

**INSTITUTUM
HISTORICUM POLONICUM
ROMAE**

**SOCIETAS
POLONICA SCIENTIARUM
ET LITTERARUM IN EXTERIS
LONDINII**

X

A N T E M U R A L E



NON EXTINGUETUR

ROMAE

LONDINII

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(REPR. PHOT. 1972)

INSTITUTUM HISTORICUM POLONICUM ROMAE
VIA DEGLI SCIPIONI 284 - ROMA

IAM PRIDEM ROMAE PRODIERUNT HAEC VOLUMINA
(Continuatio *Studia Teologiczne* — Wilno, vol. I-X):

- XI — MEYSZTOWICZ V., *Repertorium bibliographicum pro rebus Polonicis Archivi Secreti Vaticani*. Vaticani, 1943.
- XII — MEYSZTOWICZ V., *De archivo Nuntiaturae Varsaviensis quod nunc in Archivo Secreto Vaticano servatur*. Vaticani, 1944.
- XIII — SAVIO P., *De Actis Nuntiaturae Poloniae quae partem Archivi Secretariatus Status constituunt*. Romae, 1947.
- XIV — MEYSZTOWICZ V., *Prospectica descriptio Archivi Secreti Vaticani*. (Ed. chirotypica, exhausta).

- ANTEMURALE, I-X. Roma, 1954-1966.

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Obiit die 28 Aprilis 1959.

Commentarii nostri, qui nomine « Antemurale » veniunt, quique hucusque ab Instituto Historico Polonico Romae emittebantur, a praesenti X volumine ab eodem Instituto unacum Societate Polonica Scientiarum et Litterarum in Exteris, Londinii residente, editi apparebunt.

« Antemurale » aucto numero paginarum, semel in anno prodibit. Continebit scripta, non solum ad Historiam Politicam sed etiam ad Scientiam Linguarum et Historiam Litterarum pertinentia.

Rerum gestarum cultores collegas, qui scientiarum linguae et litterarum operam dant, in Commentariis suis salutant, atque hoc praesens volumen ex toto eis cedunt.

Od tomu X Antemurale wydawane jest wspólnie przez Polski Instytut Historyczny w Rzymie i Polskie Towarzystwo Naukowe na Obczyźnie w Londynie.

Antemurale ukazywać się będzie co rok w powiększonych rozmiarach. Treść uległa również poszerzeniu: oprócz rozpraw z historii ukazywać się będą studia z zakresu lingwistyki i historii literatury.

Pragnąc powitać swych kolegów na łamach Antemurale, historycy całkowicie oddają tom niniejszy do dyspozycji lingwistów i historyków literatury.

Beginning with volume X, Antemurale is being issued by the Polish Historical Institute in Rome together with the Polish Society of Arts and Sciences Abroad in London.

Antemurale will appear every year. The volumes will be larger than in the past and they will include not only historical treatises, but also studies in the field of linguistics and history of literature.

Historians sincerely welcome their colleagues - linguists and historians of literature - and have put at their disposal the whole of the present volume of Antemurale.

La Revue Antemurale, qui jusqu'ici était publiée par l'Institut Historique Polonais de Rome, devient en commençant par le présent dixième volume, l'organe commun du même Institut et de la Société Polonaise des Sciences et Lettres à l'étranger, qui siège à Londres.

La Revue Antemurale augmentée paraîtra une fois par an et contiendra, à côté des travaux d'histoire politique, aussi ceux qui se rapportent à la philologie et à l'histoire de la littérature.

Les historiens saluent leurs collègues philologues et historiens de la littérature, qui viennent prendre part à la Revue, cédant ce volume de l'Antemurale tout entier à leur disposition.

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STANISŁAW WESTFAL

THE POLISH LANGUAGE

PREFACE

Among the various unpublished papers left by Stanisław Westfal, who died in 1959, there was a manuscript entitled The Polish Language, ready for publication. Due to the undaunted efforts of his widow this study now appears in print.

The author, for many years lecturer in Polish at the University of Glasgow, was highly regarded by specialists as a meticulous research worker and a subtle connoisseur of the Polish language. He combined two important traits which have ensured him a special position among his fellow-specialists: he was a high class scholar and at the same time had the rare gift of being able to popularize his beloved subject. As learned theses and books usually reach only a very restricted circle of specialists, and as — on the other side — the matter of language, its development and its social function should be of common concern and interest, popularization of this branch of knowledge should be one of the important aims of a scholar.

*Such a goal was aimed at by Stanisław Westfal when he wrote his delightful book *Rzecz o polszczyźnie*, London, 1956. An exactly identical spirit guided him during the writing of its English version, *The Polish Language*. Both studies have many features and chapters in common, and both deal in the main with the same material, but the techniques of presentation differ, above all in that one was intended for the Polish and the other for the English reader.*

That the author has fulfilled his aims is unquestionable. One reads his study with the excitement normally reserved for a work of fiction, where the fare of a living man and not of a mere living language is being decided. As language serves as the best aid to knowledge of other nations and cultures and also serves as a bridge of friendship between different peoples, the adventures of the Polish language through the ages should not be a matter of entire indifference to a foreign reader.

Certainly, nobody was better qualified to write such a study than Stanisław Westfal. His knowledge of the history of his native tongue was incomparable, and — in addition — during his stay (16 years) in Great Britain he became thoroughly acquainted not only with the English language but also with the taste and the interest of the British reader. He could write in a most attractive manner and the linguistic facts with which he illustrates his narration are carefully selected and present a

fascinating picture of the development of the Polish language seen against the wider background of cultural relations between Poland and other nations.

As an introduction to the study of Polish and as an incentive to such an undertaking this work is unsurpassed.

The author wrote it immediately after the war in a foreign country without any access to certain fundamental works and as a result some small details have had to be slightly changed or corrected and some quotations checked again with the sources. A few explanations have had to be modified in the light of subsequent studies of the language and its history. Such corrections were kept to the absolute minimum, where the linguistic and material facts were involved. The views and comments of the author were fully respected though, on occasions, they were not identical with those of the editor.

I present this study of Stanisław Westfal to the reader fully convinced that in this way I am not only paying homage to the memory of an outstanding scholar, but also rescuing from oblivion a work which fills a serious gap in the knowledge of the Polish language outside Poland, and which, in every respect, deserves to be made available to the wide circle of persons interested in Poland and her culture.

Józef Trypućko (Uppsala)

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CHAPTER ONE: MEDIEVAL POLISH

1. BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION.

No Julius Ceasar ever made an expedition into the Slavonic lands that were to be known under the name of Poland. Situated not far from the province of Dacia, Ovid's place of exile, they were never ruled from Rome and never fully benefited from its Imperial civilisation. There is only scanty evidence of Roman merchants visiting the country. Poland's documented history began with the introduction of Christianity, in 966¹⁾, over 350 years after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon tribes in Britain. The first monuments of Old English date back to the 7th century. The use of Polish as a written language - to the 13th. Belated contact with Rome partly explains this difference of date.

Polish is a Slavonic tongue. The Slavonic group comprises: Polish, Slovak, Czech and two Lusatian languages which are spoken in a territory situated roughly between the middle Oder-Odra and the middle Elbe (the Western branch); Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian (Eastern); Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Slovene and Macedonian (Southern). The Slavonic family of languages is a particular form of the ancestral Indo-European tongue which was spoken several thousand years before Christ and later split into the following languages: *Celtic* (to-day represented by Breton and Welsh, and by Irish Gaelic or Erse, Scotch Gaelic and Manx - Cornish having become extinct in the 18th century); *Italic* (the main representative is Latin, a popular form of which gave rise during the Dark Ages to the modern Romance languages: French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Rumanian); *Germanic* (English, Flemish, Dutch, German, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and Icelandic); *Baltic* (Lithuanian and Latvian - old Prussian having died out in the 17th century); *Albanian*; *Greek*; *Slavonic*; *Armenian*; *Iranian* (chief representative *Persian*); *a number of languages in India with Sanscrit and Veda at their head.*

Thus, Polish is genetically connected with the Western-Slavonic tongues, for instance, Czech, next - with all the other Slavonic languages (Russian, Serbo-Croat, etc.) and lastly with nearly all the tongues of Europe - the Germanic English, the Italic Latin and the Celtic Welsh included - as well as with many languages of Asia.

1) Almost a century prior to the above date, however, about the year 870, the Duke of the Wislans is said to have been baptised. His capital was probably situated in the present-day Wislica in S.W. Poland.

The cradle of the Polish state lay along the lower and middle Warta, in the country inhabited by the tribe of *Polanie*, literally 'field-dwellers' (from *pole*, 'field'). The name *Polska*, 'Poland', originally an adjectival derivative of *Polanie* and denoting their land was later extended to all Polish territories. Similarly, Switzerland (*die Schweiz*) owes its name to one of the three cantons which once founded the Swiss federation. The difference in stem between *Polanie* (*Polan-*) and *Polska* (*Pol-*) is due to the fact that some Polish words lose their suffixes when derivatives are formed: *Polska* does not contain the *-an-* of *Polanie*, exactly in the same way as the adjective *lubelski* omits the *-in-* suffix of the place name *Lublin*. Originally an adjective, *Polska* qualified some feminine substantive, most probably *ziemia*, 'country, land'. This explains the feminine gender of Poland's name.

The history of the nation abounded in moments of glory almost from the very beginning. King Boleslas (d. 1025), a cousin of Canute, fought the German Emperor with conspicuous success. He also captured for a short time Prague, Slovakia and Kiev. In 1364 the first university was founded, that of Cracow; except for Prague, it is the oldest of all the universities of Central and Eastern Europe and so antedates any German university. In 1385 the act of union was signed between the Polish Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a country which then comprised vast expanses of Byelorussian and Ukrainian lands, including Kiev. It was then that the Lithuanians were baptised, without any blood being shed - the German Teutonic Knights had exterminated most of "their" pagans, the old Prussians. The Polish-Lithuanian union, a great achievement of statesmanship and foresight, lasted until 1795 when the joint state was finally partitioned by three neighbouring powers. In 1433 King Ladislas Jagiełło decreed that "no one should be imprisoned unless convicted by law". In 1410 and 1466 two crushing defeats were inflicted upon the Teutonic Knights who formed one of the greatest and most cunning military powers of the time. Kings of the Polish-Lithuanian Jagellonian dynasty ruled in Hungary and Bohemia. Bold attempts were made during the 15th century to save South-Eastern Europe from Ottoman domination.

The history of the language was less glorious. The first Polish word to be recorded was *czebry*, nominative pl. masc., 'kind of wooden vessel' (to-day *cebry*), in a Latin chronicle written in 1113. The first extensive list of local and personal names (about 410 in all), dealing with the archbishopric of Gniezno, appears in a papal bull of 1136. The first Polish sentence was recorded by a Silesian monk in 1270. The earliest literary work is a beautiful and artistic hymn to the Virgin Mary (*Bogurodzica*) and was most probably composed in the middle of the 13th century. Its very existence is the proof of an old, though lost, poetical tradition.

It was only later that literature written in Polish began. It consisted of songs, hymns and poems of secular or religious character, sermons, two translations of the Psalter of David, one of the Bible and a number of legal texts. This literature, however, never equalled the achievements of the nation in other spheres and certainly was on a lower level than the literature written in Latin by Poles of this time.

It is not hazardous to assume that a number of early and valuable literary works in Polish have been lost or destroyed, and later erased from the nation's memory. This supposition is confirmed by such facts as the almost miraculous finding of *The Holy Cross Sermons* (*Kazania*

świętokrzyskie). This most important monument of early Polish was written or copied in the first half of the 14th century.

On the other hand it must be acknowledged that the vernacular, as a written language, held a position inferior to that of Latin, the international tongue of the Middle Ages (cf. *Chapter Three*, 2 - on Latin in Poland). Nevertheless, it was in the Middle Ages that Polish began to influence the languages situated to the north and to the east of Poland: old Prussian, Lithuanian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian.

Two main points should be borne in mind with respect to medieval Polish: it is, in actual fact, the language of the 13th-15th centuries and therefore corresponds to Middle English; it was the second written language of the country, and space will be found in this book for a few quotations, remarkable for their beauty or intellectual interest, from the texts in which it was recorded.

The medieval Polish language was somewhat more complicated than modern Polish. The absence to-day of the dual number and the two past tenses, aorist and imperfect, as well as a greater uniformity in the system of case-endings as exemplified in the dative, instrumental and locative plural of the substantive, prove this clearly.

Except for the aorist and the imperfect, these formal complexities extended beyond the Middle Ages. The dual lingered for some 150 years longer, and the multiple endings of three cases mentioned above, for 100 years. To have described these two latter traits of the language in the part dealing with medieval Polish is perhaps not fully justified, even though the dual was more frequently used in the Middle Ages than later. However, it is not always possible to fix a clear-cut boundary in the history of a language. On the other hand, the description of the exclusive or almost exclusive traits of medieval Polish, such as the relative pronoun "*jenże*", the non-abbreviated form of the infinitive (*-ci*), the compound past tense, the two simple past tenses and a number of words sufficiently justifies the title of *Medieval Polish*, the more so as all the examples given are taken from medieval texts.

Comparison with other Slavonic languages, though not aiming at fullness, will show something of the relation between Polish and its cognates. In the Middle Ages this relation was much closer. To-day Polish is neither among the most archaic nor among the most "advanced" Slavonic languages. The main aim of *Chapter One* is to present the earliest phase of written Polish, a point of departure for comparison with the language of to-day.

2. THE DUAL NUMBER.

Though the Polish language of to-day has a wealth of grammatical forms, medieval Polish was considerably richer. Besides the two usual numbers, the singular and the plural, it had the *dual number*, once known to all the Indo-European languages and recorded, for instance, in ancient Greek and Sanscrit. Only two idioms of the Slavonic family still retain it: Slovene in Northern Yugoslavia and Lusatian in Eastern Germany. In Old-English the dual was confined to the pronouns of the first and second persons: *wit*, 'we two', *git*, 'you two'.

The *raison d'être* of the dual was, in the first place, the existence in the human or animal body, of pairs of symmetrically shaped organs, such as the eyes, the ears, the knees or the legs. The dual was used also in conjunction with the numerals: *two* and *both*, for the designation of incidental pairings. It was only secondarily that dual forms invaded, on the principle of the syntax of concord, all the other inflected parts of speech: the adjective, the pronoun and the verb.

In the literary Polish of our day only very few relics of the *substantival dual* remain. They are no longer felt as dual: the nominative-accusative plurals *oczy*, 'eyes' (nom. sg. *oko*, of neuter gender), *uszy*, 'ears' (nom. sg. *ucho*, neut.) and *ręce*, 'hands' (n. sg. *ręka*, fem.), with the old instrumentals, *oczyma*, *uszyma* and *rękoma*, used alongside *oczami*, *uszami* and *rękami* (*-ami* is the usual instrumental plural ending); the genitive plurals *oczu* and *uszu* (*ręku* has not been preserved) also were originally dual. The old plural nominative-accusative forms *oka* and *ucha* are only used to denote 'net-meshes' (*oka*) or 'handles of cups or jugs' (*ucha*). Their declension is based on the stems *ok-* (cf. the instr. pl. *okami*) and *uch-* (*uchami*).

One dual form, *w ręku*, is now employed as the locative singular ('in the hand'). The reason is that *-u* is the locative singular ending of all those masculine and neuter substantives whose stem ends in *-k*: *w roku*, from *rok*, masc., 'year', *w wojsku*, from *wojsko*, neut., 'army'. However, such expressions as, for instance, "los mój jest *w ręku* Boga", 'my fate is *in the hands* of God', seem to contain a *w ręku*, dual both in form and meaning. It is interesting to note that the singular *w ręku* is qualified by the masculine-neuter singular form of the adjective or pronoun: *w prawym ręku*, 'in the right hand' (also *w prawej ręce*, the genuine loc. sg. fem.).

Apart from these fossilised dual forms there is still one more, safeguarded by rhyme in the popular saying "Mądrej głowie dość *dwie* słowie", 'two words suffice for a clever headpiece'. Cf. also the numeral *dwieście*, 'two hundred', which has long ago coalesced into one word - n. sg. *sto*, neut. (genuine plural found in *trzysta*, 'three hundred', and *czterysta*, 'four hundred').

The *Gniezno Sermons* (end of the 14th century) tell the story of two brothers who fell under the spell of the divine teachings of St. John:

"*Byłasta* (shortened from *była jesta*) *dwa bracieńca* (n. sg. *bracieniec*, masc.) *barzo bogata*, a tać są była swoja miasta, grody i dziedziny, wszyćko bogatstwo, *sprzedała*, a ubostwu i teże na kościoły rozdali (plural, instead of a dual *rozdała jesta*), 'There were two very rich brothers; these sold their towns, castles and land, all their riches, and distributed them to the poor and for the endowment of churches'. Soon, however, the two brothers had had enough of saintliness and poverty, and began to long for the splendours, amenities and the grace of life. Full of just anger, St. John miraculously restored their worldly "paradise lost" and threatened the two sinners with eternal damnation.

A 15th century song relates how a Roman emperor sent to St. Christopher, then in prison, 'two beautiful girls': "*dwie* piękne (plural) *pannie*" (n. sg. *panna*, fem.), and how these, instead of leading the saint into temptation, themselves became ardently Christian and gladly bore martyrdom.

In the *Prague Sermon* (about 1430) the preacher says: "A mówi tu Chrystus *dwie słowie* twardzie nam grzesznym: wiesielcie sie a radujcie", 'Christ says here *two words* to us, obdurate sinners: be gay and full of joy'. In the language of our day only the plural is used: *słowa, dwa słowa*, with the single exception of the *dwie słowie* of the proverb.

For simplicity's sake, the medieval examples given are limited to the nominative and the accusative dual of the substantive. Let us only note that the ancient number had all the cases, although its genitive (*oczu, uszu* - to-day) and locative (*w ręku*) on the one hand, and the dative and instrumental (*rękoma, oczyma, uszyna*) on the other, were identical in form. Later, in the chapter of this book dealing with the Polish dialects, the verbal dual will also be described.

The dual powerfully added to the formal complexity of Old-Polish. It was a blessing that there was no "trial" number (denoting three beings or things), as is known, for instance, in the dialects of the aboriginal Australian population. We might think of an unending series of grammatical numbers, eliminating the numerals (for these would become useless) and reducing the plural to the role of a number used in generalisations. However, no human memory could be expected successfully to cope with so heavy a burden, and the fantastic nightmare of a centennial number, for instance, need not disturb our dreams.

The Polish dual was not a specific trait of the medieval language, for certain dual forms of the substantive were still in use as late as the 18th century in the literary language, while the rare verbal persisted up to the 17th century. Nevertheless, it was during the Middle Ages that Polish made the most frequent use of this ancient form.

3. THE RELATIVE PRONOUN.

There are, in the inflection of the pronoun of the third person, five different stems. One stem forms all the nominatives: *on*, 'he', *ona*, 'she', *ono*, 'it' (singular), *oni* and *one*, 'they' (plural). Four others: *i* (cf. gen. pl. *i-ch*), *ni* (cf. gen. pl. with a preposition: *do ni-ch*), *ń* (cf. the gen. sg. masc. and neutr. *do niego*) and *j* (cf. acc. sg. fem. *j-q*) are found in the oblique cases.

Though widely divergent now, the four last mentioned stems have developed from one parent form. The same form had also provided the nominatives which, however, during the Middle Ages were used in the function of the relative pronoun alone. They were most often combined with the particle *że, ż*, or, the nominative sg. masc., with the suffix *-n*, the same as in present day *ten*, 'this'.

In the second half of the 14th century a Psalter was translated into Polish, which is now known as the *Psalterium Florianense* (*Psalterz Florianński*). Here follow a few examples from the text to illustrate the use of this relative pronoun which has now been lost: "błogosławiony mąż, *jen* (nom. sg. masc.) nie szedł po radzie niemilosciwych" (1.1), 'blessed is the man *that* walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly'; "drzewo, ...*jeż* (nom. sg. neut.) owoc swoj da w swoj czas", 'a tree... *that* bringeth forth his fruit in his season' (1.3); "I wiesielić sie będą wszyscy, *jiż* (nom. pl. masc.) w tobie nadzieję mają", 'but all those *that* put their trust in thee shall rejoice' (5.13); "wylej gniew twój... w krolewstwa, *jaż*

(nom. pl. neutr.) imienia twego nie wzywały", 'Pour out thy wrath... upon the kingdoms *that* have not called upon thy name' (78.6).

This pronoun is an almost exclusive feature of the medieval language. Only very few examples of it can be found in 16th century texts where the modern *który*, 'which', is used.

Both *který* and an equivalent of the Polish medieval relative pronoun, *jen(že)* are still used in Czech, a language which is in some points slightly more archaic in its forms than Polish:

"Nevím, co ještě chce, zlý sen, *jenž* nezná rána,
který nás všechny za živa pochoval" (Cassius)
(‘Nie wiem, czego jeszcze chce, zły sen, *który* nie zna
poranka,
który nas wszystkich za życia pochował’).
(‘I do not know what it wants, the bad dream, *that* does not
know the morn
and *that* has buried us all alive’).

4. THREE CASES OF THE SUBSTANTIVE PLURAL.

The number of case-endings in modern Polish exceeds considerably that of the fourteen case-forms. The situation was still more complex in the language of the Middle Ages. Three cases of the substantive plural: the dative, the instrumental and the locative have been chosen here to illustrate the point.

* * *

The dative plural is now the only case in the whole system of the substantive inflection which has only one ending for all the three genders and all the types of declension. There is not a single exception. Most of the other cases fall short of this ideal (cf. the remarks on the nominative plural masculine, *Chapter Five*, 5). This unique dative plural ending is in modern Polish: *-om*: *ptakom* (masc.); *rybom, kościom* (fem.); *słowom* (neut.).

In the Middle Ages, *-om* was originally confined to the masculine and the neuter substantives. The feminine gender originally had *-am*. A few examples follow:

"uczynímy człowieka ku obliczu a ku podobieństwu naszemu, aby panował *rybam* morskim a *ptakom*, ježto latają pod stworzeniem niebieskim" (*Bible of Queen Sophie*, 1455), 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion *over the fish* of the sea, and *over the fowl* of the air' (Genesis 1.26);

"ni jest pokoj *kościom* moim" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'neither is there any rest *in my bones*' (37.3);

"Nie wierzyli *słowom* jego (ib.), 'they believed not his *word*' (106.25).

Though very rarely, the palatal masculine and some feminine stems also had the ending *-em*: "pokarm wziąć ma swoim *koniem*" (n. sg. *koń*,

masc.; 15th century), 'he shall take fodder for his horses'; "Jakom tym dzieciem (dzieci n. pl. was then regarded as a feminine) nie wydarł pczół" (1400), 'That I did not tear the bees away from the children'.

This third ending had no expansive force. Except for *ludziem*, 'to people', it did not survive the Middle Ages. The fate of the first two endings *-om* and *-am*, was different. The originally feminine *-am* - during the 15th century exceptionally and during the 16th extensively - also formed the masculine dative plural. To a much greater extent it had affected the neuter stems. The inroad of the originally masculine and neuter *-om* into the domain of the feminines had begun in the 14th century. Reason celebrated its triumph at the beginning of the 17th century, when *-om* became the exclusive dative plural ending of all substantives.

* * *

The locative plural ending has reached nearly the same degree of universality: *o ptakach* (masc.); *o rybach, o kościach* (fem.); *o słowach* (neut.). There are, however, four exceptions. Four names of countries, *Niemcy*, 'Germany'; *Prusy*, 'Prussia', *Węgry*, 'Hungary', and *Włochy*, 'Italy', have the ending *-ech*: *w Prusiech* (slightly archaic - the regular form is now *w Prusach*), *w Niemczech, na Węgrzech*, and *we Włoszech*. The locative plural of their inhabitants' names conforms to the ruling type: *o Niemcach, o Węgrach, o Włochach*, 'about the Germans, Hungarians, Italians'.

In the Middle Ages, there originally was a clear division in the locative plural, just as in the dative, into a masculine and neuter group on the one hand, and a feminine on the other. The former ended in *-ech*:

"Ci na woziech, a ci na koniech" (*The Puławy Psalter*, the second half of the 15th century), '(Some trust) in chariots, and (some) in horses' (19.8) - both *wóz* and *koń* are masculine;

"jenże chodzisz na skrzydłech wiatrow" (ib.), 'who walketh upon the wings of the wind' (103.4) - *skrzydło* is neuter.

A few palatal neuter substantives alone occasionally had the ending *-ich*: "*w pokolenich*" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'in the generations'.

The main ending of most of the feminine substantives was *-ach*:

"Chwalcie ji w siłach jego" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'Praise him in his mighty acts' (n. sg. *siła*), (150.2).

The palatal consonantal feminine stems ²⁾, however, originally had *-ech*:

"I myślił jeść w kaźniech twoich" (ib.), 'And I will delight myself in thy commandments' (n. sg. *kaźń*) (118.47).

In the 14th century a new masculine-neuter ending was formed, *-och*, which, most probably, had its *-o* modelled on that of the dative ending *-om*:

"Chwalcie ji w zwonkoch dobrze brzmiących" (ib.), 'Praise him upon the loud cymbals' (n. sg. *zwonek*, to-day *dzwonek*, masc.) (150.5);

"naleźliśmy ją w poloch lasa" (ib.), 'we found it in the fields of the wood' (n. sg. *pole*, neut.) (131.6).

2) The vocalic feminine substantives are those which end in the vowel *-a* in the nominative singular, cf. *ryba*, 'fish', or *ziemia*, 'earth'.

Those of the consonantal palatal type end in a consonant, cf. *kość*, 'bone'.

-och did not survive the 16th century. Almost as long as it existed, it was also, though only very rarely, used *with the feminine* substantives, thus adding to the confusion. So was the main masculine-neuter ending -ech *with the vocalic feminines* - during almost exactly the same period, and as sparingly as -och.

The encroachment of the feminine ending -ach on the domain of the masculine and neuter substantives began towards the end of the 14th century. In the 17th century -ach became predominantly the locative plural ending of all substantives.

* * *

A lesser degree of uniformity prevails in the *instrumental plural*. Here, the dominant ending is now -ami: *ptakami* (masc.); *rybami, rzeczami* (fem.); *słowami* (neut.). However, there are also two other endings: -mi and -y. The former is used with some palatal consonantal feminine stems: *kośćmi* (*kości* in the familiar saying: "dobry chłop z kośćmi", 'a good fellow to the marrow of his bones'), and with the following palatal masculine substantives: *braćmi* (n. pl. *bracia*, 'brothers'), *gośćmi* (n. sg. *gość*, 'guest'), *końmi* (n. pl. *konie*, 'horses'), *księżmi* (n. pl. *księża*, 'priests'), *liśćmi* (sometimes *liściami*, n. sg. *liść*, 'leaf'), *ludźmi* (n. pl. *ludzie*, 'people'), *nieprzyjaciółmi* (n. sg. *nieprzyjaciół*, 'enemy'), *pieniędzmi* (n. sg. *pieniądz*, 'coin, money') and *przyjaciółmi* (n. sg. *przyjaciół*, 'friend'). The latter, -y, is used with a slightly archaic flavour in the phrases "dawnymi czasami", 'in olden times' (*czas* is masc.), or "ostatnimi czasami", 'of late', and in several phrases with *słowo*, 'word', for instance: "innymi słowami", 'in other words'.

In the Middle Ages, the ending -ami was originally confined to the *feminine substantives* of the vocalic type:

"jad zmirowy pod wargami jich" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'adders' poison is under their lips' (13.5);

The ending -mi was used in the feminine consonantal palatal stems, in most masculine palatal and in some neuter stems:

"Weźmiecie psalm, a dajcie bęben, żołtarz wiesioły z gęśmi" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery', (*gęśli*, to-day *gęśle*, was feminine, 81.2);

"I mołwił jeśm o świadectwiech twoich przed krolmi" (ib.), 'I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings' (118.46);

"Wszystcy ci imięmi byli nazwani" (*Queen Sophia's Bible*), 'all of them were expressed by name' (I Esdr. 8.20; *imię* is neuter).

The main masculine and neuter ending was -y:

"wzdam ci woły z kozły" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'I will offer bullocks with goats' (*kozieł* - 'he-goat', to-day the more correct form is *koziół* - masculine; 68.14);

"mołwili usty i chwiali głowę" (ib.), 'they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying' (*usta*, 'mouth', is a neuter; 21.7).

Before the ultimate, though not complete, victory of the -ami ending, both -mi and -y, especially the former, showed a considerable degree of expansion outside their original domain.

The spreading of the now prevalent -ami to neuter nouns began in the 15th century and to masculine nouns in the 16th. In the consonantal

feminine stems, *-ami* appeared towards the end of the 14th. It reached the present degree of extension in the 17th century.

Although it is risky to forecast the future, it looks likely that *-ami* will one day prevail so completely as to bring the instrumental plural into line with the dative.

* * *

Since, except for the dative, the originally feminine ending has prevailed over the originally masculine and feminine endings in the two other cases, we may sum up the whole development as a triumph of woman over man and child, the latter symbolising the neuter gender. Although this view is certainly a gross distortion of truth - for gender is not an exact counterpart of sex - yet this method of presenting the evolution may help us to memorise it better.

It is interesting to note that woman has won a still clearer victory in Russia, the Ukraine and Lusatia, for in the languages of these countries the feminine endings have been extended to all the three genders of all the three cases, quite independently of Polish. In Russian, for instance, the dative plural has the originally feminine ending *-am*: *konjám* (*kon'*, 'horse', masc.); *rybám* (*ryba*, 'fish', fem.), *káznjam* (*kazn'*, 'execution, capital punishment', fem.); *slovám* (*slóvo*, 'word', neut.). The locative plural ends in *-ach*, which was originally restricted to feminines: *o konjách*; *o rybách*; *o káznjach*; *o slovách*. The main ending of the instrumental plural is *-ami*, also a formerly feminine ending: *konjámi*, *rybami*, *káznjami*, *slovámi*. Some feminine stems may also assume the ending *-mi*: *dočer'mi* (n. sg. *doč*, 'daughter') or *dočerjámi*. As in Polish, the Russian *-mi* is the ancient feminine ending of the palatal consonantal type. It is striking that the process of the unification of the endings should have been so similar in all the languages mentioned, Polish included.

Among all the Slavs, the Slovenes have best preserved the old opposition between the masculine and the neuter substantives on the one hand, and the feminine on the other. The ending of the dative plural is *-om* in the former group and *-am* in the latter: *hribom* (*hrib*, 'hillock', masc.), *jezerom* (*jezero*, 'lake', neut.); *hišam* (*hiša*, 'house', fem.). The locative plural has *-ih* (*h* is the usual spelling for the Polish *ch*) in the masculine-neuter group: *pri hribih*, 'by the hillocks', *pri jezerih* (*-ih* is the exact phonetical equivalent of the Polish ending *-ech*). The feminine substantives have *-ah*: *pri hišah*. The masculine-neuter instrumental plural has an ending *-i*, corresponding to the Polish *-y*: *hribi*, *jezeri*, *-ami* is confined to the feminine substantives: *hišami*.

Bulgarian has disposed of the headache altogether: it has only one case in the plural.

5. THE INFINITIVE.

In 1461, towards the end of a victorious war waged by King Casimir against the Teutonic Knights, a scandalous event occurred in Cracow, then the capital city. Andrew Tęczyński, the fiery Castellan of Cracow, had ordered armour at a weapon-maker's, Clement by name, and, not being satisfied with the work beat the artisan unconscious. This aroused

considerable indignation and commotion among the townsmen. They gathered and murdered the Castellan. The end was gloomy: six of the culprits were sentenced to death and beheaded. The opinion of the nobility found expression in a short poem in which a nobleman extolled Tęczyński's desire to serve the King in the war against the Knights:

"Chciałci krolowi służyć, swą chorągiew mieci,
A o chłopci pogańbieli ³⁾ dali ji zabici".
(‘He wanted to serve the King, to have a banneret of his own,
But these infamous and lowly folk had him killed’).

To-day the Pole says: *służyć, mieć* and *zabić*. In the Middle Ages and not beyond that epoch, the infinitive quite often still had the fuller ending *-ci*, now *-ć*. Somewhat similarly, the Old-English infinitive which ended in *-an* (*bindan, helpan*), like the German *-en*, later lost this suffix altogether (*bind, help*).

"Nikt za mię nie chce umrzeci", 'Nobody wants to die in my place' - a 15th century sinner complained on his death-bed.

In reply to a rhymed letter of a youth, a maiden wrote in the 15th century: "Przez toż, moj namilejszy, racz wiedzieci, iż miłość to w sobie ma, iże rzadko albo nigdy w wiesielu bywa, telko zawsze w smutku i w teskności i też w niewymownej sierca boleści trwa i przemieszkawa", 'Therefore, my most beloved, be pleased to know that love hath this that it seldom or never bringeth joy, but always lasteth and continueth in sadness, yearning and unspeakable grief of the heart'.

Full of melancholy and truly romantic in spirit, this passage contains *wiedzieci*, the still non-abbreviated form of the infinitive (to-day *wiedzieć*).

In some cases, the relation between the medieval and the present form of the infinitive does not bear on the ending alone, cf. "Dusza nie śmie na sąd *ici*", 'my soul dares not go to the judgment (of God)'. *Ici* was not only shortened into *ić*, but also, under the influence of such pairs as *przędę*, 'I weave' (cf. *idę*, 'I go'), *przędęć*, 'weave', developed into the modern *iść*.

The shortening of the infinitive ending began early in the Middle Ages. *The Holy Cross Sermons* abound in abbreviated forms. The process of cutting the final *-i* off had come to an end towards the close of the 15th century, not long after the six murderers of the Castellan of Cracow had had their heads cut off by the King's executioner.

Other Slavonic languages still often retain the old ending: Russian under stress (cf. *pasti*, 'tend (cattle)', and *past'*, 'fall'), Czech in written or careful language (cf. *prosiťi*, *prosiť*, 'ask'), Serbo-Croat in written or slow speech (cf. *hvaliti*, *hvalit*, 'praise'). Bulgarian first gave up the ending altogether and next almost totally got rid of the infinitive. Nowhere has the ending been extended by adding a new suffix.

3) [According to the latest research, cf.: *Język Polski*, XXVIII, 1958, 81, this word should be read: *poğembek*; therefore, the whole phrase *A o chłopci poğembek* assumes the meaning 'due to a peasant's slap in the face' = 'because a peasant (i.e. burgher) was slapped in the face'. J.T.]

6. TWO SIMPLE PAST TENSES.

Bitterly wept the Virgin Mary at Calvary in a 15th century Polish hymn:

"Synku, *bych* Cię nisko miała,
Nieco-ć *bych* ci wspomagała:
Twoja główka krzywo wisa, tę-ć *bych* ja podparła,
Krew po Tobie płynie, tę-ć *bych* ja utarła;
Picia wołasz, picia-ć *bych* ci dała,
Ale niełza dosiąć Twego świętego ciała".

('My dear son, if I had thee lower,
I would help thee a little:
Thy head droops sideways, I would hold it up,
Blood runs down thee, I would wipe it away;
Thou callest for drink, I would give thee to drink,
But I cannot reach thy sacred body').

Modern Polish does not know the form *bych*. In the Middle Ages it was inflected as follows: (ja) *bych*, (ty) *by*, (on) *by*, (my) *bychom*, (wy) *byście*, (oni) *bychą*. Derived from *być* (*byci*), 'be', with the aid of the past participle ending in *-ł* (cf. the *bych miała* of the hymn) or was used as an independent verbal form, a long forgotten past tense, called *aojist*.

The *aojist* of *bronić* (*bronici*), 'defend', ran as follows:

(ja) *bronich*, (ty) *broni*, (on) *broni*,
(my) *bronichom*, (wy) *broniście*, (oni) *bronichą*.

Beside the *aojist*, there existed in medieval Polish another past tense which the philologists call *imperfect*. It was used to denote an action *not perfected*, viewed as not yet completed. The *aojist* indicated an action as a whole, usually beginning and terminating within a limited period, but often without any regard to its duration.

The *imperfect* of *być* was as follows:

(ja) *biech*, (ty) *biesze*, (on) *biesze*,
(my) *biechom*, (wy) *bieście*, (oni) *biechą*.

From *bronić*:

(ja) *broniach*, (ty) *broniasze*, (on) *broniasze*,
(my) *broniachom*, (wy) *broniaście*, (oni) *broniachą*.

Both the *aojist* and the *imperfect* are fairly well represented in *The Holy Cross Sermons* and in the *Psalterium Florianense*.

Let us give a few samples of the *aojist*:

"Widziech... angiela Bożego" (*The Sermons*). 'I saw the angel of God';

"Angiel... święty zstąpi do Galaa ku synom izraelskim" (ib.), 'the Holy angel descended to Galaa, to the sons of Israel';

"Krol Ezechiasz i wszyciek lud jego... idziechą, pośpieszychą sie do kościoła na modlitwę przed Boga wszemogącego i poczęchą sie modlić,

izby je Bog zbawił ot mocy krola pogańskiego" (ib.), 'King Hezekiah and all his people... *went, hastened* to the church for prayer before God omnipotent (and) *began* to pray that he might save them from the power of the pagan king'.

A few samples of the imperfect follow:

"We słupie obłoka *motwiasze* k nim" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), '[The Lord] *spake* unto them in the cloudy pillar' (98.7).

"Ślepy... *siedziesze...* podle drogi" (*The Sermons*), 'A blind man *was sitting* at the side of the road';

"Krew niewinną *potępiachą*" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'They *condemn* (-ed, were condemning) the innocent blood' (93.21).

Endowed with similar endings (except for the -*sze* of the second and the third persons of the imperfect) the two past tenses of medieval Polish tended to be used rather indiscriminately. They were not very frequently employed and disappeared from the language altogether in the course of the 15th century.

The imperfect and the aorist are still used in Bulgarian, Lusatian and Serbo-Croat.

In Polish, nothing has remained of the imperfect. Only the aorist of *być*, 'be', has survived until to-day in the conjunctions *aby*, *by*, *gdyby*, *izby*, *oby*, *żeby* (*by* originally was the second and the third person singular) and in the endings of the conditional mood: *chciałbym*, *chciałbyś*, *chciałby*, *chciałibyśmy*, *chciałibyście*, *chciałiby*, from *chcieć*, 'want, wish'. Except for the third person singular and the second plural, these endings were modified under the influence of the present tense of *być*.

Standing at the foot of the Cross, the Mother of God weeps to-day differently, though no less bitterly:

"Twoja główka krzywo zwisa, *tęć bym* ja podparła".

"*Tempora* (times)-*grammatica* (tenses) - *mutantur* (change)". Only the lament, always equally poignant, immutably echoes through the ages.

7. THE COMPOUND PAST TENSE.

Non-Slavs often feel puzzled by the distinction of gender which they find not only in the Polish noun and most of the pronouns, but also in some forms of the verb, viz. the past tense and one of the three variants of the future. In speaking of a man a Pole says: *pracował*, 'he worked, he was working', and *będzie pracował*, 'he will work, he will be working'. Speaking about a woman he has to use a different ending: *pracowała*, 'she worked', and *będzie pracowała*, 'she will work'. For a child a third and different form is required: *pracowało*, 'it worked', *będzie pracowało*, 'it will work'. This over-abundance seems both superfluous and puzzling, especially if the non-Slav in question is an English-speaking person who has merely to change the pronoun in his own language.

The solution of the riddle is very simple. The future tense is a compound form, and a participle constitutes one of its parts. Most of the Polish participles have distinctive forms for the different genders, and so has that used in the future tense.

The cause of the gender distinctions in the past tense is exactly the same. This tense *was* a compound form. In the Middle Ages it was

composed of the same participle and of the present tense of *być*, 'be'. The medieval forms of the present tense of *być* were different in the first and second persons.

They were not *jestem*, 'I am', *jesteś*, 'thou art', *jesteśmy*, 'we are', *jesteście*, 'you are', as to-day, but: *jeśm*, *jeś*, *jesmy* and *jeście*. Only *jest*, 'he, she, it is', and *są*, 'they are', have remained unchanged.

Let us give a few medieval examples of the compound past tense:

"Od sądów twoich *nie sstąpił jeśm*" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'I have not departed from thy judgments' (118.102);

"zęby grzesznikow *starł jeś*" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly' (3.7);

"zapomnieli *jesmy* imię Boga naszego" (ib.), 'we have forgotten the name of our God' (43.22);

"przeciwo mnie *motwili są*" (ib.), 'they... speak (spoke) against me' (68.15).

Sstąpił jeśm, *starł jeś*, *zapomnieli jesmy*, etc., were later contracted into *stąpiłem*, *starłem*, *zapomnieliśmy*, etc., while the third person, singular and plural, simply lost its auxiliary verbal form, *motwił jest*, *motwili są* becoming *mówił* and *mówili* respectively. Wherever the participle was feminine or neuter, it remained so. Therefore, a woman must say *mówiłam* (from *motwiła jeśm*), while a man uses *mówiłem* (from *motwił jeśm*). About a child we say: *mówiło*. The number distinctions also are of similar origin.

The participle did not always precede the auxiliary form in the Middle Ages:

"Ja *jeśm spał* i *naspałem* sie" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'I laid me down and slept' (3.5);

"ty *jeś* za nas na krzyż *wstąpił*" (a 15th century hymn), 'thou (hast) ascended the cross for our sake'.

"błogosławiony mąż, jen *jest nie szedł* po radzie niemiłościwych" (*The Ps. Fl.*), 'Blessed is the man that *walketh not* in the counsel of the ungodly' (1.1);

"w cię *są pwali* oćcowie nasi" (ib.), 'our fathers *trusted* in thee' (21.4).

The inverse medieval order of the component parts of the past tense accounts for the existence in present-day Polish of such forms as "nigdy *ci tego nie wybaczył*", 'I have never forgiven you that', "cieszę się, żeś *przyjechał*", 'I am glad you have come', "wszystkoś *już zapomnieli*", 'we have already forgotten everything', or "wyście *tego chcieli*", 'it is you who have wanted it', etc.

The dropping of the auxiliary in the third person began at least as early as the first monuments of the Polish language. The amalgamation of the auxiliary with the participle took place in the latter part of the 14th century. Both processes were finally completed early in the 16th century when the present form of the past tense became stabilised.

The structure of all compound past tenses in the Germanic and Romance languages is similar to that of the Polish medieval past tense, cf. the German *ich bin gegangen* or the French *je suis allé*, 'I have gone'. However, so far as the auxiliary is concerned, the Germanic and the Romance languages use the present tense of *be*, less frequently than that of *have*, English has long discarded the Shakespearean *be* in its compound

past. No one would say now: "The King is *rode* to view the battle", but "The King *has ridden*...". In medieval Polish the auxiliary *be* held exclusive sway. On the other hand, although the French participle may have distinctive forms not only for the singular (*allé*) and plural (*allés*), but also for the two genders (*allé*, masc. sg., *allée*, fem. sg., etc.), these forms differ only in spelling (except for the plural *s* in liaison). In Polish the difference is both one of spelling and pronunciation. The obliteration of the auxiliary as a separate word has moreover not taken place in French or in German, whereas it has occurred in Polish.

The compound past tense is known in all modern Slavonic languages. In the Eastern group the auxiliary has been dropped altogether, cf. the Ukrainian *ja pik* (masc.), *ja pekla* (fem.), 'I baked'. In the Southern group the auxiliary *may* be dropped in the third person singular and plural, cf. the Serbo-Croat *hvalil je(st)*, or *hvalio*, 'he praised', and *hvalili su* or *hvalili*, 'they praised'.

In Czech the auxiliary is still spelt separately: *byl jsem*, 'I have been'. It is also sometimes dropped in the first person of both numbers: *Já tam byl*, 'I was there', *my tam byli*, 'we were there'. It may be noted that although Serbo-Croat still uses the aorist and the imperfect, these tenses are dying out in the language of big cities like Belgrade, and it is the compound past tense that is taking their place.

8. VOCABULARY.

Medieval Polish, that is the language of the 13th-15th centuries, does not differ from the present-day language to the same extent as Middle English differs from modern English. Polish has been fairly conservative throughout its development. There were indeed in the Middle Ages very few forms, e.g. the aorist or the imperfect, which to-day present difficulty in understanding to those without special philological training. Similarly, the number of medieval *words* which are no longer used or which were fundamentally different in either form or meaning, is insignificant.

a. *Some medieval words seem to have fallen into disuse for phonetic reasons.*

Let us examine the substantive *pwa*, fem., 'trust, confidence', and its verbal derivative *pwać*, 'trust'. Both are employed in the *Psalterium Florianense*: "Błogostawieni wszyscy, iż mają w niem *pwę*", 'blessed are all those that put their *trust* in him' (2.13); "bo *jeśm pwał* w cię", 'for I put *my trust* in thee' (15.1).

Pwa had been evolved from an early-Polish two-syllable word **pūva* (*ɔ* denotes a very short hard vowel which, most probably, had a pronunciation similar to that of the modern English "a" in *China*)⁴). When the *ɔ* disappeared, direct contact between the voiceless *p* and the voiced *v* occurred. In such cases, the majority of Poles were apt to pronounce

⁴ An asterisk preceding a word means that the word is *not* recorded in the monuments of a language either in the form given or at all.

**pfa*, not **pva*, *f* being voiceless equivalent of *v* (spelt *w* in ordinary Polish spelling).

It is difficult to establish with absolute certainty whether medieval Polish had any interjections with *pf-*, expressing disapproval or disgust (cf. the *pfe* of to-day) which might have lent **pfa* an unpleasant colouring. Whatever the facts, further evolution would have simplified **pfa* into **fa*. A substantive would thus have been created, somewhat peculiar in structure. Summing up, *pva* was doomed possibly because of the phonetic evolution undergone and certainly because of the evolution yet in store for it.

Its verbal derivative, *pwać*, was simplified into **fać*, and, although there was in Polish one verb of a similar phonetic structure (*dać*, 'give')⁵ it is only the prefixed *u-fać*, 'trust', that has maintained itself until to-day.

The root **pūv-*, that we have in both the words mentioned, has quite regularly developed into *pew-* in the adjective *pew-ny*, 'sure, certain', and its derivatives (*pewność*, 'certainty, certitude', *zapewnić*, 'assure', etc.).

b. *The disappearance of some other words seems to have been due to reasons connected with phonetics and word-formation.*

The early Polish **stǫdza*, fem., 'path', may be mentioned here with another very short vowel in it, the palatal *ǫ*. The disappearance of this vowel created *stǫza*: "Świeca nogam moim słowo twoje, i światłość stǫzam moim" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths' (118.105). Owing to the initial three consonants, two of them voiceless (*st*) and one voiced (*dz*), *stǫza* was difficult to pronounce. It could have been simplified into *sdza*, *zdza*, as happened indeed in the *Puławy Psalter*, cf. "Przewiedzi mye we śdzi kaźni twoich", 'Make me to go in the path of thy Commandments' (118.35). However, Polish which has always been rich in diminutives, often replaced the basic form by its diminutive. Thus **cora*, 'daughter', and *mać*, 'mother', for instance, have been replaced by *córka*, *matka*, the basic forms of to-day. Similarly the diminutive *ścieżka* ultimately prevailed over all the basic forms of *stǫdza*.

Um, masc., 'notion, knowledge, reason', was still used in the 15th century. Andrew Gałka of Dobczyn praised Wycliffe saying that "od boskich rozumow aż do ludzkich umow (gen. pl.) rzeczy pospolite, wiele mędrcom zakryte, uczynił odkryte", 'He revealed general truths which had been concealed from many a philosopher - from Divine conceptions down to human notions'. However, Polish has had very few masculine substantives composed of one vowel and one consonant only (cf. *ul*, 'bee-hive', which has succeeded in surviving, while *ud*, 'member of body' has become neuter so as to enlarge its bulk in the nom. acc. sg.: *udo*, now 'thigh'). On the other hand, as exemplified by **fać*, it is quite often the short, non-prefixed form of a word which has disappeared in favour of a longer, prefixed variant. Therefore the almost synonymous dissyllable *rozum*, now 'reason', has finally superseded *um*.

5) There are many more now, cf.: *bać się*, 'fear', *dziać się*, 'occur', *lać*, 'pour', *piąć*, 'crow (of a cock)', *siąć*, 'sow', *wiać*, 'blow' - all these, however, were also used in the Middle Ages in their non-contracted form: *bojać się*, *dziejać się*, *lejać*, *piejać*, *siejać*, *wiejać*.

Um has been retained in Russian, for instance, in the saying "*um za rozum zachódit*", used to describe the artificial and complicated character of somebody's reasoning. The sentence contains both *um* and *rozum*, just as does the quotation from Gałka's poem.

In the *Psalterium Florianense* we often find the word *Gospodzin*, 'Lord, God': "*Gospodzin rzekł ku mnie: syn moj jeś ty, ja dzisia porodził jeśm cie*", '*The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee*' (2.7). We have every right to assume that the word was also used to denote 'lord, master, Mr.', cf. the Russian *gospodín*, 'master, Mr., gentleman', and *Gospód'*, 'Lord, God'. Such words must be as short as possible, cf. French *Monsieur/M'sieu* from *Monseigneur*, English *Sir* from Fr. *Sire, seigneur*. Therefore, the one-syllable *pan*, itself an abbreviation (from *župan*), easily supplanted the three-syllable *gospodzin*. In the meaning of 'Lord, God' the acceptance of *Pan* was undoubtedly facilitated by the ancient one-syllable word *Bóg*, 'God', identical in structure.

c. In many cases the disappearance of a medieval word cannot be traced to any particular reason.

Unless he knows the Russian *nelzjá* or the Czech *nelze*, a Pole can only guess at the meaning of the medieval word *nielza*, 'it is impossible, it is forbidden': "*nielza dosiąc Twego świętego ciała*", 'I cannot reach thy sacred body' (from the 15th century hymn previously quoted).

Ostrów, masc., 'island', is now used in geographical names (*Ostrów, Ostrowiec*). The word sometimes appears in poetry or novels written in an archaic or over-ornate style. The Cassubians whose dialect has retained many features of Old-Polish, are now the only Poles to use *ostrów* in everyday language. The word has no connection with *ostrzy*, 'sharp', but contains the same Indo-European root ('flow') as the English *stream* or Greek *rheuma*, 'flow (noun)' (*o-* being a prefix with a meaning 'all around').

In present-day Polish *wyspa*, fem., is used. It is cognate with the verb *wysypać*, 'heap up (sand, by wind and river)', and so originally must have meant 'sand bank, sandy islet'.

Rozsierdzie, neut., 'wrath, anger', which is known to the *Psalterium Florianense*, has long gone out of use. This is not easily accounted for, because the verb *sierdzić się*, 'rage, fume', is still by no means uncommon, as are several neuter formations containing the same root ('heart'): *osierdzie*, 'pericardium', *litosierdzie* (obsolete), 'pity', and *miłosierdzie*, 'charity, mercy, pity'.

Wietnica, fem., denoted 'government building, council hall, town hall'. Polish towns were built, re-built or re-organised after the German fashion in the 13th century. It is no wonder - although this could not have been an absolute reason - that *wietnica* should have given way to *ratusz*, masc., 'town hall', from earlier German *Radhūs* (to-day *Rathaus*). Similar in structure and identical in root (cf. the Russian *so-vét*, 'council', Soviet Russia), *obietnica* (from **obvietnica*), fem., 'promise', has maintained itself.

Wrzemię, neut., 'time', and *wrzemienny*, 'temporal', are recorded in only one monument of medieval Polish, *The Holy Cross Sermons*. Both

are still used in Russian where they are of Church-Slavonic origin ⁶⁾: *vrémja, vrémennyj*. *Czas*, masc., a word of equal antiquity, is now the exclusive word for the many notions of 'time'. An adjectival derivative of *czas*, *doczesny*, corresponds now to the *wrziemny* of *The Sermons*.

d. A number of medieval words have changed their form without changing their meaning.

Słza, złza, fem., 'tear', has been simplified into the modern *łza*. In a 15th century life of Jesus Christ we read: "I począł płakać miły Jezus i *ślzy* puszczać", 'And the dear Jesus began to weep and let his *tears* flow'. When the infant daughter of Jan Kochanowski, the greatest poet of the Polish Renaissance, left this vale of tears, her father shed *łzy* and not *złzy* in his *Threnodies* (in other poems of his *złza* can still be found). The Czechs use *slza* even to-day.

Brona, 'gate, gateway', has become *brama*. The change cannot be accounted for from any other point of view than that of the loss of connection with *brona*, 'harrow', and *bronić*, 'defend'. Under the influence of Czech *brána*, the word first changed into *brana*. Then the initial labial *b* affected the dental *n* and transformed it into the equally labial *m* (*brama*).

Anioł, 'angel', was pronounced *angioł* or *angiel* in the Middle Ages ⁷⁾. The word was nearer to its Graeco-Latin original (*angelos-angelus*) and more sonorous. The adjective was *angielski* (to-day *anielski*), identical with *angielski*, 'English'. In a hymn from the 15th century we find "zdrow bądź, krolu *angielski*" ('be welcome, King...'). This does not refer to Henry VI, nor does the "chleb *angielski* jadł człowiek" of the *Psalterium Florianense* (77.29) refer to Poles settling in Britain. The author of the hymn had in mind the King of *Angels*, the *Angelic King*, while the translator of *The Psalter* was thinking of *angels'* food. Even as late as 1543 the Devil took upon himself "własność *angielską*", 'the shape of an *angel*', not 'English property' as we might understand it to-day. "Non *Angli*, sed *Angeli*" - we could reverse the well-known saying.

The change of *piekł*, 'hell', into *piekło* was both a phonetic simplification and a change of gender, from masculine into neuter. *Pk-* of the nominative and the accusative sg. was the only example in Polish of a word beginning with *pk-*, a somewhat difficult consonantal group to start a word with (in all the other cases the stem was *piekł-*, e.g. *piekła*, gen. sg.). The stem *piekł-* could easily have become the nom. acc. sg. However, since hell was often associated with heaven (*niebo*, an ancient neuter), *piekł-* was converted into the neuter *piekło*.

6) Church-Slavonic, the first Slavonic language to be recorded, originally was the dialect of the region of Salonika (in Greece) into which Methodius and Constantine, the first Slav missionaries, translated a number of Christian religious texts in the latter half of the 9th century. It has been used since as the language of the (Orthodox) Church - hence its name *Church-Slavonic*. The Russian vocabulary is composed both of genuinely Russian and of Church-Slavonic elements.

7) [This pronunciation was accepted generally until very recent times. At present there is a tendency to ascribe to the letter *g* the vocal value of *j* (*anjol, anjel*), cf. K. NITSCH, *Studia z historii polskiego słownictwa*, Kraków, 1948, 66-71, also S. URBAŃCZYK, *Język Polski*, XXXII, 1952, 127-128. This latest pronunciation is also stated in the *Słownik Staropolski*, vol. I, 1953-55. J.T.]

No reason can be found for the change of *wojska*, 'army', a feminine substantive in the Middle Ages, into *wojsko*, neuter.

List, a masculine substantive, which to-day denotes only 'epistle', was used in the Middle Ages (and later) to indicate both 'epistle' and 'leaf'. In the latter meaning the plural was a collective formation of the neuter gender, *liście* (sg.), 'foliage'. The ending of the nom. and the acc. of *liście* caused the word to be identified as a masculine plural, cf. the nominative pl. *goście*, 'guests', *kmiecie*, 'peasants'. Therefore, the former collective *liście* began to be inflected as a plural, and later the stem *liśc-* penetrated into the singular. *List*, 'epistle', has been left untouched: the epistolary art was not suggestive of plurality, as was the exuberance of foliage; there was no «epistolomania» in the Poland of the Middle Ages.

The Polish *ksiądz*, 'priest', as also the Russian *knjaz'*, 'prince, duke', continue the common-Slavonic **kūnędzi*, a word of Germanic origin, cf. German *Koenig*, Engl. *king*. The original meaning was probably 'lord, master'. It would be idle to discuss the question of whether pagan priests were ever addressed to or spoken of as **kūnędzi* (nom. pl.) for there are no pre-Christian Slavonic records to prove or disprove such a contention. When Christianity was introduced, the Poles, like the Czechs, began to employ the word to denote Christian priests. The secular meaning nevertheless persisted. Therefore when we read about a "*ksiądz Bolesław*" of Sandomierz in a 15th century song, we are aware that it is not a parson, but prince Boleslas himself who, when the Tartars attacked his city, "*Syradiam confugit cum nobilibus*", 'fled to Sieradz with his nobles'. The double meaning of *ksiądz* was not very convenient and might often have led to misunderstandings. Therefore the diminutive *książę*, a neuter (cf. *dziecię*, 'child'), with gen. sg. *książęcja*, nom. pl. *książęta*, was specialised in the secular meaning, while the basic form continued to have the meaning of priest. Later, as often happens in title-words, the stem *książęc-* of the singular was contracted into *księć-*, cf. gen. sg. *księcja*, and the word also changed its gender, from neuter into masculine.

In discussing the two latter words, *list/liśc* and *ksiądz/książę* we have already broached the problem of *semantic changes*.

An interesting semantic change is that of *kmieć*, from Latin *comes*, 'companion, retainer', cf. Fr. *comte*, Engl. *count*. In the 14th century continuation of the hymn *Bogurodzica*, the earliest Polish literary work, we find the following passage: "*Adamie, ty Boży kmieciu, Ty siedzisz u Boga w wiecu*", 'Adam, thou *companion* of God, Thou sittest in God's council'. Soon, however, *kmieć* fell in the social scale and began to denote village elders. A little later it was possible to use the word of *any* peasants: "*Chytrze bydlą z pany kmiecie*", '*The peasants* behave very cunningly towards their masters' (a 15th century song).

Wiece, 'council', which occurs in the above passage, was of neuter gender. To-day it is masculine (*wiec*) and has changed its meaning into that of a 'public political meeting'.

In the Middle Ages *cerkiew/cyrkiew* (gen. sg. *cerekwie, cyrekwie*), fem., was used in the same meaning as *kościół*, 'church' (cf. *Chapter Three*, 2 and 8). In the 15th century life of Jesus Christ the word is used both in the meaning 'Church (institution)' and 'church (building)': "*Głowa świętej cerckiew jest Krystus*", 'Christ is the head of the Holy Church';

"Kiedy się modlą, ciało w cerkwi mają a serce na ulicy", 'When they pray, their bodies are *in the church*, their hearts, however, are in the street'. Later, *cerkiew/cyrkiew* was limited to the Orthodox and the Uniate Church (the Orthodox Slavs had not "borrowed" the Latin *castellum/kościół* but the Greek *kuriakón*, cf. Engl. *church*, Germ. *Kirche*). However, there is in the province of Pomorze (Pomerania) a locality called *Cerekwica* or *Cerkwica* (recorded for the first time in 1273 as *Cirquiza, Cyrkwica*), near which, in 1454, the nobility of Poland Major sustained a defeat in the otherwise victorious war against the Teutonic Knights.

Similarly, *pop* can be now used only in speaking of Orthodox priests. In Gałka's poem about Wycliffe we find: "Cesarscy *popowie* są Antykrystowie", 'The Emperor's *priests* are Antichrists' - these certainly were Roman Catholic. In all probability, *pop* was the first name given to Christian priests after the introduction of Christianity. Somewhat later, they were denoted by the name *ksiądz*. *Popowo* in Poland Major is a relic similar to *Cerekwica*.

The Polish medieval vocabulary does not differ so much from the language of to-day as to make the reading of the texts really difficult. But we have to remember that the language we know properly is that of the 13th-15th centuries. King Boleslas the Great (d. 1025) would not be understood easily, even though the difference would be less than between modern English and the English of the early 11th century.

CHAPTER TWO: THE DIALECTS

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The Polish dialects are usually divided into the following groups:

1. *The Poland-Major (Wielkopolska) dialects*, spoken in the basin of the lower and middle Warta as far as the river Noteć, and north of the Noteć around the towns of Tuchola (about 65 miles S.S.W. of Gdańsk) and Nakło (over 30 miles S.S.W. of Tuchola). A former capital of Poland, Gniezno, lies in this territory;

2. *The Kuyavian dialects*, spoken around Tczew (about 15 miles S. of Gdańsk), Grudziądz (40 miles S. of Tczew), Inowrocław (about 65 E.E.N. of Poznań) and Włocławek (about 40 miles E.E.S. of Inowrocław). Kruszwica, now a little town, the legendary capital of Poland, lies in this area;

3. *The Mazovian dialects*, spoken along both banks of the Vistula, from Puławy, South of Warsaw, down to Płock (60 miles W.W.N. of Warsaw), and in the whole country north and east of the Capital. Warsaw is situated in the area of these dialects;

4. *The Silesian dialects*, spoken in Silesia, including Cieszyn Silesia;

5. *The Poland-Minor (Małopolska) dialects*, spoken in the rest of the compact territory, to the south of the line which can be defined as passing to the north of the towns of Łęczyca (about 85 miles W. of Warsaw), Radom (over 60 miles S. of Warsaw), Lublin (about 95 miles S.E. of Warsaw) and Chełm (over 40 miles of Lublin). Cracow lies in this area;

6. *The Cassubian dialect*, spoken between Chojnice (about 70 miles S.W. of Gdańsk) and the Baltic coast, N.W. of Gdańsk;

7. *Dialects of the Western Territories*. These consist of a mixture of the dialects of the populations, transferred from ethnically different regions but primarily derived from the areas east of the so-called Curzon Line annexed at the end of the last war by the Soviet Union.

The division into the first six groups is mainly based on phonetic differences; the seventh does not as yet show any unified tendency to evolve in a particular direction except, perhaps, to assimilate the non-regional manner of speech of the educated classes. In this chapter the most striking archaic features have been chosen to give some idea of the dialects considered as a whole. Most of these features have been touched upon or discussed in *Chapter One*.

The first person of the verbal dual which was still used in the literary language of the 17th century has been preserved in its original meaning in the very heart of Poland, in some of the Southern-Mazovian dialects. Examples have also been given from a Poland-Minor dialect where both the first and second persons are now used in the function of the plural.

The "aorist" past tense form of the first person singular, used in the literary language towards the end of the 15th and during the 16th century, as well as the medieval and the 16th century ending of the first person singular, conditional mood, do justice to Silesian and Poland-Minor dialects. The same applies to an old case ending, the *-e* of the genitive singular of some feminine substantives, which partly survived in the 18th century literary language.

Preferential treatment has been given to the Cassubian dialect, in view of its exceptionally archaic character. It is in the section dealing with Cassubian that a few phonetic details have been adduced. Some more, relating to the change of *cz*, *ź*, and *sz* sounds into *c*, *z* and *s*, which affects part of Silesia as well as almost the whole of Poland-Minor and Mazovia, have been mentioned in *Section 5*, dealing with the influence the dialect has had on the form of some words in literary Polish.

Section 6, dealing with old words or their old forms, gives examples from various Polish dialects.

The dialects are dying out comparatively fast. Interesting as they are from many points of view, they are particularly dear to the heart of most Poles for their preservation of many old forms or words long discarded in the literary language.

2. THE DUAL NUMBER.

The dual number of the substantive has been described in *Chapter One*. It will be remembered that it was not confined to the Middle Ages. The

last remnants of it can be found even in the 18th century literary language, not counting the very few fossilised forms used to-day. Neither was the verbal dual confined to the medieval period. It was only the third person that disappeared during the 15th century. The second was still in use in the 16th. The first person survived somewhat longer. Pasek, a Mazovian nobleman and soldier, author of some fascinating *Memoirs* covering the period 1656-1688, still made sparing use of it.

With these introductory remarks in mind we can make a somewhat unexpected leap and pass on to the death of the most famous infant of Polish literature, Ursula Kochanowska, thirty months' old daughter of the poet.

The bereaved father tried to find consolation in the divine melodies of his lute, this instrument and symbol of the tender craft of the poets. He believed that Pluto, the severe ruler of Hades, would work a miracle for him:

"A ty mię nie zostawaj, wdzięczna lutni moja,
ale ze mną pospołu pódź aż do pokoja
Surowego Plutona: owa go to łzami,
To tymi żalonymi *zmiękczywa* pieśniami.
Ze mi moję namilszą dziewczkę jeszcze wróci,
A ten nieuśmierzony we mnie żal ukróci.
Zginąć ci mu nie może; tuć sie wszystkim zostać,
Niech sie tylko niedoszłej jagodzie da dostać".

('But do thou not desert me, lovely lute!
Be thou the furtherance of my mournful suit
Before dread Pluto, till he shall give ear
To our complaints and render up my dear.
To his dim dwelling all men must repair,
And so must she, her father's joy and heir;
But let him grant the fruit now scarce in flower
To fill and ripen till the harvest hour')

(free translation by D.P. Radin) ⁸⁾.

Since both the poet and the lute implore Pluto, Kochanowski uses not the plural *zmiękczymy*, but the dual *zmiękczywa* ('we shall placate').

In *The Dialogue or Discourse* (1564) between the Host and the Lutheran about the enactment of the existing laws, S. Orzechowski lets the *two* disputants discuss the importance of oratory and mention the famous orators of Poland. The Host puts a rhetorical question:

"Cóż tu *rzeczewa* o Janie Ocieskim, Kanclerzu Koronnym?", 'What shall we say here about John Ocieski, Chancellor of the Crown?'

The verbal dual was rather rare in the 16th century, and therefore we owe all the more gratitude to M. Bielski for the excellent feast he has

⁸⁾ *Poems by Jan Kochanowski* translated from the Polish by Dorothea Prall Radin, Marjorie Beatrice Peacock, Ruth Earl Merrill, Hazel Halma Havermale, George Rapall Noyes; University of California Press, Berkeley, California. 1928. University of California Syllabus Series, No. 214; issued Dec. 1928; 156 pp. (p. 37).

given to the admirers of this ancient number in his *Rozmowa dwu baranu* ⁹⁾, 'The Discourse of Two Rams':

"Tu byłby plac, co mówić o duchownym stanie,
Których pierwsza powaga dzisiaj chodzi tanie:
Bo już dwieście biskupów zmarłych *pamiętawa*,
I wiele kardynałów w swej pamięci *mawa*.
Ale iż to nie naszej, rzecz tak wielka, głowy,
Dajwa spokój, Bożych sług nie *tykajwa* słowy,
A raczej się na ten czas, mój bracie, *prześniwa*,
Bo więcej, niż potrzeba, zda mi się, *mówiwa*".

('It would be here that we could say something about the clergy
Whose original prestige has become cheap to-day:
For we *remember* two hundred deceased bishops
And *have* in our memory many a cardinal.
However, as so great a subject is none of our concern,
Let us leave it alone - *do not let us touch* the
servants of God with our words,
We should better sleep now, dear brother,
For we talk more than is necessary').

The second person of the dual ended in *-ta*:

"Pietrze, i ty, Pawle" - two enemies who hid the reason of their enmity and thus rendered reconciliation impossible, were asked - "któreż tedy lekarstwo, a jako będzie przyłożone na ten wrzód, którego oba *taita*" (1577), 'Peter, and you, Paul, which medicine and how can it be put on the ulcer which *you both conceal*'.

In *Quincunx* (1564) Orzechowski instructed the Lutheran and the Papist:

"lubo kto od ciebie się uczy, lubo ty od kogo się uczysz, *musita* mieć między sobą początek jaki, od którego naukę swą *pocznieta*, 'whether someone learns from you or whether you learn from someone, *you must* decide on some beginning between yourselves, from which *you will begin* your learning'.

To-day, while the first person does not hurt the educated Pole's ear too much, the second undoubtedly grates on it and is almost unbearable. Most probably, the explosive character of *-t* accounts for the difference, the fricative *-v* (*-w-*) of the first person being more tranquil and less offensive. To an educated Pole both forms now have a strong flavour of dialect, for, surprisingly enough, though the dual of the substantive has not survived in the dialects, except for some insignificant relics, the verbal dual still thrives there, mostly, however, in the function of the plural. The change of meaning has been the price paid for survival.

In a popular fable recorded not so long ago near Garwolin, over twenty miles south of Warsaw, a stepmother wanted to get rid of her stepdaughter. She gave her a distaff and a reel, told her to go to an uninhabited hut for the night, weave a certain amount of thread, all this in the pious hope that the girl would be duly kidnapped by the Devil.

⁹⁾ *Dwu baranu* is a genitive dual. There are two stone heads of rams adorning a house in the main square of Cracow.

