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Honouring Ecclesiastical Dignitaries in Poetry – Jacob Masen and His Collection of Poems for the Nuncio Fabius Chigi

HONOROWANIE DOSTOJNIKÓW KOŚCIELNYCH W POEZJI – JAKUB MASEN
I JEGO KOLEKCJA WIERSZY DLA NUNCJUSZA FABIUSZA CHIGIEGO

Streszczenie

Niemiecki jezuita Jakub Masen opublikował w 1650 roku traktat „Zwierciadło obrazów tajemnej prawdy” (*Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*), do którego dołączył zbiór panegirycznych wierszy o wspólnym tytule „Rok jubileuszowy z symboli” (*Jubilaeus symbolicus*). Poeta dedykował 50 utworów nuncjuszowi apostołskiemu Fabiuszowi Chigiemu, późniejszemu papieżowi Aleksandrowi VII. Artykuł przedstawia ten szczególnie zbiór wierszy, które stanowią świadectwo dawnego zwyczaju honorowania dostojników kościelnych w poezji w celu ich upamiętnienia. Kwestie ściśle literaturoznawcze zostały pominięte, w opracowaniu omówione natomiast zostają okoliczności powstania wierszy i metoda, jaką posłużył się autor w celu uwydatnienia walorów osobistych i osiągnięć nuncjusza, z uwzględnieniem środków formalnych i treściowych wykorzystanych przez pisarza.

Słowa kluczowe: Jakub Masen, Fabiusz Chigi, papież Alexander VII, „Zwierciadło obrazów tajemnej prawdy”, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, „Rok jubileuszowy z symboli” *Jubilaeus symbolicus*, honorowanie dostojników kościelnych, poezja barokowa

Introduction

Poetry makes events perpetual – this belief of ancient provenance has been perpetuated in Western culture. As the authors of textbooks on Latin literature emphasise, it was shared by the consul Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, who in 189 BC took the poet Quintus Ennius with him on an expedition to Greek Aetolia, precisely

in order to celebrate in verse the conquests of war.¹ The thought also resonates with Horace, who, speaking of his own literary output, states that it has given him a more lasting monument than bronze.² Over the course of time, a considerable body of writing can be identified which demonstrates the vitality of a message from antiquity. They are confirmed in particular by the genologically diverse ephemeral prints that were prepared for family celebrations and the same type of writings documenting state and religious events. The patronage of the Catholic Church, extending also to the field of literary creativity, pushed writers to produce laudations of their patrons in order to commemorate them. An example of such a work is the poetic collection “Jubilee Year of Symbols” (*Jubilaeus symbolicus*), included in a larger treatise entitled “Mirror of Images of Secret Truth” (*Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*).³ The purpose of this article is to present this collection of works, which the German Jesuit Jacob Masen (1606–1681),⁴ an eminent scribal scholar and poet, prepared in the mid-17th century for the apostolic nuncio Fabius Chigi, later Pope Alexander VII. The epigrammatic collection, which the author himself calls an “emblematic work” (*opus emblematicum*),⁵ applied the norms of the concept known as *imago figurata*. This issue of a literary nature was discussed in a separate study recently published in “Roczniki Humanistyczne.”⁶ In the present

- 1 L. Rychlewska, *Dzieje literatury rzymskiej*, Wrocław 2005, p. 31; M. Cytowska, H. Szelest, L. Rychlewska, *Literatura rzymska. Okres archaiczny*, Warszawa 1996, p. 154; M. Brożek, *Historia literatury łacińskiej w starożytności*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1976, p. 53.
- 2 Horatius, *Carmina* III, 30, 1.
- 3 J. Masenius, *Jubilaeus symbolicus primus symbolorum numerus quinquagenus, Ex insignibus Illustrissimi D. Legati, Fabii Chisii*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* [...], Sumptibus J.A. Kinchii, Coloniae Ubiorum 1650, pp. 1–13.
- 4 For a biography and details of the writer’s work, see the items: M.C. Halbig, *The Jesuit Theater of Jacob Masen* [...], New York–Bern–Frankfurt am Main–Paris 1987, pp. 1–8; M. Gross, *Jakob Masen (1606–1681)*, in: *Für Gott und die Menschen. Die Gesellschaft Jesu und ihr Wirken im Erzbistum Trier*, Mainz 1991, pp. 309–312; H. Jaumann, *Handbuch Gelehrtenkultur der Frühen Neuzeiten*, vol. 1 (Bio-bibliographisches Repertorium), Berlin–New York 2004, p. 439; V. Meid, *Die deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter des Brock* [...], München 2009, pp. 353–356; J. Nowaszczuk, *Wprowadzenie do lektury*, in: J. Masen SJ, *De Christo nato. Epigramaty na Boże Narodzenie*, trans. and compl. J. Nowaszczuk, Szczecin 2020, pp. 9–23. The periodical “Colloquia Theologica Ottoniana” has published articles outlining some elements of Jacob Masen’s writing workshop, cf. J. Nowaszczuk, *Sposoby opracowania akuminu. Jakub Masen i jego cykl epigramatyczny „De Iuda proditore”*, „Colloquia Theologica Ottoniana” 1 (2013), pp. 107–132; *Entymemat jako struktura epigramatyczna. Koncepcja Jakuba Masena*, „Colloquia Theologica Ottoniana” 1 (2015), pp. 107–124.
- 5 J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum figuratarum. Introductio Lectoris*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1650), p. †† recto.
- 6 J. Nowaszczuk, *Przyczynek do dziejów obrazowania – Jubilaeus symbolicus dla nuncjusza Fabiusza Chigiego*, „Roczniki Humanistyczne” 71 (2023) 3, pp. 139–156.

