

Virginity Is Good but Marriage Is Better:  
Stefan Iavors'kyi's *Vynohrad Khrystov* (1698) as  
Emblematic Praise of Marriage\*

MARIA GRAZIA BARTOLINI

INTRODUCTION

BORN INTO A UNIATE FAMILY in the town of Iavor (today Iavoriv), Stefan (Symeon) Iavors'kyi (1656–1722) was a man of many talents and roles. A scholar well versed in neo-Latin and Polish literature and culture and a churchman of distinguished service in the Hetmanate and in Petrine Russia, he was known not only as one of the most educated persons of his day but also as an effective preacher. It was the eulogy he delivered in February 1700 at the funeral of the boyar Aleksei Shein that attracted the attention of Peter I and persuaded the young tsar to ask Iavors'kyi to remain in Moscow, where he would bring his repertoire of Humanist poetics and Latin-Polish culture.<sup>1</sup> While his homiletic production as a member of the Russian church has attracted considerable interest, the sermons that he wrote and delivered during the Ukrainian period of his life remain largely unexplored. The main reason for this neglect is not hard to determine. Iavors'kyi's Ukrainian sermons exist only in manuscript form and are therefore not easily accessible. This

---

\* This work was supported by a grant from the National Science Centre (Poland) for the project *Polish Literary and Cultural Patterns in the Russian Tsardom at the Turn of the 17th and 18th Centuries: The Case of Stefan Jaworski (Polskie wzorce literackie i kulturowe w Rosji na przełomie XVII i XVIII wieku: przypadek Stefana Jaworskiego)*, OPUS, UMO-2017/25/B/HS2/00932. The author would like to thank the anonymous readers of *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* for their comments and suggestions.

1. On Stefan Iavors'kyi's life and works, see the classic studies of Filipp A. Ternovskii, "Mitropolit Stefan Iavorskii: Bibliograficheskii ocherk," *Trudy Kievskoi Dukhovnoi Akademii*, 1864, no. 5 (May): 36–70, and Iurii F. Samarin, *Stefan Iavorskii i Feofan Prokopovich* (Moscow: Tipografia A. I. Mamontova, 1880).

article aims to advance discussion on this subject by focusing on the only Ukrainian sermon that was printed during his lifetime, *Vynohrad Khrystov trema litorasliamy divstvuiushchyykh, vdovstvuiushchyykh i supruzhnykh [...]*.<sup>2</sup>

Preached to Ivan Mazepa and his courtiers in Trinity Church in Baturyn in January 1698, *Vynohrad Khrystov* was composed to celebrate the wedding of Ivan Obydovs'kyi, Mazepa's nephew and Iavors'kyi's former student at the Kyiv Mohyla College, and Hanna Kochubei, the younger daughter of Mazepa's close associate Vasyl' Kochubei.<sup>3</sup> Iavors'kyi's affiliation with Mazepa probably originated in the late 1680s, when he returned to Kyiv from his studies at the Jesuit colleges of Lublin, Poznań, and Vilnius. In 1689 he had dedicated a panegyric to Mazepa, *Echo głosu wołającego na puszczy* (Kyiv, 1689), a complex, bilingual construction with poems in Latin and Polish that used mythological allusions to celebrate the new hetman.<sup>4</sup> As he acknowledges in the dedicatory epistle opening *Vynohrad Khrystov*, after his return from abroad (*vozvratyvshysia z nauk, z polskykh storon*), Mazepa helped him establish his career as a teacher and churchman, lavishing him with the "benefactions of his grace" (*Vashei dobrodiia...blahodiianii*) to which he ascribes, in a self-effacing gesture that is probably not simply rhetorical, "what I am, what I am able to do, what I have."<sup>5</sup> In light of their relationship, it is not surprising that Mazepa would request that Iavors'kyi, who, at the age of forty, was the hegumen of St. Nicholas Monastery in Kyiv and one of the most prominent Ukrainian churchmen of that time, prepare a sermon for his nephew's marriage. What is worthy of

2. *Vynohrad Khrystov trema litorasliamy divstvuiushchyykh, vdovstvuiushchyykh i supruzhnykh [...]* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1698). For bibliographical information on this work, see Aleksandra Guseva, Tat'iana Kameneva, and Irina Polonskaia, *Ukrainskie knigi kirillovskoi pechati XVI–XVIII vv.: Kievskie izdaniia vtoroi poloviny XVII v.* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia biblioteka im. Lenina, 1981), no. 34; Iaroslav Isaievych and Iakym Zapasko, *Pam'iatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva: Kataloh starodrukiv vydanykh na Ukraini; Knyha persha* (Lviv: Vyshcha shkola, 1981), no. 736.

3. On Ivan Obydovs'kyi (1676–1701), see Tat'iana Tairova-Iakovleva, *Mazepa* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2007), 134–37, 145–46. The son of Pavlo Obydovs'kyi and Oleksandra Stepanivna Mazepa, Mazepa's sister, Ivan Obydovs'kyi was raised by his powerful uncle. In 1693 he completed his education at the Kyiv Mohyla College, where he attended Iavors'kyi's rhetoric class. In 1695, aged nineteen, he was appointed commander of the Nizhyn regiment. He died in February 1701 while fighting against the Swedes in the Great Northern War.

4. Isaievych and Zapasko, *Pam'iatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva*, no. 657.

5. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, second unnumbered leaf (r.) of the dedicatory epistle. Quotations from the text have been transliterated according to Ukrainian conventions; e.g., и and ъ are both represented by y, and ѣ as i. The letter ï is transliterated as ĭ.

attention, however, is Iavors'kyi's decision to focus his message on the preeminence of marriage among the sacraments and to reinforce this notion with an allegorical picture (fig. 1, below) that prefaces the version of the sermon which appeared in print at Mazepa's request in the fall of the same year (*moiu propovid' pervoe typom izdannuiu...v sie osinnoe vremia*).<sup>6</sup> Engraved by Feodor A., a minor Ukrainian artist active at the end of the seventeenth century, the picture departs from convention in several ways.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the illustrations opening other Ukrainian marriage sermons (fig. 2, below), it does not offer a realistic representation of the sacrament in its church setting but visualizes the title of the sermon, a vineyard (*vynohrad*), accompanying it with biblical verses that function as keys to its allegorical meaning. Thus, Iavors'kyi took the step, hardly foreign to men of letters in the seventeenth century, of incorporating into his sermon another generic element, that of the emblem book, with its characteristic combination of word and image. The important role of emblematics in the Kyiv Mohyla College and the Jesuit circles of seventeenth-century Poland, which were the settings of Iavors'kyi's education, has already been discussed elsewhere and hardly needs emphasizing.<sup>8</sup> One of the distinctive features of the five works printed during Iavors'kyi's Ukrainian period is indeed the frequency with which they combine word and images. Besides *Vynohrad Khrystov*, the panegyrics *Echo głosu wołającego na puszczy* (1689), *Arctos avitorum illustrissimi Archipastoris syderum* (Kyiv, 1690), and *Pełnia Księżyca w klejnocie świecącego z trzech luminarzów Barlaamów* (Kyiv, 1691), the latter two of which were dedicated to his teacher and mentor Varlaam Iasyns'kyi (1627–1707), also incorporate emblematic figures.<sup>9</sup> Only his first panegyric to Iasyns'kyi, *Hercules post Atlantem infracto virtutum*

6. Ibid.

7. On Feodor A., see Dmitrii A. Rovinskii, *Podrobnyi slovar' russkikh graverov XVI–XIX vv.*, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Imperial'noi Akademii Nauk, 1895), 2:1246, and Pavlo Popov, *Materialy do slovnyka ukraïns'kykh hraveriv* (Kyiv, 1927), 32. According to Rovinskii, Feodor A. may have acquired his education in Western Europe.

8. See the seminal works of Dmytro Chyzhevs'kyi, *Ukraïns'ke literaturne baroko* (Kyiv: Instytut literatury im. T. H. Shevchenka, 2003) [Prague, 1941–44], 189–225; Janusz Pelc, *Obraz – słowo – znak: Studia o emblematyce w literaturze staropolskiej* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1973); Anthony Hippisley, "The Emblem in the Writings of Simeon Polockij," *Slavic and East European Journal* 15, no. 2 (Summer 1971): 167–83; Walter Kroll, *Heraldische Dichtung bei den Slaven: Mit einer Bibliographie zur Rezeption der Heraldik und Emblematik bei den Slaven (16.–18. Jh.)* (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz, 1986).

9. On *Arctos* and *Pełnia*, which were illustrated by the talented engravers Ivan (Inokentii) Shchyr's'kyi and Oleksander (Antonii) Tarasevych, see Isaievych and Zapasko, *Pam'iatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva*, nos. 663 and 671.



Figure 1. *Vynohrad Khrystov*. Kyiv: Lavra, 1698. Title page. Reproduced with permission from *Siverians 'kyi litopys*, 2006, no. 6, 116.

*robore honorarium pondus sustinens* (Chernihiv, 1684), does not feature any illustrations.<sup>10</sup>

As we know, Iavors 'kyi's library was stocked with an adequate selection of Jesuit emblem books, and for this sermon he may have emulated such texts as Henricus Engelgrave's *Lux evangelica* (Antwerp, 1654), a

10. *Ibid.*, no. 620.



