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*Anything But a Game. Corpus Christi in Poland**

In connection with the Feast of Corpus Christi, four types of representations can be distinguished: (1) processional quasi-theatrical productions: (a) medieval liturgical processions organized by parishes, and (b) early modern (post-Tridentine) church processions attended by college boys; (2) programs of songs, poems and disputes held in the church or at the altars; (3) pre-Tridentine Corpus Christi plays of the 14-15th c.; (4) post-Tridentine plays, (a) religious and moral dialogues mostly by teachers of Jesuit colleges, (b) plays on purely Eucharistic subjects. Before we go through this route, let us have a look at a general description of the feast.

In Poland the *festum Corporis Christi* has been known since 1320 in the Roman Catholic Church, first in the diocese of Cracow, from the beginning as a *festum fori* (working prohibited) aimed at increasing the veneration for Christ, who is “*omnium sanctorum gloria et corona*”¹. In 1720 the Synod of Zamość introduced the feast in the Greek-Catholic (Ukrainian) Church².

The procession itself is later – the present Polish rite goes back no further than the first half of the 15th c. By 1420 the CC is a *festum fori* in the whole western church province of Gniezno, by 1440 in the eastern (Lwów), and thus in whole Poland³. The rules of the *Rituale petricoviense*⁴ exceed the *Rituale romanum* of 1614. More than 30 traditional Polish ceremonies from the older *Agenda caeremoniarum* of archbishop Karnkowski were maintained, which the *Rituale Romanum* did not allow; the latter’s chapter *De Processione in festo sanctissimi Corporis Christi* has no mention of stations⁵. The most substantial difference between the two rituals is in the area of music:

*) First published in the „*Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*” 7, 2002 s. 245-270. An earlier, much shorter version of this paper has been delivered at the 35th Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo, 2000, in the session “Corpus Christi Outside England”, sponsored by Medieval and Renaissance Drama Society. With thanks to Professor Max Harris (University of Wisconsin, Madison).

¹ *De veneratione corporis Christi*, chp. 11 from the synodal constitutions promulgated by bishop Nanker (Zalewski 1973:111 with reference to *Najstarsze statuty synodalne krakowskie biskupa Nankera z 2 października 1320 roku*, ed. by J. Fijałek, Kraków 1915).

² Z. Zalewski in *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, 2:861.

³ Zalewski 1973:118. *Pontyfikał arcybiskupów halickich, później lwowskich* (15th c., *Liber archiepiscoporum [metropolis Leopoliensis]*) in the chapter with episcopal benedictions for separate feast days, after the three days of Pentecost and the Trinity-Sunday there is no mention of the Corpus Christi (fol. 203). The *Diurnale Cracoviense* from 1494 (f. l[5]-l[7]) has a full Corpus Christi office, different from those in the *Analecta Hymnica*.

⁴ *Rytuał piotrkowski* (1631, full title see bibliography): its authors – Jan Foks, Marcin Klóciński and Sebastian Nuczer were commissioned by the synod of 1621; their work was promulgated by the archbishop of Gniezno Jan Wężyk only, not by the synod nor the Papal curia (Fulman 1896:63 and 189).

⁵ Sengpiel 16, from the *Rituale Romanum Pauli V. Antverpiae*, 1625, fol.283ff.

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the post-Tridentine Roman song, as established by Giovanni Palestrina for the *Graduale* of 1614, was a simplification of the Gregorian chant, the Polish versions were more complex. In the responsory for the Ash Wednesday (Feria IV Cinerum) *Misit de caelo* there are 43 tones in the Roman version, and 115 tones in the Polish; the proportion in the offertory *Ave Maria* being 91:140.⁶ The songs in the Polish *Rituale* are also more numerous, this is valid for the Corpus Christi feast as well (Fulman 157). The most visible difference is that there are always four stations at altars outside the church, spread throughout the parish. More than one altar was allowed by the Roman rite for longer routes⁷. About 1500 it is an established tradition in Germany, Poland, Austria and Italy, to sing at every station the first verses of the 4 gospels in 4 directions⁸. A typological connection has been established with the preaching of the apostles and their followers:

Observamus autem hac in provincia nostra, quod in hac processione 4 evangeliorum initia decantantur ad 4 mundi partes, ut palam fiat hoc evangelium ... in omnibus mundi partibus ab apostolis et eorum successoribus fuisse praedicat⁹.

The recent missal, *Mszal rzymski* (1963:502-3) has also 4 altars and prescribes as the 4 readings the first verses from the gospels, and the *Te Deum* for the way back. This tradition is so deeply rooted that we find its continuation among Poles outside Poland. The four stations can be thematically arranged there, e.g.: 1. The Eucharist is an offering; reading from Matt. 26:17-9, 26-9; 2. Eucharist is food for the soul; reading from Marc 8:1-9; 3. Eucharist is an earnest of immortality; Luc. 14:16-24; 4. Eucharist is sacrament of unification; John 15:5-11¹⁰. Even the sect of the Mariavites, excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church, maintains in their “Eucharistic missal” one procession after the mass for the Corpus Christi feast, one monstrance with the Host,

⁶ Fulman 169, based on the research by the music historian J. Surzyński.

⁷ Si processio longum iter conficiendum habeat, erigenda sunt passim altaria, quae mappa tegantur, cereis et candelabris instruantur et ornentur quo decentiori modo fieri poterit. *Manuale caeremoniarum romanarum* p. 509.

⁸ Naumburg 1502: quatuor initia evangeliorum cum versiculis et orationibus propriis, que leguntur ad 4 partes mundi ... in die Corporis Chr., dum agitur processio cum venerabili sacramento... (Browe 109, n. 116). Also in Poland, in the *Agenda Cracoviensis* of 1517: Sequntur evangelia quae leguntur in processione in festo corporis xristi (f. 90-91v). The *Processionale cisterciense* (MS 16th c., Plock?) contains an ordo for the procession, with two stations; this seems to be a local tradition. Four altars described in the *Agenda Plocensis* (1554): Post missam processio per civitatem et ante processionem deferens sacramentum incipit Responsorium Homo quidam (...) quatuor Evangeliorum ad altaria ad hoc ornata. Inicium sancti Evangelii secundum Matheum (...) In secunda statione Inicium Evangelii secundum Marcum... (f. 171-2); *Rytuał piotrkowski* promulgated 1793, repr. 1806: 362-77; the benedictine *Mszal rzymski z dodaniem nabożeństw nieszpornych* (in the division *Patronat polski*, with separate asterisk-pagination pp.21*-24*) is prescribing as readings the first verses from the gospels, and the responsory *Melchisedech rex Salem*, and the *Te Deum* to be sung on the way back.

⁹ Stanislaus Hosius (cardinal, the primate of Poland), *Confessio cath. fidei christiani*, c. 8 (Browe 1967:109).

¹⁰ *Msza św. i procesja Bożego Ciała w parafii św. Jacka*, Detroit Michigan, June 19, 1974. The Sydney-procession (*Procesja Bożego Ciała. Modlitewnik*, Sydney 1974), has also 4 altars with different themes: 1 - thanksgiving, 2 - propitiation, 3 - request for preserving from evil, 4 - unity and peace; to this subjects belong readings from the usual four gospels in canonical order, but not from the common first paragraphs/verses, the 1 and 2 like in Detroit (the Last Supper, and the multiplication of bread), 3 - Emaus (L 24:13-31), 4 - Christ as the true vine-shrub (John 15:1-17).

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and the standard 4 altars and 4 gospels with the first verses. After the fourth station, “in the middle of the way back, the priest is to stop and bless the people in four directions”.¹¹

In the sources I studied the altars of the CC-procession were not oriented (against Smoleń 1987:182) as others like All Saints’ or weather-processions. “In festo Omnium Sanctorum processio” the *Agenda Plocensis* reads: prima Statio versus septentrionem (187v), secunda Statio versus orientem (f. 189v), etc. Different options has the *processio contra tempestatem* (f. 197v-199): prima statio versus occidentem (etc., clockwise). In Poland the domination of heavy and frequent west winds can be seen in smaller trees’ leaning towards east; the prayer was that of the first station in the CC (the beginning of Matthew, etc.). In the Cracow missal the gospels were sung first in the procession held in the octave, not on CC feast day; the first gospel was to be sung *ad septentrionem* (*Missale Cracoviense* 1509 and later, Zalewski 1973:140). In the German Fulda the first of the 4 altars was oriented to the east (Sengpiel 17). Before this standard was established, the procession could be held in the octave or on the Sunday in the octave, before or after the mass. The general city procession could consist of parochial and monastic processions, each with a monstrance of its own. The principle of only one monstrance became definitive in 1602¹².

The procession includes elements of the *adventus domini*, official entry of a lord visiting his people. In general, the relations seem to be reverse: “the French kings took up some Eucharistic trappings, and especially the canopy which came to be associated with notions of majesty” (Rubin 1991:259). As a popular Eucharistic church song by Franciszek Karpiński (1741-1825) puts it: “The Lord is coming to see our crofts and how his children are doing”¹³.

1. Processional quasi-theatrical productions

1a. Medieval liturgical processions organized by parishes. The first document concerning a Corpus Christi street procession (in the capital Cracow) is an indulgence letter of 1384¹⁴. If we sum up the indulgences (issued by Urbanus IV, Martin V in 1429 and Eugene IV in 1434), for all masses, the procession and the offices on canonical hours we get 4100 days for the feast itself and 1300 days for the whole octave¹⁵. The Cracow processions were the most elaborate ones due to the participation of the king (until about 1600). Historians of the feast in Poland stress its continuity (more than 500 years without a break in the whole country).