study, the object of interest is the method used by the writer in creating the praise of the hierarch. The circumstances of its creation and the structure of the collection will also be presented, along with translations of selected works.

1. Inspiration

It is possible to argue that, when Jacob Masen undertook to prepare panegyric poems for the representative of the Holy See in his homeland, he did so neither out of obligation nor out of a desire to flatter the nuncio. As the research of Nikolaus Scheid and Barbara Bauer shows, the Jesuit knew the Italian hierarch personally and was even friends with him.⁷ While in Chigi's entourage, he witnessed the unique event of the signing of the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War.⁸ Although the role of the Vatican legate in the ratification of the treaty is not clear-cut in John Norman Davidson Kelly's assessment, and Peter Arnold's study portrays the peace negotiations as a battle between the parties for their own interests, Masen confesses in the dedication letter at the beginning of the work that the actions taken by the nuncio to end the conflict in Europe and his lifestyle were admired by himself.⁹ What is more, they were also appreciated by those in the German Rhineland who were not sympathetic to Catholicism.¹⁰ Even his greatest enemies, writes Masen, changed their attitude towards the hierarch, not finding in his behaviour any confirmation of the prejudices they held.¹¹ This statement opens an extensive panegyric argument in the dedication letter about the personal qualities of Bishop Fabius Chigi.¹² Ultimately, therefore, it can be assumed that the idea of preparing a collection of poems stemmed from the poet's sincere admiration for the nuncio's personality and conduct, and that the "Jubilee Year of Symbols" itself is a laudatory work.

The collection consists of fifty works. Their number, the poet explains, refers to the fact that 1650 was a jubilee year celebrated in the Catholic Church, a fact

7 B. Bauer, *Masen Jakob*, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 16, Berlin 1990, p. 353.

8 The course of negotiation was presented in: D. Croxton, *Westphalia. The Last Christian Peace*, Palgrave Macmillan 2013, pp. 191–330.

9 J.N.D. Kelly, *Encyklopedia papieży*, trans. and compl. T. Szafranski, Warszawa 2006, pp. 395–396; P.A. Heuser, *The Peace Congress of Westphalia 1643-1649 as a Sphere of Conflict and Rivalries*, in: M. Laureys, J. Kraye, D.A. Lines (eds.), *Spheres of Conflict and Rivalries in Renaissance Europe*, Bonn 2020, pp. 257–272.

10 J. Masenius, *Illustriss^{mo} et Reverendiss^{mo} Domino D. Fabio Chisio [...] (Epistola dedicatoria)*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1650), p. †5 recto – verso.

11 Ibidem, p. †5 verso.

12 Ibidem, pp. †5 verso – †8 recto.

noted in the gloss preceding the author's name even on the title page of the first editions of the work.¹³ The poems themselves represent a certain genological peculiarity.¹⁴ Significantly, they correlate with the plastic elements in the opening drawing of the “Mirror of images of secret truth.” It is easy to determine which image relates to a particular poem, as the chalcography includes numbers – as can be seen in the figure below – which are the numbers of the individual works in the collection.



Figure 1. Chalcography opening the “Mirror of images of secret truth” in the 1681 edition

Source: J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, Sumptibus Viduae et Haeridum J.A. Kinchii, Coloniae Agrippinae 1681, title page. The copy is from a volume with the reference L.r.r.o.242 held in the Staatsbibliothek Bamberg.

¹³ Cf. *ibidem*, title page.

¹⁴ J. Nowaszczuk, *Przyczynek do dziejów obrazowania...*, p. 151.

The starting point for the laudatory content is, in each poem, one of the four artistic elements that make up the Nuncio's family coat of arms: that is, the image of an eagle, an oak tree, mountains, and stars.



Figure 2. The coat of arms of Bishop Fabius Chigi in an engraving published in 1664




Source: J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, Apud J.A. Kinchium, Coloniae 1664, title page. The copy is from an old print with the reference L.r.r.o.241 in the Staatsbibliothek Bamberg.