With the striking of eleven o'clock, a rather unorthodox hour in the regulations of Hell, the Evil One made his appearance and at once set about seducing the poor maiden: "*pójdziewa do tanecka*", 'let's dance'. The use of the dual must have impressed upon the girl that they were the only two in the hut, and that, consequently, there was nothing to prevent the Devil from putting his wicked designs into effect. Nevertheless she would not be beguiled. Before she would agree, the Devil had to help her to weave, bring a beautiful dress and a jugful of water with which she might wash herself, the result being that the Spirit, abashed and dog-tired, decided to withdraw. His appearance at eleven o'clock showed that he was not a demon of great experience, though with a stupid prey he would deal easily. For when the stepmother sent her own daughter the next night to coax some lovely frocks from the Devil, the girl, invited to dance with the words: "*bandziewa tańcować*", 'we shall dance', at once fell into the trap of the hellish dual and perished at the hands of the Evil One.

In another fable, also recorded near Garwolin, there is a buck who had so many misdemeanours on his conscience that he fled from his owner to a fox's earth. The fox could not dislodge the buck from his legitimate dwelling and asked the wolf for help. "*Chodź, bracie*" - said the wolf - "*to wa gu wypandziewa*", 'Come along, brother, *we shall chase him out*'. This form is truly interesting, for it not only contains a dual verbal form used in its original sense, but also the dual pronoun of the first person: *wa*, very rare even in medieval texts.

The original dual meaning of the first person form is now known only in the quadrangle Garwolin-Siedlce-Kock and Puławy, south-east of Warsaw. Everywhere else, this form, whether its ending be *-wa* or *-ma* (in Poland-Major, changed under the influence of the plural ending *-my*) is used as a plural form.

Nowhere has the second person the old dual meaning, though it can be found almost in the whole area where Polish is spoken.

In his pursuit of the child Jesus and his Mother, Herod comes to a village called Sulistawice, near Sandomierz. On meeting a group of peasants, he asks them:

"*Chłupy! Nie widziałyście Matki Buoski?*", 'Peasants! *Haven't you seen the Mother of God?*'.

But the men of Sulistawice did not want to betray that they had had the two refugees with them and seen them off to a neighbouring town. They exchanged glances and said, with lazy cunning:

"*A, widzieliżwa, czożwa nie mieli widzić?*", 'Yes, *we have seen, why shouldn't we have?*'.

To which they added misleading information about the direction of the flight.

In both these cases the dual no longer has its original meaning, it is a group of peasants to whom Herod speaks and who answer him.

The third person of the dual also ended in *-ta*, cf.: "*byłasta dwa bracieńca*" (from the *Gniezno Sermons*, end of the 14th century), 'there were two brothers'; or: "*oczy jego na ubogiego źrzyta*" (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'his eyes... are set against the poor'. There are no traces of the third person form in the dialects.

If anybody would like to know whether the humble prayer of the poet and his lute was answered, whether Pluto graciously agreed that Ursula should leave his subterranean kingdom and return to her father at Czarnolas ¹⁰⁾, not even a simple no would do, for within a few years of losing Ursula, Kochanowski himself met with sudden death in the Tribunal square of Lublin...

3. AN OLD GENITIVE SG. FEM. in -e.

King David announced to the Lord in the *Puławy Psalter*:

"pośrzod *cerekwie* chwalić Cie będę", 'in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee'.

In his *Mirror* (*Zwierciadło*, 1567) Nicholas Rey said:

"do nadzieje wnet przybędzie stateczna myśl", 'hope will soon be joined by steadfast thought'.

In a report from Madrid, the *Polish Ordinary Mercury* (*Polski Merkuriusz Ordynaryjny*), one of the first newspapers in Poland, wrote in 1661:

"Nasz Dwór nie traci *nadzieje* o przyjaźni angielskiej", 'Our Court (the Royal Court of Spain) does not lose hope of the friendship of England'.

In a short jocular poem by J. Kochanowski, a doctor sneaked away from his drunken companions who only later forced their way into his room, with a jug of beer:

"Nasz dobry doktor spać sie od nas bierze,
Ani chce z nami doczekać *wieczerze*".
(Our good doctor leaves us to go to bed
And does not want to stay with us until supper').

Feminine substantives with *-a* in the Nominative singular and with a stem ending in *a* - historically or actually - soft (palatal) consonant, and some of the consonantal feminines, had the ending *-e* in the genitive singular: *cerekwie* (n. sg. *cerkiew*), *nadzieje* (n. sg. *nadzieja*), *wieczerze* (n. sg. *wieczerza*) etc. Later, following the main bulk of the consonantal stems (n. sg. *kość*, 'bone', g. sg. *kości*) and the hard stems (n. sg. *niewiasta*, 'woman', g. sg. *niewiasty*) they changed their *-e* into *-y* or *-i*: *cerkwi*, *nadziei*, *wieczerzy*. The last remnants of the *-e* form could still be found as late as the first half of the 19th century (Mickiewicz, Syrokomla), the main wave, however, had ebbed away towards the end of the 17th century.

Some dialects, notably those of Silesia and the South-Western Poland-Minor, still faithfully preserve the old ending. A sick Silesian peasant from the neighbourhood of Kluczbork dreams that "kieby dostał wodę z tej studnie, co jest u dwunastej godziny w nocy zamkniętą, to by był zdrowy", 'if he could get some water from the king, from the well which is closed at midnight, he would recover'. In Poland-Minor, near Limanowa, "wilk skoczą do tej świnie", 'the wolf threw

10) The village in which the poet spent most of his life.

himself upon this pig'. It would be *z tej studni* (n. sg. *studnia*) and *do tej świni* (n. sg. *świnia*) in the literary language of to-day.

The -e genitive singular is still the regular form in Czech, cf.:

"Jim odpust'. Nám znič v srdci naivní víru
a sílu vlož tam, země dědici" (F. Holub);

('Im odpusć. Nam zniszcz w sercu naiwną wiarę
a siłę włóż tam, ziemi dziedzicu');

('Forgive them. Destroy the naïve faith in our heart
and put strength there, o ruler of our country');

"V táhlem pádu listí do aleje
slychám marná slova beznaděje" (J. Hora);

('W ciągłym padaniu liści do alei
słyszę płonne słowa beznadziei');

('In the continuous falling of leaves on the alley
I hear the vain words of hopelessness').

"meč z ruky jí dnes vypadl
a k tomu bez krve" (J. Seifert);

('miecz z ręki jej dziś wypadł
i ku temu bez krwi');

('the sword has fallen out of her hand to-day,
and this even without blood').

4. "AORIST" PAST TENSE FORM.

Darkness has fallen. A storm is raging in full fury. It tears the branches, whistles through the wooded slopes, mercilessly rips through the leas and breaks into the hut through chinks and slits. Andrew Tylka is back at home and listens, fascinated and awed. He cannot bring himself to read. His soul is held captive by the roaring wind. Suddenly, amid the wild howling of the storm, a quiet, mocking ditty resounds in the air:

"Nieboracek Telka, miał owiecek kielka,
Przysła na nie skuoda, zabrała je woda..."

('Tylka, poor wretch, had some sheep,
Disaster overcame them, the waters took them away...').

Tylka does not believe his ears. It is the singing of the Tatra music-maker Johnny Sabała, whom, wearied and at rest, they had laid in a grave, long, long ago. The ghost of Sabała, a kindly soul, a steadfast friend, though sometimes too good at gibing, not caring a straw for the world and its views, self-righteous, like the men of Poronin who, phlegmatically and good-heartedly, would light their pipes from the altar candles ("why should that fool of a parson mind it so terribly, instead of going on with Mass?")... Tylka does not believe his ears. Love and yearning make him go out, however:

"Cisnem ja książke, wylecialek z izby bez ogród na dróge a zona za mnom sła", 'I flung the book aside, flew out of the hut through the garden on to the road, my wife followed me' - such are Tylka's words.

But there was no Johnny in the darkness of the night storm, though, again, from under the forests his mocking ditty resounded, the ditty about the sheep that the waters had taken away...

Where the highlanders of the Tatra and the Beskidy ranges say *wyleciatek*, with a *-k* at the end, the more conservative Silesian still uses the older *wyleciatech*, with a *-ch*: "*Miaūech* kosą drewnianą", 'I had a wooden scythe' - he will say near Gliwice.

Neither the highlander, nor the Silesian has read the writings of Orzechowski, Rey or Kochanowski (16th century) where these forms were sometimes used. "*Mówiēch* w tamtych dyjalogoch", 'I said in those dialogues' - boasted Orzechowski, a favourite of the nobility, proud of his talents as a pamphleteer. However, towards the end of the 15th and during the 16th century, the period when these forms occurred in literary Polish, a first person plural, of similar making, was employed. Rey complained about the alleged increase of royal power:

"Nadobnie się nam miesza ta nasza patryja:
Cochmy byli sub lege, teraz sub gratia".
(*'There is a fine confusion in this motherland
of ours:
We were sub lege, now we are sub gratia'*)¹¹⁾.

In his play about Troy, Jan Kochanowski described a skirmish with the invaders:

"Jako nas tam niewielki na ten czas był poczet,
Kusiwszy się kilkakroć o nie, *musielichmy*
Na ostatek dać pokój";
(*'Since we were then a small detachment only,
After several attempts to capture them, we had
to give it up'*).

These first-person forms were less frequent than the usual *mówiēm*, *byliśmy* or *musieliśmy*. Their *-ch* (*mówiēch*, *musielichmy*) was due to the influence of the *aorist* of *być*, 'be', conserved in the conditional mood: *mówiłbych*, 'I should speak', *mówilibychom*, 'we should speak', or rather, in its newer form: *mówilibychmy*, modified by the past tense form *mówiliśmy*. The dialect has retained the singular *miałech*, etc. only.

The lament of a maiden, prone to find sadness everywhere, runs as follows in one of Kochanowski's *Songs*:

"Co śpiewam, *plakać* bych miała,
Acz me pieśni płacz bez mała".
(*'Whatever I sing, I should weep,
Though my songs are almost a lament themselves'*).

The dialects of the highlanders and the Silesians, also that of Warmia (the country south-east of Gdańsk-Danzig) still use this *bych* in the conditional mood. When Boleslas Prus, the Polish Dickens, arrived in Zakopane, at the foot of the Tatra range, and decided to make a trip into the mountains, he hired a guide, Bartek Obrochta, a fiddler. To risk the

11) *Sub lege*, 'under law', *sub gratia*, 'dependent on (King's) pleasure'.

climb was a bold step on the part of the novelist, for he was a sufferer from agoraphobia. We are told that once, in the Champs Elysées, shaken with fear of the wide open spaces around him, he had to jump from a tramcar at full speed. Noticing Prus's nervousness, Obrochta moodily assured him: "Dydziek ¹²⁾ ja przewodnik, *cobyk sie znåt na górak*", 'After all, I am a guide and I should know the mountains'. The Silesian says: "*kupiłbych kùnia*", 'I would buy a horse'. Similarly the man of Warmia: "*ja bych to kupsiuł*", 'I would buy it'.

The admirers of Zakopane tried to imprison the unruly spirit of Sabata, a grand story-teller and a fine violinist, in a small, third-class, black statuette, erected not far from the entrance to a Tatra valley. Unsuccessfully, it would seem, since the storms of history, which have blown through the Tatra, the Beskides, the fertile lowlands of Silesia and the sandy plains of Warmia, have not succeeded in howling down the late-Jagellonian "aorist" past tense form with *-ch*, changed into a cocky *-k* by the highlander.

5. SOMETHING ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF THE DIALECT ON THE LITERARY LANGUAGE.

The problem of the origin of literary Polish has not been definitely solved.

There are two views. Some philologists maintain that the dialects of Poland-Major, especially those of the country around the lower and middle Warta - the cradle of the Polish State - formed the essential basis of the all-Polish standard language. Others are of opinion that the standard language was formed only after the transfer of the capital to Cracow, in Poland-Minor, early in the 11th century.

Until quite recently, the main argument in favour of the first hypothesis was that the literary language *and* the Poland-Major dialects have *not* changed their *sz*, *cz*, *ż* and *dź* into *s*, *c*, *z* and *dz*, as has happened in nearly all the other dialects ¹³⁾, cf. the literary and Poland-Major *szew*, 'seam', *czoło*, 'forehead', *żona*, 'wife', *drożdże*, 'yeast', and Poland-Minor *sew*, *coło*, *zona*, *drozdze*. Lately, however, the view has been put forward that this change began simultaneously in different parts of the country towards the end of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century. Very, very slowly the change spread over the area where it is known to-day. By the time it had reached any considerable proportions, the literary language was too well established to succumb to the influence of a popular phonetic phenomenon, the more so as the Czech language, which enjoyed some prestige in medieval and 16th century Poland, had not undergone any similar changes.

However, there are some words in literary Polish which have changed their *sz*, *cz* or *ż* into *s*, *c*, and *z* under the influence of the dialect.

12) *Dydziek*, from *dyć-ek*, *-ek* for *-em*, an abbreviated form of *jestem*, 'I am'.

13) This type of pronunciation is called *mazurzenie* in Polish, 'the Mazovian pronunciation', from *Mazur*, 'a Mazovian', although Mazovia is only part of the territory where this pronunciation is known.

The first-recorded Polish word (1113) is "*czebri*", 'kind of wooden vessel', to be read *czebry* (nom. pl. masc.). To-day it is pronounced *ceber* (from the more ancient **czber*; *e* between *c* and *b* having been brought into nominative sg. from the dependent cases of declension), n. pl. *cebry*, and is often used in the expression "*deszcz leje jak z cebra*", 'it is raining cats and dogs' - a frequent and useful phrase in Poland with torrential rains in annoying abundance.

Dzban, 'jug' is closely related to **czber* (ancient n. sg.). It developed from **czban* (the initial *czb-* shows the relation). Under the influence of the voiced *b*, **czban* changed into **dźban* (cf. Czech *džbán*). Then the two words gave proof of their kinship and solidarity by becoming **cber/ceber* and *dzban*. In Cieszyn Silesia where the change of *cz*, *dź* into *c*, *dz* is not known, the two vessels are still called *źber* from (**dźber*, this from **czber*) and *źbún* (from **dźban*).

The *c* and *dz* of these two words in literary Polish are due to their frequency in the mouth of the servants who mostly had to deal with the two vessels: and in the whole huge area of Central Poland it was the servants who had ceased to pronounce *cz* or *dź*.

The nanny did not call a child's toy *czaczo* or *czaczko* (a diminutive), but *caco*, *cacko*. Therefore, the nobleman's child was wont to use the popular form and in many cases retained *caco*, *cacko* when grown up. However, the old *cz* forms survived in literary usage as late as the 18th century.

The poet Zabłocki expressed his adoration in the words "*Panna Eliza, milutkie caco*", 'Miss Eliza, dear little thing', while his contemporary, Węgierski, gave preference to Agatha: "*Agata, śliczne owo, miłości rękami utworzone czaczko*", 'Agatha, this beautiful toy created by love'. The objects of so much wantonly spent admiration - who, let us think, had not left the nursery too long ago - must have preferred the nanny's *cacko*, for this form finally prevailed. However, in the dialects which do not change their *cz*'s into *c* we still find the old *czaczko*.

The name for 'teal', **czyranka*, had become *cyranka* in entirely different circumstances. When a nobleman wanted to do any tealshooting he had to avail himself of the help of his fishers and shooters, most of whom did not pronounce *cz*.

As long as the nobleman had to deal with "*ceber*", jug, toy or teal, things of little value and - except for the bird - drab in their daily monotony, he would give way to the men or women of the people. It was different when something more important was at stake. Then he would not tolerate any interference with his pronunciation and, in an endeavour to stress its superior character, would even change, quite unnecessarily, ancient *s*, *c*, *z* sounds into *sz*, *cz*, *ź*.

The bison was the pride of old Poland. Only some specimens of this rare beast had survived the hunter's zeal and had found refuge in the Forest of Białowieża until the outbreak of the war. The bison's name was *zębr* as late as the end of the 15th century. This form can still be found in some place-names such as *Zębrsko* or *Zambrowo* (originally *Zębrowo*) and in such surnames as *Zembrzuski* (*Zębrzuski*). Later, *zębr* was supplanted by a parallel and an equally ancient form of *zubr*, just as *wnęk* by *wnuk*, 'grandson'. Jan Kochanowski noticed that love "*lwom srogość odejmuje i zubrom północnym*", 'deprives the lions and the Northern bisons of their severity'. This form of the word has been

preserved in the surname *Zubrzycki*. Later, however, the nobleman, quite unjustifiably, for the initial *z* had *not* been transformed from a *ż*, began to fancy that the name was not high-brow enough for the splendid beast. Thus, the modern *żubr* came into being to denote the king of the Polish forests.

The fate of the wild cat's name, today *żbik*, was similar. In the 17th century this unusually strong and crafty cousin of the domestic puss was known under the name of *zdeb*, cf. "*zdebie i liszki*", 'wild cats and foxes' (Potocki). Later, *zdeb* was replaced by its diminutive form, *zdbik*. *Zdbik* was simplified into *żbik* (1650, 1779-80) which, like the bison's name, quite unfoundedly, began to be felt as a peasant form, and changed into *żbik* either directly or through the form *żbik* (1789).

A rapacious bird's claw in the 18th century was called *spona* (prefix *s-*, root as in *opona*, 'tyre', *s-pin-ka*, 'cuff-link, stud'). Later, *spona* changed into *szpona*, not so much as a result of an unjustified reaction to the peasant pronunciation, as under the influence of many loan-words with initial *szp-*, cf. *szpada*, 'sword', *szparagi*, 'asparagus', *szprycha*, 'spike', etc.

The change of *zmudny*, 'toilsome', into *żmudny* may have been due to a false conception of the character of the initial consonant. However, the name of Samogitia (North-Western Lithuania), *Żmudź*, may also have had some share in the final shaping of this adjective.

The next word brings us back to *ceber* and *dzban* with which this chapter began. The adjective 'empty', naturally enough often qualified the two vessels. As late as the 16th century the old form *prozny* was used. However, an empty jug was rather irritating when the nobleman wanted a drink of beer or wine. Then he would be furious with his domestics and would even suspect his serfs of not working enough for the master's pleasures and amenities. In an attempt to mark his social superiority, he would change the ancient word into a seemingly more high-brow *prożny*, *próżny*. *Rozny*, 'different, diverse', was a good rhyme to *prozny*, and it is no wonder that it should have shared the fate of the latter: it is pronounced *różny* to-day. However, neither *rozmaity*, 'diverse, various', nor the prefix *roz-* (cf. *rozmowa*, 'conversation, talk', *rozwieść się*, 'divorce') on which *rozny* was based, ever changed their *z-* into *ż-*. There was no rhyme to drag them along, and the prefix was too frequent and too stable not to put up successful resistance.

The suffix *-ic (-yc)* has had an interesting history. The derivatives formed with this suffix mostly denoted human beings viewed as the offspring of others or as members of a community. The son of *Stach*, a diminutive form of *Stanisław*, 'Stanislas', was once called *Staszyc*, whence the name of an 18th century writer. The nobleman is called *szlachcic*, a member of the *szlachta* community. The *-ic (-yc)* formations sometimes also denoted things thought of as having descended from other things. The sun was the main planet, the lord, the master of the world: *ksiądz*, 'duke, lord, master, prince' in the Middle Ages. The moon was rightly regarded as being of less importance, a pale shadow of the sun and, most probably, his descendant: *księżyc* (cf. the present-day diminutive of *ksiądz*, 'priest': *księżyk*, 'young, small priest, seminarist'). *The Holy Cross Sermons* employ *księżyc* in the meaning of 'The Lord's Child', Jesus Christ.

One formation with *-ic* had the suffix changed into *-icz*. S. Simonides wrote in 1614:

"Jedzie z swoją drużyną *panic* urodziwy,
Panic z dalekiej strony";
(‘A handsome *young man* is riding with his suite,
A young man from lands afar’).

The word meant ‘the young master, the son of the master’, and was formed from *pan*, ‘lord, master, Mr.’. To-day, however, *panicz* is used. The change probably occurred under the influence of two factors: an unjustified impression that the *-c* form was a peasant form, and also the example of the Ruthenian (Ukrainian) *panýč* where the *cz* (č) was historically justified.

The old *-c* was replaced by *-cz* to an incomparably greater extent in formations containing the suffix *-owic/-ewic*, almost identical in meaning with *-ic* (of which it was an extension). Most of these formations were patronymic names.

Thus, *Stanisław*, the son of *Tomasz*, ‘Thomas’, was called Stanisław *Tomaszewic*. This formation, reminiscent of the English *Thomson* type, supplemented the Christian name and helped in identifying the man. Later, these quasi-surnames developed into full-fledged, hereditary ones: not only the son of Thomas was called *Tomaszewic*, but also Thomas’s grandson, great-grandson, etc. The surnames of this type were in Western and Central Poland used almost exclusively by townsmen, cf. the names of the poets: *Klonowic*, *Szymonowic* (*Simonides*), *Zimorowic*, etc. The nobility preferred to call themselves after their estates: the owner of *Białobrzegi* assumed the surname of *Białobrzeski* (cf. the Engl. titles like *The Duke of Norfolk*, etc.). In the eastern part of the old Polish State where the nobility were to a great extent of Ruthenian origin and were wont to use patronymics as surnames, the corresponding Ruthenian suffix contained a *-cz*. Hetman *Chodkiewicz*, etymologically son, descendant of *Chodko*, *Chwedko* (= *Chweda*, *Fedor*, *Theodore*), who in 1605 inflicted a crushing defeat on the Swedes, launched a series of famous or influential noblemen with surnames ending in *-ewicz/-owicz*, such as: *Chreptowicz*, *Naruszewicz* or *Tyszkiewicz*. Confronted with these, the townsmen’s surnames ending in *-ewic/-owic* began to be looked upon as inferior, especially as their *-c* might have been suspected of being of peasant origin. Therefore, the suffix was changed into *-ewicz/-owicz*, and to-day, beside *Mickiewicz* or *Sienkiewicz*, whose names originated in the East, there are such names as *Matuszewicz* or *Stefanowicz* which originally ended in *-c*.

One common noun has followed the lead of the surnames: *królewicz*, ‘king’s son’, formerly *królewic*. A prelate preached in 1721 about a saint son of the 15th century King Casimir: “Służył Bogu swojemu Święty *Panic*, i znać było w każdej akcji *Królewica*”, ‘The Holy Son of the Lord (King Casimir’s) served his God, and every deed showed him a *king’s son*’. Later *królewic* changed into *królewicz*: as if the powerful and rebellious noblemen of Poland’s eastern part were too much for the son of the king whose power was on the wane. No support could have been forthcoming from the peasantry, with their *s*, *c* and *z* instead of the old *sz*, *cz*, and *ż*...

6. RELICS OF THE OLD POLISH VOCABULARY.

The literary *szkło*, 'glass (substance)', has no lustre about it. It sounds solid, stolid and commercial. Just ware and nothing more. In the Old-Polish *ścikło* there was lustre, scintillation and jingling, and no one needed to call in a very long numeral: *dziewięćdziesiąt dziewięć*, '99', which according to a modern Polish poet, J. Tuwim, sounds nearest to the clink of glass flung from high down to a stone pavement.

We find the old form in the 15th century life of Jesus Christ: "promień słoneczny przechodził *ścikło*", 'a sun's ray pierced *glass*'.

The people of Olsztyn (in Warmia) still employ *ścikło*: "pogoda jak *ścikło*", 'the weather is like *glass*' (crystal-clear). So do the people of Mazovia. Others, with a less musical ear, have simplified it into *skło*. In the literary language the initial *šk-* made the impression of something below the standard (*szkoda*, 'damage', *szkoła*, 'school', *Szkot*, 'Scotsman', etc. have always had *šk-*), of a peasant form, and, therefore, we to-day have *szkło* which no longer glitters, jingles or clinks.

In changing the initial *z* into *ż*, *zmija*, 'adder, serpent, viper', fell out with *ziemia*, 'earth', to which it was so closely related by root. Let us not regret it, for this down-to-earth reptile crawls in dead silence and without any rustle, as its execrable craft demands, and the sound of the name is of no consequence. The translators of the two Psalters most probably still pronounced the word with a *z*. However, over one hundred years later, Jan Kochanowski assured us in a rhymed translation of the psalms that we should safely tread upon 'adders prone to anger' ('Thou shalt tread upon the... adder'), "po *żmijach* gniewliwych", with a *ż*. Some dialects still have the old *żmija* (for instance Lubstów, in Northern Kuyavia) or the even older *zmija* (near Garwolin). In the neighbourhood of Skwierzyn, Poland-Major, they say *zimija* as if the reptile itself were a little longer:

"leżała *zimijou* na zimi, siwoū i zimnoū", 'the viper lay on the ground, grey and cold' - a delightful alliteration (*ż*, *ż*, *ś*, *ż*).

Odźwierny, 'doorkeeper', an obsolescent word, was in olden times related to *dźwry-dźwierzy*, 'door', only used in the plural. To-day *odźwierny* does not seem to have anything in common with it. For, since the 15th century the *dźwry-dźwierzy* began to crack and change into the modern *drzwi*, probably not without some influence of *drzewo*, 'wood', of which they were made. However, in the often very archaic fringes of Polish territory *odźwierny* is still in harmony with *dźwierze*, its mother-word. The people of Olsztyn say *dźwierze*. So do those of Opole Silesia, of the neighbourhood of Sanok and Dobromil in Poland-Minor, and the Cassubians. Johnny Sabała "po *dźwirzach* burzy", 'knocks on the door', before entering the hut of his good friend, Andrew Tylka.

It has been mentioned that *brama*, 'gate, gateway', formerly sounded *brona*, and that the change occurred under the influence of the Czech *brána* and the labial *b* (assimilation). Strangely enough, however, in Cieszyn Silesia, under the very noses of the Czechs, the ancient form *brona* is still used: "Deszcz go chyciu na frysztacki *brunie*", 'Rain caught him near the gate of Frysztat' - says a Silesian.

In the same Silesia the ancient *gańba*, 'disgrace, ignominy, infamy, shame', still thrives happily, though the rest of Poland in the 15th century

began to pronounce it, Czech fashion, as *hańba*, and, at least from the middle of the 17th century onwards, has used this form exclusively.

The bear is noted for his great liking for honey. Therefore, the Slavs have nicknamed him 'honey-eater', *miedźwiedz* (cf. *miód*, 'honey', and the verbal root *ed*, 'eat', to be found in *obi-ad*, 'dinner', *na obi-edzie*, 'at a dinner'). The bear's previous name, inherited from the Indo-European ancestors and preserved, for instance, in the Greek *arktós* and Latin *ursus*, has vanished without any trace in the Slavonic languages. A superstition prevented anybody from mentioning it for fear that the dangerous beast might emerge from the forest on hearing his *true* name. If you say 'honey-eater', you don't risk anything... A humble-bee may also be 'honey-eater'... Thus, when the grizzly heard *miedźwiedz*, he would not care to move from his sylvan abode, for the Slav would only sneer and poke fun at the bear's ignorance.

Nicholas Rey still pronounced *miedźwiedz*, with an *m*- at the beginning. Among all the Poles, the Cassubians alone have retained the *m*-. Everywhere else, the internal labial *-w*- changed the initial labial *m*- into a dental *n*- (dissimilation). The bear is now called *niedźwiedz*, and the origin of the word is less clear.

There are in the dialects words which the literary language discarded long ago.

In the *Threnodies* of Jan Kochanowski, Death is "*niepobożna*" (*śmierć*, 'death', is feminine in Polish) which means 'behaving in an ungodly manner' ("*nie po Bożemu*"), or *sroga*, 'cruel, severe'. Elsewhere, he may also be called "*niezbedna*", 'horrid, loathsome, repellent' (not to be confused with *niezbędny*, 'indispensable'):

"Śmierci *niezbedna*, prawda, że teraz nie umiesz nic - połamane strzały twoje", ('O, horrid Death, thou truly canst not do anything now - broken are thy arrows') - fulminated Fabian Birkowski, a 16th-17th century preacher.

His contemporary, Piotr Kochanowski, the son of the great poet's brother, wrote that he 'lived free, without any care or trouble, not bearing any loathsome greed in his heart': "wolny, bez troski i bez kłopotu żyję, w sercu *niezbednej* nie nosząc chciwości".

Niezbedny may have come from Bohemia, although it would be equally plausible to regard it as a native Polish word, with the root as in *budzić*, 'awaken, wake' (cf. the pair *duch*, 'ghost, spirit', and *dech*, 'breath', with the same alternation of vowels).

In Silesia, around Kluczbork, a mother whose seven sons - through her own guilt - became ravens, shouted in despair: "O, jań *niezbedna matka*", 'Ah me, horrid mother'.

The Silesians of Cieszyn give the name of *dęga* to the multicoloured and shining half-circle which appears in the skies after heavy rain and which God himself spread after the Deluge as a sign of forgiveness and mercy. An ancient Polish word, it is no longer known in the literary language where 'rainbow' is *tęcza* ¹⁴).

14) The original meaning of the word *tęcza* is... 'heavy, dark cloud'. This is what its Russian equivalent, *tuča*, still means. The symbolism attached to *tęcza* and *tuča* is, needless to say, exactly opposite.

From the old Polish *reż* (fem. gen. sg. *rży*), 'rye', a derivative has remained in literary Polish: *rżysko*, 'stubble-field'. *Reż* is known in Cieszyn Silesia, in Upper Silesia between Pszczyna and Głupczyce, in Cassubia and around Augustów, near the Lithuanian frontier, in other words on the archaic fringes. Elsewhere, rye is known as *żyto*, as in literary Polish from *żyć*, 'live' (cf. also the related *żywić*, 'feed'), which has vacillated between various meanings: 'corn' (*The Psalterium Florianense*), 'fruit' (1549), or 'wheat' (to-day in that part of Silesia where rye is called *reż*).

In the Middle Ages 'mother' was called **maci* (n. sg.), *macierze* (gen.), *macierzy* (d.), *macierz* (acc.), etc. The nominative sg. *maci* was not recorded in medieval monuments, which only knew its abbreviated form: *mac* (15th century - similarly the infinitives were deprived of their final *-i*). To-day the Pole will use this form in swearing: "*Psia jego mac*", 'His bitch of a mother'. The nominative *macierz* which had been modelled on the accusative and the other oblique cases, has been limited to the name of a society for the protection of learning youth: *Macierz Szkolna* (*szkolny*, adj., from *szkoła*, 'school'). Otherwise the old stem *macierz-* has yielded two derivatives: *macierzyństwo*, 'maternity, motherhood', and *macierzyński*, 'pertaining to motherhood, maternal'. In the meaning of 'mother', *matka* is now used, formerly diminutive of **maci*. However, the old *macierz* can still be heard, for instance, in the West Beskid mountains, around *Zywiec*, "*Jeśli ci się cni bez macierze* (g. sg., with the old ending *-e*) *i bez uońca*, to se jik mozes sprowadzić", 'if you feel lonely *without* your mother and father, you can bring them over here'.

Faithfully preserving the old tradition, the dialects do not use the French-Latin *kolacja*, 'dinner, supper', (cf. Engl. *collation*, 'light repast'), but *wieczera*, a derivative from *wieczór*, 'evening', which in the literary language has been limited to *Wieczera Pańska*, 'the Lord's supper'. It is rather strange that some peripheral dialects should have adopted the German *Frühstück* for 'breakfast': *fryśtyk* (Spisz - east of the Tatra range), *fryśtuk* (Northern Upper Silesia), *frisztik* (near Gniew and Chojnice S. of Gdańsk).

The great Jesuit preacher, Piotr Skarga, defined wedlock as 'a matrimonial union of an *otrok* and his bride... for living inseparably'. In his day *otrok* meant 'young man'. The word is still known in Silesia, round Kluczbork, and Skarga would be best understood there.

The old-Polish *gwoli* (from *k woli*, cf. also *ku woli*), 'to one's heart's content', has long been given up in literary Polish. "*I gwoli i boli*" - was a proverbial old-Polish saying used to denote something which caused both pain and contentment. Shortened by the loss of *-i* and simplified into *gól*, it is still used in some dialects as a preposition: "*tyla termedyi gól głupiygo psa*", 'so much trouble *because of* a silly dog' (around Nowo-Tomyśl, Poland-Major). "*Termedyja*" comes from the Latin *intermedium*, 'a short play acted between two acts of a longer one'.

7. CASSUBIAN.

In the Dark and the Middle Ages, the whole of what is Eastern Germany to-day, was occupied by Western-Slavonic tribes.

Of these only the Lusatians now remain, also called Lusatian Serbs or Wends. A remnant of a people which once inhabited the whole area between the river Saale, a left-bank tributary of middle Elbe, and the river Bobra, a left-bank tributary of the middle Oder, they now live around the towns of Budyšin - Bautzen (the Upper Lusatians) and Chóšebuz - Kottbus (the Lower Lusatians), numbering about 250.000 people (estimates vary). Their territory formed part of the Polish Crown early in the 11th century and of the Czech Crown in the period 1320-1635.

The Westernmost Slavonic tribe, the Dravonians, originally inhabited the whole of Eastern Hanover (west of the Elbe). Their language finally died out about 200 years ago. Some records of the time have been preserved, though incomplete and for the most part imperfect.

Of the languages which were once spoken between the lower Elbe and the lower Oder, no records remain. However, the investigation of the few words, place and personal names, preserved in old documents, gives some idea of their phonetic system and vocabulary. These languages died out at the end of the Middle Ages.

Philologists divide all the Western-Slavonic tongues into three groups: the Southern group, consisting of Czech and Slovak, the two Lusatian languages (the Middle group) and the Northern group, comprising the extinct Dravonian, the dialects spoken between the lower Elbe and the lower Oder, those of Pomorze (Pomerania) including Cassubian, and those of the rest of Poland.

Of the Pomeranian dialects only Cassubian has survived; it is spoken in a narrow belt of territory stretching from the town of Chojnice down to the Baltic coast in the neighbourhood of Puck. The Western branch of Cassubian, spoken east of the town of Słupsk, near Łeba Lake died out quite recently. Cassubian earlier stretched as far south as the river Noteć (a right-bank tributary of the Oder, the Southern boundary of the province of Pomorze) near the town of Nakło and as far West as the town of Koszalin. In the South, the language has receded before the influence of other Polish dialects, and in the West it has been ousted by German.

In the earliest period Cassubian shared the development of the Northern dialects, which, though they were not Polish, were closely akin to it. Cassubian later joined the Polish branch of the Northern group and became what it is to-day: a very archaic Polish dialect, with some old phonetic features and some new peculiarities of its own, and with an almost thoroughly all-Polish vocabulary.

Pomerania belonged to Poland towards the end of the 10th and early in the 11th century. It rejoined the Polish State about 100 years later. Towards the end of the 12th century (1181) Western Pomerania was occupied by the German margraves of Brandenburg who also captured Eastern Pomerania at the beginning of the 14th century. In the period 1308-1466 most of Eastern Pomerania was held by the Teutonic Knights who slaughtered the population of Gdańsk and Tczew (1308). In 1466 this territory was regained by Poland and formed part of the Polish State until the occupation by Prussia in 1772. Poland recovered it in 1918 and in 1944 took over the whole of the province of Pomorze down to the lower Oder.

The few peculiarly Pomeranian differences comprise the development of the Common-Slavonic group *-or-* between consonants into an *-ar-* in Cassubian, while Polish has *-ro-* here, cf. Common-Slavonic **vorna*, 'crow', Cass. *varna*, Pol. *wrona*. However, some Polish words also show this

development, e.g. Old-Polish *charbry*, 'brave', later simplified into *chabry*, to-day *chrobry*, Old-Polish *karw*, 'ox', but *krowa*, 'cow', etc.

Cassubian differs from most Polish dialects by its word-stress, mobile in the North, near the Baltic coast, and fixed on the first syllable in the South. E.g.: Cass.: *s'qsōd*, 'neighbour' (n. sg. masc.), *s'qsāda* (g. sg.), *s'qsādovi* (d. sg.), literary-Polish, *sqsiad*, *sqsiała*, *sqsiadowi* (the stress is on the penultimate); cf. Northern-Cass. *mtodī*, 'young', lit. Pol. *mlody*, N.-Cass. *gad'ōj*, 'talk' (imperative, 2nd person sg.), lit. Pol. *gadać*, etc. The mobile word-stress was still known in medieval Polish, before the literary period. Initial stress is known now in the Polish highlanders' dialects. The Southernmost Cassubian dialects have developed a secondary stress on the penultimate, thus becoming close to most other Polish dialects.

Another point of difference is the preservation in Cassubian of the distinction between long and short vowels, a trait long discarded by Polish which knew it either in the 12th or even in the 15th century, cf. Cass. *gōra*, 'mountain', with a long *o* and a short *a*, and literary Polish *góra*, with both vowels identical in quantity (the letter *ó*, to-day pronounced similarly to the *u* of the English *put*, always shows that there once was a long *o* vowel). Lately, however, it has become possible to notice a tendency to eliminate these quantitative differences; the length is retained most markedly only in the accented syllable, i.e. it ceases to exist as an independent phonetic characteristic of the Cassubian dialect. Nevertheless, these two archaic features of Cassubian mark it out as a very old Polish dialect.

The dental consonants *t*, *d*, *s*, *z*, developed before palatal vowels into the very soft palatal consonants *ć*, *dź*, *ś* and *ź* in all Polish dialects, including Cassubian, cf. the Common-Slavonic **tebe*, gen. of the pronoun of the second person sg., Polish and Old-Cassubian *ciebie*; Com.-Sl. **dini*, 'day' (n. sg. masc.), Pol. and Old-Cassubian *dzień*; Com.-Sl. **sěno*, 'hay' (n. sg. neut.), Pol. and Old-Cassubian *siano*; Com.-Sl. **jezero*, 'lake' (n. sg. neut.), Pol. and Old-Cass. *jezioro*. Later, however, the new consonants hardened in Cassubian alone: *cebe*, *dzeń*, *sano*, *jezero*.

In some other late phonetic changes Cassubian has shared the development of many other Polish dialects.

Literary Polish clearly distinguishes the *i* and *y* sounds. In the North of Poland, e.g. in Mazovia, and also in the South (cf. highlanders' dialects) *y* is pronounced *i* with the preceding consonant retaining its hard dental sound. So it is in Cassubian, cf. *sin*, 'son' (n. sg. masc.), literary Polish *syn*.

The development of a palatal *n* after a palatal *m*, cf. Cass. *mnjasto*, 'town' (n. sg. neut.), lit. Pol. *miasto*, is not only known in many other Northern-Polish dialects, but in some this development has gone much farther, the *m* being omitted altogether (*niasto*).

The difficulty in understanding Northern Cassubian when quickly spoken is slightly greater than that of understanding, for instance, the highlanders' dialects. But then, it should not be forgotten that some German dialects are *totally unintelligible* to those Germans who are not specially acquainted with them, and that, from the point of view of philological classification, Low German is a separate language from the High German group of dialects from which modern literary German has been evolved.

This is a fragment of a Cassubian poem published in 1880 by the poet J. Derdowski:

"Me Kaszube, co mnieszkame w kraju nadwiślańscim,
Mniedze rzeką Brdą a morzem, co je zowią gdańscim,
Zawde żesme bele wierni katolicci wierze,
Za to nąm też mowe ojców Pan Bog nie odbjerze.
Mniemce, choc kłe mają ostre, nigde nos nie zjedzą,
O tym oni ju od downa samni dobrze wiedzą".

This is what it would be in literary Polish:

('My Kaszubi, co mieszkamy w kraju nadwiślańskim,
Między rzeką Brdą a morzem, co je zowią gdańskim,
Zawsze żeśmy byli wierni katolickiej wierze,
Za to nam też mowy ojców Pan Bóg nie odbierze.
Niemcy, choć kły mają ostre, nigdy nas nie zjedzą,
O tym oni już od dawna sami dobrze wiedzą').
(We Cassubians who live in the country on the Vistula,
Between the river Brda and the sea which is called the
Gdańsk sea,
We have always been faithful to the Catholic faith,
In reward for which God will never deprive us of the
language of our fathers.
The Germans, though they have sharp fangs, will never
devour us,
They themselves have already known this for a long time').

The only two non-phonetic differences are the *zawde*, 'always', and *ju*, 'already' of the Cassubian text. The former is a simplification of the Old-Polish *zawždy* and has its counterpart in *zawdy*, known in many Polish dialects. The latter corresponds to literary Polish *już*, originally *ju-że*, the same *ju* reinforced by the addition of the particle *że*.

There is a book in English, under the heading *The Cassubian Civilization*, dealing with all aspects of material and spiritual culture of the Cassubian and with their dialect ¹⁵⁾.

CHAPTER THREE: FOREIGN INFLUENCE

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

In describing the foreign influence on Polish, one of the foremost Polish philologists, the late Professor Aleksander Brückner, said, not without some pride: "We have lived with mankind". The language bears

15) *The Cassubian Civilization*, by Fr. Lorentz, Ph. D., Adam Fischer, Ph. D., and Tadeusz Lehr-Splawiński, Ph. D., with a preface by Bronisław Malinowski, D. Sc., Professor of Anthropology in the University of London. Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1935, pp. XXVI-407.

a clear imprint of the age-long spiritual community with Europe. The following chapters are meant to illustrate this.

It must be stressed at the outset that the native element prevails decidedly in Polish. The vocabulary is composed first of all of words inherited from the times when there was one common Slavonic speech (*góra*, 'mountain', *kwiat*, 'flower', *prawda*, 'truth', *słowo*, 'word'), or of those which were formed during the period of separate national existence (*kobieta*, 'woman', *księżyc*, 'moon', *państwo*, 'state', *samolot*, 'aircraft'). The foreign words follow far behind.

Nevertheless, Polish is a less "pure" language than, for instance, literary Czech or Lithuanian. Generally speaking, the reason is that, although the partitions (1772, 1793 and 1795) deprived the Polish nation of independence for 123 years, the Polish language has been continuously used in all fields of human activity ever since the Middle Ages. This has never given the radical purists a serious chance for exploiting any national inferiority complex. The tide of life has ever been endowing Polish with foreign words and taking many of them away. Their fate was not essentially different from that of the native words which were born and later died out, like the leaves in Horace's *De arte poetica*. Both Czech and Lithuanian passed through periods of very restricted use which resulted in waves of radical purism. Therefore, modern Czech and Lithuanian quite often have native words or words whose foreign origin is concealed by native forms, where Polish uses loan-words. Cf. Czech *hudba*, Old-Polish *gędzba*, mod. Pol. *muzyka*, 'music'; Cz. *divadlo*, from *divati se*, 'behold, gaze on', Pol. *teatr*; Cz. *článek*, Pol. *artykuł*, '(press) article'; Lith. *rusintojas*, from *rusinti*, 'russify', Pol. *rusyfikator*, 'russifyer'; Lith. *muziejaus saugotojas*, from *saugoti*, 'conserve, guard', Pol. *kustosz muzeum*, from Lat. *custos*, 'custodian of a museum'; Lith. *spaustuwė*, from *spausti*, 'press', Pol. *drukarnia*, from *drukarz*, 'printer' (German *Drucker*), 'printing house', etc. etc.

The number of loan-words in Polish has never reached the same proportions as in English. With Czech or Lithuanian on the one hand, and English on the other, constituting the extremes, Polish would have to be placed somewhere in between, though decidedly much nearer to its two neighbour languages.

"Living with mankind", the Poles have not imparted to the other nations the same number of loan-words as they have accepted themselves. Nor, indeed, have any other Slavonic nations, the younger brothers of the European community. However, the Polish language has had its own sphere of influence, and, although this problem exceeds the scope of the present work, a few instances are given of Polish loan-words in other languages.

2. LATIN.

Latin came to Poland only after the introduction of Christianity.

It came with the Church. In the Middle Ages the Church was known in Poland under its Greek name, *cerkiew*, fem., gen. sg. *cerkwie*, English *church*, Germ. *Kirche*. But it also was called *kościół*, which name ultimately prevailed during the 16th century. *Kościół* was the Polish version of

the Czech *kostel*, itself derived from the Latin *castellum*, 'castle'. The first Christian temples east of Germany apparently were either fortified or attached to places of defence.

Latin came to Poland with the Graeco-Latin *schola*: Pol. *szkoła*. It was the language of the chronicles: those of Gallus (1113), Kadubek (early 13th century), Janko of Czarnków (14th century), Długosz-Longinus (15th), Miechowita and Kromer (16th). These made Poland known throughout the whole of civilised Christendom. The medieval annals, written in Latin, saved the early history of the country from oblivion.

Latin dictated the deliberations of the Polish Parliament, documents, investitures, laws and privileges. It was in this language that King Ladislas Jagiełło solemnly promised in 1433 'not to imprison anyone unless convicted by law' ("*neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum*"), and the promise was kept by all his successors with exemplary loyalty.

It was those who used Latin as their medium who made known to Poland what mankind felt and thought, and enabled the Poles themselves to make their voice heard in the concert of the world. Paul Włodkowic, a Rector of the Academy of Cracow, read during the Council of Constance a treatise in Latin on the policy of the Teutonic Knights towards the pagan Prussians; in this treatise he declared that heathen should not be converted by sword and fire. Copernicus proclaimed in Latin his revolutionary views on the rotation of the earth and its movement around the sun (1543). The poets, Janicki-Janicius, Hussowski (16th century) and Sarbiewski-Sarbievius (17th), who in his day was also known in England, wrote in Latin alone. Modrzewski-Modrevius (16th) made his name with the work *De republica emendanda* (1551), full of a Christian and truly democratic spirit. *De optimo senatore* by Goślicki-Goslicius, was translated into English, and enjoyed three editions in this country¹⁶⁾. The handful of names quoted gives but some idea of the extent of Polish literature in Latin. It is no wonder that Polish should have adopted so many elements of the Latin vocabulary, that it should have become the most Latin-influenced Slavonic language.

Quite often a Polish writer would adorn the Polish text with Latin phrases and expressions. In a Cracow 15th century song the students of the Academy sang merrily: "*Dum bibo piwo, stat mihi kolano krzywo*", 'While I drink beer, my knee stands bended'. The celebrated Jan Kochanowski decided to provide Polish words with Latin endings (a poetical joke), to mix them up with Latin, and wrote:

"Est prope *wysokum* celeberrima silva *Krakowum*,
Quercubus insignis, multo miranda *żoładzie*,
Istuleam spectans *wodam*, *Gdańskumque gościńcum*,
Dąbie nomen habet, Dąbie dixere priores".
(There is a famous forest near *high Cracow*,
Rich in oak-trees and admirable for its many *acorns*,
Looking towards *the waters of the Vistula and the*
road to Gdańsk,
Its name is Dąbie, the ancestors called it Dąbie').

16) This book was first published in 1568 in Venice. The dates of the three English editions, under the title *The Accomplished Senator*, are: 1598, 1607, 1773. Goślicki expressed the view that the people had the right to revolt against a tyrant. According to Prof. I. Gollancz (Cambridge) Goślicki's book had a great influence on political life in this country as well as on some works of Shakespeare.

In 1586 a gazette published an alarming report from Vienna: "*In Arabia, jak tu ćwierdzi Poseł Wenecki, Turek swe rzeczy uspokoił, unde imminet maius periculum orbi Christiano*", '*In Arabia, as the Venetian Envoy asserts here, the Turks have mastered the situation, whence a great danger threatens the Christian world*'.

In 1704 a manifesto was issued by the unfortunate King of Poland, Stanisław Leszczyński, later the industrious and popular Duke of Lorraine and father-in-law of Louis XV. Each sentence of the manifesto was interspersed with Latin:

"Nie na co inszego tedy tę cierniową na Głowę Naszą wcisnąć chcemy koronę, tylko aby *ex hac passione nostra reflorescat* w swobodach swoich ojczyzna", 'Not for anything else do we want to put this thorny Crown upon our head, but that *from this suffering of ours* our native country might again blossom in her liberties'.

Or:

"Jeżeli tedy przenikający niebiosą płacz ludzki zatrzymać Uprzejmości i Wierności Wasze chcecie, jeżeli *tranquillitatem restabilire* Rzeczypospolitej¹⁷⁾, jeżeli ją *ab omni solvere metu*, nie chcecie krwią Waszą tuczyć zawziętego na zgubę Waszę nieprzyjaciela". 'If your Clemencies and Fidelities want to stop the weeping of men that pierces Heaven itself, to restore peace in the Republic¹⁹⁾ and to free her from all fear, refuse to fatten with your own blood the foe who is intent on your perdition'.

Naturally enough, the Poles not only used Latin in quotations thus adorning the Polish text of their writings or speeches, but they also "borrowed" quite a number of Latin words.

Early Latinisms came through the Czechs from whom Poland adopted the Christian faith: Lat. *claustrum*, Cz. *klášter*, Pol. *klasztor*, 'monastery'; Lat. *crux*, Cz. *kříž*, Pol. *krzyż*, 'cross'; Lat. *missa*, Cz. *mše*, Pol. *msza*, 'Mass'; Lat. *offerre*, 'offer', Cz. *ofěra*, Pol. *ofiara*, 'offer, victim'; Lat. *altare*, Old-German *altāri*, Cz. *oltář*, Pol. *oltarz*, etc.

It is perhaps worth while to elaborate the semantic evolution of the Latin *pater*, 'father', in Czech and in Polish. The first word of the most important Christian prayer, the *Pater noster*, 'Our Father', became *páteř* in Czech and *pacierz* in Polish, having the meaning of 'Our Father', or that of any other '(Christian) prayer'. Since, in saying prayers, the faithful sometimes counted them with the help of the rosary (*rosarium* in Latin, from *rosa*, *różaniec* in Polish, from *róża*, 'rose'), one bead corresponding to one prayer, *pacierz* came to denote 'bead', cf. the "bursztynowe *pacierze*", 'the amber beads' of M. Bielski (16th c.). The beads were usually minute, and therefore the diminutive *paciorek* soon took the place of *pacierz*. In this way the serious Roman *pater* found himself on maidens' slippers sown with *pacioriki* (n. pl.). This however, is not the end of the story. The back-bone, with its vertebrae, resembled the rosary, and was named *stos pacierzowy* accordingly (*stos*, 'heap, pile'). A prayer was also a good, though not too precise measure of time: "*w kilka pacierzy wróciła z oznajmieniem, że wszystkim gotowe*" (Sienkiewicz), 'She returned *within a few prayers* to say that everything

17) The term *Rzeczpospolita* - 'Republic' is explained later in this section.

was ready'. All these meanings, except perhaps the last, are known in Czech.

Some Latin words were changed unrecognisably both in Polish and Czech. *Vesper*, 'evening', became *nešpor* in Czech and *nieszpór* in Polish (now *nieszpory*, plural only), with the meaning of 'evening prayers, evening service'. *Laurus*, 'laurel', turned into *vavř-in* in Czech and *wawrz-yn* in Polish, though later it was "borrowed" again in the form of *laur*.

Aqua vitae, 'kind of alcoholic beverage, vodka', became *okowita*, as if it were 'welcoming (*witać*, 'welcome') the eye (*oko*)'.

Such words are, however, rare. Most Latinisms have in Polish a form not much different from Latin, cf. *decyzja*, 'decision', Lat. *decisio*; *konfesjonał*, 'confessional (subst.)', Lat. *confessionale*; *konkluzja*, 'conclusion', Lat. *conclusio*; *magnat*, 'magnate', mediev. Lat. *magnas* or *magnatus*; *relikwie*, 'relics (of a saint)', Lat. *reliquiae*, etc., etc.

Some Latin words were translated. The most important among them is *rzeczpospolita*, 'republic'. This word, coined in the 16th century, denoted the joint quasi-federative State of the Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian nobility, which was finally established by the Act of Union signed in Lublin in 1569. At that time the adjective *pospolity* corresponded to the modern *wspólny*, 'belonging to all', while *rzecz* has ever had a meaning similar to that of the Latin *res*. However, the Latin *corona* was not translated into *wieniec*, 'wreath', as it might have been, and *Korona* was the only designation for the Polish Kingdom (Poland proper), as well as for '(a king's) crown'. Besides *konfesjonał*, the translated *spowiednica* (cf. *spowiedź*, 'confession') was used for a time. *Musculus*, 'muscle', was in Latin 'a little mouse' (from *mus*, 'mouse'). Therefore, some anatomists of the latter part of the 18th century tried to introduce the term *myszka*, literally 'little mouse' (from *mysz*, 'mouse'). Later, a native word was coined *mięsień*, derived from *mięso*, 'flesh'. Now, both *muskul* and *mięsień* are used, though the more frequent adjective is *muskularny*, 'muscular'. *Muskul* and *muskularny* accidentally resemble the adjective *męski*, 'manly, virile', and therefore seem to be better suited to express the idea than *mięsień*, too suggestive of fleshiness.

Some ancient Polish words acquired a new meaning under the influence of Latin. *Ojczyzna* (*oćczyzna* in the Middle Ages, from *ociec*, now *ojciec*, 'father') formerly denoted '(land) property inherited from father to son'. In this meaning it was known as late as the 16th century, cf.: "Żywi mię Bóg chudą ojczyznę moją z żonką i dziećmi moimi" (Orzechowski), 'God feeds me, my dear wife and my children, with whatever my poor heritage can yield'. However, towards the end of the 15th century, *oćczyzna* began also to denote 'fatherland, motherland, native country' (*patria*). Górnicki objected to the new use pointing out that, in view of the old meaning, the loan-word *patryja* was much more handy. In the latter part of the 16th century *ojczyzna* and *patryja* were equally frequent: "przez miłość namilejszej patryjei naszej" (Orzechowski, *Quincunx*, 1564), 'for the love of that most beloved motherland of ours'; "ten najmilszy okręt ojczyzny naszej wszystkich nas niesie" (Skarga), 'this most beloved ship of our motherland carries us all'. Later, the native *ojczyzna* entirely supplanted the loan-word.

Ofiara, 'offer, victim', which has been mentioned in this chapter, was not really necessary. Until about the middle of the 17th century Polish

had its own hereditary word, *objata* (from **obwiata*, originally 'something promised, promise, vow'). Similar in their outward structure and identical in meaning, the two words could often be found side by side: "*ofiary i obiady nie chciałeś, Ojczye*", "Thou didst not want *sacrifice*, Father" (1579); "*Chrystus wydał się... obiatą i ofiarą Bogu*" (1561), 'Christ *sacrificed himself* to God'. If *ofiara* ultimately prevailed, the *offerre* of the Latin prayers of the Catholic Church may be deemed partly responsible for it.

Polish is the most Latin-influenced Slavonic language. However, the number of words of Latin origin is much smaller than in English. The reason for this is not any greater familiarity of the Englishman with the language of ancient Rome, for the Pole was on equally close terms with it. The difference arose out of the fact that the English vocabulary had absorbed a great number of French words and thus became more prone to assimilate Latinisms, which, on the other hand, resembled Gallicisms. The influx of German words did not change the fundamentally Slavonic character of the Polish vocabulary, and, moreover, the Germanisms only accidentally resembled the Latin words.

There was, however, in the history of Polish an epoch during which Latinisms were almost as frequent as in English. The impact of Latin, which for quite a long time had been the second language of all educated Poles, was in the 17th and in the first part of the 18th century strongly reinforced by the Baroque, with its fondness for excessive ornament and its lack of simplicity. The Latin word was then regarded as a good means for enriching the style and making it as decorative as the palaces and churches of those times. It was only later that the language slowly and gradually got rid of most unnecessary words of Latin origin.

Hetman Stanislas Żółkiewski, the conqueror of Moscow, was one of the greatest men of the old Republic. Severe in private life, statesmanlike in his views and brave on the battle-field, Żółkiewski had all the qualities of a Roman hero. His knowledge of Latin equalled his knowledge of the art of war. In 1612 the Hetman wrote *Memoirs* describing his expedition to Moscow and the wise policy he tried to pursue there in opposition to the views of King Sigismund III. There we find such words of Latin origin as *defensyje*, 'defences' (to-day: *urządzenia obronne*)¹⁸⁾, *diferencyja*, 'difference' (*różnica*), *suspicyja*, 'suspicion' (*podejrzenie*).

The *Memoirs* of Pasek, a veteran of the many wars which were fought during the tumultuous third quarter of the 17th century, contain many more words of Latin origin; cf.: *adwersarz*, 'adversary' (*przeciwnik*), *konsolacyja*, 'consolation' (*pociecha*), *kontumeliya*, 'contumely' (*zniewaga*, 'insult'), *obediencyja*, 'obedience' (*postuszeństwo*), *pestylencyja*, 'pestilence' (*zaraza*), *prokrastynować*, 'procrastinate' (*zwlekać*), *zægzacerbować*, 'exacerbate' (*rozjätrzyć*).

In his *Description of Polish Customs during the rule of August III* (1733-1763), Father Kitowicz uses among many other Latinisms: *anniwarsarz*, 'anniversary' (*rocznica*), *edukacyja*, 'education' (*wychowanie, wykształcenie*), *frukta*, 'fruits' (*owoce*), *importancja*, 'importance' (*doniosłość, znaczenie*), *independencyja*, 'independence' (*niepodległość*), *kontradykcyja*, 'contradiction' (*sprzeczność*), *lukta*, 'fight (between candidates during an election)',

18) The modern native equivalents are given in brackets.

from Latin *lucta*, 'fight' (*walka*), *rekurować*, 'recuperate, recover, regain' (*odzyskać*), *sentencja*, 'sentence (of a court)' (*wyrok*).

The novel of Bishop Krasicki, *Pan Podstoli* ('The Steward of the King's Household'), published in 1778, portrays an ideal gentleman-farmer. Frequent and accurate information about English parks, education, manners and ways given in the novel, shows how popular England was in 18th century Poland. Words of Latin origin occur quite often: *animadwersja*, 'animadversion' (*nagana*), *defluitacja*, 'floating (of timber, etc., by river)' (*splaw*), *ekscepcja*, 'exception' (*wyjątek*), *impresja*, 'impression' (*wrażenie*), *influncja*, 'influence' (*wpływ*), *opresja*, 'oppression' (*ucisk*), *wakryfikować*, 'sacrifice' (*poświęcać*) etc.

Most of these Latinisms have been used in English. It seems that some Latin words had more vitality than others, and that this was the reason why the languages of many different nations adopted them. It is, however, interesting to note that Polish, while "borrowing" from Latin, mostly retained its old native equivalents or later coined them, and that these ultimately won the battle.

Let us give some examples. Żółkiewski used *legacyja*, 'legation', and *poselstwo*, *rezystencyja*, 'resistance', and *odpór* (to-day *opór*). In Pasek's *Memoirs* we find: *cyrkumstancja*, 'circumstances', and *okoliczności*; *inwitować*, 'invite', and *zapraszać*; *piktura*, 'picture', and *obraz* (this word originally denoted 'sculpture', and was used in both meanings as late as the 16th century); *wiktoryja*, 'victory', and *zwycięstwo*; *wolontarz*, 'volunteer', and *ochotnik*, etc. Kitowicz used: *kredytor*, 'creditor', and *wierzyciel* (coined after the Latin *creditor* from *wierzyć*, 'believe', in the 16th century; as late as the 18th century, *dużnik*, was employed both for 'creditor' and 'debtor', which was very inconvenient); *sciencja*, 'science', and *nauka*, etc. In Krasicki's novel we find: *adwersarz*, 'adversary', and *przeciwnik*; *antecessor*, *predecessor*, 'predecessor', and *poprzednik*; *dyskurs*, 'discourse', and *rozmowa*; *eksperyencja*, 'experience', and *doświadczenie*; *frukta*, 'fruits', and *owoce*; *drzewa fruktowe*, 'fruit trees', and *drzewa owocowe*; *industria*, 'industry, assiduity', and *przemysł*; *inskrpcja*, 'inscription', and *napis*; *kredytor*, 'creditor', and *dużnik* (to-day *dużnik*, from *duż*, 'debt', means 'debtor'); *modestia*, 'modesty', and *skromność*; *possessor*, 'possessor', and *posiadacz*; *prewencja*, 'prejudice', and *uprzedzenie*, etc.

To-day, Latin no longer plays the part it did in the old Republic. Polish successfully fulfils all the functions of a modern civilised language. However, many words of Latin origin still remain in Polish. They not only adorn the language and break the native monotony, but also testify to the European character of Polish civilisation.

3. GERMAN.

German influence on Polish is next in importance to that of Latin.

When the Polish nation emerged from the twilight of prehistory, it did not border on any of the German-speaking peoples for they lived well beyond the Elbe, in present-day Western and Southern Germany. However, as early as 963 the wings of German imperialism began to throw a shadow on Poland from across the Slavonic countries, and many a war followed, at first against the German Emperor, and subsequently, beginning with the 14th century, against the Teutonic Knights.

In the 13th century waves of German settlers were admitted by Polish princes, dukes and lords to populate a country devastated by Tartar invasions. Except in the regions bordering at that time on German-ruled territory, e.g. in Lower Silesia, these settlers became Polonized.

Groups of Germans have ever since been coming to Poland at different periods, and, in most cases, the result has been Polonization. However, in adopting Polish, these Germans bequeathed to their new language a number of words which gradually spread over the whole country.

Owing to the lack of any native word, German *Muss*, 'necessity', and *müssen*, 'must', were introduced into Polish early in the Middle Ages: *mus* and *musić* (*musieć* to-day). Many derivatives were formed, cf.: *przymus*, 'coercion', *wymusić*, 'extort', and *zmusić*, 'compel, force'.

There must have been some similar reason for the introduction of the German *danken*, 'thank', transformed into *dziękować*. To-day, besides *dziękować*, Polish also has many derivatives from *dzięk-*, cf.: *wdzięczność*, fem., 'gratitude' (Germ. *Dankbarkeit*), and *wdzięk*, 'charm, gracefulness'.

The Polish vocabulary is now simply unthinkable without these two (*dzięk-* and *mus-*) word groups.

Dziękować and *musieć* do not sound alien to the Englishman. The reason is that their English equivalents, *thank* and *must*, have been evolved from the same Proto-Germanic ¹⁹⁾ words as the German *danken* and *müssen*.

The extent of German influence on Polish is many times less than that of French on English. However, there is a certain parallel between the two influences, and many instances can be given of English having a word of French origin where Polish has a "German-born" one. Pol. *malować*, from German *malen*, corresponds to the English *paint*, from the French past participle *peint*. Ever since Roman times, the Southern shores of the Baltic Sea have been noted for their golden *amber* (Fr. *ambre*). As quite a wide stretch of the amber-bearing shore is Polish, there must have been a native word for the petrified resin. However, most probably owing to the export of amber by German merchants, it is known under the name of *bursztyn*, a modification of German *Bernstein* (from *Brennstein*, 'burning stone'). The Polish word for *advice* and *council*: *rada* is derived from Germ. *Rat*. *Treachery*, *treason* and *traitor* are French. Polish *zdrada*, 'treachery, treason', has been translated from the Germ. *Verrat*, by means of a native prefix (*z-*) and the loan-word *rada*. *-D-* has been inserted here as in some other words which originally contained *-zr-*, cf. *zazdrość*, 'jealousy', composed of the prefix *za-*, the suffix *-ość*, and the root *-zr-* to be found in *w-zro-k*, 'eyesight', or *spo-zier-ać*, 'look'. *Zdrajca*, from an earlier *zdradźca*, 'traitor', is more advanced in its native character, for it also comprises a Polish suffix (*-ca*, cf. *obron-ca*, 'defender', from *obronić*, 'defend'). English *search* (cf. the French *chercher*) is used along with the native *look for* and *seek*. In Polish, German *suchen* (related to *seek*) was adopted in the earliest known phase of the language, whereas the old native *iskać* took on the very restricted and peculiar meaning of 'seeking lice'. Only the compound *zyskać*, 'gain', from **z-iskać*, has

19) The term Proto-Germanic denotes the language from which all the Germanic languages, Swedish, English, and German, etc., have developed. Proto-Germanic is only known indirectly through the comparison of the earliest forms recorded of the Germanic and other Indo-European languages.

remained. At first, it must have meant 'gain something as a result of seeking it'.

English has adopted many French terms relating to government, structure of society, etc., cf.: *coat-of-arms, escutcheon; court; judge, justice; govern, government, parliament; chivalry, nobility, castle*, etc. The Old Germanic words *king, knight, queen*, were left untouched. The Polish for 'king', *król*, continues a Common-Slavonic word which was derived from the name of Charlemagne, *Karl*. The court of a king (or a nobleman) was known as the native name: *dwór*. His *parliament* was also Polish: *sejm*, originally 'gathering'. The king's or magnate's castle: *zamek*, was translated from *Schloss* (cf. *zamykać*, Germ. *schliessen*, 'close'). The word for *gentry, nobility - szlachta*, was derived from Old-German *slahito*, 'family (in the widest sense - Lat. *gens*)', cf. modern Germ. *Geschlecht*, 'kind, sex'. From *szlachta* the adjective *szlachetny* was evolved, first to denote deeds that become a nobleman, later all that is *noble*. The coat-of-arms of the Polish noble is called *herb*, from the Germ. *Erbe*, 'inheritance, inherited property', which both in Bohemia and Poland was made use of to denote the hereditary escutcheon. *Rycerz*, 'knight', (Germ. *Ritter*), is of German origin, cf. also its Polish derivative *rycerskość*, 'chivalry'. For *govern* and *government* the Pole has used native words: *rządzić, rząd*. The main terms relating to the administering of justice: are equally native: *sąd*, 'court', *sądzić*, 'judge (vb.)', *sędzia*, 'judge (subst.)', *sprawiedliwość*, 'justice', etc.

The parallel between the two influences should not be unduly exaggerated. All we can say is that there has been an influence of a *live* language on Polish analogous to that of French on English, although far less extensive and different in detail, and that it has been German. At the same time, this constitutes a trait which distinguishes the two languages. The number of words of German origin is in English very small, cf.: *fatherland*, modelled on the Germ. *Vaterland, hinterland; kindergarten, plunder, quartz, rucksack, swindle*.

It is only natural that many German words should have assumed new meanings in Polish. *Bund* meant in German 'alliance, association'; "also hat das Haus Israel und das Haus Juda meinen *Bund* gebrochen, den ich mit ihren Vaetern gemacht habe" (from Luther's translation of the Bible), 'the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my *covenant* which I made with their fathers'. In 16th century Polish, the word *bunt* still could be used in exactly the same meaning: "Jonatan z domem Dawidowym uczynił *bunt*" (*The Bible of Brześć*, 1563), 'Jonathan made a *covenant* with the house of David'. However, although an alliance is concluded *with* someone, it is also made *against* somebody else. This negative nuance furnished the background for the further semantic evolution of the word in Polish. In condemning those deputies to the *Sejm* who were intent on abolishing the primacy of the Church in Poland, Orzechowski argued in 1564 that they should not allege support on the part of the nobility, but only with regard to 'their *plot* and faction': "na *bunt* i na fakcyję swą". 'Alliance' had descended to the depths of 'conspiracy', of 'a plot'. Plots engender mutinies, and to-day *bunt* denotes in Polish nothing else but 'rebellion' or 'mutiny'. A German must learn this word as if it were entirely alien to his own language.

Only a specialist will know of the partly German origin of the adverb *nawet*, 'even', which is in daily use. It is a fossilised accusative phrase (*na wet*), with the Polish preposition *na*, 'for'. *Wet* itself has a very

complicated history. Its source is the German *Wette* which in the Middle Ages denoted a kind of payment paid to the judge at the end of the trial. The word came into Polish with two meanings: 'payment' and 'end'. The former has been retained in *odwet*, 'retaliation' (cf. the English "pay someone back"), and in the phrase *wet za wet*, 'tit for tat'. The latter has given the words *wety*, plural only, now obsolete, 'dishes served at the end of a meal', 'dessert', and *nawet*, originally meaning that something is done towards the end or that it comes to our mind as the last thing, later a near-equivalent of the English adverbial *even* (cf. *even* you like it).

Polish *sztuka*, 'piece', 'art', comes from German *Stück*, 'piece'. The meaning 'art' developed against the background of the professional customs of the craftsmen. Anybody who wanted to qualify as a master of a craft, had to make a 'masterpiece' (*Meisterstück*). This was the formal requirement of the craftsmen's guilds: "*Żadnemu nie dopuszczają nijakiego rzemiosła jawnie robić, aż sztukę uczyni*" (1577), "They will not allow anybody to practice any craft officially, until he has made a masterpiece'. From 'masterpiece' to 'art' the road was not long, and today *sztuka* denotes 'art', although the original meaning 'piece' has also been preserved. However, the adjective *sztuczny* only means 'artificial'.

