Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

DOI:10.17951/sb.2020.14.157-170
Studia Białorutenistyczne 14/2020 LITERARY STUDIES
ISSN: 1898-0457 e-ISSN: 2449-8270 Licence: CC BY 4.0

Dariusz Chemperek

Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin (Poland)
Email: chemperek@onet.pl
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1702-7974

The Panegyric Poetry of Cyprian Bazylik. Poems Dedicated to Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł and Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł

Poezja panegiryczna Cypriana Bazylika. Wiersze poświęcone Mikołajowi Radziwiłłowi Czarnemu i Mikołajowi Radziwiłłowi Rudemu

Панегерычная паэзія Цыпрыяна Базыліка. Вершы прысвечаныя Мікалаю Разівілу Чорнаму і Мікалаю Радзівілу Рудаму

Abstract

Cyprian Bazylik was a Renaissance poet, printer in Brest Litovsk, translator, and composer strongly associated with the house of Radziwiłł. He wrote in Polish language. The article discusses two poems from the year 1566, dedicated by Bazylik to the late Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł (January 1566) and the living Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł (June 1566). Both poems are one of the oldest examples of panegyric poetry in Polish language in the Great Duchy of Lithuania and they were not analized before from religious point of viev. They are contained within the editorial framework of two publications, edited by Tomasz Falconius, a Lithuanian adherent of antitrinitarianism, which are editions of parts of the *Brest Bible* and which were published by Bazylik in the Brest printing house. In both texts, the panegyric content is surprisingly perfunctory, while Bazylik (known as a reformed Evangelical) appears in them as an unambiguous adherent of antitrinitarianism. The poems are an interesting testimony to the situation of the Polish Brethren in Lithuania after the death (in 1565) of the patron of this religious belief, Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł. Unusual tone of the poem dedicated to Radziwiłł

* Financing: Funded from the budget of the Institute of Modern Languages and Literatures and the Institute of History of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, from the funds of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for activities promoting science (contract no. 615/P–DUN/2019) and under the 'Support for Academic Journals' programme (contract no. 331/WCN/2019/1).
Publisher: Wydawnictwo UMCS

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

the Red – Bazylik asks for help and in the same time submits religious threats – shows the bad situation of Lithuanian antitrinitarians which happened in the period of half a year. But it also shows the high self-dignity of the poet.

Keywords: *Brest Bible*, reformation, panegyric, Polish Brethren, printing office

Abstrakt

Cyprian Bazylik to renesansowy poeta, drukarz w Brześciu Litewskim, tłumacz i muzyk silnie związany z domem Radziwiłłowskim. Tworzył w języku polskim. Artykuł poświęcony jest dwu wierszom z roku 1566, dedykowanych przez Bazylika zmarłemu Mikołajowi Radziwiłłowi Czarnemu i żyjącemu Mikołajowi Radziwiłłowi Rudemu. Są jednymi z najstarszych polskojęzycznych wierszy panegirycznych na Litwie i nie były dotąd analizowane z religijnego punktu widzenia. Oba utwory znajdują się w ramie wydawniczej dwu druków, opracowanych przez Tomasza Falconiusa, litewskiego antytrynitarza, będących edycjami części *Biblii brzeskiej* i wydanych w oficynie brzeskiej przez Bazylika. Treści panegiryczne są w obu tekstach poetyckich zaskakująco zdawkowe, natomiast ujawnia się w nich Bazylik (znany jako ewangelik reformowany) jako niedwuznaczny zwolennik antytrynitaryzmu. Utwory te są ciekawym świadectwem sytuacji, w jakiej znaleźli się bracia polscy na Litwie po śmierci (1565) protektora tego wyznania Radziwiłła Czarnego. Niezwykły ton wiersza skierowanego do Mikołaja Rudego – zarazem prośby i religijne groźby – świadczy zarówno o złej sytuacji antytrynitarzy litewskich (musiała się ona pogorszyć w ciągu pół roku) jak i o wysokim poczuciu godności własnej poety.

Słowa kluczowe: *Biblia brzeska*, reformacja, panegiryk, bracia polscy, drukarnia

Анатацыя

Цыпрыян Базылік – польскамоўны рэнесансавы паэт, берасцейскі друкар, перакладчык і музыкант, цесна звязаны з родам Радзівілаў. У артыкуле разглядаюцца два вершы Базыліка з 1566 года, прысвечаныя Радзівілу Рудаму і памерламу Радзівілу Чорнаму. Гэта адны з першых польскамоўных панегірычных вершаў у Вялікім Княстве Літоўскім, але яны ніколі не аналізаваліся з рэлігійнай перспектывы. Абодва творы ўвайшлі ў прадмоўна-пасляслоўны комплекс двух друкаў, падрыхтаваных літоўскім антытрынітарыям Томашам Фальконіўсам, якія з'яўляюцца перавыданнямі асобных частак *Брэсцкай Біблii* і апублікаваныя Базылікам у брэсцкай друкарні. Панегірычны змест абодвух паэтычных тэкстаў надзвычай лаканічны, затое Базылік (вядомы як кальвініст) раскрываецца ў іх як перакананы прыхільнік антытрынітарызму. Гэтыя творы з'яўляюцца цікавым сведчаннем сітуацыі, у якой апынуліся „польскія браты" на Літве пасля смерці ў 1565 г. пратэктара гэтага веравызнання Радзівіла Чорнага. Нязвыклая інтанацыя верша, скіраванага да Мікалая Рудага – адначасова просьба і пагроза – сведчыць як пра цяжкую сітуацыю антытрынітарыяў у Літве (мусіла пагоршыцца за поўгода), так і пра абвостранае пачуццё ўласнай годнасці паэта.