By linking the pieces into groups – each relating to one coat-of-arms attribute – the entire collection of “A Jubilee Year of Symbols” breaks down into four clearly delineated parts. The solution in this form is unconventional. Generally, works inspired by heraldry refer to the family emblem in its entirety and represent a well-known genre over the centuries – the stema. Masen distances himself from this form, selecting only individual elements from the coat of arms and even presenting each of them not in one, but in several lines.

2. Two cycles of thirteen works each

Jesuit opens the poetic collection for Bishop Chigi with studies inspired by the symbol of the eagle. There are thirteen in total. The same number of poems comprise the batch dedicated to the oak tree. The other two series have twelve pieces each. In all of them, the poet uses the same composition. The number of the piece is followed by a phrase, which replaces a plastic representation, the purpose of which is to create a corresponding image in the reader's mind. Significantly,

the texts do not create static visions, but show the individual characters taken from the coat of arms in action. Below the description, in each case, is a lemma written in capital letters. The whole is completed by an epigram, which in all cases comprises three distichs in elegiac metre.

Work number and phrase substituting the image	Lemma	Excerpt from the engraving at the beginning of the book correlating with the text ^a
I. An eagle looks into the sun (<i>Aquila solem intuetur</i>) ^b	UNTO THEE LIFT I UP. Ps 123 (<i>AD TE LEVAVI. Psal. 122</i>) ^c	 An engraving showing an eagle perched on a branch, looking upwards towards a sun with radiating rays. The scene is framed by decorative scrollwork.
II. Eagle exposes chicks to the sun (<i>Aquila pullos ad solem explorat</i>) ^d	OUT OF THE LIGHT (<i>EX LUCE DECUS</i>) ^e	 An engraving showing an eagle with its wings spread, exposing several chicks to the sun's rays. The scene is framed by decorative scrollwork.
III. Aging, the eagle, having shed its feathers in the sun, renews itself, regaining its youthful strength (<i>Aquila senescens, pennis in sole excussis, sese innovat, iuvenili vigore revocato</i>) ^f	THESE LOSSES HELP (<i>HAEC DAMNA IUVENT</i>) ^g	 An engraving showing an eagle with its wings spread, shedding feathers. The scene is framed by decorative scrollwork.

^a The illustrations included here and in the following discussion are – unless otherwise stated – from the 1681 edition of the work as made available by the Staatsbibliothek Bamberg. The same edition disseminated by the Zentralbibliothek Zürich can be found online, cf. <https://www.e-rara.ch/zuz/content/pageview/13484331> [accessed: 21.07.2023].

^b J. Masenius, *Jubilaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1681), p. 15.

^c Ibidem. As the author himself points out, the words were taken from the Book of Psalms. The entire phrase reads: *Ad te levavi oculos meos, qui habitas in caelis* (Psal. 123,1), which the “Millennium Bible” captures in the words “To you I lift up my eyes, who dwells in heaven” (Ps. 123:1).

^d J. Masenius, *Jubilaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1681), p. 15.

- ^e Ibidem. In the original edition, the lemma appears here as “A lineage out of light.” (*Ex luce genus*), cf. J. Masenius, *Jubiliaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1650), p. 1.
- ^f J. Masenius, *Jubiliaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1681), p. 15.
- ^g Ibidem. In the first edition, the maxim takes the form of the phrase “These losses help.” (*Haec damna iuvabunt*), cf. J. Masenius, *Jubiliaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1650), p. 1.

The pieces in the individual parts of the collection, while dealing with similar themes, form smaller wholes. This is the case, for example, in the first three studies, in which the poet juxtaposes an eagle and the sun.

The copperplate illustration, or the impression that arises in the reader’s mind, is linked to the lemmata through the poem, which explains the meaning of each gnome. In the construction of the collection as a whole, one can notice the Jesuit’s predilection for the use of opposites (*opposita*). This is evident even within the three poems referred to. After introducing the protagonist in the first of them, the author immediately goes on to show him at two extremes of life, in his youth and old age. The juxtaposition of contradictions is used by Masen throughout the collection. For example, in the fourth emblem, he shows an eagle nesting on a rock, only to immediately unfold a vision of the bird seated in a tree.¹⁵ He then juxtaposes an eagle sitting on a cliff and an eagle in flight,¹⁶ and finally overcoming a storm and stretching only one wing to fly.¹⁷ He also juxtaposes the eagle with a deer, which is a larger animal than the eagle, and with other birds, which are smaller.¹⁸ In the last pair, he juxtaposes the poetic subject “we,” attributing to it the properties of chicks, with the full grandeur represented by the Bishop Chigi, hidden behind the king of birds with outstretched wings.¹⁹

In the series based on the oak tree, the poet chooses his themes much more freely. To a certain extent, however, he repeats the pattern used earlier, linking the first three poems thematically around the theme of the cross,²⁰ and in the later