Figure 2. Lazar Baranovych. *Truby sloves propovidnykh na narochityia dni prazdnikov*. Kyiv: Lavra, 1674. Engraving prefacing the sermon on marriage (*Slovo o venchanii*). Courtesy of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv.

collection of sermons prefaced by lavish copperplates with emblems and mottoes taken from the Bible.<sup>11</sup> Whatever the immediate source of inspiration, *Vynohrad Khrystov* is firmly situated in the baroque semiotic universe—what Theodore Greene calls the *mundus significans*<sup>12</sup>—with its promotion of bimedial genres that combined text and image to foster the reader’s memory and understanding.

Iavors’kyi scholars have paid some attention to *Vynohrad Khrystov*, but they have treated its textual and visual components as distinct parts.<sup>13</sup> My aim here is to redirect the focus to an analysis of the text

11. The books in Iavors’kyi’s library, whose catalogue was published by Sergei Maslov (*Biblioteka Stefana Iavorskogo* [Kyiv: Biblioteka M. T. Meinandera, 1914]), included leading practitioners and theorists in the field of the emblem, such as Henricus Engelgrave, Hermann Hugo, Otto Vaenius, Jeremias Drexel, Maximilian Sandaeus, and Sebastian a Matre Dei.

12. Theodore M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982), 20.

13. On this sermon, see Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, “Omiletica barocca di scuola polacca: Due uomini, due stili,” in *Per Jan Slaski: Magiaristi, polonisti, slavisti italiani festeggiano*

and its illustration as part of a single discourse, one that creates that “mutually illuminating combination of word and picture which is central to the emblematic method.”<sup>14</sup> In the first section I discuss the sermon and its sources, reflecting on how textual motifs are translated into visual ones and how text and image alike highlight certain aspects of Iavors’kyi’s theology of marriage. Next, I consider his understanding of the nature and purpose of marriage. Marriage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was an object of criticism and religious reform among all Christian denominations, and *Vynohrad Khrystov*, as well as other Ukrainian marriage sermons, is a rich source for the history of early modern marriage doctrines and the way they were disseminated among ordinary men and women.<sup>15</sup> Unlike his *Kamen’ very* (Moscow, 1728), which was written in Church Slavonic and addressed to a primarily male religious audience, *Vynohrad Khrystov* was written in a mixture of Church Slavonic and vernacular Ukrainian, a linguistic choice that suggests a larger—and local—audience, lay and clerical alike. Reading it as a text designed for a specific occasion and a particular audience that we can tentatively define as “middle class”—and therefore an event as well as a text—shows Iavors’kyi addressing the specific concerns of his congregation.<sup>16</sup> While this sermon cannot tell us what early modern marriage was like, it does provide a useful insight into the changes, continuities, and contradictions of its representation. More important, it shows how Iavors’kyi combined the visual and the verbal to offer his audience a carefully constructed system of images that would foster acceptance of marriage as both a spiritual and a social institution.

---

*il suo settantesimo compleanno con scritti curati e raccolti da Andrea Ceccherelli*, ed. Andrea Ceccherelli (Padua: Unipress, 2005), 39–50; Walter Kroll, “Wie übersetzt man Embleme? Am Beispiel der Emblem- und Emblematikrezeption im Kiever Kulturmodell der Barockzeit,” *Rocznik Komparatystyczny—Komparatistisches Jahrbuch* 5 (2014): 197–225, esp. 220–23.

14. Dieter Mehl, “Emblems in English Renaissance Drama,” *Renaissance Drama* 2 (1969): 46.

15. Useful surveys of the development of the theology of marriage can be found in Philip L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); David d’Avray, *Medieval Marriage: Symbolism and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Christopher N. L. Brooke, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

16. On the importance of looking at sermons as events, see Mary Morrissey, “Interdisciplinarity and the Study of Early Modern Sermons,” *Historical Journal* 42, no. 4 (1999): 1111–23, esp. 1115–16, 1121–23.

A GARDEN OF MANY FRUITS: THE SERMON AND  
ITS ILLUSTRATED TITLE PAGE

Before I turn to the sermon in detail, it is necessary to pause and examine its illustrated title page, which includes a picture, an engraved title, and a number of scriptural references that use the keyword “vineyard” (*vynohrad*). There is a clear demarcation between the upper and lower registers of the picture. The upper register shows Christ and the God-head sitting on clouds, while three rays of heavenly light radiate from the dove of the Holy Spirit, placed in the center. The rays stream downward, illuminating the eagle of the coat of arms of the Obydovs’kyi family, which occupies the center of the page, spanning the distance between the earthly and heavenly spheres of the picture. The biblical quotations inscribed in the rays—“And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell” (Song 2:13); “I had planted thee a noble vine” (Jeremiah 2:21); “Our vines have tender grapes” (Song 2:15)—recall and amplify, in typically baroque fashion, the lexical components of the title.<sup>17</sup> On the lower, terrestrial level of the image, three vines heavy with grapes grow inside a garden protected by an elegant palisade—the *hortus conclusus* of the Song of Songs and of medieval devotions. A quotation from the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen in Matthew 21:33 (“a certain householder...planted a vineyard and hedged it round about”) projects the enclosed garden into the realm of biblical typology, just as in traditional Christian exegesis the vineyard of the parable represents Christ’s visible church on earth. While all three vines are rich in fruits—the notion of fertility being recalled by a quotation from Psalm 84:13 placed inside the garden (“the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase”)—they differ in height. The central vine is much taller than the others. On its top, graciously illuminated by the heavenly light emanating from the Trinity, the eagle of the Obydovs’kyis sits on a nest, surmounted by a quotation from Psalm 79:15–16 (“O God...look down from Heaven and behold and visit this vineyard...which thy right hand hath planted”), another verse that Christian exegesis interprets as referencing the church.<sup>18</sup>

---

17. All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version unless stated otherwise. The numeration of the Psalms follows the Greek numbering, as in the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic liturgical traditions.

18. See, e.g., the commentary on Matthew 20 in the *Commentarius in quatuor Evangelia* (Antwerp, 1636) by the influential Flemish Jesuit Cornelius a Lapide and the entry “vitis” in Hieronymus Laurentus, *Sylva allegoriarum totius Sacrae Scripturae* (Lyon, 1622), a massive, alphabetically organized compendium of biblical significations: “vineae multas continens vites significat Ecclesiam universalem, Psalm. 79.” Both books, which

Appositely mirroring this tripartite image, the sermon is divided into three parts that build on the trope of the three vines and their fruits, offering an explanation of the vineyard and its allegorical meanings. The first part of the sermon is an exegetical discussion on the Gospel of the day “Good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 18:18–30). Here Iavors’kyi addresses the first clause of his text, arguing that there are three ways that allow us to inherit eternal life (*try sut’ dorohy do neba*).<sup>19</sup> He sets out to explain the nature of these three avenues by recounting the story, told in Genesis 40:9–10, of the butler of the king of Egypt who had a dream about a vine, “and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes.”<sup>20</sup> He then clarifies that, according to some Church Fathers, the vine represents the church (*znamenuet tserkov*) while the three branches represent the “three states” (*troiakii chyn*) of virgins (*chyn divstvuiushchykh*), widows (*chyn vdovstvuiushchykh*), and married folk (*chyn supruzhnykh*), which bring forth fruit to the Holy Trinity—one hundred-, sixty-, and thirtyfold, respectively—with a further arboreal reference, this time to the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:23.<sup>21</sup>

For this passage Iavors’kyi draws closely on the Sermon on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany by the French preacher Pierre de Besse (1567–1639). Although de Besse is largely forgotten today, he was extremely influential in his time, and his collected sermons, *Conciones siue conceptus theologici* (Cologne, 1611), figured among the books in Iavors’kyi’s library.<sup>22</sup> In the Sermon on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany, which is based on John 2:1 (the wedding at Cana), de Besse explains that the three branches in the butler’s dream (*tres propagine*) stand for the three states of virgins, widows, and married people (*tres illos statos, virginitatem scilicet, viduitatem et coniugium*), which Jerome interpreted as the hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold fruit in the Parable of the Sower (*ut quidem exponit Hyeronimus*).<sup>23</sup> While the audience might not have recognized Iavors’kyi’s silent incorpora-

---

had ample circulation in the early modern period, were part of Iavors’kyi’s library (Maslov, *Biblioteka Stefana Iavorskogo*, nos. 6 and 35).

19. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 1r.

20. *Ibid.*, 1v.

21. *Ibid.*, 2r.

22. See Maslov, *Biblioteka Stefana Iavorskogo*, no. 162. On Pierre de Besse, see Antoine Albert and Jean-François de Lacour, *Dictionnaire portatif des prédicateurs françois dont les sermons...sont imprimés avec de courtes analyses de tous les traités de l’éloquence de la chaire qui ont paru en françois* (Lyon: P. Bruyset-Ponthus, 1757), 29–33.

