

Culture of Memory

**in East Central Europe
in the Late Middle Ages
and the Early Modern Period**

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Rafał Wójcik (ed.)

Culture of Memory

in East Central Europe in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period

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Rafał Wójcik, Wiesław Wydra
(Poznań)

Jakub Parkoszowic's Polish Mnemonic Verse about Polish Orthography from the 15th Century

Jakub Parkoszowic (*Jacobus Parcosii de Zoravice*), also known as Jakub of Żórawice, Jakub the son of Parkosz, or just Parkosz, is universally recognized as one of the most distinguished person of the first half of the 15th century in Poland.¹ He was born in Żórawica (or Żórawice) in Sandomierskie *starostwo* to a noble family bearing the Godzięba coat of arms. His father's name, and also grandfather's, is supposed to have been that of Parkosz. Marian Kucala mentions that the entry on Jakub reads as follow: *Jacobus Parcosii de Zoravice*. Only bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki wrote just *Jacobus Parkosz* in the letter from – 1448.² Jakub enlisted in the Cracow University in 1421 and the fact allows us to suggest that he was born in the first years of the 15th century. He graduated with baccalaureat – the following year, and he became master of art in 1427. During the next years Jakub was studying Canon Law and he graduated with *doctor decretorum*. The dates of this event vary, Kucala writes only that he graduated before 1439, whereas Wydra and Rzepka specified the date as about 1433. What is certain, however, is that after his ordination he became a parish priest on Skałka in Cracow before 1439. Parkosz was elected a rector of the Cracow University in the spring of 1439, and his tenure lasted until the autumn of 1441. Parkosz was also a canon in Cracow in 1449. According to the notes in the documents of the Cracow chapter, Parkosz is believed to have died immediately before or exactly in 1452,

¹ For information on Jakub Parkosz's life and activity see: Marian Kucala, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat o ortografii polskiej* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985), 13-15; Witold Taszycki, "Co wiemy o Jakubie z Żórawic, synu Parkosza?," *Zeszyty Naukowe UJ, Prace Językoznawcze* 4 (Filologia vol. 8) (1961): 227-233; Witold Taszycki, "Jakub z Żórawic," in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10 (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, 1962-1964), 372-373; Wiesław Wydra and Wojciech Ryszard Rzepka, *Chrestomatia staropolska. Teksty do roku 1543*, 2nd ed. (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, 1995), 298-299.

² Kucala, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 13.

because his name was not mentioned in the documents ever since that year. An occasional sermon, in which Parkosz was named among the rectors and benefactors of the University, additionally shows that this date seems to be correct. Parkosz was a lawyer, a lecturer, a clergyman and a priest, but there is no evidence of his written works related to these activities. Jakub Parkoszowic's contribution to the history of Polish literature is that he was as the author of the first Polish orthographic treatise written around 1440.

Parkosz's orthographic treatise is included in a manuscript housed at the Jagiellonian Library, with the signature 1961.³ The codex, having 824 pages *in quarto*, contains different treatises, mostly in Latin, several of them with Polish glosses. The interesting orthographic treatise is written from the third page of the manuscript to page 16 and contains few marginal notes. The treatise has two authors, and there is a distinct difference between pages 3 to 9 and the part from the pages 10 to 16. Researchers involved in the study of the work of Parkosz generally agree that this copy of the orthographic treatise from the Jagiellonian Library was written around 1470, but originally the treatise was created around 1440, more or less 30 years after the orthographic treatise of Jan Hus, and it is important for our following deliberations.

The text of the treatise is clearly divided into two parts: the introduction and the treatise proper. The introduction was written in accordance with a pattern of the introductions to be followed in medieval manuals. It is certain that it was not Parkosz but probably his colleague from Cracow University that wrote this prologue. It is obvious for researchers that this anonymous writer, citing many ancient and medieval authors, was to demonstrate himself as a great scholar and an erudite. The proper treatise from page 6 to page 16 contains a text in Latin with examples of Polish words, two verses, the Polish a-b-c poem with the incipit: *Kto chce pisać doskonale...* (*Who wants to write perfectly...*), and, at the end, as Kucała writes: *alphabetical list of the words with the incipit Adam był bił...* (*Adam was, was beating...*). Exactly this last register, and indeed the mnemonic verse, is the most interesting for us and we would like to focus on several problems related to it. At the end of the treatise there is a hardly legible three-line versified postscript. It is also worthwhile to add that Parkosz called the last register just an alphabet: *cum perdit vim vocalitatis, has tres habet diferencias, que difference patent in abecedario Polonorum, scilicet adaam bil, etc.*⁴