- 15 Cf. J. Masenius, *IV. Aquila in petra nidificans*, in: *Jubiliaeus symbolicus* (ed. 1681), p. 16; *V. Nidus Aquilae in quercu*, *ibidem*.
- 16 J. Masenius, *VI. Aquila in rupe longe dissita cognoscit*, *ibidem*; *VII. Aquila recta in caelum fertur*, *ibidem*.
- 17 J. Masenius, *VIII. Aquila per nubes et fulmina illaesa transit*, *ibidem*, p. 17; *IX. Aquila unam alam expandens*, *ibidem*.
- 18 J. Masenius, *X. Aquila cervi cornibus insidens excusso alarum pulvere illum excaecat et subigit*, *ibidem*; *XI. Aquila inter aves minores*, *ibidem*.
- 19 J. Masenius, *XII. Aquila ad volandum provocat pullos in nido*, *ibidem*, pp. 17–18; *XIII. Aquila alam utramque sublevans*, *ibidem*, p. 18.
- 20 J. Masenius, *XIV. Quercus gentilitia ramos in Crucis speciem decussatos prae se ferens*, *ibidem*; *XV. Quercus tenerae ramos Genius in Crucis formam inflectit*, *ibidem*; *XVI. Rami quercus praeputantur, quattuor remanentibus*, *ibidem*.

part, creating pairs of poems linked by a selected main idea.²¹ In this part of the collection, he more readily reaches for content relating to ancient beliefs and customs. An example of this is work 25:

XXV. Ex quernis ramis, inflexa a bono Genio corona civica

VINCENTI. Apoc. 2.

Querna triumphales foliis ambire capillos,

Ausoniis quondam visa corona fuit.

Magnus honor civi servato debitus olim:

Quot tibi debentur Maxime sarta FABII!²²

Mille tibi cives debentur, mille coronae,

Has dare mortalis dextera nulla potest.²³

XXV. A citizen's wreath woven by a good spirit²⁴ from oak branches

FOR A VICTOR Rev. 2.²⁵

In the Romans, an oak crown was once seen to

During the triumph entwines the leaves on their heads.

Greatly valued was the snatching of the companion from the battle of confusion.

Magnificent Fabio, how many bundles must be given to thee!

- 21 Another theme is, for example, acorns, cf. J. Masenius, *XVII. Glandes pertica de manu excutuntur*, *ibidem*, p. 19; *XVIII. Quercus sub qua glandes deciduae iacent*, *ibidem*. The last four poems in the set *Quercus symbolica Chisiorum* answer the question of what can be made from an oak tree. Two pieces show the tree as a building material, cf. J. Masenius, *XXIII. Clava Herculea ex quercu facta, ut Pierius l. 52*, *ibidem*, p. 20; *XXIV. Quercus excitaie columnis trabibusque palatii aptantur*, *ibidem*, pp. 20–21. The latter two speak of the use of oak in the realm of custom and religion, cf. J. Masenius, *XXV. Ex quernis ramis, inflexa a bono Genio corona civica*, *ibidem*, p. 21; *XXVI. Ara quernis ornata frondibus, ut Rhaeae, olim solita est*, *ibidem*. In the rest of the work, the focus is on demonstrating the power of the oak tree. First, the *ad intra* and *ad extra* scopes are confronted in the presentation of what natural phenomena affect the tree and what, according to old beliefs, the oak forest tells about the external world, cf. J. Masenius, *XIX. Quercum pluvia irrigat, et fulmina lacerant*, *ibidem*, p. 19; *XX. Lucus ex quercubus oracula olim fundentibus*, *ibidem*, pp. 19–20. Another juxtaposition *per opposita* is the confrontation between the dynamic action of the wind on the crown of the tree and the static, unshakable embedding of the tree's roots in the rocky ground, cf. J. Masenius, *XXI. Quercus ventis concussa*, *ibidem*, p. 20; *XXII. Quercus in senis Chisiorum collibus*, *ibidem*.
- 22 The square capital has been retained in the quote as per the original.
- 23 J. Masenius. *XXV. Ex quernis ramis*, in: *Jubilaeus symbolicus* (ed. 1681), p. 21.
- 24 Literally, "good genius".
- 25 The word "Victor" occurs four times in the Polish translation of the second chapter of the Book of Revelation, cf. Rev. 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26. In the Latin version the term *Vincenti* appears in the "Biblia Sacra Vulgata" only in Rev. 2:7 and 2:17. In the other two places the phrase *qui vicerit* is used (cf. Rev. 2:11; 2:26).

With a thousand wreaths of men a thousand, each is your debtor,
That a mortal hand should weave them – a vain effort.²⁶

As in other cases, the piece correlates with the chalcography passage in the introduction of the work, matching the content of the poetic development.²⁷



Figure 3. Good Genius with a wreath. Fragment of an engraving from the title page of the 1681 edition

Source: J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, Sumptibus Viduae et Haeredum J.A. Kinchii, Coloniae Agrippinae 1681, title page. The copy is from a volume with the reference L.r.r.o.242 held in the Staatsbibliothek Bamberg.