23. *Conciones siue conceptus theologici, ac praedicabiles* (Cologne, 1620), 91.

tion of de Besse's argument into his own words, the most theologically learned among his listeners might have noted his reference to the early Christian and medieval practice of dividing the faithful into consecrated virgins, consecrated widows, and married folk, with ascending degrees of dignity. In particular, in his *Against Jovinianum*, a work that enjoyed great popularity in the Middle Ages, Jerome interpreted the thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and hundredfold fruit in the Parable of the Sower as the eternal rewards of marriage, consecrated widowhood, and consecrated virginity, respectively. This threefold division implied, in turn, a choice between the secular vocation of marriage and the spiritual vocation of celibate holiness, which, by virtue of its withdrawal from the world, occupied the highest position.<sup>24</sup>

This idea was not new in the context of Ukrainian marriage preaching. In the *Predmova pri shliube*, a model marriage sermon printed in the *Trebnyk* (Kyiv, 1646), Petro Mohyla explains that humanity is divided into three states—virgins (*stan panenskii*), widows (*stan vdovii*), and married folk (*stan malzhenskii*)—and that there is a correspondence between these three states and the birds, pure animals, and reptiles in Noah's ark.<sup>25</sup> The comparison between the three states and the threefold structure of Noah's ark in de Besse's sermon (*In Noe arca... nonnisi tria cubacula reperire erat... triplicem ecclesiae statum per tristegam hanc fabricam designari: virginum, viduarum et coniugatorum*) suggests that the French preacher may have supplied the main argument also for Mohyla, whose inscription, dated 30 May 1639, can be found on a copy of *Conciones siue conceptus theologici* that had previously belonged to Taras Zemka.<sup>26</sup> However, the use of triplets as prototypes of the division of society into three orders was widespread in medieval culture,

24. *Adversus Iovinianum* I.3; II.19 (*Patrologia Latina* 23, 212B–214A; 313C–314C). For an overview of the patristic treatment of the motif of the “three yields” in the Parable of the Sower, see James Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009), 425–28.

25. *Trebnyk* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1646), 922. An earlier version of this sermon appeared in Polish under the title *Mowa duchowna* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1645) and was delivered by Mohyla on the occasion of the marriage of Jan Radziwiłł with the daughter of the Moldovan prince Vasile Lupu (Isaievych and Zapasko, *Pam'iatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva*, no. 344). On the relation between the *Predmova pri shliube* and the *Mowa duchowna*, see Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, “Arte della predicazione nell'Ucraina del Seicento: La ‘Mowa duchowna’ di Pietro Mohyla e la variante del Trebnyk,” in *Die slavischen Grenzen Mitteleuropas: Festschrift für Sergio Bonazza*, ed. Stefano Aloe (Munich: Otto Sagner, 2008), 66–77.

26. On the presence of de Besse's *Conciones* in Mohyla's library, see Liudmila V. Charipova, *Latin Books and the Eastern Orthodox Clerical Elite in Kiev, 1632–1780* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 70. A comparison between the three

where it became commonplace in popular literature and sermons.<sup>27</sup> Following the authoritative models established by de Besse and Mohyla, Iavors'kyi equally draws on the “profusion of overlapping and often confusing ways to divide society into...twos and threes,”<sup>28</sup> which was well established in the Latin West, and uses it as the main rhetorical building block of his sermon.

The social implications of the biblical imagery in *Vynohrad Khrystov* are adduced later in this article. Of concern now is the way Iavors'kyi describes his three branches. The first branch, virgins—whose task, he explains, quoting Augustine, is “to fill heaven”—burrow their virginity “in the earth of their body,” like the servant in the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14–30 (*aky drazhaishii talant v zemli tila svoeho...sokhraniat*).<sup>29</sup> The Parable of the Talents, in which a master gives five talents, three talents, and one talent, respectively, to his servants, was also used as a social model in the medieval West.<sup>30</sup> What is interesting here is that Iavors'kyi compares virginity to the “slothful servant” who buried his only talent in the ground, a behavior he had already condemned in the dedication of the sermon to Mazepa, where he used the parable and its moral lesson as a justification for the appearance in print of *Vynohrad Khrystov* (*Khrystos Spasytel' nash ne povelivaet sokryvaty talantov*).<sup>31</sup> Thus, we see here the use of a carefully selected biblical allusion to diminish the value of virginity without openly condemning it. While duly praising the care for “the things that belong to the Lord,” which, according to 1 Corinthians 7:32, is a prerogative of the unmarried, he also makes clear that in the “social economy” of salvation, the not-so-numerous ranks of the virgins—they are the “hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads” of Revelation 14:1—bring forth a scarce fruit, the latter a notion that will play an increasing role in the sermon. Similar if shorter praise of the spiritual benefits of withdrawing from the flesh is reserved for continent

---

states and the three stories of Noah’s ark makes its first appearance in Augustine’s *The City of God* 15.26 (*Patrologia Latina* 41, col. 476).

27. On these divisions, see G. Constable, “The Orders of Society,” in *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 249–360.

28. Paul Edward Dutton, “*Illustre civitatis et populi exemplum*: Plato’s *Timaeus* and the Transmission from Calcidius to the End of the Twelfth Century of a Tripartite Scheme of Society,” *Mediaeval Studies* 45 (1983): 79–119, here 88.

29. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 2r.

30. Constable, “Orders of Society,” 265.

31. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, first unnumbered leaf (v.) of the dedicatory epistle.

widows, whose biblical antecedents include Judith, the widow from the city of Nain in Luke 7:11–17, and Anna the Prophetess.<sup>32</sup>

Iavors'kyi has thus acknowledged that virginity and sexual continence are a good thing. However, the entire final section of this first part is concerned with eradicating the medieval model that situates virginity as the pinnacle of virtue and replacing it with a vision in which marriage occupies the highest place. The transition from the previous two states is effected largely through the construction of an image system based on the notions of growth, replenishment, and multiplication, in pointed contrast to the “only talent buried in the ground” by virgins. The vine of marriage, Iavors'kyi argues, is fertile (*blahoprorstitel'naia*), bringing forth beautiful flowers (*prekrasnye tsvity*), the sweetest grapes (*presladkie hrozdy*), and pleasing fruits (*blahoprüiatnye plody*). For this reason, he explains, during the Orthodox wedding liturgy we sing “thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine” (Psalm 127:3), a verse to which he would later return. Moreover, while the first two states “fill heaven and not earth” (*nebo tolko a ne zemliu svoim plodom napolniaiut*), married people “fill both earth and heaven” (*i nebo i zemliu napolniaet*).<sup>33</sup> In fact, “it is easier to count the stars in the sky than the innumerable married couples living in heaven” (*bo latvii zvizdykh na tverdoi nebesnoi ischytaty nezhely sviatykh supruzhnykh v neuviadaemoi slavi nebesnoi zhivushchykh*), a statement that attests to the late-medieval and early modern emergence of a new model of saintliness within marriage, which has been explored by Marc Glasser in an influential essay.<sup>34</sup>

Iavors'kyi's “demographic” argument—that married people are far more numerous than the other two states—takes further shape in the biological truism that one needs married people to give birth to virgins and widows (*ni...moshchno byty ashche ne ot supruzhestvuiushchykh svoeho nachala vospriimut i bytiia*).<sup>35</sup> Here Iavors'kyi is relying again on the authority of de Besse, who, in the Sermon on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany, compares the three states to a tree (*triplicem hunc statum arbori procerissimae comparator*): Married people are the roots that make the very existence of the tree possible (*sine quo...nequeant consistere*), while virgins and widows represent the branches (*rami vero prominentes ipsa virginitas et continentia*), as their chaste conduct proj-

32. Ibid., 3v.

33. Ibid., 4v.

34. Marc Glasser, “Marriage in Medieval Hagiography,” *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 4 (1981): 3–34.

35. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 4v.

ects them toward heavenly things.<sup>36</sup> There is, however, a fundamental shift of emphasis. While de Besse's arboreal metaphor accords married people an indispensable yet lower position, in a variation on the medieval topos of married people as the lower floor of the Temple of Solomon, Iavors'kyi represents marriage as the tallest and most fruitful of the three branches. In fact, while virginity brings forth "limited fruit" (*lichenyi plod*), marriage is characterized by exuberant fertility (*kol' mnohohoe mnozhestvo*).<sup>37</sup> Here Iavors'kyi plays on the senses of "fruit" (*plod*) as the product of a tree and as a spiritual reward, deliberately rewriting Jerome's theme of the "three yields" (*fructus*) in the Parable of the Sower: While in classic Christian exegesis virginity yields a hundredfold fruit and marriage only thirtyfold, the implication here is that marriage brings the most abundant reward. This reward is both spiritual (a place in heaven) and material (children to fill the earth). Speaking to an audience of lay people and addressing their needs and expectations, Iavors'kyi subverts the long-established tradition of describing marriage as the humblest of the three states within a hierarchically ordered spiritual community (first virgins, then widows, then married folk) and makes this subversion palpably visible in the central branch towering over the others in the titular print. Furthermore, the inclusion of the three branches within the same enclosed garden—a space that adumbrates the church—reinforces the idea that marriage is more than just a secular vocation. Like consecrated virginity and consecrated widowhood, it is a mode of participating in the life of the church—what the medieval authors would call "triplex ecclesiae status."<sup>38</sup>

The primary thesis of the first part of the sermon—that marriage is no less honorable than virginity and that, in propagating the human species, it is the founding principle of society—is fundamental to its longer, second, part, which engages more closely with theological and polemical issues. With typical deftness, Iavors'kyi effects the transition to his second part by means of another arboreal emblem taken from the Bible. Building on the rich vegetal imagery of the first part, he recounts the story of the gourd (*tykva*) in Jonah 4:6. The Lord provided a gourd to protect Jonah, and Jonah was "exceeding glad of the gourd," but the next morning a worm (*cherv'*) smote the gourd. Continuing his exercise

36. *Conciones*, 97–98. Note that Lazar Baranovych's *Slovo o venchanii*, included in the *Truby sloves propovidnykh* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1674), reproduces de Besse's argument almost verbatim. Married people (*supruzheskii san*) are the roots of the tree (*koren'*), for they are entangled in earthly matters, while the branches (*vetvii*) are virgins and widows (*Truby*, 337v).

37. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 5r.

38. Constable, "Orders of Society," 305.

in biblical typology, Iavors'kyi compares the “thrice-accursed heretic Luther” (*treokaiannyi eretyk Liuter*) to the worm in Jonah’s gourd. Like the biblical worm, he tries to destroy the three vines in the vineyard of the Lord (*sie trychyslennye litorasly pohryzty y yskorenyty*). Interestingly, Iavors'kyi’s interpretation of the episode in Jonah 4:6 departs from the received exegesis that identifies the worm with the advent of Christ.<sup>39</sup> Creating his own *Physiologus* of heresy, he interprets the biblical worm through the medieval tradition of imagining heresy through an array of nonhuman creatures that have a reputation for destructive behavior, such as the moth that destroys clothing in Job 13:28 or the foxes that destroy the vineyards in Song 2:15 (“take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes”).<sup>40</sup> The image of the worm-Luther destroying the church’s magnificent clothing appears a few lines below (*tserkvy sviatoi ryzu...snidaiushchii*). Furthermore, in a successful instance of the mutually illuminating relationship of word and image that is typical of the emblematic method, the titular image quotes the second part of Song 2:15 (“for our vines have tender grapes”), thus implying that the fence running around the vineyard of the church serves to protect it from the attacks of “the little foxes that spoil the vines.” This reading of the picture, which assumes a biblically literate reader who is familiar with the unquoted context of the immediate citation, is certainly supported by the following lines of the sermon, in which Iavors'kyi reassures his audience that the church is safely guarded by “the strong fence of the seven councils” (*oplotom tut tverdym...sedmosobornym*).<sup>41</sup> Again, it is notable how the sermon provides both an ekphrastic description and an exegetic comment on the picture on its title page.

Because of the seventeenth century’s inclination to think in analogies and correspondences, it was only natural for Iavors'kyi to see a relationship between Jonah’s gourd and the vineyard of the church, and between the worm eating the gourd and the foxes-heretics destroying the vineyard. What is more important about this passage in the context of the sermon is its emphasis on the rebuttal of Protestant marriage theory and of what he defines as its “ridiculing” of the sac-

---

39. See, e.g., the interpretation of this verse in the *Commentarius in duodecim prophetas minores* (Lyon, 1625) by Cornelius a Lapide, which was held in Iavors'kyi’s library together with the other nine volumes of this famous Commentary.

40. See Beverly Kienzle, “A Bestiary of Heretics: Imaging Medieval Christian Heresy with Insects and Animals,” in *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, ed. Paul Waldau and Kimberley Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 103–16.

41. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 6r.

ramental nature of marriage (*smikhu movyt dostoina veshch est', zhe supruzhestvo nazyvaiut sakramentom albo tainoiu*).<sup>42</sup> Responding to Luther, Iavors'kyi follows Catholic theologians in using Ephesians 5:32 (“this is a great sacrament”) and Hebrews 13:4 (“Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled”) as proof that marriage is a sacrament, a complex notion that the titular image laconically synthesizes in the rays of heavenly light—a visualization of God’s grace—circumfusing the branch that represents marriage.<sup>43</sup> In his assault on the Lutheran error of considering marriage a mere secular institution, Iavors'kyi’s concerns are theological as well as social. In particular, the idea underpinning the use of Hebrews 13:4, that only sacramental grace enables spouses to maintain the bed undefiled, betrays a vision of marriage as a legitimate outlet for sexual drives, one that can guarantee familial order within Christian society.<sup>44</sup> Throughout this section of the sermon, Iavors'kyi is at pains to contrast the irrational disorder of Protestant marriage with the rational solidity of its Orthodox counterpart (*ne tak, ne tak u nas pravoslavnykh*). Lacking sacramental grace, Protestant marriage is no more than institutionalized fornication, and Protestant spouses, he explains dismissively, “copulate like irrational animals” (*aky skoty nesmyslennye...sochetavaiutsia smisheniem*).<sup>45</sup> A variation on the medieval topos of Muslims as abusers of the procreative act, his crude rendition of Protestant marriages as examples of bestiality—as an institution belonging to the sphere of “natural law”—is a powerful re-statement of the role of marriage in the creation of a society dominated by cultural and rational values. Equal concern with the social stability of the family is expressed in his condemnation of the ease of divorce among Protestants (*latvyi rozvod, volnoe razluchenie*) as opposed to the indissolubility of Orthodox marriage (*zheni ot muzha ne razluchaty-sia*). Regulated by love, not by animal instincts, the Orthodox union of husband and wife, Iavors'kyi asserts, is a mirror of the union between Christ and the church, a topos of medieval marriage preaching which takes Christ’s union with the church as the normative exemplar that

---

42. Ibid.

43. On these Pauline quotations, see Brooke, *Medieval Idea*, 54–56.

44. The original formulation of this idea belongs to Augustine (Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments*, 102). The Augustinian idea that the essential goodness of marriage mitigates the evil of sexual pleasure appears also in Antonii Radyvylovs'kyi’s *Slovo o stani malzhenskom*, in *Ohorodok Marii Bogoroditsy* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1676), 1121: “what for widows and virgins is a sin [chto v stani devicheskoi i vdovinom est hrikkhom smertelnym], in marriage is a sacrament [to v stani malzhenskom est sakramentom].”

45. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 6v.

Christian spouses should emulate in their own marriages: The husband should love his wife as Christ loves the church, and the wife should submit to her husband as the church submits to Christ, as prescribed by Paul in Ephesians 5:25.<sup>46</sup>

Iavors'kyi then goes on to analyze the reasons that make marriage Paul's "magnum sacramentum" (*taina siia veliia est*). From this point on, the sermon adopts a new register. In place of the vehement and vituperative language, there is a rather schoolmasterly disquisition on the sacramental nature of marriage. The topoi that appear in this section—God created marriage since the beginning of the world (*zaraz z pochatku svita*); marriage was instituted in Paradise and in a sinless world; Christ was present at the marriage feast in Cana, where he performed his first miracle—are very familiar to readers of late-medieval and early modern marriage sermons.<sup>47</sup> He may have taken them from the vast body of rhetorical handbooks for preachers that were in his library, such as Giovanni da San Gimignano's *Universum predicabile* (*Nuptiae sunt valde commendabiles et solemnnes propter multa...ratione auctor, ratione loci, ratione antiquitatis, ratione status*).<sup>48</sup> Another possible source could be the section "De dignitate matrimonii" in the treatise *De statibus hominum* (Mainz, 1613) by the Mainz Jesuit Johannes Busaeus.<sup>49</sup> However, we should not be misled by the presence of such sources into underestimating Iavors'kyi's own inventiveness. What is important here is his idea that not only does marriage represent the foundation of all the other sacraments (*fundament inshym sakramentom*), it also surpasses them in dignity.<sup>50</sup> To clarify this point, he analyzes in true Scholastic fashion the sacramental composition of marriage—especially its matter, form, and agency. First, marriage is different as far as its matter is concerned (*vzhliadom pochesty materialnoi*) for the matter of this sacrament is man and woman (*sama dvoitsa malzhonkov*). While other sacraments operate through such material mediums as water, bread, or oil, marriage surpasses them in dignity to the degree that human beings

46. Ibid., 7r. On this topos, see Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments*, 65.

47. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 8–9. On these topoi in medieval marriage preaching, see D'Avray, *Medieval Marriage*, 68–69.

48. *Universum praedicabile sive Summa* (Cologne, 1670), 137. The *Universum* was probably composed between 1298 and 1314, while the first printed edition appeared in 1477 (Antoine Dondaine, "La vie et les oeuvres de Jean de San Gimignano," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 9 [1939]: 128–83).

49. *De statibus hominum* (Lyons, 1614), 341ff. Busaeus's book was held in Iavors'kyi's library (Maslov, *Biblioteka Stefana Iavorskogo*, no. 96).

50. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 9r.

surpass mere objects in dignity. From this point, he derives several lessons that combine theology with sustained attention to the social dimension of marriage. Of special interest is his emphasis on the couple and its function in fostering the perpetuity of the human species, an idea first developed by Albert and Thomas Aquinas.<sup>51</sup> First, he argues, while other sacraments are useful only for the person receiving them (*ednoi osobi*) or for heavenly matters (*tolko vzhliadom neba*), marriage is useful “for the whole world” (*vsemu svitu*). Next, marriage makes all the other sacraments possible, for one can be baptized or take communion only if born of marriage (*ashche by chelovik ne rodylsia v supruzhestvi*). Finally, marriage is better than the other sacraments because it must be taken in two (*dvoitsi trebuet*): Just as the sun and moon in heaven influence fertility on earth (*k umnozheniiu plodov zemnykh*), so man and woman on earth contribute to the continuation of the human species (*k umnozheniiu roda chelovecheskago*). In a bold theological twist, he then affirms that, whereas in the other sacraments God is present through his grace, in the sacrament of marriage he is present directly through Christ, for Christ and his mother attended the marriage at Cana (*sam Khrystos... prytomnostiu svoeiu onyi sakrament pochtyl v Kani*). If, in the Eucharist, Christ is present in the form of bread and wine (*pod zaslonoiu khliba i vyna ukrytyi*), at Cana he was visible as Himself (*ochevysto i iavno*).<sup>52</sup> The nature of the connection between Christ and the sacrament of marriage is further explored in the following section, where Iavors’kyi employs the medieval topos of the four kinds of Christ’s spiritual marriage (*dukhovnoe supruzhestvo*): to human nature (*z naturoiu chelovicheskoiu*), to the church (*z Tserkoviiu*), to the individual soul, and to the heavenly church triumphant (*uzhe ne zemnoiu voiiiucheiu ale z Tserkoviiu nebesnoiu triumfuiucheiu*), the latter being adumbrated in the “marriage of the Lamb” of Revelation 19.<sup>53</sup>

The final section of the sermon is concerned with a celebration of the bride and groom. The biting anti-Lutheran polemic and Scholastic exactitude of the theological concepts leave room for a mode of address that celebrates the Obydovs’kyis and their grandeur. Iavors’kyi explains the Obydovs’kyi eagle with a verbal image that the picture on the title page reproduces faithfully: It “flies high” (*vysoko toi ptenets*

51. See Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments*, 511.

52. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 9v.

53. *Ibid.*, 11–14. For the topos of the four kinds of marriage, which originated in Cistercian monastic preaching during the twelfth century and appears also in Mohyla’s *Predmova pri shliube*, see Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments*, 57–58.

*vozlitaet*), making its nest in the vine of the married state (*na tretei neboosiazaiushchei supruzhestva sviatoblyvoi litorasly*).<sup>54</sup> In opting for the married state, the peroration continues, “it hath chosen that good part” (*izbrala blaguiu chast*), with an implicit reference to the episode of Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38–42. This biblical allusion requires attention. The use of the image of Martha and Mary was also common in the context of medieval discussions of the orders of society. Martha, who was “troubled about many things,” exemplified the active life and the tribulations of the flesh, while Mary, who “hath chosen that good part,” the contemplative life, is removed from the disturbance of worldly affairs.<sup>55</sup> For Augustine, who comments on this episode in the influential *De bono coniugali*, Martha represents married life, while Mary typifies virginity.<sup>56</sup> In identifying marriage with the “good part,” Iavors’kyi reverses both the axiological order that assigned the married state to the lowest rung of the hierarchy of salvation and the traditional exegesis that equated the “best part” of Mary with becoming a monk or pursuing another form of religious life. Traditionally identified with the unending cycle of worldly preoccupations, here the married state does not prevent the groom from caring about “the things of the Lord” and, indeed, grants him the highest position within the enclosed garden of the church. Therefore, just as in the picture on the title page, the eagle of the Obydovs’kyis mediates between heaven (the Trinity) and earth (the enclosed garden), the matrimonial state, chosen by the eagle, emerges as a particularly apt locus for attaining a synthesis between religious and secular values. This was already evident in the first part of the sermon, where Iavors’kyi argues that “it is easier to count the stars in the sky than the married couples living in heaven.”

Following this description, which combines glorification of the sermon’s addressee with spiritual instruction, the peroration ends with a brief address to the bride that is built around the exegesis of Psalm 127 (“thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine”). The ensuing disquisition on the typological relation between the wife and the vine allows Iavors’kyi to reinstate the sermon’s emphasis on fertility as a notion that has spiritual as well as social implications. Why, he asks, does Psalm 127 establish a parallel between the wife and the vine? Just as vines cannot stand alone (*stoiaty ne mozhet, azh do dereva priviazana budet*), so the wife needs the support of her husband’s love (*tak i zhena malo chto uspiet, ashche*

54. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 16r.

55. Constable, “Orders of Society,” 300.

56. Augustine, *De bono coniugali*, 8 (*Patrologia Latina* 40, col. 379).

*ne soiuzom liubve muzhu svoemu priviazana budet*).<sup>57</sup> Here Iavors'kyi refers to the rhetorical commonplace of the "elm and the vine," a topos of Latin and Renaissance literature suggesting the union of husband and wife. Just as the weak vine needs the strong elm to bear fruit, the wife needs her husband's moral and financial support.<sup>58</sup> Iavors'kyi's use of the image to translate into visual terms the hierarchical relationship between husband and wife has a clear emblematic cast. In Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (Rome, 1593) and Filippo Piccinelli's *Mundus symbolicus* (Cologne, 1687), two standard sources for Renaissance and baroque iconology that were well known among Ukrainian literati, the elm and the vine embody marital union (*vitis natura sua debilis anxie desiderat ulmum, eius vertice nixa sublevari, et, solaribus radiis propinquior, dulcissimos fructus suos procreare possit*).<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, emblems such as "Opis indiga" in the widely circulated *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quattuor* (Nuremberg, 1590) by Joachim Camerarius show a vine bending to the ground without the help of a supporting tree (fig. 3, at right).<sup>60</sup> Additional analogies with the emblematic practice inform the conclusion of Iavors'kyi's exegetical exposition, which, much like other parts of the sermon, can be seen as an exercise in rhetorical *enargeia*, a trope whose primary goal is the vivid evocation of an image. Offering his audience another arboreal exemplum, he continues to clarify the analogical relation between the vine and the wife. Just as vines need sunshine in order to produce good fruits, marriage needs the "solar operation" (*solnechnaia operatsiia*) of Christ's spiritual love. Again, the visual nature of the description brings to mind emblems that display tree imagery, while giving credit for the blooming to Divine intervention, as in Camerarius's "Si serenus illuxerit" (fig. 4, below) or "Non inferiora secutus" (fig. 5, below), which shows a sunflower turning always toward the sun. The very titular image of *Vynohrad Khrystov*, in which the rays of God's sacramental grace illuminate the grapes growing in the enclosed garden, can be seen as an ingenious variation on this motif, one that conflates the traditional biblical metaphor of God as a gardener with a reflection on the social function of marriage.

57. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, 17v.

58. See Peter Demetz, "The Elm and the Vine: Notes towards the History of a Marriage Topos," *PMLA* 73 (1958): 521–32.

59. *Mundus symbolicus* (Cologne, 1687), 603. In the same chapter, see also Piccinelli's interpretation of the emblem "juncta foecundior": "vitis, quo nobiliore ac fortiori arbore sustentantur suaviores fructus profert" (*Mundus symbolicus*, 607).

60. Camerarius's *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quattuor* were held in Simeon Polotskii's library. See Anthony Hppisley and Evgeniia Luk'ianova, *Simeon Polockij's Library: A Catalogue* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2005), 190.

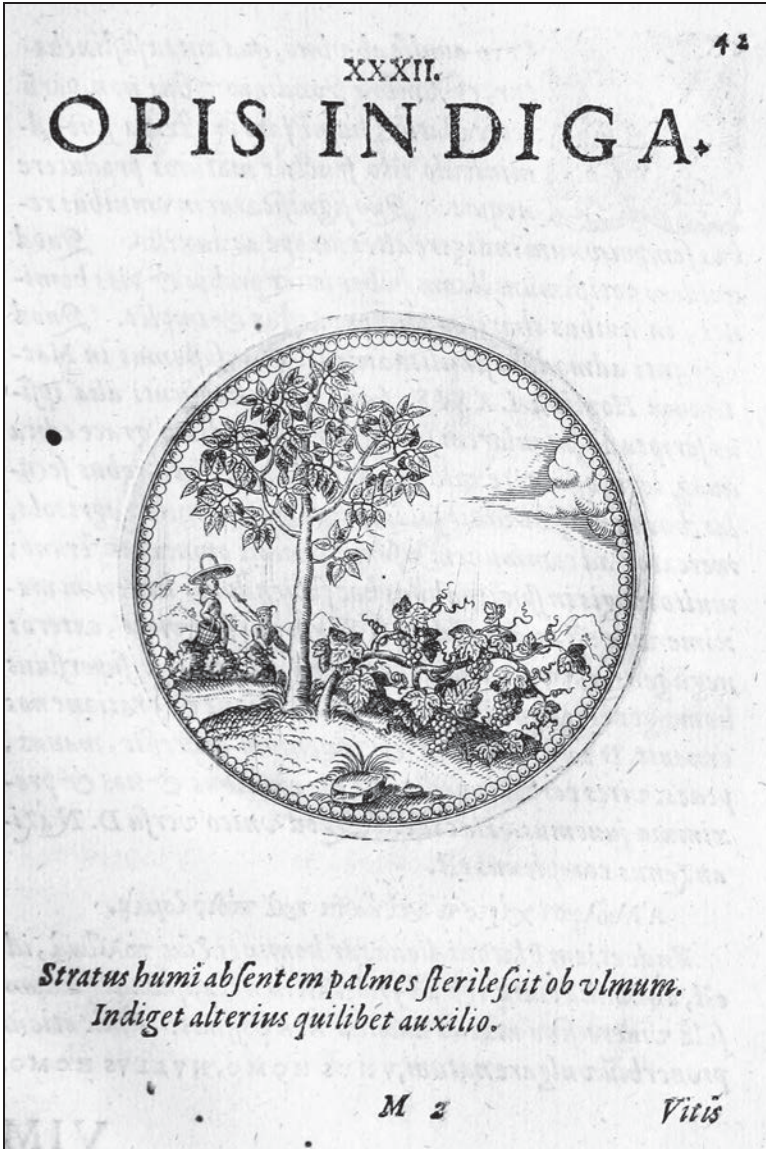


Figure 3. Joachim Camerarius. *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quatuor*. Nuremberg, 1590. Emblem XXXII, "Opis indiga." David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

I.  
SI SERENVS  
ILLVXERIT.



*Mons omni hoc, nisi Sol foueat, viduatur honore.  
Quicquid ages, cassum disperit, absque DEO.*

D 3

*Collis*

Figure 4. Joachim Camerarius. *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quatuor*. Nuremberg, 1590. Emblem I, "Si serenus illuxerit." David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

XLIX.