Many researchers were investigating the orthographic treatise by Jakub Parkosz in the past and we would like to mention the following most important ones: Jan Samuel Bandtkie, Władysław Wisłocki, Jan Łoś, Antoni Semenowicz, Aleksander Brückner, Roman Ganszyniec, Zdzisław Stieber, Witold Taszycki, Leszek Moszyński, Marian Kucała and Wojciech Ryszard Rzepka. The researchers' estimations and opinions on the proper treatise and on the anonymous introduction, however, differ as Kucała mentions: *in the course of time it was higher and higher.*⁵ We do not intend to decide –

³ For a detailed description of the treatise, see: Kucała, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 5-37; a detailed description of the codex, see: *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Universitatis Jagellonicae Cracoviensis*, ed. Władysław Wisłocki (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1877-1881), 474-476.

⁴ Kucała, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 78.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

who was right in all the disputations. In all fairness, we would like to remind that researchers reviewed Parkosz's remarks on quantity of Polish vowels (Semenowicz, Brückner), but these notes were questioned by Łoś and Stieber, and this attitude was accepted by the last editor of Parkosz's treatise, Marian Kucała.

We beg to state in the beginning of this paper that the reform of the Polish orthography and the proposals for writing Polish phonemes of the Polish language from the 15th century which were presented by Parkosz, were impractical and very difficult in use. However, the contemporary researchers appreciate this treatise for its phonological system of the Polish language of the time. Besides, Parkosz wrote many Polish words to illustrate the spelling convention and these words seem to be a valuable source of information for investigators of the Polish language from the 15th century.

In order to understand the mnemonic verse added at the end, we have to know the proper text of the treatise. Following Kucała, we would like to remind the most important issues contained by the canon of Cracow in his work.⁶ We are omitting the questions concerning the Polish words and phonology because they are irrelevant to my further remarks on the verse. We will also briefly present the rules of Parkosz's spelling convention.

Jakub arranged and changed some letters of the Latin alphabet. He also took several letters from the music notation. Moszyński claims that there is much evidence that Parkosz knew and probably used the Eastern European alphabets: Cyrillic and Glagolitic.⁷ Particularly the latter loan will be interesting in the following remarks.

Parkosz tried to adjust the Latin alphabet to the Polish phonological system in two ways. First, the reformer's proposal was to join two or three letters to represent one phoneme. This method was to be used in the case of vowels and consonants. In the other case, Parkosz suggested different forms of the letters, and this method related only to the consonants. He also mentioned that instead of doubling the letters, one could change their forms, but the author himself understood that it would be impractical, unacceptable and very difficult in use. In the case of the long vowels Parkosz recommended doubling the letters, e.g. *aa*, *ee* (he always calls the letter "y" *duplex y* and he took it just for the double *i*). According to Parkosz's rules we do not always have to write the double letter. It is important only in these cases, when the quantity (length) of the vowel changes the meaning of the word. In the case of the consonants Parkosz recommended to sign several of them with the two letters, e.g. *ch*, *dz*, *ff*, but sometimes with as many as three, e.g. *ffz*, *fch*. The letters with the modified forms represented usually in the Parkosz's system the hard consonants (cf. figure 1). In Kucała's book, the whole system was very usefully collected in the table presented below⁸.

The researchers of the treatise demonstrated Parkosz's inconsistency in the use of the rules invented by himself. The question unresolved so far, however, (and, in fact, impossible to be solved so long as the original has been discovered) is if this inconsistency

⁶ The treatise's contents following: Kucała, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 16-30.

⁷ Leszek Moszyński, "Traktat ortograficzny Jakuba Parkoszowica a alfabety słowiańskie," *Język Polski* 51 (1971): 100-107.

⁸ Following Kucała, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 17-18.