Ключавыя словы: *Брэсцкая Біблія*, рэфармацыя, панегірык, „польскія браты", друкарня

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

One of the distinctive characteristics of Renaissance literature is the modest number of works of panegyric nature, especially in comparison with the following century. Around 700 16th century publications expressing a laudatory attitude written on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were preserved, whereas there are nearly 6050 such works that date from the following century (Bieńkowski, 1980, p. 188; Dziechcińska, 1980, 1990, p. 87, 616). According to the research of Wilhelm Bruchnalski, in the years 1631–1670 panegyric literature constituted 40% of the total of literary production in the entire territory of the Commonwealth (Bruchnalski, 1975, p. 212). The results of the statistical analysis of print production are similar in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: according to the calculations of Maria Barbara Topolska, in the years 1553-1660 panegyrics constituted one-third of Lithuanian publications and, next to religious literature, were the most numerous group of texts published in Lithuania (Topolska, 1984, pp. 118-126)[1]. Taking into account the existence of the so-called 'ciemna materia'[2], that is the percent share of publications entirely lost (e.g. according to Goran Proot's Stochastic model, as much as 55% of the books from historical Flanders did not survive) and the fact that it was publications that were 'czasowo relewantne'[3] – which includes broadly understood occasional literature, as well as publications printed in small formats and those that were slight in volume (which are also the characteristics of panegyric writing) (Walecki, 2018, pp. 312–314)[4] – it can be concluded that works aiming to express amplified praise of an individual or an object were very strongly represented in the whole of Old Polish writing.

Panegyrics played a significant role in the social life of the inhabitants of the Commonwealth of that time, resounding and popularising the accepted role models and religious and pro-state attitudes. The flood of laudatory writing in the Saxon period caused a devaluation of the meaning of the term 'panegyric', it is therefore worth remembering that the artistic value of a laudatory work was decided by the literary culture, the talent of the author, as well as the figure of the addressee – their education, literary sophistication, and the environment with which they were surrounded or which they even created (courts gathering artists). Thus, a laudatory piece is nearly always the result of the interaction between the personalities, the culture of the client (the author) and of the patron (including their cultural environment).

From the point of view of genology (the study of literary genres and their transformations), a panegyric is any piece of laudatory nature (e.g. a speech, narrative poem, epigram, elegy, epicedium, epithalamium), whose distinctive characteristic is the amplification and fact of the public praising of the actions of the patron. Laudatory

[1] According to the researcher's calculations, it was 557 works out of a total of 1650.

[2] 'dark matter'.

[3] 'temporarily relevant'.

[4] The researcher refers to the article: Goran Proot, *Survival Factors of Seventeenth-Century Hand-Press Books Published in the Southern Netherlands* [Proot, 2016, p. 160-201].

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

works often do not appear on their own, e.g. epigrams can be a part of the editorial framework of another author's book, dedication letters can constitute the introduction to another author's publication or recommend works of another nature (Dziechcińska, 1990, p. 546; Niedźwiedź, 2003, pp. 29–37). The development of laudatory literature was influenced, above all, by arts patronage, more specifically – clientelistic relations which were a significant ingredient of the socio-political life in the Old Polish period (Mączak, 1994).

Renaissance panegyric writing was stimulated by the conviction that the poet was the granter of everlasting fame. It was believed that the written word:

> […] najdłużej i najskuteczniej potrafi rozsławić czyjeś imię. Czyjeś, to znaczy nie tylko autora samego dzieła, lecz także osoby, która przez tego autora została pochwalona, upamiętniona na wieki. Renesans fetyszyzował niewątpliwie rolę literatury, a zwłaszcza rolę poezji i historii jako nosicielki i gwarantki sławy za życia i po śmierci. Przekonanie, że wszystkie książki i utwory, nawet te najdrobniejsze, będą czytane przez długie wieki i przyniosą niezatartą sławę ich autorom, było trwałym elementem renesansowego światopoglądu. Na tej płaszczyźnie mógł powstać i rozwinąć się bujnie kult sławy uzyskanej dzięki literaturze[5] (Bieńkowski, 1980, p. 186).