¹¹ *Mszał eucharystyczny dla kapłanów maryawitów*, Płock 1929:214-8.

¹² *Epistola pastoralis Macieioviana...* by card. Maciejowski, reprinted in Warsaw in 1720 (Zalewski 1973:143).

¹³ Zróbcie mu miejsce: Pan idzie z nieba – Pod przymiotami ukryty chleba!
Zagrody nasze widzieć przychodzi – I jak się dzieciom jego powodzi.

(*Na Processyę Bożego Ciała, Dzieła* vol. 1:269; *Mszał...* 1963:1497).

¹⁴ ...ipso die festivo siue singulis diebus per totam festi octavam et maxime dum extra Civitatem Cracoviensem ad Kasimiriam seu per ecclesie sancte Marie cimeterium vel Civitatis circuitum iuxta morem deferre contingerit (Zaremska 1978:28, from F. Piekosinski ed., *Kodeks dyplomatyczny miasta Krakowa, 1257-1506*, Kraków 1879-1882:395-7); another “almost sure” proof of a CC procession in 1367, Zaremska p. 27 and n.11.

¹⁵ Details from the *Agenda Cracoviensis* of 1517, after the table of contents).

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There were periods of suppression, the processions were locally prohibited, but this only made them a means of manifesting Catholic, and to some extent Polish national identity. In the areas under Russian occupation (1772-1915) street processions were forbidden until 1905; in the territories annexed by the Prussians the old processions were allowed, the new churches were to confine the processions to the area of the church and the churchyard (Marlewski 1932:357). Such restrictions in Germany were part of the Kulturkampf, addressed against the catholic church as such (Sengpiel 11), not against Poles in particular. Heavy participation shows no noticeable signs of going out. Even the resurrection processions are not equally popular now, though they are earlier.

While we have a scarce and late tradition of mystery plays – the oldest known and the best one being a resurrection play¹⁶ – there is no civic theatrical tradition connected with the Polish liturgical processions other than that of the schools (until the late 16th c.).

The now famous folk-dance of Lajkonik (hobby-horse dance)¹⁷ as part of the Corpus Christi procession was first attested in 1738. After the procession (BVM cathedral) the lajkonik-raftsmen went as usual to their elder (“primate”, prymas) for a confraternity banquet; during the feast they had a fight and a governor’s judge had to intervene; it is the governors’ archives where Adam Chmiel (96) has found this entry.

The first longer description came to us from 1814¹⁸. It is connected with the last day of the CC octave, when the “king” of the rifle confraternity was also chosen. But the Lajkonik¹⁹ belongs to the tradition of another confraternity, that of the raftsmen (*defluitatores*; Cracow is situated on the Vistula river)²⁰. The figure’s attire suggests a Tartar horseman (turbaned, black-bearded, in yellow boots, in a rich costume like the “horse” itself). As a rule the Lajkonik is played by one person bearing an imitation of a horse-trunk and wearing its costume with that of a pagan warrior. Its form – the warrior is also the horse – seems to convey the metaphorical knowledge of the Tartar nation, saying they grow “together with their horses”. According to legend the lajkonik procession commemorates the Tartar invasions of Cracow (e.g. in 1281). The south-eastern part of Polish territories was living under continuous Tartar danger. One of the oldest poems we have in the Polish language concerns their invasion that struck Sandomierz in 1259.²¹ They were, in sum, not successful, and the legend says that

¹⁶ Mikołaj of Wilkowiecko, *Historia o chwalebny Zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim*. Kraków 1582?; repr. Wrocław 1992; see “RORD” 2000 for Martin Walsh’s review of an American performance. Other mystery plays were written in the 17th c.

¹⁷ Alford 1978:137-141, a drawing on p. 140. In German: Schimmelreiter, L. Schmidt 1962:175, called also camel. For a photograph see Ogródowska No 99.

¹⁸ F. Gawełek, Konik zwierzyński, “Rocznik Krakowski” 18, 1918 (Chmiel 93).

¹⁹ Alias ‘konik zwierzyński’, the horse of Zwierzyniec, a district of Cracow. W. Radzikowski, *Konik zwierzyński*, Kraków 1898; F. Gawełek, Boże Ciało w Krakowie i konik zwierzyński, “Nowa Reforma” 270-4, 13.-15.06.1917 (from:) Zaremska 1978:35, 38.

²⁰ M. Tobiasz, *Cech rybaków krakowskich*, Olsztyn 1962:51-3; (from:) Zaremska 1978:38. Here we have a possible German etymology: Laienkönig (a winner in confraternities contests).

²¹ *Pieśń o gniewie Pańskim* (inc. Mamy wszyćcy k temu się brać...), from the lost MS called *Pieśni Sandomierzanina* (end 15th c.), discovered and transcribed by W.A. Maciejowski, *Piśmiennictwo polskie od czasów najdawniejszych aż do roku 1830*, vol. 3, Warszawa 1852:133-41; quotation of the passage in modern spelling from *Chrestomatia staropolska* p. 284:

W Sędomirzu co się też stało	//	Przez Tatary płacziwie działo:
Tak ludzi wiele pobili,	//	Wisłę trupy zastawili,
Dziatki z krwią po wodzie płynęły.		

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the figure commemorates the leader of the raftsmen who killed the commander of the invaders and was dressed (decked out) by the people in the defeated man's attire. That explains the purely playful content of the pageant: There is never any display of aggression towards the Lajkonik who "beats" people with his mock-truncheon and tries to ravish girls into captivity²². The memory of the invasions wouldn't last that long if they weren't perceived as still possible. In 1594 Szymon Dąbrowski published in Cracow a poem about a Tartar invasion in Hungary. In his introduction he explains the reason of his re-telling a Latin letter of a high state official in Polish: common people should know as soon as possible its content: "it is nothing more than great sorrow because of the sudden intrusion of Tartars and Turks in Hungary, something that they can do to us as well".²³

But those representations – rather memorative than playful – were eventually excluded from the procession: In 1787 (May 30) the confraternities were ordered (by bishop Olechnowski of Cracow) to participate in the procession "without odd attires, too worldly or provoking laughter"²⁴. Even quite innocent and functional carvings like a wooden ox's head (butchers' trademark) were banned. The lajkonik pageant was held after the Corpus Christi procession ever since. We also have some indications of the use of a hobby-horse in other ceremonies. Two personal diaries, by Tomasz Krzyżanowski and by Wojciech Mączyński, are describing the entry of king Stanisław August Poniatowski to Cracow on June 16, 1787; among the people greeting him there was a group of 300 Jews with a music band and a fool riding a hobby-horse (the term lajkonik is not used (Chmiel 94-5).

Whether royal entries and coronation feasts, or the most elaborate parochial processions like Calvaries or other church festivals, they have developed something more than the elementary aspects of spectacle: decorations, candles and torches, ribbons, flowers and green twigs, gonfalons and saints' pictures, trumpet and lute music, drumming and cannon-shooting, singing participants, some of them armed, others wearing wreaths²⁵. The bells of the church where the procession started, as well as those of the destination church should be rung²⁶. The presence of all clergy, crafts and

²² Marlewski 1932:361-2, from A. Gołębiowski's *Gry i zabawy*.

²³ *Wirsze Rymowne o przeszćiu Tatarskim do Węgier* (printer W. Kobyliński, copy Biblioteka Kórnicka Cim. 2649; 6 pp.).

²⁴ "bez strojów dziwacznych lub nadto światowych, albo do śmiechu pobudzających, ale aby były podług myśli i ustaw Kościoła Bożego, zagrzewające do cnót chrześcijańskich i pobożności" (Chmiel 96).

²⁵ Details and sources in Zaremska 1978:30-5; Browe 1967:110. For modern projects for decoration of the altar and the procession route, see Ignacy Ryndzionek SDB, *Boże Ciało (propozycje dekoracyjne)*, Kraków: Wyd. Poligrafia Salezjańska 1997: 29, 31.

²⁶ Tempore Processionis pulsari debent campane Ecclesiae ex qua exit, et campanae Ecclesiae quam praetergreditur Processio (*Manuale Caeremoniarum* p. 515).

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guilds was obligatory; the confraternities were recognizable by special attires of different colors²⁷. A report of a Cracow citizen provides us with some of the details of house decorations on the procession route (like the emblem of a white eagle in a window, making a bow for the king passing by); another detail is the heavy participation of armed soldiers and musicians, also 3 playing women in a window are mentioned²⁸. From the beginning, children participated as well; they could bear liturgical vessels. In an initial of the Cracow *Missale* of 1544, before a priest bearing a monstrance, a boy is walking with a chalice in his hands (Zalewski 1973:149). Although this old parochial tradition was criticized by the liturgists around 1600, we can read about it in reports from the processions organized by Jesuit colleges. In the *Rituale Petricoviense* (ed. from ca. 1800:364) we read still a warning against bearing chalices²⁹. Today it is the girls who sprinkle flowers on the way before the Sacrament. In the last decades a regional custom has developed of building a flower carpet on the procession route. The parish of Spicimierz (Central Poland) is famous for its rich flower carpet, including iconographical motifs (Agnus Dei, Host, Fish, Cross).

