled. Kochanowski speaks of the benefits to follow the arrival of Henri as of the future; it is the belief of the poet that this future is certain to occur should the fundamental condition be met (the arrival of the ruler), but it remains a hypothesis.

A further difference is the extent of the changes in the state. Essential for Horace is chiefly peace, and this is desired immediately. Kochanowski also speaks of peace, but only once the Commonwealth has conquered enemies:

Servent mihi illum fata precor diem,
 Cum te subactis hostibus et maris
 Ultum Tyrannos, vadere albis
 Conspicuum videam quadrigis:
 Vincetos catenis nexilibus duces,
 Urbesque captas, signaque bellica
 Spectanda proponentem, et axes
 Divitibus spoliis onustos.

(*Lyr.* 1, 29–36)

Borrowed expressions are not especially numerous in this ode. Lines 10–12 may be given as the first. These contain an appeal to Henri to travel to Poland without delay. In order to do so, the future ruler must abandon mother and sisters. A similar image can be found in the poem of Horace, in the fifth ode of the third book (*Carm.* III 5: *Caelo tonantem credidimus Iovem*).¹⁹ There are certain differences, however. The latter description relates to Marcus Atilius Regulus, who, bound by his word, returned to Carthaginian captivity. This event thus took place; it is not a possible future as with Kochanowski.

Regulus abandoned a worried wife and children. Henri could not abandon his wife, since at that time he did not have one. The difference, however, is in some sense only ostensible, for in both cases the point is to leave immediate family (that which there is) for the good of the state. Regulus did so for the honour of the empire, while Henri was to have done so to take the crown in Poland, left in an interregnum.

The second analogous location comes with lines 25–28.

Argenteum acri calcar equo admove, et
 Perterrefactis impiger hostibus
 Vulcaniis offer te in armis.

(*Lyr.* 1, 25–28)

Kochanowski encourages the addressee of his ode to rout enemies (we presume these to be the enemies of the Commonwealth). He should do so as a horse-

¹⁹ See Hor., *Carm.* III 5, l. 41.

man in armour forged by Vulcan. The Horatian counterpart is to be found in the first stanza of the second poem of the third book:

Angustam amice pauperiem pati
robustus acri militia puer
condiscat et Parthos ferocis
vexet eques metuendus hasta.

(*Carm.* III 2, 1–4)

This time we have in both the texts an expressed desire of the poem persona relating to a possible future occurrence. In the case of Horace a nominal addressee for the appeal does not appear. It is every Roman who wishes to live in accordance with *virtus Romana*.

Kochanowski addresses Henri de Valois directly. Henri is to be a soldier fighting on horseback. Both the Roman horseman and the pretender to the Polish throne are to sow fear among the enemy ranks, fighting hand-to-hand. The Roman with spear,²⁰ Henri with the sword.

A further parallel image is the depiction of a poet who with his poems moves nature, in this case oaks. The motif of the poet with this talent is far older than the odes of the lyricists of interest to me in this chapter. The description in the case of Horace relates to Orpheus,²¹ a mythical poet who with his music enraptured nature. Kochanowski intends to be the one moving the oaks. He does not express this precisely in these words, but says that he exceeds Orpheus and Linus, who did have a talent so great that nature was moved by their music.

Tum me nec Orpheus, nec fidicen Linus
Vincat canendo, saxa licet lyra
Uterque dicatur canora
Et rigidas agitasse quercus.

(*Lyr.* 1, 36–40)

Line 24 (*Podoliis equitare campis* (*Lyr.* 1, 24)) is an almost exact repetition of a line by Horace:

exiguus equitare campis.
(*Carm.* II 9: *Non semper imbres nubibus hispidos*, l. 24)

A clear similarity to a line by Horace (*quod regum tumidas contuderit minas* (*Carm.* IV 3: *Quem tu, Melpomene, semel*, l. 8)) is displayed also by line 22:

²⁰ This is how I understand the term *hasta*.

²¹ See Hor., *Carm.* I 12: *Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri*.

Moschus tumentes deposuit minas.