Sounds	Letters	Examples
ū	aa	<i>ḡaad</i> (<i>gād</i>), <i>kaaṣaal</i> (<i>kāzāl</i>)
ǎ	a	<i>miṣṣa</i> (<i>miśā</i>), <i>piṣṣag</i> (<i>piśāc</i>)
ē	ee	<i>chmeel</i> (<i>chmiēl</i>), <i>gee</i> (<i>jē</i>)
ě	e	<i>obecado</i> (<i>obiēcado</i>), <i>tobe</i> (<i>tobiě</i>)
īȳ	y	<i>byl</i> (<i>bīl</i>), <i>byl</i> (<i>bīj</i>)
īȳ	i	<i>biṭh</i> (<i>bīt</i>), <i>biṭh</i> (<i>bīj</i>)
ō	oo	<i>kooth</i> (<i>kōt</i>), <i>roog</i> (<i>rōg</i>)
õ	o	<i>koth</i> (<i>kōt</i>), <i>ktħo</i> (<i>ktõ</i>)
ū	uu	<i>druug</i> (<i>drūg</i>), <i>kuur</i> (<i>kūr</i>)
ǔ	u	<i>druga</i> (<i>drūga</i>), <i>umee</i> (<i>ūmiē</i>)
ū	oo	<i>dəob</i> (<i>dāb</i>), <i>xəədz</i> (<i>kxiādz</i>)
ǔ	o	<i>drōga</i> (<i>drūga</i>), <i>yəczy</i> (<i>jāczy</i> 'jęczy')
b	b	<i>babə</i> (<i>babā</i> 'babē'), <i>bodze</i> (<i>bodzie</i>)
ɸ	ɸ	<i>bika</i> (<i>bika</i>), <i>bodri</i> (<i>biodry</i>)
c	c	<i>cap</i> (<i>cap</i>), <i>chce</i> (<i>chce</i>)
é	g	<i>ḡalo</i> (<i>ciālo</i>), <i>ḡemə</i> (<i>ciemią</i> 'ciemię')
č	cz	<i>czapka</i> (<i>czapka</i>), <i>czas</i> (<i>czas</i>)
d	d	<i>dəob</i> (<i>dāb</i>), <i>dim</i> (<i>dym</i>)
ź	dż	<i>dzaal</i> (<i>dziāl</i>), <i>dzoəgīl</i> (<i>dziągīl</i> 'dzięgiel')
ż	dż	<i>ḡviṣdz</i> (<i>gwiżdż</i>)
f	ff	<i>ffaṭh</i> (<i>fast</i>), <i>ffaṭaa</i> (<i>fytā</i>)
f	f	<i>faal</i> (<i>fiāl</i>), <i>figi</i> (<i>figi</i>)
g	g	<i>ḡaad</i> (<i>gād</i>), <i>migdal</i> (<i>migdal</i>)
χ	ch	<i>chmeel</i> (<i>chmiēl</i>), <i>chce</i> (<i>chce</i>)
j	g I	<i>gee</i> (<i>jē</i>), <i>Iaan</i> (<i>Jān</i>)
k	k q	<i>kameen</i> (<i>kamiēn</i>), <i>ḡvath</i> (<i>kwiat</i>)
l	ł	<i>lis</i> (<i>lis</i>), <i>łudze</i> (<i>ludzie</i>)
l	l	<i>lapka</i> (<i>lapka</i>), <i>liṣz</i> (<i>lys</i>)
m	ṃ	<i>ṃige</i> (<i>myje</i>), <i>ṃikaa</i> (<i>mykū</i>)
ń	m	<i>maal</i> (<i>miāl</i>), <i>mood</i> (<i>miōd</i>)
n	ṇ	<i>ṇoc</i> (<i>noc</i>), <i>ḡvath</i> (<i>gnat</i>)
ń	n	<i>niṣki</i> (<i>niski</i>), <i>nevaṭa</i> (<i>niewiasta</i>)
p	p	<i>knaap</i> (<i>knāp</i>), <i>pan</i> (<i>pan</i>)
ó	p	<i>piḡe</i> (<i>pije</i>), <i>poṭr</i> (<i>Piotr</i>)
r	r	<i>drōga</i> (<i>draga</i> , tj. <i>drēga</i>), <i>prave</i> (<i>prawie</i>)
s	s// ʃ	<i>seen</i> (<i>sēn</i>), <i>ṣaam</i> (<i>sām</i>), <i>miṣṣa</i> (<i>miśa</i>)
ś	ʃz	<i>ʃzano</i> (<i>siano</i>), <i>ʃzirotha</i> (<i>sirota</i>)
ś	ʃch	<i>ʃehopa</i> (<i>szopa</i>), <i>ʃehum</i> (<i>szum</i>)
t	ih t	<i>kath</i> (<i>kat</i>), <i>teṣz</i> (<i>też</i>)
v	ʋ	<i>viḡlad</i> (<i>wykład</i>), <i>viḡe</i> (<i>wyje</i>)
ó	v	<i>vino</i> (<i>wino</i>), <i>voṣna</i> (<i>wiosna</i>)
vu	w	<i>wṣta</i> (<i>w usta</i>), <i>wmaar</i> (<i>w umiār</i>)
z	z s//	<i>zəob</i> (<i>zāb</i>), <i>masal</i> (<i>mazał</i>), <i>kaaṣaal</i> (<i>kāzāl</i>)
ź	zz	<i>zzyrna</i> (<i>zima</i>), <i>zəoba</i> (<i>ziqba</i> 'zięba')
ż	ʃz	<i>ʃzaak</i> (<i>żāk</i>), <i>ʃzəədlə</i> (<i>żądło</i>)