In his translation of the Bible Luther said: "*Jonas hat sich... lange mit Angst gefressen*", 'Jonah hath long been worried by anxiety ('eaten his heart out with anxiety')'. The basic meaning of *fressen* was 'eat, devour'. However, Polish *frasować się*, 'worry', and *frasunek* (*Fressung?*), 'worry, fret (the English etymological equivalent of *fressen* (subst.))', continue the very rare use as found in Luther's sentence. The substantive forms part of the popular rhymed saying "*dobry trunek na frasunek*" (known at least since the 17th century), 'drink is good for worry', where both substantives are of German origin.

Ring meant 'main (market) place in town' in the German spoken by settlers in Silesia, Bohemia and Hungary. In Polish it became *rynek* (g. sg. *rynku*) and later also acquired the metaphoric meaning of 'market': "*światowy rynek na cukier*", 'the world market for sugar'.

It was the medieval towns that were mostly affected by German influence: colonization in the 13th century had contributed to the development of town-like settlements which nestled close to castles or places of defence (cf. *gród*, originally a 'hedged-in, fortified place', later 'castle'; modern Russian *górod*, 'city, town') into full-fledged towns. The German word for 'city, town' was the same as that for 'place'. In medieval Polish 'place' was denoted by *miasto*, cf.: "*Bo uśmierzył jeś nas w mieście udręczenia*" (*The Puławy Psalter*), 'Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons'. However, under German influence, *miasto* began to be used in the meaning of 'city, town': the two brothers upon whom St. John had cast the spell of his divine teaching, sold "*swoja miasta*" (*The Holy Cross Sermons*), 'their towns', in the first moment of their enthusiasm. Had it not been for the German *Stadt/Stat*, *gród*, 'castle, fortified place and the settlement attached to it', would now denote 'city, town', as it does indeed, in solemn style: "*znajdźcież mi drugi taki gród*", (from a poem about Warsaw by J. Liebert); *gród* podwawelski, 'the city under Wawel-Castle' (Cracow).

After *miasto* fully had established itself as 'city, town', its diminutive form, *mieście*, now *miejsce*, became the only word to denote 'place'.

One important element of the external structure of a town or city, *ulica*, 'street', is indigenous. The word does not derive from *ul*, 'bee-hive',

in spite of any temptation to visualise a street as a way between a double row of bee-hives, houses, in which there live laborious people, not always devoid of stings. *Ul*, 'bee-hive', first denoted the wild bee's hive, a hollow in the trunk of a tree. *Ulica*, quite independently from *ul*, though not so from their common root, began its career as 'the hollow place between two houses' or even 'door-niche'.

Polish sometimes preserves German words which are no longer used in (literary) German itself, cf. *zegar*, 'clock', and its diminutive *zegarek*, 'watch'. They both come from the medieval German word *Seiger*: in 1425 "leit de rad to Magdeborch der Stad to eren und den borgerer to nutte und bequemlichkeit bewen *einem seiger* an das radhus", 'the council of Magdeburg resolved to build a clock on the town-hall in order to honour the city and that it be of advantage and convenience to the burghers'. The word was later used by Luther and, possibly, is still known in some dialects. In literary German it was supplanted by *Uhr*, from Latin *hora*. Some Polish writers used *godzinnik*, from *godzina*, 'hour', coined on the model of the Latin *horarium* (*hora*, 'hour'): "wielką ten człowiek miał w astronomii naukę i w Magdeburgu *godzinnik* uczynił" (Father Skarga), 'great was the knowledge of this man in astronomy - he made a clock in Magdeburg'. Kochanowski preferred *zegar*: "*Zegar* godzinę wybija, Ustąp, melankolija", 'The clock strikes the hour, Depart, o, melancholy'. The Poles have followed the poet's lead.

Many Polish words of German origin relate to material civilization, for instance, the structure of a house: *cegła*, 'brick' (Germ. *Ziegel*, from Lat. *tegula*); *dach*, 'roof' (*Dach*); *strzecha*, however, 'thatch-roof', is Polish; *ganek*, 'passage, porch', from *Gang*; *szyba*, 'window-pane', from *Scheibe* (the window itself is in Polish: *okno*, from *oko*, 'eye'), etc.

Earlier in this chapter *frasunek*, 'worry' was mentioned. Let us add that some time towards the end of the Middle Ages a number of loan-words with the suffix *-unek*, Germ. *-ung*, had been borrowed by Polish, and that later the language availed itself of this means of derivation for forming such substantives as *opatrunek*, 'wound dressing, bandage', *pocałunek*, 'kiss', *poczęstunek*, 'treat', *podarunek*, 'gift', etc., with a Polish verbal stem. These formations are analogous to such English words as *bewilderment*, *embodiment*, *enlightenment*, *fulfilment*, etc., whose suffix has been derived from French.

German has only a few words of Polish origin: *Dolmetsch-Dolmetscher*, 'dragoman, interpreter' (*tłumacz*, also 'translator') *Grenze*, 'frontier' (*granica*), *Peitsche*, 'kind of whip' (*bicz*), *Petschaft*, 'seal' (*pieczęć*); *quarg-quark*, 'curds' (*twaróg*), *Sliwowitz*, 'prune vodka' (*śliwowica*), etc.

4. FRENCH.

Although there was in Poland a king of the French dynasty of the Valois, who later became Henry III of France, his reign was too short (1573-74) to pave the way for the French language at the time. Its influence for good did not begin until the 18th century. Since then it has ever enjoyed great prestige. Alliances with France, the participation of Polish military formations in the Napoleonic campaigns and lively cultural contact especially during the 19th century, have contributed to the spread

of French. France became the second motherland to many Poles. It gave refuge to the émigrés of all the Polish risings. The greatest poets of the Romantic period, Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński and Norwid, lived in France. So did Chopin, himself partly of French origin, but fervently Polish in his national sentiment and musical production. Marie Curie, née Skłodowska, the co-discoverer of radium, spent most of her life in Paris. Both culturally and politically, the eyes of the Poles were set on France. As somebody has remarked, with a touch of irony, its name, *Francja*, rhymed very well in Polish with *monstrancja*, 'monstrance'.

The traces which French influence has left in the Polish language are not so deep as in English. It was mostly those words which were connected with "the elegant life" that took root in Polish.

In 1638, a poet announced that he was bringing his beloved a "bouquet" of rosemary: "*równiankę rozmarynu tobie niosę*". The word was formed from the adjective *równy*, 'even', and originally denoted a bunch of evenly cut straw, later a bouquet of corn ears and flowers. However, this rustic word was soon supplanted by the more fashionable French *bouquet*: Pol. *bukiet*, and after lingering during the 19th century, it went completely out of use. The smaller *wiązka*, 'bunch', has been left in peace.

Bzowy kolor, 'lilac colour', was replaced by the French *lilas*, at first in the inflected form of *lila* (fem.). Later, *lila* was changed by the addition of the adjective suffix *-ow-* into *liliowy*, with an unexpected insertion of *-i-* (for *lilia*, 'lily', is notoriously white):

"*Te liliowe mokradła i las romantyczny*

Są nagle polem bitwy w sercu Europy"

(S. Baliński, *Polish Landscapes*, 1933).

('These lilac swamps and the romantic forest

Have suddenly become a battle-field in the heart of Europe').

The older form, *lila*, has also been maintained, though it is not longer inflected.

"*I gdzieś kończy muzyka jakiś bal spóźniony.*

Pod lila abazurem mrugają lampiony" (J. Lechoń).

('And, somewhere, the orchestra is finishing a late ball.

Chinese lanterns are twinkling under lilac-coloured lampshades').

The fashionable French *abbé* of the 18th century had become an object of gay gibes or malice on the part of those who rightly saw some discrepancy between his priestly robes and ultra-worldly tastes. This is the reason why the word assumed in Polish an original form. Usually, when "borrowing" substantives from languages where the article is used, Polish omits the article. In this instance it maliciously did not. So it was *labe* at first. Then, a diminutive suffix was added, *-uś*, known in such formations as *Wojtuś* (from the Christian name *Wojciech*, 'Adalbert, Albert') or *synuś*, 'sonny' (from *syn*), and thus the derisive *labuś* arose: "*nasi labusiowie kłaniają się oczkowaniem i minkowaniem*", 'our labusiowie (the word is untranslatable) greet by ogling and making faces' (Zabłocki, the latter part of the 18th century). After losing its connection with the French mother-word, *labuś* soon shared the fate of many short-lived derisive or humorous formations and is hardly ever used now.

The Latin *magister* has been "borrowed" by Polish directly from Latin in the meaning of 'master of arts, law, pharmacy, etc.' (*magisier*); through German in the meaning of 'master of any branch of knowledge, art or craft' (*mistrz*) or, later, as almost synonymous with 'artisan, craftman' (*majster*), and through French in the meaning of 'teacher of French, dance, music' (*metr*). The feminine counterpart of the French *maitre*, the *maitresse*, was only accepted as 'illicit or even kept woman', *metresa*.

The fate of the French *affaire* was similar: *afery* means in Polish something either not exactly serious (*afery miłosne*, 'love affairs') or definitely shady (*afery panamska*, 'the affair of the Panama Canal'). To call the *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*, even the *Quai d'Orsay*, *Ministerstwo Afer Zagranicznych*, instead of *Spraw* (g. pl. of *sprawa*, 'cause, matter, problem, question'), would cause quite an uproar, especially among those in charge of the foreign policy of the country.

The French *desein* established itself in Polish in the meaning of 'cloth design, pattern (*deseń*)', without dislodging the Polish-German *rysunek*, 'drawing, design'. French sempstresses and their feminine *clientèle* were responsible for this. Similarly, *le journal* has been accepted into Polish as "*żurnal mód*", 'journal of fashion'. *L'attention*, 'attention', had some success in this meaning in the 18th century. To-day, however, only the plural *atencje*, 'attentions', is used. *La patience* never dislodged the genuinely Polish *cierpliwość*, 'patience' - *pasjans* denotes 'patience', the card-game. *La jalousie*, the feeling, also never succeeded in supplanting the Polish *zazdrość*, 'jealousy', but is only used for 'the (window) blind': *żaluzja*, in which meaning it has pushed aside the somewhat artificial *zazdrostka*, coined on the French model. *La douceur*, 'sweetness', has descended to 'exaggerated, meaningless and insincere compliments': *dusery* (plural) - the Polish equivalent of *la douceur*, *słodycz* (fem.), was too sweet and beautiful a word to give way to the importee. *La conquête* never came to denote 'conquest' (the native *podbój* is the word for it), but the fair sex have played the main role in introducing French loan-words into Polish - it may only mean a cheap and passing conquest of the sentiments of an admirer (*konkieta*).

Even when a French word was accepted into Polish without being semantically degraded it often assumed a restricted place among native equivalents. *Sentyment* (from Fr. *sentiment*) does not mean *any* feeling, but one that has a note of wistfulness and transiency about it: the Pole may feel *sentyment* towards something belonging to the past; when he does so towards somebody alive - the feeling, however deep, never reaches the reality and soundness of the native *uczucie*. There is a touch of passing and light gracefulness about *szarm* (Fr. *charme*). The native *czar*, which is only accidentally similar to the French *charme*, has more genuine value about it, and, besides, *czar* is the only word to denote the performances of witchcraft or other wonders: *Alice in Wonderland* has been translated into Polish under the title of *Alicja w krainie czarów*.

Since the Polish adjective is for the most part endowed with suffixes, the French *élégant* and *charmant* have been adopted in the forms of *elegancki* and *szarmancki*. The latter denotes someone who skilfully uses social *étiquette*, especially with regard to ladies.

The battles which the Poles fought side by side with the French were responsible for the introduction into Polish of quite an amount of military terms: *bagnet*, 'bayonet' (*baïonnette*), *batalion*, 'battalion' (*bataillon*),

dywizja, 'division' (*division*), *fuzja* (obsolescent), 'rifle' (*fusil*), *reduta*, 'redoubt' (*redoute*), *sierżant*, 'sergeant' (*sergent*), *szarża*, 'cavalry charge' (*charge*), *szwoleżer*, 'light cavalryman' (*chevaux-légers*, 'light cavalry'), and many others.

The *Arc de Triomphe* in the Champs Élysées has a considerable number of Polish names engraved on its vaults and walls. That of Prince Joseph Poniatowski figures among them, the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army, *maréchal de France* and a nephew of the last king of Poland. The prince perished in the battle of Leipzig (1813). Only the following modest reminiscence of those times of blood and glory has taken root in the sweet tongue of France: *czapska* (masc.), also spelt *czapska* or *szapska*, and often used with the adjective *polonais*, 'Polish', a kind of uhlan cap ('*shako*'). Its Polish mother-word is *czapka*, 'cap'. The insertion of -s- is, most probably, due to the influence of the typically Polish surnames, which are formed with the suffix -*ski* (for a man) or -*ska* (for a woman): *Poniatowski*, *Walewska* ²⁰).

Quite a number of uhlans never came back from the battle-fields. However, there is only one strange word to remind the Frenchman of the wars fought side by side with the Poles. In the relation between the two languages, French has been the giver, Polish - the taker.

5. ITALIAN.

Latin has influenced Polish ever since the introduction of Christianity. Its descendant, the musical language of modern Rome, Italian, first penetrated into Poland during the 16th century. The wife of the last-but-one king of the Jagellonian dynasty, Sigismund I, was the energetic, cunning and industrious princess Bona of Milan and Bari. Many Italians came in her wake - artists, architects, merchants, bankers, gardeners and vagrants. The Italian Renaissance, the plastic arts and literature, all celebrated great triumphs. Polish students went to Italian universities.

When, following the Italian example, Poles set out to arrange splendid parks, full of exotic flowers, wide-spreading lawns, ornamental alleys, variegated flower-beds, bowers and foreign trees twisted and tortured into the strangest of shapes or vaulted like castle-towers, with fountains and statues, the old word *ogród*, 'garden', seemed too modest to denote these wonders of art and nature. Therefore, the melodious Italian *giardino* was adopted in the Polonised form of *dziardyn*:

"Zakwitły piękne dziardyny,
Zgoła wszytek świat jak iny,
Ogródów Flora bogini
W oczach ludzkich cuda czyni"
(W. Kochowski, 17th century).

('The beautiful *giardini* are in blossom;
the whole world seems different;
Flora, the goddess of *gardens*, performs miracles
in human eyes').

²⁰) Countess Walewska was Napoleon's mistress. Her son later became French Foreign Secretary. Using the name of Count Walewski, he felt too proud ever to acknowledge that he was the son of the Emperor.

However, as we see from the quotation, the old *ogród* remained, although *dziardyn* was in use as long as the 18th century. To-day, to denote a park, either *park* or *ogród* is used, the latter word also being reserved for orchards and vegetable gardens.

In the 16th century Italian *tovaglia*, 'towel; table-cloth', made its appearance in Polish, though not without protest from some writers who, like Górnicki and Rey, rightly pointed out that in the meaning of 'towel' there was a good, old native word: *ręcznik*, a derivative from *ręka*, 'hand' (like French *essuie-main*, It. *sciugamano*, Germ. *Handtuch*, etc.).

Polonized into *tuwalnia*, most probably under the influence of *umywalnia*, 'wash-stand', and restricted in meaning to 'church-towel' or 'table-cloth', the word later disappeared and is no longer in use.

Equally short-lived was the career of *speza*, 'cost, expense', known in Polish towards the end of the Middle Ages and derived from Italian *spesa*. A nobleman who oppressed his peasantry, tried to justify himself by pointing out that 'he had children, he had various expenses' ("mam i dziatki, mam i różne *spezy*", 1650), and that, therefore, there was nothing else for him to do. *Speza* did not survive the 18th century. The career of *splendeca* (from *splendenza*, *splendidezza*, 'splendour') was still more short-lived: "silcie wy się Panowie, na koszty próżne, budując *splendece różne*" (1674), 'exert yourselves, Sirs, incurring vain expenses to build various *splendid things*'.

However, many other Italian loan-words have remained until to-day: *pałac*, 'palace'; *kalafior*, 'cauliflower'; *pomidor*, 'tomato'; *faszyna*, 'fascine'; *forteca*, 'fortress'; *fosa*, 'moat'; *pistolet*, 'pistol'; *szpada*, 'sword'; *sztylet*, 'stiletto'; and words which are mostly connected with the art of music and known all over the whole civilized world.

6. ENGLISH.

Despite the distance and the differences in the political and cultural situation of the two countries, Britain has been better known in Poland than is usually thought. A few details, chosen at random, illustrate this. The Scottish merchant was known in the 16th-18th centuries. Many Scots settled down in the old Republic and became Polonized, cf. the names of *Lossan-Lawson*, *Machlejd-Macleod*, etc. During the 17th century wars were fought in which detachments of English and Scottish soldiers took part either in the Polish armies or in those of Poland's enemies. Some plays of Shakespeare are supposed to have been acted by troupes of wandering actors not long after the death of the great bard. English beer was the most popular of all beers during the reign of August III (1733-1764). Writers of the latter part of the 18th century knew English periodicals and read English literature in the original or in translation. The works of the Bishop of Warmia, I. Krasicki, show his familiarity with the main features of English culture. It was in his day that the language began to be taught in some schools in Poland. Ever since that time many representatives of the intellectual and artistic élite of the country have been able to read English. Lord Byron was one of the favourite Romantic poets. However,

it is only now that things English and the language have reached the zenith of their popularity.

The number of English loan-words has, so far, been comparatively limited, and no inferences should be drawn from the extensive list of words of English origin in this section.

Many sporting terms have come from England: *sport*, *tenis*, *kort*, 'tennis court'; *football* (the native equivalent, *piłka nożna*, is a translation); *gol/goal*, spelt both ways, 'goal in football' (does not denote in Polish 'the posts between which the ball is to be driven', but only 'the point scored by kicking the ball there'; the native *bramka*, a diminutive of *brama*, 'gate, gateway', denotes both); *aut/out* (in football), *korner/corner*, *bak/back* (the native equivalent is *obrońca*, literally 'defender'); *mecz/match*, of 'football' or 'boxing match' (the native equivalent being *zawody*, masc. plural); *boks*, 'box' (the native equivalent *pięściarstwo*, from *pięściarz*), *bokser*, 'boxer' (*pięściarz*, from *pięść*, 'fist'); *dzokej*, 'jockey'; *finish*, 'finish (subst.)', *start*, 'start (subst.)'; *trening*, 'training', etc.

Among terms relating to *commerce, trade and banking* the following are in use: *biznes*, 'business' (never what is sometimes meant by the slightly differently spelt *busyness*), *biznesmen*, 'businessman', *clearing*, *combine*, 'a combination of firms', *czek*, 'cheque', *lock-out*, *run*, 'run (on a bank)', *strajk*, 'strike (subst.)', *trust* (subst.)', etc.

The name of an English firm, *Rover*, has supplied Polish with the word denoting 'bicycle': *rower*. *Traktor*, 'tractor', *piżama*, 'pyjamas' (also *piżama* as in French), *pled*, 'plaid', *smoking*, 'smoking-jacket', *skwer*, 'kind of square in towns', *sweter*, 'sweater', *tramwaj*, 'tramcar', etc., are also of English origin.

A number of English loan-words relate to *society life*: *dancing*, *fajf* or *five o'clock*, for 'five o'clock social gatherings', *raut*, 'rout' (no longer used in English), etc. Here several names of card-games can be mentioned, such as: *brydż/bridge*, *pokier/poker*, *wist/whist*, etc.

Furthermore, the following English nouns are in common use: *bojkot*, 'boycott' (in industrial and social life), *gangster*, *chuligan* 'hooligan', *snob*, *snoberia* or *snobizm*, 'snobbery'; *clown*, 'circus clown'; *girlaska*, a very interesting hybrid formation not used outside slang, 'cabaret girl'; *komfort*, 'comfort' (to a Pole's mind this word is associated much more with luxury than actual comfort), etc.

The most valuable and the most distinguished of all the acquisitions is *dżentelmen/gentleman*, a word which in Polish is not tied down to its "feudal" past.

An Englishman may be astonished at the form many English words have taken in Polish through extension by prefixes: *zboksować*, 'box somebody down', *wysportowany*, 'having bodily qualities developed through practising sport' (adj.); or suffixes: *bokszerski*, *dancingowy*, *komfortowy*, *sportowy* (adjectival formations); *bokszować się*, *snobować się*, *snobizować* (verbs); *dżentelmeneria*, *dżentelmeństwo*, 'gentlemanry, gentlemanly qualities' (substantival formations). The practice of deriving new words from foreign ones is undoubtedly not restricted in Polish to those of English origin.

The widespread, though imperfect, knowledge of English in present-day Poland should further increase the number of loan-words. The process will be interesting to watch. However, in view of the relatively great resistance Polish has always shown towards foreign influence, both friendly and unfriendly, it cannot be expected that the number of English loan-words will reach considerable proportions.

There are practically no Polish words in English, except for a few, *hetman*, 'chief army commander in Old Poland', *sejm*, '(Polish) diet, parliament', which denote specifically Polish institutions. It may be interesting to note that Shakespeare knew and used the Polish form for 'Pole', *Polack*, (cf. Pol. *Polak*, Old Fr. *Polaque*, etc.):

Hamlet: Goes it (the Norwegian army of Fortinbras) against the
main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Captain: Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the *Pole*
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Hamlet: Why, then the *Polack* never will defend it.

Captain: Yes, it is already garrison'd.

7. CZECH.

The Czechs adopted the Christian faith earlier than the Poles. Their language earlier became the vehicle of literary production. Their civilisation and culture was more advanced in the Middle Ages. Therefore, they enjoyed prestige in medieval and even 16th century Poland.

A Czechophil writer, Malecki, stressed in 1574 in the introduction to his collection of sermons that every translator of religious literature "also ought to know the Czech language, because Polish and Czech are one and the same speech apart from the fact that either language... has specific phrases and features; because the Czechs preceded the Poles in translating the Bible and other books of Luther... Therefore, we Poles, have had to take many words from them and today must still take and use many, especially in the domain of theology".

Lucas Górnicki was less Czechophil. In his *Courtier (Dworzanin, 1566)* he acknowledged that "the Czech language was beautiful", although, at the same time, it seemed to him "as if it were a little over-petted and somewhat unsuitable for a man" ("jakoby troszkę pieszczący a mężczyźnie mało przystojny"). The modern Pole's attitude towards Czech is not fundamentally different: Czech makes the impression of a childish language. This is mainly due to the over-abundance of palatal *i* sounds, which, by their narrow articulation, seem specially fit for diminutive formations

often suggestive of the nursery language ²¹). On the other hand, *e*, which is also fairly narrow, is the Czech equivalent of many *a*'s in Polish. However, Górnicki willingly conceded that "when the Courtier fell short of Polish words he would do well to borrow from Czech rather than from any other language, because in Poland Czech was regarded as the most wonderful language" ("kiedy Dworzaninowi polskich słów nie stanie, dobrze uczyni, iż pożyczycy z czeskiego języka rychlej niż z drugich, a to dlatego, że już ten sam u nas jest wzięty i policzony za najcudniejszy").

Czech influence has modified the outward form of many native words. The heart was called *sirce* or *sierce* in medieval Polish (from an earlier, unrecorded **sirdce*). The adjective was *sirdeczny* or *sierdeczny*, 'cordial', cf. "*sirce* jego jemu doradzi, iżby grzecha ostał, swoich grzechow *sirdecznie* żałował" (*The Holy Cross Sermons*), 'his heart will advise him to give up sin and heartily to repent for his sins'. Later, some time during the latter part of the 15th century, the initial, palatal *ś*- was replaced under Czech influence by a non-palatal, hard *s*- (cf. Czech *srdce*, *srdeční*, mod. Pol. *serce*, *serdeczny*). However, the hardening of the *ś*- did *not* take place in such formations as *litosierdzie*, 'pity, mercy', *miłosierdzie*, 'charity, mercy, pity', or *osierdzie*, 'pericardium'.

The fate of medieval *wiesiołe wiesiele*, 'gay joy, mirth', was similar. Both words changed into *wesołe wesele*, with hard *s*. It must be stressed that *wiesiołe-wesele* meant 'mirth', and only later was narrowed down to the meaning of 'wedding feast' - 'merry feast' providing the necessary link between the two. M. Bielski still wrote that "cesarz turecki prosił Zygmunta na wielkie *wesele* do siebie, to jest na obrzezanie dwu synów swoich", 'the Turkish emperor invited Sigismund to a great festivity, the circumcision of his two sons'. At the same time the word was still used in the old meaning of 'joy, mirth', cf. "Napemiteś mię żalem i *weselem*" (Orzechowski), 'You have filled me with sadness and joy'. The adjective *wesoły*, 'gay, joyous, merry', alone has remained in the sphere of pure, non-matrimonial feeling. The hardening of the *ś* into *s*, however, has affected both words: *wesele*, *wesoły*, cf. Czech *veselí*, *veselý*. Only some dialects still retain the old *ś*: *wasiole* (near Garwolin), *wiesieli* (Silesia).

21) *i* often corresponds to Polish *u* (Cz. *lid*, 'the people', Pol. *lud*); almost always to Polish *y*, although on historical grounds, Czech spelling still retains *y* (cf. Cz. *syn*, 'son', Pol. *syn*); often to Polish *ę*, *q* (Cz. *duší*, 'sould', acc. sg., Pol. *dużę*; Cz. *spí*, '(they) sleep', Pol. *śpią*); sometimes to Polish *a* (Cz. *místo*, 'town, city', Pol. *miasto*), etc.

Here is a sample of modern Czech with translation into Polish showing the abundance of *i* sounds in Czech:

"Věti
Ukřižována a krev a slzy roníc
mědí lánů svých a stříbrem zvoníc,
věti má vlast"

(K. Bednář)

("Wierzy,
ukrzyżowana i krew a łzy roniąc
miedzią łańców swych i srebrem dzwoniąc
wierzy ma ojczyzna")

('My motherland believes, crucified, shedding her blood and tears, with the copper of her fields and the silver of her steeples').

The proportion of *i* sounds is three to one in favour of Czech. It should not be forgotten that the ante-vocalic Polish *i* letters merely indicate the palatal character of the preceding consonant.

Obywaciel, from the verbal stem *bywa*, 'be', meant 'inhabitant' in medieval Polish. Later semantic evolution gave the meanings of 'owner of an estate' and 'citizen'. However, under Czech influence, the soft *ć* of the suffix changed into *t*: *obywatel*.

The obsolescent modern *rzetelny*, 'honest, strict', developed from an earlier *źrzetelny*, 'clear', "borrowed" from Czech *zřetelný*, 'clear, transparent'. Górnicki advised his readers to pay attention to "which word better suited Polish ears and was more meaningful, *more clear*" ("które słowo bardziej służy uszom polskim, które znaczniejsze, które *źrzetelniej-sze*"). The evolution from '(intellectually) clear' to '(morally) clear' was a purely Polish development.

The suffix *-telny*, modified, Czech-fashion, by a change of *ć* into *t*, is now used in a number of formations e.g. *nieskazitelny*, 'immaculate', or *śmiertelny*, 'mortal'. Julius Słowacki wrote of "Miss Angela, a maiden with a white neck" ("Panna Aniela, dziewczę z białą szyją"):

"Chociaż tak piękna, jak żadna *śmiertelna*,
Zbliżyć się ludzie i kochać nie śmieli,
Została piękna i *nieskazitelna*".

('Although she was more beautiful than any *mortal* being,
people did not dare to approach and love her,
she remained beautiful and *immaculate*').

In a number of words the Old-Polish *o* of the interconsonantal *to* or *ro* groups was replaced by an *a*, also under Czech influence. Thus, among the derivatives of the verbal root *włod-*, 'rule', *włość*, 'territorial possession', and *włodarz*, 'an estate owner's bailiff', have alone retained the old *o*, whereas *włodza*, 'rule (subst.)', *włodać*, 'rule (vb.)', *włos(t)ny*, 'proper, one's own', were changed into *władza*, *władać*, *własny*. But the preacher of Holy Cross still threatened his flock: "dam was... *w jich włodanie*", 'I will give you *unto his rule*'.

Brona, today *brama*, 'gate, gateway', is mentioned in *Section 8, Chapter One*, and *Section 6, Chapter Two*. Let us add *straż* (fem.), 'defence, guard, watch', which in the Middle Ages was *stroża*. Orzechowski used the modified form: "*ku straży i rozmnożeniu wolności pospolitej*", 'in order to maintain and increase common freedom'. *Stróż*, however, 'door-keeper, guardian, watchman', has retained its *o*.

The change of *g* into *h*, at first a voiced *h* (this sound is usually unvoiced in Polish) is also ascribed to Czech influence, cf. Old-Polish *gańba*, 'disgrace, ignominy, infamy, shame', and modern *hańba* (the verb *ganić*, 'blame', which forms the stem of the formation still begins with *g*); Old-Polish *gardy*, *hardy* to-day, 'haughty, arrogant', and the verb *gardzić*, 'despise, scorn'.

On the whole, unless future investigations confirm the truth of Malecki's assertions, we shall not be far wrong in assuming that the Czech influence on Polish mainly consisted of phonetic modifications. As such, it cannot fail to remind us of certain changes in Old-English which are due to Scandinavian influence, cf. A.-S. Middle English *yive*, *yeve*, modern *to give*, A.-S. *swuster*, modern *sister*, etc.

Czech influence did not survive the 16th century. The battle of the White Mountain (1620) put an end to the flourishing civilization of Bohemia. Czech national rebirth took place during the 19th century. It

was then that Polish repaid its debts, and many Polish words found their way into Czech, some for a short time only (*následovce*, 'imitator', Pol. *naśladowca*; *přímus*, 'coercion, compulsion', Pol. *przymus*), some others for good (*pojetí*, 'notion', Pol. *pojęcie*; *příroda*, 'nature', Pol. *przyroda*; *úsluha*, 'service', Pol. *usługa*).

8. UKRAINIAN.

There is a little town in Poland-Major, not far from Poznań, called *Trzemeszno*. In a document of 1146 its name is spelt *Sciremusine*, to be read *Czrzemeszno*, a derivative of an unrecorded **czrzemcha*, 'bird-tree'.

In a Mazovian court register of 1411 there is a note concerning a theft of cherries in which one of the accused testifies that he "ne bral czrzesny samopøth w Marczinowey czøsczi", 'he did not take cherries with four other men from the holding of Martin'. *Czrześnia*, 'cherry; cherry-tree', has since been simplified into *trześnia*.

Modern *trzoda*, 'flock, herd, cattle' (mostly *trzoda chlewna*, 'pigs', literally 'pigsty flock') was once pronounced *czrzoda*, as spelt in the *Psalterium Florianense*.

**Czrzemcha* - **trzemcha* was replaced early by its Ukrainian equivalent *czereŃmcha*, and disappeared altogether. As well as *trześnia*, Ukrainian *czereśnia* is now widely used.

Although *trzoda* has remained, the related Ukrainian *czereda* was introduced with a different and slightly depreciative meaning 'crowd of men'.

Like Czech, Ukrainian has converted all the ancient Slavonic *g*'s into voiced *h*'s. This pronunciation apparently was considered attractive, for several Polish words with *g* were replaced by their Ukrainian equivalents with *h*. The medieval *rogacina*, 'kind of spear', still known in the 16th century, gave way to *rohatyňa*, cf.: "Na niedźwiedzie i na dziki trzeba mieć włócznie mocnego i twardego żelaza, które *rogacinami* albo *rohатыnami* zowąż" (1549). Similarly, *gołota*, 'rabble' (18th century), from *goły*, 'naked', was replaced by *hołota*, while *rozhowory*, 'conversation, talk', which is now used in the plural, supplanted *rozwowor* (16th century).

Sobór, 'Church Council', (cf. *the Council of Trent*), is the most interesting Polish word of Ukrainian origin.

The Council of Constance debated an important matter of contention between Poland and the Teutonic Knights. Both the dispute and the debates of the much-revered Church body were undoubtedly widely commented upon among the contemporary Poles. However, nothing is known for certain of what the Council was called in the Polish of the time.

The acceptance by King Sigismund II of the resolutions of the Council of Trent started the process of Poland's return to the bosom of the Catholic Church after a period of vacillation and uncertainty. We are in a much better position here, for we do know the contemporary Polish name - or names, for there were several - for the 'Church Council'.

Zbór, is the oldest of them all: "zgromadzenia święte pospolicie *zbozem* bywają nazywane, chociaż to nazwisko tak świętemu jak i też świeckiemu zgromadzeniu służyć może" (1577), 'sacred gatherings are

commonly called *zbor*, although this name may equally well denote a sacred or a secular *gathering*. There was also *zebranie*, from *zebrać*, 'gather': "święte trydenckie zebranie" (1568), 'the sacred *gathering* of Trent'. As if these two names were not enough, we also find *zborzyszcze*, a derivative of *zbor*: "na zborzyszczu w Tyrze Melecjanie obwiniali a Arianie sądzili" (1603), 'at the Council of Tyre the Meletians accused and the Arians judged'. The Latin *concilium* was also used sometimes, often in a slightly Polonized form: "Gdy Ariuszowe na Syna Bożego bluźnierstwo rozdział w Kościele czyniło, zebrał się zbor abo koncylium w Nicei" (1579), 'When the blasphemy of Arius against the Son of God caused a split in the Church, a Council or *concilium* gathered in Nicaea'. This was really an overabundance of words, but in the latter part of the 16th century all Poland was deeply interested in religious matters, and an exuberance of life was, as it were, matched by an exuberance of words.

Since a violent struggle was waged in Ruthenia-Ukraine, then part of the old Republic, between the followers of the Orthodox and the Uniate churches (a dispute of undying topicality), two Ukrainian words, *sobor* and *soboryšče*, denoting minor and major church councils, made their way into Polish. A Basilian monk wrote in 1781-82: "od Florencji nazwisko swoje wziął sobór Floreński", 'the Council of Florence was called after the city's name'. Joseph Rutski, the metropolitan of Kiev, wrote in 1621: "Atanazjusz patriarcha, będąc odsądzony od całego soborzyszczu syrmieńskiego, uciekł do Juliusza papieża", 'The patriarch Athanasius, after being condemned by the Council of Syrmium, appealed to Pope Julius'.

It was *sobór*, the exact etymological equivalent of the native *zbor*, that ultimately prevailed. There were two reasons for this. First, the deep interest felt in Poland for the denominational struggle in Ruthenia-Ukraine. Second, and more important, the genuinely Polish word *zbor* had acquired a distinctly Protestant flavour with its meaning of 'church community, church, temple'. Therefore, Catholics avoided it with as much zeal as it was used by the Protestants. An ardent Jesuit, Father Wujek, wrote in introduction to his translation of the New Testament (1593) that he would not use *zbor*, but *kościół*, this because *zbor* was a "heretical" invention, while *kościół* was a much older, traditional word. The first reason given does not bear scrutiny: in the 15th century *zbor* was used in the meaning of 'church, community, church, temple' by Catholic writers (e.g. in *The Puławy Psalter*) and it mostly corresponded to Graeco-Latin *ecclesia*, originally also 'gathering'. The antiquity of *zbor* in the general meaning of 'gathering' was certainly greater than that of *kościół* (cf. Section 2, Chapter Two). In contrast with Wujek's dislike for *zbor*, the Protestant translator of *De republica emendanda* by Modrevius-Modrzewski, used *zbor* for 'church, temple' and for 'Church'. Most Protestant denominations gave up *kościół*, 'church', and employed *zbor* instead. Some do so even to-day. Thus it was no wonder that the Uniate *sobór* should have been preferred to *zbor*, even despite its non-Polish, though not "foreign", origin.

Besides *sobór*, another important loan-word of Ukrainian origin, now widely used in Poland, is *sojusz*, 'alliance', from *sojúz*, 'association, federation, alliance'. This word has taken its place alongside the native *przymierze*, once 'peace, truce' (15th century), 'armistice, truce' (16th c.), 'alliance' (16th), a derivative of *mir* which meant 'peace' in the Middle Ages; and alongside the French *aliens*, masc. (from *alliance*, 18th century).

The final *sz* is due to the influence of such Latin names as *Horacyjusz* (now *Horacy*), 'Horace', *Liwiusz*, 'Livy', etc.

In exchange for these words and some others which have not been mentioned here, Polish has given the Ukrainian tongue so many words of its own that the vocabulary of that language now abounds in "Polonisms", cf. *cikávyyj*, 'curious, interesting', Pol. *ciekawyy*; *cnóta*, 'virtue', Pol. *cnota*; *cnotlívyyj*, 'virtuous', Pol. *cnotliwy*; *grécnyj*, 'courteous, polite', Pol. *grzeczny*; *slovnýk*, 'dictionary', Pol. *słownik*; *uplýv*, 'influence', Pol. *wpływ*; *žart*, 'joke', Pol. *żart*, etc. It should not be forgotten that the main bulk of the Ruthenian territory belonged to the common State in the period 1385-1772, parts also both earlier and later, and that it was not only this time that the Ukrainians were subjected to Polish influence. On the other hand, many Poles did settle in the Ukraine and a number of them were assimilated by the Ukrainians.

9. LITHUANIAN.

All scholars who have dealt with the problem, agree that, within the Indo-European family, the Baltic (Lithuanian and Latvian languages) ²²⁾ are very closely akin to the Slavonic tongues. However, only some philologists feel justified in assuming that after the disintegration of Proto-Indo-European, the idiom from which nearly all the languages of Europe and some of Asia have evolved, there was a period of a common Balto-Slavonic speech. To a skilled specialist the similarities are striking even to-day, and sometimes even a layman can recognise them easily enough: Lith. *eiti*, Old-Pol. *ici* (now *iść*), 'go'; Lith. *liepa*, Pol. *lipa*, 'lime- or linden-tree'; Lith. *papartis*, Pol. *paproć*, 'bracken'; Lith. *saldus*, Pol. *słod-ki*, 'sweet'; Lith. *sėdėti*, Pol. *siedzieć*, 'sit'; Lith. *sėsti*, Pol. *siąść*, 'sit down'; Lith. *varna*, Pol. *wrona*, 'crow'; Lith. *žemė*, Pol. *ziemia*, 'earth, ground, land'; Lith. *žiema*, Pol. *zima*, 'winter'; Lith. *žvėris*, Pol. *zwierz*, 'animal, beast', etc. However, these similarities, numerous as they are, in no way go far enough to make the two languages mutually intelligible. When in 1385 the Lithuanians were united with the Poles, the language of neither nation was comprehensible to the other.

The old Republic survived until 1795. During all the 410 years of common life and even up to the First World War, the Poles had considerable influence in Lithuania. In the latter part of the 16th century all the Lithuanian nobility, most of the gentry and townspeople spoke Polish. Canon Nicholas Daukša, a Lithuanian writer, wrote in 1599 that the Polish language "was almost native to the Lithuanians through this wonderful union of our Great Duchy with the glorious Crown of Poland". At the same time he also complained that "our own Lithuanian language was neglected, despised and almost given up altogether". It is then not surprising that it should have become thoroughly permeated with Polish loan-words.

²²⁾ The now extinct Prussian language also belonged to the Baltic group. It was spoken in the area between the lower Vistula and the lower Niemen. This country was conquered by the German Teutonic Knights in the 13th century. The conquerors partly exterminated the population. The last speakers of Prussian died out during the 17th century.

Counter-action against Polish preponderance in Lithuania began about 70 years ago and was at first slow; it did not triumph until the establishment in 1918 of a separate Lithuanian state. In the field of language this counter-action assumed the form of a far-reaching and pronounced purism. As a result the number of Polish (and Byelorussian) loan-words has decreased considerably. Nevertheless, some of them have stayed for good: *devatka*, 'exaggeratedly pious person' (Pol. *dewotka*, fem., applied to women alone); *miestas*, 'city, town' (Pol. *miasto*); *pamidoras*, 'tomato' (Pol. *pomidor*); *pana*, 'unmarried woman' (Pol. *panna*), with a diminutive Lith. derivative, *panelė*, for 'Miss'; *ponas*, 'gentleman, lord, master, Mr.' (Pol. *pan*); *ponia*, 'lady, Mrs.' (Pol. *pani*); *poteriai*, plural only, 'prayer' (Pol. *pacierz*); *rotušė*, 'town-hall' (Pol. *ratusz*); *seimas*, 'seym, parliament' (Pol. *sejm*); *suknelė*, 'frock, skirt', with a Lith. diminutive suffix (Pol. *suknia*); *šlėkta*, 'small nobleman' (Old-Pol. *szlachta*, 'nobleman', to-day 'nobility'); *žegnotis*, 'make the sign of the cross' (Pol. *żegnać się*), etc.

In Polish, the number of Lithuanian loan-words is extremely limited. *Režginie* (plur.), 'implement for carrying hay' (Lith. *rezginės*, plur.), was only recently introduced into Polish ethnographic literature. *Rojst*, 'kind of boggy grove' (Lith. *raistas*), is a provincialism known to the Poles of the Vilna region and Lithuania. Lith. *kulšis*, 'thigh', is more widespread, in the adjectival form "(rwa) *kulszowa*", a somewhat artificial name for 'ischias'. *Znicz*, 'sacred eternally burning fire (literally and metaphorically)', is a high-brow literary word. Incidentally, its Polish meaning is due to a misunderstanding, for the Lith. *žinčius*, derived from the root *žin-*, 'know', is thought of as having denoted the pagan priests of the Lithuania of yore.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOME ETYMOLOGIES

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Many etymologies have been given or discussed in this study. Nowhere, however, have any semantically related groups of words been examined. This chapter is meant to fill the gap.

Among the numerous groups of words the choice fell on two: the names of months and the words denoting 'woman'. The selection was not accidental. Most European nations use the Latin names of the months. Anybody familiar with the reaction of a non-Pole towards the Polish vocabulary knows that it is the "strange" and "exotic" names of the months that arouse interest and, not rarely, also astonishment. Why should the Pole - as well as some other Slavonic and non-Slavonic nations - use a system of native names when there is an international one at hand, and what is the nature and the etymological meaning of these terms? The first section of this chapter attempts to answer both questions. We may only add that the Pole, whose names of the days are simple and

mostly derived from ordinal determinatives (cf. *piątek*, 'Friday', literally 'the fifth day', from *piąty*, 'fifth'), as they also are in Portuguese, does not fail to be perplexed at finding in most European languages names pagan in origin and differing if not from nation to nation (cf. Engl. *Wednesday*, Germ. *Mittwoch*) at least from race to race (cf. Engl. *Wednesday*, Fr. *mercredi*).

The second section of the present chapter deals with the Polish names for 'woman'. It is not without interest that during the 650 years or so, when the *real* history of the language can be followed up, as many as eleven words should have been in use to denote the fair sex. Is it a tribute? The status of woman in Poland has assuredly not been a low one at any time throughout this long period. Lack of gallantry towards women does not figure among the faults of the Pole whatever the class or whatever the epoch. But does this explain the abundance? Are the two facts in any way related? Is the abundance due to the very lively interest in women on the part of their menfolk? The reader will be best advised to form an opinion himself after he has perused the observations made and the material adduced.

2. THE NAMES OF MONTHS.

March was the first month of the year in ancient Rome. As a result the four last months of our calendar now bear the incongruous names of *September*, *October*, *November* and *December*, "the seventh", "eighth", "ninth" and "the tenth" month. Matter-of-fact and business-like, these numerical names lack the splendour and the dignity of another set of four: *januarius*, 'January', was consecrated to the two-faced *Janus*, *martius*, 'March' - to the bloodthirsty *Mars*, *maius*, 'May' - to gentle *Maia*, the mother of *Vulcan*, and *junius*, 'June' - to *Juno*, the greatest of all goddesses. When *Julius* Caesar, the first Roman invader to land on British soil, and the Emperor *Augustus* Octavianus, had posthumously been elevated to the rank of the gods, the new religious names were added to the Roman calendar: those of 'July' and 'August'. *Februarius*, 'February', more humbly, was only the month during which the rites of purification were performed. *Aprilis*, 'April', stands apart. Not all Latin scholars are inclined to treat it as a derivative of *aper*, 'boar'.

It seems rather strange that Christianity should have maintained the Roman names of the months. There is, however, a parallel case in the European calendar; nearly all the Romance and Teutonic names of the days are pagan in origin, cf. *Thursday*, 'day of Thor', or Fr. *jeudi*, 'day of Jove'.

If only two Latin names of months found their way into Polish, *marzec* for 'March', and *maj* for 'May', we need not seek the reason in any objection to the heathen character of most of the Roman names. At the time when Christianity was introduced into Poland, the Poles, as indeed every other Slavonic people, had a motley set of native names. These were retained even in spite of the obvious advantages which the uniformity of the Latin system had to offer.

Let us first examine the names of the months as now used.

Styczeń, 'January' has been derived from **styka*, 'perch, staff', a prefixed form related to the modern prefixless *tyka* (in the medieval period *tyczeń* was also in use). During this month - and the next - the severe Polish winter reached its peak. The snow-covered roads offer an excellent opportunity for sleighing. Peasants who are then free from work on the land, go on sledges to the neighbouring forests to fell trees for the wood they will need for heating and building. At the same time staffs and perches are cut, the more readily as these are stronger and more flexible in winter than in any other season.

Luty, the name of February, was once an everyday word for 'cruel, severe', and, indeed, the month is noted for the severity of the weather.

During *kwiecień*, 'April', the first spring flowers (*kwiat*, 'flower'), make a cautious appearance in the still somewhat chilly leas and meadows.

In *czerwiec*, 'June', the larvae of an insect called *czerw* or *czerwiec* (*Coccus polonicus*) were collected in Poland. They provided the Pole with a primitive red dye. However, about 150 years ago someone noted that "this insect, once an important source of Poland's commerce... now, after the discovery of the American cochineal... is only used by the peasant women of Polesie ²³ for making a darkish red dye". Other explanations of the name of June are less convincing. Some philologists derive it from the same *czerw* or *czerwiec* in somewhat indefinite meaning of 'beetle, grub, insect, worm' and point to the abundance of all that crawls and flies in the warm and luscious month of June. Others, basing themselves on the meaning 'larva', claim that the name is connected with the process of the hatching of the bee-larva from the egg. As, however, according to experts, this process begins early in spring, it never absorbs the attention of the bee-keeper. Their contention is that the important point is not the hatching, but the swarming of the honey-bringing insect.

The name of the next month, *lipiec*, 'July', is undeniably connected with the art of bee-keeping. *Lipa* means 'lime-tree'. July is the month during which lime-trees are in full blossom and graciously yield their riches to the laborious bee. It would be erroneous to ascribe the origin of the name to the inspired poet's love of the tree, though Poland's greatest 16th century poet, Jan Kochanowski, liked to rest and compose in the shade of his famous linden of Czarnolas with the wind rustling among the leaves...

Sierpień, 'August', has been derived from the name of the harvesting implement, the sickle (*sierp*) which is now falling into disuse. It is then - if not already in July - that the ripe ears of the corn humbly submit to the cruel and cold steel of the sickle.

Wrzesień, 'September', owes its name to *wrzos*, 'heather', and is the other bee-keeper's name in the Polish year. For it was not from the admiration that a vast expanse of heather in full bloom is likely to inspire, but from a sober, purely economic appreciation of that last natural source of food for the bee that the name of *wrzesień* was born.

Październik, 'October', is the period during which flax is hackled. The hard outer parts of its fibre are called *paździerz* (fem. sg. collect.)

23) A marshy and poor region along Prypeć (Pripiet) river.

or *paździory* (masc. pl.) and these are separated from the useful inside of the stalk.

November is 'the leaf fall': *listopad*, from *list* (now only 'epistle', earlier also 'leaf') and the verbal root *pad*, 'fall' (cf. *padać*). The shedding of the leaves, in their multicoloured glory, announces the approach of winter. After the trees have discarded their foliage, the frost freezes the soil into clods, *grudy* (fem. pl.), and the last month is accordingly called *grudzień*.

Having only two names of months taken from ancient Latium: *marzec* and *maj*, Polish stands apart from most of the Orthodox Slav languages, Russian and Bulgarian, for example, which now use Latin names throughout as the Poles sometimes did in the 16th-18th centuries. This is an interesting difference, for Polish has been much more influenced by Latin than any other Slavonic tongue. The Orthodox Slav names of the months were borrowed through Greek.

If *kwiecień* and probably also *listopad* bear some imprint of a poet's approach to the world, all the other names of the months are utterly prosaic and have been born from a strictly utilitarian attitude towards nature. Two, *lipiec* and *wrzesień*, are connected with bee-keeping. Three, *styczeń*, *czerwiec* and *październik* have to do with other specialist occupations of the peasant. *Grudzień* probably betrays his interest in the state of the roads, very bumpy and harsh in December, for the white shroud of snow completely covers them a little later. *Luty* is a complaint against the severity of the weather. One name only, that of *sierpień*, keeps up modern Poland's reputation as a fertile grain-producing country. None is even faintly reminiscent of the old pagan cults and rites, as most of the Latin names so clearly are. Is the reason that, as historical sources lead us to believe, the Slavonic heathen religion was not so widely developed as that of ancient Rome? Or is it because the year was more interesting to the medieval Pole from the economic than the religious point of view?

The modern nomenclature is a simplification of a very complex medieval system, which still partly survived in the 16th century.

This system was composed of names similar in character to those now in use. With the exception of May, *maj*, all the other months had more than one name each. April, for instance, was called *dębień* (*dąb*, 'oak'), *kwiecień* (as to-day) and, as with its frequent returns of cold weather it often ruthlessly deceived the more credulous among spring flowers, also *łzykwiat*, 'flower-deceiver' (*łże* is the older equivalent of *klamie*, 'he lies'). This last name is still known in Cassubia. February had as many as six names. It may also be noted that the use for February of *gromnicznik*, 'Candlemas month', from *gromnica*, 'candle used for certain religious purposes', was the only inroad of Christian faith into the Polish names of months. Overlapping was a fairly frequent feature of the medieval system. *Styczeń*, for instance, denoted January (as to-day) and February, *wrzesień* - September (as to-day) and November. These differences most probably corresponded to dialectal differences.

Except for the medieval *stojączka*, 'August', all the Polish names of the months have been and are masculine. This is due to the gender of *miesiąc*, 'month' (and 'moon').

January was known not only as *styczeń-tyczeń*, but also as *ledzień*, from *lód*, 'ice', *prosiniec* (of the etymology later) and... *luty*. The last

name fits both January and February very well indeed: they both are severe.

During the second month forests were felled and perches or staffs were cut, just as in January. *Styczeń* was therefore used for February, which also had another name of an analogous character: *sieczeń*, derived from *sieć*, *siec*, 'cut, fell'. As if this profusion were not enough, the names "*yathen*" and "*strompacz*" were also used. "*Yathen*" we read as *jacień* and derive from *jata*, 'shed, tent', a word still in use in the 16th century (now only "*jatka mięsna*", 'butcher's market-stall')²⁴). It is very probable that sheds were then built or repaired. *Strępacz* ("*strompacz*") seems to be derived from a theoretical, non-recorded **stręp*, presumably meaning 'scab' (cf. *strup*, 'scab', whose relation to **stręp* would be like that of modern word *wnuk*, 'grandson', to the Old-Polish *wnęk*) or 'clod' (cf. the origin of *grudzień*). We may also note the only inroad of Christian faith into the Polish names of months in the use for February of *gromicznik*, 'Candlemas month' (see above).

March was a much easier month, for apart from its "Latin-born" name, it was called either *unor* (*unór?*) or *brzezień* (*brzezeń*). These two names are probably of Czech origin. However, they may equally well be a common, Western-Slavonic heritage. *Unór*, from Old-Polish *norzyć*, 'dip' (*za-nurzyć* to-day), meant either 'the dipping (of the ice)', 'the breaking of the ice into floes and the subsequent partly dipping of these under the water surface' (cf. Czech *nořiti se* with exactly the same meaning) or 'immersion of soil by thaw'. *Brzezień* was 'the month of the birch tree' (*brzoza*).

April, with its frequent returns of cold weather, often ruthlessly deceived the more credulous among spring flowers. It is then no wonder that it should have been called 'flower-deceiver': *łzykwiat*. Whether or not the third name of April, *dębień* (*dąb* means 'oak'), came from Bohemia (cf. *duben*), is difficult to decide.

No native name for May is on record. This is strange, for May in Poland is perhaps the most beautiful month, and its gracefulness must have stirred the poetical imagination of the medieval Pole.

June was known as *czerwiec-czerwień*, *zok* and *ugornik*. The now enigmatic *zok* is the Polish counterpart of the Old-Church-Slavonic *izokŭ*, 'grasshopper', and thus this "entomological" name of June is akin to *czerwiec-czerwień*. *Ugornik* was derived from *ugór*, 'fallow', itself a derivative from *gorzeć*, 'burn, be on fire'.

July had completely submitted to the bee-keeper and was known as *lipiec* or *lipień*.

August, however, was not similarly monopolised by the landtiller. Oddly enough, the dyer came in with his *czerwień*, otherwise used for June. This perhaps can be explained by the fact that dyeing in earlier days started after the harvest with the *Coccus polonicus* dye collected in June. The name *stojączka*, connected with the verb *stać*, one time *stojąc*, 'stand', is, however, still odder and ludicrously reminiscent of such unpleasant disabilities as: *bolączka*, 'headache (fig.)', *drzączka*, 'shivers',

²⁴) [The word *yathen* was noted only once in a context from which it was not quite clear whether it did refer to the name of the month or not. J.T.]

gorączka, 'fever, temperature', *świerzbiczka*, 'itch, mange', etc. It is maintained that nature, after reaching its zenith of bloom, becomes immobilised for a while. This explanation is, however, too artificial for serious belief. *Stojączka*, a feminine substantive, is an isolated exception among the Polish names of months which, owing to the gender of *miesiąc*, 'month', are all masculine.

The bee-keeper was not the only one to bestow a name upon September. Some already hacked their flax, and to them the ninth month of the year was *październik*. Others, more lazy, would just stand and gape at the frail cobweb of gossamer floating in the air, and preferred to call September 'the month of cobweb, gossamer': *pajęcznik*, from *pajęk*, 'spider'. And there were the folk who would not do anything at all. Thus the name of *stojąceń*, undoubtedly connected with the paralytic *stojączka*, became the fourth name with which September was dubbed. Further north, the leaf-shedding period came sooner, and so the tenth month was known as *listopad*.

November was also called *grudzień*, for the soil would become cloddy in some parts of the country even in November. Elsewhere gossamer still might have been floating in the air, and the eleventh month was also known as *pajęcznik*. Heather, still blossoming in some places, allowed the use of *wrzesień*. Lazybones would hang on to their hacking of flax and, reasonably enough, would call November *październik*.

The last month of the year had only two names: *grudzień* or *prosień-prosiniec*, the latter mentioned in connection with January. A troublesome name, this *prosień-prosiniec*, and a conscientious etymologist ought to spend his Christmas holidays, New Year's Eve and the Epiphany in a mood of melancholy and humility. There is one temptation he is sure to reject at once: the enigmatic name has nothing to do with *prosię*, 'young pig', which the Slavs were supposed to kill for their winter feast. Were it so, the word would sound **prasinec* in Czech and **prasinac* in Croat, for the little pink squeaker is called *prase* in both these languages. Further analysis is, however, more difficult. After all, the Slavs *might* have gorged themselves on *proso*, 'millet'... Moreover, the verb *prosijati*, *prosinoti*, 'shine through', which we know from the Old-Church-Slavonic language, might also have been used for derivation: the daylight time lengthens from 21st December onwards, and there is more sunshine to gladden the eye.

This great variety of medieval names for the months must have been troublesome, though, most probably, there were fairly uniform systems in use in different parts of the country. The differences provided persons of a serene but unreliable character with excellent opportunities: they would borrow money, promising to return it in *wrzesień*, 'September' and returned it, if ever, in November: in *their* part of the country the charming name of *wrzesień*, rightfully denoted November... Who knows, it might even have been Mieszko the Old, a clever 12th century prince of Cracow with quite a reputation for fishy financial dealings, who used this trick on his bankers, just for the fun of it and for a little profit to be put aside?

Well, we shall never know the truth. Philologists are in a better position than historians, for the former at least can say that the medieval names of the months do not add anything new to the general picture of the names now in use. All were born of the same spirit. Of religion there is in them almost nothing, of poetic feeling very little indeed. In the main they are all the fruit of the simple cares of a peaceful, stolid, farming folk.

3. WORDS FOR 'WOMAN'.

Woman is an everyday occurrence. So are the words which denote her. However, the modern Polish for 'woman', *kobieta*, is one of the most enigmatic items of the Polish vocabulary. No etymologist, although the most expert have tried their hand at it, has so far been able to give an explanation acceptable to everyone. The dispute about *kobieta* still continues.

The enigmatic origin of *kobieta* is the more amazing in that all the other Polish words for 'woman' are crystal-clear and do not present any difficulties.

The first word for 'woman' was *żona*, etymologically 'bearer (of children)', connected with the Latin *genitrix*, etc. Today *żona* denotes 'wife' as in Russian. In other Slavonic languages, such as Bulgarian, Czech, Serbo-Croat and Ukrainian, the word is used in both meanings.

The Polish examples for *żona*, 'woman', do not occur later than the 16th century. In the 15th century hymn quoted in *Chapter One, Section Six*, the Virgin Mary wept bitterly: "Zamęt ciężki dostał sie mnie, ubogiej żenie", 'A great trouble hath befallen me, poor woman'. Nicholas Rey, the Protestant father of post-medieval Polish prose, wrote in his *Mirror* (1567): "żadny z nią poczcziwy człowiek ani poczcziwa żona żadnego społku ani towarzystwa ani rozmowy nie miewali", 'no decent man nor any decent woman ever had any commerce with her, or kept company, or held conversation'. The Women's Parliament, *Sjem*²⁵ *Niewieści*, from a satire by M. Bielski, almost contemporaneous with Rey's *Mirror*, adopted the following resolution:

"Dziewki nasze, aby się też ćwiczyły, chcemy,
A przetoż im po żony tatarskie pošemy;
Niech sie uczą ciągnąć łuk, jeździć na bachmacie"
(We will it that our daughters also be trained,
Therefore, we shall send for Tartar women for them;
Let them learn how to bend the bow and ride the steed').

During the sitting of this imaginary Parliament which, by the soundness and common-sense of its resolutions, was meant to instil shame into the hearts of the men, one of the deputies, Catherine, moved the following motion:

"To jest moje w tej sprawie, prostej żony zdanie.
By osobno siedziały panny, wdowy, panie"
(This is my, a simple woman's, opinion in this matter.
That maidens, widows and matrons sit in separate groups').

It is clear that in all the four quotations given, the word *żona* denotes 'woman' and not 'wife'. The adjective *żeński*, derived from *żona* and employed to-day in such phrases as "rodzaj żeński", 'feminine gender', or "szkoła żeńska", 'girls' (women's) school', was formed at the time when *żona* still meant 'woman'.

As if *żona* were not enough, Old-Polish had four indirect derivatives from this word, all of them meaning 'woman': *żeńszczyzna* (in a 14th cen-

25) The word was inflected *sjem* (n. sg.), *sejmu* (gen. sg.), etc. Today *sejmn*, *sejmu*, etc.

ture sermon), an exact counterpart of the modern Russian *ženščina*, 'woman'; *żeńszczyzna* (in the Bible translation of 1572), formed with the same suffix as *mężczyzna*, 'man (male)' from the adjective *żeński*, from which also *żeńszczyzna* was derived; *żeniczyzna* (1579) and its abbreviation, *żeńczyzna* (in the 15th century life of Jesus), from an unrecorded ancient diminutive of *żona*, **ženica*, 'little woman'.

In the 16th-18th centuries woman was known under the interesting name of *biała głowa* or *białogłowa*, literally 'white head'. Another deputy to Bielski's Women's Parliament, Potentiana, thus showed off her knowledge of literature and history:

"Wiele by tego było, bych wam powiadała,
O zacnych *białych głowach*, com o nich czytała"
(It would be much to tell you
What I have read *about illustrious women*).

"*Białogłowy są bardzo niestałe*", 'Women are very inconsistent', a writer ruefully complained in 1614.

The Prince-Bishop of Warmia, I. Krasicki, criticised the generosity of the kings of Poland in bestowing large estates on "*młode białogłowy*", 'young women' (about 1776).

Białogłowa is still used as a jocular archaism. However, jocularly was there since the very birth of the word. It certainly was a fruit of the good humour of "the rulers of the world". To-day the Poles say of those who like pursuing women that they "*uganiają się za spódniczkami*", 'pursue (the) skirts', cf. the English *petticoat*, *petticoat-government*. It is undoubtedly a little licentious to call a human being after the garment he or she wears, especially because, as moralists try to persuade us, it is not the garment that makes the man. If recent generations have concentrated on the skirt, the Poles of gone-by centuries fixed their attention on the white veil of the women of their time. Even when the veil went out of fashion, the jocular character of *białogłowa* was maintained by the compound character of the word ²⁶⁾ and by its connection with 'whiteness' (*biały*, 'white') and the noun *głowa*, suggestive of the *pars pro toto* trick. It may be mentioned that during the 17th and 18th centuries, the adjective *biały*, derived from *biała głowa* and *białogłowa*, was used in many less important two-word combinations denoting 'woman', all of them a little frivolous.

In the 18th century *białogłowa* was simplified into *białka*, now known in several Northern Polish dialects, i.e. in Cassubian.

Beside *białogłowa* there existed another name for 'woman': *niewiasta*. An old rhymed proverb said that "*ani na wsi, ani w mieście, nie trzeba wierzyć niewieście*", 'in country or town, woman should not be believed'.

To-day, the word is still used, though again as a jocular archaism, but the joke is not based upon anything in the name itself. *Niewiasta* originally was 'unknown (from *nie wiedzieć*, 'not to know') woman, woman previously not known in the family circle, bride, young daughter-in-law' (some dialects still use the word in this meaning, cf. also the Russian *nevěsta* and Czech *nevěsta*, 'bride, fiancée'). Father P. Skarga characterised matrimony as "*złączenie małżeńskie otroka i niewiasty w prawnym po-*

²⁶⁾ Compounds are comparatively rare in Polish and often made use of in depreciative or humorous formations, cf. *wartogłów*, 'giddy-head, rattle-head'.

rzędku na mieszkanie nierozdzielne", 'the matrimonial union of a young man and his *bride*, based upon law, for living inseparably'. However, in the title of Bielski's satire, *Sjem Niewieści*, the youthfulness of *niewiasta* had already faded away, for not only maidens, but also married women and widows, well advanced in years, gathered to pass their judgement on men's misrule. There is no specific shade about such derivatives of *niewiasta* as *zniewieściały*, 'effeminate', or *zniewieścić*, 'become effeminate', both of which remain in the normal language; in the same way as the adjective *żeński*, 'feminine', has retained the old meaning of *żona* ('woman'), despite the semantic change in the parent-word.

Białogłowa was not the only fruit of masculine malice, irony or good humour. There was also *podwika* or *podwijka* which originally denoted a kind of women's veil and is derived from the verb *podwijąć*, 'tie up', as *zasuwka*, 'bolt', from *zasuwać*, 'shove behind'. Beata said in the *Sjem*:

"Chociem ja jest żeńska płeć, w podwikę zawita,
Gdy do rady mąż idzie, mnie o wszystko pyta"
(Although I am a woman, tied up in a veil,
When my husband goes to a meeting, he consults me
about everything').

However, the same Bielski had already written about King Casimir the Great (1333-1370), known for his love affairs, "że go nie mierzyła *podwika*", 'that a woman would not be repellent to him'.

To-day, *podwika* is also a humorous archaism, although only the specialist will know the origin of the word. Here, a short digression must be made. The word *mąż* originally denoted 'man (a male)', not 'husband' as to-day. However, it may be used in archaic style in the old meaning, but then quite contrary to *białogłowa*, *niewiasta* or *podwika*, *mąż* is a very lofty word. Apparently, the world is still the man's place.

To repeat what has been said earlier, all the Polish words for 'woman' are clear and easy to explain. Only the modern *kobieta* has not been satisfactorily elucidated.

Kobieta was first recorded in the satires of Bielski written about 1566-1569. It was disparaging them. This is what the already quoted Catherine had to say in the *Sjem*:

"Już dalej, siostry miłe nie bądźmy w tym błędzie,
Którego u nas pełno po wszej Polsce wszędzie;
Próżno się mamy spuszczać na męskie osoby,
Już oni nie odstąpią swojej zwykłej proby:
Starajmy się o lepsze z swej strony porządki,
Chocia oni nas zową *białogłowy*, *prządki*;
Ku większemu zelzeniu *kobietami* zową,
Každy dzień by chciał pojąć żonę sobie nową".

(Let us not persist, dear sisters, in this error
Which is so abundant in Poland everywhere;
It would be vain of us to rely on men,
They will not rise above their usual test:
Let us endeavour ourselves to get a better order;
Although they call us *białogłowy*, *prządki* (spinners),
And, for greater disparagement, *kobiety*,
(Each of them) would be glad to marry a new wife every day').

Beata added:

Mogąć oni przezywać żony kobietami,
Aleć też nie do końca mają rozum sami"
('They (the men) can *nickname* their wives *kobiety*,
But they themselves have not sense enough').

It may be stated on the strength of these two quotations that *kobieta* was a disparaging word, that it was more so than *białogłowa*, a mere product of good humour and lightness of mind, or *przędka*, 'spinner', whose insulting character is questionable indeed. On the other hand, to forestall any suppositions, it must be said that *kobieta* did *not* mean anything really indecent, for, if so, it could have been mentioned in a text like Bielski's satire. Besides, all the Polish words for 'prostitute' are known from statutes dealing with this problem, and *kobieta* does not figure among them. On the other hand, if Catherine regards *białogłowa* as a disparaging word, the problem is very relative, indeed, for this very word is used by Bielski in a poem full of seriousness and even melancholy, *The May Dream (Sen majowy)* cf. "Powie na ty słowa Wołoska ziemia, barzo smutna *białogłowa*", "To these words says the land Valachia, a very sad *woman*' (the poet called for a crusade against the Turks - Valachia, Southern part of the Rumania of to-day, was one of the Turks' victims).

The words *białogłowa*, *podwika* and the modern *spódniczka* authorise us to seek the origin of *kobieta* among nouns denoting women's dresses. *Przędka* - among words denoting some activities practised by women alone.

Whatever solution of the enigma may be found in the future, it can be safely said that it did not take *kobieta* long to lose its originally light character. Petrycy wrote in his translation of Aristotle (1605) that "*kobiety strojów niezwyčajnych nie mają wymyślić*", '*women ought not to invent extraordinary attires*'. J.C. Pasek, the sprightly Mazovian nobleman, said in his *Memoirs* (1656-88) about the widow who was to become his wife: "Już też i żal było owej *kobiety*, widząc jej wielki affekt", 'I pitied that *woman* when I saw her great affection'. The 18th century finally disposed of all lowly associations with *kobieta*. "My rządźim światem, a nami *kobiety*", 'We rule the world, and *the women* rule us' - said the Prince-Bishop of Warmia, a writer whose language was both selective and fastidious. Another 18th century writer, Zabłocki, boasted in one of his comedies, written in 1781, that "żyjąc w wielkim świecie, wie, jak się przymilić *kobiecie*", 'living in the elegant world, he knows how to gain a *woman's* favours'.

However, this great career of the word has not redeemed the suspect origin of *kobieta*. One etymologist traced it to *koba*, 'mare', or *kob*, 'pigsty', deriving the unusual suffix from such Christian names of the fair sex as *Bieta*, *Elżbieta*, *Greta*, *Markieta*, quite popular in the 16th century. Another has tried to find it among Finnish tribes, suspecting it of being a loan-word. Yet another has wanted to divide it into *kobi*, 'augurium' and **vēta*, 'talk' (cf. *ob(w)ietnica*), and sees a 'witch' in her, 'the teller of fortunes from the flight of birds'. However, they have been beset by doubt ever since they took their scalpels to this enigmatic word; no one can claim to have reached a satisfactory conclusion. Most probably they will never reach it, and *kobieta* will remain the secret of the hoary past, a secret unsolved and insoluble, a really adequate word for the divine and inscrutable being it denotes.

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

To-day, Polish is spoken by about 30 million people, one eighth of the number that speaks English. There are two Slavonic languages whose speakers outnumber the Poles: Russian and Ukrainian.

The mother tongue of a medium-sized European nation, Polish neither belongs to the most easy nor the most difficult among the languages of mankind. Within the Slavonic family, it seems to be one of the easier languages.