# NON INFERIO- RA SECVTVS.



*Solis vt hunc florem radiantia lumina versant,  
Dirige sic mentem Christe benigna meam.*

23

Est egre-

Figure 5. Joachim Camerarius. *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quatuor*. Nuremberg, 1590. Emblem XLIX, "Non inferiora secutus." David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

As all growth depends on God's grace (as clarified by the inscription from Psalm 84:13 placed inside the enclosed garden, "The Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase"), Christian marriage, sanctified by God's sacramental grace, is crucial to the growth—material as well as spiritual—of humanity.

#### MOBILIZING THE VISUAL AND THE VERBAL IN THE DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE

*Vynohrad Khrystov* is thus structured around a single picture that captures the essential message of the sermon in visual form, with the three vines symbolizing the three states, and provides a key to its proper understanding. Its intrinsically bimedial nature—that is, both visual and verbal—turns it into what we may call an "emblematic sermon." More specifically, the combination of image and motto (the biblical text) on the title page clearly conforms to emblematic conventions, as does the static combination of natural objects (the vine, the eagle) in a single picture. What we see is not a real garden and a real vine but a mental, antimimetic space that recapitulates the allegorical meanings of the vine in Christian art and allegory (fertility, the good wife, Christ, a foreshadowing of the church, and so on). According to William Heckscher and August Wirth's classic definition of the emblem, the typical emblem presents us with a tripartite semiotic unit in which an epigram (the *subscriptio*) resolves the enigma of the relation of the motto (the *inscriptio*) to the picture (the *pictura*).<sup>61</sup> Taking this definition as a model, we may say that in *Vynohrad Khrystov* the sermon occupies the place that in a conventional tripartite emblem would be called the epigram, or *subscriptio*. Like the epigram, it solves the pictorial enigma (What do the vines and the eagle in the picture represent? What is their relationship to the Trinity?) and its functional relation to the *inscriptio*, whose place is occupied by the biblical quotations placed inside the picture. Thus, the sermon clarifies the meaning of the picture by identifying the enclosed garden with the church, the three vines with the three states, and the eagle with the groom and his illustrious family. The picture, the scriptural references, and the sermon do not, however, have separate existences but are part of a more complex semiotic unit in which the individual components, to use what Andreas Schöne describes as another defining characteristic of the

61. William S. Heckscher and Karl-August Wirth, "Emblem, Emblembuch," in *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1959), cols. 85–228.

emblem, fulfill a dual function of “representation and interpretation, description and explanation.”<sup>62</sup> In other words, the sermon does not simply gloss a meaning that is already complete or intelligible in the picture, nor does the picture merely depict what is described more exhaustively in the sermon. At times the *pictura* sheds additional light on the sermon, as is the case with the truncated quotation from Song 2:15 and its antiheretical subtext. At other times, the sermon introduces what we may call “verbalized emblems” that supply the *pictura* with additional meanings, such as the traditional emblematic motif of the elm and the vine. In this way we understand that the vine on which the eagle of the Obydovs’kyis is sitting comfortably represents marriage but also the good wife of Psalm 127 (*tvoia zhena iako loza plodovita*), and the particular dislocation of these two elements, with the eagle on top of the vine, in turn seems to visualize Paul’s exhortation in Ephesians 5:23 that the husband be the head of the wife.

The use of verbalized emblems and a writing style grounded in *ekphrasis* and *energeia*—that is, literary descriptions of visual images—betrays the influence of the tradition of seventeenth-century Jesuit rhetoric that Fumaroli calls “la rhétorique des peintures.”<sup>63</sup> This style, which Iavors’kyi would have assimilated during his studies in Lublin, Poznań, and Vilnius, privileges metaphors and the vivid description of images in order to illustrate spiritual truths, in continuation of the medieval tradition of studding sermons with verbal *picturae* that would imprint themselves in human memory more effectively than things merely heard. In *Vynohrad Khrystov* we see further evidence of the typically Jesuit concern for the mimetic potential of language in relation to visual objects in the repeated invitations to readers to “look” or “take a look” at what the preacher is saying (*smotrite, hlian’, hlian’mo, hlian’moz’, zrite*), a lexical choice that is associated both with the theological notion of the “mind’s eye” and with the capacity of language to recall a vivid image of the thing described.

Emblematics is thus not a matter of pure entertainment but has a clear rhetorical function. It is a vehicle of meaning in that the visual concurs with the verbal in teaching (*docere*) and persuading (*movere*) the audience to embrace the truths of Christian doctrine. In this sermon, the most obvious purpose of the combination of word and image is to instruct the audience about the status of marriage in the value system of the Kyivan Orthodox Church. The celebration of a particular event—the

62. Andreas Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock* (Munich: Beck, 1964), 22.

63. Marc Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence* (Geneva: Droz, 1980), 675–83.

marriage of Ivan Obydovs´kyi—thus becomes the occasion for a larger discussion of the general meaning of marriage among the Orthodox, in a transition from the particular to the general, which is aptly synthesized in the vertical orientation—from the enclosed garden of the visible church to the Trinity in the clouds—of the title page. At first glance, Iavors´kyi’s teachings on marriage are not particularly remarkable. As has been shown, they include a number of the characteristic *topoi* of medieval and early modern marriage preaching, such as the sacramental character of marriage, marriage as the instrument of procreation and a remedy against fornication, and the obligation of the husband to treat his wife with respect and of the wife to obey.<sup>64</sup> However, if we situate the text in its political and ideological context (if we look at it as an “event”), the circumstances of its delivery, in the presence of Mazepa, make clear that *Vynohrad Khrystov* represents an attempt by those who possessed power and authority to influence the reading of marriage. But why would one need to refashion the symbolic order, acting on the social relations and political claims attached to marriage? After the Protestants refuted its sacred nature, marriage was at stake in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Petro Mohyla’s liturgical reforms of the 1640s declared the exclusive competence of the Orthodox Church in questions of marriage in an attempt to counter Protestant claims and the situation of matrimonial “anarchy” that existed, even though the marriage liturgy in the Byzantine East was a condition of validity as early as the ninth century.<sup>65</sup> Following the Tridentine decrees, Mohyla formulated in his revised *Trebnyk* (Kyiv, 1646) a number of conditions for the validity of marriage: that it be based on consent between husband and wife and publicly celebrated in a church before a priest and at least two witnesses. The *Trebnyk* transformed marriage, to use the words of John Bossy from his discussion of the Tridentine reforms, “from a social process which the church guaranteed to an ecclesiastical process which it administered.”<sup>66</sup> The importance of marriage for the Kyivan

---

64. For an overview of these *topoi*, see David D’Avray and M. Tausche, “Marriage Sermons in ad status Collections of the Central Middle Ages,” in *Modern Questions about Medieval Sermons: Essays on Marriage, Death, and Sanctity*, ed. David D’Avray and Nicole Bériou (Spoleto: Centro italiano di Studi sull’Alto Medioevo, 1980), 77–134.

65. On Mohyla’s reform of marriage, see Antoine Wenger, “Les influences du rituel de Paul V sur le Trebnik de Pierre Moghila,” in *Mélanges en l’honneur de Monseigneur Michel Andrieu* (Strasbourg, 1956), 477–99, esp. 493–94. For a comparison with Muscovy, see Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 85–87.