26 The author of the article prepared an Polish and metrical translation of this poem. See below:

XXV. Wieniec obywatela uwity przez dobrego ducha z dębowych gałązek
ZWYCIĘZCY. Ap 2

U Rzymian widziano niegdyś, jak korona dębowa
Podczas triumfu oplata liśćmi włosy na głowach.
Wielce ceniono wyrwanie drucha z bitwy zamętu.
Wspaniały Fabio, ileż trzeba dać tobie pęków!
Z tysiącem wieńców ludzi tysiąc, każdy to twój dłużnik,
Żeby śmiertelna ręka je uwiła – trud próżny.

27 Cf. footnote 17.

The whole thing was prepared by a reference to the ancient custom of wreathing people and statues. In the further derivation of the treatise, Masen himself explains that during the Olympics, bouquets of braided olive branches were given to the winners.²⁸ Throughout the Roman Empire, the laurel wreath was known in particular. The Greeks awarded one under the name “Delphic laurel” (*laurus Delphica*) as a prize in art competitions at the shrine of Apollo. Among the Romans, the Cyprian variety of the plant (*laurus Cypria*) was more readily used.²⁹ The Jesuit, however, refers to an oak wreath called the “civic wreath” (*corona civica*). This type was only used in one case, namely when a Roman citizen offered it to another citizen for saving his life on the battlefield.³⁰ It was therefore a very personal way of expressing gratitude and, at the same time, a testimony to the exceptional courage of the soldier who received the reward. The Jesuit devotes three lines of text in his work to summarising this information. The next three speak of the addressee of the entire collection, Nuncio Chigi. Acknowledging that a thousand people should offer him a citizen’s wreath, the poet suggests that the hierarch saved a considerable number of people from death. A reference can be made here to the Peace of Westphalia, already mentioned, in the negotiation of which the bishop participated as a representative of the Pope. Thanks to the pact, hostilities ceased and many lives were saved. Masen does not stop at this praise, but develops the laudation. Using amplification, he moves the matter from the plane of interpersonal customs to the realm of the extraterrestrial. Fabius Chigi’s merits were so great, he stresses, that the temporal reward is too insignificant. The wreath should therefore be prepared in the supernatural world by a good Genius. Who is behind this phrase, which comes from mythological staffage, is explained by the painting and the rest of the book. The engraving depicts someone in human form with wings, thus the most common image of an angel. In turn, the author himself states:

28 J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1681), p. 421.

29 N. Perottus, *Cornucopiae seu Latinae Linguae Commentarii Locupletissimi*, V. Curio, Basileae 1532, pp. 586–587; J.J. Hofmann, *Lexicon Universale Historiam Sacram et Profanam [...] Explanans*, Apud J. Hackium, C. Boutesteyn, P. Vander AA, et J. Luchtman, vol. 2, Lugduni Batavorum 1698, pp. 766–767.

30 J. Rosinus, *Antiquitatum Romanarum corpus absolutissimum*, Ex Typographia Blaviana, Amstelodami 1685, p. 751; J.B.G. Dumesnil, *Latin Synonyms [...]*, trans. J.M. Gosset, London 1809, pp. 189–190. Numerous testimonies in the field of civic crown literature are included in: J. Gottlob L. Ramshorn, *Dissertatio philologica de corona civica et laureis ante domum caesaris Augusti*, Dresdae 1800.

Genius Iovis et terrae filius habitus, significabat, veteribus daemonem vel malum, vel bonum, qui ideas ac imagines pro se quisque rerum persuasibilium obicerent.³¹

A Genius³² regarded as the son of Jupiter and Earth meant an evil or good deity³³ to the ancients, each spreading images and representations of suggestive things.

This phrase is accompanied by an explanation in the margin:

Angelus bonus vel malus.³⁴

Good or bad angel.

The assumption that it is God's messenger who prepares the wreath for the bishop explains both the engraving and the premise expressed in the work's heading. The lemma finally allows one to understand when the clergyman will receive his reward. The maxim seems to correspond in particular to the content of the apocalyptic "Letter to the Church in Smyrna," where it is said that for faithfulness to death, the reward will be the wreath of life, and damnation does not threaten the victor (Rev 2:10-11).

3. Works on crest mountains and stars

Several successive phases can be distinguished in the method of narration employed by the scholar in "The Jubilee Year from Symbols." The author starts with a presentation of interpersonal realities, in order to use the theme *per amplificationem* to praise the nuncio, and finally moves on to moral and supernatural issues. In this model, sometimes linked to a change of temporal plane, he reproduces more or less scrupulously in all the studies of the collection. It thus tells the story of what constitutes the heritage of the past, describes the present state of affairs, and foreshadows the future. This is also evident in this part of the collection, where he devotes twelve pieces each to the presentation of two more elements of the Chigi's family coat of arms, namely mountains and stars.