During the Renaissance, the distinguishing characteristics of epideictic literature were considered to be the predominance of the religious subject matter, more broadly – political ideas drawn from the universe of humanism, a certain freedom for authors from the pressure of institutions (e.g. religious orders, courts), and the personalisation of apologia (in the 17th century praise of religious orders, schools, and entire families were popular).

The panegyric poetry of Cyprian Bazylik (circa 1535 – after 1591) on the one hand confirms the above general constatations, on the other, however, it constitutes a precursory phenomenon in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. For the Radziwiłł poet was one of the initiators of this kind of writing in the Polish language in Lithuania.

The activity of Bazylik – an artist whose achievements are the *iunctim* of the culture of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – is paralleled by the earlier poetry of Mikołaj Hussowski. Just as it could be said about the author of *Carmen ... de statura, feritate ac venatione bisontis*, referencing the famous words of Stanisław Orzechowski, that he was a *gente Lihuanus vel Leucorussus, natione Polonus*, about Bazylik one could say – *gente Polonus, natione Lithuanus*. Born in Sieradz, son of

[5] '… can bring glory to somebody's name for the longest time and the most effectively. Somebody, that is not only the author of the work itself, but also the person praised by this very author, immortalised for centuries to come. The Renaissance undoubtedly fetishized the role of literature, and especially the role of poetry and history as the bearer and guarantor of fame in life and after death. The belief that all books and works, even those most petty, would be read throughout centuries and bring indelible glory to their authors was a fixed element of the Renaissance worldview. It was on this plane that the cult of fame obtained thanks to literature could come to life and flourish'.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

a burgher, educated in the Kraków Academy, he spent most of his life in Lithuania, identifying with the Lithuanian national interest, at that time represented by Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł and Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł.

This, however, is where the similarities between him and Hussowczyk end – Bazylik, nearly a generation younger, wrote poetry in Polish, was a reformed Evangelical, a secretary (*secretarius regius)* at the chancellery of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and an author whose horizons were broad and truly Renaissance in nature. In the court of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł, he was writing religious hymns and composing music for them, writing poetry (narrative poems and shorter forms), and in the Radziwiłł printing office in Brest-Litovsk – he was engaged in printing and in the art of translation (it was both religious texts that he was translating from Latin and those on historical as well as social subjects, for instance, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski's monumental masterpiece *De republica emendanda*). Noteworthy is Bazylik's *Historyję o srogim prześladowaniu Kościoła Bożego* (*Stories of the Fierce Persecution of the Church of God*, 1567), a compilation of martyrological works by John Foxe, Jean Crespin, Heinrich Pantelon, and Jan von Utenhove (the last of whom recounted the story of the reformer Jan Łaski). The creation of the vastly expansive *Historyja* was no doubt inspired by Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł (Hanusiewicz-Lavallee, 2017, pp. 25-61) and, although published two years after his death, was in line with the politics of the Lithuanian patrician intent on the consolidation of Protestantism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Kavalëŭ, 2010, pp. 18-40; 101-179). Bazylik was part of a group of Radziwiłł littérateurs whom Jan Kochanowski called 'pszczoły'[6], alongside Andrzej Trzecieski the younger, Jan Mączyński, and (temporarily) Jan of Czarnolas himself (Chemperek, 2016, pp. 153–172). In Polish and Latin epigrams dedicated to the members of this group, Kochanowski praised both the effort of the collective work of the circle of authors gathered around the voivode of Vilnius and the talents of each of the writers. Bazylik was also valued by his patrons – it was to their patronage that he owed the quick granting of his questionable ennoblement[7] by King Sigismund Augustus, the title *poeta laureatus* (also bestowed by the sovereign), and the occupation at the royal chancellery in Vilnius. In the 1560s he was involved with the Radziwiłł printing office in Brest-Litovsk as an administrator, head of the literary department, and, finally, in the years 1569–1570, as its owner[8].

The panegyric poems of the Radziwiłł author include: *Na herby Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego* (On the Coats of Arms of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł, Brest,

[6] 'the bees'.

[7] The notorious troublemaker Jakub Heraklides Basilicus, who designated himself the despot of the Greek island Samos, gave him his coat of arms and last name in 1557. At that time, Basilicus stayed in Vilnius as a guest of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł, seeking to found an anti-Turkish coalition.

[8] A synthetic view of the creative profile of Bazylik, see: (Kawecka-Gryczowa, Korotajowa i Krajewski, 1959, pp. 46–47; Kot, 1935, p. 375; Morawska, 1994, p. 247; Topolska, 1984, pp. 89–91).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

1566); *Do Jego Książęcej Miłości Pana Mikołaja Radziwiłła, wojewody wileńskiego* (To His Princely Grace Mikołaj Radziwiłł, Voivode of Vilnius, Brest, 1566); *Napis na grobie zacnego szlachcica Pawła Secygniowskiego* (Inscription on the Grave of the Honourable Nobleman Paweł Secygniowski, Brest, 1570)[9]; *O zacności herbu Warnia a o wielkiej dzielności ludzi rycerskich w domu Panów Gnoińskich, którzy się piszą z Gnojnika* (On the Nobleness of the Warnia Coat of Arms and on the Great Gallantry of the Knightly Folk in the House of the Gnoiński Masters from Gnojnik, Kraków, 1600; a lost work)[10]. The narrative poem *Krotkie wypisanie sprawy przy śmierci i pogrzebie Oświeconej Księżny Paniej Halżbiety z Szydłowca Radziwiłłowej* (A Short Record of the Matter Written Upon the Death and Burial of the Enlightened Princess Elżbieta Szydłowiecka Radziwiłł, 1562) is excluded from this group, being primarily an occasional and paraenetic piece, building an image of the perfect Evangelical.