66. John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 25.

ecclesiastical elites can also be inferred from the sheer space allotted to the analysis of this sacrament in Inokentii Gizel's *Mir s Bohom cheloviku* (Kyiv, 1669), which served as the major East Slavic textbook on moral theology in the seventeenth century: fifty-eight folios (*prostranneishego zhe ucheniia trebe*) against, say, six for the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.<sup>67</sup>

Central to Stefan Iavors'kyi's construction of symbolic idioms that had to ensure the public dissemination of the new rules of the Mohylan marriage are three themes chosen carefully from the spectrum of topoi offered by the tradition of the genre: the essential goodness of marriage as one of the paths leading to heaven, its sacramentality, and its function as an instrument of procreation. These three aspects recapitulate what, according to Augustine's influential doctrine, are the three goods (*tria bona*) of any Christian marriage: children (the *bonum prolis*, represented in the *pictura* by the abundant fruits yielded by the vine), faith (the *bonum fidei*), and sacrament (the *bonum sacramenti*, represented by the rays of light emanating from the Trinity).<sup>68</sup>

Orthodox in his comments on the goals of marriage (procreation, licit satisfaction of sexual desire), Iavors'kyi nonetheless departs from tradition when he argues the superiority of marriage vis-à-vis the other two states, thus providing his readers with a clear break from the ascetic and contemplative ideals of medieval Christianity. While this idea is certainly unusual, it has a precedent in Mohyla's *Predmova pri shliube* (1646), which, to the best of my knowledge, is the first Ukrainian text to establish a symbolic discourse for the preeminence of marriage, although it clearly lacks the powerful display of theological erudition and rhetorical deftness that is typical of Iavors'kyi's defense of the matrimonial state. There the Kyivan metropolitan argues somewhat more laconically that marriage is a sacrament of the church, whereas the virginal or vidual state is not. Therefore, marriage is better because it endows spouses with sacramental grace (*est vyshshym nad tamtyi dva, ponevazh est taemnitseiu albo sakramentom i prychnoiu lasku podavaiuchoiu*).<sup>69</sup>

The idea that marriage conferred sanctifying grace was common among theologians after Trent and had become commonplace in or

67. *Mir s Bohom cheloviku* (Kyiv: Lavra, 1669), 167–207.

68. *Contra Julianum*, 5, 12 (*Patrologia Latina* 44, col. 46). Augustine's triad, which represents the essential framework from later Christian works on marriage, appears also in *Mir s Bohom cheloviku*: "dobra supruzheskaia troistvennaia...chadorodie...vernost' supruzheskaia...taina nerazdelnosti supruzheskoia" (169–70).

69. *Trebnyk*, 926.

by the seventeenth century in Catholic Europe.<sup>70</sup> De Besse, a possible common source behind Mohyla and Iavors'kyi, argues that the fact that marriage was instituted by God grants it an honorable place with respect to virginity and widowhood (*porro inter tres hos vitae Christianae status [status virginalis, vidualis et coniugal] matrimonium eminet et honorem promeretur, velut opus Dei quod ipse nimirum in paradiso terrestri...instituit*).<sup>71</sup> Although no Catholic author, including de Besse, went so far as to state the superiority of marriage vis-à-vis the other two states, in their defense of marriage against the Protestants they put sacramental theory at the service of a concern for the preservation of the order of the family—and, by extension, of society itself—which was widespread in post-Tridentine Europe. Treatises intended to define the behavior of a good Christian, which had appeared under the influence of Tridentine precepts, such as Silvio Antoniano's *Tre libri dell'educazione cristiana dei figliuoli* (Rome, 1584) or Johannes Busaeus's *De statibus hominum* (Mainz, 1611), accorded the matrimonial state a dignified position, praising marriage and the family as an institutionalized framework for Christian instruction and the ideal locus for the propagation of religious values.<sup>72</sup> It is precisely here, amidst growing interest in the concept of social order and responsibility, which is typical of the early modern period, that the ideological roots of Iavors'kyi's (and Mohyla's) praise of marriage are to be found. We have already seen that Iavors'kyi opposes Protestant marriage—a “natural” institution based on the legitimation of irrational instincts—to the rational and “cultural” qualities of its Orthodox counterpart. Arguing the superiority of marriage thus serves to create a symbolic idiom that shapes the sacramental union of man and woman—that couple (*dvoitsa*) which is so central to Iavors'kyi's theology of marriage—as the building block of an orderly society. This concern for social order is also well documented in other Ukrainian works of this period, such as Gizel's *Mir s Bohom cheloviku*, whose declared aim was to “heal” society by eradicating sin “in every social rank” (*u vsiakago chynu chelovika*).<sup>73</sup>

However, unlike his sources, Iavors'kyi's approach may seem more

---

70. See D'Avray, “The Gospel of the Marriage Feast of Cana and Marriage Preaching in France,” in *Modern Questions*, 135–53. D'Avray notes that the theme of marriage as a sacrament is rare in medieval marriage preaching, as opposed to its regular recurrence in the seventeenth century.

71. *Conciones*, 98.

72. On the Counterreformation promotion of marriage and the family as places of Christian instruction, see Gabriella Zarrì's magisterial study *Recinti: Donne, clausura, matrimonio tra Medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010), 208–56.

73. *Mir s Bohom*, seventh unnumbered leaf of the Preface to the Reader.

theological than pastoral. In emphasizing the sacredness of marriage (the *bonum sacramenti*), his work lacks the attention paid to the importance of mutual affection or to the practical concerns of the people who had to cohabit within this institution that we find in Mohyla's *Predmova pri shliube* and other Ukrainian marriage sermons of this period, such as Antonii Radyvylovs'kyi's *Slovo o stani malzhenskom* (1676).<sup>74</sup> While Mohyla and Radyvylovs'kyi present marriage as an institution that can lead to conflict in everyday life—hence their emphasis on mutual help, as well as their warnings against both husbands' tyrannical behavior and wives' quest for power—Iavors'kyi's perspective on marriage is firmly entrenched within the boundaries of an idealized norm.<sup>75</sup> Even when he speaks of the actual relationship between husband and wife, he does not stray from the commonplace notion that a man held unquestionable authority over his wife, according to Ephesians 5. Most of the glory accorded to marriage by Iavors'kyi lies in its value as a sign of another intimate relationship, that of Christ and his church. Seemingly unconcerned about the everyday life of married people, he obliges his listeners to focus on the relationship between signs and things, signifiers and signifieds, in a display of theological literacy that is testament to Mohyla's successful efforts to make sacramental theory routine and accessible to Ukrainian priests and their parishioners. If, according to Brian Stock, debating the Eucharist helped medieval Christians learn the relationship between signs and things, the observable phenomena of nature and their inner reality, Iavors'kyi's discussion of marriage as a sacrament equally helps his readers develop conceptual tools with which to think.<sup>76</sup> In a sense, the emblematic picture opening the sermon anticipates and amplifies the "semiotic" quality of the text. Just as marriage is a sign of the relationship between Christ and the church, one that, according to medieval symbolism, reveals the thing it signifies, so too in the emblematic image there is a flow of meaning from the *pictura* (the sign) to the thing in the *subscriptio* (the epigram). Interpreting an emblem means in fact recognizing the meaningful relationship between word and image, this relationship being often

74. *Ohorodok*, 1120–29.

75. Mohyla's and Radyvylovs'kyi's marriage sermons are a good example of what Rüdiger Schnell and Andrew Shields, analyzing medieval preaching, call the "discourse on marriage"—a discourse characterized by a perspective that views both sexes in similar ways in order to help them live peacefully. See their "The Discourse on Marriage in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 73, no. 3 (1998): 771–86.

76. Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 241–43.

arbitrary—or at least nonconventional. In this respect, Iavors'kyi's sermon goes further than Mohyla's in expounding the complexities of marriage sacramental theory through a technique that, on the one hand, makes the supernatural accessible by rendering it visual and, on the other, teases its observer into speculating as to its metaphysical meaning. It is evident that the sermon assumes an educated reader who is able both to solve the enigma in the *pictura* and to grasp the complexities of sacramental theory—a reader who is acquainted with the baroque episteme and its corpus of authoritative texts. One can only wonder what the groom, an alumnus of the Kyiv Mohyla College and a former student of Iavors'kyi's, would have made of the more theological passages of the sermon, especially those dealing with the Scholastic notions of sign, matter, and form. They might have brought back memories of his school days—and it is not irrelevant to restate that the Aristotelian theory of signs, as well as the production of emblematic materials, was part of the epistemological equipment of every student of the Kyiv Mohyla College—or even provoked a wry smile at the thought of his former teacher lecturing him on the form and matter of marriage on his wedding day.

Iavors'kyi's predilection for the intricacies of theology over concrete pastoral advice does not exclude, however, a keen awareness of the social and political circumstances of his time. A vocal advocate for the separation of church and state, he continues, here as elsewhere, Mohyla's and Varlaam Iasyns'kyi's efforts to extend ecclesiastical control over various aspects of society.<sup>77</sup> In particular, the sacramentality of marriage provides a rationale for the spiritual monopoly of the church over it, a notion that the titular image visualizes by placing the three vines in the enclosed garden of the church. Together with the superiority of marriage vis-à-vis the other two states, its existence in an exclusively religious sphere is the central symbolic idiom devised by this sermon. Here it may be useful to recall that, by denying the sacramentality of marriage, the Lutherans put this institution under the exclusive jurisdiction of the state. This circumstance sheds additional light on the anti-Lutheran tirade in the central part of the sermon, which must be understood first and foremost as a passionate defense

---

77. The problem of the relation between church and state occupied Iavors'kyi all his life and, once he moved to Russia, it became the central cause of friction between him and Peter I. On this, see Jurij Šerech, "Stefan Yavorsky and the Conflict of Ideologies in the Age of Peter I," *Slavonic and East European Review* 30, no. 74 (December 1951): 40–62; Viktor M. Zhivov, *Iz tserkovnoi istorii vremeni Petra Velikogo* (Moscow: NLO, 2004), 119–29.

of the prerogatives of the church over marriage: It is the *bonum sacramenti*, hence ecclesiastical control, which transforms marriage from a natural—“irrational”—institution into a cultural and “rational” one. In this respect, Iavors’kyi’s concentration on the sacramental nature of marriage in a sermon originally preached to the hetman—that is, the highest representative of the state—has special relevance. It is difficult not to read it both as a warning against a reduction of the prerogatives of the church vis-à-vis civil authorities and a request that the hetman act in his traditional capacity of defender of these prerogatives.