1b. Early modern church processions co-organized by schools. In Poland almost all the colleges (schools with courses on a pre-academic level) were founded by the Jesuits. Before 1600 there were 11 colleges on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland, 5 in areas with a purely Polish population³⁰. Before 1600 there were about 60 Jesuit colleges which developed theater activities: 23 in the German Empire, 14 in Italy, 11 in Poland, 6 in Spain, 3 in Portugal, 2 in France and 2 in Switzerland (Poplatek 107). Other schools have also contributed to the production and delivery of drama. The procession shows were presented by college boys, and were arranged according to a visual program with mute figures and groups on wagons, with music. The most elaborate CC processions, with all possible types and levels of text presence, are from Bavaria, Germany. The description of the Munich procession of 1580 has 595 pages in folio³¹. The oldest we know of in Poland was organized in 1569, and

²⁷ The Charity confraternity in green copes, John Baptist's - white, St Anne's - grey, Passion confraternity - black sacks and cowls, Scapular conf. - blue copes (Chmiel 1947:98).

²⁸ *Kronika mieszczanina krakowskiego z lat 1575-1595*, p.96 and 114.

²⁹ ...Sacerdos resumit Sacramentum, et ad altare versus populum stans, incipit Responsorium: *Homo quidam fecit*: quod canendo, prosequitur chorus ordine suo procedens, quem sequi debent pueri, Ecclesiastico vel honesto habitu induti, tenentes in manibus **non calices** (ut magno et periculoso abusu fieri solet) sed candelas vel faces accensas, et ut fieri potest, adornatas.

³⁰ The others being: **Lithuanian** – Vilna, Latvian – Riga, **Estonian** – Dorpat/Tartu (then in Livonia), **German** – Braunsberg/Braniewo, **Ukrainian** – Jaroslaw, **Belorussian** – Polotsk, **Hungarian** – Koloszwär/Kolozsvár in Transylvania, now Cluj in Romania (Claudiopola in Latin).

³¹ *Befehle und Anordnungen Wilhelms V. ten Herzogs aus Baiern, die hohe Fronleichnamsprozession betreffend 1580*, by the licentiate Müller, responsible for processions; partly published by Lorenz Westenrieder, in "Beiträge zur vaterländischen Historie", vol. 5, 1794:76-181. Other important German sources are: *Daniel Holzmanns Fronleichnamspiel vom Jahre 1574*, ed. by Von Prantl, "Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-philologischen und historischen Klasse der königlichen bairischen Akademie der Wissenschaften" vol. 3, 1873:843-88, and the *Ordnung der gantzen Procession dess Allerheiligsten Sacraments wie deselbe in der Fürstlichen Hauptstadt München in Ober Bayrn ... auff das Fest Corporis Christi dess 1603 jährs ... gehalten wirdit*, München: Adam Berg, 1603.

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they disappeared after about 1650. The most interesting programs for Corpus Christi processions we have were written in Polish and printed for the Jesuit college of Vilna (Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania), The opened in 1570. The oldest (1614) is a poem³², others are in prose³³. Out of the 11 scenarios of pageant shows from Vilna, 10 concerned the CC procession, one – a translation of relics³⁴. Those were of course not the only processions organized and “played” by students of the colleges: there must have been hundreds of them.

The processions are divided into 3, 4, 5, 6 or 8 parts, with a different number of wagons; it can be concluded from the descriptions that there was always a main carriage for each part, and some smaller carts, figures (on horses and walking) as the company of the main hero (*comitiva*). Let us have a look at one description:

³² Walenty Bartoszewski, *Pobudka na obchodzenie nabożne świętości rocznej tryumfu i pompy Ciała Bożego dana*, Wilno 1614, J. Karcan; (description in *BDS* vol. 1, No 30, p. 24-5); divided into eight “figures” – the first being: the Church militant, Faith, Hope, and Love; the beginning of the first poem of 14 lines (*BDS* 1:25):

Kościół bojowny jedzie na wozie wysokiem. / Na cztery części swiata patrząc bystrym okiem.

Dwaj Anieli potężni straż jego trzymają, / Sferę i klucze złote, w rękach swych dźwigają.

³³ Walenty Bartoszewski, *Dowody procesyjnej w dzień Ciała Bożego*; Wilno: J. Karcan, 1615; *BDS* vol. 1, No 29 (6 “figures” – in prose). The authors who wrote the later programs remain unknown. 1623 - No 503 (5 parts); 1624 - No 505 (6 parts); 1625 - No 504 (4 parts); 1627 - No 502 (4 parts); 1630 - No 506 (3 parts); 1631 - nr 414 (6 pageants), 1633 – No 597 (5 parts); copy lost of the program of 1639 - No 507.

³⁴ *Suma procesyjnej na wnoszenie kości świętych od Akademików wileńskich Soc. Iesu sporządzonej. Wozów wszystkich iest małych y wielkich 17, które tym porządkiem wychodzą* (Vilna, after 1631?; *BDS* No 501).

*A Summary of the Vilna Procession
About the Six-fold Abode of God Staying With Men,
for the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1624,
by the Academics of the Soc. Iesu, Prepared in Six Parts³⁵*

In the first part, God's first abode – in the Sun – is presented, in the following order. Kings from the four parts of the world, on carts, precede the carriage of the Sun. On this carriage God's Providence is seated above the Sun, through which the good as well as the evil are comforted, where also Intelligences are revolving the wheel of the Sun which is shining on the persons of Asia, Africa, America and Europe, who are sitting on their steps. Behind the carriage, Adam alongside paradise, followed by Abel and Cain with their offerings, Noah with his sons, Abraham with Isaac³⁶, Jacob with Esau, the Pharaoh with Joseph³⁷.

In the second part, God's second abode – at the Shrine of the Covenant – is led out, accompanied by Moses, Aaron, the Levites, the Cloud Column of the day and Fire Column of the night³⁸. This abode is led by Courage, Joshua, Israeli and Philistine Princes, King David and Solomon, his son, with their choruses.

In the third part, the third abode of God – in the Blessed Virgin Mary – is shown by the Annunciation. Alongside this abode there is Purity, an Angel in the burning bush, Judith Triumphant over Holofernes, Abigail begging David³⁹, Angels with signs of the Blessed Mother of God alongside Archangel Gabriel.

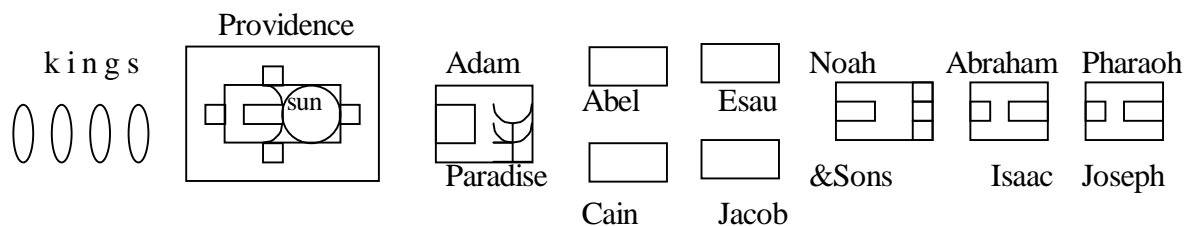
In the fourth part, God's fourth abode – by the establishing of the Holy Sacrament in the species of bread and wine – is expressed: At this abode God's Mercy is present, a Pelican feeding blood to its nestlings, a Grape from the Promised Land, Samson with a honeycomb in the lion's mouth, Jonathan with honey on his cane, the five wise virgins following the voice of the bridegroom⁴⁰.

In the fifth part, God's fifth abode – in the hearts of humans – is exposed. To this abode belong: God's Love towards the people, Wisdom demanding hearts, Saul among the Prophets with a changed heart, St Paul surrounded by light (enlightened) on his way to Damascus⁴¹, the Disciples going to Emmaus, St Augustine, a Holy Martyr and other Saints whose hearts were shown miracles by God.

In the sixth part, God's sixth abode is in the Holy City, as described in the Revelation of St John⁴². Before this shrine proceeds the person of the King of Kings, followed by all manner of horsemen and a heavenly throng.

Each part has its own retinue and singing, relevant to the subject.

Below is a reconstruction of the first part of the procession:



Printed programs of this sort were distributed before the procession. Other summaries mention scrolls or boards with names or short texts. The contents show concern with legitimization of the Eucharist not only in the miracles of the Host (connected with legendary or historical persons),

³⁵ *Summa processiej wileńskiej O Szesciorakim Przybytku Bozym z ludzmi na Swieto Bozego Ciala w Roku 1624. Od Akademikow Soc. Iesu sporzadzoney na szesc Czesci.*

³⁶ In the MS Ossolineum 6710/I (pp. 169-84), probably made by the Franciscans of Cracow about 1596, there is a *Komedia albo Dialog – Comedy or Dialogue* (about Abraham's sacrifice), ed. by Lewański in DS 2:415-33 as *O ofiarowaniu Izaaka*.

³⁷ R. Wimmer, *Jesuitentheater: Didaktik und Fest. Das Exemplum des ägyptischen Joseph auf den deutschen Bühnen der Gesellschaft Jesu*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann.

³⁸ See Exod. 13:21 i 14:19.

³⁹ See 1 Sam. 25:23-31.