Both works from 1566 are connected to Tomasz Falconius (Sokołowski), since they belong to the editorial framework of his two books which were released by the Brest printing office in the same year, within a six-month interval. The epigram *Na herby Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego* is part of the editorial framework of the monumental (printed in folio format) *Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa Syna Bożego, ku wiecznej pociesze wybranym Bożym napisane przez świadki i pisarze na to od Boga zrządzone, a tu wykłady krotkiemi są objaśnione* (The Deeds and Words of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Written to the Eternal Solace of God's Chosen by the Witnesses and Writers Thus Ordained by God, Here Expounded by Short Expositions) edited by Falconius and published (as per the note on the title page) in Brest-Litovsk 'roku 1566, ostatniego dnia stycznia'[11]. *Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa* is a reprint of four Gospels from the *Brest Bible*, accompanied by Falconius's commentary and arranged, after separating the Gospel of John from the synoptic Gospels, into the so-called gospel harmony. The second of Bazylik's panegyrics from 1566 was included in the editorial framework of *Wtore księgi Łukasza świętego, ktorych napis jest Dzieje, abo Sprawy Apostolskie, krotkiemi wykłady objaśnione* (The Second Books of Saint Luke, Whose Title Is Acts or Deeds of the Apostles, Expounded by Short Expositions). This reprint of the Acts of the Apostles printed in folio, also from the *Brest Bible* and with Falconius's commentary, was published in Brest six months later, on 23rd June[12].

[9] Hereinafter I quote from poems as cited by the edition: (Kot, 1956, pp. 145–150). The title *Na herby Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego* comes from the publisher.

[10] The work named by K. Estreicher in the bibliography, as cited by previous bibliographers. The Gnoiński family was highly distinguished in the Reformation, as well as renowned for its knightly virtues (among other things, the fighting with the Turks in Hungary), extolled by, for instance, M. Rej, M. Bielski, B. Wapowski, B. Paprocki, Sz. Starowolski. It is from the Warnia coat of arms (a Crayfish) mentioned in the title of the panegyric that comes the name of Raków, founded in 1567 – the centre of intellectual life of the Polish Brethren for over half a century, cf. (Oszczęda, 2014, pp. 6-8).

[11] 'in the year 1566, on the last day of January'.

[12] Both copies are in the Princes Czartoryski Library, file ref. no. Cim. F. 787/II and Cim. F. 788/II.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

At this point, some remarks on Falconius himself are worth making, since his activity and the circumstances of the creation of both publications shed some light on Bazylik's works included therein. Sokołowski (the Polish sound of the name is not, however, certain), who, like many protestant ministers, latinised his last name as Falconius, was in the 1560s the courtly preacher of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł. In September 1560 he brought to the Calvinist synod in Książ the guarantee that the printing of the Bible that was being translated by the reformed Evangelicals would be funded by the prince (Jasnowski, 1939, p. 364). Meanwhile, already beginning from 1563 (and so the year of the publication of the *Brest Bible*), Falconius turned to the positions of nontrinitarianism, taking a stand against the doctrine of the Trinity during the synod in Mordy in the Podlaskie Voivodeship (on 6th June 1563). In this spirit, he was fulfilling his pastoral ministry for his patron, and 'za pośrednictwem kazań Falconiusa antytrynitaryzm torował sobie coraz szerszą drogę do umysłu Czarnego'[13] (Jasnowski, 1939, p. 387; Ivanova, 2015, pp. 92–98). The prince began to openly eject from his estate the Calvinist ministers who did not share his nontrinitarian views. It was only the patrician's death on 29th May 1565 that put an end to his efforts to convert the Calvinist places of worship remaining in his possession into Arian churches. Thus, the volumes published in the following year may be called – both due to the nontrinitarian theological commentary included therein and the ties between Falconius and Radziwiłł – 'duchowym testamentem księcia'[14] (Siwiec, 2016, p. 64).