Figure 1. The table of Parkoszwic's letters

was Parkosz's own fault, or rather all the mistakes and errors were made by the copyist who, on the one hand – could copy the work inattentively, and on the other, could just not understand all the rules introduced by the first reformer of Polish orthography. As Kucała proves, the author was inconsistent not only in using his own rules, but also in creating them.

The above-mentioned introduction to the Parkosz's rules was supposed to serve a purpose in understanding this part of the treatise to which no attention has been attached to so far. The alphabetical register of Polish words provided at the end of the treatise is, in my opinion, not a simple alphabetical list but also a verse, although in a special form. The person who read and understood the treatise and learnt the versified alphabets, *ipso facto*, had in memory the Parkosz's orthographical system. This invention was nothing new in the Parkosz's times, but nobody has investigated this issue up to this day insofar as it deserves more attention because of several reasons.

Firstly, an alphabet in which the names of each letter has a meaning in itself and corresponds to specific words is nothing new and has a long tradition. Like most issues connected with mnemonics as such a form of ordering letters it goes well back into the past. It is known that Phoenician alphabet, the so called *abjad*,⁹ contains the names of the letters which have specific meaning. A Phoenician telling the name of the letter, visualized it into the concrete image: *aleph* – an ox, *beth* – a house, *gimel* – a camel, *daleth* – the door, *he* – a window, *waw* – a hook, *zayin* – a weapon, *heth* – a fence, *teth* – a wheel, *yodh* – an arm, *kaph* – a hand, *lamedh* – fishing spear, *mem* – water, *nun* – a fish, *samekh* – a pillar, *ayin* – an eye, *pe* – a mouth, *sade* – a plant, a papyrus, *qoph* – a monkey, *reš* – a head, *šin* – a tooth, *taw* – a sign; however for the Greeks, who had adopted and perfected Phoenician alphabet adding the vowels, the adopted names of the letters were only abstract ideas, and *alpha*, *beth*, etc. were simply the names of the letters and nothing more. We have to add that the constant order of the letters was the perfect basis for the beginning of the *versus abecedarii*, abecedaries, and this was the way of remembering different messages easily. This kind of verses were very popular in the Middle Ages.

The second reason of remembering mnemonic verses from the Parkosz's treatise is that such a method of learning the alphabet and learning the rules of faith using an alphabet was already known in East-Central Europe at the time of Saints Cyril's and Methodius' activity. Franciszek Waclaw Mareš reminds that very probably Cyril composed or wrote the *versus abecedarius*, without rhyme, which contained liturgical and biblical contents.¹⁰ Each verse starts with letters in the alphabetical order. The first words of the verses were then adopted as the names of Slavonic letters (except for a little, probably later, changes). The only departure was the name of the second letter: *buky*, that is simply "a letter," because during the automatic recitation it was not allowed to say the name of god.

⁹ *Abjad* is a term on the designation of the consonantal alphabet and is related to the West-Semitic writings; Peter Daniels and William Bright, *The World's Writing Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4.

¹⁰ Franciszek Waclaw Mareš, *Pierwszy słowiański język literacki i początki piśmiennictwa słowiańskiego* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo i Drukarnia "Secesja," 1994), 39.