⁴⁰ See Judges 14:8; 1 Sam. 14:27, and Mt 25:2.

⁴¹ See Acts 22:6, and 1 Sam. 10:9.

⁴² See Rev. 21.

but also in the ministry of Christ (the Last Supper) and in the Old Testament (many prefigurations of the Eucharist, as in the above text).

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2. Programs of rhetorical-literary productions (no drama)

They include Eucharistic songs, poems and disputes held in the church or at the altars. Only some texts were written down (in codices called *Liber dialogorum*, *Liber orationum*, or the like), and still fewer were transmitted. Different from occasional declamations and orations were the **literary dialogues**, recommended for schools already by the founder of the S.J., Ignatius Loyola, and written by the hundreds for schools' use by such figures as Jacob Pontanus, author of the most influential poetics for Jesuit schools⁴³. The dialogues were distinguished (as shorter and simpler) from **comedies** and **tragedies**. The distinction is difficult to draw, however, especially when we take into account that in some periods and provinces the long dramas were prohibited and only dialogues were allowed. Texts calling themselves "*dialogus*" could have quite a complicated plot and could be divided into more acts. Among the occasions for the performance of dialogues, the beginning of the school year and the Corpus Christi feast were equally most frequent – about one third of the total number (Poplatek 111).

Eucharistic **songs**⁴⁴ are part of the church offices, and belong to the study of liturgy. They are of some interest to us because their content is not purely hymnic glorification. We can find there substantial explanation of the origin of the Eucharist, which was propagated in special booklets including the readings from the 4 gospels (mostly the first paragraphs), prayers, litanies and church songs. The believers could read there that the Last Supper was "clear proof" of Christ's preparatory move which enabled transubstantiation: changing wine into Blood, and bread into Body⁴⁵), and of the special power of the priest to consecrate and ordain the Eucharist, a power "not given to kings or lords"⁴⁶. All are equal before the Host: kings, lords, as well as all estates should recognize their one Lord and Savior⁴⁷. Contrary to the resurrection processions, which have introduced Polish vernacular chant into the liturgy, no Eucharistic vernacular chant is attested in early liturgical books, although we have Corpus Christi songs in Polish already from the 15th c. on⁴⁸. The oldest song written specially for the procession

⁴³ *Poeticarum institutionum libri tres*, Ingolstadt 1594. The dialogues in: *Progymnasmatum latinitatis sive dialogorum de variis rerum generibus libri quatuor*; (100+100+95+77 dialogues); two books (II-III) reprinted in Poland, 1610 (Poplatek 112).

⁴⁴ E.g.: *Oktawa Bożego Ciała na cały rok rporządzona albo sposób nawiedzania Najśw. Sakramentu...* przez X. Jakuba Radlińskiego, Lwów 1749; *Processya czyli cztery Ewangelie z modlitwami, litaniją o Przenajświętszym Sakramencie i pieśniami, które podczas Oktawy Bożego Ciała z uroczystością się odprawiają*, we Lwowie nakładem Franciska (!) Pillera, 1829; *Ewangelie i pieśni na procesję Bożego Ciała*, Kraków 1931; *Procesja Bożego Ciała*, Poznań 1946 (on p. 11-12 short hints for directing: 4 altars mentioned; music band and choir).

⁴⁵ This is the content of the 3rd couplet of the song 158 from the hymn-book of J. Siedlecki:

A jeśli kto nie wierzy / Ma z ostatniej wieczerzy
Jasny dowód, co się stało, / Że wino w Krew, a chleb w Ciało
Bóg swe przemienił.

⁴⁶ I tę moc dał Kapłanom, / Nie królom ani panom,
Aby oni poświęćali / I nam grzesznym rozdawali / Ciało, Krew Pańską. (4th couplet)

⁴⁷ (7.) Nuż królowie i pany, / I wszystkie ludzkie stany:

Upadajcie na kolana, / Uznawajcie swego Pana / I Zbawiciela.

⁴⁸ *Witaj miły Jezu Chryste, O Ciało Boga żywego*, and *Jezu Chryste nasza radość*; Zalewski (1973:154) with reference to: M. Bobowski, *Polskie pieśni katolickie od najdawniejszych czasów do końca XVI wieku*, Kraków 1893:95-101, A. Brückner, *Średniowieczna pieśń religijna polska*, Kraków 1923:110-12; *Witaj miły święte Ciało and Witaj, miły Jezu Kryste* (Nowy Korbut 1:292).

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was printed in 1580⁴⁹. In the oldest known Polish translation of the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, in the *Kancjonał puławski* (1551, Bibl. Czartoryskich 2372), every couplet is preceded by the Latin incipit; this can be an indication of it being sung according to the principle “the clerus literaliter – the populus vulgariter”.

One of the favorite allegories of Christ giving his life for humans is the pelican. The “feeding with its own flesh” made it an ideal model for the Eucharist as well, which is attested already in the 3rd c.⁵⁰ We find this motif elaborated in a short **poem**⁵¹ (26 lines) *Pro festo Corporis Christi*, preserved in the 17th-c. Jesuit codex⁵². “A great mystery there is in the most holy body, in which God has turned into food for you, man.”⁵³ The similarity is explained twice: The first comparison follows the doctrine of satisfaction, the second – that of recapitulation. In the first part (ll.6-11) God the creator is the pelican wounding his heart for his children’s sake⁵⁴, in the second (15-22) “God’s Son is the true pelican”, who – after “having washed away our sins with his blood” – “takes us under his wings” and promises “eternal coolness” to those “who work faithfully”⁵⁵.

Speaking of songs, we must not forget the choruses separating the acts in Eucharistic dramas. One of them is the *Chorus tertius* from the *Drama de Arca* (1623)⁵⁶. In 20 lines it develops a moral interpretation of the Eucharist, rooted in solar symbolism:

⁴⁹ *Pieśń czasu Procesyey z Ciałem Pańskim ... Czas jest łaski wszystkim Krześcianom* (Zalewski 1973:154, text in Bobowski p.374-6 (see previous note).

⁵⁰ A.L. Delattre, *Symbolles eucharistiques de Carthage*, Tunis 1930; LCI 3:390-1. In Polish in the song *Radości wam powiedam* (ca. 1444, MS Bibl. Narodowa Warszawa 8040:618-9; *Chrestomatia* 241-2; “On jest wierny pelikan” - l. 17, presented as a quotation from Isaiah; and in the translation of *Adoro te* by Thomas of Aquin (*Zbliżam się w pokorze*: “Ty, co jak pelikan...”; in: *Hymny kościelne na cześć Najświętszego Sakramentu*. Transl. Tadeusz Karyłowski, Kraków, 1916.

⁵¹ More about poems in Popłatek 108-111.

⁵² MS Bibl. Ossolińskich 1125/I, f. 172-172v.; the codex contains plays from the Jesuit College of Krosno (Crosna, Sub-Carpathian Poland). Probably it was the first part of a cycle, the second being *ad secundum altare* (Windakiewicz 117).

⁵³ Wielka to tajemnica w przenaświetszym cieie
Ze się w nim Bóg pokarmem człecze stał dla ciebie. (1-2)

⁵⁴ Bóg stworzyciel i jako on Pelikan prawy
który dla swoich dzieatek i śmierć podjąć woli
Dosyć czyni z przyjaźni a to ku nam gwoli
Ze sam ciała i zdrowia nie lituje swego
Serce swe sobie rani by dzieateczki jego
Wcale zostawać mogły... (6-11)

⁵⁵ Lecz prawdziwy pelikan Syn Boży łaskawy
Pan Odkupiciel Bóg zaś, i dobrodziej prawy
który krew swą naświetszą wylał z boku swego
Dla nas wiernych Chrześcijan, Zbawienia naszego
By zaś omywszy z grzechów wziął pod skrzydła swoje
A okrywszy skrzydłami rzekł: Dzieateczki moje
Pódcie do mnie wy którzy wiernie pracujecie
A ochłodę ode mnie wieczną odczujecie. (15-22)

⁵⁶ MS BJ 6589/III, f. 5v-8v (incomplete), *Anno 1623 // 22 Iunii mane in octava Corporis Christi exhibitum Drama de Arca*, ed. by J. Okoń in *Dramaty eucharystyczne*, p. 128-163.

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Like the sun (rejoicing the healthy, but harmful for the sick), and like the Ark of the Covenant (inaccessible to those who are not holy⁵⁷), the sacrament of the Eucharist differentiates its effects, bringing salvation to the just and death to the evil⁵⁸.

Some unique *benedictiones speciales* from the *Breviarium Plocense* of 1520 should be mentioned (Zalewski 1973:121-2). Latin couplets are pointing at the most important aspects of the Eucharist. They do not look like benedictions, nor even like incantations:

1. Per huius Sacramenti institutionem / mereamur peccatorum remissionem.
3. Corporis et sanguinis dominici sumptio / sit nostra salus et sempiterna protectio.
4. Per corporis et sanguinis dominici veritatem / attingamus supernorum civium veritatem.
6. Per domini nostri Jesu Christi humanitatem / pervenire mereamur ad suam divinitatem.

Other short pieces were preserved in a codex used not by a Jesuit college, but probably by another school or a professional company working in Chełmno in the first half of the 17th c.⁵⁹. The **dialogue** *In sacratissimum festum Corporis Christi* is a conversation between a student and his master; the topics are: God's presence in the Host, the dialectics of whole God and the pieces of bread, the sufficiency of the Communion under one species.