The poem printed on the verso of the title page of *Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa*, entitled *Na herby Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego*, is placed under the family's coat of arms. Contrary to what is found in typical stemmata (works consisting of an illustration referring to the coat of arms and a poem) dedicated to heraldic legends, explanations of the symbolism of a coat of arms (Ocieczek, 2002, p. 54), Bazylik does not refer to genealogical threads, stopping at the general statement that 'Ty herby […] / Zacność starodawnego rodu wyświadczają'[15] (lines 1, 3). For it is not the ancestry 'już umarłego'[16] (line 2) prince that decides that 'wielkim Radziwiłem nazwać go możemy'[17] (line 5) but his achievements: 's p r a w y [D. Ch.'s emphasis] tę mu wieczną sławę dają'[18] (line 4). It was then Horace's ode on the virtue of the nobility (*Carmina* 4,4), the real value of the high-born, that became the material for Bazylik's invention. The achievements of the prince were left to the reader's knowledge or quick-wittedness, but the context – the presence of the poem in a religious volume edited by a member of the Polish Brethren and the subsequent part of the poem – allows one to presume that what the 'deeds' constituted was the backing of the community of the Polish Brethren in Lithuania.

[13] 'through the medium of Falconius's sermons, nontrinitarianism was progressively working its way into the mind of Mikołaj "the Black" Radziwiłł'.

[14] 'the spiritual testament of the prince'.

[15] 'Your coats of arms … / Show the nobleness of the ancient clan".

[16] 'of the already departed'.

[17] 'we can call him a great Radziwiłł'.

[18] 'the d e e d s [D. Ch.'s emphasis] give him this eternal glory".

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

In the panegyric written seven months after the death of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł, one can detect references to the criticism (most likely on the part of the reformed Evangelicals) of the nontrinitarian beliefs of the patrician, his religious views in the last years of his life. In the name of the community of the Polish Brethren remaining in Lithuania, whose patron was the prince, Bazylik declares: 'Oszczypkow [uszyczypliwości – D. C.] nieprzyjaciół w tym się nie bojemy'[19] (line 6), since Radziwiłł 'Palcem Syna Bożego, którego miłował / A wyrokow i wolej jego naśladował'[20] (lines 11–12). The demonstrative reference to the ideal of *imitatio Christi*, employed with the use of the scholastic topos, was to dismiss the belief that, as an adherent of nontrinitarianism, Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł did not worship the deity of Christ. The good memory of the departed is also succoured by the extensive (comprised of as many as eight lines in the 26-line epigram) recollection of his wife – a paragon of an Evangelical's virtues, a respected and liked matron whose death in 1562 'serce wielu ludzi srogim żalem zbodła'[21] (line 20). Let us recall that Bazylik himself commemorated the death of Elżbieta Szydłowiecka Radziwiłł with the elegiac narrative poem *Krotkie wypisanie sprawy przy śmierci i pogrzebie Oświeconej Księżny Paniej Halżbiety z Szydłowca Radziwiłowej, wojewodziny wileńskiej. Roku 1562*. It is characteristic that the term 'święta pani'[22] repeated many times throughout the piece is now transferred to her husband – in the analysed epigram, the princely couple is 'dwu świętych ludzi'[23] (line 21). Towards the end of the poem, the poet expresses the hope that their offspring, growing up 'jak majowe kwiatki'[24] (line 22), will imitate their parents' *pietas*.

The laudation of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł corresponds with the general subject matter of the work within which it is placed – the praise references only his spiritual virtues. Bazylik fashioned the prince to be a pious husband of the Calvinist 'święta'[25] and father of god-fearing children. The authority of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł – who followed the example of Christ, was a model Evangelical, aimed to encourage people to read *Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa*, a work whose purport is … nontrinitarian[26].

Bazylik distributes the laudatory accents slightly differently in *Do Jego Książęcej Miłości Pana Mikołaja Radziwiła, wojewody wileńskiego etc.*, for the addressee of the work published within the editorial framework of *Wtore księgi Łukasza świętego* is not the departed Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł but his cousin, Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł. He soon proved not to favour the adherents of nontrinitarianism in Lithuania, similarly to other members of the Radziwiłł family – out of the entire clan, it was only the chancellor

[19] 'We are not afraid of the foes' acerbity'.
[20] '[Was] the finger of the Son of God whom he loved / And whose orders will be mirrored'.
[21] 'many a heart smote with dour grief'.
[22] 'holy lady'.
[23] 'two holy people'.
[24] 'like May flowers'.
[25] 'saint'.
[26] The theological issues associated with *Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa* are extensively discussed by the distinguished researcher of nontrinitarianism Konrad Górski (1949, pp. 129-140).

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, departed in 1565, whose attitude towards the Polish Brethren could be described by the term 'mecenat wyznaniowy'[27] (Tazbir, 1993, p. 128). Meanwhile, in June 1566, Falconius and the Brest printer seeked to secure the patronage of Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł over the Lithuanian adherents of nontrinitarianism.