Thirdly, the fact that Parkosz used the mnemonic method of learning alphabet is a strong evidence that he knew the Hus's treatise on the orthography. Maciejowski observed as early as 1851 that Parkosz must have known the treatise by Master Jan from Bohemia. After Maciejowski, Wisłocki proved this issue, and Kucała discussed that in details.¹¹ It is remarkable that Parkosz wanted to and, in fact, had to cover up any connections with the Hus' treatise, because, otherwise, he could have been accused of promoting heresy. Among all the borrowings, the most interesting for us is the use of the mnemonic register of the words. Jan Hus put the sentence in Czech in the beginning of his work, in which each following word begins with the following letter of the alphabet. Parkosz proceeded in a very similar way but he put his mnemonic register at the end of the treatise. Jakub did not compose sentences, but rather something like a verse, where many words are connected with themselves syntactically (register with the incipit: *Adam był bił...*). This kind of register turns again our attention to the East European alphabets, that is Cyrillic, and particularly Glagolitic. Franciszek Mareš, mentioned earlier, in his paper delivered in Zagreb in 1969 was analyzing the influence of Glagolitic alphabet on the Hus's treatise.¹² Except for the thesis that the knowledge of this alphabet was an inspiration for Hus to adapt the Latin alphabet for the use in the Czech language, Mareš indicated that also the mnemonic sentences, which help in remembering of the alphabetical order, are related to the Glagolitic alphabet. Mareš, and then Moszyński, reminded the sentence from the so called Paris alphabet (Glagolitic), from which Hus took the names of his letters. So, it is unquestionable that Hus knew the Slavonic alphabets. Moszyński also proved that Parkosz had known and had been inspired by not only the great Czech, but also by Glagolitic. In my opinion this is very interesting testimony of the courage of Hus and Parkosz because they studied not only the Western tradition (I mean the adaptation of the Latin alphabet as the basis for the next proposals), but also they took the inspiration from the East (the elements from Glagolitic in the act of creating new forms of the letters and putting several of them, particularly the specific Slavonic nasal vowels like ϕ , $\phi\phi$, in the alphabetical order characteristic for Glagolitic).¹³ It is also interesting that, although *versus abecedarii* were very popular in the West, Hus and Parkosz took the idea of such an alphabetical order and this kind of the alphabetical register rather from the East.

The last but not least, the both mnemonic verses (*Kto che pisac doskonale...* and *Adam był bił...*) demonstrate very well that in the ancient and medieval world memory and memorizing played very important role, as it was proved by Walter J. Ong, Eric Havelock, Michael T. Clanchy, Frances A. Yates, Mary Carruthers, Mieczysław Mejer and Alexandru Cizek, and many others.

Mnemonic verses, the so called *versus memoriales*, were very popular in the Middle Ages. Their rhymes and rhythmic structure served for easy and quick memorizing and remembering of formulas (legal, medical), names (the lists of the popes or

¹¹ Kucała, *Jakuba Parkosza Traktat*, 31-33.

¹² Following: Moszyński, "Traktat ortograficzny Jakuba Parkoszwica," 100.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 106.

kings), grammatical rules (e.g. *Doctrinale* of Alexander de Villa Dei) or calendar (cistercians).¹⁴ It is well-known that the variety of the structure of medieval poetry also has a source in the methods of memorizing. Except for the rhyme and rhythm, medieval poets also used the alphabet as some kind of a trick, because the constant order of the letters protects one from omitting a stanza or a verse. The abecedaries were known in the ancient culture and literature. We can find them in Psalms or in the early Christian hymn *A solis ortus cardine* by Caelius Sedulius, which is the part of the larger work composed in the alphabetical order: *De vita Christi*.¹⁵ In this kind of the verse different contents were contained; there are known alphabetical epitaphs, historical, hagiographical, moralistic, prayer or love verses, and enigmas.¹⁶ Some of them were very long, e.g. the longest catalogue of popes from the so called Kuropatnicki Codex with the incipit *Antistes primus Romanus sanctus Petrus apostolus* contains 414 verses and repeats the alphabet 11 times.¹⁷ Acrostic verses played the similar role.