This Chapter is meant to illustrate some of these traits of modern literary Polish which are likely to be of interest to the English-speaking reader: the main phonetic qualities (*Section Two*), the spelling (*Section Three*), the richness or complexity of the inflection (*Sections Four, Five and Six*), the verbal aspects (*Section Seven*) as well as the diminutive and the augmentative formations (*Section Eight*). With a view to making the various problems more digestible, some comparison has been given with modern Standard English, a language so different in grammatical structure, though distantly akin (cf. *Section Nine: The Distant Kinship*).

2. SOUND.

In comparison with other Slavonic languages Polish has three enormous advantages in its sound system: stability of word stress, absence of any distinction between long and short vowels, and lack of syllabic intonations.

Mobile accent is known in Russian ²⁷⁾. It is never marked in the ordinary spelling:

"Búrja mglóju nébo króet,	Burza mgłą niebo kryje,
Vichri sněžnye krutjá;	Wichry snieżne kręcą;
To, kak zver' oná zavóet,	To, jak zwierz. ona zawyje,
To zapláčet, kak ditjá".	To zapłacze, jak dziecię'.
(Pushkin)	

(“The storm covers the sky with mist,
The snowy winds whirling around;
Now it will howl as a beast,
Now cry as a child”).

Cf. also *náberežnaja*, ‘quay’, *moróženoe*, ‘ice-cream’, *nasekómoe*, ‘insect’, *zapjátája*, ‘comma’, *dvorjanin*, ‘gentleman, nobleman’, *čužój*, ‘foreign, strange’, etc.

In Polish, the stress is on the penultimate syllable. It is only the first and the second person plural of the past tense which, in view of

²⁷⁾ The acute accent denotes here the place of stress.

their origin (cf. *Chapter One, 7*), may also be stressed on the antepenultimate: *widzieliśmy* (from medieval *widzieli jesmy*), 'we saw, have seen', *widzieliście* (from *widzieli jeście*), 'you saw, have seen', but, in rather careless speech will occur frequently with the stress on the penultimate: *widzieliśmy, widzieliście*. Besides, under the influence of Latin words with a short *i* in the penultimate (cf. *música*), a few Polish substantives with *i* or *y* in the last-but-one syllable, have the penultimate or the antepenultimate stressed: *muzýka*, usually 'band, orchestra', and *mízyka*, usually 'music (art)', *okolica*, 'neighbourhood, vicinity', and *okólíca*, *Rzeczpospolita*, 'the Republic', and *Rzeczpospólita* (cf. the Latin *res pública*). Otherwise, there is perfect regularity, uniformity and monotony.

In this regularity Polish enjoys an advantage over English. The difference is, perhaps, slightly less striking due to the scarcity of inflectional forms in English as compared with Russian which very often has stress differences within one paradigm. Nevertheless, Polish spares the foreigner the trouble of learning the stress of *dictionary, psychólogy, psychológical, belief*, etc., and that of distinguishing *súspect* (subst., adj.) from *suspéct* (verb), or *énvelope* (subst.) from *envélop* (verb), etc.

Czech has regularised its stress on the first syllable. It has, however, retained the distinction between long and short vowels, the former always marked in script and print with an acute accent:

"Nechtějte víc, než unést můžete,
nechtějte štěstí víc, než unéstí se dá,
jen bolest smíchem ozdobit a jít
jak motýl, když na květ třešni usedá".

(M. Haller)

('Nie chcejcie więcej, niż unieść możecie,
nie chcejcie szczęścia więcej, niż unieść się da,
jeno boleść śmiechem ozdobić a iść
jak motyl, gdy na kwiat trześni usiada').
(Do not want any more than you can carry,
do not want any more hapiness than can be borne,
(you must) adorn pain with a smile and carry on
as a butterfly when sitting on the blossom of the
cherry-tree').

Polish has long discarded this old Slavonic feature. More uniformity and monotony is the result. Nevertheless, Polish is here again a less complex language than English with its long and short vowels, sometimes differing in quality: *sea* (with a long and narrow *i*), and *ill* (with a short and wide *i*); sometimes without any qualitative difference: *hot* (short *o*), *law* (long *o*).

Serbo-Croat distinguishes between various syllabic intonations, never marked in the ordinary spelling and very difficult for a foreigner to distinguish and learn properly²⁸. This ancient Slavonic trait has also long been given up in Polish (Russian and Czech) which finds itself here on an equal footing with English.

The melodiousness of modern Polish relies on phonetic qualities other than the three mentioned. First, on a great clarity and "distinctiveness"

28) Among Germanic languages Swedish can boast of melodious intonations, similar in nature to those of Serbo-Croat. Cf. also the Greek intonations, marked in script.

and the absence of any "indefinite" or "obscure" vowel. Second, on the relative frequency of a vocalic word-ending. Third, on the nasal vowels, similar to those of modern French. Fourth, on the abundance of "hissing" consonants. Fifth, on that of palatal consonants.

Not much can be said without elaborate phonetic terminology about the clarity and the "distinctiveness" of the vowels. Prof. Jones distinguishes 13 English vowels. Carefully pronounced Polish has eight vowels only (*a, e, i, o, u, y, ɛ* and *ɔ*). Since the oral cavity of an Englishman and that of a Pole are of the same size, the inferences are not difficult to draw.

Professor Jones also says that "many weakly stressed syllables are pronounced with an obscure vowel or with no vowel sound at all" ²⁹). Here is a spelling explanation by G.B. Shaw, given in *Pygmalion*: "In the dialogue an *e* upside down indicates the indefinite vowel, sometimes called obscure or neutral, for which, though it is one of the commonest sounds in English speech, our wretched alphabet has no letter". There is no such vowel in literary Polish.

The Polish word more often ends in a vowel than in a consonant. Some light on the problem is thrown by a summary examination of the substantive inflection. There are four main types of inflection: masculine, neuter and two feminine (cf. *kobieta*, 'woman', the vocalic type; *kość*, 'bone', the consonantal type), each with fourteen case-forms. The total number of case-forms is 56. Among these a very few can end in practically any consonant, for instance, the nominative singular masc. (*dom*, 'house', *kos*, 'blackbird', *łoś*, 'elk', *kruk*, 'raven'); some more end in definite consonants, for instance, the dative plural of all the four types of inflection, which ends in *-m* (*domom*, 'to the houses', *polom*, 'to the fields', *kobietom*, 'to the women', *kościom*, 'to the bones'). It is the first type of case-form that really gives full consonantal variety. All the other case-forms end in various vowels (cf. the genitive singular masc. and neut.: *kosa*, 'of the blackbird', *domu*, 'of the house', *pola*, 'of the field'). The examination of the final sound shows that out of the 56 Polish case-forms, 36 always end in a vowel, while 15 only always end in a consonant. The proportion is similar in the adjective, the pronoun and the verb.

Let us illustrate the relation between the vocalic and the consonantal word-end by quoting a short poem, taken at random, *A jak poszedł król na wojnę*, by Maria Konopnicka:

A jak poszedł król na wojnę,
Grały jemu surmy zbrojne,
Grały jemu surmy złote
Na zwycięstwo, na ochotę...
A jak poszedł Stach na boje,
Zaszumiały jasne zdroje,
Zaszumiało kłosów pole
Na tęsknotę, na niedolę...
A na wojnie świszczą kule,
Lud się wali jako snopy,
A najdzielniej biją króle,
A najgęściej giną chłopcy.

²⁹) Cf. *Dhe Fonetik Aspekt on Speling Reform*, Pamflet No. 8, Simplified Speling Soslęty, 1944, p. 3.

Szumią orły chorągwiane,
Skrzypi kędyś krzyż wioskowy,
Stach śmiertelną dostał ranę,
Król na zamek wracał zdrowy.

A jak wjeżdżał w jasne wrota,
Wyszła przeciw zorza złota,
I zagrały wszystkie dzwony
Na słoneczne światła strony.

A jak chłopu dół kopali,
Zaszumiały drzewa w dali,
Dzwoniły mu przez dąbrowę
Te dzwoneczki, te liljowe...".

(When the king went to war,
Army clarions sounded for him,
Golden clarions sounded for him
For victory and for mettle.

When Stach went to fight,
Bright springs rustled,
The field of corn-ears rustled,
For longing and ill fortune.

Bullets whistle in the war,
Men tumble down like sheaves,

It is the kings that strike
most bravely,
It is the peasants that perish
most often.

Eagles rustle in the banners,
A village cross creaks somewhere,
Stach got a mortal wound,
The king returns safe to his castle.

When he rode into the bright gate,
The golden dawn met him,
And all the bells rung out
To all the parts of the world.

When they dug a grave for the
peasant,

The trees rustled afar,
And the bluebells, the sky-blue
ones

Rang him through the forest..').

Out of the 103 words of the poem, 79 (76.7%) end in a vowel, 22 (21.4%) - in a consonant ³⁰⁾.

The proportion is not much different in a poem by Baliński, *Ojczyzna Szopena* ('Chopin's Motherland') where out of 239 words, 155 end in a vowel (64.9%) and 70 (29.3%) in a consonant (*j* excluded). In a passage from *Cudzoziemka* (*The Stranger*), a modern novel by Maria Kuncewicz, containing 2197 words, 1448 (65.9%) end in a vowel, 704 (32.1%) - in consonant (45.2% in *j*).

These data tally very well with the rough estimate of the vocalic- or consonantal-end of the substantive: the vocalic word-end is about twice as frequent as the consonantal. This may be thought of as endowing the language with a somewhat feminine grace.

There are two main *nasal vowels* in Polish, the nasal *o* (spelt *ą* and the nasal *e* (spelt *ę*), cf. *wąs*, 'moustache', and *kęs*, 'bit (of food)'. They are largely modified heritage from the epoch of the common Slavonic speech (*Proto-Slavonic*); Polish is the only literary Slavonic language to have preserved them until to-day.

In ordinary conversation, nasal vowels are pronounced only in those words in which the nasal vowel letter precedes a fricative consonant, cf. *wąs* and *kęs*, which have been already quoted. Before other consonants, a

³⁰⁾ In conformity with the usual pronunciation of poetry *ł* has been treated as a liquid, "dark" consonant, not as a reduced non-syllabic *u*. Words ending in *j* have not been included in either category of words.

combination of a pure vowel with a nasal consonant is pronounced: *rąbek*, 'hem', is sounded as if it were spelt "*rombek*", *szp*, 'vulture' - "*szemp*", *kął*, 'corner' - "*kont*", *pięta*, 'fetters' - "*penta*". Before an *ł*, *q* becomes a pure *o* (*stanął*, 'he stopped', pron. "*stanoł*"), while *ę* may preserve its nasal character (*stanęła*, 'she stopped', pron. "*stanęła*" or "*stanęła*"). When at the very end of a word, *q* is usually pronounced as a nasal vowel (*są*, 'they are'), *ę* - as a pure *e* (*prosię*, 'young pig', pron. "*prosie*").

On the other hand, words of recent and recognizable foreign origin, with *om*, *on*, *em*, *en*, are colloquially pronounced as if they had nasal vowels before the fricatives: *konwalia*, 'lily-of-the valley' (pron. "*kqwalia*"), *pensja*, 'salary' ("*pęsja*"), *pons*, 'dark crimson red' "*pqs*", etc. In other positions, the nasal consonant is retained: *pompa*, 'pump', *konto*, '(bank) account', *temperatura*, 'temperature', *sentencja*, 'maxim', etc.

In solemn diction, sermons, public speech, recitation of poetry, on the stage (in serious plays), etc., the pronunciation of the nasal vowels and the *om*, *on*, *em*, *en* of the "foreign-born" words strictly follows the spelling. Some speakers will also be very careful on this point in colloquial speech. In other words, the older pronunciation, petrified by the spelling, is almost the only one admissible in all kinds of solemn speech, and the poet therefore can make full use of the sonority, gracefulness and elegance of the nasal vowels:

"Okręt dalekobieżny, przez gniewny ocean płynący,
Solą morską jak siwym zarostem okryty,
Burze zwyciężył, aż wreszcie jękliwym drzewem trzeszczący,
Wypłynął pod nieba pogodne błękity".

(A. Słonimski).

('A long-distance ship, sailing through an angry ocean,
Covered with sea salt as if with silvery-grey hair,
Has vanquished the storms and at last, creaking with
groaning wood,
Has steered out into the bright azure of the sky').

There are in Polish the following dental and palatal fricatives and affricates: *s*, *z*, *c*, *dz*; *ś*, *ź*, *ć*, *dź*; *sz*, *ż*, *cz*, *dż*. For practical purposes and in conformity with the general acoustic impression they make, we shall call them "*hissing consonants*". Their presence seems to be particularly justified in words denoting various kinds of whistle (*świst*, 'whistle'), whisper (*szept*, 'whisper') and rustle (*szelest*, 'rustle of leaves, twigs', *szum* - of the trees, of the sea).

Apart from minor differences in pronunciation, the Polish series of hissing consonants differs from the same sounds in English mainly in the palatal set: *ś*, *ź*, *ć*, *dź*, (since the two English lisping *th*'es (*the*, *thin*) can hardly be included in the category of hissing consonants).

The percentage of these sounds may reach 30%. When a poet wishes to render the phonic character of a scene of nature, the hissing sounds assume greater force than usual, in view of their onomatopoeic value.

This may deliberately be intensified in recitation:

"Senna fala uderza o piaszczysty brzeg,
chwieje się bór sosnowy, zdjęty niepokojem,
nad rozlewem siwych rzek
księżyc w głębi zielonej srebrną płetwą pluszcze"
(J. Łobodowski)

("The sleepy wave beats against the sandy beach,
The pine forest shakes, seized with anxiety,
Over the spread of silver-grey rivers
The moon splashes her silvery fin in depth of green').

The hissing consonants constitute here 28.2% of all the consonants used.

Here is another sample:

"We Francji było sennie, Noce wschodziły wcześniej, Dnie szeleściły snami, Żyło się trochę we śnie" (J. Baliński)	("It was drowsy out there in France, The nights came up soon, The days rustled with dreams, One lived in dream a little').
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Here, the hissing consonants amount to 34%. Owing to the peculiarly onomatopoeic character of the two fragments chosen, this proportion is not characteristic for the language.

English has "none of that palatalization of consonants which gives an insinuating grace to such languages as Russian" ³¹⁾. *The Polish palatal consonants* are perhaps less graceful and somewhat less frequent (the Russian *č* and *l'*, cf. *čistyj*, 'clean, pure', *les*, 'forest, wood', are palatal as they once were in Polish). Nevertheless, the general impression of Polish is one of softness, and most of it certainly relies on the relative frequency of palatal consonants. In the poem by Konopnicka, already quoted, they amount to 17% of all the consonants (the *j* has been excluded from these statistics as it is often regarded as a non-syllabic vowel). In *Chopin's Motherland* by S. Baliński, the proportion is higher: 29%. In the passage from *Cudzoziemka (The Stranger)* by Maria Kuncewicz, there are 1022 palatal consonants in a total of 5439 consonants. This proportion (18.8%) is typical ³²⁾.

Among the palatal consonants the most characteristic are: *ś, ź, ć, dź*, which have already been mentioned in connection with the "hissing" consonants. They are fairly frequent: in the prose fragment by M. Kuncewicz they number 402, i.e. 7.4% of the consonantal total, or 39.4% of all the palatal consonants.

31) O. Jespersen, cf. p. 2: *Growth and Structure of the English Language*, Ninth Edition, carefully revised, Oxford 1945.

32) The *j* has been omitted altogether. The statistics have been based on very careful, literary pronunciation, with the nasal vowels and the vowel plus anteconsonantal, or final nasal consonant pronounced in strict accordance with the spelling; with the *ł* pronounced as a liquid "dark" consonant, not as a non-syllabic *u*; and the exclusion of all the non-Polish names and words contained in the passage.

To sum up, the relative phonetic beauty of Polish relies on the clarity of the vowel, the greater frequency of the vocalic word-end, the elegance of the (pure) nasal vowels, the onomatopoeic character of the hissing consonants and the softness of the palatal consonants. The language has thus a big, but not exclusive element of what is conventionally regarded as feminine. The lack of distinction between long and short vowels, the stabilised accent and the absence of any syllabic intonations add a certain monotony to the softness, the hissing, the elegance and the clarity. The monotony may and often is compensated by a rather lively way of speaking and the comparatively diversified sentence intonation.

The characteristics of Polish would be incomplete without devoting some attention to the problem of *the monosyllabic word which is so prominent in modern English*.

English literally abounds in monosyllables. In the opinion of Jespersen (ib., p. 5-7), this feature lends it force and "business-like shortness", although at the same time detracting from its elegance.

The great philologist overlooks the existence in English of *one-sound monosyllables* and the comparative frequency of *two-sound* ones. This subject offers an interesting point of departure for comparison with Polish.

The number of one-sound words in English is small. The spelling, a capricious lady from the point of view of modern English, but a comparatively faithful servant of the old tradition, demands three letters: *awe*, though sound there is only one, namely a long 'o:, identical with that of *law*. This word or two words, substantive and verb, is the only one *invariably* pronounced as one vowel. However, if we consider the speech of the educated classes of the South of England, the number of one-vowel words is much greater. The obliteration of the ante-consonantal *r* has mothered them. *Are*, *err*, *oar* and *ore* are one-vowel words if pronounced at the very end of an utterance or before another, closely connected word, beginning with a consonant. Some even pronounce them as long vowels *in all positions*.

In striking contrast with this state of affairs in English, Polish has not a single substantive, adjective or verb consisting of one vowel alone.

The situation is slightly different with regard to *one-consonant words* ³³⁾.

English has several "weak" verbal forms consisting of one consonant only. Their existence has for the most part been recognised in the usually very conservative spelling:

"Tell what I'll (I will) do", said Mr. Prigson, after literally dosing himself and his friend with a little something to keep the cold out, as he put it" (G. Bullett);

"Oh, that's (is) nonsense", said Roy good-humouredly, with the tone of a doctor who is trying to persuade a child to have its throat examined" (G. Bullett);

"I'm (I am) staying in the cottage of my female cousin" (G. Bullett);

33) These have been included here, although, obviously enough, a consonant cannot make up a syllable by itself. The term *word* will henceforth be used in this section in the slightly restricted meaning of substantive, adjective and verb.

"Now I come to think of it, you're (you *are*) as like as two peas, you and your granny" (G. Bullett);

"Sometimes I've (I *have*) thought of an island lost in a boundles sea, where I could live in some hidden valleys, among strange trees, in silence" (W. Somerset Maugham);

"You'd (you *would*) be just as upset as I should, if anything happened to the child" (G. Bullett).

There also are: "s" (*has*) "sh" (*shall*, the only one not recognised by spelling, "chiefly used when *we* or *be* follows", cf. p. 383, *An English pronouncing Dictionary*, by D. Jones, 7th edition, London, 1945), *d* (*had*) and another *d* (*should*).

The one-consonant forms of *am*, *has* and *is*, relate to one person alone, the first and the third singular respectively. That of *are* - to four persons. That of *have* - to five. The others (*had*, *should*, *will* and *would*) - to all the six persons. *Am*, *are*, *is*, *have*, *has* and *had* are both independent words and auxiliaries which correspondingly enhances the frequency of their use.

To match all these, there are only two one-consonant verbal forms in Polish: *-m* and *-ś*, relics of the medieval *jeśm*, 'I am', and *jeś*, 'thou art', the 1st and 2nd persons singular of the present tense from *być*, 'be': "Nigdy-m ci tego nie wybaczył", 'I've never forgiven you that', "To-ś ty taki!", 'So that's what you are', and "Czy-ś słyszał?", 'Did you hear?'. The *-m* of the first sentence is an auxiliary. The *-ś* is an independent word in the first example where it corresponds to *jestes*, and an auxiliary in the second. In all the three, however, the one-consonant verbal form relates to one person alone. All this has to be borne in mind when stating *the much greater rarity of one-consonant words in Polish than in English*.

The two-sound word is fairly frequent in English. It may consist of: a vowel and a consonant, a consonant and a vowel, two vowels merged into one diphthong, and of two consonants (the last type are *not* monosyllables).

The first type may be exemplified by the substantives *egg*, *inn*, *earth* and *eel*, which, let us note, not quite accidentally correspond to much longer Polish words: *jajo* or *jajko*, 'egg' - four, five sounds in two syllables; *karczma* or *zajazd*, 'inn' - six sounds in two syllables each; *ziemia*, 'earth' - four sounds in two syllables; *węgorz*, 'eel' - five (or six) sounds in two syllables (the number depends on the type of pronunciation).

Of the second type we may give the following examples: *bee*, *ewe*, *knee*, *tea* and *yew*, which, also not quite accidentally, correspond to the six sounds in two syllables of the Pol. *pszczola*, 'bee', four sounds in two syllables of *owca*, 'ewe', six sounds in three syllables of *kolano*, 'knee', seven sounds in three syllables of *herbata*³⁴⁾, 'tea', and three sounds in one syllable of *cis*, 'yew'.

The third type - one-diphthong words - comprises *eye* and *owe*, in Polish *oko* (three sounds in two syllables) and *być winnym* (infinitive - nine sounds in three syllables) or *jestem winien*, 'I owe' (11 sounds in 4 syllables).

Finally, the last type - words composed of two consonants - can be

34) *Herbata* is fundamentally the same Chinese word as *tea*, enlarged by the addition of the Latin *herba*, 'herb', cf. Wordsworth: 'And sitting on the grass partook *The fragrant beverage drawn from China's herb*'.

found in the realm of "weak" verbal forms: "shd" or "sht" from *should* (cf. Jones, op. cit. 385).

The number of English words conforming to the first three types run into hundreds.

In Polish, there are only very few two-sound words. Four nominative-accusative singular of masculine gender: *ar* (surface measure), 'are', *as*, 'ace', *it*, 'loam, silt', and *ul*, 'bee-hive'. One of feminine gender: *os*, 'axis, axle'. Two feminine genitives plural: *os* (or *ós*), 'of wasps', and *ód*, 'of odes' (from *oda*)³⁵. Three neuter genitives plural: *ok*, 'of eyes of fat', 'of net-meshes', *uch*, 'of boiled paste cakes', 'of cup of jug handles', and *ud*, 'of thighs'. Three third persons singular of the present tense: *je*, 'east', *ma*, 'has', and *wie*, 'knows'. One third person plural of the present tense: *sg*, '(they) are'. One of the future tense, singular: *da*, 'will give'. Two imperatives singular, 2nd person: *órz*, 'till', and *ucz*, 'teach'. 17 word-forms altogether. And it must not be forgotten that while *ul*, 'bee-hive', is a two-sound monosyllable in two cases alone out of seven cases of the singular, the two-sound monosyllabic English *bee* which flies out from the bee-hive, remains unchanged in all the uses which correspond to the Polish singular. Similarly, the verbal *arm*, a two-sound monosyllable, serves in English as an infinitive and imperative singular and plural, as well as in the form of five persons in the present tense, while *ucz* is restricted to one person of the imperative alone. To put the facts differently, not only is the English two-sound monosyllable much more frequent in the vocabulary, but it is also so within its own paradigm of inflection. Of two-sound adjectives, like the English *ill*, Polish has none whatsoever; its shortest adjective, *zły*, 'angry, bad', being a three-sound word (in some inflectional forms it can reach even the size of two syllables and five sounds: *złymi*, instr. pl.).

In order to illustrate the relation between three-sound English and Polish monosyllables we have to restrict ourselves to one single pattern: *p*, vowel and *t*.

This pattern can be filled up by 10 English words: *pit*, *pet*, *pat*, *pot*, *put*, *put* (in golf pronounced like *cut*), *port*, *peat*, *part*, and *pert*. Only the long *u*: (cf. *boot*), a variant of *o* (*molest*) and "the inverted *e*" (cf. the last vowel of *China*) do not form words with *p* at the beginning and *t* at the end.

The gap between *p* and *t* can be filled in Polish with eight vowels: *a*, *o*, *u*, *y*, *e*, *i*, *ę*, and *ą*. The latter two can be made use of in solemn or more careful speech alone - before *t* the speakers of Polish ordinarily pronounce *en* instead of *ę*, and *on* instead of *ą*. Therefore, *pęt*, 'of fetters', gen. pl., is a four-sound monosyllable in colloquial Polish ("pent"). Before *i* the Pole does not pronounce *p* (as in *pasek*, 'belt'), but its palatal variant (as in *piasek*, 'sand'). If we take into account all these complications, we shall obtain either five (without the nasal vowels and without the palatal *p*), ten (without the nasal vowels, but with the palatal *p*), seven (with the nasal vowels, but without the palatal *p*) or fourteen (with both) possible combinations. In the first case three combinations are made use of: *pot*, 'sweat', "put", '40 lbs' (pronounced unvoiced in certain conditions, cf. *puł soli*, '40 lbs of salt'), and *pyt*, 'kind of whip', the gen. pl. of a very rare feminine substantive *pyta*. The second variant will not

35) Occasionally, the incorrect *ócz*, gen. pl. of *oko*, can also be found in speech or print.

yield any new words: *piat*, *piot*, *piut*, *pit*, or *piet* do not exist (the palatal *p* cannot precede *y*). The third variant will give two words: "*peť*", 'impetus, speed' (spelt *peđ* and sometimes pronounced with an unvoiced consonant, cf. *peđ powietrza*, 'the impetus of the air'), and *peť*, 'of fetters'. The last pattern will be filled with six words: *pięť*, 'of heels', gen. pl. fem., will be the new one. To sum up, we shall obtain either three used combinations from among a possible five, three in ten, four in seven or five in fourteen. None of these proportions reaches the English proportion of 10 to 13. It is most probable that there is a similar difference between all the English and Polish three-sound monosyllables and that possibly this proportion can be extended to all the longer one-syllable words.

So far, we have omitted all semantic considerations. However, *pet* is not only the favourite cat or dog, but also 'a fit of sulks'. *Port* is not confined to Liverpool, New York or Gdynia, but can also denote a multitude of other things: a strong sweet red wine, an opening in a ship's side, left of a ship looking forward, etc. The principle of *one meaning one word* is sometimes difficult to apply, but its fundamental reasonableness cannot be seriously disputed. Therefore, in discussing the pattern *p*, vowel and *t*, we have to modify our statistical data by taking the meaning into consideration. In English we find, *roughly*, 82 words: 52 substantives, 27 verbs and 3 adjectives ³⁶). In Polish, there are 10 words all told: *pot* (two meanings, one literal, one metaphoric), "*put*", *pyť*, "*peť*", *peť* (two meanings, one literal and one metaphoric), *pięť* (of heels, human or animal, in socks and shoes - three meanings). Thus, in Polish, there are over eight times fewer words, although we have also taken into account collateral forms like "*put*".

The abundance of monosyllables in English has created a soil fertile for the formation of such "stump-words" as *ad* (*advertisement*), *bus* (*omnibus*), *doc* (*doctor*), *lab* (*laboratory*), *pub* (*public house*), *sub* (*submarine*) or *zoo* (*zoological garden*). Being the familiar forms, they can be regarded as *sui generis* diminutives, and since a diminutive implies the smallness of the thing or being, the fact that they are shorter than the basic forms seems logical in comparison with most Polish diminutives which, like *ogródeczek*, 'a small garden', a 'dear garden', are longer than their basic words: *ogród*, 'garden'. However, as we shall see later, either of the two languages applies its own logic here. Some of the English familiar forms quoted have already outlived their slang or nursery period and have acquired full rights of citizenship in the language. The comparatively great scarcity of monosyllables in Polish has been the cause of there being *no* "stump-words" at all.

In a play by G.B. Shaw our forefather Adam complains - in a typically English monosyllabic sentence - of the shortness of the word *love*: "That is too short a word for so long a thing". The Polish equivalent, *miłość*, is a six-sound two-syllable word, and not only our forefathers might prefer

³⁶) Computed according to *The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English* Compiled by F. G. Fowler and H. W. Fowler, New Edition, Revised by H. W. Fowler and H. G. Le Mesurier, Oxford 1934.

it to the "business-like" love. However, even a short word may convey much meaning:

"Tęsknota, słowo zużyte,
Otworło mi swoją dal.
- Jak różne są rzeczy ukryte
W króciutkim wyrazie: *żał*"
(A. Słonimski)

'Yearning, a worn-out vocable,
Has opened its expanse to me.
How varied are the contents hidden
In the very short word: *żał* (regret)'.

Hope is a four-sound monosyllable. Its Polish equivalent is a six-sound three-syllable word: *nadzieja*. It is a matter of preference which of the two is better suited to express the idea.

This and suchlike questions can be clinched by many foreigners. Those who hail from countries where the polysyllable is preferred, have great difficulty in fishing out English short words from the whirl of the rapidly flowing sentence. "Business-like" in its own realm, English does not seem to be so elsewhere. Anyhow, it is the speech of the Anglo-Saxon race first of all. The Anglo-Saxons are the only judges that matter.

3. SPELLING.

English spelling is a well-known nightmare for the English-speaking child and the foreigners alike. The differences in the pronunciation of *ough* in: *borough*, *cough*, *enough*, *hiccough* (*hiccup*), *hough* (*hock*); *ought*, *through*; and *dough*, *plough* - are very often quoted as a characteristic example of the quasi-anarchical state of written and printed English. *Ough* represents five different vowels and two diphthongs. If there is a pronounced consonant at the end of these words, it is never a *g* as, for instance, in *ghost*, but, strangely enough, *f* (*cough*), *k* (*hough*) or *p* (*hiccough*).

The diphthong *ai* is spelt in sixteen different ways:

<i>ais</i> : <i>aisle</i> ;	<i>i</i> : <i>life</i> ;	<i>is</i> : <i>island</i> ;
<i>aye</i> : <i>aye</i> ;	<i>I</i> : <i>I</i> ;	<i>oi</i> : <i>choir</i> (<i>quire</i>) ³⁷⁾ ;
<i>ei</i> : <i>either</i> , <i>seismic</i> ;	<i>ie</i> : <i>lie</i> ;	<i>ui</i> : <i>guile</i> ;
<i>eigh</i> : <i>height</i> ;	<i>ig</i> : <i>sign</i> ;	<i>uy</i> : <i>buy</i> ;
<i>eye</i> : <i>eye</i> ;	<i>igh</i> : <i>high</i> ;	<i>y</i> : <i>fly</i> ;
		<i>ye</i> : <i>rye</i> .

The letters *ai* are pronounced in *five* different ways:
said, *plaid*, *pair*, *rain*, *aisle*.

The consonant *k* is spelt in *eight* different ways:

c: *cat*; *ch*: *chemist*; *ck*: *rock*; *gh*: *hough* (*hock*); *k*: *keep*; *q*: *quite*;
x: *except*; *x* (jointly with the following *s* sound): *fox* (*fok-s*).

Two different values correspond to the letter *k* in speech:

zero: *know*, and *k*: *keep*.

Many oddities of spelling (or pronunciation) can be found among surnames and place-names, cf. *Cholmondeley* (pron. "Chumly"), *Ciren-*

37) Here the diphthong *ai* is preceded by the "w" sound.

cester (local pronunciation "*Sisiter*"); *Keighley* (town in Yorkshire, pron. "*Keethley*", with an unvoiced *th*, as in *thin*; the surname, pron. with the vowel as in *eel*, or with the diphthong *ai*, as in *life*); *Leicester* ("*Lester*"); *Marjoribanks* (pron. "*Marchbanks*" or "*Marshbanks*"); *Thames* (*t* and *e* like in *get* in England, Canada and New Zealand, *th* as in *thin* and the diphthong *ei* like in *rain* - in Connecticut, U.S.A.).

In the preface to *Pygmalion* G.B. Shaw maintains that "the English... cannot spell it (their language) because they have nothing to spell it with, but an old foreign alphabet of which only the consonants - and not all of them - have any agreed speech value". This opinion is formulated somewhat too brusquely, in true Shawian manner, but it is certainly true in part: although some consonant letters correspond to one and the same sound in speech, not a single sound is always represented in writing by the same letter. In other words, the relation between sound and letter is complex both ways. There are certain patterns which ease the task of the visual memory, but the choice between them is - from the point of view of modern English - purely arbitrary. Consequently, a heavy burden is laid on the memory of the speller. On the other hand, there is considerable uncertainty and vacillation even among the speakers of Standard English in England itself with regard to the pronunciation of many words, especially those which are more often written than used in live speech. "Dr. Murray - writes O. Jespersen (cf. p. 133, *Growth and Structure*) - relates how he was once present at a meeting of a learned society, where in the course of discussion he heard the word *gaseous* systematically pronounced in six different ways by as many eminent physicists". D. Jones's *English Pronouncing Dictionary* gives many examples of this vacillation, not necessarily connected with the "mostly-written" learned word, cf. *forehead*, *hotel*, *suit*, etc.

It certainly can be argued that English spelling is responsible for many unnecessary divergences in the speech of the various branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. Since disunity in pronunciation may often lead to unintelligibility and sometimes also to friction, this only enhances the inadequacy of the spelling.

A believer in spelling reform points out that "as compared with a simple one sign one sound fonetic alfabet, such as recommended by the Spelling Reform Associations, the mesurable and preventable economic waste due to our present conventional spelling exceeded \$ 1.000.000.000 a year. Two-thirds of this is in the mere writing and printing of superfluous letters, one-third the net cost to the taxpayer of the appalling waste of time in elementary education" ³⁸⁾.

It must also be added that in view of its importance in the world, English should be made as accessible to other nations as possible, though decidedly not through the medium of basic English. This certainly raises the issue of spelling reform. A widespread speech for international communication is badly needed. Babel cannot be maintained for much longer. English fulfils many requirements, though not that of simple spelling.

The graphical impression of an English text is one of great neatness due to the almost total absence of diacritic signs which only occur in some words of recent French origin (cf. *coupé*).

38) Godfrey Dewey, Hon. Sec. United State Simplified Spelling Board, *Now is the Time*, cf. p. 24, *Views on Spelling Reform*, London, 1944.

In Polish, the diacritical signs are fairly numerous and frequent:

1. an *l* crossed on the slant: *łaska*, 'mercy';
2. an acute accent sign over *ń, ś, ć, ź*; the latter three being the peculiar palatal sounds of Polish, cf: *koń*, 'horse', *dać*, 'give', *oś*, 'axle', *groźba*, 'menace, threat', *dźwig*, 'crane; girder, lever';

an acute accent sign over *o*: *sól*, 'salt' - the *ó* being sounded like *u* (*kula*, 'bullet'), shorter than the English *u* in *rule*;

3. a dot over *z*: *żal*, 'regret', *radża*, 'rajah' - *ż* ("zh") being sounded like *s* in *pleasure* or *z* in *azure*, while *dż* corresponds to *g* in *gem*;

4. a "cedilla-like" hook under *a* and *e* denoting the nasal *o* and *e* respectively: *wąs*, 'moustache', *kęs*, 'bite (of food)'.

These diacritic signs make a Polish text "untidy", and a non-Pole is often perplexed by them at the beginning. Among the Slavonic languages Czech has the same number of diacritic signs, but makes more frequent use of them ³⁹.

In English, there is only one diacritic consonant letter: *h*. It is used in combination with *s*, *c* and *t*: *she*, *chat* (*ch* being sometimes preceded by one more consonant letter: *catch*), *the*, *thin*.

In Polish, there are two diacritic consonant letters: *h* and *z*, and one diacritic vowel sign *i*. *H* is used after *c* only: *chata*, *ch* denoting an *h* sound similar to the last consonant of the Scottish *loch*. *Z* is used after *s*, *c*, *d* and *r* to convey the "sh", "ch", "dz" and "zh" respectively, cf. *szum*, 'rustle', *czas*, 'time', *dżban*, 'jug', and *wrzos*, 'heather'. *I* is used after all palatal consonants when they are followed by a vowel. The already mentioned *ń, ś, ć, ź* and *dź*, which can be used before consonants and at the very end of the word only, must be turned into *ni*, *si*, *ci*, *zi* and *dzi*, when a vowel follows, cf.: *koń*, 'horse', n. sg., and *konie*, 'horses', n. pl.; *oś*, 'axle', n. sg., *osie*, n. pl.; *rtęć*, 'mercury, quicksilver', n. sg., *rtęci*, gen. sg.; *groźba*, 'menace, threat', n. sg., *grozić*, 'menace, threaten'; *łódź*, 'boat', n. sg., *łódzie*, n. pl. The palatal variants of other consonants are denoted in the same way in the ante-vocalic position: *pies*, 'dog', *kiedy*, 'when', etc.

The rules concerning the use of the diacritic signs and letters are fairly easy. The only difficulties are connected with the double notation of the "zh", "u" and "h" sounds and also with the use of the nasal vowel letters.

The "zh" sound (cf. *azure*, *pleasure*) is spelt with *ż* or *rz*: *żal*, 'regret', *wrzos*, 'heather'. *Ż* is used to denote the "zh" which has been evolved from Proto-Slavonic *z*: *grozić*, 'menace, threaten', *groźę*, 'I menace, threaten'; or from Proto-Slavonic *g*, cf. *połóg*, 'confinement', *położyć*, 'lay, put'; otherwise, in foreign loan-words mostly French in origin: *żaluzja*, 'a blind'. *Rz* represents the former palatal *r*, cf. *bór*, 'big forest', n. sg., *w borze*, loc. sg. The palatal *r* changed in Polish into a "rzh" sound (cf. Czech *řeka*) some time during the 12th century. It has been sounded in the literary language like *ż* since the 17th century.

When deciding whether to chose *ż* or *rz*, we may derive some assistance from a knowledge of the vocabulary and from the inflection. If a *z* or a *g* occur in the inflection of the same word or in one related by root, *ż* is

39) The Czech spelling has: an inverted circumflex accent (*Čech*, *dělo*), a "comma-like" sign attached to the upper part of *t* (*rt'at'*), a small *o* sign over *u* (*uůle*), an acute accent over all the long vowels (*léto*, *český*).

the choice, cf. the examples given above. *Ż* must be spelt in words of French origin (*żenować się*, 'feel embarrassed, slightly ashamed', Fr. *se gêner*). If a related word or another inflectional form has an *r*, *rz* is the choice; *morze*, 'sea', because of *morski*, 'naval'; *w borze*, 1. sg., because of *bór*, n. sg. However, these principles, although clear, cannot be applied to all the words with "zh", for a number of them have no related words in the language with *z*, *g* or *r*, and have their "zh" in a position in which it cannot be affected by the inflection: the spelling of *żaba*, 'frog', and *rzeka*, 'river', has to be learnt by heart, unless the speller knows other Slavonic languages where *r* has been retained, palatal (Russian) or "depalatalized" (Ukrainian).

The second difficulty is that of choosing between *u* and *ó*. The latter, now pronounced *u*, has been evolved from medieval and 16th century long (and narrow) *ó*: *sól*, 'salt', n. sg.

The inflection or related words offer some help, cf. *sole*, n. pl., or *tów*, n. sg. 'hunt', and *towy*, n. pl. There are, however, words like *góra*, 'mountain', and *kura*, 'hen', where nothing but a knowledge of other Slavonic languages distinguishing between *o* and *u* here, can offer any guidance.

The use of *ch* and *h* is a little more difficult. Those Poles who originate from the so-called Eastern Borderlands (the country East of the Bug), distinguish them in pronunciation, giving *h* the quality of a voiced consonant, while leaving *ch* unvoiced. All the others can only be guided by the native or foreign origin of the word or the sound concerned: *ch* is spelt in native word (*chwala*, 'glory') and in many of those of German (*loch*, 'cellar, dungeon, vault') or Greek origin (*chemia*, 'chemistry'); whilst *h* almost exclusively occurs in words of French (*hotel*, 'hotel') and Latin (*honor*, 'honour') origin, though also in many Greek (*heroizm*, 'heroism') or German (*handel*, 'commerce') ones. Otherwise *h* is the sound which has been adopted in certain native words under Czech or Ukrainian influence (*hańba*, 'disgrace', *hołota*, 'rabble', etc.). Since the criterion of origin exceeds the limits of a practical knowledge of the native tongue, we may say that, from the point of view of Polish alone, there is no principle to guide the speller in choosing *ch* or *h*.

The question of distinguishing the nasal vowel letters from *em*, *en* and *om*, *on*, also revolves round the problem of the native or recent and recognisably foreign origin of the words. This problem has been dealt with in the preceding Section.

One more difficulty is connected with the spelling of the voiced and unvoiced consonant letters. In certain conditions, for instance, under fixed rule, at the very end of a word uttered in isolation, voiced consonants have lost their "voicedness". In others, a contrary process has taken place. Except for some individual instances (like *sfora*, 'pack of hounds', from *swora*), the spelling has not taken these changes into account. The overwhelming majority of consonants, the final consonants always, are spelt in the traditional way. The letter *w* after *s* or *t*, etc., is pronounced like *f*, except by the Poles hailing from Poland Major where the old pronunciation has been retained, cf. *twój*, 'thy, thine', *swój*, 'one's own' (the spelling there is always with *w*). *Babka*, 'grandmother, grannie', a derivative of *baba*, 'woman, esp. elderly woman', is pronounced *baпка* everywhere. *Vice versa*, the once unvoiced *ś* in *prośba*, 'prayer, request', a derivative from *prosić*, 'ask, pray', has long become voiced *ż*, etc. In

many instances the inflection can be looked to for guidance: *lud*, 'people', n. sg., is spelt with a *d* because of all the other cases, cf. *ludu*, gen. sg., or *ludy*, 'peoples', n. pl., while *kot*, 'cat', n. sg., is spelt with a *t* for the same reason: *kota*, gen. sg., *koty*, n. pl.

Thus, the typical difficulty in Polish spelling is the necessity of choosing in a number of instances between two different ways of spelling one and the same sound, while in English one sound may be spelt in 8 or 16 different ways (cf. *ai* and *k*). The choice may sometimes be facilitated by clear-cut rules (cf. *ć* and *ci*) or by criteria of a relative value (cf. *u* and *ó*). If we turn the problem the other way round, there are no difficulties in reading a new word, for, except for regular cases like that of *ć* and *ci*, a letter has always the same sound value (contrast the five values of the English *ai* and the two values of *k*). We must also remember that the accent in Polish is stabilised on the penultimate and that this also facilitates the task of the reader and the speaker. A difficulty like the six-fold pronunciation of *gaseous* would be unthinkable in Polish: *gazowy*, can be pronounced in one way only. Moreover there are in Polish practically no specific difficulties in spelling proper nouns (cf. *Cholmondeley*, *Keighley*). Instances like *Zamoyski*, spelt sometimes with *y* instead of *j*, are isolated.

When we compare the English alphabet with the Polish, we find in English one letter more, the Graeco-Latin *x*. The words which contained it in ancient Greek or Latin, are spelt according to their pronunciation, cf.: *Ksenofont*, 'Xenophon', *egzamin*, 'examination', *ekspedycja*, 'expedition', etc. In English, the adoption of *x* has caused certain additional difficulties: this letter is pronounced in six different ways (cf. *maxim*, *exist*, *anxious*, *luxurious*, *excite*, *Xenophon*). Neither have the Poles introduced unnecessary letters under foreign influence, cf. *doubt* (evolved from *doute*, with the *b* added under the influence of Latin *dubitare*), *tongue* (Old English *tonge*, with the *u* added under the influence of French *langue*), etc. Nor is there in Polish any "mute" letter, cf. English *love*, for instance, although the infinitive was shortened at the end of the Middle Ages from *bronici* into *bronić*, the final *-i* was dropped as soon as it had ceased to be pronounced.

It may be argued that much of the difference between the two spellings is due to the fact that English has been spelt for some 1250 years, while Polish became a written language in the full sense of the word about 650 years ago. This, however, does not explain everything.

The comparative facility of Polish spelling greatly simplifies the task of those learning to spell Polish whether it be the Polish child or the foreigner. The important point is that it eases the toil of those who, in climbing up the social ladder, want to acquire the pronunciation of the educated classes. Higgins's labours would be almost inconceivable in Poland. A Polish Shaw could not have written that "it is impossible for a Pole to open his mouth without making some other Pole despise him".

The only difficulty which is in any way serious for the Polish speller is the question of the separate or joint spelling of certain words which may be treated either as groupings or amalgams. Much harm has been done here by some ill-advised changes carried out by the somewhat incongruous official reform of 1936 which has not received unanimous approval in Poland. The adverb *przedtem*, 'before, previously', which is an amalgam of *przed tym*, 'before it', is regarded in the new spelling as one word, whilst *poza tym*, 'besides', which is similar in structure, is treated as if it

were two separate words. These and suchlike inconsistencies have caused some confusion. However, on the whole, Polish spelling is incomparably simpler and more advantageous, than English.

Before the 1936 reform, there were voices in Poland demanding a radical reform consisting of the abolition of the double notation of certain sounds and of the removal of diacritic letters, the latter to be replaced by a much wider application of diacritic signs. The reformers who advanced economic and pedagogic arguments failed to convince public opinion. If there is anything to be said in defence of the stand Polish public opinion has taken, it is, first of all, that Polish spelling is not too far from the ideal principle of "one sound - one letter", and, second, that the Polish language can never aspire to become an auxiliary speech for international communication.

4. THE SUBSTANTIVE.

The Polish substantive differs from the same part of speech in English in the following features:

a) there is no article, definite or indefinite to qualify it;

b) there are seven cases, with a multitude of endings dependent upon the type of declension.

In English, on the other hand, there are only two cases with incomparably fewer endings;

c) the Polish substantive has three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter, whereas in English the gender distinction is restricted to a few parallel types of masculine and feminine formations, with distinctive prefixes or suffixes (cf. she-wolf, peer-ess, etc.).

ARTICLE.

The problem of the article in English is one of outstanding complexity. This does not mean that there is much uncertainty and vacillation in the actual *use* of the article. The rules which govern the distribution of the "strong" and "weak" forms of *the* on the one hand, and of *a* and *an* on the other, are fairly easy. The complexity becomes obvious only when the grammarian faces the task of defining why an article is, or is not, used before a particular substantive. This complexity is explicitly acknowledged by the best specialists in English, e. g. by H. E. Palmer⁴⁰⁾ who - let us add - contents himself with a few generalities and is not too accurate in the presentation of some detailed questions (cf. p. 33, the remark "no article" when indicating names of mountain peaks, despite *the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, the Wetterhorn*, etc.). G. O. Curme's⁴¹⁾ observations are more detailed, though by no means exhaustive.

40) *A Grammar of Spoken English on a Strictly Phonetic Basis*, by H. E. Palmer, 2nd Ed., revised by the author with the assistance of F. H. Blandford, Cambridge, 1939, cf. p. 48 ff.

41) *A Grammar of the English Language*, by G. O. Curme, Part II, 1939, cf. pp. 1-3, Part III, 1931, cf. pp. 68-69, 510-515.

The total absence of any article in Polish, whether definite or indefinite, is not directly connected with the overabundance of form in the domain of the case and case-endings. However, lack and exuberance of formal complexity seem to maintain equilibrium in a language, and complications in one domain are often compensated by absence of difficulties elsewhere.

The only Slavonic language to have developed a definite article is Bulgarian. Much as in English, the Bulgarian article has been formed from a demonstrative pronoun. The difference consists in its *following* the substantive it qualifies, cf. *zakón-ăt*, 'the law', *zakoni-te*, 'the laws', *žená-ta*, 'the wife, the woman', *ženi-te*, 'the wives, the women'.

CASES.

A. Number of Cases.

Until quite recently classical grammar weighed rather heavily upon the study of modern English, one of the results being that many grammarians had been tempted to recognise the existence in English of four or five cases, much as in ancient Greek or Latin. However, the strict application of the criterion of form does not allow us to acknowledge any more than two: the Main Case (sg. *dog*, pl. *dogs*), and the Possessive (sg. *dog's*, pl. *dogs'*).

In Polish, the number of cases is seven, one more than in Latin.

The nominative (Pol. *mianownik*) fulfils the function of the subject or, sometimes, of the predicate: *Warszawa* (subject) *leży nad Wisłą*, 'Warsaw lies on the Vistula'; *ja jestem Polak* (predicate), 'I am Polish (a Pole)'.

When without preposition, *the genitive* (*dopełniacz*) has three main functions, possessive: *stolica Polski*, 'Poland's capital, capital of Poland'; partitive: *daj mi wody*, 'give me some water'; and that of the direct object when the verb governing it, is used in the negative form: *nie mam wody*, 'I have no water'. When with a preposition, the genitive may denote direction: *wyjechać z Polski*, 'leave Poland, depart from Poland', and *przyjechać do Polski*, 'come to Poland'.

The main function of *the dative* (*celownik*) is to denote the indirect object: *daj Marii książkę*, 'give Mary a book'.

The direct object is mostly indicated by *the accusative* (*biernik*): *daj Marii książkę*. With a preposition, this case denotes direction: *włóż to w książkę*, 'put it into the book', *połóż to na książkę*, 'put it on the book'; or the performer of an action when the verb is in the passive voice: *Jan został zabity przez Marię*, 'John was killed by Mary'.

The vocative (*wołacz*) is used when addressing or calling someone (or something): *Mario, daj Janowi książkę*, 'Mary, give John a book, please'.

The instrumental (*narzędnik*) is the main case of the predicate: *Warszawa jest stolicą Polski*, 'Warsaw is Poland's capital', and also denotes the instrument with which an action is performed: *Maria pisze piórem*, 'Mary writes with a pen'. Further, the instrumental is used after many prepositions.

The locative (*miejsownik*) is never used without prepositions and denotes local or other relations: *kapelusz jest w paczce*. 'the hat is *in the parcel*', *na paczce*, 'on the parcel'; *mówię o Warszawie*, 'I am talking about Warsaw'.

The above is only a rough outline of the meanings and uses of the Polish cases. It is meant to serve as an illustration and a basis for comparison with English. The result of this comparison may be formulated in the following two sentences: in any of the functions mentioned, a Polish case may, with or without a preposition, be translated by the English Main Case, with or without a preposition; therefore, we can rightly say that *the differentiation into seven cases in Polish is something entirely superfluous*. The only thing about the case system that seems really to matter is the distinction between the singular and the plural. This, however, is a distinction somewhat apart.

In fairness we must say that a charge of superfluity can also be levelled against the English possessive which could be, and often is, replaced by the preposition *of* combined with the Main Case. However, there are certain fixed types of the use of either form which rather complicate the structure of English. In the colloquial language of our day the possessive is practically restricted to animates, cf.: *Roger's* golden rule in life was to take care of Roger (G. Bullett). His body was shaped like a huge *duck's* egg (Somerset Maugham). Otherwise, it can be found in certain denotations of time, cf.: I never have a *moment's* peace (S. M.), and in some set expressions, cf.: If he takes me, it'll be charity *for Kate's sake* (G. Greene), or: *With my mind's eye* I saw Strickland throw his hat on a table (S. M.). On the other hand, the possessive is by no means the only construction of an animate. When the animate is qualified by a relative clause, for instance, *of* alone can help us to find our way out of difficulties, cf.: He was the only son *of a colonial servant who*, after being Colonial Secretary for many years in Hong-Kong, ended his career as Governor of... Jamaica (S. M.). The possessive is often avoided when the animate is qualified by an adjective and, still more often, when there are two adjectives or more, cf.: She found herself looking, with fear and hatred, into the *dark commanding eyes of Father* (G. Bullett).

These complications in the use of the possessive and the *of* construction certainly constitute a step in the direction of the complexities of the Polish seven-case system.

B. Case Endings.

The number of endings in English is three: *-s* (*cat's, cats, cats'*), *-z* (*dog's, dogs, dogs'*) and *-yz* (*fox's, foxes, foxes'*). In assessing their number, the differences of spelling are immaterial. The only relevant thing is the pronunciation.

Each of these three endings fulfils three different functions: that of forming the possessive singular, the possessive plural and the Main Case. The choice of the ending depends on the phonetic form of the end of the substantive.

We may omit from consideration rare endings such as the *-en* of *oxen* and such minor problems as e.g. the identity of both numbers in *salmon, sheep, trout, etc.*

In Polish, each case has a different ending according to the type of the substantive concerned. The only case which has one ending in all substantives, without a single exception, is the dative plural, with its *-om* (cf. *Chapter One, Section Four*). The instrumental sg. of *stolica*, 'capital', is *stolic-ą*, while that of *nóż*, 'knife', is *noż-em*. The genitive sg. of *dom*, 'house', is *dom-u*, that of *Polska - Polsk-i*, etc. These differences are not essentially connected with the gender distinctions: other semantic, and phonetic, factors also intervene. For instance, masculine genitive sg. of the animates ends in *-a*, cf. *Jan-a*, 'of John', *wilk-a*, 'of the wolf', while that of the abstracts - in *-u*: *ból-u*, 'of pain', *gniew-u*, 'of anger'. The feminine locative sg. of the non-palatal stems ends in *-e*, cf. *w Warszawie*, 'in Warsaw', while that of the (formerly or now) palatal stems ends in *-i*: *w nadzie-i*, 'in the hope'.

In view of this overabundance of endings, it must be said that the complexity and the superfluities of the Polish seven-case system go much further than the number seven (fourteen) might suggest. In this respect, English, with its phonetically distributed three endings (*-s*, *-z*, and *-yz*) is a much simpler and more convenient language. There are, however, some complications in the possessive which are worthy of mention. Although different in character, they can be treated on the same plane as those of the Polish case system (cf. end of previous paragraph). Let us mention some. If the substantive is composed of two parts or more, the first part being the one that really should be inflected, the ending, somewhat incongruously, is attached to the end of the compound: he hooked an arm into his *brother-in-law's* and drew him out into the street (H. Spring). The same happens when a substantive is qualified by another one preceded by *of*: the *Ministry of Health's* model by-laws on building and sanitation (*The Times*), or: Take the *Master of Trinity's* English Social History (*Spectator*). If there is a substantive qualified by a string of other substantives preceding it, these do not take the ending *-s*: The Summary of *Sir William Beveridge's* report on Social Insurance and Allied Services (P. Bottome). If there are two or more mutually independent substantives, the last only is inflected: The lounge of *Jack and Jill's* villa at New Hampstead (C. Mount). On the whole, it may be argued that the possessive has already assumed the character of a *post-positional* construction. The colloquial "*the man I saw yesterday's father*" (Palmer) is the most striking illustration of this fact.

Otherwise, there is also the combination of the prepositional construction and the possessive to be considered. It is found in instances in which a substantive is additionally qualified by a demonstrative pronoun, cf.: And you put those letters where you were sure I would find them, *those letters of your wife's* (H.D. Irvine), or by an indefinite article, cf.: Once he confessed to me that he had pawned a *brooch of his mother's* (H.D.I.), etc.

C. Stem.

The difference of stem is restricted in English to a comparatively small number of substantives which, in the singular, end in an unvoiced consonant, *-f* or *-th*, whilst having equivalents, *-v* or *"-dh"*, in the plural. This concerns the *s* - plural, cf. *thief/thieves* (but: *belief/beliefs*),

path/paths (but: *birth/births*). We may omit such rare differences of stem as can be found in the pairs *child/children* or *foot/feet*.

In Polish, most substantives have different stems in their inflection. In *błąd*, 'error, mistake', we can discern four stems: "*błąt*" (n. sg., spelt *błąd*), "*błąd*" (if the following closely connected word begins with an voiced consonant), "*błąd*"- (gen. sg. *błąd-u*) and "*błądź*"- (loc. sg. *w błędzie*). The ending of the locative sg. of many masculine and feminine substantives, which once was palatal, requires the palatal form of the stem: *stół*, 'table', loc. sg.: *o stol-e*, *kobieta*, 'woman', loc. sg.: *o kobiec-e* (*o kobiecie*), etc. The consonantal feminine inflection has one stem only: *kość*, 'bone'. So have many neuter substantives, cf. *pol-e*, 'field', *pol-a* (g. sg.), *pol-u* (d. sg.), etc. However, the neuter substantives are far less numerous than those of the two other genders. On the other hand, the consonantal feminine declension is the rarer of the two feminine inflections. The majority of Polish substantives have different stems.

In this respect, English is again a simpler language than Polish.

GENDER.

The distinction of three genders in Polish may be traced back to the difference in the sex of the animates: *żona*, 'wife', is a feminine; *mąż*, 'husband' - a masculine, whilst *dziecko*, 'child', in view of its sexual immaturity, is regarded as neuter. This distinction has pervaded the whole domain of the substantive. The sexless *księżyc*, 'moon', the abstract *miłość*, 'love', and *słońce*, 'sun', sexless again, are masculine, feminine and neuter respectively. This does not mean that the inanimates are treated as sexed beings, although, in poetical personification, it is the grammatical gender that decides whether an inanimate should be regarded as a *he*, a *she* or an *it*. This often brings about a glaring discord with other languages. The Pole may imagine the motor-car, the ship and the moon as masculine beings (cf. the masculine gender of *samochód*, *okręt*, *księżyc*), while the Englishman, in view of the *she* by means of which all these may be referred to, is naturally inclined to visualise them as feminine beings. The *he* used in English poetry when referring to *Death* and *Love* is most astonishing to a Pole who is used to thinking of these as female persons⁴²⁾ (cf. the gender of *śmierć*, *miłość*), although both behave with strict impartiality towards either sex and have nothing essentially feminine (or masculine) about them...

The great majority of English substantives are in their form devoid of any gender marks. Both *husband* and *wife* are without ending. Their inflection is in no way influenced by the sex of the beings they denote. Most verbal formations in *-er* denote feminine and masculine beings as well as things inanimate, cf.: Jack is a good *swimmer*, Mrs. Lincroft was not a *bird-watcher* (G. Bullett), this knife is a good *cutter*.

42) E. g. in a 15th century poem *Death* appears as a female being: "*uźrzał człowieka nagiego, przyrodzenia niewieścigo*", 'He saw a naked human being, female in sex'. Sometimes, *Death* is nicknamed *Kostusia*, a diminutive form of the feminine Christian name *Konstancja*, 'Constance'. The choice of *Kostusia* has probably been determined by its consonance with the stem *kost-*, 'bone' (cf. *kostnica*, 'charnel-house', *kostny*, 'osseous', etc.), reminiscent of the skeleton.

It is only occasionally that we find in English prefixes or suffixes which are specialised in denoting one or the other sex, cf. the pronominal prefixes *he* and *she* in a *he-lion*, a *she-lion*, or the suffix *-ess* in *prince/princ-ess*, etc. This, however has no bearing on the inflection.

5. THE ENDINGS OF THE MASCULINE NOMINATIVE PLURAL.

The masculine nominative (and the vocative) plural has five endings. Although this is a real *embarras de richesse*, there are some principles to guide us through the jungle.

The ending *-owie* has an exclusively personal character: *generałowie*, 'generals', *królowie*, 'kings', *panowie*, 'lords, masters, Messrs.', *posłowie*, 'envoys, parliamentary deputies', *wojewodowie*, 'voivodes (governors of provinces)', etc.

The ending *-i* has the same value: *biskupi*, 'bishops', *chłopi*, 'peasants', *Francuzi*, 'Frenchmen, the French', *sąsiedzi*, 'neighbours', etc. However if the stem ends in *-c*, *-k*, or *-g*, the ending *-i*, for phonetic reasons, changes into *-y*, while the *-k*, *-g* become *-c-* and *-dz-* respectively: n. sg. *chłopiec*, 'boy', n. pl. *chłopcy*, n. sg. *Warszawiak*, 'a man from Warsaw', n. pl. *Warszawiacy*. This *-y*, and not any other, has the semantic value of the *-i* ending.

Another *-y*, the principal one, is used in substantives denoting animals, plants, objects and abstract notions: *psy*, 'dogs', *dęby*, 'oaks', *okręty*, 'ships', *kłopoty*, 'troubles', etc. The "anthropocentric" convention of the language has willed it that the masculine nominative plural *-y* ending have a lower value than the exclusively personal *-owie* and the almost exclusively personal *-i*. Therefore, the rude man, the pitied beggar, the urchin, the scoundrel and the detested egoist have been transferred on to the lower plane of the world of beasts and vegetation by means of the non-personal *-y*: *chamy*⁴³⁾, *dziady*, *łobuzy*, *łotry*, *samoluby*. However, *duchy*, 'spirits, ghosts', even the most respectable ones, and sometimes, *anioły*, 'angels' (the usual form is *aniołowie*, the less usual *-anieli*) and their satanic brethren, *diabły*, 'devils' and *szatany*, 'satans' (the usual forms: *diabli*, *szatani*) also join the underworld. On the other hand, the goblin of phonetics has played another prank to complicate the picture - those non-personal substantives whose stem ends in *-k* or *-g*, do not assume *-y*, but *-i*: n. sg. *kruk*, 'raven', n. pl. *kruki*, n. sg. *głóg*, 'hawthorn', n. pl. *głogi*, n. sg. *potok*, 'brook, stream, torrent', n. pl. *potoki*, n. sg. *połóg*, 'confinement', n. pl. *połogi*. This *-i* ending has the value of the non-personal *-y*.

The fourth ending, *-e*, is indifferent, in the sense that the masculine substantives which assume it in the nominative plural belong to all the semantic categories enumerated: *goście*, 'guests', *konie*, 'horses', *złocienie*, 'chrysanthemums', *kamienie*, 'stones', *obyczaje*, 'customs, habits', etc.

The very rare nominative plural masculine ending, the *-a* of *księża*,

⁴³⁾ *Cham* comes from the name of one of Noah's sons, *Ham*. It was popularly believed in old Poland that the peasantry descended from Ham (who misbehaved towards Noah when Noah was drunk).

'priests', and *akta*, 'records, archives' (*akty*, 'acts of a theatre play'), is also similarly indifferent ⁴⁴).

The abundance and the disposition of the five endings of the masculine nominative plural is one of the thorniest problems in the history of the Polish language owing to the frequent changes occurring in the Middle Ages and the 16th-17th centuries. Suffice it to say that, right at the start, the *-owie*, *-i* and *-e* endings had no additional value except that of the nominative plural masculine. The division of the endings into personal, non-personal and indifferent, was made later amidst considerable confusion and chaos. The assumption by the non-personal substantives of the originally accusative ending *-y* was one of the main factors which started the whole process.

To-day, an interesting use is made of the variety of endings. By employing the fundamentally non-personal *-y* with those substantives which denote persons, an effect of degradation and depreciation may be achieved.

A. Słonimski is firmly convinced that the development of Polish-Soviet relations depends on the two nations themselves. He is scornful of the machinations of the high-ups:

"Niech posły, dumne generały, Nasze, brytyjskie, czy sowieckie, Taki czy inny piszą pakt"	'Let the envoys, the proud generals, Ours, British or Soviet, Write this pact or another'.
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The poet's scorn is stressed by the use of the fundamentally non-personal *-y* ending in the two substantives which normally assume the exclusively personal *-owie*. It should be noted too, that the pronoun and the adjective employed follow suit: *nasze*, *dumne*, *brytyjskie* and *sowieckie* are non-personal forms, blatantly different from the personal *nasi*, *dumni*, *brytyjscy*, *sowieccy*.

The reader may remember (pp. 76-7) the poem by Maria Konopnicka, the most talented woman-poet of the Positivist period, who felt social wrongs and inequalities very deeply and who described, with delicate but trenchant irony, what the rulers and the plain people get from a war:

A na wojnie świszczą kule, Lud się wali jako snopy, A najdzielniej biją króle,	('Bullets whistle in the war, Men tumble down like sheaves, It is <i>the kings</i> that strike most bravely,
A najgęściej giną chłopcy	It is <i>the peasants (men)</i> that perish most often').

The normal forms are *królowie* and *chłopi*. Since *-y* is incompatible with a preceding *l*, the author could not have used anything like "*króły*". Her choice had to fall upon *-e*, an ending which may be used with the personal and non-personal substantives. The *-e* of *króle* is suggestive of dialect (where *króle* often is the only form), secondly, of the old language (cf. the *króle* of *The Holy Cross Sermons*) and thirdly - since language is not mathematics - of such non-personal substantives as *konie*,

⁴⁴) This ending is of double origin: *księża* originally was a collective formation, feminine in gender; *akta*, and other substantives of Latin or Greek origin, owes its *-a* to the *-a* of the Latin and Greek neuter substantives, cf.: *templa*, *poemata*. Its acceptance in Polish has been facilitated by the plural *-a* ending of the nominative neuter, cf.: *pola*, 'fields'.

'horses', and *kamienie*, 'stones'. The seemingly complicated effect, reminiscent of feudalism (the past and the dialect) and also of the world of beasts and things inanimate, really conveys an impression of scornful condemnation. *Chłopy* has a different value. It is the usual dialectal form of the nominative plural. The *-y* ending may sometimes be found with personal substantives in Old Polish literary texts (cf. *senatory*, 'senators', 17th century). In the literary language of to-day, *-y* is an almost exclusively non-personal ending. Against the background of the views expressed in the poem, the first two factors give the effect of vigour and virility. The third, although depreciative in principle, places the peasants among beings of Nature.

The vigour of the times of yore leads A. Czajkowski, a poet of the Romantic period, to use the *-y* ending in three substantives denoting the notables of the old Republic. The passage is taken from a description of the king's election:

<p>"Jak pszenica świecą pany Wojewody, Kasztelany, A poselska izba zwita Z możnej szlachty niby z żyta"</p>	<p>'As wheat, the gentlemen shine, The voivodes, the castellans, And the chamber of deputies is woven From mighty nobles - as if from rye.'</p>
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In his *Wiatr od morza* (*Breeze from the Sea*), the saga of the province of Pomorze, S. Żeromski, a lover of ornate style, described the blinding and banishment of Prince Zbygniew (12th century). The scene is set against the background of elemental frightfulness: "Wiatr szumi. Krucy kraczą. Rzą konie", "The wind howls. The ravens croak. The horses neigh".

The usual form is now *kruki*, with the *-i* of the non-personal substantives whose stem ends in a *-k*. The form *krucy* lends the ravens personality and stresses their ill-omened character as prophets of misfortune. On the other hand, it also brings out the distant past (cf. for instance, *krucy*, Orzechowski, 16th century).

The effect attained through interchanging the endings may sometimes be criss-crossed through skilful employment of suffixes. For instance, in view of its specific dignity, the exclusively personal ending *-owie* does not easily stand contact with suffixes expressing depreciation and derision. However, this may be exactly the shock a writer will seek and achieve:

"Warszawiaczkowie są bardzo dowcipni", 'The people of Warsaw are very witty' - bitterly and incisively complains Rose in *The Stranger* by Maria Kuncewicz. The formation (n. sg. *Warszawiaczek*, a diminutive form of *Warszawiak*, a somewhat "cocky" formation beside the more formal *Warszawianin*) is untranslatable. To convey the whole atmosphere in which it is steeped, it must be added that, before the war, rose-adorned Warsaw had the reputation of being light-hearted, over-gay and too much addicted to cheap mockery. Some of this has stayed, purified and sublimated, some will doubtless have passed for ever.

The *embarras de richesse* can also be made use of, even if the *richesse* be an overabundance of case endings.

6. THE ADJECTIVE.

"You were trifling with the poor creature's affections, were you?" - someone asks in the humorous novel *When the Cat's away* by G. Bullet.

The substantive *creature* is in the possessive, but this does not affect the adjective *poor* which qualifies *the creature*. The English adjective has no case-forms whatsoever.

The Polish counterpart is entirely different. *The poor creature's affections* would have to be translated by *uczucia biedn-ego stworzenia* in Polish, *-ego* being the genitive sg. neut. ending of the adjective (*stworzenie*, 'creature', is neuter). The Polish adjective has as many case-forms as any other noun, and it has to follow the lead of the substantive which it qualifies. The endings are mostly different from those of the substantive: *biedn-ego* (adj.), *stworzeni-a* (subst.). However, there is more uniformity in the adjective than in the substantive. For instance, the genitive singular masculine and that of the feminine gender have one ending each: *dobr-ego* (masc.), *dobr-ej* (fem.). In the same case of the substantive we find two masculine and two feminine endings: *kos-a*, 'of (the) blackbird, blackbird's', *ból-u*, 'of (the) pain'; *kos-y*, 'of (the) scythe', *kość-i*, 'of (the) bone'. The distribution of the two masculine endings is by no means easy to define.

A man, woman or child, waking up from invigorating sleep, may in English be referred to as having wakened "*fresh as a daisy*". The English adjective does not know any gender distinctions. The situation in Polish is quite the contrary: a man would have to be "*świeży jak stokrotka*" (in Polish the daisy symbolises modesty, not freshness!), a woman - "*świeża*", a child - "*świeże*", although if men, women and children are sexed beings, there is nothing sex-like about being "*fresh as a daisy*".

There is nothing double, treble, quadruple, quintuple or plural about the beauty of the 2, 3, 4, 5 or many flowers one has seen. Quite consistently, an Englishman will describe each or any number of them as having been beautiful, whilst a Pole will have to say: *piękny kwiat*, about one, and *piękne kwiaty* about more than one, without giving any thought to the possible different degrees or amount of beauty in each of the flowers. The number distinction is not known in the English adjective, whereas it must be very strictly observed in Polish.