The dedication letter of the Arian theologian constitutes an important context of Bazylik's poem. Falconius recommends his work 'w łaskawą obronę Radziwiłowskiej wierności'[28] and presents himself as head of the religious community ('Falconius z bracią swą'[29]). It is a group at risk of religious persecution, in need of spiritual strengthening (provided by *Wtore ksiegi Łukasza świętego*), and institutional aid (to be granted by Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł). Hence the theologian spins parallels between the young Christian Church, described in the Acts of the Apostles, and the (not directly named) Polish Brethren from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Siwiec, 2016, p. 69). They sought patronage from the young sons of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł as well, which is evidenced by the anonymous poem *Do Ich Miłości książąt, Pana Mikołaja i Krzysztofa Radziwiłów* (To Their Graces the Princes Mikołaj and Krzysztof Radziwiłł) printed directly following Bazylik's panegyric.

This time, the poem addressed to Radziwiłł is twice as long as the one from six months earlier, and its structure is also more sophisticated. It opens with an extensive *proemium*:

> Jest rzecz osobna, gdy kto zacność domu swego
> Ozdobi uczynkami. A snadź nic lepszego
> Nie masz, bo nie sfolguje śmierć żadnej zacności
> A znamienite sprawy dochodzą wieczności,
> Bo człowieka po śmierci prawie ożywają,
> A o nim wieczną pamięć potomkom dawają.
> Wszkeśmy starodawnych ludzi tych nie znali,
> Co wiecznej sławy swemi sprawami dostali,
> Jedni słynąc dowcipem, drudzy naukami,
> A drudzy rycerskiemi zacnemi sprawami.
> Ty rzeczy zacnych domow sławę pomnażają,
> Niższego stanu ludzi z nimi zrownywają.[30]

[27] 'religious patronage'.
[28] 'to the kind protection of the Radziwiłł fidelity'.
[29] 'Falconius and his brethren'.
[30] 'To adorn one's house's nobleness with acts is separate.
And surely than to do so there is nothing better,
For death, when it comes, it shall spare no nobility
And yet illustrious deeds, they do reach eternity,
They nearly give one life again, once the life is gone,
And bring undying memory of one to those to come.
For we did not know at all the people of days old'.
Whose many deeds an everlasting glory them brought,

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

(lines 1–12)

In the poem, Bazylik developed the concept from the previous piece: ‘zacność domu’[31] is adorned by ‘uczynki’[32] (here, once again, the poem echoes Horace’s odes on real nobility) but also ‘zacne sprawy’[33] undertaken by a person ‘niższego stanu’[34] allows the house to become equal with the high-born. This idea is the result of the Renaissance elitism of the citizens of ‘rzeczpospolita literacka’[35], but it is possible to think that, in the context of the theological work of Falconius, Bazylik is expressing the democratism characteristic of the Polish Brethren. The poet also reminds ‘the reader about the topos ‘zabrakło Homera’[36], alluding that he – the grantor of immortal glory on earth – will not forget the excellent acts which are expected of the current voivode of Vilnius.

However, for a person who waits ‘potym w grobie z sławą dnia sądnego’[37] (line 18) more important than ‘ona sława wieczna’[38] (line 24) – life in heaven. The reference to the *vanitas* topos is justified in the subsequent part of the poem, in which the poet reminds Mikołaj ‘the Red’ Radziwiłł about the sudden death of his cousin, a death which cut short the work of Mikołaj ‘the Black’ Radziwiłł. This work was, as the poet allusively indicates in the subsequent part of the poem, the propagation of nontrinitarianism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The praise of the addressee’s acts (*res gestae*) is perfunctory, which may be surprising – after all, Mikołaj ‘the Red’ Radziwiłł was a distinguished commander during the wars with Moscow. Bazylik stated about the prince: ‘na zacności / Nic nie schodzi i w wielu rzeczach na biegłości’[39] (lines 25-26), according to him, the prince’s achievements are known by ‘każdy nieomylnie’[40] (w. 28). More important for the poet is the future activity of Mikołaj ‘the Red’ Radziwiłł, ‘Gdy się już tak ku Bogu pilnie mieć poczynasz’[41] (line 30), which he attemps to direct to the area of religious activity.

Some are famed for science, others amused with their wit,
Some held glory from many a knightly noble deed.
Thou go and multiply the things of houses noble,
And make with them even the people who are lower’.

31 ‘the house’s nobleness’.
32 ‘acts’.
33 ‘noble deeds’.
34 ‘of a lower status’.
35 the ‘literary Republic’.
36 ‘Homer is gone’.
37 ‘afterwards in the grave with the glory of the doomsday’.
38 ‘it, the eternal glory’.
39 ‘in respectability / Does not lack and in many things in proficiency’.
40 ‘everyone infallibly’.
41 ‘When you are beginning to tend towards God so intently’ This expression is ambiguous. It may indicate the religious activity of the patrician, or some kind of health problems.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

The praise of Radziwiłł becomes an incentive (exhortation) – in order to act, Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł is first to look into the mirror of the acts of his departed cousin:

Że, acz świętej pamięci Pana brata twego,
Wziął nam już do żywota onego wiecznego,
Dał cię na jego miejsce, abyś jego chwały
Pomnażał, a przy jego słowie tak był stały
Jako i on. A wspomnij, jak zacne klejnoty
W domu swoim zostawił, chcąc rozmnożyć cnoty,
Które mu i po śmierci sławy przymnażają,
Bo go ci co je widzą, często wspominają.
Dokończ jego umysłu, który śmierć przerwała,
Bo mu tak wielkiej chuci ku Bogu zaźrzała.
Ku tym twym zacnym sprawom, dla ktorych tak słyniesz,
Przydaj też chuć ku Bogu, a tak nie zaginiesz[42].
(lines 33–44)

The poet emphatically asks Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł to finish the work started by his cousin, the deeds to which his death put an end. This, of course, refers to the consolidation of nontrinitarianism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The prince should take the place of the departed patron of the Polish Brethren and propagate this religious belief with enthusiasm ('wielka chuć'[43]). A frantic tone resounds in the exhortation: already ('teraz czas'[44], line 52) Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł must fight the adversaries of Christ ('Zastaw się przeciwnikom mocnie Syna jego'[45], line 45) because death is jealous of those who increase God's glory, as the example of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radzwiłł proves. The encouragement to work for the benefit of the adherents of nontrinitarianism – the prince's reward was to be heaven – are mixed with monitions

[42] 'That, although thy brother, the late lamented Master,
He had already taken to life everlasting,
In his place, it is thee that he now has to us brought
To multiply his glory and stand right by his word,
As he used to. Recall how noble gems in his house
he left, with the longing to multiply the virtues
Which, after his death as well, his glory does increase,
For one oft remembers him when it is them one sees.
Do finish the mind of his which death has thus cut short
Because it came to envy his mighty zeal for God.
To thy noble deeds, that which fame thou of all the most
Also, add a zeal for God and thou shall not be lost'.

[43] 'mighty zeal'.

[44] 'now is the time'.

[45] 'oppose strongly the enemies of his Son'.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

of death. 'Bo po śmierci już pozno'[46] (line 53) – it is with this chord in the spirit of *vanitas* that the poet ends his appeal to Radziwiłł.

In the poem, 'dominuje […] ton zdecydowanej prośby o wsparcie, której nadano rangę niemal moralnego obowiązku'[47] (Siwiec, 2016, p. 69). The eschatological themes surely stem from the persecution of the Polish Brethren – the followers of Falconius. However, making Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł the spiritual heir of the chancellor, Bazylik committed an indiscretion by reducing the future activity of the poem's addressee exclusively to the imitation of the departed and by ostentatiously, in turn, scaring him with death and promising him heaven.

***

Both poems by Cyprian Bazylik dedicated to the Radziwiłłs – 'the Black' and 'the Red' – say more about their author and the situation of the Lithuanian adherents of nontrinitarianism than about their addressees. In *Na herby Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego*, the poet appears as a faithful servant of the house of the Radziwiłł, cultivates the memory of the departed 'by kwiatek w południe'[48] (line 15) Elżbieta Szydłowiecka with marked admiration, and tendentiously creates the image of Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł as an orthodox Calvinist. The faithfulness of the 'napowolnieszy sługa'[49], as Bazylik signs his name, nevertheless comes with a price, which is to be the help of Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł given to the adherents of nontrinitarianism during the oppression which they will suffer after the death of their patron and cousin of the current voivode of Vilnius. It is especially the latter of the two discussed poems that constitutes an interesting and up until now unexploited source of knowledge on the situation of the Polish Brethren in Lithuania in 1566, and thus at the time of a peculiar interregnum in the religious patronage held over them by Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł and, beginning in 1570, by Jan Kiszka (Tazbir, 1986, pp. 355-363). Above all, Bazylik appears in them as an ardent supporter of the teaching of Tomasz Falconius. However, the fascination with nontrinitarianism proved to be fleeting, since already in 1567, the Brest printer appeared before the readers as the translator and compiler of the monumental Calvinist martyrology.

Translated into English by Lingua Lab s.c.

[46] 'For after death, it is too late'.

[47] 'dominates … a tone of emphatic request for support, request which was given the rank of an almost moral duty'.

[48] 'as if a blossom at noon'.

[49] 'your humble servant'.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

References

Bieńkowski, Tadeusz. (1980). Panegiryk a życie literackie w Polsce XVI i XVII w. In: Hanna Dziechcińska (ed.). *Z dziejów życia literackiego w Polsce XVI i XVII wieku* (pp. 183–196). Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Bruchnalski, Wilhelm. (1975). Z dziejów panegiryku w Polsce. In: Wilhelm Bruchnalski, *Między średniowieczem a romantyzmem* (pp. 180–217). Warszawa: PWN.

Chemperek, Dariusz. (2016). Jana Kochanowskiego epigramaty o „pszczołach budziwiskich" i radziwiłłowska elegia (III 9). Prolegomena do badań nad środowiskiem kulturalnym Mikołaja Radziwiłła Czarnego. *Roczniki Humanistyczne*, 64(1), pp. 153–172.