Therefore, the verse and the alphabetical order helped to remember different categorized pieces of knowledge. In the case of the Parkosz's register closing the treatise, we find a very interesting inversion. It was not the alphabet that should help to memorize the content, but the content, the specific words with specific meaning, should help firstly to memorize the order of the letters in the alphabet, and then to use the proposals for a spelling convention for the phonemes, which were presented by Parkosz earlier in the proper treatise.

Finally, we would like to pay your attention to two aspects. Firstly, the alphabetical register *Adam był bił...* has been edited until now as a sequence of words, sometimes only mentioning that they are connected syntactically. We think it proper, together with Prof. Wydra, that the syntactical connections should be emphasized in next editions and the register should be divided into the following verses:

Adam był bił cał kał;	Adam was, beat whole mud;
czas, ciało, chod dał dział;	time, body, walk gave, happened;
eż fyta figi	that catches figs
i je je chan krol;	and them eats khan king;
łys lis myka,	bald fox makes a bolt,
Mika nyski niski	Nicolas from Nysa small

¹⁴ See: *Lehrdichtung*, in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. Gert Ueding, vol. 5 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001), 107-112; Dorothea Klein, "Zur Praxis des Lateinunterrichts: *Versus memoriales* in lateinisch-deutschen Vokabularen des späten Mittelalters," in *Latein und Volkssprache im deutschen Mittelalter 1100-1500. Regensburger Colloquium 1988*, ed. Nikolaus Henkel and Nigel F. Palmer (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992), 337-350; Dorothea Klein, "Ad memoriam firmiorem. Merkverse in lateinisch-deutscher Lexikographie des späteren Mittelalters," in *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Editionen und Studien zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters. Kurt Ruh zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Konrad Kunze, Johannes G. Mayer and Bernhard Schnell (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), 131-153.

¹⁵ Teresa Michałowska, *Średniowiecze* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1997), 403.

¹⁶ Following: Andrzej Dąbrówka, *Średniowiecze: korzenie* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2005), chapter: *Ars memorativa*. There are examples of different categories of such poems.

¹⁷ Wiesław Wydra, "Z pogranicza poezji, historii i mnemotechniki. Wierszowane katalogi papieży, cesarzy i królów polskich w Kodeksie Kuropatnickiego," in *Pogranicza i konteksty literatury polskiego średniowiecza*, ed. Teresa Michałowska (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, 1989), 193 and 201.

Secondly, unfortunately Parkosz is inconsistent in this register too. We find in this mnemonic verse several enigmas, which until this day have not been solved. Parkosz put the letter *k* into two places, in the first one correctly, according to his own rules, that is among *c* (as *kał*). It is compatible with his definition of this phoneme and its varieties. However, in the other one he put it into its contemporary place, that is before the *t*, as *krol*. The second inconsistency is the insertion of the word *rozum* as an example for proper *r* (*r per se*), however a moment earlier he inscribed the word *rosa* as an example for the same phoneme. The enigma of the word *uun* has never been solved. The pronunciation of this word is very uncertain. The researchers try to read it as *jun* (young) or *uuy* (an uncle). Lastly, we would like to pay attention to the word which has been read as *chan* (between *je* and *krol* in the register). The letter written in the manuscript is clearly *g* with the hook directed to the left. According to Parkosz's rules, we should read it as *j* (*y*) in words: *genus*, *gymnasium*, pronounced as *yenus*, *yymnasium*. There was also an idea to read this word as the name *Jan*, but the next letter, that is *h*, completely does not fit in because Parkosz, explaining the letter *g* in the proper treatise, gives this name as an example too, and there it was written correctly – *Iaan*. We have to admit that we cannot prove which word should be read here, but we dare say that, in our opinion, the pronunciation *chan* is not correct. It is difficult to say if the above-mentioned inconsistency was a mistake made by Parkosz himself or by the copyist.

To sum up, it seems that the alphabetical register or juxtaposition of words added at the end of Parkosz's treatise constitutes a natural element of medieval pedagogy, in which the order of the letters was very often used in learning and teaching. In this particular case, it is specific words that should help memorize and remember the order of the letters and their spelling. Moreover, the influence of Hus' spelling convention on the Parkosz's treatise, and, what is particularly interesting, the knowledge of both authors of the Slavonic alphabets, is very striking in this case. It appears that the alphabetical register *Adam był bił...* is not only the mnemonic aid but also the essential part of the Parkosz's rules relating to his proposal for reforming the Polish system of orthography.