The number distinction belongs to the substantive. So does the gender distinction (as there are two different sexes among most live beings). The extension of these differences to the adjective may rightly be thought of as superfluous. Grammatically, this is the result of the "concord of syntax". In Polish, there is concord between the substantive and the qualifying adjective in case, gender and number, whereas in English the work of bygone centuries has given the adjective perfect freedom in all these respects.

Therefore, if we adopt the criterion of rigid, logical analysis, we shall have to state that, with regard to the adjective, Polish is far behind English, even a little more than with regard to the substantive (simplicity is the slogan!).

7. THE VERBAL ASPECTS.

The plural number of the substantive indicates that there are more than one beings or things. Of one train we say: *a train, the train*. Of

more than one: *trains, the trains*, or, when specifying their number: *(the) two, five, or many trains*.

When one train stops at a station, we say: "a train stops". If there is more than one train, we have to change the form of the substantive and that of the verb: "five trains stop". The reason is that there are five different acts of stopping. However, in the English simple past tense the same verbal form is used, irrespective of the number of trains and the acts of stopping: "a train stopped", "five trains stopped". In the latter sentence the form of the substantive indicates that there was more than one train, and this is considered sufficient, though there might have been more than one act of stopping.

There may also be a different kind of verbal plural. The 5 p. m. from Victoria stops at Croydon at 5.20. It does so every day, which means more than once. Nevertheless, we use the same verbal form here as in the sentence "a train stops", although, obviously enough, there are in the background many acts of stopping.

Polish has a special form for this kind of verbal plural. The English "a train stopped" has to be translated into Polish by "pociąg stanął", the infinitive stem ⁴⁵⁾ suffix *-ną-* denotes that the action has happened only once. However, an English sentence like "the train stopped at every station" corresponds in Polish to "pociąg stawał na każdej stacji". The infinitive stem suffix *-wa-* denotes repetition. *Stanąć* is a peculiar singular of the verb, while *stawać* is a "plural" form.

The differences between the substantive singular forms and those of the plural are expressed by means of various pairs of endings. In the nominative of *woda* (fem.), 'water', the pair is *-a* (n. sg.) and *-y* (n. pl. *wody*). In *koło* (neut.), 'circle', the pair is *-o* (n. sg.) and *-a* (n. pl. *koła*), etc. Similarly, there are different pairs of suffixes to indicate the difference between a "singular" and "plural" verbal form: *-i, nastąpić*, 'ensue, take place (once)', and *-owa-, następować*, 'ensue, take place (several, many times)', *-i, pozwolić*, 'allow (once)', and *-a-, pozwalać*, 'allow (several times, many times)'. There also is a change in the root itself (*-q-j-e-; -o-/a-*). In a description of a rising in the Warsaw ghetto, J. Andrzejewski writes: "Po całonocnej strzelaninie rankiem *nastąpiła* krótka przerwa w walkach", 'After disorderly and intense shooting which lasted all night, there ensued a short pause in the morning'. If the author had had in mind several mornings, several pauses, he would have had to use the past tense form *następowała*: "Po całonocnej strzelaninie rankiem *następowała* krótka przerwa w walkach". In a novel by Z. Nałkowska a wedding is described. Owing to her recent mourning, the newly-married Róża does not allow her guests to dance during the wedding-feast: "Chciano tańczyć, ale sama Róża nie *pozwalala* ze względu na świeżą żałobę", ('They wanted to dance, but Rose herself *did not allow* it in view of her recent mourning'). She apparently had been asked for permission several times in turn and had as often to refuse, for the authoress has used the form *pozwalala*, not *pozwolila*. In a tale by J. Andrzejewski, a Jewish professor's daughter does not find courage enough to prevent her father from joining a batch of Jews led to slaughter by the Germans: "Wiedziałam, że powinienam coś zrobić, *nie pozwolić* mu odejść, pójść za nim, ale nic nie

45) The Polish tense system is based upon two stems: that of the infinitive and that of the present tense.

zrobiłam", 'I knew that I ought to do something, *not to let him go*, to go after him, but I didn't do anything'. The act of not letting, not allowing the professor to go, could have happened only once, and therefore the right form is *pozwoić*, not *pozwalać*.

The verbs which express this specific notion of verbal plurality are usually called iterative (*następować*, *pozwalać*, *stawać*). The "singular" verbs (*nastąpić*, *pozwoić*, *stanąć*) might perhaps be termed "singulative".

* * *

The difference between one verbal form and another may also bear on the prefix. The Polish (Slavonic) verb is noted for the great variety and for the very frequent use it makes of them.

The fundamental difference between a non-prefixed verbal form and its prefixed counterpart is that the former is *imperfective*, while the latter is *perfective*.

The imperfective form describes an action while in its course. The perfective draws our attention to the beginning or the ending.

Let us examine the pair *pisać* (imperf.) and *napisać* (perf.), 'write'. We may say: "Jan *pisał* list", and "Jan *napisał* list", 'John wrote, has written, was writing a letter'. In each case we shall have in mind a different aspect of the action. The imperfective *pisał* informs us that at a certain time in the past Jan was still busy writing the letter, that he had not yet completed it. This form often, though by no means always, corresponds to the English continuous form (*was writing*). The perfective *napisał* indicates the completion of the writing of the letter.

The idea of "imperfectivity" is often played upon. For instance, some time after receiving John's letter, we may say "Jan *napisał* do mnie, że...", and also "Jan *pisał* do mnie, że...", 'John wrote (*has written*) to me that...', although John's writing will have been completed in both cases. The difference lies therein that in the latter case (*pisał*) we revive in ourselves the action of writing, while in the former (*napisał*) we treat it as something already completed and done with.

Napisać indicates the end of (the) writing. Perfective verbs may, however also call our attention to the beginning of an action: "*Rozchorowała się* na zapalenie płuc i prędko zgasła przeżywszy ledwie lat trzydzieści parę" (S. Żeromski), 'She was taken ill with pneumonia and soon expired at the age of just over thirty'.

Sometimes, the beginning and the end of an action are blended into one. When this is the case, the perfective verb indicates a sudden and short action: "*Róża zaśmiała się*" (M. Kuncewicz), 'Rose gave a short laugh'.

Unless the verbal prefix is "quashed" by an iterative suffix or unless the verb is already perfective (of both later), the role of the prefix is always to render verbs perfective. However, and this is very important, the prefix only rarely limits itself to "perfectivisation" alone.

All the 16 Polish verbal prefixes have originated from those prepositions which fundamentally denoted spatial relations. It is only accidental that a few prefixes, like *roz-* for instance, have now no equivalents among the prepositions.

The straightforward semantic relation which once existed between the preposition and the verbal prefix may to-day be somewhat blurred. Thus, the preposition *przy*, used with the locative, denotes 'being or

moving near something', "siedzieć przy domu", 'sit near the house'. The preposition *do*, used with the genitive, denotes 'moving towards something', often with the intention of getting inside the something: "iść do domu", 'go to the house (home)'. The preposition *przy* can never be used in connection with verbs denoting movement towards something. It is, however, often used as the prefix attached to these very verbs: *przy-* and *iść*, 'go', give *przyjść*, 'come'. The preposition employed in connection with the *przy-*verbs is ...*do*: "przyjść do domu", 'come to the house (home)'. The verb *iść* may also be prefixed by *do-*: *dojść*, "dojść do domu", 'reach the (immediate neighbourhood of) the house', that is, to find oneself in exactly the same spatial relation as that denoted by the preposition *przy*. Thus the semantic character of the prefixes *do-* and *przy-* is reversed with regard to the meaning of the preposition *do* and *przy*. However the main problem is that the verbal prefixes (which have evolved from prepositions fundamentally denoting spatial relations) to-day very often have spatial meaning. The difference then between a non-prefixed verbal form and its prefixed counterpart is not only that of the imperfective and the perfective - the prefixed form may also denote a certain spatial relation. This constitutes the second main function of the prefix.

The relation between the two forms is not always a matter of only spatial signification. For instance, the prefix *po-* often has the meaning of the adverbial 'a little'. *Siedzieć* (imperf.) means 'sit', *posiedzieć* (perf.), 'sit for a short time'. "Pojutrze, akurat o tej porze jak mama list odbierze, pójdę pomodlić się do kościoła" (I. Dąbrowski), 'The day after to-morrow just when you, Mummy, will receive this letter, I shall go to church to pray a little'. The "amount" of action is here indicated by the prefix (the third main function).

There may be a wide gulf between the meaning of the non-prefixed and the prefixed form. *Bić* means 'beat', while the perfective *zabić* means 'kill'. Beating only sometimes results in the death of the person beaten. On the other hand, we cannot trace the cause of all deaths to beating (people die a natural death, commit suicide by taking poison, etc.). The link between *bić* and *zabić*, though clear, is rather slender. Since, despite the many centuries that have passed since *zabić* was first derived from *bić*, the now entirely independent *zabić* is always a derivative from *bić*, the fourth main function of the prefix may be defined as that of creating verbs which are almost completely different in meaning.

There are in Polish three future tense forms. One of them is confined to perfective verbs and was once a present tense form. The future tense of *napisać* is *napiszę*, 'I shall write (complete the writing of)'; that of the perfective *kupić*, 'buy', is *kupię*, 'I shall buy (have something bought)'. Since most perfectives are prefixed, a relation arises between the non-prefixed imperfective present tense form and the prefixed perfective future, such as *piszę*, 'I write (am writing)', and *napiszę*. In view of this relation we may say the fifth main function of the prefix is that of forming the perfective future from the imperfective present tense form. The prefix is also a tense formant, and its function may therefore be determined here as purely grammatical.

The prefix is not the only means of forming perfective verbs. First of all, there are some perfective non-prefixed forms: *dać*, 'give', *kupić*, 'buy', *siąść*, 'sit down'. When a prefix is added to them, they change their

general meaning, though, obviously remaining perfective. It is only occasionally that their perfective character is somewhat strengthened by the prefix. Somebody's infatuation has passed: "Ale to *przemineło*. Dzisiaj bez radości mogę widzieć twoje oczy" (Z. Nałkowska), 'But this *has* quite passed. Today I can see your eyes without any joy'. The prefixed *przemineło* is a more forceful form than the simple *mineło*, although both are perfective.

Secondly, some perfectives have been formed by means of adding not prefixes, but suffixes, cf. *ciskać*, 'throw' (the root is *cisk-*), and *cisnąć* (*cis(k)-nąć*), *kopać*, 'kick', and *kopnąć*.

Thirdly, the perfective character of a verbal prefix is always "quashed" by iterative-imperfective suffixes. *Mrzeć*, 'die', can be made perfective by adding the prefix *u-*: *umrzeć*. *Umrzeć* can be made imperfective by adding the iterative or durative suffix *-a-* and suitably changing the root itself: *umierać*. "Zrobiło się okropne zamieszanie, ona się rozchorowała i w ostatnim akcie *umarła* (perf.) na suchoty" (I. Dąbrowski), 'There was a terrible turmoil, she became ill and in the last act *died* from consumption'. "Jak *umierała* (imperf.), miała na sobie biały peniuar koronkowy...", 'When *she was dying*, she was wearing a peignoir of lace' (a girl's version of the death of *la dame aux camélias*).

The right use of the prefixal and suffixal forms is the main difficulty in the Polish verb, far greater than the use of the tenses or the complexities of the person, gender or number forms. Being a difficulty, by suitable use it can be changed into great richness.

8. THE DIMINUTIVES AND THE AUGMENTATIVES.

According to Professor Jespersen (cf. pp. 9-10, *Growth and Structure*), the English have little love for the diminutives and - let us add - the augmentatives. For the most part, English diminutives are confined to the nursery. Grown-ups use them sparingly, mostly when speaking to or of children. It may also be said that - with the exception of a certain type of abbreviation - it is considered unmanly, unseemly or low-class to mark one's emotions (if any) by indulging in forms other than the basic ones. *Dearie, girlie, laddie*, diminutive formations derived by means of adding a suffix, are avoided. The employment of the adjectives *dear* and *little*, often used both together, is however tolerated, if it does not exceed certain limits. "*d-*" and "*b-*" supply, accordingly, an outlet for depreciative feelings, though the strictness and rigidity inherited as part of the Puritan tradition confine their use to very loose style.

There is, however, one important exception with regard to the diminutives. The familiar abbreviations of Christian names (*Sue* for *Susan*), surnames (*Dizzy* for *Disraeli*), proper names (*the Char* for the *Cherwell* in Oxford) and many other substantives (*the doc* for the *doctor*) partly compensate the English language for the comparative lack and infrequency of the diminutives. They are due to familiarity (a feeling!), but also to the desire to avoid effort in speech by using the shortened form.

Polish offers a glaring contrast. Diminutive and augmentative formations are both numerous and frequently used. Except for the abbre-

viated forms of Christian names (*Stas* or *Stach* for *Stanisław*, 'Stanislas'), the overwhelming majority of the diminutives and the augmentatives are longer than their basic forms. They convey an entire range of feelings and emotions, from the lowest to the loftiest. If convention imposes a certain restraint on the employment of these formations, this convention may be broken without causing astonishment or scorn. Diminutives are used *too* often by servants and some women. "Kilka ciasteczek", 'a few little pastries', a waiter will suggest (*ciastko* is the basic form, itself an ex-diminutive of *ciasto*, 'dough, pastry'), thus tortuously implying the cheapness of the price and, more straightforwardly, the daintiness of the ware. A woman will buy herself "śliczny kapelusik" (basic form: *kapelus*), 'a beautiful little hat', though the thing itself often has the size and resplendency of a miniature hanging-garden. It is natural too that the diminutive should abound in folk songs:

"Mam koników parę, Cztery wołki w pługu, Chałupeczkę malusienką Bez żadnego długu"	(I have a pair of little horses, Four little oxen at the plough, And a teeny-weeny little hut Without any debt')
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(Cf. the basic forms: *koń*, *wół*, *chatupa* and *maty* - *chałupeczka* has been formed from the "first-grade" diminutive *chałupka*, *malusienki* - from the equally diminutive *malusi* - therefore, they are "second-grade" diminutives).

In view of their meaning, some substantives are richer in diminutives than the average word. *Matka*, 'mother', is perhaps the best example. It is itself a fossilised diminutive from Old Polish *mac*, 'mother'.

Many of the diminutive formations for "mother" have been derived from *mac*. The liquid *l* rolls softly in *matula*. The *u* adds a note of sadness, as in *smutek*, 'sadness', itself. And some music, too, as in *szum*, 'rustle'. The word is a popular form. This is how a folk song depicts the death of an uhlan hit by the enemy's bullet:

"Spadł z konia we znak Na kaliny krzak, A kalina jak matula W swoje listki go otula"	(He fell on his back from his horse On a guelder-rose bush, The guelder rose, like a dear little mother, Wraps him up in her little leaves')
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Feeling soon wears out. Therefore, new formations arose, "second-grade" diminutives: *matulka*, *matuleńka* (a cross-breed of *matula* and *maleńka*), and a "third-grade" one: *matuleczka* (from *matulka*). Each of these is different in style and sentimental value, though the differences are mostly very difficult to grasp and to define. However, the speaker is always absolutely sure which form he ought to use and where.

Beside *matula*, the following diminutives are used, all of them formed from *mac*: *mateńka*, *matuchna* (now slightly over-worn in church language in the meaning of 'Mother of God', with a nauseating flavour of saintliness about it), *matuś* (in view of the consonantal ending, mostly found in substantives, suggestive of masculine words, though qualified by means of feminine adjectives), *matusia* and *matunia*. *Mateńka* attracts attention through its *-teń-*, somewhat rare in genuinely Polish words and reminiscent of Ukrainian (Michael Wołodziejowski, the hero of one of Sienkiewicz's

historical novels, often used Ukrainian when lapsing into a sentimental mood). There is a peculiar note of wistfulness about it:

"Lecz wróćę, Miła, i to, co marzyłem	('But I will return, and what I dreamt
W tęsknoty nasze wplotę męską ręką,	I shall weave into our longings with a manly hand,
Położę niebo na ojczyściej przyźbie,	I shall lay heaven on our fathers' threshold,
moja <i>Mateńko</i> "	my dear little <i>Mother</i> ').
(J. Faczyński)	

Matka has yielded the diminutive *mateczka*:

"A Tobie chatę zasadzę błękitną	('I will plant you a hut sky-blue
W ogródku kwiatów białą	and a little white apple-tree
jabłoneczkę	
pod oknem malwy posieję czerwone,	under the window, God willing
da Bóg, <i>Mateczko</i> "	I shall sow red mallows, dear little <i>Mother</i> ').
(J. Faczyński,	
from the same poem as above).	

Augmentative formations often assume the suffix *-isko/-ysko*. The word formed therewith must be of a neuter gender. If this implies a change of the gender of the basic word denoting a person, depreciation follows automatically, for the neuter gender is primarily "non-personal". However, in the case of *matka* the depreciation is immediately countered by the fundamentally positive attitude towards mother. *Mateczysko* expresses love which seemingly descends to disparagement and scorn. There is a note of compassion and sympathy in the word:

"Matka Grakchów? Rzymska	('The mother of the Gracchi?
matrona?	A Roman matron?
"Propagandowe" nazwisko?	A name of "propaganda" value?
Nie, to tylko dobroć wcielona,	No, it is simply an embodiment of kindness,
Zwykle <i>matczysko</i> "	A simple dear old mother').
(M. Pawlikowska)	

Against the background of so many emotional formations, the now basic form *matka* quite unexpectedly may sometimes acquire a strong sentimental colouring:

"Przyszłaś, <i>matko</i> , o samym	('You have come, o <i>Mother</i> , at the
świtaniu,	very break of the day,
w rudy łachman okryta zorzy..."	covered with the golden-red rag of the dawn').
(E. Szemplińska)	

As in English, Poles use the word *mama*, 'mummy', again with a whole host of diminutives: *mamcia*, *mameczka*, *mameńka*, *mamuchna*, *mamuła*, *mamuleczka*, *mamuleńka*, *mamulka*, *mamunia*, *mamusia*, *mamuś*, *ma-muśka*, etc.

Old Polish *dziewa*, 'girl', exemplifies those substantives which abound

both in diminutives and augmentatives. Originally, it meant 'suckling woman' (the root is the same as in the Latin *femina*, 'woman'). The first diminutive to come was *dziewica*. This soon, however, lost its diminutive character together with all the formations ending in *-ica* and acquired the meaning of 'virgin'. The next one was *dziewka*. This word established itself in four distinctive meanings. Kochanowski dedicated his *Threnodies* "swej najmilszej *dziewce*", 'to his most-beloved daughter'. In this meaning *dziewka* is now an archaism. A peasant girl and a maid-servant have also been known as *dziewki* (the latter often with the addition of the adjective *stuzebne*, 'serving'). However, the path of degradation was not thereby ended. The word as the French *fille* (the *fille repentie* of Barbey d'Aurevilly), has denoted a prostitute, sometimes, in the Middle Ages, with the adjective *zła* (fem.), 'bad, wicked'. Today *dziewka* may also be used with an archaic flavour in the sense of 'maiden', cf. the following passage about Nike of Samothrace:

<p>"Stańcież w cieniu <i>dziewki</i> skrzydlatej Rolandowi rycerze, podaj dłoń, nieśmiertelny Bayardzie". (J. Łobodowski)</p>	<p>('Stand in the shadow of the winged maiden, knights of Roland, stretch out your hand immortal Bayard').</p>
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The loss of the original diminutive character of *dziewka* has led to the creation of several new formations. The first was *dzieweczka*, now only used as a slightly humorous archaism. *Dziewczę*, neuter in gender, was modelled on the type *chłopię*, *pacholę*, 'young boy', now no longer productive. To-day, *dziewczę* is either more or less neutral ("Niech *dziewczęta* wieniec plotą", 'Let the girls weave a wreath') or tinged with irony.

Dziewczę soon gave birth to the equally neuter *dziewczątko*, historically a "third-grade" diminutive, and *dziewczyniątko* ("fourth-grade").

There is little feeling about *dziewczyzna* now, the third derivative of *dziewka*, and if any, this (some harshness) seems to be due to the formation of *dziewczynka*, 'little or young girl'. The latter may also be used in light, jocular, talk among men about women treated as a source of pleasure. *Dziewczynina*, historically a third-grade diminutive, implies some warm pity, sympathy.

Dziewczysko, the fourth derivative of *dziewka*, has a tinge of rudeness about it.

Dziewczynisko, from *dziewczyzna*, is half-way between *dziewczysko* and *dziewczynina*.

Of words directly formed from *dziewa*, *dziewoja*, and *dziewucha* should be mentioned. *Dziewoja*, a formation with an extremely rare suffix corresponds to the English *wench* and is now slightly ironical. *Dziewucha* means the same and is often used of peasant girls, irony being replaced by rudeness:

"Pochwaleni zadzierzyści parobcy,
szeroki uśmiech twoich krzepkich *dziewuch*"
(J. Łobodowski)
('Praised be the stout plough-boys
and the broad smile of your (Poland's) hefty *wenches*').

Dziewuszka and *dziewuszysko*, both derivatives of *dziewucha*, are diminutive and augmentative formations respectively.

Complicated as the patterns of word-formation are, the old *dziewa* from which all the Polish girls' names have sprung in the course of centuries, has now seemingly returned as a back-formation from the disparaging *dziewka*, 'maid-servant', 'peasant girl' etc. The depreciative character of both *dziewka* and *dziewa* can be further enhanced through pronouncing, dialect-fashion, their *e*'s as *i*: *dziwa*, *dziwka*.

All these nouns are due to feeling, positive or negative. In English, the feeling has been working in a more discreet way, by introducing into the language almost an equal number of *different words* for 'girl', cf.: *gal* (*girl*), *lass*, *wench*, *colleen*, *tomboy*, *flapper* (Pol. *podlotek*, masc. gen.), *hoyden*, etc.

A number of substantives resist any attempt at being converted into diminutives or augmentatives. Euphony and meaning can be given as the causes.

Nożyczki, pl., 'scissors', is historically a diminutive of *nożyce*, pl., 'shears'. As we have seen, Polish may even form "fourth-grade" diminutives (e.g. *dziewczyniątko*, 'little, small girl'). The "grade" of *nożyczki* does not then account for there being no diminutive at all. If there were one, it would have to be "*nożyczeczki*", a form which, owing to its "*czeczka*", simply does not "sound" in Polish.

The explanation of this instance is based on the tacit assumption that there are no semantic reasons to cross the natural tendency to "diminutivisation". Pairs of scissors (*nożyczki*), for example, may each be of different sizes and different sentimental value, in the same way as a book (*książka*, dim. *książeczka*) or a knife (*scyzoryk*, dim. *scyzoryczek*) can be. It can therefore be said not only that there are no semantic reasons for making "diminutivisation" impossible, but, on the contrary, that everything favours it, except for the factors of euphony.

The position of another group of words shows the exact inverse. If there is a diminutive from *posada*, 'job, place', *posadka*, no phonetic or formal grounds can account for there being none from *porada*, 'advice', a word both of the same gender and inflection (feminine vocalic) and of the same type of formation (cf. *posadzić*, 'place, put', and *poradzić*, 'advise'). However, *porada*, has no diminutive at all. This difference is due to semantic reasons. *Porada* in the concrete sense is an utterance, written or spoken, while *posada* suggests a whole series of audible and visible activities, and therefore may be regarded as being less abstract. There is every reason to say that the abstracts are less susceptible to "diminutivisation" than the concretes. This accounts for the lack of a diminutive from *porada*. Similarly, *więź*, fem., 'bond, link' (cf. *wiązać*, 'tie, link'), has no diminutive in the abstract sense, although in the past it has produced one in the concrete sense: *wiązka*, 'bunch', cf. also the pair *gałęź*, 'branch (of a tree, of a firm)', and *gałązka*, 'little branch (of a tree), twig'.

The idea of seriousness is often incompatible with "diminutivisation". *Bóg*, 'God, The Lord', has no diminutive (*bożek* can only be used in speaking of pagan gods), much feeling though the Deity can inspire; *róg*, 'horn', which rhymes with *Bóg*, has one: *rożek*, 'little horn'. Reverence

for other peoples' native lands and for one's own has prevented the Pole from forming any diminutives from *Francja*, 'France', *Niemcy*, plur., 'Germany', *Polska*, 'Poland', etc., although there are diminutive forms of *kombinacja*, 'combination, trick' (*kombinacyjka*), *Niemiec*, 'German' (*Niemczura*, masc., *Niemczysko*, neut., *Niemiaszek*, masc., etc.) and *Polak*, 'Pole' (*Polaczek*, *Polaczysko*, etc.) as well as from *laska*, 'stick' (*laseczka*), a word with a stem ending in *-sk*.

The notion of wide space, especially if associated with a feeling of awe, also counteracts possible "diminutivisation". *Morze*, neut., 'sea', has no diminutive, although the root can be found "intact" in the adjective *morski*, 'pertaining to sea, naval', and although *łóże*, neut., 'bed', a word of similar structure, has produced a diminutive *łóżko*, 'bed', now no longer thought of as a diminutive.

The process of forming diminutives etc. also affects the adjective and the adverb. From *mały*, 'little, small', the following diminutives have been made: *malutki*, *maluteński*, *malusi*, *maluśki*, *malusienki*, *maluchny*, *maleński*, *maluni*, *malenieczki*, *malusienieczki*, *maluczki*, *maluli*, *maluteczki*, *malutenieczki*, *maluścki*, *maluśty*, *malutuchny*, *malutuperny*, *maluturny*, *maluty*, *malutynieński*, *maciupci*, *maciupki*, *maciupeński*, *maciupenieczki*, *maciuchny*, *madziudzi*, *madziubdzi*, *madziubeński*, etc., at least 30 formations, although not every speaker of Polish uses all of them. The corresponding adverbial formations can be formed by changing the ending *-i*, *-y* into *-o*, cf. *malusienko*.

The comparison of the basic *mały* with such derivatives as, for instance, *malusienki*, or *malutenieczki* shows the underlying absurdity of the diminutives: a being or a thing which is smaller, is denoted by a word several times longer. This absurdity, however, is only a seeming one: there is *an increase of the quality* and, therefore, the diminutive is more bulky than the basic form.

In English, the number of diminutive adjectival formations is much lower: from *small* there is only *smallish*.

Owing to the abstract character of this part of speech, the Polish verb is almost absolutely free from any inroad of emotions and feelings. Diminutive of augmentative verbal formations are exclusively limited to young children's language.

The above observations give some idea of the complications *and the structural richness* of Polish in the domain of the diminutive and the augmentative. All the Slavonic languages are alike in this respect. The sober and sparing usage of English stands very much aloof.

9. THE DISTANT KINSHIP.

Polish is a Slavonic tongue. English belongs to the Germanic group of languages. Since both idioms, the Proto-Germanic and the Proto-Slavonic, were formed from a common speech, Proto-Indo-European, which was spoken in hoary antiquity, several thousand years before the Christian era, English and Polish are connected by links of a very distant kinship.

In principle, this kinship is not any closer or any looser than between any Germanic language on the one hand, and any Slavonic tongue on the other.

Though many centuries have passed since the primeval unity, bringing change after change, even to-day we can find Polish and English words, not only having a similar outward form, but also an identical or very close meaning.

Among animal names there are:

beaver, Pol. *bóbr*; *mouse*, Pol. *mysz*; *swine*, Pol. *swinia*; the relation between *ewe*, 'female sheep', and Pol. *owca*, 'sheep', is less obvious since it has been obscured by the fact that the Proto-Slavonic **ovi* was early replaced by a diminutive, **ovi-ca*; the widely divergent development accounts for the present dissimilarity of *wolf* and *wilk*, though originally they both were one and the same word.

The following are some related plant names:

birch, Pol. *brzoza* (the difference between these two is also due to phonetic factors); *linen*, formerly an adjective from Old English *līn* (to-day *line*), 'flax', *len*, 'flax'; *tree*, Pol. *drzewo*, 'tree, wood'.

In the realm of nature we find:

mere, now poetical and dialectal for 'lake', Pol. *morze*, 'sea'; *salt*, Pol. *sól* (there is a difference of suffix between the Germanic and the Slavonic word); *snow*, Pol. *śnieg*; *stream*, Pol. *strumień*; *water*, Pol. *woda*.

Parts of the human or animal body:

arm, Pol. *ramię*; *brow*, Pol. *brew*; *ear*, Pol. *ucho* (the relation has been obscured mainly by the Proto-Indo-European **s-* having become *r* in Germanic (as in the Latin *auris*), and *ch* in Slavonic); *eye*, Pol. *oko* (the Polish word has retained the P.-I.-E. stem practically intact, cf. the Lat. *oc-ulus*, 'eye'); *heart*, Pol. medieval **sirdce*, *sirce*, *sierce*, modern *serce* (the early Proto-Slavonic form must have been **sřd-*, *-ce* was a diminutive suffix); *nail*, Pol. *noga*, 'leg', cf. also *paznokieć*, Pol. med. *paznogieć*, 'nail', with the Slavonic root *nog-*, Germ. *Nagel*, 'nail'; *rib*, Pol. med. **rzebro*, Russian *rebró*, with the *-ro* suffix - modern Pol. *żebro*; *step*, 'pace', Pol. *stopa*, 'foot', and *stąpać*, 'pace, step'.

Terms denoting kinship:

brother, Pol. medieval *bratr* (cf. the modern adjective *braterski*, 'brotherly, fraternal'), modern *brat*; *daughter*, Pol. med. *cora*, from **dcora* (still spelt *dcera* in Czech; cf. also Russian *doć*, gen. sg. *dóćeri*), modern *córka*, a former diminutive; *mother*, cf. the Old Polish stem *mactierz-* (*maciór-*, mod. Pol. *mactrzyński*, 'maternal, motherly', *macióra*, 'sow'), mod. Pol. *matka*, a former diminutive; *sister* (of Scandinavian origin), Old English *swuster*, Pol. *siostra*; *widow*, Pol. *wdowa*.

Other words:

be, Pol. *być*; *eat*, Pol. *jeść* (the P.-I.-E. root was **ēd-*, cf. Pol. *jedz-ą*, 'they eat'); *guest*, Pol. *gość*; *night*, Pol. *noc* (the Proto-Slav. form was **nokti*); *red*, Pol. *rudý* (of *red* hair; in Czech *rudý* exactly corresponds to the English *red*); *six*, Pol. *sześć*; *smile*, Pol. *śmiać się*, 'laugh', *uśmiech*, 'smile';

sour, Pol. med. *syr*, modern *ser*, 'cheese'; *to*, Pol. *do* (preposition); *three*, Pol. *trzy*; *two*, Pol. *dwa*; *wheel*, Pol. *koło*; *will*, Pol. *wola*; *wit*, Pol. *wiedzieć*, 'know'; *young*, Pol. med. *juny*, Russ. *júnyj*, 'youthful'.

The Polish dative plural of the substantives ends in *-om*. This ending is equivalent to the Old English dative plural ending *-um*: *handum* (fem. from *hand*); *mannum* (from *man*, *mann*, *manna*), *sunum* (from *sunu*, *suno*, 'son'); *wordum* (from *word*, neut.). The dative singular *-m* of the Polish pronominal inflection (*jemu*, 'to him, him'), corresponds to the English *-m* still retained in *him* and *whom*.

The English *-ed*, *-t* and *-en* suffixes of the passive past participle are related to the *-t* and *-en* suffixes of the same formations in Polish: *dreamt*, *dreamed*, Pol. *myty* from *myć*, 'wash', *eaten*, Pol. *jedzony*, 'eaten'.

Although Polish, as a representative of the Indo-European family of languages, is more archaic than English, the endings of the now extant English case-forms still retain the final P.-I.-E. *-s* which was dropped before the Proto-Slavonic period: *son's* (possessive singular) and *sons* (plural) are thereby nearer to the P.-I.-E. **sūnous* (gen. sg.) and **sūneues* (n. pl.) than the medieval Pol. *synu* (cf. the modern *wołu*, 'of the ox, ox's'), modern *syna* (gen. sg.), or *synowie* (n. pl.). However, the Slavonic languages have retained, with some modification, the vowel(s) preceding the final *-s*.

The distant genetic relation between English and Polish does not render it any easier to learn either language. It is nevertheless worth while for the student to know of the relationship and to remember it.

ANDRZEJ BUSZA
(Vancouver)

CONRAD'S POLISH LITERARY BACKGROUND AND SOME
ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INFLUENCE OF POLISH
LITERATURE ON HIS WORK

TO MY UNCLE

PREFATORY NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conrad's Polish background has already received a certain amount of attention, especially from his biographers. However, there has been no systematic study of the influence of Polish literature on his work. In this thesis I have tried, first, to show why one should expect to find traces of Polish literary influence in Conrad's writings, and secondly, to give some illustrations of that influence.

The thesis was written and approved for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of London; and I am grateful to the University for giving me permission to publish it. I am also grateful to the University for awarding me the William Lincoln Shelley Studentship which enabled me to pursue full-time research for two years. Similarly, I wish to record my gratitude to the Polish Historical Institute in Rome and the Polish Society of Arts and Sciences Abroad for making the publication of this study possible.

In the course of my research, I have become indebted to a large number of people; unfortunately, I can mention only a few. My thanks are due to Mr. Jocelyn Baines for making available to me typed transcripts of the Polish material he used in the preparation of his excellent biography of Conrad; to Professor G.J. Resink for letting me read Miss Florence Clemens' dissertation on Conrad's Malaysia; to Mr. Mieczysław Grydzewski for making it possible for me to read through the back numbers of

Wiadomości Literackie; to Messrs. Borys and John Conrad and David Garnett for allowing me to visit them, and for answering my questions with patience and pertinence. I want particularly to thank Mrs. Maria Danilewicz, Mr. Charles Peake and Dr. Wit Tarnawski for their advice and assistance at all stages of the work. Finally, I owe a great debt to my wife, who gave me aid and encouragement when I needed them most.

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Unless otherwise stated, all the translations are my own. Quotations from Conrad's writings are made from the Uniform Edition, published by J.M. Dent & Sons, London and Toronto, 1923-28.

Vancouver, B. C.

A.B.

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INTRODUCTION

During Conrad's lifetime there gathered around him a series of myths, stemming from his foreign origin¹⁾ and his romantic sea-career, and enhanced by his tendency to colour or to cloud over certain facts and data relating to his life and writing²⁾. Occasionally, a hint dropped carelessly in the heat of conversation or perhaps an idea elaborated for the sake of stylistic effect would, after a passage of years, boomerang upon Conrad in a new and unexpected form; the hint having been driven in the meantime to or beyond its logical conclusion. Conrad would protest strongly, or even make a complete denial; but by then it would be too late: a new myth would have been born.

Thus, for instance, in 1903 Conrad told Hugh Clifford something to the effect that he had once "debated within himself seriously as to the choice of the language in which he should elect to write", and that "French at first attracted him more than English"³⁾. The following year Clifford reported this in an article which appeared in *The North American Review*. However, when twelve years later Hugh Walpole repeated Clifford's story in his book on Conrad⁴⁾, he was pounced upon:

I want to thank you at once for the little book and to tell you that I am profoundly touched by many things you have found it possible in your heart and conscience to say about my work. The only thing that grieves me and makes me dance with rage is the cropping up of the legend set afloat by Hugh Clifford about my hesitation between English and French as a writing language. For it is absurd. When I wrote the first words of *Almayer's Folly*, I had been already for years and years *thinking* in English.

1) In 1924 Virginia Woolf wrote about Conrad: "Suddenly, without giving us time to arrange our thoughts or prepare our phrases, our guest has left us; and his withdrawal without farewell or ceremony is in keeping with his mysterious arrival, long years ago, to take up his lodging in this country. For there was always an air of mystery about him. It was partly his Polish birth, partly his memorable appearance, partly his preference for living in the depths of the country, out of ear-shot of gossips, beyond reach of hostesses, so that for news of him one had to depend upon the evidence of simple visitors with a habit of ringing door-bells who reported of their unknown host that he had the most perfect manners, the brightest eyes, and spoke English with a strong foreign accent." (*The Common Reader* [London, 1925], p. 282.)

2) In a letter to Curle, Conrad once remarked: "Didn't it ever occur to you, my dear Curle, that I knew what I was doing in leaving the facts of my life and even of my tales in the background? Explicitness, my dear fellow, is fatal to the glamour of all artistic work, robbing it of all suggestiveness, destroying all illusion." (Conrad to Curle, 24 April 1922; *Conrad to a Friend: 150 Selected Letters from Joseph Conrad to Richard Curle*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by R.C. [London, 1928], p. 142.)

3) Hugh Clifford, "The Genius of Mr. Joseph Conrad," *The North American Review* (New York), 571 (June 1904), p. 847. Clifford stuck to and repeated the story in his *A Talk on Joseph Conrad and his Work*, English Association (Ceylon Branch) (February 1927), p. 13.

4) See Hugh Walpole, *Joseph Conrad* (London, 1916), p. 77. Cf. Ford Madox Ford *pseud.* [i. e. F. M. Hueffer], *Joseph Conrad; a Personal Remembrance* (London, 1924), p. 211.

I began to think in English long before I mastered, I won't say the style (I haven't done that yet), but the mere uttered speech. Is it thinkable that anybody possessed of some effective inspiration should contemplate for a moment such a frantic thing as translating it into another tongue?... You may take it from me that if I had not known English I wouldn't have written a line for print, in my life⁵).

Soon afterwards, Conrad made a similar, public protest in the "Author's Note" to *A Personal Record*:

The present Governor of Nigeria [i. e. Clifford] may not remember that conversation as well as I do, but I am sure that he will not mind this, what in diplomatic language is called "rectification" of a statement made to him by an obscure writer his generous sympathy had prompted him to seek out and make his friend.

The truth of the matter is that my faculty to write in English is as natural as any other aptitude with which I might have been born. ...All I can claim after all those years of devoted practice, with the accumulated anguish of its doubts, imperfections and falterings in my heart, is the right to be believed when I say that if I had not written in English I would not have written at all⁶).

However, Conrad's passionate protests fell on deaf ears. In a recent survey of twentieth century English literature we read: "...it is said that, before he [Conrad] decided on English as the medium for his novels he had considered the possibility of French instead"⁷).

Similarly, Conrad's persistent lack of confidence in his powers, accompanied by an intense desire for achievement, prompted him to play down his urge to write. Hence, we are now told that Galsworthy was responsible for the writing of *Almayer's Folly*⁸) and that Garnett persuaded Conrad to become a novelist⁹). Examples of similar legends could be easily multiplied.

As a starting point for this inquiry, we shall take perhaps the crudest of the Conrad myths: the myth of the Polish-born sea captain who, having been stranded on the English shore, suddenly, at the age of thirty-eight, began to write novels. Again, Conrad himself inadvertently set this

5) Conrad to Hugh Walpole, 7 June 1918; in G. Jean-Aubry, *Joseph Conrad; Life and Letters* (London, 1927), II, 206.

6) *A Personal Record*, p. vii-viii.

7) A. S. Collins, *English Literature of the Twentieth Century*, 3rd edition (London, 1956), p. 186.

8) For example, A. S. Collins writes: "It was the English novelist Galsworthy who, talking to him as a passenger on a ship on which he was serving, was largely responsible for encouraging the writing of his novel." (*op. cit.*, p. 186.)

Similarly, in a well-known history of English literature we read: "Encouraged by John Galsworthy, who happened to be a passenger on a ship of which Conrad was one of the officers, he began to write seriously in 1889..." (George Sampson, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* [Cambridge, 1941], p. 956.)

9) See e. g. Frank Swinnerton, *The Georgian Literary Scene; a Panorama* (London, 1935), pp. 153-4. Cf. Chapter IV of this thesis, p. 192 ff.

legend afloat. He mythologized in *A Personal Record* his initiation in literature:

Till I began to write that novel I had written nothing but letters, and not very many of these. I never made a note of a fact, of an impression or of an anecdote in my life. The conception of a planned book was entirely outside my mental range when I sat down to write; the ambition of being an author had never turned up amongst these gracious imaginary existences one creates fondly for oneself at times in the stillness and immobility of a day-dream: yet it stands clear as the sun at noonday that from the moment I had done blackening over the first manuscript page of "Almayer's Folly" (it contained about two hundred words and this proportion of words to a page has remained with me through the fifteen years of my writing life), from the moment I had, in the simplicity of my heart and the amazing ignorance of my mind, written that page the die was cast. Never had Rubicon been more blindly forded, without invocation to the gods, without fear of men¹⁰).

His reluctance to speak openly about his past created the impression that his contact with literature before 1895 had been limited to sea stories and a handful of French and English classics. Moreover, this impression was strengthened by Conrad's tendency to indulge in self-depreciation. For instance, a year before his death, he wrote to Garnett:

It is thirty years now (almost to a day) since I came ashore for good. And the very next year our friendship began! Straight from the sea into your arms, as it were. How much you have done to pull me together intellectually only the Gods that brought us together know. For I myself don't. All I had in my hand was some little creative gift-but not even one single piece of "cultural" luggage¹¹).

However, Conrad had not foreseen the dangers of becoming a living myth. As long as he remained faithful to the established image of himself, he was praised and admired, but as soon as he betrayed that image, he

10) *A Personal Record*, pp. 68-9.

This account is simply contradicted by the existence of the "Congo Diary" (*Joseph Conrad's Diary of his Journey up the Valley of the Congo in 1890*, with an Introduction and Notes by Richard Curle [London, 1926].), by what we can infer as to the nature of Conrad's correspondence from the "Bobrowski Letters" (see Chapter II of this thesis, p. 146 f.) and by the fact that already in 1886 Conrad had sent "The Black Mate" to *Tit-Bits* (see Jocelyn Baines, *Joseph Conrad; a Critical Biography* [London, 1960], pp. 84-5). Moreover, there is some evidence that Conrad deliberately distorted the facts. In 1922 he wrote to Pinker: "My feeling about it ["The Black Mate"] is that there will be nothing actually disgraceful in its inclusion in my collected editions (for that is what its publication in book form would ultimately mean) but it would complicate my literary history in a sort of futile way. I don't remember whether I told you that I wrote that thing in '86 for a prize competition, started, I think, by *Tit-Bits*. It is an extraneous phenomenon. My literary life began privately in 1890 [in fact 1889] and publicly in 1895 with *Almayer's Folly*, which is regarded generally as my very first piece of writing. However, the history of the "Black Mate", its origin etc., etc., need not be proclaimed on housetops, and *Almayer's Folly* may keep its place as my first serious work." (Conrad to Pinker, 19 January 1922, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 264.)

11) Conrad to Garnett, August 1924; *Letters from Conrad 1895 to 1924*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Edward Garnett (London, 1928), p. 326.

evoked in his readers only a sense of disappointment. In her obituary on Conrad, Virginia Woolf wrote:

Essentially — such remained his creed — this world of civilised and self-conscious people is based upon "a few very simple ideas"; but where, in the world of thoughts and personal relations, are we to find them? There are no masts in drawing-rooms; the typhoon does not test the worth of politicians and business men. Seeking and not finding such supports, the world of Conrad's later period has about it an involuntary obscurity, an inconclusiveness, almost a disillusionment which baffles and fatigues¹².

This complete lack of understanding by "the mass of critics and readers"¹³ was, during the last years of Conrad's life, a constant source of bitterness to him. In 1917 he confessed sadly to Sir Sidney Colvin: "Perhaps you won't find it presumption if, after 22 years of work, I may say that I have not been very well understood"¹⁴. Two years later, he wrote to his literary agent, J.B. Pinker, with exasperation: "I ...don't see why I should have *Lord Jim* thrown at my head at every turn. I couldn't go on writing *Lord Jim* all my life, and I don't think you would have liked me to do so"¹⁵. And in 1922, he was deeply disappointed when Curle failed to shake the "seaman writer" myth in his article on the Uniform Edition:

My point of view is that this is an opportunity, if not unique then not likely to occur again in my lifetime. I was in hopes that on a general survey it could also be made an opportunity for me to get freed from that infernal tail of ships, and that obsession of my sea life which has about as much bearing on my literary existence, on my quality as a writer, as the enumeration of drawing-rooms which Thackeray frequented could have had on his gift as a great novelist. After all, I may have been a seaman, but I am a writer of prose¹⁶.

It did not occur to Conrad's contemporaries that their image of him might be false; and because of this, their critical estimation of his work was impaired.

What is more surprising, however, is that the legend has lingered on. Writing about *The Rescue* in *The Great Tradition*, Leavis has remarked:

The book, in fact, is not altogether a surprising kind of thing to have come from a sailor of pertinacious literary talent and French literary education. The reason for bringing it in just here is to enforce the point that Conrad, for all his sophistication, exhibits a certain simplicity of outlook and attitude. About his attitude towards women there is perceptible, all the way through his literary career, something of the gallant simple sailor¹⁷.

12) Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader* (London, 1925), p. 290. Cf. Frank Swinnerton, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.

13) Conrad to Curle, 14 July 1923, *Conrad to a Friend*, p. 189.

14) Conrad to Colvin, 18 March 1917, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 185.

15) Conrad to Pinker, 14 August 1919, *ibid.*, II, p. 227.

16) Conrad to Curle, 14 July 1923, *Conrad to a Friend*, pp. 188-9.

17) F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition* (London, 1948), p. 183.

To my mind, it is both significant and characteristic that Leavis, like Virginia Woolf in her time, is impressed by *Chance*. (See Virginia Woolf, "Mr. Conrad: A Conversation", *The Captain's Death Bed and Other Essays* [London, 1950], p. 78.)

There is, no doubt, a great deal of truth in what Leavis says; yet, by appealing to the "simple sailor" myth, he has simplified the whole problem rather crudely. For instance, it is possible to argue that Conrad's attitude towards women was influenced in some measure by the attitudes and conventions prevalent amongst the Polish gentry in the middle of the last century. But, above all, in an influential and otherwise excellent essay, Leavis has given a new lease of life to an approach that is neither inspired nor particularly helpful.

Few critics would nowadays maintain that Conrad was a simple sailor, with no literary education, but many are not aware of the extent and richness of his literary background, not only before he wrote *Almayer's Folly*, but even before he left Poland.

The main aim of this thesis is to show that the "cultural luggage", which Conrad took with him to sea, was not as slight as is sometimes imagined. This will be achieved, first, by a discussion of the two men who dominated Conrad's early life: his father, Apollo Korzeniowski, and his maternal uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski; and second, by an examination of the various Polish circles and milieus with which Conrad came in contact in his childhood and youth. Further, it will be shown that the cultural background, which he thus acquired, and especially Polish literature, remained a vital force throughout his life, and, in fact, exerted a considerable influence over his writing. To substantiate this, several illustrations from Conrad's works will be given, where the influence of Polish literature is particularly evident.

Chapter I

APOLLO KORZENIOWSKI

Most Conrad biographers, when writing about Apollo Korzeniowski (1820-1869), have stressed above all his political activities. These, certainly, played an important part in his life and consequently had an effect on his son's future writing. However, it should not be forgotten that Apollo Korzeniowski was also a literary figure.

He was not one of the great Polish writers of the nineteenth century, but his poetry and drama show he had considerable literary gifts, and he was a skilful and important translator. Most of his literary works were motivated less by a powerful creative urge than by a passionate desire to teach and edify. He was a revolutionary, a moralist and an ardent apostle of his patriotic and social creed. In short, he was a man whom one would expect to exert a considerable influence over his son.

Apollo Korzeniowski's literary after-life is, in many ways, as sad as his biography. After a brief period of fame in his own life-time, crowned with the glory of a patriotic martyrdom, he was soon forgotten, as is often the case with national heroes¹⁸). Many years had to pass before he was remembered again; this time, however, as the father of a more famous son¹⁹). The subject being soon exhausted, his works were once more put aside.

It is only recently that there has been a genuine revival of interest in his work. But, ironically, this revival too was prompted by ulterior motives; being the result of certain ideological trends in Polish post-war criticism²⁰).

The present author is also dealing with Apollo Korzeniowski's work with an ulterior motive in mind. Yet, in order to estimate its influence on (or, more precisely, its relation to) Joseph Conrad's writing it is nec-

18) The first book about Apollo Korzeniowski was Stefan Buszczyński's *Mało znany poeta, stanowisko jego przed ostatnim powstaniem, wygnanie i śmierć. Ustęp z dziejów społecznych południowej Polski* (*The Little-known Poet, his Stand Before the Last Uprising, his Exile and Death. A Chapter of the Contemporary History of Southern Poland*) (Cracow, 1870).

19) The titles of some of the articles which appeared in Poland between the wars speak for themselves: Kazimierz Bartoszewicz, "Ojciec Conrada" ("Conrad's Father"), *Nowa Reforma* (Cracow), No. 91 and 92 (1926); Kazimierz Czachowski, "Ojciec Conrada," *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 192 (1927); Adolf Nowaczyński, "Ojciec Conrada," *Skamander* (Warsaw), 43 (1935).

20) After the Second World War Apollo Korzeniowski was "discovered" by such well-known Marxist critics as Jan Kott and Stefan Żółkiewski. Stefan Żółkiewski in his *Spór o Mickiewicza* (Wrocław, 1952, pp. 230-1) praises Korzeniowski's play *Komedia* (*Comedy*) for showing human conflict, first and foremost, as class struggle.

In 1954 a new edition of Korzeniowski's *Komedia* appeared: Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, *Komedia. Dramat we trzech aktach*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Tadeusz Mikulski (Warsaw, 1954).

essary in the first place to examine the peculiar nature and merits of Korzeniowski's literary achievements in their own right.

Apollo Korzeniowski's literary output was wide and varied. He was a tolerably good poet, writing, in the romantic convention, patriotic and religious verses which range from good rhetorical poetry to versified journalism. The bulk of his poetry is contained in a series of poetic cycles, inspired by certain political events.

Thus, between 1849 and 1854 he wrote a cycle of six long poems entitled *Czyścownicze pieśni* (*Purgatorial Cantos*) in which he expressed the sorrow and disappointment caused by the failure of the 1848 Revolution. The poems are very pessimistic in tone, full of despair and patriotic grief. In a poem called *Przedgrom* (*Before-thunder*) Korzeniowski writes:

So many days and so many years
have we groaned with the voice of orphans
on this our mother's grave,
accompanied by the music of thunder;
on our own soil — yet dispossessed,
in our own homes — yet homeless!
This once proud domain of our fathers
is now but a cemetery and a ruin.
Our fame and greatness have melted away
in a stream of blood and tears;
and our sole patrimony
is the dust and bones of our ancestors ²¹).

On account of their patriotic theme, *Czyścownicze pieśni* (*Purgatorial Cantos*) could not be published, but numerous manuscript copies of the poems circulated amongst the local gentry and enjoyed great popularity. In Korzeniowski's obituary Stefan Buszczyński tells us:

In Podolia he devoted himself to poetry. Many transcriptions of his works were made and in this form they passed from hand to hand. There was hardly a home where they were unknown. He gave them the general title of *Purgatorial Cantos*, since they contained all the anguish of a spirit desiring freedom and longing for action which would ensure independence for his country ²².

Another similar cycle of poems was inspired by the Ukrainian peasants' revolt which took place in the Skwirski district of the province of Kiev in the spring of 1855 ²³. Here the dominant note is that of anger and indig-

21) Appended to Roman Taboraki, *Apollo Korzeniowski; ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny* (*Apollo Korzeniowski; The last Romantic Dramatist*) (Wrocław, 1957), p. 144.

22) [Stefan Buszczyński], "Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski" [obituary notice], *Kraj* (Cracow), 68 (1869). *Apud* Taboraki, p. 22).

23) For a brief account of the revolt see Czesław Miłosz, "Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski," *Kultura* (Paris), 100 (February, 1956), pp. 70-1.

nation, directed chiefly against the Polish gentry. The first two stanzas of one poem called *Dzisiejszym (To the Contemporaries)* run as follows:

Begone! I will not feast with you
on ruins and on funeral pyres.
Go on, pay homage
to your medals, salaries and banquets!
Kiss the knout that hangs above you!
Suffer the blows and spittings of contempt!
Raise toasts at the hangman's table!
I will remain alone, for I prefer,
O truth, your hard holy bread!
Noblemen-pedlars, Noblemen-sugar mongers,
sheep-farmers, chapmen, merchants, beer mongers;
friends of the Government which lets you
drain the people's blood
under the protection of the Russian whip;
evil bodies — muddy spirits;
in your health is the people's sickness!
Begone! for I prefer,
O probity, your bread, though it be dry!²⁴⁾

Korzeniowski wrote yet another poetic cycle called *Zgliszcza (Cinders)*, but only the title has survived²⁵⁾.

Apart from political poetry, Korzeniowski also composed love poems, occasional verses celebrating various family events, and miscellaneous poems dedicated to friends²⁶⁾. One poem addressed to his future brother-in-law, Tadeusz Bobrowski, might have appealed to Conrad on account of its imagery:

Your ship is ready,
the wanton wind fills the sails;
and even if life's deep is perilous,
not every voyage ends in disaster.
Let cowards tremble at the frown of waves,
for you they are harbingers of good fortune;
you know the secret of hidden rocks
and have often fought the raging storm.
Your winged vessel
will outfly the swift falcon;
steered by reason, governed by self-control,
you will reach the distant shores of fame.
But, when you stand at your journey's end
in the golden realm of happiness,
remember, oh remember, with sadness
those who perished in the storm!...²⁷⁾

24) Appended to Taborski, p. 150.

25) According to Taborski (*op. cit.*, p. 21) the manuscript of *Zgliszcza* was presented to Conrad after the First World War.

26) Twenty-one of these poems appeared in Apolla Nałęczka Korzeniowskiego *Komedja. Dramat w Trzech Aktach i Strofy Oderwane*. (Wilno, 1856.)

27) Quoted by Tadeusz Bobrowski in his *Pamiętniki (Memoirs)* (Lwów, 1900), I, 363. There exists another, slightly different text in a letter from Apolla Korzeniowski to Tadeusz Bobrowski, dated 11 May 1849 [o.s.], Biblioteka Narodowa (National Library of Warsaw) MS. 2889. According to Gustav Morf, *The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad* (London, 1930, p. [2]) a manuscript of the poem, in Apolla's own hand, was found amongst Conrad's papers.

Viewed as a whole, Korzeniowski's poetic achievements are by no means outstanding. Much of his poetry is highly derivative. He continues the epigone traditions of late romantic poetry, taking as his principal model Zygmunt Krasiński, the third of the three great Polish romantic poets²⁸. The verse structure of Korzeniowski's *Czystcowe pieśni* (*Purgatorial Cantos*) is so reminiscent of Krasiński that one of the poems was for a long time attributed to the latter²⁹. The very titles of Korzeniowski's poems are deliberate echoes of Krasiński. Krasiński's *Przedświt* (*Before-dawn*) is paralleled by Korzeniowski's *Przedgrom* (*Before-thunder*); his *Dzień dzisiejszy* (*To-day*), by Korzeniowski's *Noc ostatnia* (*Last Night*).

Korzeniowski, however, differed considerably from Krasiński on ideological grounds. Both were ardent patriots — and, in each case, their patriotism was tinged with strong religious sentiments. Korzeniowski was a disciple of the so-called Polish Messianic school, of which Krasiński was one of the propagators³⁰. But, whereas Krasiński was a conservative and a die-hard aristocrat, Korzeniowski's social and political creed was revolutionary and radical³¹. Indeed, politically, he was probably one of the most progressive writers of his time. In this respect, he reminds one more of the second great Polish romantic poet, Juliusz Słowacki. Roman Taborski, in his monograph on Apollo Korzeniowski, has shown certain similarities between Słowacki's *Grób Agamemnona* (*The Tomb of Agamemnon*) and his *Odpowiedź na "Psalm przyszłości"* (*Reply to "The Psalms of the Future"*) and the final sections of Korzeniowski's *Przedgrom* (*Before-thunder*)³². In 1860 Korzeniowski wrote a poem called *Warszawie* (*To Warsaw*). Again, the tone is reminiscent of the poems dedicated to the city by Słowacki.

Apollo Korzeniowski's best work is contained in his plays. In the autumn of 1855 he wrote his first dramatic work, *Komedia* (*Comedy*). *Komedia* was started, most probably, as a free adaptation of Griboedov's *Goré ot uma* (*The Mischief of Being Clever*), but as Korzeniowski went on writing, he became so engrossed in the subject that he began to depart more and more from his Russian model³³. By the time he reached the third act (which is perhaps the best thing he ever wrote) he was writing a new and completely original play.

The central theme of *Komedia* is the conflict of the poet Henryk, who is an idealist and a revolutionary, with the materialistic and wordly society which surrounds him. The conflict is presented in the form of a love story. Henryk, who is penniless, wants to marry a rich, well-born girl, Lydia.

28) The three great Polish romantic poets - for a long time called the three *wieszczce* (bards) - were: Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), Juliusz Słowacki (1809-1849), and Zygmunt Krasiński (1812-1859).

29) See Taborski, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3.

30) Polish Messianism was an ideology which flourished especially after the failure of the so called November Rising of 1830-1. It claimed that Poland had been endowed with the historic mission of reconverting Europe to the true spirit of Christianity. Analogies were developed between Christ and Poland; just as Christ had died on the cross and risen, so would the Polish State rise again after its tribulations. Some of the exponents of the ideology were: Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński, Towiański, Hoene-Wronski, Cieszkowski, Bukaty and Królikowski.

31) It is quite possible that Apollo Korzeniowski came in contact with Russian revolutionaries during his studies at the University of St. Petersburg, and was influenced by their political views.

32) See Taborski, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-1.

33) See *ibid.*, pp. 48-9. Korzeniowski's debt to Griboedov is also discussed by Rafał Blüth in "Dwie rodziny kresowe," *Ateneum* (Warsaw), I (1939), pp. 1-24.

Lydia is also in love with him, but her guardian, the President, is strongly opposed to the match. He wants Lydia to marry the wealthy landowner, Dutkiewicz. Together with Basia, a wordly and experienced widow, they hatch a plot, whereby Henryk is discredited in Lydia's eyes. At first, Lydia is taken in. But then, at the last moment, the intrigue is discovered by the President's private secretary, who, after years of servitude, rebels against his unscrupulous master. But the expected "happy ending" does not come. Korzeniowski is not merely writing a pleasant comedy of manners. When Lydia at last realizes her mistake and proposes to Henryk, he refuses her. Henryk's reasons are simple: not only has she doubted his honesty, but, what is more important, he now sees clearly that he will have nothing to do with the world to which she belongs.

The play is quite well written and there are some good dramatic scenes. Its main interest, however, lies in the social criticism which it contains. Henryk's numerous invectives and the Secretary's violent outburst in Act III contain some of the most open and bitter social criticism that was written in Poland in the 1850s. The rebellious Secretary, turning on his master, the President, says:

Well, I'll tell you now what has been sticking in my throat and choking me like a bone. I am your servant no more. Once a man has breathed a little honest air, he will rather starve to death than return to his master's service.

(after a brief pause)

So I am the master's somewhat soiled left hand? Whenever there was any dirty, crooked, underhand business to do — I had to be there. So that later — should anything go wrong — you could say:

(imitating the President's voice)

"Oh, that secretary of mine is an absolute rogue. That class has no sense of morality at all. They are corrupt to the very core". Yes, we are corrupt — but who has corrupted us? You! With how much villainy we had to pay for that bitter piece of bread! You took us by the hand and led us personally into every dung-heap. You taugth, you advised, you directed; you cankered our sound heart and soul like a maggot. For all this, of course, I must thank you. Well, I thank you and thank you and thank you — with curses! ³⁴⁾

Komedia ends on a note of rebellion. Henryk, paying an extremely high price for maintaining personal integrity, has not allowed himself to be engulfed by the materialistic society which he hates and despises.

Dla miłego grosza (*For the Sake of Money*), written in 1857-8, is a more pessimistic work. The social satire has become more bitter; there is more irony; and we even find hints of cynical resignation. The play continues the life history of Henryk. Ten years have passed. Henryk, from the young revolutionary idealist of *Komedia*, has turned into a wordly cynic. In spite of his initial resistance, society has finally succeeded in corrupting him. He still hates and despises its petty ideals, but he has recognized defeat and accepted a compromise. He tells Józef Staropolski (the name

34) Apolla Nałęcz Korzeniowskiego, *Komedja. Dramat w Trzech Aktach i Strofy Oderwane* (Wilno, 1856), pp. 238-9. (Original in verse.)

itself means "Old-Polish"), a romantic dreamer and his old comrade-in-arms of the 1848 days:

For you know, my friend, that for the last three or four years I have been neither frank nor open with anybody. I have turned into a perpetual jester, otherwise I would be lost. Here, you must either laugh at everything or despair. So I laugh ³⁵).

All the characters in *Dla miłego grosza* (*For the Sake of Money*) are presented with ironic detachment. Lydia's counterpart, Anna, cynically rejects her faithful but poor lover, Józef, and marries the wealthy idiot, Adam Muchowski. Adam Pług, a contemporary writer, reviewing the play in the *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (*Illustrated Weekly*), criticized Korzeniowski for the lack of a sympathetic heroine ³⁶).

Apart from the general criticism of a society corrupted by material interests, which was evident in *Komedia*, we find in Korzeniowski's second play a vigorous attack on the new capitalist class that had risen in the preceding decade. Józef Staropolski exclaims:

And, what's more, they have the cheek to call themselves the country's benefactors! It was not customary for gentlemen to exploit their own country... As if all this wasn't enough, we know quite well to what vices the factory life leads; what horrid diseases breed in the sugar-mills amongst the simple folk, whom you tempt with gain to rot and perish in the mud! ³⁷)

Like the author of *Nostromo*, Korzeniowski was not only aware of the corrupting influence of money, but also very sceptical of all new social developments. This may be difficult to reconcile with his revolutionary tendencies, but Apollo Korzeniowski was a man of many contradictions. Writing about Korzeniowski's political attitude, Tadeusz Bobrowski said in his memoirs:

Though he considered himself a sincere democrat, and others even considered him "extremist" and "red", he had a hundredfold more traits of the gentry in him (as I often told him) than I had myself, though I was not suspected, either by him or by others, of being a democrat ³⁸).

Moreover, it appears that between the writing of the two plays Korzeniowski's attitude to social problems had undergone a certain change. This is exemplified, above all, by the way in which the author's point of view is presented in the two plays. In *Komedia* the two revolutionaries, Henryk and the Secretary, are virtually the author's mouthpieces. In *Dla miłego grosza* (*For the Sake of Money*) if anyone is his *porte parole*, it is

35) Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski, *Dla miłego grosza; Komedia w Trzech Aktach* (Petersburg, 1859), p. 9. (Original in verse.)

36) Adam Pług pseud. [i.e. Antoni Pietkiewicz], "Pierwsze przedstawienie na żytomierskim teatrze komedii Apolla Korzeniowskiego pod tytułem: Dla miłego grosza. » *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw), 28 (1860).

37) *Dla miłego grosza*, p. 21. (Original in verse.)

38) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 362.

the traditionalist and conservative, Józef Staropolski. But even he is viewed with a nostalgic detachment.

It appears that Korzeniowski intended to continue writing plays about social problems. We have some evidence for this in his correspondence³⁹⁾. There is also among Korzeniowski's unpublished manuscripts a fragment of a play entitled *Koniec pana Henryka* (*The End of Mr. Henryk*), which suggests that he wanted to complete Henryk's life history⁴⁰⁾. However, either these projects were never realized, or some of the material was destroyed by him just before his death.

During his forced stay in Chernikhov, Korzeniowski wrote a dramatic fragment called *Bez ratunku* (*Without Help*) which is the only other important dramatic work that has survived. It was first published in the *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* in 1866⁴¹⁾. Two years later, it was revised and produced in Lwów, under the new title of *Akt pierwszy* (*The First Act*)⁴²⁾. Finally, in 1869 it appeared as a separate pamphlet, with an introduction by Korzeniowski himself, stressing the ideological message of the play. *Bez ratunku* is a psychological drama about a family, haunted, in Theban fashion, by the curse of a national betrayal, committed by one of its ancestors. It is not a well-written work, but the theme of betrayal strikes a familiar note for the Conrad critic.

Korzeniowski also wrote a two-act play for children entitled *Batożek* (*The Little Whip*)⁴³⁾. *Batożek* is essentially only a modern fairy-tale, "based on a real incident" from Kościuszko's life, none the less it is full of social criticism and anti-Russian sentiments. Korzeniowski was ideologically involved in everything he wrote.

Although Korzeniowski's achievement in the sphere of drama is unquestionably limited, he is, none the less, one of the more interesting Polish dramatic writers of the mid-nineteenth century. The critic, Jan Kott, in a review of the world *première* of *Komedia*, which took place in Wrocław in 1952, called Korzeniowski's play "... the most politically progressive, the fiercest and the most pungent piece of literature written in

39) In December 1859 he wrote to the historian Karol Szajnocha: "I am now writing a comedy called *Rok 1959* (*The Year 1959*) and another called *Humański dureń* (*The Human Fool*). " Korzeniowski to Szajnocha, n.d. but about 17 December 1859; in *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Henryk Barycz (Wrocław, 1959), II, p. 186.

And half a year later, he told his friend Kazimierz Kaszewski: "If not for pending petty troubles; if not for bouts of melancholy, I might have by now completed two, more than half-written, comedies: - *1960R.* (*The Year 1960*) and *Bez Przesądów* (*Without Superstitions*), as well as a two-act play dealing with the modern gentry." Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 9 July 1860, Jagellon Library MS. 3057.

40) See Taborski, *op. cit.*, p. 62 n.

41) Apollo Korzeniowski, "Bez ratunku; Urywek dramatu nieoryginalny" ("Without Help; An Unoriginal Fragment of a Drama"), *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw), No. 339-341 (1866).

42) Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski, *Akt Pierwszy; Dramat w jednej odsłonie. (Nieoryginalnie wierszem napisany.)* (*The First Act; A Drama in One Scene. [Composed Unoriginally in Verse]*), Biblioteka Teatralna Lwowska. Zeszyt IV (Lwów, 1869).

43) Apollo Korzeniowski, *Batożek; Komedia we dwóch aktach, ułożona z prawdziwego wydarzenia* (*The Little Whip; A Comedy in Two Acts, Based on a Real Incident*) (Lwów, 1861).

Poland in the 1850s" 44). Similarly, Roman Taborski writes in his monograph on Korzeniowski:

Komedia is a completely isolated work in the literature of the period in which it was written. It is, in the Polish literature of the 1850s, the last major example of the continuation of the tradition of our great romantic drama from before the Spring of Nations 45. If someone were to ask, of which of its great dramatic predecessors does *Komedia* most remind one, the answer would unquestionably be *Fantazy*. Like Słowacki's masterpiece, *Komedia* discards completely the historic costume, so characteristic of earlier romantic drama, and introduces a topical action, drawn from contemporary life and full of realistic details, which place it in a strict historical and geographical context 46).

One is tempted to question Taborski's rather high opinion of the play, since it is clearly conditioned by certain aprioristic factors, but there can be no doubt that there is some truth in what he says. In spite of the form of Korzeniowski's plays — the dialogue is in rhymed verse — they are intrinsically realistic dramas and this gives them a unique place in the literature of the period.

As has already been remarked, Korzeniowski was not a great original writer. He thought deeply, he showed great concern for the problems of his time, he tried to disseminate his ideas zealously, but he lacked an artistic imagination commensurate with his other gifts. Consequently, it is not surprising that much of his creative energy was spent on translation and journalistic writing.

In Poland he is perhaps best remembered as the translator of Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton* and of the works of Victor Hugo. This is also the aspect of his work that has received most attention from Conrad critics and biographers. The fact that Apollo Korzeniowski was a translator had, no doubt, an influence on Conrad's development. Conrad thus came into contact with literatures other than Polish at a very early age. In *A Personal Record*, he tells us that he first read Shakespeare in his father's translations and that his first introduction to the sea in literature was Apollo Korzeniowski's rendering of Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la mer* 47). But for the purposes of the present thesis this section of Korzeniowski's literary output is obviously less important, and can be briefly summarised.

In the course of his life, Apollo Korzeniowski, apparently, translated into Polish all Victor Hugo's dramatic works, with the exception of *Cromwell* 48). He also translated two of Hugo's novels: *Les Misérables* and *Les Travailleurs de la mer*, and started working in collaboration with Adam Pług on *La Légende des Siècles*.

44) Jan Kott, "Nie znana sztuka Apolla Korzeniowskiego na scenie wrocławskiej," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 39 (1952). [Reprinted in:] Jan Kott, *Jak wam się podoba. Spotkanie pierwsze* (Warsaw, 1955), p. 142.