31 J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1714), p. 295.

32 The translation of the piece uses the 'good spirit' version.

33 Literally, "bad or good demon".

34 J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae* (ed. 1714), p. 295.

The essential points of the indicated structure are possessed by the epigram that opens the part “Symbolic mountains of the House of Chigi” (*Montes Chisiorum symbolici*), whose illustration in the introductory engraving are hills in stylised form, as can be seen below.³⁵



Figure 4. The heraldic mountains of the Chigi family. Fragment of an engraving on the title page of the 1681 edition

Source: J. Masenius, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, Sumptibus Viduae et Haeredum J.A. Kinchii, Coloniae Agrippinae 1681, title page. The copy is from a volume with the reference L.r.r.o.242 held in the Staatsbibliothek Bamberg.

The representation of the mountains coincides with that which appears in other heraldic studies, which can be confirmed by the illustration relating to the coat of arms of Pope Alexander VII in the work of Philip Juvarra.³⁶

³⁵ Cf. footnote 17.

³⁶ F. Juvarra, *Raccolta Di Targhe Fatte da Professori primari in Roma* [...], Apresso G.M. Salvioni, In Roma 1727, without pages.

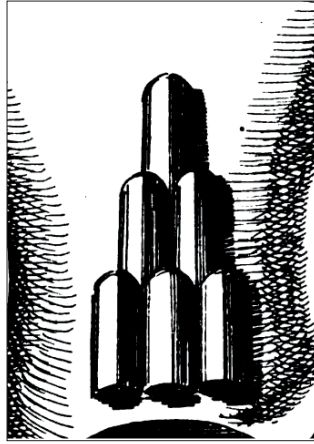


Figure 5. Coat of arms of Pope Alksander VII by Philip Juvarra

Source: F. Juvarra, *Raccolta Di Targhe Fatte da Professori primari in Roma* [...], apresso G.M. Salvioni, In Roma 1727, without pages.

The text of the work itself retains all the indicatives given earlier. It thus consists of a title, a lemma, and three distichs in elegiac metre:

XXVII. Montes sex gentilicii Chisiorum.

SEPTIMUS HIS DEEST

Quod senos tantum numerent insignia montes,
Forte tuis debes annumerare SENIS.³⁷

Sed tamen Ausonios postuquam colis, inclyte, Montes,
Quid modo septenos te numerare vetat?

Vaticanum addet:³⁸ aut si tibi fata negabunt:³⁹

Septimus ad senos iunctus Olympus erit.⁴⁰

³⁷ The distinction of the word appears in the original text presumably to distinguish the homonymous Latin words *senis* – ‘of six’ and *Senis* – ‘of Siena’.

³⁸ It should rather be *addes*. The last subject in the third person to which *addet* can refer is the interrogative ‘what’ (*quod*).

³⁹ In the first edition, the phrase reads “if Rome refuses this, fate will prepare you such glory” (*quod si Roma neget, decus hoc tibi fata parabunt*), indicating that the Jesuit was originally more restrained and by no means predicted the election of Fabius Chigi as pope. He later rewrote the content *per affirmationem*, emphasising the hierarch’s assumption of the Vatican seat. Cf. J. Masenius, *Jubilaeus symbolicus*, in: *Speculum imaginuj veritatis occultae* (ed. 1650), p. 7.

⁴⁰ J. Masenius, *XXVII. Montes sex gentilicii Chisiorum*, in: *Jubilaeus symbolicus* (ed. 1681), p. 21.

XXVII. Six mountains of the Chigi family

THEY ARE MISSING THE SEVENTH MOUNTAIN

Because the coat of arms only has six mountains when you add them up,
 Perhaps you should add something to those of Siena.
 And when you settled, O famous one, on the hills of Rome, I do not know,
 Does anything prevent you from counting seven.
 Throw in the Vatican, or – if fate gets in the way of luck –
 Olympus as the seventh one will join those six.⁴¹

In the first two lines, the Jesuit speaks of the family coat of arms and the hierarch's hometown, Siena. In the following lines, he outlines the contemporary state of affairs, and in the last line – again using amplification – he transcends the boundaries of the material world. There is also a motif taken from mythology, namely Olympus as a place believed by the Greeks to be the seat of the gods. As in the case of the genius, Masen uses the concept not in its original sense, but as a synonym for the supernatural realm of God. In confirmation, one can cite the opinion of the writer himself, who adds a gloss under "Mount Olympus" and explains that under this term "what is to be seen is that which pertains to heaven" (*caelestia spectanda*).⁴²

A three-part model in the manner of elaboration is used by the poet in those works in which he refers to biblical stories. In each case, he starts by invoking a motif from Scripture, ascribes allegorical significance to it, and explains the whole in such a way as to praise the nuncio.⁴³ In the part of the collection that deals with mountains, however, it is difficult to find the intended arrangement