Dziechcińska, Hanna. (1980). Zabawa jako komponent życia literackiego. In: Hanna Dziechcińska (red.). *Z dziejów życia literackiego w Polsce XVI i XVII wieku* (pp. 80–92). Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Dziechcińska, Hanna. (1990). Panegiryk. In: Teresa Michałowska (ed.). *Słownik literatury staropolskiej* (pp. 544–547). Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Górski, Konrad. (1949). *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrynitarskiej XVI w*. Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności.

Hanusiewicz-Lavallee, Mirosława. (2017). *W stronę Albionu. Studia z dziejów polsko – brytyjskich związków literackich w dobie wczesnonowożytnej*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.

Ivanova, Lûdmila. (2015). Mikalaj Radzivil Čorny i pačatkovy ètap rèfarmacyi ŭ VKL. In: Zmicer Âackevič (ed.). *Mukalaj Radzivil Čorny (1515–1565 gg.): Palityk, dyplamat, mecènat* (pp. 92–98). Minsk: NGKMZ "Nâsviž" 2016. [Іванова, Людміла. (2015). *Мікалай Радзівіл Чорны і пачатковы этап рэфармацыі ў ВКЛ.* У: Зміцер Яцкевіч (рэд.). *Мікалай Радзівіл Чорны (1515–1565 гг.): Палітык, дыпламат, мецэнат* (с. 92–98). Мінск: НГКМЗ "Нясвіж" 2016].

Jasnowski, Józef. (1939). *Mikołaj Czarny Radziwiłł (1515-1566). Kanclerz i marszałek ziemski Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, wojewoda wileński*. Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie.

Kavalëŭ, Sârgej. (2010). *Šmatmoŭnaâ paèzìâ Vâlikaga Knâstva Litoŭskaga èpohi Rènecansu*. Mìnsk: Knigazbor. [Кавалёў, Сяргей. (2010). *Шматмоўная паэзія Вялікага Княства Літоўскага эпохі Рэнесансу*. Мінск: Кнігазбор].

Kawecka-Gryczowa, Alodia; Korotajowa, Krystyna; Krajewski, Wojciech (eds.). (1959). *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku*. Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Kot, Stanisław. (1935). Bazylik Cyprian. In: Władysław Konopczyński (ed.). *Polski słownik biograficzny* (p. 375). Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności.

Kot, Stanisław. (1956). Nieznany poeta polski z XVI wieku. *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*, 25(1), pp. 113–150.

Mączak, Antoni. (1994). *Klientela. Nieformalne systemy władzy w Polsce i w Europie XVI–XVIII w*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.

Morawska, Katarzyna. (1994). *Renesans 1500–1600*. Warszawa: Sutkowski Edition Warsaw.

Niedźwiedź, Jakub. (2003). *Nieśmiertelne teatra sławy. Teoria i praktyka twórczości panegirycznej na Litwie w XVII–XVIII w.* Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Bia?orutenistyczne **http://bialorutenistyka.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 00:28:28

Ocieczek, Renarda. (2002). *Studia o dawnej książce*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Gnome.

Oszczęda, Aleksandra. (2014). Wstęp. In: Lenart Gnoiński. *Łzy smutne*. Warszawa: Sub Lupa.

Proot, Goran. (2016). Survival Factors of Seventeenth-Century Hand-Press Books Published in the Southern Netherlands: The Importance of Sheet Counts, Sammelbande and the Role of Institutional Collections. In: Flavia Bruni, Andrew Pettergee (eds.) *Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*, (pp. 160–201). Leiden-Boston: Brill.

Siwiec, Justyna. (2016). Brzeskie potomstwo Biblii radziwiłłowskiej: „Sprawy i słowa Jezusa Krystusa" oraz „Wtore księgi Łukasza świętego" Tomasza Falconiusa. *Tematy i Konteksty*, 6 (11), pp. 60–72.

Tazbir, Janusz. (1986). Jan Kiszka – ariański magnat. In: Tazbir, Janusz. *Świat panów Pasków. Eseje i studia* (pp. 355–363). Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie.

Tazbir, Janusz. (1993). Bracia polscy w służbie u Radziwiłłów. In: Tazbir, Janusz. *Reformacja w Polsce. Szkice o ludziach i doktrynie* (pp. 128–147). Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza.

Topolska, Maria Barbara. (1984). *Czytelnik i książka w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w dobie Renesansu i Baroku*. Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Walecki, Wacław. (2018). O roku ów! Obraz ruchu wydawniczego sprzed czterystu laty (1618) według Elektronicznej bazy Bibliografii Estreichera (EBBE) i dalsze perspektywy badań. In: Pawlak, Wacław; Hanusiewicz-Lavallee, Mirosława (red.) *„Sława z dowcipu sama wiecznie stoi..." Prace ofiarowane pani Profesor Alinie Nowickiej-Jeżowej z okazji pięćdziesięciolecia pracy naukowej* (pp. 307–314). Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.

Article submission date: 09 January 2020