45) i.e. the 1848 Revolutions.

46) Taborski, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-6.

47) See: *A Personal Record*, pp. 71-2.

48) He told Kaszewski: "I have nearly all the plays ready except *Cromwell*; should you undertake the latter, it would be excellent - and then we could decide how to present them jointly to the readers." Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 9 July 1860.

Of other French works, he translated Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton*. Korzeniowski's translation is to date the best Polish rendering of Vigny's tragedy. The Polish novelist, Stefan Żeromski⁴⁹⁾, says of it, in one of his essays:

The first breath of gentle poetry came to me, when I was still a child, in some fragments copied by my mother's hand — they were passages from Alfred de Vigny's *Chatterton*, translated by the poet Apollo Korzeniowski, the unknown father of the famous English writer Joseph Conrad-Korzeniowski⁵⁰⁾.

Bobrowski mentions in his memoirs that Apollo Korzeniowski also translated some of Heinrich Heine's works⁵¹⁾.

Finally, Korzeniowski translated into Polish three Shakespearian comedies: *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; as well as Dickens's *Hard Times*, an excellent translation which was recently reprinted in Poland⁵²⁾.

It is worthwhile noticing that Korzeniowski's choice of the materials which he translated was not haphazard. Three of the writers, Hugo, Heine and Dickens, whom he wished to introduce to the Polish reader were radicals who shared, in some measure, his own social and political creed.

During the two years that preceded his arrest and exile, Korzeniowski devoted most of his time to journalism. He published articles in various periodicals that came out in the Russian part of Poland. He had a regular column in the Warsaw daily, *Gazeta Codzienna* (*Daily Gazette*), called "Korespondencja Gazety Codziennej. Zza Buga" ("The Correspondence of the Daily Gazette. From behind the Bug"⁵³⁾), in which he discussed the problems of the Polish community living in the Ukraine. He wrote about new social developments, economic changes and other similar topics. We find, once again, in these articles severe attacks on capitalism and industrialization. His economic theories were based on the conviction that agriculture is all-important in the national economy. He wrote in the *Gazeta Codzienna*:

...we place before and above everything agriculture and all that is directly related to it...

...manufacture, industry and commerce should not overwhelm our agriculture, but should be subordinated to it, as befits things of a lower station⁵⁴⁾.

As the tempo of political events, leading up to the 1863 insurrection, increased, Korzeniowski threw himself wholeheartedly into political activ-

49) Stefan Żeromski (1864-1925), novelist and dramatist.

50) Stefan Żeromski, *Elegie i inne pisma społeczne* (Cracow, 1928), p. 395.

51) See: Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 361.

52) Karol Dickens, *Ciężkie czasy na te czasy. Tłumaczenie z roku 1866 Apolla Korzeniowskiego* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1955).

53) The Bug is a river in Poland. The territories east of the Bug were regarded by the Russians as a part of Russia proper.

54) From [Apollo Korzeniowski], "Korespondencja Gazety Codziennej. Zza Buga," *Gazeta Codzienna* (Warsaw), 225 (18 July 1860); quoted by Taborski, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

ity. He wrote at the time several political pamphlets which were used as evidence against him when he was arrested by the Russian authorities in October 1861.

An important by-product of his political writings was a treatise entitled *Polska i Moskwa (Poland and Muscovy)* which Korzeniowski wrote during his exile in Chernikhov and which appeared anonymously in 1864 in *Ojczyzna (The Fatherland)*, an émigré newspaper published in Leipzig⁵⁵). *Polska i Moskwa* is partly a personal memoir and partly an essay in the philosophy of history.

Korzeniowski begins by narrating his arrest and imprisonment in the Warsaw Citadel. He describes the notorious prison with his usual heavy irony:

This embodiment of the "beneficence, revivalism and regeneration" of Alexander I, named after him, is constantly threatening the Polish capital with extermination and stifling inside it one generation after another of Polish patriots.

Such is the book of Genesis of the Alexandrine Citadel in Warsaw⁵⁶).

An attack on his Russian gaolers leads to an invective against the Russian army:

I deliberately use the word *soldat*, rather than *soldier*. The concept of the soldier prompts thoughts of noble courage and manly devotion. Muscovy has never had, has not, and can never have soldiers... The *soldat* is a typically Muscovite product. *Soldats* are armed and organized brigands and looters, beginning with the Commander-in-Chief, and ending with the camp-followers. Their civilians are unarmed thieves in uniform; their military, the same thieves, armed for the purpose of brigandage⁵⁷).

Circumstantial material then gives way to a general indictment of Russia:

For all Muscovy is a prison. From the time of the Ruriks onwards, under the Tartar yoke, under the tyranny of the Ivanovs, under the knouts of Tzars and Tzaritzas, etc., she was, is and always will be a prison, otherwise she would cease to be herself. — In this prison perpetrated crimes and flourishing falsehood copulate whorishly. The law and the established religion bless this union. Its progeny: the prostitution of all religious, social, political, national and personal relationships⁵⁸).

The central thesis of Korzeniowski's dissertation runs as follows: The progress of humanity is a constant struggle between civilization and barbarism; one aspect of this deadly struggle is the age-long conflict between

55 [Apollo Korzeniowski], "Polska i Moskwa. Pamiętnik*** zaczęty 186..." ("Poland and Muscovy. A Memoir*** begun in 186...") *Ojczyzna; Dziennik polityczny, literacki i naukowy* (Leipzig), No. 27-9, 31, 34-6, 42-52 (1864).

56 *Ojczyzna*, 27 (3 June 1864), p. 1.

57 *Loc. cit.*

58 *Ibid.*, 28 (4 June 1864), p. 1.

Poland and Russia, the former acting as the outpost of the Western European civilization, the latter being the incarnation of oriental barbarism.

The Polish way of life — writes Korzeniowski — as the mould of all immortal human values: faith, patriotism, the family — finds its direct antithesis in Muscovite life. Polish inspired thought turns in the Muscovite mind into systematic and arrant falsehood ⁵⁹).

Poland stands for the Western ideals of democracy, personal freedom and patriotic idealism; Russia offers tyranny, moral nihilism, corruption and cynicism. As in the days of the Tartar invasions, Poland is the last outpost of the Western civilization, which the barbaric hordes are intent on destroying. Thus the conflict between Poland and Russia is not merely a national affair - it is the prelude and first stage of a far more momentous struggle: the struggle between the West and the East, between civilization and barbarism. The West, however, does not realize the issues involved in the Russo-Polish conflict:

Ninety years ago, the European governments and nations looked on calmly, as locusts fell upon the most fertile fields; as miasmas of the filthiest, deadliest pestilence spread; as a sea of putrid mud covered crops and fields; as barbarism, obscurantism and dissent engulfed civilization, light, faith in God and the future of mankind — briefly, as Muscovy conquered Poland ⁶⁰).

Korzeniowski continues:

Muscovy has her own distinct civilization: terrible, corrupt and destructive. She pays homage to this civilization, formed under the Tartar whip and the knouts of the Tzars, as if it were some god; but she does this in secret, under the cover of an assumed imitation of Western refinement ⁶¹).

Speaking as a man from the borderlands, from the zone where the conflict is actually being waged, Korzeniowski warns the West:

The aim of the spirit of the Muscovite civilization is to spread the smear of falsehood over all mankind ⁶²).

and

...to destroy all human progress ⁶³).

59) *Loc. cit.*

60) *Ojczyzna*, 29 (5 June 1864), p. 2.

61) *Ibid.*, 27 (3 June 1864), p. 2.

62) *Ibid.*, 28 (4 June 1864), p. 2.

63) *Ibid.*, 27 (3 June 1864), p. 2.

But, Korzeniowski goes on, the Russian colossus, reared in fear, tyranny and falsehood, "which spreads its body from the Frozen Sea to the Black Sea and from the Vistula to the Pacific" ⁶⁴).

...has all the strengths, as well as all the weaknesses of a giant. It can crush because of its sheer weight, but, at the same time, the bulk of its limbs, joined in an unproportional and therefore unwholesome way, hampers its movements ⁶⁵).

The very forces that make Russia so powerful abroad are also the main source of its weakness at home. The West needs only to push the huge, rotten hulk and its own internal poisons will destroy it finally.

Korzeniowski's attitude to Russia is a typical, if somewhat extreme example of the outlook of contemporary Polish philosophers of history. A milder form, upon which he almost certainly drew, will be found in the famous course of Slavonic literatures, delivered by Mickiewicz at the Collège de France ⁶⁶).

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Korzeniowski's views also remind one of Karl Marx's writings on Russia ⁶⁷). In one of the articles, which appeared in 1856 and 1857 in the London *Free Press*, Marx wrote:

Muscovy was raised and educated in the vicious and miserable school of Mongolian slavery. It won its strength only by becoming a virtuoso in the arts of slavery. Even after having liberated itself, Muscovy as conqueror played its traditionally slave-like role. It was Peter the Great who finally combined the political skill of the Mongolian slave with the proud strivings of the Mongolian overlord to whom Jhengiz Khan had bequeathed in his last will the conquest of the world ⁶⁸).

Or again, in a speech given in London, probably on 22 January 1867, at a meeting commemorating the Polish uprising of 1863, Marx said:

There is but one alternative for Europe. Either Asiatic barbarism, under Muscovite direction, will burst around its head like an avalanche, or else it must re-establish Poland, thus putting twenty million heroes between itself and Asia and gaining a breathing spell for the accomplishment of its social regeneration ⁶⁹).

64) From *Ojczyzna*; quoted in translation by Czesław Miłosz in "Joseph Conrad in Polish Eyes," *The Art of Joseph Conrad; a Critical Symposium*, edited by R. W. Stallman (Michigan, 1960), p. 37.

65) *Ojczyzna*, 49 (29 June 1864), p. 2.

66) In 1840 Mickiewicz was appointed to the newly founded chair of Slavonic languages and literature at the Collège de France and held the post until May 1844 when the French government brought about his suspension for political reasons. The lectures were extremely popular and parts of the text appeared in Polish (1841-2) and in German (1843), whilst they were still in progress. The original French text was published in 1849: *Les Slaves; Cours professé au Collège de France par Adam Mickiewicz...* 5 vols. (Paris, 1849).

67) Cf. Czesław Miłosz in *Kultura*, No. 100, p. 76.

68) From: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Russian Menace to Europe*, edited by Paul W. Blackstock and Bert F. Hoelitz (London, 1953), p. 254.

69) *Ibid.*, p. 108.

Unlike Marx, however, Korzeniowski was a pessimist. He knew that no one would listen to him. He assumed the role of an embittered and resigned Cassandra:

Such as Muscovy is, from fear of her own annihilation, she is forced to fight outside her borders. Although Europe may avoid the struggle for a long time yet, the moment will come when it will be no longer possible to escape it; but then the time will have been chosen by Muscovy. Thus will Europe be robbed of half its strength ⁷⁰).

Korzeniowski continued to be interested in Russia. In 1868, during his stay in Lwów, he wrote to Stefan Buszczyński:

I have in mind a great Polish novel about the corruption that has fallen upon us from Muscovy, through its Asiatic pomp, through its bureaucratic honours, the unbelief disseminated by its public educational system; further, through the baubles of the civilised, Muscovite high society, and finally, about how all these have infiltrated into our families ⁷¹).

He never wrote this novel. Some forty years later, however, his son Conrad informed Galsworthy that he was working on "a story the title of which is *Razumov*".

Isn't it expressive? [— Conrad continued —] I think that I am trying to capture the very soul of things Russian — *Cosas de Russia*. It is not easy work but it may be rather good when it's done ⁷².

The result was *Under Western Eyes* - one of the most powerful anti-Russian novels that have ever been written.

To complete this brief survey of Apollo Korzeniowski's work, and to show the full extent and variety of his literary interests, one should also mention his criticism. Apart from prefaces and introductions to his own works, Korzeniowski also wrote some reviews and studies of his contemporaries. But, most important of all, he published in 1868 a long essay entitled *Studia nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira* (*Studies on the Dramatic Element in the Works of Shakespeare*) ⁷³). The study,

70) From *Ojczyzna*; quoted in translation by Miłosz in "Joseph Conrad in Polish Eyes," *The Art of Joseph Conrad*, ed. R. W. Stallman, p. 37.

71) Quoted by Miłosz in *Kultura*, 100, p. 79.

74) Conrad to Galsworthy, 6 January 1908, in G. Jean-Aubry, *Joseph Conrad; Life and Letters* (London, 1927), II, p. 64.

73) Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski, "Studia nad dramatycznością w utworach Szekspira," *Biblioteka Warszawska* (1868), Vol. II, pp. 1-17, 219-232.

inspired by the critical writings of the German scholars Gervinus and Kreysig, is the work of a great admirer of Shakespeare:

Shakespeare! It is enough to pronounce this name and at once a whole world of alluring visions deludes the mind. Before one's eyes, the man and the poet, his people and its civilization, and his age stand out — enigmatical and alluring.

The life of this extraordinary man did not especially attract the attention of his contemporaries, and for posterity it remains in a well-nigh impenetrable darkness. But the dramatic work he created shines on the new road he opened up all the more brilliantly, as after three hundred years, he still stands alone, unique, and solitary ⁷⁴).

Having paid tribute to the great English dramatist, Korzeniowski considers in general terms the character and essence of dramatic writing. He argues that drama is essentially a social art form; as opposed to lyric poetry, for instance, which can be enjoyed and appreciated to the full by the individual in isolation, drama achieves fullness of expression only in the theatre, in front of an audience. Hence, the dramatist should always create in close communion with the people. According to Korzeniowski, dramatic art develops and rises to the heights of achievement only when it stands "close to the majority, the masses, the people" ⁷⁵), and declines and degenerates, when it becomes exclusive and dependent solely on "the upper classes":

Dramatic art flourishes and gains in stature only when it is closely linked with the taste, the customs, the whole life of a people; when it becomes a nation's festival, its entertainment, its absolute necessity ⁷⁶).

This, according to Korzeniowski, was the position held by drama in Ancient Greece and later in Elizabethan England.

After these preliminary remarks, Korzeniowski proceeds to the main subject of his study, which is, Shakespeare's philosophy of life, as expressed in his works, and the effect of this philosophy on the matter and the form of his dramas:

The new pattern of dramatic art was born in his [Shakespeare's] soul through an insight into *the essence of man*. The bard's genius was moved and inspired by a universal spectacle; a spectacle of almost daily recurrence and yet one which goes unperceived by mankind, in spite of the fact that man is in it both the author and the spectator. This spectacle is the deadly struggle of the might of *Man* with the powers of Fate ⁷⁷).

When we see the terrible disproportion that exists between man's endeavours and his ultimate achievements, between the infinitude of human desires and the extremely limited possibilities of fruition, we are

74) Quoted in translation by Gustav Morf, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-5.

75) Quoted by Taborski, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

76) From *Biblioteka Warszawska* (1868), Vol. II, p. 5; quoted by Taborski, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

77) Quoted by Piotr Chmielowski in *Dzieje krytyki literackiej w Polsce (The History of Literary Criticism in Poland)* (Warsaw, 1902), p. 560.

moved to pity and tears⁷⁸⁾. But when, on the other hand, the struggle turns round petty vanities and insignificant issues, and we witness the triumph of fools, we laugh and are amused. The first attitude gives us in drama the tragic vision; the second, is the essence of comedy.

The central theme of Shakespeare's work is "the inner man, encompassed by the circumstances of earthly existence". In his plays Shakespeare treats this theme in three different ways. In the tragedies and *Richard III* he deals with "the individual reality of man", and "the truth of destiny in the human soul". In the historical plays he shows "the collective reality of man in history". In these works "events play the main role, and the character of the hero cannot be creative, but becomes a part of history". "The works of Shakespeare which were later called comedies" are, according to Korzeniowski, Shakespeare's "escape into the world of illusions from the terrors of reality" which he examined in the tragedies and histories. To support his theory, Korzeniowski contrasts Shakespeare's comedies with those of Aristophanes and Molière; and concludes that their work is far more concerned with "human reality" than is Shakespeare's⁷⁹⁾.

So much space has been devoted to Apollo Korzeniowski's writing because he was the first and probably the most important formative influence on Conrad during the novelist's Polish years; because Conrad critics and biographers, whilst stressing Korzeniowski's political activities, have usually neglected him as a writer; and thirdly, because much of the material upon which these pages are based is, practically speaking, inaccessible to the English reader.

The time has now come to relate Apollo Korzeniowski's work to Conrad. Although we can hardly expect to find direct borrowings, there are obvious points of likeness which may help us to get an idea of the kind of influence that Korzeniowski's thought and writing exerted on Conrad.

To begin with, both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad were serious writers, in the sense that in everything they wrote they were concerned with problems which they regarded as fundamental and which they treated accordingly. Although, of course, there is no comparison whatsoever in the artistic and intellectual quality, we find a similar intensity of feeling in the writing of both the father and the son. But, whereas Conrad always subjected his work to the strictest discipline of artistic expression, Korzeniowski frequently allowed himself to be carried away by his ideas. Closely allied to this earnestness, and undoubtedly, largely responsible for it, was the fact that both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad had a more or less comprehensive philosophy of life which informed and coloured their writing.

Apollo Korzeniowski was a deeply religious man, an ardent patriot and, to a lesser extent, a social rebel. As has already been remarked, his ideas were strongly influenced by the so-called Polish Messianic school⁸⁰⁾. Messianism neatly combined patriotic and religious sentiments by endowing Poland with the historic mission of reconverting Europe to the true

78) It is interesting to compare these ideas with the preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (p. vii ff.), and *A Personal Record* (p. 92).

79) Quoted by Chmielowski in *The History of Literary Criticism in Poland*, pp. 560-565.

80) See: p. 121 f.

spirit of Christianity. This moral regeneration was to embrace all spheres of life: the political, the social, as well as the personal. The core of the ideology was an elaborate quasi-mystical system which obviously appealed to the poetic imagination, since some of its most eager exponents were poets.

Korzeniowski was a fanatic, as far as his convictions were concerned, but he was not a doctrinaire. In the best tradition of the Polish gentry, he was tolerant and liberal-minded. Thus, for example, on arriving in Cracow in 1869, he did not join one of the Catholic papers, but instead the democratic and free-thinking *Kraj (Our Country)*. For, although he disagreed with the paper on religious grounds, he fully sympathized with its political aims. *Kraj* was leftist and patriotic; whilst the Catholic press was dominated by reactionary, pro-Austrian circles. We find a similar mixture of tolerance and fanaticism in Conrad. In his correspondence Conrad never disguised his fanatical hatred of the Russians, and yet, in *Under Western Eyes* he could write about them with detachment, understanding and even sympathy.

Conrad reacted early against his father's religiousness⁸¹), which, particularly towards the end of Apollo Korzeniowski's life, took a morbidly obsessive turn, but he retained a religious frame of mind. There is a marked metaphysical undercurrent in all of Conrad's work. His protagonists are pitched against the forces of fate and nature which at times seem not just indifferent but positively hostile. The sense of loneliness which pervades his work is not simply social alienation but a kind of existential anguish. And evil in such works as the "Heart of Darkness" and *Victory* has a distinctly supernatural dimension.

It is also possible to argue that there is a connection between Apollo Korzeniowski's mystical tendencies, which became especially pronounced after his exile to Russia, and what could be described as "mystical elements" in Conrad's writings. In the little known fragment of a novel, *The Sisters*, we constantly meet such passages as:

With a child's fearless stare Stephen's eyes exchanged placid and profound glances with the inscrutable stars. Ignorant and undismayed he stretched his unsteady little hands towards the universe in a desire to play with that brilliant dust which streams through infinite space into an infinity of time. The glory of heaven is very near a child's soul, as the memory of his native land is near the heart of an exile at the beginning of his pilgrimage⁸²).

Although Conrad soon outgrew this style of writing, he continued to express in his work yearnings for the absolute, the infinite and the ideal. There is Marlow's evocation of the East in "Youth"⁸³), Stein's oft-quoted:

81) Once he told Garnett: "It's strange how I always, from the age of fourteen, disliked the Christian religion, its doctrines, ceremonies and festivals." (22 December 1902, *Letters from Conrad*, p. 188.) In the Poland of Conrad's childhood "Christian festivals" were first and foremost family occasions. It is therefore not surprising that Conrad, who was an orphan from the age of eleven, developed an early dislike for them. For him they were only painful reminders of his dead parents and of his loneliness.

82) Joseph Conrad, *The Sisters*, with an introduction by Ford Madox Ford (New York, 1928), p. 27.

83) *Youth*, p. 37.

"To follow the dream, and again to follow the dream — and so — *ewig — usque ad finem...*"⁸⁴⁾ and the romantic suicide of Renouard who "set out calmly to swim beyond the confines of life — with a steady stroke — his eyes fixed on a star!"⁸⁵⁾

Furthermore, Conrad surrounded woman and the sea with an aura of mystical awe. In *The Arrow of Gold* he wrote:

Woman and the sea revealed themselves to me together, as it were: two mistresses of life's values. The illimitable greatness of the one, the unfathomable seduction of the other...⁸⁶⁾.

And in *Chance*:

...the part falling to women's share being all 'influence' has an air of occult and mysterious action, something not altogether trustworthy like all natural forces which, for us, work in the dark because of our imperfect comprehension⁸⁷⁾.

In the preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* he spoke of art and the artist in almost mystical terms. And in the "Heart of Darkness" he tried to capture the very soul of evil:

And for a moment it seemed to me as if I also were buried in a vast grave full of unspeakable secrets. I felt an intolerable weight oppressing my breast, the smell of the damp earth, the unseen presence of victorious corruption, the darkness of an impenetrable night...⁸⁸⁾.

An important theme of Conrad's work is the notion that reality is illusory and that life is only a dream⁸⁹⁾. Stein says: "A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea..."⁹⁰⁾ and Decoud ends the letter to his sister with the words: "...all this is life, must be life, since it is so much like a dream"⁹¹⁾. Conrad himself, writing towards the end of his life to Christopher Sandman, said: "I felt more than ever how much *la vida es sueño...*"⁹²⁾. This idea, which we associate with Plato and which frequently recurs in religious thought, presupposes the existence of another real world. It is clearly incompatible with any genuine materialistic philosophy.

Having rejected the tenets of religion, Conrad embraced a stoical view of life together with a moral code, based on such concepts as fidelity, duty,

84) *Lord Jim*, pp. 214-5.

85) "The Planter of Malata," *Within the Tides*, p. 85.

86) *The Arrow of Gold*, p. 88.

87) *Chance*, p. 327.

88) "The Heart of Darkness," *Youth*, p. 138.

89) Cf. Jocelyn Baines, *Joseph Conrad: a Critical Biography* (London, 1960), pp. 190, 448 and 449.

90) *Lord Jim*, p. 214.

91) *Nostramo*, p. 249.

92) 21 November, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 285. *La vida es sueño* (Life is a Dream) is the title of Calderon's famous play.

responsibility, solidarity and honour, to which he adhered as tenaciously as his father had clung to orthodox Christian ethics.

Apollo Korzeniowski's fanatical patriotism also left its mark on Conrad. Although much of his youth was spent in a cosmopolitan setting, Conrad remained an ardent patriot throughout his life. Not only did he keep his feelings for Poland alive, but developed a deep emotional attachment to England. Moreover, he regarded patriotism itself as a highly commendable sentiment. At the beginning of "Prince Roman" he writes:

...patriotism — a somewhat discredited sentiment, because the delicacy of our humanitarians regards it as a relic of barbarism. Yet neither the great Florentine painter who closed his eyes in death thinking of his city, nor St. Francis blessing with his last breath the town of Assisi, were barbarians. It requires a certain greatness of soul to interpret patriotism worthily — or else a sincerity of feeling denied to the vulgar refinement of modern thought which cannot understand the august simplicity of a sentiment proceeding from the very nature of things and men ⁹³).

Conrad's high regard for patriotic feelings was, of course, a logical consequence of his moral philosophy in which the virtue of virtues was loyalty.

Side by side with these high ideals, we find in Apollo Korzeniowski's and Conrad's work a profound and all-embracing scepticism. Both were deeply conscious of the imperfections of the world and of human nature. Conrad once wrote to Cunninghame Graham:

International fraternity may be an object to strive for, and, in sober truth, since it has your support I will try to think it serious, but that illusion imposes by its size alone. Franchement, what would you think of an attempt to promote fraternity amongst people living in the same street, I don't even mention two neighbouring streets? Two ends of the same street.

There is already as much fraternity as there can be, — and that's very little and that very little is no good. What does fraternity mean? Abnegation, — self-sacrifice means something. Fraternity means nothing unless the Cain-Abel business. That's your true fraternity. Assez.

L'homme est un animal méchant. Sa méchanceté doit être organisée. Le crime est une condition nécessaire de l'existence organisée. La société est essentiellement criminelle, — ou elle n'existerait pas ⁹⁴).

Both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad distrusted human motives, intentions and even ideals. In *Dla milego grosza* (*For the Sake of Money*) Korzeniowski gives the portrait of a revolutionary idealist who has turned into a cynic.

Similarly, in Conrad's political novels most of the revolutionaries are cynics and hypocrites. Hueffer has said of Conrad:

He was, that is to say a student of politics, without prescription, without dogma, and, as a Papist, with a profound disbelief in the perfectability of human institutions ⁹⁵).

93) "Prince Roman," *Tales of Hearsay*, pp. 29-30.

94) February 1899, *Life and Letters*, I, p. 269.

95) Ford Madox Ford pseud [i.e. F. M. Hueffer], *Joseph Conrad: a Personal Remembrance* (London, 1924), p. 58.

Both Conrad and Korzeniowski feared change which, in their opinion, could only bring further chaos. They eyed with suspicion such new developments as industrialization, urbanization and the growth of capitalism. In their hankering after order and stability, they looked to simpler social structures based on tradition and some kind of aristocratic hierarchy. Apollo Korzeniowski saw his ideal in the agrarian, feudal society of pre-partition Poland; Conrad, on board the ships of the British merchant navy. Both stressed time and again the corruptive power of money. For Apollo Korzeniowski money was the antithesis of all higher values, turning love into prostitution, and patriotism into servility and opportunism. Conrad saw in material interests a major threat to the "solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts" ⁹⁶⁾. An acute awareness of social evil, running parallel to a feeling of powerlessness and a fear of change, resulted, in the case of both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad, in the curious, though by no means infrequent, admixture of anarchism and conservatism. It also induced a sense of frustration and fatalism.

Both were pessimists: Korzeniowski notwithstanding his deep religious faith; Conrad in spite of the fact that he lived and wrote in a country which was at the height of its political and economic power. To both the spirit of nineteenth century optimism was quite alien. They did not believe in the myth of human progress. They saw civilization surrounded by the forces of barbarism and primeval chaos ⁹⁷⁾. Conrad further believed that these destructive forces not only encompassed civilized man, but were immanent in him, ready to surge up at any moment ⁹⁸⁾. The darkness of the Congo penetrates Kurtz's very soul, and brings out the savage in him. Falk becomes a cannibal when his survival is at stake. Gentleman Brown's massacre of Dain Warris's party is "a demonstration of some obscure and awful attribute of our nature which, I am afraid, is not so very far under the surface as we like to think" ⁹⁹⁾. And, when Winnie Verloc stabs her husband she puts into her blow "all the inheritance of her immemorial and obscure descent, the simple ferocity of the age of caverns" ¹⁰⁰⁾.

Both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad saw the embodiment of these forces of barbarism and primeval chaos in Russia. Writing to Edward Garnett about Dostoevsky, Conrad said:

Moreover, I don't know what D. stands for or reveals, but I do know that he is too Russian for me. It sounds to me like some fierce mouthings from prehistoric ages ¹⁰¹⁾.

96) *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus,'* p. viii.

97) Cf. Mitosz in "Joseph Conrad in Polish Eyes," *The Art of Joseph Conrad*, ed. R. W. Stallman, p. 38.

98) Bertrand Russell has written of Conrad: "I felt, though I do not know whether he would have accepted such an image, that he thought of civilized and morally tolerable human life as a dangerous walk on a thin crust of barely cooled lava which at any moment might break and let the unwary sink into fiery depths." *Portraits from Memory and other Essays* (London, 1956), p. 82; quoted by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

99) *Lord Jim*, p. 404.

100) *The Secret Agent*, p. 263.

101) 27 May 1912, in Edward Garnett, *Letters from Conrad, 1895 to 1924*, edited with Introduction and Notes (London, 1928), p. 260.

Like his father, Conrad regarded Russia as the antithesis of the Western European civilization and a threat to humanity. In his most important piece of political writing "Autocracy and War", Conrad wrote:

...she [Russia] is and has been simply the negation of everything worth living for. She is not an empty void, she is a yawning chasm open between East and West; a bottomless abyss that has swallowed up every hope of mercy, every aspiration towards personal dignity, towards freedom, towards knowledge, every ennobling desire of the heart, every redeeming whisper of conscience. Those that have peered into that abyss, where the dreams of Panslavism, of universal conquest, mingled with the hate and contempt for Western ideas, drift impotently like shapes of mist, know well that it is bottomless; that there is in it no ground for anything that could in the remotest degree serve even the lowest interests of mankind — ...¹⁰²).

He stressed the un-European character of the Russian civilization. In *The Secret Agent* Mr. Vladimir speaks "with an amazingly guttural intonation not only utterly un-English, but absolutely un-European"¹⁰³ and uses "Oriental phraseology"¹⁰⁴. In *Under Western Eyes* Conrad describes Russia as "the autocracy in mystic vestments engendered by the slavery of a Tartar conquest"¹⁰⁵. *Under Western Eyes* is "a Russian story for Western ears, which, as I have observed already, are not attuned to certain tones of cynicism and cruelty, of moral negation, and even of moral distress already silenced at our end of Europe"¹⁰⁶.

Both Apollo Korzeniowski and Conrad attributed the moral nihilism which, they believed, characterized the Russian civilization, to the age-long heritage of autocratic rule. We read in "Autocracy and War":

From the very first ghastly dawn of her existence as a State she [Russia] had to breathe the atmosphere of despotism; she found nothing but the arbitrary will of an obscure autocrat at the beginning and end of her organisation. Hence arises her impenetrability to whatever is true in Western thought. Western thought, when it crosses her frontier, falls under the spell of her autocracy and becomes a noxious parody of itself¹⁰⁷). Hence the contradictions, the riddles of her national life, which are looked upon with such curiosity by the rest of the world. The curse had entered her very soul; autocracy, and nothing else in the world, has moulded her institutions, and with the poison of slavery drugged the national temperament into the apathy of a hopeless fatalism¹⁰⁸).

Not only are Conrad's ideas about Russia and Poland extremely reminiscent of Apollo Korzeniowski's theories in *Polska i Moskwa (Poland*

102) "Autocracy and War," *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 100.

103) *The Secret Agent*, p. 24.

104) *Ibid.*, p. 226. For an interesting analysis of *The Secret Agent* from this point of view, see: Thomas Mann, "Joseph Conrad's 'The Secret Agent' Preface to the German edition" in *Past Masters, and other papers...* Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter (London, 1933), p. 235 ff.

105) *Under Western Eyes*, p. 142.

106) *Ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

107) Cf. Korzeniowski in *Ojczyzna*, No. 28, "Polish inspired thought turns in the Muscovite mind into systematic and arrant falsehood."

108) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 96.

and Muscory), but the very manner in which they are expressed is similar. Both Conrad and Korzeniowski appeal principally to the reader's emotions. The language is passionate, rhetorical and colourful. Korzeniowski time and again stresses Russia's inhumanity:

But as soon as she was defeated, she would cringe and whine in every human language, imitating one nation after another, in order to convince men that she was in fact human¹⁰⁹).

Conrad compares Russia to some Eastern ogre:

This dreaded and strange apparition, bristling with bayonets, armed with chains, hung over with holy images; that something not of this world, partaking of a ravenous ghoul, of a blind Djinn grown up from a cloud, and of the Old Man of the Sea...¹¹⁰).

Both are very fond of irony. Neither is afraid of using straightforward invective. At one point Korzeniowski says: "Rub a Russian a little, and a Mongol will appear before you"¹¹¹). Conrad, too, can be vicious. In "Autocracy and War" he writes: "For the autocracy of Holy Russia the only conceivable self-reform is — suicide"¹¹²).

In his articles on the Polish Question Conrad, again like his father, stressed the Western character of Poland:

The Poles, [— he wrote in "A Note on the Polish Problem" —] whom superficial or ill-informed theorists are trying to force into the social and psychological formula of Slavonism, are in truth not Slavonic at all. In temperament, in feeling, in mind, and even in unreason, they are Western, with an absolute comprehensions of all Western modes of thought, even of those which are remote from their historical experience¹¹³).

In another article, entitled "The Crime of Partition", he said:

The success of renewed life for that nation whose fate is to remain in exile, ever isolated from the West, amongst hostile surroundings, depends on the sympathetic understanding of its problems by its distant friends, the Western Powers, which in their democratic development must recognize the moral and intellectual kinship of that distant outpost of their own type of civilization, which was the only basis of Polish culture¹¹⁴).

Furthermore, he argued that the disappearance of Poland - "That advanced outpost of Western civilization"¹¹⁵) — "would remove a possibly

109) *Ojczyzna*, No. 27 (3 June 1864), p. 2.

110) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 89.

111) *Ojczyzna*, No. 27 (3 June 1864), p. 2.

112) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 101.

113) *Ibid.*, p. 135.

114) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 131.

115) *Ibid.*, p. 138.

effective barrier against the surprises the future of Europe may hold in store for the Western Powers" ¹¹⁶).

As has already been pointed out, Apollo Korzeniowski achieved his best results in drama. The dramatic element is also very important in Conrad's work ¹¹⁷). His stories unfold in a succession of episodes, conceived and presented dramatically, and nearly always end with a dramatic climax. It is the dramatic episodes: the storm in *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, Jim's fatal "jump", Razumov's walk through the snowed-up streets of St. Petersburg, Verloc's death, the sea-chase in *The Rover*, etc., that leave the most lasting impression. Conrad tried his hand at dramatic writing a number of times, but invariably failed ¹¹⁸). He probably lacked a practical knowledge of the theatre as well as a command of colloquial English.

It would be wrong to conclude on the evidence of these similarities that Conrad's writing was directly influenced by Apollo Korzeniowski's work. We do not even know how much of his father's work Conrad had actually read. But since he spent the greater part of his childhood with his father, the latter's thought and interests were bound to have some effect on Conrad's imagination. The similarities which we have just discussed serve as a pointer to the nature of this influence.

But the most obvious as well as the most important "influence" that Apollo Korzeniowski exerted on Conrad was the fact that he introduced him to literature and creative writing.

116) *Ibid.*, p. 137.

117) For an interesting discussion of the dramatic element in Conrad's work see: Paul Kirschner, "A Study of Conrad's Use of the Principles of Dramatic Technique and Construction in his Fiction, With a Comment on his Three Plays," University of London M. A. Thesis (1956).

118) In 1904 Conrad wrote a one-act play, based on the short story "To-morrow" and called it *One Day More*. In 1919 he made a dramatic version of *The Secret Agent*. And in 1920 he dramatized the story "Because of the Dollars," and called the resulting two-act play *Laughing Anne*.

Chapter II

TWO MINOR GUARDIANS AND TADEUSZ BOBROWSKI

After Apollo Korzeniowski's death in 1869, Conrad passed through the hands of several guardians, before he was finally taken into the care of his uncle Tadeusz Bobrowski. It is worth noting that all those who looked after Conrad, when he was a child, were people of some importance in Polish cultural life.

His first guardian was Stefan Buszczyński (1821-1892), a close friend of Apollo Korzeniowski. Buszczyński was a minor dramatist, poet, literary critic, journalist and, above all, an historian, belonging to the so-called Polish romantic school of historians, which originated with Joachim Lelewel¹¹⁹⁾.

Buszczyński began his literary career with a novelette entitled *Wymarzony kochanek* (*The Ideal Lover*) (1848) and two mediocre dramatic works, a comedy called *Leliwa* (1857)¹²⁰⁾ and a contemporary play, *Demokraci i Arystokraci* (*Democrats and Aristocrats*) (1857), which he revised in 1876, and published under the new title of *Posłannicy* (*The Envoys*)¹²¹⁾. It is an extremely patriotic work which tells the story of a woman who sacrifices her own happiness for the good of the country. In addition to that, the play criticises the political quarrels which divided contemporary Polish society, at a time when national unity was of the utmost importance. (Incidentally, the central male figure is called Konrad.)

Buszczyński also wrote poetry. In 1857 he published a volume of poems entitled *Inne życie* (*Another Life*). There followed in 1872 a long narrative poem called *Niewolnik* (*The Slave*). Finally, in 1886 he published another narrative poem, *Syn Zemsty* (*The Son of Vengeance*) and a patriotic visionary poem, *Duch światła* (*The Spirit of light*). His poetic achievements are not outstanding.

Buszczyński's best and most important work, however, is to be found in the political and historical writings which he published between 1860 and 1890 in Polish, French and German¹²²⁾. In his life and writing Buszczyński showed himself to be a great patriot, an ardent supporter of

119) Gabriel Korbut calls it "The Lelewelian historical school"; *Literatura polska od początków do wojny światowej* (Warsaw, 1930), III, p. 2.

Joachim Lelewel (1786-1861), historian, geographer and numismatist.

120) [Stefan Buszczyński], *Leliwa. Komedja we dwóch aktach, dla teatru amatorskiego napisana* (Kiev, 1857).

121) Stefan Buszczyński, *Posłannicy. Obraz dramatyczny w pięciu odstonach* (Lwów, 1876).

122) These include: *La décadence de l'Europe* (1867), *Die Wunden Europas* (1875), *Ameryka i Europa* (*America and Europe*) (1876), *Le catéchisme social* (1876), *Przestroga historii* (*The Warning of History*) (1882), *Znaczenie dziejów Polski i walk o niepodległość* (*The Significance of Polish History and the Struggle for Independence*) (1883) and *Obrona spotwarzzonego narodu* (*The Defence of a Slandered Nation*) (1888-1890).

all freedom movements and an uncompromising opposer of foreign domination. This is how he saw his life's mission in *Duch światła*:

On this solitary journey
wherever I stood, I never spared trouble,
nor grudged to sow the seed,
nor refused willing service;
and I preached to the people the people's gospel:
the Laws of Freedom and the Rights of Man¹²³).

Writing about Buszczyński in *The History of Polish Political Thought*, Wilhelm Feldman says:

This warm-hearted continuator of national romanticism, brought up on the liberal traditions of contemporary Europe, spent half of his life combating sham culture, and especially the slanderers and enemies of Poland. At a time when Europe was drunk with "progress", Buszczyński showed how full of confusion, corruption and poverty this Europe was. Only freedom and education could remedy this state of affairs. Buszczyński was an ardent republican, but an enemy of socialism and strikes, as well as of the temporal power of the Papacy. He prophesied the fall of Austria "that state without foundations, without a nation, without a language, and without a soul", he admired America — his ideal was a federation on the Swiss model. Both emotionally and logically, he had to be a bitter opponent of Russia and of all those who tried to disguise her real intentions towards humanity and Poland¹²⁴).

Buszczyński's works were thought highly of by a large section of the Polish community. In 1869 he was elected a member of the Cracow Academic Society and in 1872 he became a fellow of the Polish Academy of Learning. Abroad, he was read and admired by such people as Victor Hugo and Jules Michelet. Later, however, he came under heavy fire from the historians of the so-called Cracow historical school, who considered his work unacademic¹²⁵).

He also seems to have been well-versed in literature and wrote about three of the contemporary Polish writers: Kraszewski, Pol and Apollo Korzeniowski¹²⁶) — incidentally, all of them personal friends.

A collected edition of Buszczyński's works started coming out in Cracow in 1894-5. In the end, however, only eight volumes appeared.

123) From Stefan Buszczyński, *Duch światła, wieszczba z dziejów* (Cracow, 1886); quoted in the preface to *Zbiorowe wydanie pism Stefana Buszczyńskiego* (*The Collected Works of Stefan Buszczyński*), 2nd edition (Cracow, 1894), Vol. I, p. 1.

124) Wilhelm Feldman, *Dzieje polskiej myśli politycznej w okresie porozbiorowym* (Cracow, 1918), II, pp. 307-308.

125) The Cracow historical school was a right-wing group of historians who expounded the thesis that Poland's downfall was caused by its own shortcomings, by the absence of a strong authority and by resulting anarchy. Amongst the leading historians, belonging to the school were: Józef Szujski (1835-1883), Michał Bobrzyński (1849-1935) and Walerian Kalinka (1826-1886).

126) S.[tefan] B.[uszczyński], "J. I. Kraszewski w życiu i pismach" in *Złote myśli J. I. Kraszewskiego*, edited by S. Wegner (Poznań, 1879).

[Stefan Buszczyński], *Pol i jego pisma* (Cracow, 1873).

Stefan Buszczyński, *Malo znany poeta...* (Cracow, 1870).

In 1870 a family council placed Conrad under the official guardianship of Teofila Bobrowska and Count Władysław Mniszek, "a cousin of the George Mniszek who, ten years earlier, had been Balzac's son-in-law" (127). The decision was officially ratified by a court of law (128).

Teofila Bobrowska, née Biberstein-Pilichowska, was Conrad's maternal grandmother. She had already looked after him several times during Apollo Korzeniowski's exile. Unlike her husband, Józef Bobrowski, Teofila was a patriot of the romantic kind, and at the time of Apollo's wooing of her daughter, Evelina, she had always been on her future son-in-law's side. In his memoirs Bobrowski describes his mother, Teofila, as a proud, intelligent, open-minded and extremely warm-hearted woman (129).

At school, Conrad's studies were supervised by an old friend of the family, Dr. Izidor Kopernicki (1825-1891). Kopernicki is to this day considered as one of the foremost Polish anthropologists (130). He studied medicine at the University of Kiev, where, in the spring of 1849, he obtained an honours degree "cum eximia laude". After his studies he was obliged to join the army in return for a scholarship which he had been given by the Russian government. As a part of his military service coincided with the Crimean war, he spent several years at the front. He performed his duties with great conscientiousness and was decorated three times. From 1857 to 1863 he worked in the department of anatomy at the University of Kiev. But when in 1863 the insurrection broke out, he abandoned everything and joined the insurgent forces. After the collapse of the rising he went into exile, first to Paris and then to Bucharest. In Paris he came in contact with the Paris Anthropological Society. He returned to Poland in 1871 and five years later joined the academic staff of the Medical Faculty of the University of Cracow. In 1886 he became the first Professor of Anthropology at the University. During his stay in Cracow he laid the foundations of the Anthropological Institute of the Polish Academy of Learning. Apart from his anthropological and medical work, Kopernicki also showed some interest in literature (131). Among other things, he collected, edited and translated folk tales and songs (132).

Throughout his life, Kopernicki was a fervent patriot, sympathetic

(127) Gérard Jean-Aubry, *The Sea Dreamer: A Definitive Biography of Joseph Conrad* (London, 1957), p. 47.

(128) See Baines, *op. cit.*, note 78 on p. 464.

(129) See Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 11-12.

(130) Some of Kopernicki's more important anthropological works (published in journals in Cracow, Paris and London) are: "Description d'un nouveau craniographe" (1867), "On the Works of John of Głogów" (1870), "Anatomical and Anthropological Observations On the Negro" (1871), "The Kalmucks" (1872), "Sur la conformation des crânes bulgares" (1875), "The Prehistoric Antiquities of the Caucasus" (1875), and "The Skulls of the Ainu" (1886).

(131) Bobrowski relates that when Kopernicki was in Kiev, Polish students would gather once a week in his flat to discuss politics and literature. (Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 225.)

(132) His works in this field include: "The King of the Serbs. A Tale from Lusatian Folk-lore" (1880), "Songs of the Carpathian Highlanders from the District of Rabka" (1888), *Na Vidov-dan (1389-1889). Serbian Lays About the Battle of Kosovo* (1889) and "Textes tsiganes. Contes et poésies avec traduction française" (1925 and 1930).

to the "Red" party¹³³). He was a close friend of both Stefan and Tadeusz Bobrowski, as well as of Antoni Syroczyński.

Concluding his monograph on Kopernicki, Michał Ówirko-Godycki writes:

There is no doubt that Kopernicki was an eminent scientist, in fact the greatest pioneer of anthropology in Poland and a man of extraordinary integrity of character and goodness of heart¹³⁴).

Conrad seems to have been very fond of Kopernicki, who, in his turn, was always interested in the fortunes of his former pupil. In 1881 Kopernicki asked Conrad a favour through Bobrowski. In a letter written from Marienbad, Bobrowski told Conrad:

Mr. Kopernicki has been asking me everything about you. I even read to him some of your letters, as I found one waiting for me on my arrival here. He is writing a great work, which has already brought him European fame: "The comparative study of the human races, based on the comparison of skulls". This science is called "craniology". He asks you to collect in the course of your voyage *native skulls*, writing on each one, whose it is and where it comes from; and when you have collected a dozen or so of these skulls, write to me, and he will give you instructions how to send them on to Cracow, where there is a special craniological museum. Please do not forget this and thus fulfil the scientist's wish. In doing this, you will give pleasure not only to him, but also to myself, for he is a very forthright, wise and learned man; moreover his attitude towards me is both very friendly and sympathetic¹³⁵).

Judging from Bobrowski's letter of 22 August, 1881, Conrad agreed to help Kopernicki.

The main purpose in giving this brief account of Stefan Buszczyński and Izidor Kopernicki has been to show that after Apollo Korzeniowski's death, Conrad remained for some time yet¹³⁶) under the influence of men similar to his father.

133) On the eve of the 1863 rising there were two main political parties centered on Warsaw: the "Whites" and the "Reds". Both the parties were opposed to Marquis Aleksander Wielopolski's policy of co-operation with the Tsarist government; both set as their aim the re-establishment of the 1772 boundaries of Poland, and both believed that this could be achieved only through an armed rising. But whereas the "Whites" contemplated a rising only at some indefinite moment in the future and argued that in the meantime political pressure should be brought to bear on the Russians to obtain further concessions, the "Reds" opted for direct and immediate revolutionary action. The "Whites" found most support amongst the wealthier bourgeoisie and the gentry. The "Reds" were recruited chiefly from the poorer bourgeoisie, the artisans, the intellectuals, students and lower clergy. Apollo Korzeniowski, Stefan Buszczyński and Stefan Bobrowski, all belonged to the "Reds". Indeed, the last played an important part during the actual rising as a "Red" leader. For first use of the term and further details see F. E. Lealle, *Reform and Insurrection in Russian Poland, 1860-1865* (London, 1963), p. 83 ff.

134) Michał Ówirko-Godycki, *Izidor Kopernicki* (Poznań, 1948) [Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk; Prace Komisji Lekarskiej, Vol. IV, part 2], p. 237.

135) Bobrowski to Conrad, 15 August 1881, "The Correspondence of Józef Korzeniowski (Joseph Conrad), 1869-1895," The National Library of Warsaw, MS. 2889.

136) There are serious gaps in Conrad's early biography. The period between the death of his father and his departure from Poland is particularly badly documented.

Apollo Korzeniowski, Stefan Buszczyński and Izydor Kopernicki had much in common. All three were members of the somewhat impoverished landed gentry which lived on the south-eastern marches of Poland. Although they shared with the gentry of that region its peculiar way of life, its customs and age-long traditions, they rebelled against its scale of values. They were romantic idealists, ardent patriots and political radicals. They were violently anti-Russian and stressed Poland's links with Western Europe. Their attitude to the West, however, was by no means uncritical. For instance, in *La décadence de l'Europe* Buszczyński bitterly criticised the materialism, corruption and the social and political selfishness of the Western European governments. And in *Die Wunden Europas* he sets out to show how much suffering the European wars have brought to mankind.

All three — Korzeniowski, Buszczyński and Kopernicki — were "Reds". This meant not only that they believed in the use of radical methods in the struggle for national independence, but also were critical of the social conditions in Poland and pressed for reforms. Although their radicalism was admittedly limited¹³⁷⁾, it presents none the less a marked contrast to Conrad's strong conservative tendencies.

Finally, all three were, in varying degrees, interested in literature. Kopernicki seems to have found time for it, in spite of his scientific work. Korzeniowski and Buszczyński were both professional writers. Moreover, in their writing both the latter continued the traditions and conventions of Polish romantic literature and actively opposed the rising tide of positivism¹³⁸⁾.

Particularly after 1863, their political and literary stand became increasingly quixotic. Buszczyński was probably the last outstanding representative of the so-called Polish romantic school of history and Apollo Korzeniowski has been called "the last [Polish] romantic dramatist"¹³⁹⁾.

The importance of Buszczyński and Kopernicki, in relation to Conrad's early development, lies chiefly in that, by sharing Apollo Korzeniowski's background and convictions, they confirmed the kind of influence that Korzeniowski had exerted on Conrad.

137) In the preface to his translation of de Vigny's *Chatterton* (Kiev, 1857), Korzeniowski defends himself against a certain reviewer (Leopold Jakubowski, writing in "Przegląd Literacki," *Dziennik Warszawski* [Warsaw], 129 [1855]) who said that *Komedia* had been inspired by communist and socialist ideas. Korzeniowski denies this categorically and then goes on to say that, in his opinion, these Western theories are alien to Poland and consequently can never take root there.

Stefan Buszczyński attacked international socialism in his *Le catéchisme social*.

138) Polish positivism was an ideological and literary movement which flourished in Poland after the failure of the 1863 rising. It was strongly influenced by the *positivistic* philosophy of Comte (hence the name), as well as by such English writers as Spencer, Darwin, Buckle and Mill. It was a rationalistic reaction against idealism in politics, Messianism in philosophy and romanticism in literature. The political programme of the movement was epitomized in the slogan "organic work". This meant the renunciation of armed resistance and the concentration of all energies on the development of the cultural and economic assets of the nation.* The chief theoretician and leader of the Warsaw positivists was Aleksander Świętochowski (1849-1938) who voiced in his journalistic writings democratic, anti-clerical and anti-aristocratic views. The foremost positivist literary critic was Piotr Chmielowski (1848-1904). In literature the movement found its best expression in the realistic novel and short story. Some of the outstanding writers who were linked with Polish positivism are: Bolesław Prus pseud. (i.e. Aleksander Głowacki) (1847-1912), Eliza Orzeszkowa (1842-1910) and Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916). The Cracow historical school (see p. 141 f.) represented the movement in historical studies.

139) The sub-title of Roman Taborski's monograph on Apollo Korzeniowski.

It was quite a different matter when Tadeusz Bobrowski (1829-1894) became Conrad's chief guardian.

Conrad had already met his uncle several times whilst Apollo was still alive. Indeed, he had spent two summers on the Bobrowski estate at Nowofastów¹⁴⁰⁾. But however critical of Apollo Bobrowski may have been, it is unlikely that at this early stage he would have attempted to undermine Apollo's authority. Once Apollo was dead, however, and Bobrowski took over the guardianship of Conrad, he felt not only entitled, but indeed obliged to correct what, in his opinion, was detrimental to Conrad's upbringing in Apollo's influence and educational methods.

Bobrowski's attitude to Apollo was ambivalent. He both liked and disapproved of him. The first time he mentions Apollo in his memoirs this ambivalence comes out clearly:

Of the young men of the district, there was only one with whom I could find a common language and sympathize, namely with Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski (for in this somewhat pretentious manner he always signed himself),...¹⁴¹⁾

In his letters to Conrad, Bobrowski often stressed the negative influence upon Conrad of the Korzeniowski family and inheritance. In October 1876 he wrote:

You have always, my dear fellow, annoyed me with your lack of order and your carefree treatment of things — in which you remind me of the Korzeniowski family — always wasting everything — and not of my dear sister, your mother, so painstaking in everything¹⁴²⁾.

And a year later he told Conrad:

I gather from your relation of the conversation... that you have *la re-partie facile et suffisamment acérée* in which I recognize the Nałęcz blood — from the way in which you easily lose your temper... but I cannot see in the whole business — that common sense, of which you have a right to be proud on the distaff side...¹⁴³⁾

But Bobrowski was an intelligent and objective man. In another, truly prophetic letter he mentioned the qualities inherent in the Nałęcz temperament:

I see with pleasure that the "Nałęcz" in you has been modified by the influence of the "Bobroszczaki", as your incomparable mother used to call her own family before she flew away to the nest of the Nałęcz. This time I rejoice over the influence of my family, though I don't deny the Nałęczs a spirit of initiative and enterprise greater than that which runs in my veins. From the blending of the blood of these two excellent races in your worthy person should spring a character whose endurance and wise enterprise will cause the whole world to be astonished!¹⁴⁴⁾

140) In 1863 and in 1866.

141) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 361.

142) Bobrowski to Conrad, 9 October 1876; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

143) Bobrowski to Conrad, 8 August 1877.

144) Bobrowski to Conrad, 28 June 1880; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

Bobrowski's attitude to Buszczyński and Kopernicki differed considerably. Kopernicki he liked and respected. His opinion of Buszczyński, on the other hand, was not very high. In 1881 he wrote to Conrad:

Mr. Buszczyński was in Toeplitz, he even sent me a pamphlet of his, which contains little sense. I wrote to him about myself, but I made no mention of the pamphlet, because it was extremely stupid — evidently this offended him for he has not replied. Everyone says that he is suffering from literary monomania and the consequences of fame ¹⁴⁵).

It is difficult to say precisely when Bobrowski became Conrad's chief guardian, but in any case this took place some time before Conrad left Poland in 1874. Under his care Conrad passed through a wild and irresponsible youth into manhood and maturity. And just as the tragic figure of Apollo Korzeniowski casts a dark shadow over Conrad's childhood, so the wise and authoritative Uncle Tadeusz dominates the next important period of Conrad's life, that which separates his decision to go to sea from his completion, some twenty years later, of *Almayer's Folly*.

During those years the two corresponded regularly. Bobrowski gave his nephew advice, helped him out of various difficulties, financial and otherwise, and generally played the role of a watchful parent; whilst Conrad in the long letters to his uncle (as far as one can tell from Bobrowski's replies) poured out his soul, translated his thoughts and experience into writing and, in fact, first gave vent to his literary talent ¹⁴⁶). What is more, Bobrowski positively encouraged him in this. In a letter, dated 28 June 1881, he wrote:

As, thank God, you are not forgetting your Polish, God bless you for it — and I bless you for it too) and you don't write badly at all, I am returning to a subject of which I once wrote and spoke to you: namely that it would be good if you would write some articles (about your travel experiences) for the Warsaw *Wędrowiec* (*The Wanderer*)... It would be both an exercise in your native tongue and that thread which would bind you to your country and your fellow-countrymen, and finally a tribute to the memory of your father who wanted to and did serve his country with his pen ¹⁴⁷).

145) Bobrowski to Conrad, 10 September 1881.

146) One can get a vague idea of the nature and contents of Conrad's letters to his uncle from such passages in Bobrowski's letters as:

- (i) "Certainly there is no need to commit suicide or to join the Carthusians, just because one has done something stupid..." [26 October 1876]
- (ii) "Your letters are coming thick and fast; I have one every few days..." [14 September 1878]
- (iii) "Your misfortunes of the past filled me with despair." [20 January 1882]
- (iv) "Inexpressible pleasure was given me by your last letter, of 11 May, full of energy, bright ideas and the desire to work..." [26 May 1885]
- (v) "Well, let us begin with Barataria, the metaphor of which you explained not only wittily, but also in such a pure Polish style that I really enjoyed the whole passage." [13 June 1885]
- (vi) "To philosophise thus on death and maintain that 'en fin de compte' - 'it is better to die young for after all one is bound to die sooner or later' - one must feel 'profondément découragé' or ill - or perhaps both?? that is to say at your age..." [26 September 1891]
- (vii) "Whatever you may say, my dear boy, about the good or evil disposition of the forces of nature, about good or evil social conditions, about a good or evil social structure - about the boundless stupidity of crowds fighting for a piece of bread - and ending in nothingness - will not be new!!!" [9 November 1891]

147) Bobrowski to Conrad, 28 June 1881.

It was, therefore, no passing fancy that prompted Conrad to dedicate his first novel "To the memory of T.[adeusz] B.[obrowski]"¹⁴⁸).

Bobrowski, in his turn, made Conrad one of the six members of a committee which was to decide five years after his death, whether his memoirs were to be published or not¹⁴⁹).

The esteem and regard which Conrad had for his uncle is perhaps best illustrated by what Conrad wrote about him in *A Personal Record*:

He was then sixty-two years old and had been for a quarter of a century the wisest, the firmest, the most indulgent of guardians, extending over me a paternal care and affection, a moral support which I seemed to feel always near me in the most distant parts of the earth¹⁵⁰).

Tadeusz Bobrowski presents a complete contrast to Apollo. He was a realistic, common sense man, extremely down to earth and even prosaic, living a solitary, busy life. He had studied law at the University of St. Petersburg and had, in due course, obtained the degree of Master of International Law¹⁵¹). He had intended to follow up a civil service career, when in 1850, at the age of twenty-one, he lost his father. He immediately abandoned everything and went back to the Ukraine and spent the rest of his life administering the Bobrowski estates.

Tadeusz's father, Józef Bobrowski, was also by no means an ordinary man. He was better educated than most of his neighbours. Although his official education had ended after a grammar school course at a Dominican convent, he had supplemented it, later in life, with wide and intensive reading. He was well read in Polish and French literature, and especially eighteenth century French philosophy.

Tadeusz Bobrowski inherited his father's literary interests. During his stay in St. Petersburg he associated with a group of Polish conservative writers, known as "The Pentarchy"¹⁵²); these included the novelist,

148) *Almayer's Folly*, p. [vi].

149) A copy of Bobrowski's note to that effect is to be found in The National Library of Warsaw, MS. 2889.

150) *A Personal Record*, p. 31.

Cf. Conrad's letter to Kazimierz Waliszewski: "Je ne puis parler sans émotion de Thadée Bobrowski, mon oncle, tuteur et bienfaiteur. Jusqu'à ce jour, après dix ans je suis sous l'impression d'une lourde perte. C'était un homme d'un grand caractère et d'une intelligence remarquable. Il ne comprenait pas mon désir de la mer, mais il ne s'y opposa pas par principe. Au cours de mes vingt années de pérégrinations (de 1874 à 1893) je ne l'ai vu que quatre fois, mais les bons côtés de mon caractère je les dois à son attachement, à sa protection et à son influence." (4 December 1903; in Joseph Conrad, *Lettres Françaises*, avec une introduction et des notes de G. Jean-Aubry (Paris, 1930), pp. 59-60.)

151) The title of Bobrowski's dissertation, which apparently brought him considerable distinction, was *O działaniu praw cywilnego i karnego jednego państwa w granicach drugiego* (*On the Force of Municipal and Criminal Laws of One Country Within the Territorial Limits of Another*). See Róża Jablikowska, *Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)* (Wrocław, 1961), p. 13.

152) "The Pentarchy", known also as "The St. Petersburg Coterie", was one of the most powerful Polish literary groups in the 1840s. For a number of years its official organ was the *Tygodnik Petersburski* (*St. Petersburg Weekly*). Ideologically, the group was reactionary, aristocratic and Catholic. Its strong pro-Russian sympathies soon won for it the support of the Tzarist government. Its literary views showed certain neo-classical tendencies. In their critical work, the writers of the group attacked vigorously the excesses of romantic literature. For a monographic study of the group see Mieczysław Inglot, *Poglądy literackie koterii petersburskiej w latach 1841-1843* (Wrocław, 1961).

Henryk Rzewuski, the critic, Michał Grabowski, as well as less well-known writers such as Ignacy Hołowiński, Józef Przeclawski and Ludwik Sztyrmer¹⁵³). Like his father, Bobrowski was a prodigious reader. Indeed, he seems to have spent most of his time reading, writing letters and collecting material for his memoirs. Włodzimierz Spasowicz¹⁵⁴), a close friend of Bobrowski and the editor of his memoirs, gives us a portrait of Bobrowski at home:

It was only in Kazimierówka that one got a true picture of Bobrowski's way of life. He was a solitary man, lonely as a finger, who had lost not only all his brothers and sisters, but also his wife and daughter. He had no close relative living with him. He did not personally occupy himself with farming, preferring to rent his farms instead. He hardly ever drank wine and kept it solely for the benefit of his guests. However, he had an excellent cook. Weeks on end, he would stay at home, with a long chibouk in his hand, surrounded by books and periodicals, always busy doing something. The feeling of boredom was quite unknown to him¹⁵⁵).

Spasowicz also tells us that Bobrowski was a great and talented conversationalist:

Bobrowski himself admits that he never learned to ride a horse, to drive, to shoot or to swim; the only pastime he knew was conversation. He was an inexhaustible and extremely interesting spinner of yarns, capable of debating all kinds of social problems and of amusing a company by narrating interesting things late into the night¹⁵⁶).

However, in spite of this, Bobrowski had very few friends. He was admired for his honesty and personal integrity; his devotion to public affairs won him great respect, but he antagonized people by his outspokenness, his caustic humour and ironic disposition. Moreover, few people could agree with him on ideological grounds. He alienated the reactionaries by his social views and the radicals by his political outlook.

A fervent admirer of the French Revolution, he was deeply contemptuous of the Polish aristocracy and the higher gentry, and constantly sneered at their stupidity, conceit and snobbishness. He devoted much of his life to the cause of the peasantry. Having freed the serfs on his own estates, as soon as he came into his father's inheritance, he became one of the leaders of the emancipation movement in the Polish Ukraine. But his radicalism was strictly limited. He eyed with suspicion all new social developments and detested "professional revolutionaries"¹⁵⁷).

His chief quarrel with the radicals, however, was of a political nature. He disagreed with them not so much over ends as over means. He strongly opposed the idea of armed resistance. He believed that Poland could

153) Henryk Rzewuski (1791-1866); Michał Grabowski (1804-1863); Ignacy Hołowiński (1807-1855), archbishop, novelist, journalist and translator; Józef Przeclawski (1799-1879), journalist, editor of the *Tygodnik Petersburski*; Ludwik Sztyrmer (1809-1886), novelist and literary critic.

154) Włodzimierz Spasowicz (1829-1906), lawyer, critic and journalist.

155) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. viii.

156) *Ibid.*, p. vii.

157) The part of Bobrowski's memoirs which deals with the events of 1863 opens with a passionate invective against "professional revolutionaries." (Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 426-427.)

regain national independence only through gradualism and that all revolutionary measures were doomed to failure. In the meantime the country must seek to regenerate its social structure from the very foundations and increase its material wealth. This was, in fact, a cardinal doctrine of the positivists who dominated Polish politics and literature after the failure of the 1863 rising¹⁵⁸).

In marked contrast to most of the other members of Conrad's family, Bobrowski remained on good terms with the Russian authorities. He was a personal friend of Prince Vasilchikov, the Russian governor of the district for many years. This does not mean, however, as has been suggested by Bobrowski's enemies¹⁵⁹), that he collaborated in any way with the Russians. In actual fact, he used his influence to help compatriots who got into trouble with the authorities. In this way, he helped his brother Stefan, his sister Ewelina and her husband Apollo Korzeniowski, Mickiewicz's son Władysław, and many others. At heart, Bobrowski was as good a patriot as the most fanatical of the "Reds", though his patriotism was of a sober and realistic kind.

Bobrowski was not artistic by temperament. His attitude to writers was sceptical and, at times, a little sardonic. Often, when he is writing in the memoirs about the literary celebrities of his day a faint ironic tone creeps in. Having praised, at one point, the celebrated novelist, J.I. Kraszewski¹⁶⁰) for showing a genuine interest in the cause of the peasants, Bobrowski hastens to add: "Kraszewski was most sensitive to flattery, and that was the simplest way to win his favour..."¹⁶¹).

Nevertheless, Bobrowski appears not only to have enjoyed but to have had a good knowledge of literature. In his letters to Conrad, we find, him, now quoting a stanza of Bohdan Zaleski¹⁶²), now referring to an expression of Słowacki, now alluding to Shakespeare, Molière or Pushkin. When Conrad suggested in one of his letters to Bobrowski that the latter might not have read Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Bobrowski was offended:

Well, let us begin with Barataria, the metaphor of which you explained not only very wittily, but also in such a pure Polish style that I really enjoyed the whole passage. In answer to your unjust insinuation that the work of the famous Cervantes is unknown to me, let me tell you that not more than a year ago I read the work in Toeplitz¹⁶³).

Bobrowski's memoirs are strewn with the names of the more important writers of the period, both foreign — Pushkin, Lermontov, Schiller, Byron, Richter, Poe, Comte, — and Polish: Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński, Malczewski, Zaleski, Goszczyński, Czajkowski, Kraszewski, Jeź, Grabowski,

158) For note on Polish positivism see p. 144.

159) E.g. by Franciszek Rawita-Gawronski in an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Tadeusz Bobrowski i jego pamiętniki* (*Tadeusz Bobrowski and his Memoirs*) (Lwów, 1901), p. 15 ff.

160) Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (1812-1887), novelist, poet, literary critic, dramatist, historian and journalist; one of the most prolific Polish writers (Kraszewski's works in book form alone fill 641 volumes); author of 29 novels covering Polish history in chronological order.

161) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 210.

162) Bohdan Zaleski (1802-1886), Polish romantic poet; one of the founders of the so-called Ukrainian school of poetry.

163) Bobrowski to Conrad, 13 June 1885.

Rzewuski, Pol and others¹⁶⁴). Occasionally, we find a short paragraph of critical appreciation. Writing about Rzewuski's novel *Pamiętniki Soplicy* (*The Memoirs of Soplica*), Bobrowski says:

Paying a personal tribute to the gift of reconstructing the past, I consider *The Memoirs of Soplica* an excellent work of art for art's sake, but which, in a literature already possessing *Pan Tadeusz*, can no longer be regarded monumental. I will also admit sincerely and humbly that I do not consider *Pan Tadeusz* Mickiewicz's best work, rating others higher¹⁶⁵).

Tadeusz Bobrowski was a man of great wisdom and erudition; he was well-read and had a phenomenal memory; he was a keen observer of people and things; he had a profound knowledge of human psychology; he was an excellent narrator; and last, but not least, he had an uncommon talent for writing good Polish prose. All these qualities, added together, produced the work of his life: *The Bobrowski Memoirs*, which we have mentioned already many times and which Czesław Miłosz has called "one of the most interesting memoirs of the nineteenth century"¹⁶⁶).

The Bobrowski Memoirs are a two-volume work, running to some nine hundred pages. The autobiographical element constitutes a very minor part of the whole, and even family history appears only peripherally. Intrinsically, the book is a multi-dimensional portrait of the society in which Bobrowski lived, presented over a period of about thirty years, with numerous flash-backs which take us further into the past. For the social historian of the south-eastern marches of Poland it is a priceless document. It contains thousands of names, numerous genealogies, all kinds of biographical data, descriptions of political events, current opinions, comments on literary taste and popular anecdotes.

However, *The Bobrowski Memoirs* are not merely a compendium of local history; they are, in fact, a work with a particular thesis. Three main themes emerge clearly from the book:

- (1) an objective, though often quite ruthless criticism of contemporary Polish society;
- (2) the struggle of certain members of the gentry — Bobrowski amongst them — to introduce social reforms, and especially to bring about the emancipation of the peasants; and
- (3) the absurdity of the 1863 rising (with numerous flash-backs to 1831) and its tragic consequences.

The pivot around which the whole work turns is Bobrowski's positivist ideology, which, as has already been explained, rejected the idea of armed conflict with Russia as completely impractical, in the context of the existing political situation, and placed all emphasis on the internal regeneration of the nation.

It is therefore not surprising that when *The Bobrowski Memoirs* finally appeared in 1900, by which time a neo-romantic reaction against the posi-

164) Antoni Malczewski (1793-1826), poet; Seweryn Goszczyński (1801-1876), poet, linked with the so-called Ukrainian school of poetry; Michał Czapkowski (1804-1886), novelist, linked with the Ukraine; Tomasz Teodor Jeż pseud. (i.e. Zygmunt Miłkowski) (1824-1915), novelist; Wincenty Pol (1807-1872), poet.

165) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 128.

166) *The Art of Joseph Conrad*, ed. R.W. Stallman, p. 36.

tivist ideology had set in, they were greeted by an avalanche of hostile criticism. Moreover, in addition to the political issues involved, the truth which Bobrowski had published about certain well-known personages not only provoked anger and indignation, but resulted in a series of public scandals, some of which reached the law courts. A large number of copies were bought out and destroyed¹⁶⁷). In 1901 there appeared anonymously a pamphlet entitled *Tadeusz Bobrowski i jego pamiętniki* (*Tadeusz Bobrowski and his Memoirs*). In it the author (Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński) accuses Bobrowski not only of a lack of patriotism and public spirit, but of overt pro-Russian sympathies. There are even strong insinuations that Bobrowski collaborated with the Russian authorities and was morally, if not in fact, guilty of national betrayal.