41 Metrical translation of the poem in Polish prepared by the author of the article, see below:

XXVII. Sześć gór rodu Chigi
 BRAKUJE IM SIÓDMEJ

Ponieważ herb ma tylko sześć gór, gdy je zsumujemy,
 Może winienes doliczyć coś do tych ze Sieny.
 A gdy osiadłeś, o sławny, na wzgórzach Rzymu, nie wiem,
 Czy stoi coś na przeszkodzie, byś wyliczał siedem.
 Dorzuć Watykan, bądź – gdy los stanie na drodze szczęściu –
 Olimp jako siódmy dołączy do tamtych sześciu.

42 Ibidem, p. 528.

43 Cf. J. Masenius, XXIX. *Arca Noetica in montibus, ad quam columba olivifera redit*, ibidem, p. 22; XXXII. *Mons unde abscissus lapis idolum cadendo obruit*, ibidem, p. 22–23; XXXIV. *In monte Deus tabulas legis dat Moysi*, ibidem, p. 23.

of the poems. The author sometimes takes up the same theme in two of them.⁴⁴ Ultimately, he is much freer here and uses a variety of content that fits the theme.⁴⁵ The same can be said of the set of poetic elaborations devoted to the coat of arms in the “Jubilee Year of Symbols.” In most of them, the Jesuit is based on elementary insights into the celestial bodies. The leading thought in several cases is light. Thus, the scholar points out that it travels from space towards the earth; the most brilliant comes from the sun; taking its origin from other stars, it also shines in the darkness.⁴⁶ Continuing the theme, in the next three pieces he focuses on what impressions can be gained by looking at the sky. Thus, the stars appear closer than they really are; they appear small, although they are in fact large; sometimes they seem to fall from the vault.⁴⁷ The collection concludes with pieces devoted to specific celestial bodies; those that shine brightly at sunrise and sunset, and the constellation of the Twins. The set is punctuated by one study on viewing the celestial sphere in the mountains.⁴⁸

Conclusions

The poetic collection compiled by Jacob Masen first makes clear the important role of the bishop’s coat of arms in the realities of past eras. In the first place, it was a sign identifying the person of the hierarch, as is also the case today. Since ecclesiastical dignitaries became clergymen with family emblems, unlike in modern times, episcopal emblems were not created, but took over the family emblems already in their possession, as evidenced by the coat of arms of the nuncio himself.

44 He refers, for example, to mountains devoid of vegetation, cf. J. Masenius, XXX. *Unus ex collibus gentiliicis mons nudus*, ibidem, p. 22; XXXI. *Montes nudi ventis quaquaversum impetuntur*, ibidem.

45 E.g. the encouragement to go upwards, cf. J. Masenius, XXVIII. *Montes iidem per quos genius enititur*, ibidem, pp. 21–22; the wild goat in the mountains, cf. XXXIII. *Caprea in monte frustra a canibus appetitur*, ibidem, p. 23; the mountain as a place of refuge, cf. XXXV. *Mons in quo munita valla et propugnacula*, ibidem; sunrise in the mountains, cf. XXXVI. *Mons soli orienti expositus*, ibidem, pp. 23–24; a shepherd with his flock while grazing, cf. XXXVII. *Pastor in monte stans, gregem iuxta pascentem custodit*, ibidem, p. 24; mountain reaching its peak above the clouds, cf. XXXVIII. *Mons in vertice coronatus, quo nubes superat*, ibidem.

46 J. Masenius, XXXIX. *Stella radios ad imam terram dimittens*, ibidem; XL. *Stella influxu suo in haec inferiora mundi operatur*, ibidem, pp. 24–25; XLI. *Stella a sole lucem accipit*, ibidem, p. 25; XLII. *Stella in tenebris illustrior*, ibidem.

47 J. Masenius, XLIII. *Stella in caelo, in terra genius spectans*, ibidem; XLIV. *Stellae in firmamento parvae*, ibidem, pp. 25–26; XLV. *Stella in caelesti orbe, quam angelus movet*, ibidem, p. 26.

48 J. Masenius, XLVI. *Stella gemina Phosphorus et Hesperus medio sole*, ibidem; XLVII. *Stella Castoris et Pollucis in tempestate*, ibidem; XLVIII. *In monte genius stellas explorat*, ibidem, pp. 26–27; XLIX. *Stella soli orienti praevia*, ibidem, p. 27; L. *Stella Hesperus post solem occiduum*, ibidem.