The presentation *Pro solemnitate Corporis Christi* contains 4 scenes: *Rebecca; Isaac; Samson sublatis portis civitatis; Triumphus Dei in carne humana crucifixi*. The first three depict inefficient offerings as negative prefigurations of the sacrament of the altar (Jacob and Esau's mess of pottage, Jacob beguiling the blessing out of Isaac, and Delilah selling Samson's secret to the Philistine princes). The fourth scene is an allegorical play with God's Triumph preaching to the Mundus the importance of grace; it contrasts the failure of the Old Law with the victorious truth of the New.

Actiuncula pro festo Corporis Christi is another cycle of 4 short plays, with positive prefigurations: Jews in the desert – Elijah with the widow in Zarephath [1 Kings 17:9-24] – David in Abimelech's tent [2 Sam. 11,21] – King Joab and Amasa [2 Sam. 17:25, 20:9]⁶⁰. The first play, enacting the manna story (Exodus 16), closes with the sentence:

⁵⁷ The same motif in a eucharistic church song by F. Karpiński *Zróbcie mi miejsce*:

Straż przy nim czynią Anieli możni. / Nie przystępujcie blisko, bezbożni.

(from *Ewangelie i pieśni*, 1931: 26-7, see note 44; also in his collected works: *Dziela*, vol. 1:269-70).

⁵⁸ This is a motif from the sequence *Lauda Sion salvatorem*:

Sumunt boni, sumunt mali: sorte tamen inaequali, vitae vel interitus.

Mors est malis, vita bonis: vide, paris sumptionis quam sit dispar exitus;

Biorą dobrzy i grzesznicy, lecz się losów przyjrż różnicy: życie tu, zagłada tam.

Złym śmierć niesie, dobrym życie: patrz jak w skutkach rozmaicie czyn ujawnia się ten sam (*Mszał* 1963:500).

⁵⁹ Kodeks Krasieńskich (Chełmno 1648-56); destroyed in 1944, fragments in a copy, *Corpus dramatum* f. 175-8 (see bibl.); the following description from Windakiewicz 114-7.

⁶⁰ Kodeks Krasieńskich, MS Ossol. 7075/II f.178-85, and 185-90 (Windakiewicz 1902:116). The whole codex was discussed first by W. Chomętowski (1870:84-110). For the first two titles cf. the responsory for the CC procession on its way back in the Polish part of the Missal (*Mszał rzymski*, p. 24*):

Melchisedech rex Salem typicum panem et vinum obtulit / patribus in deserto manna pluit
Isaac immolatur / Elias pane subcinericio roboratur. (etc.)

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“God, may your power be helpful to everybody”; a production hint was added on the margin: “Or the name of the town instead of *everybody*”⁶¹. Windakiewicz cites this as proof that the play was performed in different towns.

Most of the contents of literary productions presented during processions are known only from short descriptive reports, written down in school chronicles or by inspectors; reports by eyewitnesses from the audience are extremely rare. One of the oldest **reports** concerns a performance from 1568 (June 17, Pultusk). At the altar in the form of a Roman triumphal arch⁶², three young boys (as angels) venerated the Eucharist with poems in Hebrew, Greek and Latin; then followed a Polish dialogue between Faith, Hope and Love who explained the mysteries of the Eucharist to the doubtful Courtier⁶³. It was performed on the same place as in 1566; at that time, on June 20, four students of the Pultusk college, in beautiful costumes were reciting poems and singing chants at the altar built in front of the entrance to the college. According to Okoń (1970:82 n.5) the only teacher and author who was able to write the three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, at that time was Jakub Wujek, the translator of the Bible into Polish (1599).

Finally, other early performances of dialogues should be mentioned: 1570, June 1, Braniewo (Braunsberg, Ermland/East Prussia) - boys disguised as angels were carrying imitations of liturgical vessels; at the altar a dispute on transubstantiation was started (in German): 5 student-actors were trying to convince the Kapharnaite (one doubting the real presence of Christ in the Host; John 6:22-72). They were discussing in a very suggestive way, “everybody thought it was no theater but that real questions of faith have been actually considered”⁶⁴. The college of Poznań has opened with two performances in the octave of the CC: on May 26 and 28, 1573. On the market of Polotsk (now in Belorussia), on June 23, 1585 (in the octave of the CC), a Polish dialogue was spoken or played (a drama?).

3. Plays

According to historians of Polish school drama and theater, it is not until the Jesuits came and founded their colleges (the first in 1566) that Corpus Christi plays appear in Poland. But their activity is intensive: before 1600, 33 performances were recorded

⁶¹ Niech twoja możność wszystkim dopomoże. *vel nomen ciuitatis ponendum loco wszytkim*. (Windakiewicz 116).

⁶² Arch. Soc. Jesu Germ. 140, p.89; Lewański 1956:49 n. 73); in Poland this is the earliest Roman triumphal arch as the altar-stage (Okoń 1970:81).

⁶³ *Iam in octava Corporis Christi [1568] ante nostrum Collegium altare non mediocri nostruorum labore, arcuum Romanorum instar, ita instructum fuit, ut ipsa novitate et forma non ineleganti spectantium oculos in se converteret. Deinde, ut primum eo loco SS-mum consistit Sacramentum, tres pueruli angelorum habitu Hebraicis, Graecis et latinis versibus illud salutaverunt. Mox dialogus Polonicus a pueris aliquot recitatus est. Cuius argumentum id fuit, ut a fide, spe et caritate in iis, quae cuiusque virtutis essent propria, de mysteriis divinissimi Sacramenti, aulicus quidam, qui initio nonnihil haesitare videbatur, instrueretur. Ea re, quae SS-mae Eucharistiae dignitatem populariter explicaret et ad reverentiam tanti Sacramenti ac frequentem sumptionem exhortaretur... – *Compendium historiae collegii Pultoviensis* p. 68-9. The subject matter is discussed by J.-M. Valentin (1979) in his study and edition of a Latin version.*

⁶⁴ Smosarski 124, from: *Archivum Romanum Soc.J. Germania* f.140v-141. The following data from Lewański 1956:218.

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(about the same number as in Italy, France, Germany and Bohemia together), and about 80 in the 17th c. – 80⁶⁵.

In the repertory of school theater, four main groups should be distinguished. Firstly there were humanist biblical dramas and moralities. The most well-known authors and plays were W. Gnaphaeus' *Acolastus*, G. Macropedius' *Petriscus* (staged in Pultusk in 1581), A. Fabritius, Ch. Ischyrius' *Homulus*, Livinus Brecht *Tragoedia christiana Euripus*, written and first published in 1549 in Lovanium, second printing Cologne 1555, it was first performed that year at the Vienna college. Being as Duhr has called it "erstes Stück der Jesuitenbühne" (1907:331), it had 18 productions more before 1600.

Secondly (from about 1565), there was "Renaissance" repertory: Plautus, Terence, Seneca and some translations from Greek, e.g. Lukian. The third group are plays written by teachers of Jesuit colleges: dialogues and tragedies on religious and moral themes in general, or on purely Eucharistic subjects. The first play was produced in 1559 at the Vienna college, it concerned the Resurrection, and was written by the Austrian author Wolfgang Piringer, born 1536 (Duhr 1907:351). The earliest codex of a Polish Jesuit-writer was made by Kasper Pełkowski (Pentkovius, 1554-1612). Only the interludes are written in Polish, the plays in Latin; all titles are in Greek.⁶⁶ The most important early Polish author Grzegorz Knapski (Gregorius Knapius, 1564?-1639) from the college of Poznań (Collegium Posnanensis), later working in Cracow, not as a teacher, but a lexicographer. It is part of his dramatic oeuvre (from 1596 on) that has been delivered in the codex *Tragoediae sacrae*⁶⁷. The codex was robbed by the Swedish army during the war against Poland 1655-60; since 1693 in the Univ. Library of Uppsala.

Finally, the fourth group should be added, that of medieval (pre-Tridentine) repertory; some must have been played by schools. This in particular is valid for the Medieval Corpus Christi plays of the 14-15th c. They are not attested in Poland at all, but were delivered in other countries (see Kolve, Rubin, Sengpiel). It is possible that they were played at schools before a genuine Jesuit repertory was created.

An example of a Jesuit dialogue performed on the occasion of the CC feast, but not treating the Eucharist as a subject, is difficult to find⁶⁸. Performing of Eucharistic plays on other occasions was also possible⁶⁹.

As in the case of literary productions presented during processions, details about the performances of plays are known only from reports, written down in school chronicles or by inspectors. Some evidence is hidden in students' notebooks; reports by eyewitnesses from the audience are extremely rare. One of them is

⁶⁵ Poplatek (1957, not all German sources taken into account). The number for the 17th c. from Okoń 1970.

⁶⁶ Bibl. Ossolińskich 1137, ff.219; Lewański 1956:52-9.

⁶⁷ Catalogue title *dito of Comoedier och Tragoedier*, R 380. It was subject of a full-length study of Adolf Stender-Petersen (1931), reviewed by L. Simon in "Pamiętnik Literacki" 29, 1932; Lewański 1956:62.

⁶⁸ *Comoedia de Jacob et Joseph Patriarchis*, Grodno 1651, pro Corpore Christi, by Eustachy Pyliński (Brückner 1891:400).