The effect that such a slanderous accusation, aimed at his favourite uncle, must have had on Conrad can well be imagined. Indeed, in the letter to Józef Korzeniowski, the librarian of the Jagellon Library, in which he acknowledged the receipt of the memoirs, Conrad wrote:

I have heard indirectly from Mrs. M. Poradowska as well as from Mrs. A. Zagórska, a cousin of mine living in Lublin, that the Memoir received a very unfriendly reception. This grieves me exceedingly, since the uproar (if there is an uproar, as they write) touches the memory of a man for whose mind and heart I had the greatest admiration; not to mention my deep attachment to him as an Uncle, a Guardian and a Benefactor!¹⁶⁸)

In his somewhat confused and pretentious book on Conrad, Hueffer relates that Conrad was challenged to a duel on account of the memoirs.

He said, "My dear faller, you must go with me to Boulogne! You'll have to fight the second, of course. It's always done in Polish duelling!"...

It appeared that the uncle Paradowski [sic]¹⁶⁹), almost viceroy of Russian Poland and guardian to half the sons and daughters of the Polish nobility of his province, had had unheard of opportunities of learning all the matrimonial and family scandals of his neighbours. All these he had set down in his journal — and this journal had just been published. It had caused the wildest consternation in Poland and as Conrad was the legal heir of M. Paradowski the responsibility for the publication was considered to be his. The son of one of the most horribly aspersed couples had therefore challenged Conrad and was coming to Boulogne. Conrad was horrified to the point of madness: and he was justified. That poor fellow shot himself in despair over the revelations, in the railway carriage, on the journey. So we never fought...¹⁷⁰)

167) See Róża Jabłkowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

Also Maria Danilewiczowa, "Polska młodość Conrada" ("Conrad's Polish Youth"), *Pierścień z Herkuleum i płaszczyzna pokutnicy* (London, 1960), p. 296.

168) Conrad to Józef Korzeniowski, 14 February 1901; published with an English translation by Barbara Kocówna in *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), I (1959), pp. 37-43. (The above translation is my own. A.B.)

169) Hueffer's book is full of inaccuracies. In this case, he confused the name of Tadeusz Bobrowski with that of Aleksander Poradowski, a distant cousin of the former and the husband of Marguerite née Gachet.

170) Hueffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

It is interesting to note that Marguerite Poradowska mentioned a duel in a letter written to the librarian Józef Korzeniowski on 28 November 1900: "On m'a dit, qu'à cause de ces mémoires M. Syroczinski un des exécuteurs testamentaires s'était battu en duel? Qu'y a-t-il de vrai dans tout cela -"; B. Kocówna, "Dwa listy Małgorzaty Poradowskiej do Józefa Korzeniowskiego" ("Two Letters from Marguerite Poradowski to Józef Korzeniowski"), *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), 4 (1959), p. 330.

How much of this is true is difficult to say. But it seems unlikely that Hueffer made the whole story up, however much he may have embroidered the original incident.

Lest Hueffer's account of *The Bobrowski Memoirs* should leave too strong an impression, it is worth quoting the opinion of a well-known Polish critic, Wiktor Weintraub. In his short biography of Bobrowski in the *Polski słownik biograficzny* (*The Polish Biographical Dictionary*) Weintraub writes:

He left behind him a work of no mean literary value, *The Memoirs*, a picture of Ukrainian life around the middle of the last century, wide and rich in detail... The second volume, based on the minutes of the Committee, is an important source for the history of the emancipation in the Ukraine ¹⁷¹).

Indeed, *The Bobrowski Memoirs* are not devoid of literary qualities. Bobrowski's prose style is heavy but powerful, with a strong flavour of legal writing. (Bobrowski had, after all, been trained as a lawyer.) His sentences are long and elaborate, but well balanced. What saves him from being tedious is the concrete nature of his writing. He avoids abstracts, he is precise and economical, and is afraid neither of realism nor of simplicity. He is never ornamental or rhetorical. Some of these qualities are illustrated in the passage where he describes the character of Conrad's father:

He had established the reputation in the country of being very ugly and excessively sarcastic. In actual fact he was certainly not beautiful, bah! [sic] not even handsome but the expression of his eyes was very pleasant, and his malice was only verbal — of the drawing-room type; for neither in his feelings nor in his actions did I ever perceive it. Violent in emotions, unreservedly and sincerely loving people; unpractical in his deeds, often helpless and unresourceful. In speech and writing often implacable, in everyday life he was frequently far too indulgent -- evidently for the sake of balance, as I demonstrated to him many a time; last but not least, he had what I call two sets of weights and measures — for the very little and silly, and for the mighty of this world...

He was very pleasant in the drawing-rooms; he attracted women by his ugliness, his originality and his talents — we know how great is their interest in all they are ignorant of... When he chose to practise what may be called his "public" malice he chose his victims from among those who had in some way harmed him or who were in general puffed up in wealth or rank, and here he usually had the laughter on his side ¹⁷²).

Even when he is writing about a subject that touches him deeply, as

¹⁷¹ *Polski słownik biograficzny* (Published by the Polish Academy of Learning) (Cracow, 1936), II, pp. 163-4.

¹⁷² Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 361-2; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

in the eulogy on his beloved sister Ewelina, Conrad's mother, Bobrowski maintains his characteristic poise and detachment:

My elder sister possessed the fine outer appearance of a woman of the world and with [it] a higher level of education than was usual among women of our class. She was capable of soaring flights of intellect and heart and had a less easygoing nature [than Bobrowski's younger sister, Teofila - A.B.], making far greater demands and, at that period, requiring more attention from others than she was ready or able to give them. Being of rather feeble health and struggling between love for her future husband and the expressed will of her father, whose memory and judgement she respected, she was unable to maintain her moral balance. Dissatisfied with herself, she could not give others that inner contentment which she lacked. It was only after her union with the man she loved that she developed in later life those rare qualities of intellect and emotion, mind and heart, which distinguished her¹⁷³).

The tone, the rhythms, the syntax, the vocabulary — all bear the unmistakable stamp of Bobrowski's clear, pedantic, masculine, unimaginative mind. There is hardly any padding; every phrase adds to the meaning and every word has been carefully chosen. The actual narrative of events is related in a dry, matter of fact way. Bobrowski tries to convey the facts as fully, as accurately and as briefly as possible. Whenever he is not certain of them, he informs the reader. The passage in which he gives a brief account of Prince Roman Sanguszko's trial is characteristic of the memoirs as a whole:

When the examining officer, won over by Roman's parents, suggested in his questions how he should explain himself: that depressed by his wife's death, without realizing the consequence of his action, he joined the rising, Prince Roman replied in writing: "I joined the rising from conviction". Some people maintain that the last words of that reply have been adopted by the Princes Sanguszko as their device, but I never noticed them on Prince Roman's own seals¹⁷⁴).

173) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 14; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

Conrad reproduced this passage almost verbatim in *A Personal Record*, adding certain details which he had presumably obtained direct from Bobrowski:

"Your mother - of far greater beauty, exceptionally distinguished in person, manner and intellect - had a less easy disposition. Being more brilliantly gifted, she also expected more from life. At that trying time, especially, we were greatly concerned about her state. Suffering in her health from the shock of her father's death (she was alone in the house with him when he died suddenly), she was torn by the inward struggle between her love for the man whom she was to marry in the end and her knowledge of her dead father's declared objection to that match. Unable to bring herself to disregard that cherished memory and that judgement she had always respected and trusted, and, on the other hand, feeling the impossibility to resist a sentiment so deep and so true, she could not have been expected to preserve her mental and moral balance. At war with herself, she could not give others that feeling of peace which was not her own. It was only later, when united at last with the man of her choice, that she developed those uncommon gifts of mind and heart which compelled the respect and admiration even of our foes." *A Personal Record*, pp. 28-9.

In his critical biography, Baines notices that one of the recurrent themes in Conrad's work is a father-daughter relationship in which "the father stands in the way of, and attempts to thwart, his daughter's impulse towards what she believes to be freedom and happiness." (Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 154.) Baines then suggests that Conrad might have met with a problem of this kind in his own life. We have no documentary evidence for this. What is certain, however, is that (as the above passage from *The Bobrowski Memoirs* shows) the situation arose in Conrad's mother's life and caused her a great deal of suffering.

174) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 372 n.

Using the very simplest means, Bobrowski captures the tension on the eve of the 1863 rising:

The rising was to take place in the last days of April! Although all the sparrows twittered about it on the rooftops, the authorities did nothing; just waited for the events... On 25, 26 and 27 April a fine spring rain was falling, sharp in the cold nights and covering a large part of the country; for it reached as far as Zasław and Ostróg. On 27 April, in spite of the fact that it was the anniversary of my wife's death, a day which I usually spend at home, I set out after the service to Pawłocze where, as far as I knew, the insurgent forces of the Skwirski district were to assemble...¹⁷⁵⁾

Similarly, in a few sentences, Bobrowski sketches a somewhat malicious portrait of Conrad's paternal grandfather, Teodor Korzeniowski. He tells us that Teodor was a brave but narrow-minded soldier who was firmly convinced that he was:

...the first warrior in Europe, the best estate manager, and a man whose services to the country were unequalled; but, in point of fact, he was a utopian and a liar of the sort who first deceive themselves, come to believe their own lies, deceive others, and are angry at those who refuse to believe them. Naturally, he was also a great politician and the only patriot in Poland; without listening to common sense, he was always ready to saddle his horse and chase the enemy out of the country ¹⁷⁶⁾.

The touch of caustic humour is characteristic. Much of the liveliness of the memoirs derives from the numerous amusing and often revealing anecdotes which are scattered through the book. Writing about his great-grandmother, Bobrowski relates the following anecdote about her:

On one occasion she wrote to her daughter-in-law, asking her to pay her a visit with her sons. The son, offended that he had not been approached directly, wrote to his mother, saying that she had forgotten that he was the head of the family and that the women constitute only its latter part. To which she replied: "You are quite right, sir, to consider your wife your tail, yourself aspiring to be the head — for just as nature has given animals a tail to hide their obscene parts, so your wife serves to cover up your stupidity and follies" ¹⁷⁷⁾.

Bobrowski's prose also comes to life when he is dealing with dramatic events, as in the pages where he describes the political activities of his brother Stefan. Stefan's story is not only interesting in itself, but also shows certain parallels with the plot of *Under Western Eyes*.

In 1862 Stefan Bobrowski, together with a fellow-student named Hoffman, set up a secret lithographic press in Kiev. For several months they successfully printed and distributed political pamphlets. Then suddenly Hoffman was arrested and Stefan Bobrowski had to flee the

175) *Ibid.*, II, p. 464.

176) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 363.

177) *Ibid.*, I, p. 8.

country. The discovery of the secret press was the work of an informer. Tadeusz Bobrowski writes in his memoirs:

The informer was a Warsaw Jew named Bernstein (or Bersztam? I cannot remember), who, having been caught in Warsaw at revolutionary practices, agreed to undertake spying. Since he could not work in Warsaw where he was known, he was sent to Kiev to discover the secret lithographic press which had been causing trouble to the police for some time. In Warsaw he had been a student, and so in Kiev he also mixed with students, pretending to be one himself¹⁷⁸).

The resemblance between Bernstein and Razumov in *Under Western Eyes* is obvious. There are also slight points of similarity between Stefan Bobrowski and Haldin. One of the precautions that Bobrowski took, before starting work on the secret press, was to change his lodgings. In *Under Western Eyes* Haldin also leaves his home some time before the attempt on de P's life. After Hoffman's arrest, Bobrowski hid at the home of a fellow-student, who was trusted by the authorities on account of his political views. When the vigilance of the police abated, he escaped from Kiev by sledge, as Haldin planned to do.

It is also possible to argue that Tadeusz Bobrowski's account of Stefan's death in 1863 influenced the ending of *Lord Jim*¹⁷⁹). Having played a key role during the rising in Warsaw as a leader of the "Reds", Stefan Bobrowski was challenged to a duel by Adam Grabowski, a man of seedy reputation and an agent of the "Whites". At first Bobrowski declined to accept the challenge, but then the ruling of a "court of honour" made him change his mind. Although Bobrowski knew that he could not come out of the duel alive, his sense of honour prevented him from ignoring the court's ruling. The odds were exceptionally uneven: Bobrowski was very short-sighted and Grabowski was a well-known marksman. The duel took place on 12 April 1863 near Rawicz. Stefan Bobrowski was shot straight through the heart¹⁸⁰). Most historians agree that he had been assassinated; but Tadeusz Bobrowski had a theory of his own. He wrote in the memoirs:

It is my conviction that, having lost faith in the cause he had embraced — his mind was too alert and realistic to harbour illusions — he no longer wished to live and preferred to die by another's hand than by his own...¹⁸¹)

178) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 450.

Discussing the incident in his book on the 1863 rising, Paweł Jasienica maintains that Ludwik Bernstein was in fact innocent. When the police raided Hoffman's flat, Bernstein, who was also involved in underground work, immediately left the city and fled abroad. He had evidently failed to inform his colleagues about his decision, and so the brunt of suspicion fell on him. (Paweł Jasienica, *Dwie drogi [The Two Ways]* [Warsaw, 1960], pp. 82-3.)

179) It is quite safe to assume that Conrad was familiar with Stefan Bobrowski's story and Tadeusz Bobrowski's views on it long before the publication of the memoirs in 1900. Cf. Marguerite Poradowska's letter to Józef Korzeniowski, 28 November 1900: "Il [Conrad] avait lu, lors qu'il était chez son oncle, la plus grande partie de manuscrit et ne comprend pas les colères qui ont pu surgir"; *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny*, 4 (1959), p. 330.

180) For further details of the duel see Paweł Jasienica, *op. cit.*, pp. 328-345 and F. R. Leslie, *Reform and Insurrection in Russian Poland 1856-1865* (London, 1963), pp. 211-212. Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński, *Stefan Bobrowski i Dyktatura Langiewicza* (Warsaw, 1914), recognizes that Bobrowski's death amounted to murder, but suggests suicidal tendencies.

181) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 459.

Jim's death is equally ambiguous. His conduct combines in a disturbing way the ideas of honour and supreme courage with the notion of self-destruction.

It is not being suggested that Conrad consciously borrowed from family history when he wrote the ending of *Lord Jim*, but that he might have easily had Stefan Bobrowski's story at the back of his mind at the time.

Conrad received Bobrowski's memoirs shortly after their publication in 1900 and no doubt read them carefully for personal reasons. It is well known that he drew heavily on them when he was reconstructing his family history in *A Personal Record*¹⁸²⁾, as well as when he wrote the short story "Prince Roman"¹⁸³⁾. Moreover, it appears from a letter to his agent, J.B. Pinker, that he had even more ambitious plans in connection with *The Bobrowski Memoirs*:

I am anxious in other ways as to the Remées [sic]¹⁸⁴⁾. To make Polish life enter English literature is no small ambition — to begin with. But I think it can be done. To reveal a very particular state of society, bring forward individuals with very special traditions and touch in a personal way upon such events, for instance, as the liberation of the serfs (which in the number of people affected and in the general humanitarian significance is a greater fact of universal interest than the abolition of Negro Slavery) is a big enterprise. And yet it presents itself easily because of the intimate nature of the task, and of the 2 vols. of my uncle's *Memoirs* which I have by me, to refresh my recollections and settle my ideas. I can safely say that I feel equal to the work¹⁸⁵⁾.

It may seem a little fanciful to talk about the influence of such a minor literary talent as Bobrowski on such a giant as Conrad. Indeed, Conrad's debt to Bobrowski is quite out of proportion with the latter's real literary achievement. However, we are dealing here not with a purely intellectual interaction between two minds, but with an intimate, emotionally charged relationship between an orphaned nephew and his uncle and only close relative. Furthermore, it should be remembered that, like Apollo Korzeniowski, Bobrowski had great educational ambitions. (In his memoirs Bobrowski proudly gives us a list of his wards, eighteen names in all.)¹⁸⁶⁾

Strangely enough, the friendship which eventually grew up between the two men (uncle and nephew) started only after a number of years of separation. The tone of Bobrowski's early letters to Conrad is stern

182) E.g. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 471-2 n. and *A Personal Record*, p. 57 ff. See also p. 153 f. of this thesis.

183) See pp. 120-121.

184) i.e. *Some Reminiscences*, the original title of *A Personal Record*.

185) Conrad to J.B. Pinker, October 1908, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 87.

186) See Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 447 n.

and austere — they are clearly the letters of a conscientious guardian to his rather undisciplined ward.

Two years ago, I with constricted heart, Grandmother with tears, both of us with a blessing, submitted to your desire and let you go free into the world — to fly on your own — though with our advice and help — and when you read this letter you'll have completed your nineteenth year. An age at which one is a finished young man, often even earning one's living and sometimes supporting a family, — in any case, an age at which one is quite responsible before God and before people, and before oneself for one's own deeds ¹⁸⁷).

A little later in the same letter, having listed Conrad's expenditure over the last two years, Bobrowski continues:

Apart from the fact of expenditure itself, I can state frankly that I was not pleased with the tone in which you speak about what happened. *Vous passez condamnation trop complaisante sur les sottises, — que vous avez faites!* Certainly, there's no reason to commit suicide or to retreat to the Carthusians because some silliness has been done — even though it very acutely affects someone very near to you! — but a little more contrition would not be amiss — and particularly a more thoughtful mode of behaviour which would prove that after a temporary imprudence thoughtfulness and commonsense have prevailed ¹⁸⁸).

Gradually, however, mutual understanding deepened and developed into a genuine friendship. Bobrowski continued to advise and criticize Conrad, but the tone of his letters changed. A letter, written in 1891, begins:

My dear boy,

We write to each other nearly every week now... In my last letter, unasked and unquestioned by my Dear Sir, I touched slightly on certain defects in *my dear boy*, defects with which, for that matter, it is possible to live and be loved. Today, you yourself ask me to indicate those shortcomings of your character that I have observed during thirty-four years in the light of "my cold reasoning", shortcomings that make your life difficult, as you yourself admit. You state in advance that you can't perceive them yourself and for that reason ask me to conduct this operation upon your person ¹⁸⁹).

It is perhaps significant that this development did not take place through ordinary live intercourse, but through the medium of letters. Bobrowski and Conrad met several times after 1874 ¹⁹⁰), and these meetings,

187) Bobrowski to Conrad, 26 October 1876; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

188) *Ibid.*, p. 40.

189) Bobrowski to Conrad, 30 July 1891; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

190) i) in March 1878 Bobrowski visited Conrad in Marseilles.

ii) in July 1883 Conrad met Bobrowski at Marienbad.

iii) in February 1890 Conrad visited Bobrowski at Kazimierówka in the Ukraine.

iv) in September 1893 Conrad visited Bobrowski for the last time at Kazimierówka.

no doubt, brought the two men even closer together, but their friendship was intrinsically a pen-friendship.

As is apparent from the excerpts already quoted, Bobrowski's letters are interesting not only as documents. They are written in an elegant, literary style, perhaps a little heavy, at times, but far more readable in the original Polish than some of the translations may suggest. What makes them particularly enjoyable is Bobrowski's peculiar humour in which they abounded after the relationship between uncle and nephew had become cordial. In one letter, having listed the names of the six children of his brother Kazimierz, who was a railway official, Bobrowski commented:

...you must admit that Your Uncle tilled the matrimonial field with excellent results. I really do not know when he had the time to do all this, since he always had trains at night. Evidently, fearing to fall asleep between one train and the next, he devoted himself to "social works" ¹⁹¹).

Some years later he made an amusingly acid comment on Conrad's aunt, Marguerite Poradowska, whom he suspected of having a romantic relationship with Conrad:

Madame Marguerite has been writing me voluminous letters, so illegible that I have had to use a magnifying glass — but I reply to every one. Her enthusiasm has now cooled a little and she has not written, I think, since April. The dear woman is a *bas bleu* — I tried to persuade her that it would be better if she changed this title for Madame la Bourgmestre Buls, but she would not listen. She's as romantic as a girl of sixteen ¹⁹²).

Apart from dealing with practical matters and family affairs, Bobrowski kept Conrad informed of social, economic and political developments in the Ukraine. In May 1880 he wrote with indignation about some anti-semitic incidents which had taken place in the district.

From your reading of the newspapers, you have probably some idea, no doubt a little exaggerated, of certain incidents which took place in the country, referred to by the Russian press as "the Jewish pogrom", and which from the theoretical German "Judenhetze" turned into "common robbery" in our district! ¹⁹³)

In another letter (23 September 1881) he discussed at length the whole problem of the Pan-Slavic movement and showed how each Slav nation — including the Poles — wished to establish its hegemony. Russia presented the greatest threat not because it was intrinsically more evil than other nations, but because of its numerical superiority ¹⁹⁴).

191) Bobrowski to Conrad, 26 May 1882.

192) Bobrowski to Conrad, 18 September 1892; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 128. Charles Buls, the burgomaster of Brussels, was for many years a devoted admirer of Marguerite Poradowska. In other words, Bobrowski insinuated that Marguerite should marry Buls and stop flirting with Conrad.

193) Bobrowski to Conrad, 30 May 1881.

194) In his political writings Conrad also opposed Pan-Slavism. Cf. "The Crime of Partition" and "Note on the Polish Problem" in *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 115 ff.

Bobrowski had no romantic illusions about politics, but he was not a pessimist. At the end of the memoirs, he gives an interesting assessment of the international situation. He is deeply disturbed by the rise of nationalism and stresses the attendant dangers. He is convinced, however, that after a period of "blood and iron" and "mutual enmity" reason will prevail and there will come an era of "peace and understanding", when the "weak and downtrodden" will be able to improve their lot¹⁹⁵).

Apollo Korzeniowski taught Conrad to love Poland and hate the Russians; but it was probably Bobrowski who first drew his attention to political and social problems. Having acquired such an interest early on in life, Conrad did not remain a passive observer of people and places in the course of his travels, but subjected his observations to careful scrutiny and reflection. Hence his knowledge of those parts of the world which he visited in his youth is often far more comprehensive than one would expect of a casual traveller. Moreover, many of these early impressions were probably first formulated in his letters to Bobrowski. Later they became the raw material of his fiction.

There is also in Bobrowski's letters an ever-present current of moralizing. Bobrowski was a man of strong moral convictions. As in Conrad's case, his ethical system was based on a few basic ideas; personal integrity, an uncompromising honesty and a high sense of honour. In fact, we find in the Bobrowski letters not only the prototypes of many of the moral sentiments which are scattered throughout Conrad's writings, but also the seeds of his whole moral philosophy. When Conrad was a boy of twelve, Bobrowski wrote to him:

Thus, you must favour not what is easy and interesting but what is useful even though sometimes difficult; for, a man who can do nothing thoroughly has no strength of character and endurance, cannot work by himself and direct himself, and is no longer a man but becomes a doll serviceable in nothing. So my child, do your best not to be or become a doll but a useful, industrious and skilful man, hence a worthy one, and so reward us for our pains and anxieties during the course of your upbringing¹⁹⁶).

Twenty-two years later, in reply to some particularly pessimistic letter from Conrad, Bobrowski expounded his philosophy of life:

If both Individuals and Nations were to establish as their aim "duty" instead of the ideal of greatness, the world would certainly be a better place! And those crowds "instinctively aiming at securing only bread"¹⁹⁷), so detestable to all visionaries, have their *raison d'être*: to satisfy the material needs of life, — and they cease to be detestable when a more precise examination often reveals that they illumine their existence by their work, and often even their shortcomings, by some higher idea of duty accomplished, by their love for family or country, to whom they bequeath the fruit of their effort and labours through their generosity or by way of inheritance...¹⁹⁸)

195) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 500-1.

196) Bobrowski to Conrad, 20 September 1869; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

197) Bobrowski is obviously quoting from Conrad's letter.

198) Cf. Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 499-501.

Perhaps you will tell me that what I have said is but the words of one who has always been comfortable in the world "qui a eu toujours chaud" — but this is not so, you know this well; I have had my ups and downs, I have suffered over my own fate and that of my family and Nation; and just because of these sufferings, perhaps, these disappointments, I have developed in myself this calm point of view on the tasks of life, whose motto I venture to say, was, is, and will be, "usque ad finem": the love of duty more narrowly or more widely conceived, depending on circumstances and time. This comprises my practical creed which, backed by experience of my sixty years of life, may possibly be useful to you;...¹⁹⁹⁾

Conrad found a much greater use for these words that Bobrowski could ever have hoped for. Donkin of *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* is precisely that "doll serviceable in nothing":

They all knew him! He was the man that cannot steer, that cannot splice, that dodges the work on dark nights; that, aloft, holds on frantically with both arms and legs, and swears at the wind, the sleet, the darkness; the man who curses the sea while others work. The man who is the last out and the first in when all hands are called. The man who can't do most things and won't do the rest. The pet of philanthropists and self-seeking landlubbers. The sympathetic and deserving creature that knows all about his rights, but knows nothing of courage, of endurance, and of the unexpressed faith, of the unspoken loyalty that knits together a ship's company ²⁰⁰⁾.

Gould of *Nostramo* is one of those whose *raison d'être* is to "satisfy the material needs of life", and who try "to illumine their existence by their work".

"What is wanted here is law, good faith, order, security. Any one can declaim about these things, but I pin my faith to material interests. Only let the material interests once get a firm footing, and they are bound to impose the conditions on which alone they can continue to exist. That's how your money-making is justified here in the face of lawlessness and disorder. It is justified because the security which it demands must be shared with an oppressed people. A better justice will come afterwards" ²⁰¹⁾.

Bobrowski's motto *Usque ad finem* (which, incidentally, appears several times in his memoirs) figures, of course, prominently in *Lord Jim*.

"He [Stein] sat down and, with both elbows on the desk, rubbed his forehead. 'And yet it is true — it is true. In the destructive element immerse'... He spoke in a subdued tone, without looking at me, one hand on each side of his face. 'That was the way. To follow the dream, and again to follow the dream — and so — ewig — usque ad finem'..." ²⁰²⁾.

¹⁹⁹⁾ Bobrowski to Conrad, 9 November 1891; quoted in translation by Baines. *op. cit.*, pp. 126-7.

²⁰⁰⁾ *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, pp. 10-1.

²⁰¹⁾ *Nostramo*, p. 84.

²⁰²⁾ *Lord Jim*, pp. 214-5.

And to say that the concept of duty and responsibility are central to Conrad's moral philosophy is regarded nowadays as a commonplace.

Just as Apollo Korzeniowski's romanticism had stamped its mark on Conrad's imagination, so Bobrowski's profound wisdom exerted a far-reaching formative influence on Conrad's mind and intellect.

These two influences were fundamental to the development of Conrad the man and writer. Not only did they by virtue of their very diversity enrich immensely his attitude towards the world around him, but also they planted within his breast, early on in life, the painful inner conflict of divided loyalties. On the one hand, there was the strong, authoritative figure of Bobrowski; on the other, the tragic memory of his father. To make things worse, throughout his correspondence, Bobrowski kept on harping on the two strains in Conrad's character: the "Nałęcz" and the "Bobrowski", attributing all Conrad's levities and misdemeanours to the former and extolling and encouraging the latter. It is quite possible that one of the main psychological reasons for Conrad's decision to leave Poland was the ever increasing pressure of the Bobrowski influence, which was further enhanced by the anti-romantic mood of Cracow and Lwów in the 1870s. This was bound not only to produce inner tension and confusion, but also to fill the fifteen year old boy with feelings of resentment and rebellion, which, in any case, are frequent at that age. Thus, psychologically speaking, Conrad's flight from Poland might have been a posthumous victory for Apollo. Later, Conrad learned to appreciate the positive aspects of the Bobrowski point of view and used it to check his innate romanticism.

On the literary level, these two influences correspond closely with the two dominant literary movements in nineteenth century Polish literature: romanticism which, practically speaking, had come to an end about the time of Conrad's birth, and positivism which was rapidly gaining strength on the eve of his departure from Poland.

Apollo Korzeniowski grounded Conrad in Polish romantic literature, whilst Bobrowski in his long letters introduced him to the positivist mode of thinking. It is precisely the richness and diversity of Conrad's Polish literary background that gave him such a magnificent start as a future writer.

Chapter III

THE CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE YOUNG CONRAD

As is already evident from the first two chapters, Conrad's Polish years were spent almost exclusively in cultured surroundings; amongst people who were never far from the centre of the country's intellectual, literary and political life. This fact has not been stressed sufficiently. Much has been made of Conrad's aristocratic origin, and Conrad himself seems to have been flattered not a little by the idea²⁰³). But, though this may have a special significance for the expatriate, though it may appeal to the romantic and the snob, from the literary point of view it is relatively unimportant. On the other hand, the fact that Conrad's early years were spent in the midst of the Polish intelligentsia played a crucial role in his whole development.

About a year after Conrad's birth, Apollo Korzeniowski moved with his family to the Ukrainian town of Zytomierz, the seat of a Catholic bishopric and a lively intellectual centre. There, as he devoted himself exclusively to literature and politics, he associated with a group of Polish writers which, included, among others, the novelist Kraszewski, the poets Groza²⁰⁴) and Pług²⁰⁵), and the historian Buszczyński. A common political programme, rather than a pure devotion to literature had brought these men together. Unlike most of the Polish gentry after the tragic events of 1846²⁰⁶) and the failure of the 1848 Revolutions, they continued to show strong patriotic and leftist tendencies. They still believed that the only way to rid Poland of foreign domination was to rise up in arms. Moreover, they hoped that in the event of a national rising they would receive both moral and efficient support from such comparatively enlightened states as France and England. At home they were critical of the existing social order and opposed the reactionary politics of the St. Petersburg "Pentarchy" and its numerous allies. Instead of glorifying the Polish *szlachta*²⁰⁷) and the old feudal system, they exposed the plight of the peasant and showed how corrupt, selfish and unpatriotic were the nobles and the gentry. Their proximate ambition was to bring about the abo-

203) It is interesting to note, for instance, that the Uniform Edition of Conrad's works bears on the inside of the cover the "Nałęcz" (his father's full name was Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski) coat-of-arms.

204) Aleksander Groza (1807-1875).

205) Adam Pług *pseud.* (i.e. Antoni Pietkiewicz) (1823-1903).

206) The national rising, which the Polish radicals had planned for 1846, was a complete failure. In Poznań the Prussians swiftly suppressed an abortive insurrection; a corresponding move in Galicia was stopped by the Austrian officials inciting the peasants against the gentry. In the resulting peasants' revolt over two thousand of the gentry were massacred.

207) The Polish word *szlachta* is, in effect, untranslatable. It denotes the hereditary class below the aristocracy and combines the meanings of the English terms "gentry" and "nobility."

lition of serfdom. In their writings they continued the traditions and conventions of romantic literature. Kraszewski wrote historical novels in the manner of Walter Scott. Korzeniowski modelled his *Czyścicowe pieśni* (*Purgatorial Cantos*) on Krasieński's visionary poems. Sowiński, Groza and Plug wrote about the Ukraine, following the traditions of the so-called Polish Ukrainian school of poetry.

Apart from this local circle, Korzeniowski had literary and political contacts in other parts of the country. From about 1858 he published articles in the St. Petersburg *Słowo* (*Word*), in the Lwów *Dziennik Literacki* (*Literary Daily*), and in the Warsaw *Gazeta Codzienna* (*Daily Gazette*) and *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (*Illustrated Weekly*). He corresponded with the historian Karol Szajnocha²⁰⁸) in Lwów and the critic and classical scholar Kazimierz Kaszewski²⁰⁹) in Warsaw.

In May 1861 Korzeniowski moved to Warsaw with the intention of editing together with the young poet and politician Ludwik Brzozowski²¹⁰) a new literary periodical called *Dwutygodnik* (*The Fortnightly*). His wife and child joined him in August or September. A month later, on 21 October, Apollo Korzeniowski was arrested and imprisoned in the Warsaw citadel, and the following May the Korzeniewskis left Poland for their Russian exile.

In this way, Conrad was prevented from ever profiting directly from the Zytomierz circle. However, it is possible that later he learned something of the character and atmosphere of his milieu from his father. A fragment of the interview, which the Polish journalist, Marian Dąbrowski, had with Conrad in 1914, suggests that Apollo Korzeniowski encouraged his son to read some of the easier literary productions of his friends and acquaintances. After speaking about the more important Polish authors whom he had read as a boy, Conrad mentioned the minor poet Wincenty Pol:

Of the others... oh, yes, there was old, grey-haired Pol, with his white, drooping whiskers; he used to come and visit my father, I remember him well...²¹¹)

There is, however, one interesting detail connected with Conrad's Zytomierz days. In 1858 Apollo Korzeniowski wrote a two-act play for children entitled *Batożek* (*The Little Whip*). Obviously, it had been written chiefly with Conrad in mind, and doubtless, as soon as the boy could read, he was presented with a copy. The play was performed a number of times by the local children with great success²¹²), and it is very likely that Conrad was present at some of the performances. Miscellaneous fragments of documentary evidence suggest that *Batożek* played an important part in the life of the boy. In a letter, written with his mother's help in June 1861, Conrad proudly informed his father that

203) Karol Szajnocha (1818-1868).

209) Kazimierz Kaszewski (1825-1910).

210) Ludwik Brzozowski (1833-1873).

211) Marian Dąbrowski, "Rozmowa z J. Conradem" ("A Talk with J. Conrad"), *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw), 16 (1914); reprinted by Maria Dąbrowska in her *Szkice o Conradzie* (*Conrad Sketches*) (Warsaw, 1959), p. 20.

212) See *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, II, pp. 178 and 251.

Olutek (presumably some playmate of his) had sent him "a fine little whip" ²¹³). Again, a photograph of Conrad, taken the following year in Warsaw, shows the boy standing in front of a huge ornate chair with a whip in his left hand ²¹⁴). In 1895, Konstancja Montrésor, thanking Conrad for a copy of *Almayer's Folly*, wrote:

...there are ties and bonds of friendship which neither time nor distance can weaken — to such belong the ones which link me to your family — Above all, the memory of ever mourned and never forgotten Mr. Tadeusz, likewise that of your worthy Grandmother, who had always been so kind to me and whom I loved dearly, and finally that of tiny Conrad himself, running about the room with a little whip...²¹⁵)

The matter, though trivial in itself, shows the great interest that Apollo and Ewelina Korzeniowski took in the upbringing of their son.

In Russia, contrary to what one might expect, Conrad again found himself in a cultured setting. This was largely due to Apollo Korzeniowski who had a rare gift for surrounding himself with people. In Vologda he soon became the centre of the exile community. According to an anonymous writer, all the political exiles living in the settlement, Russians and Poles alike, gathered once a week in the Korzeniowski home for a frugal "tea" with biscuits; "the scant means did not allow anything more; however, in view of the hospitality of our hosts and considering our situation then, the satisfaction of spiritual needs was plentiful" ²¹⁶). Korzeniowski himself described the exile community in a letter to Jan and Gabriela Zagórski:

Vologda, therefore, in itself does not exist for us. Vologda, as a gathering of exiles, exists in the following measure: Fr. Suzin from Ołyka, Fr. Chiliczowski from the Lublin area (from Goraj), Fr. Burzyński from Maciejowice, Fr. Pelagiusz Rzewuski from Białą. From Wilno there is Wacław Przybylski, a pleasant, good man, a writer and a teacher. From Livonia, the two Limanowskis. From the Crown ²¹⁷), Stanisław Kraków, the son of Pauline ²¹⁸) who has opened here a photographic establishment and is taking pictures of the scrofulous natives of both sexes. There is also Libelt from Podlaskie. Finally, there are we, God only knows where from.

We have set up and are maintaining a chapel; it is the centre around which we live. We pray a great deal, ardently and sincerely. Apart from us, there are people from '30, '46 and '48, who since '56 are allowed to return, but who, having acclimatized themselves, have married and, what is more, multiplied; obviously, they belong to the cold-water species.

For them our arrival was like a few drops of water that have fallen on to a layer of unslaked lime. They remembered their speech, their customs, their church. The priests instruct their children; we encourage them to join in common prayer and to take part in the life of the community, for it would be a shame to let the sheep grow scabby. As a place

213) The letter is quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

214) The photograph has been reproduced by Aubry in *Life and Letters*, I, 22.

215) Konstancja Montrésor (née Lubomirska) to Conrad, 6 December 1895, The National Library of Warsaw, MS. 2889.

216) Quoted by Michał Rolle in "Zapomniany poeta" ("The Forgotten Poet"), *In Illo Tempore... Szkice historyczno-literackie* (Brody - Lwów, 1914), pp. 47-8.

217) In the pre-partition period, Poland itself without, and as opposed to, Lithuania was referred to as "the Crown."

218) Paulina Krakowowa (1813-1882), journalist and author of books for children.

of exile, Vologda caters for those who love their country and wish to serve it, for women of evil ways and for thieves. Our community is, therefore, as numerous as it is badly chosen ²¹⁹).

The Vologda community at large might have been an ill-assorted social group, but Conrad himself spent his first years amongst the select few — in a hot-house of culture, religion and patriotism.

Moreover, Apollo and Ewelina encouraged Conrad to participate in their life as much as possible. There has been preserved, for instance, a photograph of Conrad aged five, bearing the following inscription on its back:

To my dear grandmother who helped me send cakes to my poor father in prison. Pole, Catholic, gentleman. 6 July 1863. Conrad ²²⁰).

Apollo Korzeniowski not only gave Conrad ideological instruction, but drew him into his own literary work. In *A Personal Record* Conrad relates how one day his father found him reading the manuscript of a translation of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

I was greatly confused, expecting to get into trouble. He stood in the doorway looking at me with some surprise, but the only thing he said after a moment of silence was:

"Read the page aloud".

Luckily the page lying before me was not over blotted with erasures and corrections, and my father's handwriting was otherwise extremely legible. When I got to the end he nodded and I flew out of doors thinking myself lucky to have escaped reproof for that piece of impulsive audacity ²²¹).

A little later Conrad tells us:

It was only a month before, or perhaps it was only a week before that I had read to him aloud from beginning to end, and to his perfect satisfaction, as he lay on his bed, not being very well at the time, the proofs of his translation of Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea" ²²²).

After the death of Ewelina, Apollo clung jealously, almost to the point of obsession, to his son. In a letter written at that time to his cousins, Jan and Gabriela Zagórski, he said:

...my life ...is entirely centred upon my little Conrad. I teach him what I know, but that, unfortunately, is little. I shield him from the atmosphere of this place, and he grows up as though in a monastic cell. For the *memento mori* we have the grave of our dear one, and every letter which reaches us is the equivalent of a day of fasting, a hair shirt or a discipline ²²³).

²¹⁹ Korzeniowski to Jan and Gabriela Zagórski, 15 June 1862; in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw) 4 (January 1920).

²²⁰ *Life and Letters*, I, p. 8.

J. K. Blunt's "Je suis Americain, catholique et gentilhomme" in *The Arrow of Gold* (p. 18) and in *The Mirror of the Sea* (p. 158) is almost certainly an echo of this typically Polish formula.

²²¹ *A Personal Record*, p. 72.

²²² *A Personal Record*, p. 72.

²²³ Korzeniowski to Jan and Gabriela Zagórski, 18 January 1866, in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw), 20 (May 1920); quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

Apollo was too intelligent a man not to realize the destructive influence of such a life on Conrad. In September 1865 he told Kaszewski:

The poor child does not know what it is to have a playmate of his own age; he looks at my wizened sorrow and who knows whether this sight does not cover his youthful heart with wrinkles and his awakening soul with hoar frost. That is one of the important reasons forcing me to tear this poor child from my gloomy heart²²⁴).

In order to remedy, at least partially, this undesirable state of affairs, he twice reluctantly sent Conrad to spend a little time on Tadeusz Bobrowski's estate at Nowofastów. But it was already too late then. The years of loneliness and the oppressive company of the constantly depressed parent had left a permanent mark on the child's character. During Conrad's second absence, Apollo wrote to Kaszewski:

I am lonely. Conrad is with his Grandmother, first for a month to the doctors in Kiev, and from Kiev, on the advice of these doctors, to his Uncle in the country. We suffer equally: just imagine, the boy is stupid enough to long for this loneliness and orphanhood in which he sees only my gloomy face; in which the toil of learning is the only recreation of his nine-year-old life; he longs for me from the pure air of the countryside, amidst games with his girl-cousin of the same age, from under the wings of his Grandmother's caresses and with the indulgence of his Uncle who has transferred all the love he felt for his sister to his nephew and, just as he regarded the Unforgotten One as a superior being, so now does he caress the little fellow with a respect that is somehow touching. And yet he longs — for he is stupid, and, I fear, will remain stupid all his life²²⁵).

In December 1867 the Russian authorities finally granted Korzeniowski a passport which enabled him to leave Russia with Conrad. Arriving in the Eastern Galician city of Lwów, Conrad found himself in a completely new atmosphere. During this first short stay, he was too young to be affected by the city's cultural and political climate; however, since several years later he returned to Lwów as a youth of fifteen and spent altogether some twelve months there, it is worthwhile to take a brief look at the atmosphere of the city about this time.

What characterized Lwów most in the early 1870s was its mood of compromise. After the Austrian defeat at Sadowa (1866) which led to the *Ausgleich* (compromise) of 1867, Austrian rule had become quite tolerable and the Galician population, mindful of the days of Metternich and Bach, enjoyed the newly acquired freedom. Few people dreamed of complete independence, and the idea of a national rising was considered preposterous. The disaster of 1863 had taught the Poles a bitter lesson. Half a century had to pass before another rising was organized. It was decided that instead of wasting lives and energy on such futile ventures as the 1863 fiasco, the whole national effort should concentrate on the material and spiritual betterment of Polish society, in preparation for some moment in the future when the international situation would warrant a more active

224) Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 18 September 1865; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

225) Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 22 November 1866.

policy. This doctrine known as "organic work"²²⁶⁾ became one of the cardinal points in the political programme of the Warsaw positivist school²²⁷⁾. But, although the positivist programme was actually formulated in the Warsaw periodicals in the 1870s, some aspects of the ideology had already been accepted by the more sober sections of the Galician intelligentsia. Thus, for instance, Tadeusz Bobrowski both preached and practised the principles of "organic work" long before the Warsaw *Niwa* (*The Field*) published articles on the subject.

Apollo Korzeniowski, on the other hand, opposed this policy of compromise throughout his life. He believed that the first and main duty of every good Pole was to strive for complete independence. Nothing — not even the general welfare of the nation — was more important than this high ideal. Poland must first be free and only then should one start worrying about her material interests. Moreover, to men like Korzeniowski it was not merely a question of political strategy, but an all-embracing ethical problem. Kraszewski in his novel *Choroby wieku* (*The Diseases of the Age*) criticized the positivist attitude from the moralist's standpoint:

It has always seemed to me that man has lost his reason in seeking, above all, material gain and sacrificing for its sake the most precious aims of existence. For I simply cannot conceive how men who are completely engrossed in business can serve both the cause of the soul and the interests of the pocket²²⁸⁾.

To Kraszewski's reader "the cause of the soul" was the national cause²²⁹⁾. Many of the "Reds" considered the "organic work" doctrine a tool in the hands of the possessing classes. The capitalist could now amass wealth and call it patriotism. This is Korzeniowski's main accusation against the promoters of "organic work" in his *Komedia*:

Enough! The very plagues of God will not mend you!
Go on, live unclouded lives like snails!
Barter and trade! Eat! Drink! Rot!
Cringe to the mighty, trample on wretches!
Raise temples to gold; altars to the rouble!...
Buy! Sell! And build factories! After death posterity will
erect a monument on your magnificent grave with this epitaph:
He had so many serfs! Avoiding the highways of life, he
increased the country's trade and furthered its industry.
Moreover, he did not steal; therefore was virtuous.
Naturally! And if he had a soul, may perpetual light shine
upon it for ever and ever!²³⁰⁾

226) For an excellent article on the history of the doctrine see Stefan Kieniewicz, "Problem pracy organicznej," *VIII Powszechny Zjazd Historyków Polskich; Referaty i dyskusja* (Warsaw, 1960), IV, pp. 169-204.

227) See p. 144 f.

228) J. I. Kraszewski, *Choroby wieku. Studium pathologiczne* (Warsaw, 1874), I, p. 11. Kraszewski is, of course, echoing "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16).

229) The novel is dedicated to "To the memory of our unpractical fathers..." and ends with St. Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians "Quench not the Spirit!" (I Thessalonians 5). It was a common practice among Polish nineteenth century writers to disguise a political message in religious language.

230) *Komedia*, pp. 264-265.

The failure of the 1863 rising and the Russian exile in no way cured Korzeniowski of his patriotic idealism. If anything, he grew more fanatical. His patriotism acquired religious, almost mystical overtones. His sense of mission deepened. In 1866 he concluded a letter to Jan and Gabriela Zagórski like some apostle in exile:

Tell everyone whom you see of your family, tell everyone, that I remain faithful to my attachment. Tell strangers that I love them as well as before, when I myself was rich in love; I have nothing now, but my heart has not diminished. I end, as I began, with the Name of God the Redeemer, who died in order to make us happy, and who knows that we are still waiting for this happiness ²³¹).

The "happiness" of which Korzeniowski wrote was freedom.

It is therefore not surprising that after his return from Russia he found the lukewarm patriotism of the inhabitants of Lwów extremely annoying. In March 1868 he wrote to his friend Kaszewski:

It is written on my forehead that I am departing, and perhaps for that reason the Galileans ²³²) bear my stay more calmly: I will not snatch from anyone the bone which he is gnawing. Strong in my disinterestedness, I tell them, whenever it is necessary, the truth straight to their faces. They have had bestowed upon them, beyond and without their deserving it, that which is so difficult to acquire and perhaps precisely because they have not deserved it, they cannot, and what is worse, do not wish to, make proper use of it. Few peoples in Europe could boast of such a wide freedom of the word, as one finds here now: but what of it, if the *Word* has long since died in them and only the words have remained and these but bark and growl at one another. [...] Egotists, egotists, to the third power — these subjects of the Kingdom of Głodomeria ²³³) and Galicia ²³⁴).

The mood of compromise had also taken hold of Cracow, where Korzeniowski moved with Conrad in February 1869. But here the political scene was somewhat livelier. The city was divided into two camps. There were the *Stańczyks* ²³⁵) — a conservative party which, whilst accepting the general principles of "organic work" ²³⁶), disagreed fundamentally with the Warsaw positivists on many other important issues. The *Stańczyks* were reactionary, aristocratic and very Catholic. They saw

231) Korzeniowski to Jan and Gabriela Zagórski, 18 January 1866; in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* (Warsaw) 20 (May 1920).

232) The inhabitants of Galicia were sometimes jokingly called "Galileans."

233) Under the partitions Austrian Poland comprised of: the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, the Great Princedom of Cracow and the Princedom of Bukovina. "Głodomeria" is a deliberate corruption of Lodomeria (*głód* is the Polish for "hunger").

234) Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 11 March 1868.

235) The party acquired its name from a political pamphlet entitled "The Portfolio of Stańczyk," (Stańczyk was the court fool of the last Jagellonians, renowned for his shrewd political criticism), which was published in the *Przegląd Polski* in 1869 by Stanisław Kozmian, Józef Szujski, Stanisław Tarnowski and Ludwik Wodzicki. The pamphlet vigorously attacked the policy of armed resistance.

236) See: Józef Szujski's pamphlet *Kilka prawd z dziejów naszych ku rozważaniu w chwili obecnej*, published in Cracow in 1867. The pamphlet has been reprinted in *Dzieła Józefa Szujskiego; wydanie zbiorowe* (Cracow, 1885), Series III, Vol. I, pp. 281-2.

in Catholic Austria a potential ally against Russia. Józef Szujski, one of the *Stańczyk* leaders, wrote in 1867:

Five centuries ago, Germany was our enemy, to-day it is only Russia. Russia, I say and repeat it, for only Russia has before her an unaccomplished mission, and, standing in the way of the accomplishment, there is Austria ²³⁷).

Opposing them, there was a leftist minority, the Democrats, whose programme envisaged far-reaching social reforms and who placed a strong emphasis on education and scientific progress. Although the Democrats also tried to be realistic about the general political situation, they were, on the whole, less willing to reconcile themselves to the prospect of prolonged foreign domination than were the right-wing parties.

In 1869 the Democrats founded in Cracow a new daily, called *Kraj* (*Our Country*). The main aim of the paper was to combat the city's reactionary press, notably the conservative *Czas* (*Time*) and the *Stańczyk* — dominated *Przegląd Polski* (*The Polish Review*). In addition to this tactical function, *Kraj* was to acquaint the Galician intelligentsia with the new progressive ideas. During its short existence (it ceased appearing in 1874), *Kraj* launched attacks on established religion and the clergy, expounded the teachings of the so-called Positivist philosophers ²³⁸), applied Darwin's theories to social and political phenomena, preached the freedom of thought and expression, and generally tried to keep pace with the most progressive Warsaw periodicals.

It was with the intention of joining the editorial staff of *Kraj* that Korzeniowski moved to Cracow. Korzeniowski himself was a deeply religious man and probably found the free-thinking tendencies of his colleagues distasteful; however, in view of the many other points of contact he seems to have been prepared to overlook this difference. Evidently, he preferred free-thinking radicals to reactionary Catholics who fawned upon the Austrian Emperor.

In the end, however, Korzeniowski did not contribute anything to *Kraj*. He was already too ill to work when he arrived in Cracow in February. Three months later *Kraj* published his obituary ²³⁹). His funeral which took place on 26 May 1869 occasioned a major political and patriotic demonstration.

Last night at six o'clock in the evening, [wrote Stefan Buszczyński in *Kraj*] huge crowds filled Grodzka and Poselska Street, in order to pay a last tribute to the prematurely deceased poet and worthy son of Poland. ...Cracow has not known such a magnificent funeral for many years, not because of the external pomp, but because of the participation and sorrow of fellow-countrymen. In that respect, it can only be compared to the funeral of the seventeen victims who died on 26 April 1848 ²⁴⁰).

Conrad, who walked at the head of the enormous procession, described the occasion both in the "Author's Note" to *A Personal Record* ²⁴¹), as

237) *Ibid.*, pp. 283-4.

238) i.e. Comte, Littré, Mill, Spencer, Taine, etc.

239) On 25 May 1869.

240) *Kraj* (*Our Country*) (Cracow) 70 (27 May 1869); quoted by Taborski, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

241) *A Personal Record*, p. x.

well as in the essay "Poland Revisited"²⁴²). Evidently it made a great impression on him. For the first time in his life the eyes of a whole city were upon him. As the orphaned son of a national hero, he became a public figure in his own right. On December 28, 1872, in homage to the memory of his father, the municipal council conferred upon him the freedom of the city of Cracow. Apart from these brief moments of exaltation, Apollo's death brough Conrad only misery. He was left alone, amongst strangers, in a city predominantly critical of his parents' ideals, viewing their final sacrifice more with irony than with admiration. Moreover, he had been deprived of the sheltered security of a home and had found himself in the somewhat harder world of orphanages, pensions and schools.

As long as Apollo lived, Conrad received most of his education at home, his father acting as his principal tutor. During their stay in Russia, clearly, there had been no other alternative; but when father and son arrived in Lwów, and Conrad could, at last, be sent to a proper school, Apollo was reluctant to take advantage of the opportunity and continued to teach his son at home. He explained his course of action to his friend Kaszewski by stressing the inadequacy of the local *gymnasium*:

I would like to send little Conrad to school this year; however, I have put it off till the next academic year. I am fully aware of the advantages of public education for the boy; but, judge for yourself: I went to the *Gymnasium* to enrol my child. I met some school-children returning home for lunch: suddenly, I was amongst a crowd of Polish children, making an awful row, as in the old days. I listened, and I could not believe my ears. I heard sounds, childish sounds, Polish ones — but, believe me I understood barely a half of this childish chatter. Just shows you how careful the headmasters and teachers are today. There is a lack of school-books, our own text-books are infinitely better. They study Polish grammar from a Polish translation of a work, written originally in German. The geometry book has been translated into the worst possible Polish and all the other text-books are not much better²⁴³).

But Apollo's main reason for keeping Conrad at home was, it seems, the desire to have as much influence over him as possible. After Ewa's death, he transferred all his love to Conrad.

He is all that remains of her on this earth and I want him to be a worthy witness of her to those hearts who will not forget her²⁴⁴).

He wished to form his mind and character on the pattern of his ideals. In a letter to Buszczyński, he said that his "chief concern, if not the first one, is to make little Conrad neither a democrat, nor an aristocrat, nor a demagogue, nor a republican, nor a monarchist — nor the servant and lackey of any of these — but a good Pole"²⁴⁵). It is therefore not surpris-

242) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 169.

243) Apollo Korzeniowski to Kazimierz Kaszewski, 14 October 1868.

244) Apollo Korzeniowski to Kazimierz Kaszewski, 10 June 1865; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

245) Apollo Korzeniowski to Stefan Buszczyński, 17 March 1868; quoted by Taborski, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

ing that he wished to protect Conrad from what he considered to be the corrupting influence of contemporary Galician society, even if it meant depriving him of a proper school education.

Apollo started teaching Conrad very early. The first piece of writing from Conrad's hand, though admittedly written with the help of his mother, dates from June 1861, when the boy was three-and-a-half²⁴⁶⁾. In *A Personal Record* Conrad tells us that from the age of five he had been "a great reader, as is not perhaps wonderful in a child who was never aware of learning to read"²⁴⁷⁾. By the time Conrad was eight, Apollo was teaching him so intensively that, at one point, his friend Kaszewski found it necessary to advise him to slacken the pace a little. On 18 February 1866 Apollo informed Kaszewski:

I am taking your advice: I am giving my poor child a little rest from study²⁴⁸⁾.

Although Apollo tried to follow the official school syllabus as closely as possible, it seems inevitable that his lessons had a marked literary basis. In the press interview, which we have already quoted, Conrad told Dąbrowski:

My father read *Pan Tadeusz* aloud to me and made me read it out loud on many occasions. But I preferred *Konrad Wallenrod* and *Grażyna*. Later I preferred Słowacki. Do you know why Słowacki? Il est l'âme de toute la Pologne, lui²⁴⁹⁾.

Supporting evidence comes from Jadwiga Kałuska (née Tokarska) who knew Conrad in Lwów in 1867. Quoting Kałuska in an article which appeared in 1927, Roman Dyboski says that Conrad "astonished everyone by reciting whole passages of *Pan Tadeusz* as well as Mickiewicz's ballads, from memory"²⁵⁰⁾. Conrad supplemented Apollo's lessons with wide and intensive reading.

At ten years of age I had read much of Victor Hugo and other romantics. I had read in Polish and in French, history, voyages, novels; I knew "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote" in abridged editions; I had read in early boyhood Polish poets and some French poets...²⁵¹⁾

The influence of Apollo's own intellectual occupations must have also been important for Conrad. We have already seen how Apollo drew

246) The letter first appeared in Stefan Pomarański, "Nieznane listy matki Conrada do męża ("Unpublished Letters from Conrad's Mother to her Husband"), *Gazeta Lwowska* (Lwów), 154-160 (1929); quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

247) *A Personal Record*, p. 70.

248) Korzeniowski to Kaszewski, 18 February 1866.

249) Marian Dąbrowski, "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; reprinted by Maria Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 20. *Pan Tadeusz, Konrad Wallenrod* and *Grażyna* are all works by Mickiewicz.

250) Roman Dyboski, "Z młodości Józefa Conrada" ("Joseph Conrad's Youth"), *Czas* (Cracow) (December 1927); quoted by Piotr Grzegorzczak in *Joseph Conrad w Polsce; materiały bibliograficzne* (*Joseph Conrad in Poland; bibliographical materials*) (Warsaw, 1933), p. 9.

251) *A Personal Record*, p. 70-1.

Conrad into his literary work. It was not long before Conrad began to imitate his father.

As far as we know, Conrad's earliest efforts to write date from his first stay in Lwów in 1867-8. Jadwiga Kałuska related that:

Already then his flair for writing began to manifest itself. He would bring comedies of his own composition... These works dealt with the struggles against the Russians... The most splendid work was the drama "The Eyes of King John Sobieski" (252).

This is corroborated by Tekla Syroczyńska, who described how Conrad

already at this time... had written a little comedy which he wanted us to act, but nothing came of it (253).

and Leon Syroczyński, her cousin, told Aniela Zagórska that Conrad used to write comedies and act them with the Syroczyński girls (254).

In spite of what he says in *A Personal Record*, Conrad first made known his ambition to become a writer whilst still in Poland. Tekla Syroczyńska related that during his second stay in Lwów in 1873 Conrad claimed to have great talent and said that he would become a great writer (255).

Conrad's unconventional early education certainly aggravated the problems which he encountered after the death of his father. He was inadequately prepared for school from the academic point of view and he seems to have found it difficult to adjust himself. On the other hand, however, life with Apollo must have been a good apprenticeship for a literary career.

Conrad first went to school during Apollo's last illness. He wrote about this in *Poland Revisited*:

...there issued out of my aroused memory, a small boy of eleven, wending his way, not very fast, to a preparatory school for day-pupils on the second floor of the third house down from the Florian Gate. It was in the winter months of 1868. At eight o'clock of every morning that God made, sleet or shine, I walked up Florian Street. But of the school I remember very little. I believe that one of my co-sufferers there has become a much appreciated editor of historical documents. But I didn't suffer much from the various imperfections of my first school. I was rather indifferent to school troubles. I had a private gnawing worm of my own. This was the time of my father's last illness (256).

His second and most important school was the famous *gymnasium* of St. Anne in Cracow, where he was sent probably in the autumn of 1870 (257).

252) Roman Dyboski, "Z młodości Conrada," *loc. cit.*

253) Stanisław Czosnowski, "Conradiana," *Epoka* (Warsaw) 136 (May 1929); quoted by Piotr Grzegorzczak in *Joseph Conrad w Polsce, op. cit.*, p. 9.

254) See Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 22 n.

255) Stanisław Czosnowski, "Conradiana," *loc. cit.*

256) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 167.

257) The question whether or not Conrad attended the *gymnasium* of St. Anne is discussed in the Appendix.

St. Anne's, one of the oldest and most famous schools in the country ²⁵⁸) produced in the course of its long existence a whole series of outstanding people, in all spheres of life. Confining ourselves to the mid-nineteenth century and the world of letters, we find among its ex-pupils such writers as: Stanisław Tarnowski, Józef Szujski, Michał Bobrzyński, Adam Bełcikowski, Michał Bałucki, Włodzimierz Zagórski, Konstanty Marian Górski, Lucjan Rydel, Tadeusz Żeleński ("Boy"), and, above all, Kazimierz Tetmajer and Stanisław Wyspiański ²⁵⁹).

Conrad entered St. Anne's *gymnasium* at a fortunate moment ²⁶⁰). In 1867 the Austrian government passed two decrees which changed the entire educational situation in Galicia. The first made Polish the official school language; the second sanctioned the formation of the *Rada Szkolna Krajowa* (National School Council). This body then proceeded to reform the existing school system, which had been based on the Austrian *Organisationsentwurf* ²⁶¹), and remodelled it along lines mapped out by such positivist educationalists as Józef Dietl, Adam Potocki and Zygmunt Sawczyński.

It was not easy to change a system that had lasted for over twenty years, especially as the higher authorities responsible for it remained the same. Nevertheless, the Polish teachers, urged on by national pride, were determined to achieve the seemingly impossible. First, the language in the class-room was changed from German to Polish. Then school administration began to be conducted in Polish. Until 1868 the class diaries (*Klassenbuch*) of St. Anne's were written in German; after that year they were in Polish ²⁶²). Text-books were translated. German teachers were quietly dismissed and replaced by Poles. Even the syllabus was modified a little, and more time allotted to Polish language, literature and history. All this had to be done gradually, with a great deal of caution, in case the Viennese bureaucrats felt that advantage was being taken of their new liberal mood.

When Conrad started going to the *gymnasium* in Cracow, the effects

258) The school was founded by the Cracow Academy in 1588 under the name of *classes* or *scholae privatae*. In 1617 it was endowed by Bartłomiej Nowodworski (of the "Nałęcz" coat-of-arms) and came to be known as the Nowodworski Schools. In 1643 it moved to a new building, built from funds donated by Władysławski and King Władysław IV, and changed its name to the Władysławsko-Nowodworski College. In 1815 it received the name of the Lyceum of St. Anne and in 1850 that of the Imperial and Royal Gymnasium of St. Anne. One of its most famous pupils was the future king of Poland, John III Sobieski, who attended the school with his brother Mark from 1640 to 1643.

259) Stanisław Tarnowski (1837-1917), literary historian, critic and politician; Józef Szujski (1835-1883), historian, dramatist, poet and politician; Michał Bobrzyński (1849-1935), historian, lawyer and politician; Adam Bełcikowski (1839-1909), dramatist and historian; Michał Bałucki (1837-1901), poet, dramatic writer and novelist; Włodzimierz Zagórski (1934-1902), poet, novelist and humorist; Konstanty Marian Górski (1862-1909), poet and critic; Lucjan Rydel (1870-1918), poet and dramatist; Tadeusz Żeleński ("Boy") (1874-1941), poet, critic, translator and journalist; Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer (1865-1940) poet and novelist; Stanisław Wyspiański (1869-1907), painter, dramatist and poet.

260) This would also be true if Conrad did not attend St. Anne's but some other Cracow school.

261) The *Organisationsentwurf* (Organizational Scheme) was a plan formulating the organization and curriculum of secondary schools in Austria, which had been drawn up in 1849 by two eminent Austrian educationalists, Franz Exner and Hermann Bonitz.

262) See Jan Leniek, *Książka Pamiątkowa ku uczczeniu jubileuszu trzechsetnej rocznicy założenia gimnazjum św. Anny w Krakowie* (*Memorial Book Celebrating the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of St. Anne's Gymnasium in Cracow* (Cracow, 1888), p. XVI.

of the recent Austrian concessions could already be felt. At the same time, there still persisted the atmosphere of defiance which characterized the preceding period and which, among other things, manifested itself in a particularly keen interest in Polish subjects. Thus, it was the common practice of Polish schoolboys to read and discuss outside school-hours "banned books", i.e. those Polish works which had been proscribed by the government authorities.

The novelist Zygmunt Kaczkowski²⁶³ who attended a Galician *gymnasium* under the Metternich regime — one of the worst periods — relates:

When we managed to get hold of some banned book — and everything that was published abroad by the *émigrés* was banned — we tore off its title page and stuck another one in its place, taken from some Polish classic; so that from the outside it looked like the *Jagielloniad*²⁶⁴ or Feliński's *Barbara*²⁶⁵; whereas in fact it was *Pan Tadeusz*²⁶⁶ or the *Forefathers' Eve*²⁶⁷.

Similarly Bolesław Baranowski²⁶⁹, one of the main figures in the history of Galician education during the autonomic period, who matriculated at the Stanisławów *gymnasium* in 1863, tells us in his memoirs how a meagre two hours a week, in a dark cell-like room, had been allotted to the study of Polish; but, he continues, this was only half the story. Whenever the boys had a spare moment they would bury themselves in straw in some barn or go to the riverside and read to one another the works of Czajkowski, Słowacki and Krasiński²⁷⁰. Tadeusz Bobrowski also relates how his brother Stefan got into trouble with the school authorities for reading "subversive literature"²⁷¹.

Conrad who had been brought up in an atmosphere of political conspiracy would, no doubt, take part in such activities eagerly. Not only did they break the humdrum monotony of school-life, but were also a mild form of rebellion against authority.

That this transitional period in the Galician educational system was particularly conducive to the development of literary talent is clearly borne out by the fact that the next important movement in Polish literature — the so-called Young Poland movement²⁷² — was created largely by

263) Zygmunt Kaczkowski (1825-1896).

264) *Jagiellonida*, a pseudo-classical epic by Dyzma Bończa Tomaszewski (1749-1825).

265) *Barbara*, a pseudo-classical tragedy by Alojzy Feliński (1771-1820).

266) *Pan Tadeusz*, Mickiewicz's patriotic epic, describing the traditional life of the Polish gentry.

267) *The Forefathers' Eve (Dziady)*, Mickiewicz's bold romantic drama, mingling passionate love motives, folk-lore and mystical and patriotic elements.

268) Zygmunt Kaczkowski, "Młodość szkolna w dobie spisków i Metternichowskiej reakcji 1835-1840" ("Schooldays in the Period of Conspiracy and the Metternich Reaction 1835-1840") in *Galiczyjskie wspomnienia szkolne*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Antoni Knot (Cracow, 1955), pp. 107-8.

269) Bolesław Adam Baranowski (1844-1916), educationalist and literary critic.

270) See *Galiczyjskie wspomnienia szkolne*, pp. 251-2.

271) See Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, I, p. 109.

272) The Young Poland movement was a neo-romantic reaction against positivism and its realistic approach to life and literature which came in the 1890s, due in part to influences from France, Germany and Scandinavia. The dominating tone of this period was the return to the expression of feelings and to imaginative writing. The movement aimed at freeing the arts

people who were to enter the Galician schools within a matter of years of Conrad²⁷³).

As has already been mentioned, adjustment to school-life was difficult for Conrad. His cousin, Tekla Syroczyńska, retained this memory of Conrad, the schoolboy:

He was intellectually very developed. He hated the school routine which both tired and bored him. He would often say that he had great talent and that he would become a famous writer. This, together with the sarcastically-ironic expression on his face and the numerous critical remarks which he kept on making caused surprise amongst the teachers and provoked the ridicule of other boys. He did not like to feel constrained by anything anywhere. At home, at school, in the salon he would lounge in a semi-reclining position²⁷⁴).

In view of his unorthodox upbringing, this is by no means surprising. After years of idleness and comparative freedom, he must have found school discipline highly antipathetic. Moreover, a passage in the essay "Geography and Some Explorers" suggests that he was in conflict with his teachers.

Unfortunately, the marks awarded for that subject [geography - A.B.] were almost as few as the hours apportioned to it in the school curriculum by persons of no romantic sense for the real, ignorant of the great possibilities of active life; with no desire for struggle, no notion of the wide spaces of the world — mere bored professors, in fact, who were not only middle-aged but looked to me as if they had never been young. And their geography was very much like themselves, a bloodless thing with a dry skin covering a repulsive armature of uninteresting bones.

I would be ashamed of my warmth in digging up a hatchet which has been buried now for nearly fifty years if those fellows had not tried so often to take my scalp at the yearly examinations. There are things that one does not forget. And besides, the geography which I had discovered for myself was the geography of open spaces and wide horizons built up on men's devoted work in the open air, the geography still militant but already conscious of its approaching end with the death of the last great explorer. The antagonism was radical²⁷⁵).

from utilitarianism, and in this showed certain affinities with French naturalism and symbolism and with Wilde's cult of "art for art's sake." It looked back to Polish romantic literature, and especially to the poetry of Słowacki and the newly discovered Cyprian Norwid (1821-1883). In contrast to the preceding period, poetry, drama and the novel all developed equally. Among the pioneers of the movement were: Stanisław Przybyszewski (1868-1927), critic, novelist and dramatist, editor of the Cracow weekly *Zycie (Life)*; Zenon Przesmycki ("Miriam") (1861-1944), poet, translator and critic, editor of the Warsaw monthly *Chimera*; Antoni Lange (1861-1929), poet and translator, and Artur Górski (1870-1959), poet, critic and dramatist. Some of the other outstanding writers linked with the movement are: Stanisław Wyspiański (1869-1907), poet, dramatist and painter; Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer (1865-1940), poet and short story writer; Jan Kasprówicz (1860-1926), poet and translator; Bolesław Leśmian (1878-1937), poet; Leopold Staff (1878-1957), poet; Stefan Żeromski (1864-1925), novelist and dramatist; Władysław Reymont (1868-1925), novelist; Wacław Berent (1873-1940), novelist; Wacław Sieroszewski (1860-1945), novelist.

273) For a discussion of certain affinities between Conrad and the Young Poland writers see Tymon Terlecki, "Conrad w kulturze polskiej" ("Conrad and Polish Culture"), *Conrad żywy*, ed. Wit Tarnawski, pp. 100-113.

274) Quoted by Zdzisław Najder in "Polskie lata Conrada" ("Conrad's Polish Years"), *Twórczość (Warsaw)*, 11 (November 1956), p. 149.

275) *Last Essays*, p. 12.