(*Lyr.* 1, 22)

In the second line Kochanowski names Henri the greatest of kings (*maxime regum*; *Lyr.* 1, 2), an echo of the epithet bestowed by Horace upon Augustus – *maximus principum* (IV 14, 6). The choice of a different word than that used by the Augustan poet to name the group among which the addressee stands out is of course dictated by the difference in the official title of the ruler being mentioned.

This same 14th ode of the fourth book of odes by Horace (*Carm.* IV 14 *Quae cura patrum quaeve Quiritium*) was used by Kochanowski for four more lines in his poem:

te Cantaber non ante domabilis
Medusque et Indus, te profugus Scythes
miratur, o tutela praesens
Italiae dominaeque Romae.

(*Carm.* IV 14, 41–44)

These lines were changed by the Polish poet quite considerably, retaining more their central idea than the phraseology. There has been discussion of one of these lines (l. 22) in the context of vocabulary borrowed from Horace.

A similar idea is expressed in lines 17–20 of the ode by Kochanowski:

Sceptrum, feroces cui Litavi et potens
Paret Polonus, quotquot et incolunt
Gentes profundum Balticum inter
Caeruleamque Maeotis undam.

(*Lyr.* 1, 17–20)

Kochanowski most likely took the inspiration from lines 49–52 of the 14th ode of the fourth book by Horace:

te non paventis funera Galliae
duraeque tellus audit Hiberiae,
te caede gaudentes Sygambri
compositis venerantur armis

(*Carm.* IV 14, 49–52)

and lines 21–24 of the 15th ode of the same:

non qui profundum Danuvium bibunt
edicta rumpent Iulia, non Getae,
non Seres infidique Persae,
non Tanain prope flumen orti.

(*Carm.* IV 15, 21–24)

Again, it is the general idea which becomes the inspiration and not the details of the formulation.

In his political odes Kochanowski drew readily from Horatian allegory and metaphor. One excellent example of this is the depiction of the homeland as a warship in the third poem of the collection (*Lyr.* 3: *Qua vorticocus Vistuleis Veper*). The clear model is the 14th ode of the first book by Horace (*Carm.* I 14: *O navis, referent in mare te novi!*). The model is transformed as follows: “as it is impossible to steer two vessels over deeps of the sea with the use of a single helm, so it is necessary to seek a new guide for the Sarmatians for the ship adrift, and to take in the other hand the helm abandon’d by Henri, before the outbreak of some terrible upheaval comes on nigh.”²²

Budzyński expresses the opinion that the allegory of Kochanowski performs a role ancillary to the central idea of the ode. While it is true that this allegory does not constitute the content of the entire ode (as it did in the case of Horace’s poem), I do not believe it to be as unimportant as Budzyński seems to suggest.²³ The image of the warship which Kochanowski depicts gains in pertinence at the cost of universality. The allegory relates to the Polish situation contemporary with Kochanowski in a relationship in actual fact of equivalence.²⁴ Budzyński does not deny the specificity of the image, but perceives it to be a flaw in the excellence of the poem. In my opinion this need not be the case. Let us recall the active involvement of the Polish poet in efforts to place Henri on the Polish throne. Following the flight of the king, Kochanowski must have felt very disappointed. For him the specific situation was significant. From this point of view the significance of the allegory being made more specific would not be a flaw. The specification of the image of the warship could have been (and I think was) the intention of the poet, and, assuming this to be so, it is a successful realization of the idea.

It is worth remarking that the Horatian models for the fourth ode by Kochanowski (*Carm.* I 2, I 12, I 21, I 35, IV 2 and *Carm. saec.*) provided the Polish poet, beyond the topics, with metrical patterns. Very nearly all (the exception being *Carm.* I 35) were written by Horace in the lesser Sapphic metre, with this being the metre used by Kochanowski in his poem.