⁶⁹ *Mensa Eucharistica, olim triduanae in rupe fami Maximiliani I Archiducis Austriae, nunc vero ad petram scandali inter geniales carnisprivii epulas famescenti Orbi scenico apparatu instructa a perillustri ac magnifica iuventute Collegii Varsaviensis Soc. Jesu anno 1679 die 6 Februarii* (Rezanov 1916:93-4).

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Descriptio gratulationis..., concerning the production of the *Drama of Peace* by Kasper Pełkowski, performed at the Vilna college on Feb. 4, 1582 for king Stephan Batory after signing a peace treaty with Russia⁷⁰.

Eucharistic drama. In the Jesuit repertory, Eucharistic drama takes a special place: Some 20-30% of texts and productions in the Polish province of the S.J. were connected with the *festum Corporis Christi* and had a Eucharistic subject. Shorter or longer dialogues and plays of different genres - allegorical or narrative, in Polish or Latin⁷¹ were produced in colleges or churches, but not during processions. Some of the dialogues are divided into 4 parts, which means a possible presentation at four altars. The first full play was performed on 17.06.1571, in the Jesuit's church of Pułtusk - *Dialogue about the most holy Sacrament of Lord's Body and Blood*⁷².

The plays were written down in codices called *Liber dramatum*, or *Liber comoediarum et tragoediarum*. The vernacular Jesuit drama is rather rare; the Polish province was occasionally exempted from the general rule of the *Ratio studiorum*, prescribing Latin as the language of all literary productions: "Dialogi vero breves, praeter comoediam, in festis aliquibus principalibus haberi possunt, cum latini, tum interdum Polonici, praesertim in festo Corporis Christi, ad excitandam populi devotionem."⁷³ Unfortunately, for most of the 33 titles we know from the period before 1600, only the titles are extant. Many texts, even from the 17th c., remain anonymous⁷⁴.

Corpus Christi literature became a special subject in theoretical works like the *Poetica practica anno Domini 1648*, discussing in its 10th Treaty on "other genres" four sorts of "christian poetry for the altars during the feast of Corpus Christi"⁷⁵.

Tractatus X. *De aliis speciebus poeticae et modis scribendi* (f. 141-169);

Cap. 12 *De poesi christiana in festo Corporis Domini ad altaria.*

Modus 1-mus carminis Eucharistici universalis.

⁷⁰ *Peri tes eirenes pros ton basilea Stephanon dialogos*, or *Dialogus de pace pro rege Stephano* for the Polish text see DS 4:385-418. The *Descriptio gratulationis* is a letter by Jakub Brzeźnicki, canon in Poznań, to Martin Gerstmann, bishop of Wrocław; quoted in Lewański 1956:55-7 (from: A. Mosbach, *Wiadomości do dziejów polskich z archiwum prowincji śląskiej*, Wrocław 1869:172-4).

⁷¹ The 7 preserved eucharistic plays from the German speaking province of the SJ are all in Latin (see below: Texts, Valentin 1983).

⁷² *Dialog o Najśw. Sakramencie Ciała i Krwie Pańskiej* (in Polish).

⁷³ *Acta in prima Congregatione Provinciali Poloniae anno 1576 in Boszevia celebratae*, Arch. Soc. J., MS Congr. 42, f. 181v, Poplatek 50.

⁷⁴ One of the first known authors was Marcin Łaszcz, by whom a *Dialog o Drzewie Zywota* (Dialogue on the Life Tree) was performed (in the Corpus Christi octave of 1578, in Pułtusk); from the text only short excerpts are preserved, they allow one to tell the play was different from the *Viator* (1609, Kalisz), see note 83. The excerpts were published by priest A. Załęski (1844, ²1854) who discovered the codex during reconstruction works in the former Jesuit church in Pułtusk. Afterwards the codex got lost.

⁷⁵ See *Poetica practica...* in the bibliography below (*Texts*): the chapter's and subchapters' titles are quoted; the whole text of this unique poetics was never edited and is now lost – destroyed in the WW II (see note 80 on the Załuski-library). Banasiowa 1997; Dąbrówka 2000.

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Modus 2-dus Eucharisticae poeseos.

1-ma praxis doctrinae in epigrammate Eucharistia panis angelorum dicitur;

Praxis 2-da in oda.

Modus 3-tius poesis Eucharisticae.

Modus 4-tus poesis Eucharisticae.

Figurae de sanctissima Eucharistia veteris legis, de quibus carmina formari possunt ad altaria in Corporeum Christi.

Before Trent, Eucharistic motifs in drama concerned two general aspects: the institution of the sacrament of body and blood, and the miracles of the Host proving its divine power. Less frequent was a third aspect: the importance of this sacrament for the salvation of mankind. If the two former covered the historical and legendary legitimization of the Eucharist (its past), the latter (third) motif covers the devotional aims of its use (its present and future). The former found its divinity, the latter – ethics and eschatology.

We recognize in this tripartition the three main genres of drama: the mystery play, the miracle/saint play, and the morality play. Each of them has its continuation in post-Tridentine Eucharistic drama. The first type receives a new dimension: proof of the Eucharist's historicity is preferably looked for and found in the subject matter of the Old Testament (1). The legendary tradition only becomes richer, but its argument remains unchanged (2). The third motif (soteriological legitimization) gets more elaboration by depicting the devotional and moral circumstances of the way of sacramental salvation, read: obligations of humans in their relation to the Eucharist taking the place of the Savior (3). Also the interlude deserves its place in this story (4).

(1) The anonymous *Dialogus de Miphiboseth* (Pułtusk, June 1622; Okoń 119-) can be classified as a **Eucharistic mystery play**. The medieval mysteries were biblical plays, proving the historicity of Christ's revelation. In the Eucharistic mystery play the biblical historicity of the Eucharist is being proved. The means are much the same as earlier: demonstrating prophecies and prefigurations in the Old Testament (bread and wine, banquets, offerings) in the same way as it was done e.g. by Isaiah for Christ as the Messiah. Other prophets or other aspects of well-known prophecies get attention, as in the case of Nathan (2 Sam. 7) predicting the birth of a Messiah from the house of David; the interpretation now is that he will invite all people to his banquet, a banquet that will exceed all the kings' best dishes⁷⁶. We can even find an extremely effective "self-conscious prefiguration": Participants of the events in the Old Testament know they won't get the opportunity to be invited to this great feast; "the more, and thrice so happy"

⁷⁶ **Natan** (69-80) Albowiem z pokolenia cny Dawidowego / Narodzi się Mesyjasz dla ludu wszytkiego. ... Dawid bankiet królewski jednemu wystawił, / By Mifibosetowi swą miłość objawił,
A Mesyjasz zaprosi do stołu swojego / Na chleb Boski wszytkiego rodzaju ludzkiego. ...
Uczta ta ma przechodzić wszech królów bankiety, / A przewyższać przysmaki i kosztowne wety:
Bo nie wymysłem ludzkim wytworne potrawy, / Lecz krew swoje i ciało da na pokarm prawy.

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will be those who will get that opportunity;⁷⁷ but we should also be happy knowing the secrets; let us look at the figure, before the “real thing” comes⁷⁸.

(2) The legendary tradition of medieval **miracle plays**, based on *exempla* and *miracula* was enriched by many new stories about new saints and new miracles. The Host miracles do not disappear in the Catholic countries, nor do the stories about them.

The continuity of this genre is best shown by the example of the Corpus Christi play (ca 1650?) based on the report about the Lithuanian Duke Vitenes. He was an anti-hero of a local Eucharistic miracle from 1311, written down in narrative form, and preserved in a Lithuanian chronicle⁷⁹. The text of the play is not extant, we have got only a much later “tragedy”-version of the legend, by the owner/writer of the codex Joseph Załuski, with a title, speaking for itself: *Vitenes or a tragedy of God’s revenge on the Great Duke of Lithuania - abuser of the most holy Sacrament* (1751, ed. 2000, see bibliography, *Witenes*). The earlier (lost) play’s content has been delivered in its extant prologue *Prologus. Rusticus, Wurszaitis, Puszaitis, Parstukai* (in Polish, Lithuanian and some Belarussian)⁸⁰. It was meant as a “prelude” preceding the performance of this short play in the Jesuit college of Kroże (Lithuania) on Corpus Christi. Its content mirrors that of the main play: a Lithuanian peasant who has had a dream about Duke Vitenes fighting against the Host, asks the pagan sacrificer Wurszaitis for an explanation of the vision; he can’t do that and calls his god, the forest spirit Puszaitis, who shows up with his dwarfs, the Parstukai. Similar names are used in a chronicle of Prussia by Martin Murinus, in the chapter V about the celebrations of the “pagan Prussians”⁸¹.

⁷⁷ **Achior** (105-6) Toć my wielkie zaiste stąd nieszczęście mamy, / Że tak zacnej biesiady już nie doczekamy. **Abiatar** Szczęśliwi, a po trzykroć szczęśliwszy ci będą, / Którzy u tego Stołu Pańskiego zasięda. ...

⁷⁸ **Natan** (113-118) Wszakże i my szczęśliwi, którym objawiono: / Przed wieki tajemnice takie zatajono. ... Na **figurę**, aż **sama rzecz** przyńdzie, patrzajmy.