Significantly, the detailed analysis of the meaning of heraldic symbols and their glorification, as in the Jesuit collection, was a way of honouring hierarchs and commemorating them. In the case of Bishop Fabius Chigi, the coat of arms became particularly famous after his election to the See of Peter. The emblem of Pope Alexander VII, carved for example by Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, is part of the famous colonnade in St Peter's Square. It can also be found on the conopeum in the basilica itself, as well as in the sculpture of an elephant by Ercole Ferrata, a monument standing in the square in front of the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and in many other places in Rome⁴⁹. With a high degree of probability, it can be assumed that the artists created the plastic images inspired by the same motives that prompted Jacob Masen to write "The Jubilee Year of Symbols." The frequency of stemma in seventeenth-century literature further convinces us that the laudation based on the coat of arms was an expression of general tendencies and not the result of Alexander VII's personal tastes. In Baroque writing, this is most likely the result of a widespread fondness for genres combining text and image. The predilection was so widespread that it translated into codifications concerning rhetoric. The family coat of arms does not appear in the classical excerpt of *locus persona*, which was used as a scheme for drafting praise.⁵⁰ In his works, however, Jan Kwiatkiewicz, who was one generation younger than Masen, already recognises heraldry as a sphere related to the description of persons (*adiuncta personarum*) and regards it as an equivalent source to other loci for the elaboration of a brilliant characterisation of a character.⁵¹ The scholar supports his belief with an extensive excerpt of examples.⁵² Masen thus manifests in this subject the tendencies inherent in the literature of the period. The same can be said of the use of mythological staffage in the works. The Jesuit is keen to take up themes from this sphere. However, he is aware that not all the content will be understood by the readers, so he introduces as glosses explanations of how a particular concept or theme is to be understood, which was the case in the works presented in the case of Genius and Olympus. The limited understanding of mythological motifs in the 17th century can be seen as a sign of the times and a harbinger of a move away from the use of this kind of expressive means in writing.

49 Cf. J. Nowaszczyk, *Przyczynek do dziejów obrazowania*, p. 148.

50 Cf. H. Lausberg, *Retoryka literacka. Podstawy wiedzy o literaturze*, trans. and compl. A. Gorzkowski, Bydgoszcz 2002, pp. 223–226.

51 J. Kwiatkiewicz, *Suada civilis* [...], Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae, Pragae 1690, pp. 36–38.

52 Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 38–74; J. Kwiatkiewicz, *Phoenix rhetorum* [...], Typis Academicis, Pragae 1690, pp. 91, 108, 228–229.

The novelty of the Jesuit's study is an unprecedented approach to the image of the coat of arms. The poet abandons the typical stemmatic approach to the family emblem as an integral whole. Masen's presentation is concerned with a selection of four plastic elements that are taken out of the coat of arms and each becomes the subject of a series of elaborations. The structure of the poems is constant and used consistently by the poet in all cases. Each time, the number of the work is followed by its title, followed by a lemma and an epigram made up of three distichs in elegiac metre. The author makes this arrangement the warp of the laudatory themes. He is also fond of using a certain model of reasoning, which could be grasped through the analysis of the works. In general, he starts from information concerning the plastic image described and, in his search for this kind of information, shows a visible predilection for etiological content. He then relates the general observations he has made to the person of Nuncio Chigi and *per amplificationem* goes beyond nature and even temporality to highlight the qualities of mind, the qualities of conduct and the merits of the Nuncio. Ultimately, the kind of praise the reader encounters in Masen's work is now completely unknown. Moreover, the pompousness of some of the statements may be perceived by contemporaries as irony rather than sincere praise. Instead, as emphasised in the introduction, the Jesuit created the collection driven by a genuine admiration for the hierarchy. The works are thus rather a testament to the typical grandiloquence of the Baroque, which, as Jacob Masen's collection convincingly demonstrates, must be reckoned with in reading ancient writing dedicated to church hierarchs. Nor can his analyses underestimate the former aesthetic tastes and the rhetorical technique used to create works combining text and image.

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HONOURING ECCLESIASTICAL DIGNITARIES IN POETRY – JACOB MASEN AND HIS COLLECTION OF POEMS FOR THE NUNCIO FABIVS CHIGI

Summary

The German Jesuit Jacob Masen published a treatise in 1650, “The Mirror of Images of Secret Truth” (*Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*), to which he appended a collection of panegyric poems with the common title Jubilee Year of Symbols (*Jubilaeus symbolicus*). The poet dedicated 50 works to the Apostolic Nuncio Fabius Chigi, later Pope Alexander VII. The paper presents this particular collection of poems, which bear witness to the ancient custom of honouring ecclesiastical dignitaries in poetry to commemorate them. The paper discusses the circumstances in which the poems were written and the method used by the author to highlight the personal qualities and achievements of the nuncio, taking into account the formal and content means used by the writer.

Keywords: Jacob Masen, Fabius Chigi, Pope Alexander VII, ‘Mirror of images of secret truth’, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occultae*, ‘Jubilee year of symbols’, *Jubilaeus symbolicus*, honouring ecclesiastical dignitaries, Baroque poetry

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