Mazepa, who, as has been noted, was aware that “a strong, independent, and well organized church was tantamount to his efforts to rule a unified Ukraine,”<sup>78</sup> must have been pleased enough with the sermon to urge that it be printed, as Iavors’kyi acknowledges in the dedicatory epistle (*trykratnoe Velmozhnasty Vashei na toe dilo povelinie*).<sup>79</sup> This suggests how congenial he found the sermon’s view on marriage and that the question of patronage—and, by extension, of church-state relations—is probably not a side issue but a central theme of this writing. In this respect, *Vynohrad Khrystov* is an understated exercise in political theology, one that postulates the *corpus mysticum* of the church (the enclosed garden) and the *corpus politicum* of secular authorities (the eagle of the Obydovs’kyi family, and, by extension, of Mazepa) as two separate but cooperating bodies: The church has jurisdiction over spiritual matters, while the state must protect the church from external threats. Significantly, the heraldic verses on Mazepa’s coat of arms prefacing the sermon invite the reader to consider “how firm” the Orthodox faith in the Rus’ lands is (*kol’ kripko v Rossii vira stoit sviata*), just as the cross affixed to an anchor (*krest na kotvi utverzhden*)—one of the symbols on Mazepa’s coat of arms—stands immovable (*nedvyzhym*) against the “impious streams” (*zlochestyvykh riky*) (fig. 6, below).<sup>80</sup> Another revealing place to appraise these attitudes is, not accidentally, the *pictura* of the title page. Following the influential iconography employed in the frontispiece of the Kyivan Caves Monastery *Pateryk* (Kyiv, 1661), where the eagle of the Romanovs, surmounted by Christ and the Theotokos, spreads its wings over the monastery (fig. 7, below), in *Vynohrad Khrystov* secular authority (the eagle of

78. Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, “The Hetman and the Metropolitan: Cooperation between State and Church under Metropolitan Varlaam Jasyms’kyj,” in *Mazepa and His Time: History, Culture, Society*, ed. Giovanna Siedina (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2004), 417–44, here 420.

79. *Vynohrad Khrystov*, second unnumbered leaf (v.) of the dedicatory epistle.

80. *Ibid.*, first unnumbered leaf (v.) of the dedicatory epistle.



Figure 6. *Vynohrad Khrystov*. Heraldic verses on Mazepa's coat of arms. Reproduced with permission from *Siverians'kyi litopys*, 2006, no. 6, 115.

the Obydovs'kyis) also spreads its protective wings over the enclosed garden of the church, while taking its legitimacy from heaven. Seen in this context, the title page can be further understood as a miniature reproduction of what a stable and orderly community had to look like to a late seventeenth-century Ukrainian Orthodox churchman: a verdant and prosperous *hortus conclusus* protected from the contagion of external heresies by the palisade of the Orthodox Church and guarded from a distance by the watchful eye of the secular authorities. Much like the baroque and medieval *hortus*, this placid and confessionally



Figure 7. *Paterik Pechers'kyi*. Kyiv: Lavra, 1661.  
Frontispiece. Courtesy of the Vernadsky National Library  
of Ukraine, Kyiv.

homogeneous garden is an abstract and exclusive space, an ideal *res publica Christiana* to which only the devout reader-citizen is granted entry.

Writing about the establishment of the feast of Corpus Christi in late medieval Liège, Miri Rubin has shown that sacramental representation often engaged with questions of both secular and religious authority,

mediating tensions between the lay and religious spheres.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, *Vynohrad Khrystov* can likely be explained in terms of a compromise between lay and ecclesiastical interpretations of the nature of marriage: If the sacramentality of marriage asserted the importance of the church, the very fact that marriage, which is one of the defining factors of the lay condition, could be a sacrament suggested “an elevation of lay status.”<sup>82</sup> In this respect, Iavors’kyi’s attitude toward marriage versus consecrated celibacy addresses the needs and expectations of an audience that was more likely to experience the joys and burdens of married life and parenthood than self-imposed sexual continence. However, the sermon’s rhetorical elevation of marriage is less a successful instance of audience accommodation than the creation of a symbolic idiom that reflects a substantial change in the social landscape of seventeenth-century Ukraine, and specifically an increase of power of the middle sections of society. We have already seen how the sermon rewrites established medieval metaphors of social hierarchy—the three states, the Parable of the Talents, the story of Martha and Mary—to express the growing dignity of the lay condition and, no less important, of a life of action. That this is part of a broader process of changing social and economic circumstances is apparent from at least two factors: the emergence of a body of literature in the vernacular that characterizes the second half of the seventeenth century and the increasing recognition of the importance of secular values in other devotional works of this period. For instance, Gizel’s *Mir s Bohom cheloviku* contains codes of conduct for various occupational groups, while manuals for confession addressed to the laity, such as the anonymous *Nauka o taine sviatoho pokaianiiia* (Kyiv, 1671) and Ioanikii Galiatovs’kyi’s *Hrikhy rozmaidii* (Chernihiv, 1685), place special emphasis on the importance of honestly accumulated wealth, individual labor, and education as vehicles of social advancement.<sup>83</sup> Transformed by Mohyla into a union based on free, individual choice and a distiller of sacramental grace, marriage emerges as an equally important part of this revalorization of lay life. As an institution in which Christ is present “*ochevysto i iavno*,” it would give the middle sections of society a meritorious alternative to celibate life and

---

81. Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

82. On marriage as a catalyst of lay dignity, see Emma Lipton, *Affections of the Mind: The Politics of Sacramental Marriage in Late Medieval English Literature* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 2007), 5.

83. On this point, see my “Handling Sin in Seventeenth-Century Ukraine: The Sacrament of Confession between Community and Individuals,” *Zeitschrift für Slawistik* 63, no. 3 (2018): 455–88.

also a “discourse of social legitimation.” Marriage is indeed useful “to the whole world” (*vsemu svitu*), an idea that, besides duly flattering the bride and groom, could have helped lay readers of the sermon understand themselves as a separate social group from the monastic clergy, one with a specific set of merits and responsibilities toward their community. Similarly, the sermon’s sustained attention to the “fructus” (*plod*) of the matrimonial state articulates a set of concerns that are socio-economic no less than spiritual and which reflect the growing importance of the value of work in the world; unlike “unproductive” virgins and consecrated widows, married folk are crucial to the well-being of the community because they are responsible for its material growth. The “increase” yielded by the land in Psalm 84:3 thus epitomizes both the “fruits” of procreative marriage (the *bonum prolis*) and the “productive” powers of the laity. Far from being a mere rhetorical commonplace, this emphasis on “growth” clearly addresses the current exigencies of a society coming out of a long period of internal conflict—the “Ruin” (*ruina*), which Iavors’kyi had described “extensively and dramatically”<sup>84</sup> in his 1689 panegyric to Mazepa—and trying to rebuild itself on stronger political, economic, and demographical bases. Wars were continuous in Ukraine during the second half of the seventeenth century, and if new forces had to be injected into the country, marriage and a life of action had to be encouraged. The *pictura* on the title page also functions in that connection as an effective vehicle for this new discourse of “lay identity,” offering a striking visual synthesis of the growing importance of the lay status—the tallest of the three branches—within the *hortus conclusus* of Ukrainian society.

## CONCLUSIONS

Keenly aware of the nature of marriage as an institution at the crossroads of public and private concerns, Stefan Iavors’kyi deftly combines theology and demography in order to promote the matrimonial state as fundamental to the public good of a Christian society—the verdant *res publica Christiana* portrayed on the title page. Little is strictly new in this sermon but, even so, Iavors’kyi exercises his own invention, combining old marriage topoi with new rhetorical means of articulation, namely, the union of word and image that is typical of the emblematic mode. The result is an essentially original composition that offers us an example of the political role of sermons in promoting normative social

84. Brogi Bercoff, *Hetman and the Metropolitan*, 424.

models. In his creation of symbolic idioms relating to Orthodox marriage, he mobilizes words and images as versions of a single way of communicating and representing moral experience. Therefore, *Vynohrad Khrystov* also opens an important window into the semiotic universe of seventeenth-century Ukraine—its *mundus significans*—and on what we may call an Orthodox poetics of emblematic (and para-emblematic) forms. The picture on the title page, the biblical quotations, and the sermon form a complex semiotic unit, one that conveys a message that, much like the very genre of sacred eloquence, has both spiritual and social connotations. In a series of analogical transformations that are quintessentially baroque, the vineyard functions as an allegory of the church and its three states; as a miniature picture of an ideal *res publica Christiana*, and as an emblem of a newly emerging lay identity. This dilation of symbolic meanings bespeaks the adaptability of the emblematic genre and is of fundamental importance to understanding the epistemological and semiotic conventions of seventeenth-century Ukrainian culture.