⁷⁹ Maciej Strykowski, *Kronika polska, litewska, żmudzka i wszystkich Rusi Kijowskiej, Moskiewskiej, Siewierskiej, Wołyńskiej, Podolskiej, Podgórskiej, Podlaskiej etc. i rozmaite przypadki wojenne i domowe pruskich, Mazowieckich, Pomorskich i innych krain Królestwu Polskiemu i W.X. Litewskiemu przyległych* (until 1582), Königsberg 1592, p. 382 (Brückner 1891:216). The quoted title from J. I. Kraszewski, *Studia historyczne litewskie. Strykowski i jego kronika krytycznie przejrzana do roku 1316*, f. 9-10; MS Bibl. Narodowa Akc. (from Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Lwowskiego 747), Mf 46137.

⁸⁰ Published by Brückner 1891:217-21, and by Lewański as *Chłop, Sołtys, Puszajtis, Parstukas 1, Parstukas 2*, in *DS* 6:409-15, with translation of the Lithuanian passages and some notes on pp. 705-8; 147 lines, mostly in couplets; texts from the first half of the 17th c. The MS was No 1. in: *Drammata y 5 Intermedii po Rusku Mazowiecku Cygańsku*, from the Joseph Załuski collection of rare codices and old prints robbed (together with the whole Załuski Public Library of 180,000 vols, and the official archives and regalia of the Polish kingdom) by Russian authorities after the third partition of Poland (1794-5). Part of the collection, since 1814 in Petersburg’s Imperial Public Library, was returned to the University of Warsaw in 1842, and to Poland in 1922-3, with it our MS (as Razn. Q 12); put into the Krasieński Library which was purposely burnt down by the Germans after the fall of the Warsaw’s uprising in late 1944 (about this: B. Horodyski, *Spuścizna działu rękopiśmiennego Biblioteki Załuskich*, “Przegląd Biblioteczny” 1948 No 1-2). For the history of the Załusianum, the oldest public library in Poland (open since 1747 “on Tuesdays and Thursdays”), see Tadeusz Zarzębski, *Biblioteka Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa 1997.

⁸¹ Święta obchodzili **Puszaita** Boga (ale bo raczey Dyabła) którego mniemieli mieszkac pod krzewiną bżową / przetoż to drzewo w wielkiej u nich uczciwości było / **parstuki** też iakoby Anyołki iego czcili... (A iii v.) Potym **Wurszaitis** ich Pop wdziawszy wieniec na głowę... (p.B).

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Protection of the sacred was an important function of miracles, most effective when showing punishment for a blasphemer or an enemy of believers. Already in the Middle Ages we find all sorts of events (sudden deaths, cases of misfortune) that are eligible for double interpretation: One can say it was just a bad accident (an emperor choking to death when eating chicken), but the structure of the play suggests God's punishment. This providential interpretation has the advantage of being more acceptable than a vulgar miracle. This entails another advantage: More motifs can easily be found among events that didn't involve any attested miracles, but were just instances of misfortune in a religious context. The anti-hero of the *Danish and Swedish King Christian II*, three years after becoming king of the united kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, was overthrown and banished as a beggar. Why? Because he broke his oath made "on the holy sacrament" and murdered 94 Swedish senators⁸².

(3) Let us call the next type the **Eucharistic morality play**. The anonymous play *Viator. Dialogus de ligno vitae* was produced in 1609, by the college of Kalisz/Calisia. Before the title the inscription: "Anno 1609 Dominico die infra octavam Corporis Christi [June 22] exhibitus est sequens dialogus in templo nostro [of the Jesuits in Kalisz] horis pomeridianis"⁸³. Not the "tree of life" in the subtitle is important here, but its fruits. In the first act, Mors, Caro and Daemon are trying to destroy the green tree, which is an allegory of the Eucharist. But the tree only becomes more green and doesn't lose any of its fruit. The tree is a visualized metaphor: It is a new Tree of Life, replacing the old one, from paradise; the latter becomes a mere "sign" that should now give place to the "thing signified". It was also a bad tree: It did harm to the human population⁸⁴. The Eucharistic dimension is not only general, but also particular and real⁸⁵.

In both the mystery and morality plays, an opposition is drawn between the "figure" and the "real thing", but the status of the "figure" is different in each. In the first drama, one of many possible examples (Miphiboseth invited by David) is chosen to serve as a token of the later event; their relation is not unique but quite contingent. Many medieval and later Eucharistic shows or dramas include such examples separately or in series. Their value is not theological but explanatory. In the second drama the tree of life is a very important parallel, a prefiguration as an earlier version of something final; their relation is necessary and valid only for them both, the former is sort of a prerequisite of the latter.

From a comparison of the two examples, the dialectics of the typological relations between the New and the Old Testament again emerges: As in the case of short dialogues, the subject matter includes not only positive prefigurations but also negative ones.

⁸² *Christiernus II, król duński i szwedzki* (Toruń 1684).

⁸³ *Viator*, MS Ossolineum (Biblioteka Pawlikowskich 204, p. 117-126v). Published first by Lewanski, *DS* 4:419-60, and again by Okoń 1992:48-91.

⁸⁴ Ustępuj, drzewo, w rajskim ogrodzie / Szkodę czyniące w ludzkim narodzie.

Ustąpcie znaki, rzeczy znaczonej, / Ustąpcie cienie, prawdzie spełnionej. (231-4; Okoń 203-6)

⁸⁵ Obrona i posiłek rodzaju ludzkiego / W Ciele jest przeniajświętszym Syna Nawyższego,

W Najświętszym Sakramencie jedynej ofiary, / Gdzie sie sam hojnie daje Bóg, daje przez miary. (III 33-6)

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The former were proof of continuity in the relations with God, the latter - of their renewal in Christ, and of a substantial improvement.

(4) The so-called **accessus-dialogues** were a separate genre, played among the public before the main play, and explaining its contents. As a genre this was an interlude, but actually it was a "prelude". It had two functions, both meta-theatrical: firstly that of the prologue (announcement of the drama with the main line of the action⁸⁶), and secondly, accompanying and enacting the *distributio synopsisium* (handing-out of program sheets)⁸⁷ among the audience. They were also called *arguments*, *synopses* or *periochae*, and contained lists of figures and players, and a short summary of the action. The texts abound with references to the audience, to its language or languages, to personal connections between people from the audience with the players (their sons). There is, finally, some instruction (explicit or implicit) on how to behave as an audience. The program sheets themselves are part of the subject matter – what they are, how to use them: “If you cannot read, give it to someone who can”, “I want that copy with bold characters”⁸⁸, “I’ll read it later after I’ve found my glasses”, etc. The dialogue itself may be a quarrel between members of the audience, who also comment the sheets being handed out. Even the making of the summary itself can be enacted, as well as the distribution of the sheets: In the *Prologus Rusticus...*, after the pagan god Pushaitis has given the explanation of the dream, the sacrificer asks him to write it on a card for better remembrance (111-2); the god "prints" it with his hand on paper and sends out the players with the cards.

A pure example of an *accessus* dialogue was found in another codex. Let us call it after its incipit **Hey ia ia!** (Sort of “Wow!”, a simpleton expressing admiration seeing the stage prepared for the performance)⁸⁹. It preceded a Eucharistic play performed on Corpus Christi in 1677⁹⁰, whose central motif (victorious bread, Judges 7:13-14) resembles that of the other play and its prelude (the Host victorious over Vitenes). I’ve called it 'pure' because of its relative simplicity. It starts with a speech by a *boioraytis* (Lithuanian peasant), who praises the beauty of the stage. After his almost all-Lithuanian

⁸⁶ “...osobna forma intermedyum wstępnego, tzw. *Accessus ad comoediam*, w którym miasto afiszu drukowanego podawano publiczności ogłoszenie co do treści widowiska” (Windakiewicz 1902:171, with a short discussion of other examples from the printed sources, as well as from codices).

⁸⁷ Polish genre name: *sumariusz teatralny*.

⁸⁸ According to Lewański (*DS* 6:708) the shorter (mostly handwritten) programs are meant here; they consisted only of the title and a short “argument”.

⁸⁹ Published by Brückner (1891:222-3), from the now lost MS in the Załuski collection (Q XIV, 10, f. 297); 42 lines, mostly in couplets.

⁹⁰ *Chleb zwycięski w Gedeonie nad Madyanitami tryumfującym figurowany, od szlachetney młodzi Studenskiej collegium Kroskiego Soc. Jes., w dzien Bożego Ciała reprezentowany 1677 a P. G. Szymkiewicz prof. rhet.* (Victorious Bread figured in Gedeon triumphant over the Medyanites, represented in 1677 by the noble student youth of the Kroze college of the Soc. Jesu at the day of Corpus Christi, by father G. Szymkiewicz, professor of rhetorics). We can be almost sure the same Szymkiewicz has also written the introductory dialogue. Brückner 1891:221 has pointed to common peculiarities in language - indicative of the Polish spoken by Lithuanians (replacing of Polish f with p, czy- with ki/ci-, of r with rz, and of k with ch, e.g.: Ak, iak szrogim sen iakis przerzaził mię strzakiem (should be) Ach, iak srogim sen iakiś przerzaził mię strachem; kitam for czytam, prez for przez, etc., id. 214).

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monologue, he asks in Polish what it is going to be today; a short playful quarrel follows with another (Polish?) peasant: "A comedy will be played". Its content is signaled with one sentence.