The sixth ode by Kochanowski is in a certain sense Horatian in the clearest of manners. I have in mind here a motif continually reappearing in the odes of Horace, that of making the most of life while there is time.²⁵ This Roman poet of the Augustan era evokes in many odes (e.g. *Carm.* I 4, I 9, II 3, III 8, III 21) the image of a quiet joy in life arising from simple, everyday pleasures.

²² J. Budzyński: *Horacjanizm w liryce...*, p. 69.

²³ While Budzyński does not use the word “unimportant,” this idea appears to underscore his statement (the Horatian allegory, great and independent, is in Kochanowski only ancillary).

²⁴ In a logical sense.

²⁵ I am not of course, by any means, suggesting hedonism in this context.

A major element in topics of this type in the odes of Horace is the threat of death. Death, however, does not bring a sorrowful atmosphere. Its constant presence is only a reason to use all the better that time which the individual has been given.

Kochanowski modifies this motif slightly. He encourages the audience (both Mikołaj Firlej, as clearly expressed, and the reader) to enjoy simple pleasures – a goblet of wine drunk in the shade of a sycamore in the company of a friend. The difference consists in a certain feverishness and desperation, an essential element of the present for Kochanowski and Firlej. The rest enjoyed in the shade of a tree is to allow an immediate and specific threat to be forgotten (if only briefly). In the odes of Horace, death was shown as a constant aspect of reality and an indispensable element. It did not provoke overly violent raptures, and was something ordinary. With Kochanowski the threat is in some sense pressing. It is not death as such, but the danger of war, from which results more misfortune for the homeland than for a specific individual. It is not death that the central figures of the poem are afraid of, but the threat to the state. To the state, a threat which can be forgotten but for a moment. The inability to expel the danger permanently from the memory is a result of this being no everyday situation. Death is a constant, allotted to each of us; each of us is “accustomed” to it. Unrest in the country does not affect everyone, everywhere and always, and this is precisely why it evokes fear.

Beyond the differences are many similarities. The small pleasures of which Kochanowski writes are the same presented by Horace. Resting in a shaded place in pleasant company is bound in literary terms quite closely with the topos of *locus amoenus* (pleasant places). The topos was present in literature long before Horace,²⁶ and it cannot be stated with complete certainty therefore that Horace was the immediate source of this particular borrowing,²⁷ but it is possible, at least in part.

A separate question is the composition of the collection. Kochanowski planned the arrangement of poems in his collections carefully.²⁸ He composed his collection of Latin odes as a cycle.²⁹ A cycle indicates a certain very precisely determined organization of the odes in a collection. The Horatianism of the 12 odes is surely a primary reason for which these together form one volume, a Horatianism in both metrics and topics. There are after all other poems by Jan Kochanowski within which Horatian inspirations may be sought, but the 12 odes here simultaneously combine language, metre and source of topics.

A major organizing factor in a cycle is chronology. The time at which some odes came into being cannot be established with complete certainty. For obvious

²⁶ For instance in Theocritus and Virgil.

²⁷ Kochanowski had a good knowledge of both Greek and Roman literature.

²⁸ Cf. for example J. Sokolski: *Lipa, chiron i labirynt: esej o „Fraszkach”*. Wrocław 1998.

²⁹ On concepts of various cycles in Kochanowski, see Z. Głombiowska: *Lacińska i polska muza Jana Kochanowskiego*. Warszawa 1988, pp. 61–125.

reasons this is made easier in the case of political odes, but again we have no absolute certainty. Generally, however, drawing conclusions from likely dates for the creation of the poems, the order of creation of the individual odes agrees with the order of the poems in the collection. Overlapping the “external” chronology is the “internal” chronology of the odes. Again, it is easier in this regard to examine the political odes, the “action” of which in terms of order of events coincides with the external chronology of the events described, and so the logic of the “action” also agrees with the order of the odes in the cycle.

The influence which the odes of Horace exerted on the poetry of Kochanowski cannot be overestimated. From the poetry of Horace he drew inspiration for his own poems in respect of both metrics and topics. He made use of models adopted in accordance with the spirit of the era in which he lived. Preserving the essence of the spirit of Horatianism, he created odes both original and worthy of the attention of scholars.