The functions of the first prelude deserve more attention. It not only briefly tells the action of the main play, but also mirrors its central motif and frames it. The frame suggests a diabolic conspiracy behind the sacrilege perpetrated by the pagan duke. The conspiracy motif proves, by the way, the existence of pagan rites and beliefs: The old gods who won't appear after the first prayers, are invited in an imperative way, as a matter of fact are "forced" to show up with ritual dances, "without dances no sacrifice for these gods, the dance is a sacrifice for the devil" (71-2, Br. 219). This paganization and diabolization of dance is an interesting point for comparison with the Spanish custom of allowing dances even in religious processions⁹¹, and even at some points of the liturgy⁹².

That the prologues of Eucharistic dramas are not playful is a matter of course. But even some interludes are completely serious:⁹³ They serve as a theological frame, or focus attention on an aspect of the play, e.g. by offering room for the voice of the socially different in a strongly divided society (it was almost a caste system). A very important non-dramatic *Chorus rusticorum*⁹⁴ was delivered in this function – a bitter satire on the exploitation of peasants by the lords. This dimension alone would give the text its great historical importance, but the interlude has also a double internal function. It gives a more discursive explanation to the preceding scene exposing lord's moral maltreatment of his serfs. Desperate peasants eventually throw maledictions against the lord, e.g. "May the devils take you away!". Their chorus is elaborating their position, but it is not just an aria: it sharpens the moral contrast and is a preparation for the next scene's dramatic catastrophe (peripetia) that must have been thought of as an answer to the maledictions and an implicit ordeal. And see – the next act opens with the tragic news about a bad accident of the lord who is dying now.

With this, we are back to the topic: Why is the celebration of CC in Poland so serious?

The meta-theatrical (or self-referring) motifs in the prelude build a bridge between the two worlds: that of the play and the reality. Or, rather, they teach an understanding of the ontological difference between them: It was crucial in liturgical contexts not to mistake the fictitious with the real. In a marriage scene from a Flemish play,

⁹¹ See the dance of St Michael and the Devils, opening the Santa Tecla festivities in Taragona (Bertran 1998:139).

⁹² E.C. Dunn 1989, chp.V: Liturgical Dance as Sacred Drama, pp. 102-121; Browe 115; G. Matern, *Zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Fronleichnamtsfeier besonders in Spanien*, Münster 1962; F.G. Very, *The Spanish Corpus Christi Procession*, Valencia 1962.

⁹³ Cf. one of many instructions of General Aquaviva: Concessit intermedia vulgari lingua, modo non contineat levitatem Religioso indignam (1588, Ordinationes A.P.M.P., MS 35, p. 33, Poplatek 59)

⁹⁴ Delivered in the codex *Tragoediae sacrae* (see note 66), as an interlude *Chorus rusticorum* (inc. Biada nam wielka na te nasze pany!) in the Latin morality play *Antithemius* (between acts III and IV, lines 826-997; pp. 64-9); published separately already in the 17th c. as *Lament chłopski na pany* (ed. by K. Badecki, Lwów 1910).

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performed probably in a church at the main altar, the additional text says: this marriage is valid only in the play, not before God or the world⁹⁵. We have to think of a non-Catholic environment (Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox), and also the audience. Such “quotation marks” were needed as status clarification in the context of Protestant accusations of idolatry. The solemnity of the celebrations can be explained in the same way: They should appear as part of a serious cult, not as a sort of pagan Bacchanalia.

4. Processions - Corpus Christi plays – Eucharistic drama

Finally, the relations between processions and plays should be discussed. On the structural level the extremes are: a tableau/show displayed (drama played) during the procession on a moving stage, for the audience standing along the route, and a procession staged within a drama⁹⁶. The number of possibilities in between depends on how many factors we take into account. The drama can be played before the procession (3), after the procession (4), in one (5) or more parts (6) during one or more stops in the procession.⁹⁷ The general line of development is exclusion of drama from the processions. The plays of the Jesuits were sometimes played in churches, but more and more in schools, and were structured more like tragedies (Windakiewicz 117).

The processions were not any beginning of theater based on dramatic action. They are rather the most complex form of religious and moral instruction using a symbolic-visual channel. Mnemonic constructions (symbols, idols, figures) were visualized in processions before symbolic and meditative forms of cognition and oral and visual communication were replaced by textual-discursive communication and cognition. The maximum amount of action possible here was animation – moving, not acting. The representations involved could bear or hold short text scrolls, the actors involved could say a couple of words or even produce a dialogue turn. But processional representations didn't allow or need real acting based on identification of the player with his figure. It has been shown for the German CC processions (Munich) that the choice of the scenes and their composition were not primarily dramatic: Some of them had motifs with dramatic potential, but this potential was not the reason for them being used, nor was any historical precision aimed at (Sengpiel 34f). As Mary Carruthers has shown (1998:72), mnemonic constructions have to be “cognitively useful”: to help us “think in pictures” and are not concerned with coherence, nor do they need any longer narrative perspective. Invented for better remembering, they want to cognitively dominate the very moment of their reproduction in a spontaneous way. And they cannot go beyond their discrete nature without special efforts. To sum up: The processions could not become meaningful action streams based on coherent stories.

⁹⁵ Ramakers 1996:379: “Dese trouwe nu hier geschiedt den spele ter eeren, maer sy en sal niet beduyden voor God.”

⁹⁶ *Wieczera wielka* (1687) is closing with a procession of modern kings whose reverence for the eucharist was exemplary.

⁹⁷ Other possibilities in Brooks 1933:142-4.

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Drama of action is working through empathy and imagination, both impossible without identification of the audience with the individualized human players.

It is the 16-17th c. plays that actually discuss the Corpus Christi (the Eucharist), not the late medieval cycles of mystery plays. They are called in England Corpus Christi cycles, but the evidence of their being performed on Corpus Christi days is not very strong. The Eucharistic subject is even more common in late medieval miracle plays⁹⁸, not in the cycles. If the frequency of performance of cycles during the CC feast hardly justifies the name “CC-cycle”, the question should be asked, then, if we should maintain this label - Corpus Christi plays - for the repertory of the early modern humanist school theater connected with the *festum Corporis Christi*. The evidence for the Corpus Christi processions before 1500 is not very impressive at all. In the magisterial manual of liturgy, Guillelmus Durandus' *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*, printed in 1484, the mention of the Corpus Christi is almost difficult to find: it doesn't have any subtitle of its own, and was apparently added to the chapter on the first Sunday after Pentecost⁹⁹. Anyway, we are dealing with a phenomenon which was more or less the same all the time. The reason for continuation (in spite of differences) is the same concept of the altar sacrament, not changed substantially since the Fourth Lateran Council (1215, Geary 460):

“There is indeed one universal church of the faithful, outside of which no man at all is saved, in which Jesus Christ is both the priest and the sacrifice, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the species of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body, and the wine into the blood by the divine power, in order that, to accomplish the mystery of unity, we ourselves may receive of His that which He received of ours. This sacrament no one can perform but a priest, who has been duly ordained, according to the keys of the church, which Jesus Christ Himself granted to the apostles and their successors.”

The Thirteenth Session of the Council of Trent (October, 1551), *Decree concerning the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist*:

And because that Christ, our Redeemer, declared that which He offered under the species of bread to be truly His own body, therefore has it ever been a firm belief in the Church of God, and this holy Synod doth now declare it anew, that, by the consecration of the bread and of the wine, a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood; which conversion is, by the holy Catholic Church, suitably and properly called Transubstantiation¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁸ E.g. *Play of the Sacrament* (in:) *Non-cycle plays and fragments*, ed. N. Davis, London 1970, s. lxx-lxxxv, 58-89; new ed. by J. Coldewey.

⁹⁹ Et est sciendum quod urbanus papa quartus statuit fieri festum de corpore christi quinta feria post hanc dominicam, concedens magnam indulgentiam tam clericis officiantibus quam populi convenientibus... (Lib. VI, Folium 230). No mention of CC is given in the *Agenda Vilnensis* of 1494; the only procession is: “Collecte in die Sancti Marci sive in Rogationibus ad processionem dicende” (f. 54-7).

¹⁰⁰ *The Council of Trent, Canons and Decrees*, Edited By J. Waterworth (Chicago, 1848) Scanned by Hanover College students, 1995 (<http://www.hanover.edu>).

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There is, however, only scarce evidence of continuity in the repertory of plays. Students of early German and Swiss Jesuit drama suggest a connection, but this is obvious because the parochial and the Jesuit paratheatrical processions co-existed in time. For Poland in the extant non-Jesuit codices we have some examples of common traditions, like the cycles of 4 actiuncula for the procession, or proofs for using subject matters from medieval exempla (not plays) by Jesuit authors¹⁰¹.

Should we declare the sequence: CC-cycles – Eucharistic plays to be contingent? Not necessarily, if we refer to the two aspects of Corpus Christi: the social dimension of the *corpus mysticum* and the spiritual dimension of the Eucharist¹⁰². This shift from a horizontal to a vertical communication with the sacred, and from bodily/existential to mental/lingual experience thereof can be recognized as a development. It is only possible on a stable fundament created by the possibility of communication with the sacred, and the facticity of its experience.

¹⁰¹ It has been proved by Stender-Petersen (1931:274) for the drama comicum *Odostratocles* (with reference to *Legenda aurea* LI:3).

¹⁰² H. de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: l'eucharistie et l'église au moyen âge*, Paris 1949.

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