These words are symbolic not only of the basic antithesis of youth and age, but also of the conflict which grew up between the boy, brought up in the tradition of romantic idealism, and the adherents of the sober but dull positivist philosophy. This conflict was largely responsible for Conrad's flight from Poland. More significantly, it gave rise to the neo-romantic revival in the Young Poland movement.

After Apollo Korzeniowski's death, Conrad remained in Poland another five years, growing up in a society which was increasingly critical of many of his father's most cherished convictions and ideals.

Throughout the nineteenth century politics exerted a great deal of pressure on Polish literature. But, perhaps, at no period was this pressure greater than in the early years of positivism. Indeed, for a time, literature seemed to have been completely harnessed to politics and other, similar "higher motives". Poets were castigated for their political views²⁷⁶, literary criticism was pressed into ideological service²⁷⁷, and "art for art's sake" was emphatically condemned²⁷⁸. The positivist theorists maintained, in accordance with their utilitarian creed, that a work of art must have a definite moral, social or political purpose. Piotr Chmielowski, the leading positivist critic, writes:

Before creating a work of art, an artist should decide upon some social aim: his work should have a tendency. Without tendency, there are no great works of art, there are only better or worse wrought trifles²⁷⁹.

It is the *matter* that decides the greatness of a given work of literature. The form is merely an outward vesture and, therefore, of secondary importance. The only question relating to form that the positivist critics concerned themselves with was whether the style of a given piece of writing expressed the *thought* clearly.

The positivists were generally critical of poetry²⁸⁰. They ridiculed mercilessly such "second-wave" romantics as Ujejski, Pol, Lenartowicz, Zaleski, Berwiński, Wolski, Odyniec, Deotyma and Żmichowska²⁸¹.

276 See e.g. Spasowicz's essays on Syrokomla and Pol. (Włodzimierz Spasowicz, *Pisma* [St. Petersburg, 1892], I, pp. 61-143 and 147-198.)

277 See e.g. the concluding paragraphs of Tarnowski's study of Coriolanus. (Stanisław Tarnowski, *Studia do historii literatury polskiej. Wiek XIX. Rozprawy i sprawozdania*, [Cracow, 1898], pp. 389-390.)

278 In 1872 Jan Maurycy Kamiński gave a lecture *On the Relationship of Poetry to Social Life* in which he condemned the theory of "art for art's sake" and advised poets to study the social sciences unless they wanted to become "sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." (See Piotr Chmielowski, *Zarys najnowszej literatury polskiej*, [1864-1897], 4th edition [Cracow, 1898], p. 35.)

279 From Piotr Chmielowski, "Utylitaryzm w literaturze," *Niwa* (Warsaw), 18 (1872); reprinted in *Publicystyka okresu pozytywizmu; wybór tekstów*, edited by Teofil Wojeński (Wrocław, 1953), p. 137.

280 See e.g. Adam Wiślicki, "Groch na ścianę," *Przegląd Tygodniowy* (Warsaw), 49 (1867); also, the column "Echa waszawskie" which started appearing in the *Przegląd Tygodniowy* in 1871.

281 Kornel Ujejski (1823-1897); Teofil Lenartowicz (1822-1893); Ryszard Berwiński (1819-1879); Włodzimierz Wolski (1824-1882); Antoni Odyniec (1804-1885); Jadwiga Łuszczewska ("Deotyma") (1834-1908); Narcyza Żmichowska ("Gabryella") (1819-1876).

They even dared to direct jibes at the acknowledged masters. A verse of the minor poet Karol Świdziński²⁸²⁾ runs as follows:

I speak to you, my young friends, full of pain
and anxiety, for I am neither the Constant Prince,
nor Wallenrod, nor Beniowski²⁸³⁾.

Just as the romantic movement seems to have preferred poetry as a medium of literary expression, so the positivists favoured prose. In the early, formative years of the movement much of the creative energy, even of the most talented writers, was spent on journalism²⁸⁴⁾. Later, the novel and the short story became by far the most popular literary forms²⁸⁵⁾.

It is not difficult to imagine the effect that the atmosphere of Cracow in the early seventies would have on a boy who had been brought up by an ardent patriot and one of the last survivors of the romantic school. At first, Conrad probably reacted violently against the new environment and sought the company of children who had a background similar to his own. This, at least, is the impression one gets from the flashbacks in the "Author's Note" to *Nostromo* and the cancelled opening to *The Arrow of Gold*.

How we, a band of tallish schoolboys, the chums of her [Conrad's "first love" on whom Antonia Avellanos was supposed to have been modelled - A.B.] two brothers, how we used to look up to that girl just out of the schoolroom herself, as the standard-bearer of a faith to which we all were born but which she alone knew how to hold aloft with an unflinching hope! She had perhaps more glow and less serenity in her soul than Antonia, but she was an uncompromising Puritan of patriotism with no taint of the slightest worldliness in her thoughts²⁸⁶⁾.

A great austerity of feelings and convictions is not an uncommon phenomenon in youth. But that young girl seems to have been an uncommon personality, the moral centre of a group of young people on the threshold of life²⁸⁷⁾.

There are, however, indications that, as Conrad grew older, he began to respond to the surrounding atmosphere. The new ideas were being propagated by young people, some only a few years older than himself, whilst his father's ideology had adherents mainly amongst the elder generation. Moreover, Conrad had reached the age at which children begin to question their parents' authority and beliefs.

282) Karol Świdziński (1841-1877).

283) Quoted by Antoni Potocki in *Polska literatura współczesna* (Warsaw, 1911), I, p. 200.

The Constant Prince is the hero of Słowacki's translation of Calderon's play *El principe constante*; Wallenrod is the hero of Mickiewicz's tale in verse *Konrad Wallenrod*, and Beniowski the hero of Słowacki's narrative poem of that name.

284) The positivist period was a hey-day of periodical literature. Piotr Chmielowski in his *Zarys najnowszej literatury polskiej* lists some 350 periodicals that were coming out all over Poland about that time.

285) The most important novelists of the period are: Prus, Orzeszkowa and Sienkiewicz.

286) *Nostromo*, p. xlv.

287) MS. entitled "R.L." (Yale); quoted by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

In later life, Conrad, unlike Apollo Korzeniowski, turned out to be a staunch conservative. He abhorred revolution and revolutionaries, and frequently expressed this hatred in his writings. In *The Secret Agent*, for instance, he shows more sympathy for the spineless informer Verloc than for any of the anarchists. In the "Author's Note" to *A Personal Record* he even tried to explain away his father's radicalism:

One of the most sympathetic of my critics tried to account for certain characteristics of my work by the fact of my being, in his own words, "the son of a Revolutionist". No epithet could be more inapplicable to a man with such a strong sense of responsibility in the region of ideas and action and so indifferent to the promptings of personal ambition as my father. Why the description "revolutionary" should have been applied all through Europe to the Polish risings of 1831 and 1863 I really cannot understand. These risings were purely revolts against foreign domination. The Russians themselves called them "rebellions", which, from their point of view, was the exact truth. Amongst the men concerned in the preliminaries of the 1863 movement my father was no more revolutionary than the others, in the sense of working for the subversion of any social or political scheme of existence. He was simply a patriot in the sense of a man who believing in the spirituality of a national existence could not bear to see that spirit enslaved²⁸⁸.

Although it is true that the Polish rising of 1863 was not a social revolution, revolutionary ideas played a part in it. Moreover, Conrad seems to have forgotten that Apollo Korzeniowski, before his arrest, was one of the leaders of the "Red" party.

It has been argued that one of the factors responsible for Conrad's reaction against his father's leftist tendencies was the extremely conservative atmosphere of the Galician cities in the early 1870s²⁸⁹. Cracow, where Conrad spent most of the time after his father's death, was dominated by the reactionary *Stańczyk* party. There was one significant aspect of the party's policy which would certainly have drawn Conrad's deepest sympathy: the *Stańczyks* were very anti-Russian. At the same time, however, they were opposed to the policy of armed resistance and believed in close co-operation with the Austrian government. Indeed, they regarded Austria as an ally in the struggle against Russia.

It is interesting to note that later Conrad's own attitude to Austria was very similar. In the interview with Marian Dąbrowski, Conrad said that of the three powers occupying Poland he found Austria "least anti-pathetic", and that, strangely enough, he had a certain admiration for the Habsburg dynasty²⁹⁰. Shortly before leaving Poland in October 1914, Conrad handed over to Dr. Teodor Kosch, a well-known Cracow lawyer, a political memorandum, concerning the current international situation, in

288) *A Personal Record*, pp. ix-x. Cf. Conrad's letter to William Blackwood, 29 October 1897; in *Joseph Conrad; Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum*, edited by William Blackburn (Durham, North Carolina, 1958), p. 14.

289) E.g. by Józef Ujejski in *O Konradzie Korzeniowskim (About Conrad Korzeniowski)* (Warsaw, 1936), p. 72.

290) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in M. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

which he clearly expressed his sympathy for Austria²⁹¹). Conrad wrote that on his return to England he intended

To support and develop the feeling of sympathy for Austria which existed already in July and was expressed in some newspapers. To show that England had no personal quarrel, to strive to develop a friendly atmosphere of public opinion, explaining that Austrian policy under the heavy pressure of Russia was the result of hard necessity and not the symptom of an unlawful ambition to increase its territory — *but* emphasizing that after many years of a patient and prudent peace policy Austria has the right to demand a reward for its endeavours in this war²⁹²).

The Austrophil orientation of the *Stańczyk* party was influenced by religious considerations. The *Stańczyks* often stressed the fact that Austria, as opposed to Russia and Prussia, was a Catholic power. For similar reasons they sympathized with such ultramontanist ventures as the Carlist war. Ignacy Skrochowski, who in 1874 became the editor of *Przegląd Polski* (*The Polish Review* — the chief organ of the party), sent reports from the camp of Don Carlos²⁹³). It is possible that Conrad's alignment with the Carlist cause, during his stay in Marseilles, was to some extent the result of the sympathy for Don Carlos in Cracow.

A fragment of the Dąbrowski interview also suggests that Conrad's literary tastes might have been influenced by the Galician environment. Conrad told Dąbrowski that as a boy he had read Mickiewicz's works, but that later he preferred Słowacki. "Do you know why Słowacki? Il est l'âme de toute la Pologne, lui"²⁹⁴). This is interesting since during Conrad's childhood Słowacki was almost an unknown figure. Apollo Korzeniowski probably knew Słowacki's poetry somewhat better than the average Polish intellectual; but it is extremely doubtful whether he would ever compare his achievements with those of Mickiewicz or Krasiński. However, precisely at the time of Conrad's stay in Galicia, there began a marked revival of Słowacki. In 1866 a posthumous edition of his collected works appeared in Lwów²⁹⁵). In 1874 his drama *Maria Stuart* was put on the stage for the first time in Cracow. The revival did not reach its culminating point for another twenty years, when Conrad's contemporaries, having formed the so-called Young Poland movement, chose Słowacki for their poetic patron; however, already at this time Słowacki's greatness was gradually being realized.

It would be dangerous to conclude on the evidence of this material, some of which is conjectural, that Conrad's conservative tendencies, or that his partiality for Słowacki's poetry, date *necessarily* from the Cracow period. But on the other hand, it is obvious that the city in which Conrad

291) The document was first published in 1934 in the Easter number of *Czas* (Cracow); it is quoted in translation by Ludwik Krzyżanowski in "Joseph Conrad: Some Polish Documents," *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*, edited by Ludwik Krzyżanowski (New York, 1960), pp. 123-5.

292) *Ibid.*, p. 124.

293) See Piotr Chmielewski, *Zarys najnowszej literatury polskiej*, p. 113.

294) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in M. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

295) *Pisma pośmiertne Juliusza Słowackiego*, Sponsored by A. Małecki (Lwów, 1866), (3 vols).

ceased to be a child and where his "boyhood received its earliest independent impressions" ²⁹⁶⁾ was bound to affect his intellectual development in a significant way.

The environment in which Conrad spent his early years was culturally both rich and varied. His father belonged to a group of Polish writers who lived in the Ukraine, and who reflected in their literary work and political outlook the traditions of Polish romanticism. After a brief stay in Warsaw, where his house was the centre of conspiratorial activity, Conrad went into exile with his parents. In Vologda, a provincial town in Northern Russia, his home became a meeting-place for political exiles — men with shattered hopes, who doted on the past and sought consolation in religion and patriotic mysticism. Then, at the age of ten, Conrad followed his father to Galicia, where he soon found himself an orphan amongst people who were increasingly critical of the ideals and convictions that had been instilled into him as a child. Moreover, at this juncture, he had no one to turn to, for his new guardian, uncle Tadeusz, was in sympathy with the new environment. It was probably Conrad's inability to cope with the complexities of this situation, coupled by a stubborn refusal to compromise, that drove him to sea.

Although it is true that Conrad was exposed to this environment only in childhood and youth, like most men of genius he was a precocious child. He, no doubt, owed this precocity largely to certain inherited qualities, but these were greatly enhanced by his difficult childhood, his unconventional education and the overwhelming problems which he had to face so early in life. Moreover, these early years were so eventful and fraught with the most powerful emotional experiences that they were bound to leave a lasting impression on the child's mind and character. Thus, to understand Conrad, the man and writer, fully, one must have some knowledge of the vital cultural background from which he emerged.

296) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 146.

Chapter IV

CONTACTS WITH POLAND AND POLISH LITERATURE AFTER 1874

After leaving Poland in 1874, Conrad's scission from things Polish was not as complete and immediate as might be thought. His first contacts abroad were, in fact, Polish *émigrés* whom Bobrowski had asked to look after him. On the way to France, Conrad spent a day in Switzerland at Pfäffikon on Lake Zürich with Oksza-Orzechowski, a former representative of the Polish government in Constantinople. In Marseilles he was taken care of by Wiktor Chodźko, the son of the well-known novelist Ignacy Chodźko²⁹⁷). There were possibly others of whom we know nothing.

Naturally, after 1874 Conrad's contact with Polish literature weakened. Henceforth, he read mainly in French and later in English. However, it is very likely that whenever he had an opportunity of reading a Polish book he did so with interest and pleasure. One of the few things which survived throughout his sea-career was an old battered copy of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*, which, according to Retinger, "he never tired of re-reading"²⁹⁸). When in 1876 Conrad lost some Polish books he asked Bobrowski to send him new ones. The eagerness with which Conrad read books during his visit to Poland in 1914, suggests that he had really missed his Polish reading²⁹⁹). Similarly, he seems to have been always pleased when his Polish guests brought him books from home³⁰⁰).

For many years Conrad's main link with Poland was his correspondence with Bobrowski. As Conrad's own letters have been lost, we can only guess their contents and character from Bobrowski's replies³⁰¹). At first Conrad seems to have spent much of the time trying to explain his

297) Ignacy Chodźko (1794-1861).

298) J. H. Retinger, *Conrad and His Contemporaries; Souvenirs by...* (London, 1941), p. 96.

According to Retinger, Conrad himself admitted that Mickiewicz's poem exerted an influence on his writings: "In parenthesis I would like to add that there is one feature in Conrad's art which is unique in English literature. Writers in this country when depicting Nature, the landscape and its phenomena, usually portray them in a static manner and seize the passing moments as if they were frozen into immobility. They give successive pictures as if a cinematographic ribbon were cut into separate stills. Wordsworth is a typical example of an author who, when describing events of Nature, renders them in successive immobile landscape paintings. Conrad, on the other hand, puts movement into his words, and catches Nature in the act of changing from one mood into another. When I commented on that to him and observed that this is a typically Polish verbal procedure he made no reply for a moment, then handed me some faded volume out of his library, saying: 'Here is the reason.' The book was *Pan Tadeusz*..." (Ibid., pp. 95-6). Retinger's critical opinions are arguable, but his account sounds authentic, and as such, throws interesting light on Conrad's own estimate of his indebtedness to Polish literature.

299) See Aniela Zagórska, "Kilka wspomnień o Conradzie" ("Some Reminiscences of Conrad"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 312 (December, 1929).

300) See e.g. Hanna Skarbek-Peretiatkiewicz, "Two Visits to Conrad Korzeniowski," *The Voice of Poland* (Glasgow), 24 (November, 1943), p. 13.

301) See note on p. 146.

misdeemeanours to his uncle, whilst Bobrowski showered him with criticism and advice. But then, as Conrad gradually managed to extricate himself from the various imbroglios, his letters shed their formal, apologetic note and took on a more discursive character. Bobrowski was prompt to notice their literary qualities. In 1881 he suggested that Conrad should write something for the Warsaw periodical *Wędrowiec* (*The Wanderer*). In 1885, only a year before Conrad wrote "The Black Mate", Bobrowski commented on the excellence of Conrad's Polish:

Well, to begin with, let us talk about Barataria, the metaphor of which you explained not only wittily but also in such a pure Polish style that I really enjoyed reading the whole passage ³⁰²).

It was in these early letters, written to his uncle in Polish, that Conrad first learnt to express himself in writing and gradually developed a prose style of his own.

Bobrowski on his part took care that Conrad should not neglect his further education. In the long letter written in the autumn of 1876 he bombarded him with questions:

Immediately after reading this letter, i. e. right after your return, please write to me about your health and further plans. Please also give me *details of your studies*? On what did you work during this voyage? You praise your present captain. So, you have profited by him? Did he give you lessons? and what? Did you work some out yourself? and what? Did you teach yourself? Are you also working on the English language? or some other? and so on. In short, write about everything regarding your moral and physical being? Did you recover the trunk so carelessly left behind in Havre? Your things and Polish books must have been in it? I know what happened from a later letter ³⁰³).

He had already given Conrad instructions where to obtain new books:

I cannot send you books, it is too complicated — it would be far simpler for you to write to Cracow to the same bookshop where they were bought and to send 10 fr., or else you could write to Paris — *Librairie du Luxembourg Rue Tournon 16*. This is the bookshop of Mr. Władysław Mickiewicz ³⁰⁴).

Bobrowski was also concerned that Conrad should not forget his Polish. After the meeting in Marseilles in 1878, he wrote with pleasure to Stefan Buszczyński:

He is gifted and eloquent — he has not forgotten his Polish at all, although I was the first person he spoke to in Polish since his departure from Cracow ³⁰⁵).

³⁰²) Bobrowski to Conrad, 13 June 1885.

³⁰³) Bobrowski to Conrad, 26 October 1876; quoted in translation by Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³⁰⁴) Bobrowski to Conrad, 27 September 1876.

Władysław Mickiewicz (1838-1926), son of the poet Adam Mickiewicz, critic, journalist and editor of his father's correspondence.

³⁰⁵) Bobrowski to Stefan Buszczyński, 24 March 1879; quoted in Jabikowska, *Joseph Conrad*, p. 48.

Three years later, in June 1881, he again praised Conrad for his Polish:

...thank God, you are not forgetting your Polish, God bless you for it — and I bless you for it too and you don't write badly at all... 306)

Moreover, as we have already seen, he suggested that Conrad should write some articles about his travel experiences. This, Bobrowski said,

...would both be an exercise in your native tongue and that thread which would bind you to our country and your fellow-countrymen, and finally a tribute to the memory of your father who wanted and did serve his country with his pen 307).

He even went to the trouble of correcting Conrad's grammar:

You said "that I do not know the *imieni* (names) of Uncle's children", you should say "*Imion*" 308).

The earliest Polish letters of Conrad that have survived (to Aleksander Poradowski³⁰⁹) and Gustaw Sobotkiewicz³¹⁰) date from 1890. Although the language of these letters is, generally speaking, idiomatic, their style is stiff and, at times, archaic. The recently discovered letter which Conrad wrote in 1901 to Józef Korzeniowski, the librarian of the Jagellon Library in Cracow, contains, in addition to this, two definite mistakes³¹¹). In the letter written to M. Jasiński in 1905 there is one glaring idiomatic mistake. However, unlike the letters which we have already mentioned it is written in a terse, colloquial style with numerous abbreviations³¹²). The letters which Conrad wrote in 1914 after his visit to Poland (to Dr. Teodor Kosch, to Stanisław Zajączkowski and to Marian Biliński)³¹³) show a marked deterioration in his command of Polish. This is even more noticeable in the Polish letters written towards the end of his life (to Stefan Żerom-

306) Bobrowski to Conrad, 28 June 1881.

307) Bobrowski to Conrad, 28 June 1881.

308) Bobrowski to Conrad, 26 May 1882.

309) Three letters to Aleksander Poradowski, dated 16, 20 and 31 January 1890, were published by Aleksander Janta in "Pierwszy szkic *Lorda Jima* i polskie listy" ("The First Draft of *Lord Jim* and Conrad's Polish Letters in American Collections"), *Conrad żywy*, edited by Wit Tarnawski, pp. 212-214.

310) Conrad's letter to Gustaw Sobotkiewicz appeared in draft form in *Conrad żywy*, p. 215; whilst the final version, dated 29 March 1890, has been appended to Adam Gillon's "Joseph Conrad In Present-Day Poland," *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*, pp. 159-160.

311) This letter was first published by Barbara Kocówna in *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), I (1959), pp. 37-43. In the accompanying commentary Kocówna discusses the style of the letter.

312) Conrad's letter to M. Jasiński, 25 March 1905, has been included by Jerzy Pietrkiewicz in his *Polish Prose and Verse* (London, 1956), p. 109. At the end of the letter Conrad writes: "Wszystko to mówię Sz. Panu nie dla drukowania, ale by mu *dać wiedzieć* jakie jest moje polskie pochodzenie." [My italics - A.B.] Conrad probably had at the back of his mind the expression "dać znać." He might also have been thinking of the French construction "faire savoir."

313) The original Polish text of these letters has been appended to Ludwik Krzyżanowski's "Joseph Conrad: Some Polish Documents," *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*, pp. 139-143.

ski³¹⁴), to the Polish consul in Milan³¹⁵), to Bruno Winawer³¹⁶) and to Stefan Pomarański³¹⁷). The syntax is laboured, there are occasional grammatical mistakes and the influence of English is evident throughout. The English reader can get some idea of Conrad's Polish style, after he ceased corresponding with his uncle, by using Conrad's early English letters as an analogy. For instance, a letter written to his friend Spiridion Kliszczewski in October 1885 ends as follows:

We are almost discharged, but our loading port is, as yet, uncertain. At any rate, I hope to be in England some time in July, when you may depend I shall gladly avail myself of your kindness and go down to Cardiff to see you all. As soon as my examination is over I shall be at liberty. I had a letter from my uncle, but he does not say if we could arrange an interview in Germany next year as we contemplated.

Accept a hearty handshake with many thanks for your kindness, and believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,
Conrad N. Korzeniowski³¹⁸).

In the spring of 1890, for the first time in sixteen years, Conrad visited Poland. On the way he called upon a distant cousin, named Aleksander Poradowski³¹⁹), who was living in Brussels. Poradowski was an emigrant after the 1863 rising. Having taken an active part in the fighting, he was captured by the Russians and condemned to death. However, he managed to escape and left the country. He lived for some time in Dresden, then in Paris, and finally in Brussels, where he met and married the French writer, Marguerite Gachet. Poradowski played an important role among the Polish *émigrés* living in Brussels. He founded, together with the poet Henryk Merzbach³²⁰), the *Société de bienfaisance polonaise*. In 1888 Poradowski published in the Warsaw periodical *Słowo* (*Word*) a series of articles about the Brussels Exhibition³²¹). Marguerite Poradowska, who spent a number of years in Galicia with her husband, herself developed an interest in Poland. She wrote several novelettes on Polish subjects³²²), and translated three of Sienkiewicz's short stories³²³). In 1884 she was

314) Conrad's letter to Stefan Żeromski, 25 March 1923, was reprinted in Stefan Żeromski, *Elegie i inne pisma społeczne*, p. 393. There is a facsimile of the letter in *Life and Letters*, II, p. 298.

315) Conrad's letter to the Polish Consul in Milan, 8 September 1921, appeared in *Conrad żywy*, p. 217.

316) The letters which Conrad wrote in Polish to Bruno Winawer have been recently published by Zdzisław Najder in *Conrad's Polish Background; Letters to and from Polish Friends*. (London 1964).

317) Conrad's letter to Stefan Pomarański, 28 June 1924, was first published by Piotr Grzegorzczak in *Ruch Literacki* (Warsaw), 7 (1927), pp. 207-8.

318) Conrad to Spiridion Kliszczewski, 13 October 1885: *Life and Letters*, p. 81.

319) Aleksander Poradowski (1836-1890).

320) Henryk Merzbach (1837-1903), Polish poet and journalist.

321) The articles appeared in *Słowo* (Warsaw), Nr. 199, 202, 207, 211 and 244, between 5 September and 30 October 1888.

322) *Yaga, Demoiselle Micia, Les Filles du pope*, etc.

323) *Janko muzykant, Z pamiętnika poznańskiego nauczyciela and Sielanka*.

engaged on a translation of his historical novel *Ogniem i mieczem* (*With Fire and Sword*)³²⁴.

The Poradowskis were personal friends of Sienkiewicz. He visited them a number of times in Brussels; on one occasion (August 1889), only a few months before Conrad³²⁵). Moreover, like Conrad, he was planning an expedition to the Belgian Congo, but gave up the idea when he found out that the game around the settlements was poor³²⁶). Sienkiewicz was at this time at the height of his fame and Marguerite Poradowska must have spoken to Conrad about him³²⁷).

In Warsaw Conrad paid a visit to the offices of the *Słowo*, possibly to inform the editor of the death of Poradowski. On February 11th, 1890 Conrad wrote to Marguerite Poradowska:

I called at the offices of the *Słowo*, but without finding the editor in. I left the announcement and my card, and shall drop in again tomorrow³²⁸).

Gee and Sturm write in the footnote to this letter that the editor of *Słowo* from 1882 had been Henryk Sienkiewicz, and this has led some Polish critics to speculate whether Conrad met the famous novelist or not³²⁹). In fact, Sienkiewicz had resigned from the post on 21 November 1887, and the position had been filled by his close friend Mścisław Godlewski (unofficially, Godlewski had been acting as editor from the April of that year). For a time Sienkiewicz continued to edit the literary section of the paper, but he gave this up at the end of 1889³³⁰). When Conrad visited the offices of *Słowo*, Sienkiewicz was in Vienna³³¹).

From Warsaw Conrad travelled via Lublin to the Ukraine. He spent altogether some two months on his uncle's estate, at Kazimierówka.

During his second visit to Poland in the early autumn of 1893 Conrad again stopped in Warsaw. He relates one episode of this stay in *A Personal Record*:

In Warsaw, where I spent two days, those wandering pages³³²) were never exposed to the light, except once, to candle-light, while the bag lay

324) See Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy do Mścisława Godlewskiego*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Edward Kiernicki (Wrocław, 1956), p. 83 n.

325) See Julian Krzyżanowski, *Henryk Sienkiewicz. Kalendarz życia i twórczości* (Warsaw, 1956), p. 161.

326) See Sienkiewicz's letter to Henryk Merzbach, 1888; Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Korespondencja I; Dzieła; wydanie zbiorowe*, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski (Warsaw, 1949-1955), LV, p. 480.

327) There is an interesting reference to Sienkiewicz in one of Conrad's letters to the Polish historian and journalist, Kazimierz Waliszewski (1849-1934): "I consider *Romance* as something without any importance: I collaborated when I could do nothing else. It was easy to relate a few incidents without getting otherwise involved in the subject. Our intention was purely aesthetic; to render several scenes, several situations in a suitable manner. Moreover, it gave us some pleasure to show that we could do something in the style which is so popular with the reading public to-day. The heroic gospel according to St. Henry, dear Sir, reigns throughout the world, and - you know - there are more ways than one to make fun of it." [St. Henry is almost certainly Henryk Sienkiewicz - A.B.] 8 November, 1903, *Joseph Conrad; Lettres Françaises*, avec une introduction et des notes de G. Jean-Aubry (Paris, 1930), p. 54.

328) *Letters of Joseph Conrad to Marguerite Poradowska, 1890-1920*, translated from the French and edited with an Introduction, Notes and Appendices by John A. Gee and Paul J. Sturm (Yale University Press, 1940), p. 4.

329) See e.g. Aleksander Janta, "Pierwszy szkic *Lorda Jima* i polskie listy," *Conrad żywy*, p. 214.

330) See the introduction to Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy do Mścisława Godlewskiego*, p. 17.

331) See Henryk Sienkiewicz. *Kalendarz życia i twórczości*, p. 166.

332) I.e. the manuscript of *Almayer's Folly*.

open on a chair. I was dressing hurriedly to dine at a sporting club. A friend of my childhood (he had been in the Diplomatic Service, but had turned to growing wheat on paternal acres, and we had not seen each other for over twenty years) was sitting on the hotel sofa waiting to carry me off there.

"You might tell me something of your life while you are dressing", he suggested kindly.

I do not think I told him much of my life-story either then or later. The talk of the select little party with which he made me dine was extremely animated and embraced most subjects under heaven, from big-game shooting in Africa to the last poem published in a very modernist review, edited by the very young and patronised by the highest society. But it never touched upon "Almayer's Folly", and next morning, in uninterrupted obscurity, this inseparable companion went on rolling with me in the south-east direction towards the Government of Kiev³³³).

It is difficult to say whether it was the same incident that Conrad recalled in a letter to R.B. Cunninghame Graham written in 1889:

When I was in Poland 5 years ago and managed to get in contact with the youth of the University in Warsaw I preached at them and abused them for their social democratic tendencies³³⁴).

Conrad stayed a month with his uncle. He was suffering from the disastrous effects of his Congo expedition, and spent much of the time in bed.

During both his visits to Poland, he already had with him the unfinished manuscript of *Almayer's Folly*. In 1890 he was working on chapter four; by 1893 he had reached chapter nine. Thus, ironically, whilst Conrad was enjoying for the first time after many years the atmosphere of his native country, whilst he was speaking his own language and, most probably renewing his acquaintance with Polish literature, he also continued to write in English the book which would finally put a seal upon his self-imposed exile.

The death of Tadeusz Bobrowski on 10 February 1894 broke a real and important link with Poland. Conrad did not visit the country again for another twenty years. However, he continued to correspond with a few relatives and friends. When his books began to appear, he sent copies to Poland. On 10 March 1896 he wrote to Karol Zagórski:

I am again sending you a masterpiece, the second one this time. Last year I sent three copies of my novel to my native place. Two of them arrived all right but the third addressed to you and your wife no doubt failed to reach its destination. I now make another attempt and I hope that this time my book and my letter will find you³³⁵).

From other sources we know that he sent copies of *Almayer's Folly* to a friend of Tadeusz Bobrowski, Konstancja Montrésor³³⁶), as well as to his own childhood friends, Baroness von Brunnow (formerly Janina Taube) and her brother Baron Gustaw Taube³³⁷). Apparently, the letter

333) *A Personal Record*, p. 19-20.

334) Conrad to Cunninghame Graham, 8 February 1889; *Life and Letters*, I, p. 269.

335) *Life and Letters*, I, p. 184-5.

336) Konstancja Montrésor to Conrad, 6 December 1895, The National Library of Warsaw, MS. 2889.

337) See Conrad's letters to Janina Taube (Baroness de Brunnow), *Lettres Françaises*, passim.

in which the Baroness von Brunnow thanked Conrad for the book first suggested the idea of *The Arrow of Gold* ³³⁸). What is far more interesting, however, in December 1902 he wrote to his publisher, William Blackwood:

I am going to ask the London office for three more copies. I want one for Paris ("Mercure de France"), one for Dr Yrjo Hirn a professor in the university of Helsingfors who, with his wife, has translated some of the Tales of Unrest into Swedish, and had a critical article on my work in a Stockholm paper some time ago. The third I want to send to Poland, for the very young lions of an extremely modern literary review in Warsaw, the *Chimera*. Let them chew it up and snarl over the flavour of the fossil ³³⁹).

The book Conrad wanted to send to Poland was either *Youth* or *Lord Jim*.

In November 1896 he had written to Garnett with obvious pleasure:

They have heard of me in Poland, through Chicago (of all the God-forsaken places!) and think of trying for translations of *A. F.* and *O.* So I am unofficially informed by a Warsaw friend ³⁴⁰).

Clearly, like Jim, he wanted "them" to know of his achievements ³⁴¹. Indeed, they had "heard" of him in Poland. On 16 November 1896 the Cracow *Przełqd Literacki* (*The Literary Review*) informed its readers that

Joseph Conrad published last year the novel *Almayer's Folly*, which was immediately noticed by the critics. Now he has published a second novel in English, called *An Outcast of the Islands*, dealing with the Island of Celebes. The American critics consider it a masterpiece both with regard to form and language, and have called the author, the Rudyard Kipling of the Malayan Archipelago. The author's real name is Konrad Korzeniowski. He was born in the Ukraine. His father was the well-known writer, Apollo; his mother, née Bobrowska. He served in the French and English navies, reaching in the latter the rank of captain. He settled in the Transvaal [sic!], where, as a result of some disturbances, he lost his property. At present he is living near St. Malo ³⁴²).

In January 1897 a translation of *An Outcast of the Islands* began to

338) See Baines, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30.

339) 22 December 1902, *Joseph Conrad: Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum* Duke University Press, 1958 p. 174.

Chimera was an illustrated monthly magazine, devoted to art and literature which came out in Warsaw between 1901 and 1907 (altogether 30 numbers, i.e. 10 volumes appeared). It was published and edited by the poet, translator and critic, Zenon Przesmycki ("Miriam"), and served as a platform for a large number of the Young Poland writers.

340) *Letters from Conrad*, p. 59.

341) Cf. Jim's parting with Marlowe in Patusan:

"We shook hands, and I walked to the boat, which waited with her nose on the beach. The schooner, her mainsail set and jib-sheet to windward, curveted on the purple sea; there was a rosy tinge on her sails. 'Will you be going home again soon?' asked Jim, just as I swung my leg over the gunwale. 'In a year or so if I live,' I said. The forefoot grated on the sand, the boat floated, the wet oars flashed and dipped once, twice. Jim, at the water's edge, raised his voice. 'Tell them...' he began. I signed to the men to cease rowing, and waited in wonder. Tell who? The half-submerged sun faced him; I could see its red gleam in his eyes that looked dumbly at me... 'No - nothing,' he said, and with a slight wave of his hand motioned the boat away. I did not look again at the shore till I had clambered on board the schooner." *Lord Jim*, p. 335.

342) *Przełqd Literacki* (Cracow), 11 (November 1896); quoted by Ujejski, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

appear in instalments in the Warsaw *Tygodnik Mód i Powieści* (*Fashion and Fiction Weekly*), under the title of *Wygnaniec* (The Outcast), translated by M[aria] G[ąsiorowska]³⁴³). This was the first translation of Conrad, not only into Polish, but into any language. There is nothing to indicate that the novel made an exceptional impression upon its Polish readers. After two years of silence (as far as we know even the titles of his subsequent books: *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, *Tales of Unrest* and *Youth* did not reach Poland) Conrad's name appeared once more in the Polish press.

In March 1899 the Polish philosopher, Wincenty Lutosławski³⁴⁴), who had paid Conrad a visit in 1897, published in the St. Petersburg weekly *Kraj* (*Our Country*)³⁴⁵) an article, entitled "Emigracja zdolności" ("The Emigration of Talents"), in which he discussed the controversial problem of Poles who left the country and used their talents abroad:

Whenever an individual, possessing exceptional talents, chooses to live abroad, people complain that he is lost to us, that he is pursuing material gain, or that he is deserting his duties towards his own nation. As a result, we have in Warsaw a host of talented men, filling modest clerical posts, copying papers or dealing with the most ordinary accounts, instead of contributing to the progress of humanity and working in a wider field for their country³⁴⁶).

Lutosławski then went on to cite Conrad as one outstanding example of a Pole who was using his talents abroad:

Only recently a compatriot of ours, Konrad Korzeniowski, an emigrant from 1863, who writes under the pseudonym of Joseph Conrad, made his mark in English literature. His novels show the imagination of a Polish nobleman, enhanced by long wanderings among Pacific Islands. When I paid him a visit in the country, near London, I put to him the simple question: "Why don't you write in Polish?" — "Sir, I value our beautiful literature too highly to introduce into it my inept fumbling. But for the English my abilities are sufficient and secure my daily bread"³⁴⁷).

Lutosławski approved of Conrad's attitude. He argued that a writer like Conrad, harassed by constant economic difficulties, would waste his talents in Poland. Moreover, he maintained that:

The work is Polish, even though it is written in a foreign language, since it is the product of the Polish spirit which differs from the spirit of other nations. The more numerous such works are, the more respect will Poles enjoy amongst foreigners. The more quickly also will the bad reputation, incurred by our political *émigrés* be erased — men driven from their country by circumstances and therefore unprepared to compete with foreigners³⁴⁸).

343) *Tygodnik Mód i Powieści* (Warsaw), 1-26 (January to June 1897).

344) Wincenty Lutosławski (1863-1954).

345) *Kraj* (*Our Country*) was a conservative weekly which came out in St. Petersburg between 1882 and 1909. It was published and edited (until 1908) by Erazm Piltz, with the help of Włodzimierz Spasowicz and other well-known Polish journalists. (N.B. Do not confuse with the Cracow daily *Kraj*.)

346) Wincenty Lutosławski, "Emigracja zdolności," *Kraj* (St. Petersburg), 12 (1899); reprinted by Lutosławski in his *Iskierki warszawskie; serja pierwsza* (Warsaw, 1911), p. 60

347) *Ibid.*, p. 61.

348) Wincenty Lutosławski, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

The article ended on a magnanimous note:

Let us not, therefore, blame those who seek an outlet for their work without regarding the frontiers of their own country. If they are strong and great, they will be enduring and loyal in their love, and will not forget the mother who gave them suck, but will win for her a rich harvest, gathered on the distant fields of work and fame ³⁴⁹).

The editors, knowing well that this was highly inflammable material, not only headed the article with a note, saying that they did not share Professor Lutosławski's opinions, but also published in the same number of *Kraj* a fiery comment by Tadeusz Żuk-Skarszewski ³⁵⁰). Skarszewski ended his long and impassioned reply by stating emphatically that he preferred

...a simple school-teacher in Przyszowa or Poniemoń to a magnificent editor of Plato — nay, to a Polish Plato himself ³⁵¹) — in Boston! ³⁵²)

And this was written by a man who was not only an outstanding journalist, but who considered himself a European in the fullest sense of the word.

But the real onslaught came from the Polish novelist, Eliza Orzeszkowa, who directed most of her patriotic indignation against Conrad himself. In an article which appeared in *Kraj* a few weeks later Orzeszkowa wrote:

Since we are on the subject of books, I must say that the gentleman, who is writing in English novels which are widely read and which pay extremely well, almost brought on a nervous breakdown for me. As I read about him, I felt something slimy and nauseating rise in my throat. What! Are the creative talents also to join the "exodus"? So far there has only been talk of engineers, lawyers and opera singers. But now, it appears, we are to give absolution even to writers! As far as chemical or even philosophical works are concerned, I know little about them, and can even perceive some reasons why they should sometimes be published in foreign languages, but since we have touched upon the writing of novels, and that is a part of creative activity, I belong to the guild, I know its duties *forts comme la mort*, and with all my might — I protest. The creative faculty is the very crown of the plant, the very pinnacle of the tower, the very heart of the nation. And to think that one is ready to deprive one's own country of this flower, this pinnacle, this heart, and to give it away to the Anglo-Saxons, who cannot complain even of a lack of bird's milk ³⁵³) — because they pay more! The very thought fills one with shame! And, what is worse, this gentleman must bear the name of the same Józef Korzeniowski (perhaps some close relative of his) ³⁵⁴) over whose books, as a

349) *Ibid.*, p. 67.

350) Tadeusz Żuk-Skarszewski (1858-1933), Polish novelist and journalist.

351) Lutosławski was especially well-known for his work on Plato.

352) "Emigracja zdolności," *Kraj*, 12 (1899). Lutosławski did not reprint this part of the discussion in his book. I have used a typed transcription of the whole polemic which was kindly made available to me by Dr. Wit Tarnawski.

353) A Polish idiom denoting something so rare and precious that it even does not exist.

354) Józef Korzeniowski (1797-1863), dramatist and novelist. Cf. Conrad's letter to Garnett, 20 January 1900: "Then in the thirties of the 19th century (or forties) there was a novelist of about say - Trollope's rank (but not so good in his way) named *Joseph Korzeniowski* [Sic! - no full-stop - A.B.] That is also my name but the family is different, my full name being *Joseph Theodor Konrad Nałęcz Korzeniowski*..." *Letters from Conrad*, p. 165.

girl, I shed the first tears of compassion and felt the first fires of noble enthusiasms and resolutions. No Polish girl will ever shed an altruistic tear over the novels of Mr. Konrad Korzeniowski, nor make any noble resolution. But, on second thoughts, this causes me only moderate grief, since, believing in the transcendental nature of the elements which constitute creative power, I do not suppose that ours would ever want to embrace the vocation of a *vivandière* or a huckster. Moreover, even if we stay where we are, we are not starving to such an extent that we should have to feed on the crumbs from the great lords' table. Indeed, I dare say, we are sufficiently great lords ourselves...³⁵⁵⁾

Orzeszkowa's article closed that particular polemic. None the less, ten years later Lutosławski thought it worthwhile to return to the subject. In his "Odpowiedź Orzeszkowej" ("A Reply to Orzeszkowa")³⁵⁶⁾ he repeated, more or less, the old arguments:

Orzeszkowa is indignant at Conrad (Korzeniowski) who now occupies a prominent position in English letters. But had he returned to Poland after his travels to various parts of the world, he would have never found out that he had a literary talent, because he would never have dared to write in the language of Sienkiewicz and Mickiewicz.

He started writing in English to earn his living and has given the English a series of novels, redolent of the Polish spirit and spreading Polish influence amongst the race which is now dominating the world. We therefore lose nothing by the fact that instead of remaining a sailor he became an English novelist³⁵⁷⁾.

And, of course, he could not refrain from the usual magnanimous exhortation:

Let us therefore not begrudge the English a second-rate writer, who, in any case, would not have enriched our literature, since, as he himself admits, profit was the motive for his writing. We can afford to give many such writers to all the nations of the world and retain for ourselves only the best ones who will express their Polish souls in Polish³⁵⁸⁾.

In the meantime Orzeszkowa had not left it at that. In her patriotic zeal, she went to the trouble of writing Conrad a private letter. We can easily guess its form and content by referring to her public denunciation of him. Conrad never forgot this letter. When in 1914 Aniela Zagórska brought him Orzeszkowa's novel *Nad Niemnem (On the Niemen)*, he cried out: "Don't you dare bring me this!" and then continued angrily: "Don't

355) "Emigracja zdolności," *Iskierki warszawskie*, pp. 84-85.

356) "Odpowiedź Orzeszkowej" appeared in *Iskierki warszawskie*. (Incidentally, it was written at Kosów, in my maternal grandfather's home, where Professor Lutosławski was a frequent visitor.) Lutosławski almost certainly sent Conrad a copy of *Iskierki warszawskie* in 1911. Cf. Conrad's letter to Garnett of 20 October 1911: "Yes. I had a letter and some books from Mr. Lutoslawsky. I ought to have written to him before - tho' really and truly I don't know what he wants with me. I don't understand him in the least. His illumination seems to me a very naive and uninteresting thing. Does he imagine I am likely to become his disciple? He worries and bores me. But I won't tell him that when I write (as I must in common decency) because I believe he is a good man - though confoundedly inquisitive." *Letters from Conrad*, p. 251.

357) "Odpowiedź Orzeszkowej," *Iskierki warszawskie*, pp. 104-5.

358) *Ibid.*, p. 105.

bring me anything by that hag... You don't know about it, but she once wrote me such a letter..."³⁵⁹⁾

A somewhat confused account of the whole incident is also to be found in Retinger's book:

Polish patriotism is often a most exacting passion. As soon as Conrad became slightly known in England, his rising reputation penetrated to Poland, perhaps through his uncle Bobrowski's agency. When he refused to contribute to a weekly called *Wędrowiec* ("The Traveller") and shunned writing in Polish, a well-known Polish woman novelist, Mme Orzeszko³⁶⁰⁾, wrote a letter to him reprimanding him for abandoning the language of his fathers, and appealing, rather rudely, to his patriotism, demanded that he continue writing in Polish. This letter perturbed Conrad most deeply. Years after he used to complain to me: "Why impose such an obligation on me? Can't I run my trade according to my lights, inclination, and benefit? I am not a political exile, who has duties towards his past acts. I am a voluntary emigrant who left in search of a career. My career now consists in writing in English"³⁶¹⁾.

Perhaps it is merely a coincidence, but the tone of Conrad's letters about the time of the polemic was particularly pessimistic. In a letter to Garnett, dated "Good Friday in sorrow and tribulation", he wrote:

The more I write the less substance do I see in my work. The scales are falling off my eyes. It is tolerably awful. And I face it, I face it but the fright is growing on me. My fortitude is shaken by the view of the monster. It does not move; its eyes are baleful; it is as still as death itself — and it will devour me. Its stare has eaten into my soul already deep, deep. I am alone with it in a chasm with perpendicular sides of black basalt. Never were sides so perpendicular and smooth, and high. Above, your anxious head against a bit of sky peers down — in vain — in vain. There's no rope long enough for that rescue³⁶²⁾.

Orzeszkowa's letter pressed on a painful nerve.

As we have already seen, Conrad had been brought up in an intensely patriotic atmosphere; amongst people who constantly thought in such categories as the national cause, duty to one's country, sacrifice for the nation; and, on the other hand, such notions as the lack of patriotism, the neglect of patriotic duties, and, above all, *betrayal* — a word which has haunted Polish life and literature ever since the partitions. This word "betrayal" was also to taint the two decisive moments in Conrad's life: his decision to go to sea and his decision to write.

Before he left Poland in 1874 he met with "the astonished indignations, the mockeries and the reproaches of a sort hard to bear for a boy of fifteen"; he was "charged with the want of patriotism, the want of sense, and the want of heart too"; he "went through agonies of self-conflict and shed secret tears not a few..."³⁶³⁾

359) Aniela Zagórska, "Kilka wspomnień o Conradzie," *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 312 (December 1929).

360) i.e. Orzeszkowa, the usual form of her married name.

361) J. H. Retinger, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

362) Conrad to Garnett, Good Friday 1899; in *Letters from Conrad*, pp. 150-151.

363) *A Personal Record*, p. 110.

Cf. *ibid.*, p. 121: "I catch myself in hours of solitude and retrospect meeting arguments and charges made thirty-five years ago by voices now for ever still..."

Twenty years later, as he began to write his second English novel, the old doubts and scruples returned, augmented proportionately to the gravity of the new decision. Conrad has given us an account of the state of his mind at the time in the "Author's Note" to the Uniform Edition of *An Outcast of the Islands*:

"*An Outcast of the Islands*" is my second novel in the absolute sense of the word; second in conception, second in execution, second as it were in its essence. There was no hesitation, half-formed plan, vague idea, or the vaguest reverie of anything else between it and "*Almayer's Folly*". The only doubt I suffered from, after the publication of "*Almayer's Folly*", was whether I should write another line for print. Those days, now grown so dim, had their poignant moments. Neither in my mind nor in my heart had I then given up the sea. In truth I was clinging to it desperately, all the more desperately because, against my will, I could not help feeling that there was something changed in my relation to it ³⁶⁴).

He then goes on to relate how Garnett persuaded him to continue writing:

A phrase of Edward Garnett's is, as a matter of fact, responsible for this book... One evening when we had dined together and he had listened to the account of my perplexities (I fear he must have been growing a little tired of them) he pointed out that there was no need to determine my future absolutely. Then he added: "You have the style, you have the temperament; why not write another?" ...Had he said, "Why not go on writing", it is very probable he would have scared me away from pen and ink for ever; but there was nothing either to frighten one or arouse one's antagonism in the mere suggestion to "write another". And thus a dead point in the revolution of my affairs was insidiously got over. The word "another" did it ³⁶⁵).

Garnett's encouragement at this early stage was certainly important and valuable, but it is doubtful that it played as decisive a role as Conrad claimed ³⁶⁶). Moreover, Conrad's emphatic assertion that there was "no hesitation, half-formed plan, vague idea, or the vaguest reverie of anything else" ³⁶⁷) between *An Outcast of the Islands* and *Almayer's Folly* is contradicted by a letter which he wrote to Marguerite Poradowska, three months before he met Garnett for the first time:

I have begun to write, but only the day before yesterday. I want to make this thing very short — say twenty to twenty-five pages like those of the *Revue*. I am calling it "Two Vagabonds", and I want to sketch in broad outline, without shading or detail, two human wrecks such as one meets in the forsaken corners of the world. A white man and a Malay. You see that I can't get away from Malays. I am devoted to Borneo. What bothers me most is that my figures are so real. I know them so well that they fetter my imagination. The white man is a friend of Almayer; the Malay is our old friend Babalatchi before he arrived at the estate of prime minister and confidential adviser to the Rajah. There it is ³⁶⁸).

364) *An Outcast of the Islands*, p. vii.

365) *Ibid.*, pp. vii-viii.

366) Cf. Baines, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-142.

367) *An Outcast of the Islands*, p. vii.

368) Conrad to Poradowska, 18 (?) August 1894, *Letters to Poradowska*, pp. 76-77.

This was before he heard anything from Fisher Unwin and Co. about the typescript of *Almayer's Folly*, which he had submitted a month earlier for consideration.

Conrad stressed the influence of Garnett's remark on his decision to start the *Outcast* to diminish his own responsibility. He realized that he was now committing himself definitely. The writing of *Almayer's Folly* could be attributed to chance, to a mere passing fancy, a mood that came and went. But the commencement of a second novel was a far more serious matter. He could no longer toy with illusions. *An Outcast of the Islands*, which is the story of a man who betrays his own race, begins ominously:

When he stepped off the straight and narrow path of his peculiar honesty, it was with an inward assertion of unflinching resolve to fall back again into the monotonous but safe stride of virtue as soon as his little excursion into the wayside quagmires had produced the desired effect. It was going to be a short episode — a sentence in brackets, so to speak — in the flowing tale of his life: a thing of no moment, to be done unwillingly, yet neatly, and to be quickly forgotten ³⁶⁹).

The passage could easily be interpreted as a reflection of Conrad's own situation. The starting of the *Outcast* was tantamount to a decision to take up writing seriously and to continue writing in English for the English ³⁷⁰).

Orzeszkowa's attack, which came two years later, sharpened Conrad's sense of guilt and deepened his obsession with betrayal and desertion. The theme of betrayal, remorse and expiation frequently recurs in Conrad's work. We find it prominently in *An Outcast of the Islands*, "Karain", "The Lagoon", *Lord Jim*, "Falk", *Nostramo* and *Under Western Eyes*. He broached the subject several times in *A Personal Record*. One much quoted passage runs:

And looked at in the same light, my own diet of *la vache enragée* appears a fatuous and extravagant form of self-indulgence; for why should I, the son of a land which such men as these have turned up with their ploughshares and bedewed with their blood, undertake the pursuit of fantastic meals of salt junk and hard tack upon the wide seas? On the kindest view it seems an unanswerable question. Alas! I have the conviction that there are men of unstained rectitude who are ready to murmur scornfully the word desertion. Thus the taste of innocent adventure may be made bitter to the palate. The part of the inexplicable should be allowed for in appraising the conduct of men in a world where no explanation is final. No charge of faithlessness ought to be lightly uttered. The appearances of this perishable life are deceptive like everything else that falls under the judgment of our imperfect senses. The inner voice may remain true enough in its secret counsel. The fidelity to a special tradition may last through the events of an unrelated existence, following faithfully, too, the traced way of an inexplicable impulse.

It would take too long to explain the intimate alliance of contradictions in human nature which makes love itself wear at times the desperate shape of betrayal ³⁷¹).

369) *An Outcast of the Islands*, p. 3.

370) For a very interesting discussion of the *Outcast* from this point of view see Wit Tarnawski, "Niedoceniona powieść Conrada" ("A Neglected Novel of Conrad"), *Conrad żywy*, p. 181-192.

371) *A Personal Record*, pp. 35-6.

Again, some years later in the essay *Poland Revisited* he wrote:

I felt more and more plainly that what I had started on was a journey in time, into the past; a fearful enough prospect for the most consistent, but to him who had not known how to preserve against his impulses the order and continuity of his life — so that at times it presented itself to his conscience as a series of betrayals — still more dreadful ³⁷²⁾.

The obverse of this obsession with betrayal and desertion was his fanatical insistence upon duty and fidelity.

Those who read me know my conviction that the world, the temporal world, rests on a very few simple ideas; so simple that they must be as old as the hills. It rests notably, among others, on the idea of Fidelity ³⁷³⁾.

Conrad was particularly preoccupied with these problems in *Lord Jim*. Since most of the novel was written immediately after "The Emigration of Talents" debate, Polish critics — Ujejski, Tarnawski, Ludwik Krzyżanowski and Janta, among others — have argued that there is a close connection.

Conrad began *Lord Jim* as a short story. On 4 June 1898 he wrote to his publisher David Meldrum:

Last night I posted you the last pages of *Youth*. Here I send the first 18 pages of *Jim*: *A sketch* just to let you see what it is like. It will give you an idea of the spirit the thing is conceived in. I rather think it ought to be worked out in no less than 20-25 thousand words ³⁷⁴⁾.

He mentioned this in the "Author's Note" to the Uniform Edition of *Lord Jim*, adding that he had written "a few pages" some time before he was approached by Blackwood and Meldrum.

But, seriously, the truth of the matter is, that my first thought was of a short story, concerned only with the pilgrim ship episode; nothing more. And that was a legitimate conception. After writing a few pages, however, I became for some reason discontented and I laid them aside for a time. I didn't take them out of the drawer till the late Mr. William Blackwood suggested I should give something again to his magazine ³⁷⁵⁾.

The "few pages", to which Conrad referred, were some pencil notes made on the blank pages of an album which belonged to his grandmother, Teofila Bobrowska ³⁷⁶⁾. This album was a thirty-four-page, leather-bound note-book, containing the transcriptions of thirteen contemporary poems (about 1820). It is interesting to note that one of the poems is by the

372) *Notes on Life and Letters*, p. 149.

373) *A Personal Record*, p. xxi.

374) *Letters to Blackwood and Meldrum*, pp. 21-22.

375) *Lord Jim*, p. viii.

376) These pencil notes, which constitute the first draft of *Lord Jim*, were published by Aleksander Janta in *Conrad żywy*, pp. 195-205.

same Józef Korzeniowski whom Orzeszkowa mentioned in her article. The poem, entitled *When Would I Be Happy!*, runs as follows:

If I could see the white hair of my dear parents
in their old age, untroubled by misery,
oh, how happy I would be.
If I could see, with an ever more tender eye, my
beloved a good mother and a good wife, I would be...
oh, how happy I would be.
But if my bardic foresight which so often deceives
me would bring me back my country, I would be the
happiest of men³⁷⁷).

Five pages intervene and then Conrad has scribbled in pencil:

TUAN JIM: A SKETCH

(They called him Jim.)
(By the) All the white men by the waterside and
and (board ships) the captains of the ships in
the () roadsteads () called him Jim. He was over
six feet and stared downwards at one with an ()
air of overbearing watchfulness³⁷⁸).

However, only three days after he sent the opening of *Lord Jim* to Meldrum³⁷⁹) he announced to Garnett his intention to lay the work aside:

As to *Rescue* you are under a "misapprehension" as Shaw would have said. I intend to write nothing else. I am not even going to finish *Jim* now. Not before Sept^{er}³⁸⁰).

He took it up again in the summer of 1899 and from then on the story began to grow rapidly.

"The Emigration of Talents" debate took place that spring. According to Polish critics, Orzeszkowa's letter not only gave fresh impetus to Conrad's writing, but influenced the whole theme of *Lord Jim*. In his introduction to *Lord Jim* Tarnawski writes:

Conrad never forgave Orzeszkowa that letter. In his proud way he never spoke about it, he did not reply with any open letter. But a year later he wrote *Lord Jim*.

Conrad wrote afterwards many books — some artistically more perfect. But into none did he pour so much of his soul, as into *Lord Jim*. In this passionate case against the accusation of betrayal with which he had been charged, this case for his honour, for the rightness of the way of life he had chosen, this plea for an understanding of his tragic situation — Conrad uncovered and expressed himself completely³⁸¹).

377) Quoted by Janta in *Conrad żywy*, p. 228.

378) *Ibid.*, p. 195.

379) See Conrad's letter to Meldrum, 4 June 1898: "Last night I posted you the last pages of *Youth*. Here I send the first 18 pages of *Jim*: A sketch just to let you see what it is like." *Letters to Blackwood and Meldrum*, pp. 21-2.

380) *Letters from Conrad*, p. 131. Garnett dated this letter "Tuesday [May, 1898.]" William Blackburn, however, has shown that in all probability the date of the letter was "Tuesday [June 7 1898]." (*Letters to Blackwood and Meldrum*, p. 22 n.

381) Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*; *opowieść*, translated into Polish by Aniela Zagórska, with an Introduction by Wit Tarnawski (Jerusalem, 1946), I, pp. ix-x.

Today even the most sceptical critics will agree that it is not "utter nonsense" to talk about certain analogies which exist between *Lord Jim* and Conrad's own situation. This does not mean, of course, that we have to subscribe to such fantastic interpretations as, for instance, Gustav Morf's ingenious allegory:

In spite of his origin and of his careful education, Jim "jumps". In all probability, he would not have done it, had not his very superiors urged him to go, and had not the ship been sure to sink the next moment. This is exactly what happened to Joseph Conrad. *The sinking ship is Poland*. The very names are similar. *Patna* is the name of the ship, and *Polska* the (Polish) name for Poland. *Poland* (i.e. *polonity*) is doomed to disappear in a short time. There is, rationally speaking, no hope whatever for her. Such was at least the opinion of Jim's superiors, i.e. of Conrad's uncle and guardian, T. Bobrowski. The machines have stopped, i.e. the independent Polish government ceased to exist ³⁸²).

Morf goes on to say that the *Patna* is rescued by a French gunboat because "Ever since the rise of Napoleon, the Poles have expected their help to come from France" ³⁸³).

However, it would be equally injudicious to dismiss, as a matter of principle, certain obvious parallels that come to mind when we read such passages of *Lord Jim* as Marlow's thoughts on "going home":

And then, I repeat, I was going home — to that home distant enough for all its hearthstones to be like one hearthstone, by which the humblest of us has the right to sit. We wander in our thousands over the face of the earth, the illustrious and the obscure, earning beyond the seas our fame, our money, or only a crust of bread; but it seems to me that for each of us going home must be like going to render an account. We return to face our superiors, our kindred, our friends — those whom we obey, and those whom we love; but even they who have neither, the most free, lonely, irresponsible and bereft of ties, — even those for whom home holds no dear face, no familiar voice, — even they have to meet the spirit that dwells within the land, under its sky, in its air, in its valleys, and on its rises, in its fields, in its waters and its trees — a mute friend, judge, and inspirer. Say what you like, to get its joy, to breathe its peace, to face its truth, one must return with a clear consciousness. All this may seem to you sheer sentimentalism; and indeed very few of us have the will or the capacity to look consciously under the surface of familiar emotions. ...

.....

But the fact remains that you must touch your reward with clean hands, lest it turn to dead leaves, to thorns, in your grasp. I think it is the lonely, without a fireside or an affection they may call their own, those who return not to a dwelling but to the land itself, to meet its disembodied, eternal, and unchangeable spirit — it is those who understand best its severity, its saving power, the grace of its secular right to our fidelity, to our obedience. Yes! few of us understand, but we all feel it though, and I say *all* without exception, because those who do not feel do not count. Each blade of grass has its spot on earth whence it draws its life, its strength; and so is man rooted to the land from which he draws his faith together with his life. I don't know how much Jim understood; ...

He would never go home now. Not he. Never. Had he been capable of picturesque manifestations he would have shuddered at the thought and made you shudder, too ³⁸⁴).

382) Morf, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

383) *Ibid.*, p. 164.

384) *Lord Jim*, pp. 221-223.

Marlow's reflections are just as relevant to Conrad's own situation as to that of *Lord Jim*. What is more, parts of the monologue remind one of the tenor of the "Emigration of Talents" debate.

We wander in our thousands over the face of the earth, the illustrious and the obscure, earning beyond the seas our fame, our money, or only a crust of bread; but it seems to me that for each of us going home must be like going to render an account ³⁸⁵).

In spite of the danger of reading too much into the text, *Lord Jim*, invites, and even demands some form of subjective, symbolic interpretation. If we want precedent for this kind of approach, we have only to glance at Polish nineteenth century literature which is full of patriotic messages, presented in symbolic and allegorical form, owing to censorship restrictions.

A symbolic interpretation of *Lord Jim* could be sketched, more or less, as follows: Both Jim and Conrad are guilty of desertion. Jim jumped from the Patna when the ship was in danger. Conrad left Poland when the country was struggling for national survival. In doing this he deserted the cause for which both his parents, as well as some of his relatives had sacrificed their lives. Incidentally, on one occasion in *A Personal Record* Conrad uses the metaphor of jumping with reference to his own decision to go to sea.

There was no precedent. I verily believe mine was the only case of a boy of my nationality and antecedents taking a, so to speak, standing jump out of his racial surroundings and associations ³⁸⁶).

Conrad's second "betrayal" was his decision to write in English. Jim's two failures: the first at the naval school and the second on board the Patna, may or may not have been intended as a deliberate parallel to Conrad's "double" desertion. In the end, both Jim and Conrad expiate their guilt by proving their worth in an alien setting. Jim becomes the uncrowned king of Patusan; Conrad, first an excellent sailor and then an outstanding novelist.

Expiation, vindication, proving one's worth and achievement are frequent motifs in Conrad's work and appear prominently in *Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, *Under Western Eyes*, "The Secret Sharer", *The Shadow Line* and *The Rover*.

When Conrad reflected on his own life he thought in identical categories. After describing in *A Personal Record* how he passed the examination for a master's certificate, he recalled his feelings at the time:

It was a fact, I said to myself, that I was now a British master mariner beyond a doubt. It was not that I had an exaggerated sense of that very modest achievement, with which, however, luck, opportunity, or any extraneous influence could have had nothing to do. That fact, satisfactory and obscure in itself, had for me a certain ideal significance. It was an answer to certain outspoken scepticism, and even to some not very kind aspersions, I had vindicated myself from what had been cried upon as a stupid obstinacy or a fantastic caprice ³⁸⁷).

385) *Lord Jim*, p. 221.

386) *A Personal Record*, p. 121.

387) *A Personal Record*, p. 120.

Two years after the "Emigration of Talents" debate, and obviously with Orzeszkowa's indictment in mind, Conrad wrote to his namesake Józef Korzeniowski, the librarian of the Jagellon Library:

And let me tell you, kind Sir, (for it may well happen that you will hear this and that about me) that I have in no way disavowed my nationality and our common name for the sake of success. It is well-known that I am a Pole and that Joseph Conrad are my two christian names, the second of which I use as my surname to prevent foreign mouths from distorting my real one — a thing I cannot bear. It does not seem to me that I have been unfaithful to my country for having proved to the English that a nobleman from the Ukraine can be as good a sailor as they and can have something to say to them in their own language. It is from this point of view that I regard the recognition, such as I have managed to win, and offer it in silent homage where it belongs ³⁸⁸).

Dąbrowski's interview with Conrad ends with a similar sentiment:

Two personal things fill me with pride, that *I, a Pole, am a captain in the English navy and that I can write English fairly well* ³⁸⁹).

When in 1903 a well-known Polish historian, Kazimierz Waliszewski, informed Conrad that he was writing an article about his work, Conrad eagerly supplied him with all the necessary information. In one of his letters to Waliszewski Conrad wrote:

I consider myself both fortunate and deeply honoured to return to my country under your aegis (if I may use this expression). And if you are prepared to take my word, tell them that in the course of my wanderings across the terrestrial globe, I have never been far from my native country, neither in heart nor in mind, and that I hope to be received there as a compatriot, in spite of my anglicization... ³⁹⁰

Waliszewski's article — one of the earliest critical studies of Conrad's work — appeared almost simultaneously in the Parisian *La Revue* ³⁹¹), and, more significantly, in the St. Petersburg *Kraj* ³⁹²), where five years previously Conrad had been attacked by Orzeszkowa.

Conrad often took such positive, though always very discreet steps to ensure that news of his work and of the recognition he was winning in England reached his native country. He wanted his countrymen to know of his achievements, since achievement alone could justify in some measure his "desertion", and thus redeem his guilt.

Orzeszkowa's attack brought into relief another aspect of Conrad's complex attitude towards his past: his intense touchiness about everything

388) Conrad Józef Korzeniowski, 14 February 1901; *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny*, I (1959), p. 39.

389) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in M. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

390) Conrad to Kazimierz Waliszewski, 15 November 1903, *Lettres Françaises*, p. 56.

391) K. Waliszewski, "Un cas de naturalisation littéraire," *La Revue* (formerly *Revue des Revues*) (Paris), 47 (December 1903), pp. 734-748.

392) Kazimierz Waliszewski, "Polski powieściopisarz w angielskiej literaturze," *Kraj* (St. Petersburg), No. 3, 4, 5 and 7 (1904).

connected with Poland³⁹³). Conrad himself confided to Dąbrowski: "I cannot think about Poland often, for it is bitter, painful, and unhappy. *I could not live*"³⁹⁴). Retinger says that for a number of years Conrad deliberately avoided meeting Poles³⁹⁵). From Garnett we learn that amongst Englishmen he disliked talking about Poland:

Of himself Conrad spoke as a man lying under a slight stigma among his contemporaries for having expatriated himself. The subject of Poland was then visibly painful to him, and in those early years he would speak of it unwillingly, his attitude being designed to warn off acquaintances from pressing on a painful nerve. Later he grew less sensitive...³⁹⁶)

And Jessie Conrad relates that when Conrad was questioned on his reluctance to write about Poland,

He would declare that he could not bear to show his wounds to all and sundry, who would feel nothing but idle curiosity as to their scars, without troubling in the least to understand the pain and discomfort they had given³⁹⁷).

Overtly Poland played a very small part in Conrad's fiction. Only one short story, "Prince Roman", was actually set in the country, and this was a kind of appendage to the semi-autobiographical *A Personal Record*. Although the hero of "Amy Foster" is obviously a Pole, at no point in the story does Conrad say so explicitly. In the rest of his fiction there are virtually no references to Poland.

One interesting exception is an allusion to the charge of the Polish *cheval-légers* at Somosierra³⁹⁸), which occurs in *Romance*. When Carlos' faithful henchman, Castro, is first introduced, we are told that he had once served in Napoleon's *Grande Armée*; that he took part in the Spanish and Russian campaigns; and, that he lost an arm at the wars. Two theories are put forward as to the actual circumstances of the event:

In his heroic moods he would swear that his arm had been cut off at Somo Sierra; swear it with a great deal of asseveration, making one see the Polish lancers charging the gunners, being cut down, and his own sword and arm falling suddenly.

Carlos, however, used to declare with affectionate cynicism that the arm had been broken by the cudgel of a Polish peasant while Castro was trying to filch a pig from a stable...³⁹⁹)

393) Some interesting light is thrown on the problem by Jerzy Peterkiewicz in his article "Patriotic Irritability," *The Twentieth Century* (London), 970 (December 1957), pp. 545-557.

394) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in M. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

395) See Retinger, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

396) *Letters from Conrad*, p. x.

397) Jessie Conrad, *Joseph Conrad and His Circle* (London, 1935), p. 50.

398) Somosierra is a pass in the Sierra de Guadarrama mountains on the road from Burgos to Madrid. In 1808 the Spanish forces occupied the pass with the intention of stopping the advancing French army. After several unsuccessful attempts by the French infantry to dislodge the Spaniards from the heights, Napoleon ordered the Polish light cavalry to charge the Spanish artillery positions. The charge, which took place on 30 November 1808, achieved its objective. It opened Napoleon's way to Madrid, but with heavy losses to the Polish contingent.

399) *Romance*, p. 37.

Although the passage occurs in a section of *Romance* which, according to Conrad, was written entirely by Hueffer, it is more than likely that the Somosierra reference was Conrad's own contribution⁴⁰⁰). The charge of the Polish *chevau-légers* at Somosierra, like the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, without assuming an important place in European history, became a national legend. In the course of time it developed into a conventional symbol of Polish heroism, cropping up time and again in third-rate patriotic poems and providing subject matter for popular historical novels⁴⁰¹).

An important stage in the history of Conrad's relationship with Poland was the writing of *A Personal Record* and the two "Russian" novels, *The Secret Agent* and *Under Western Eyes*.

In *A Personal Record* Conrad answered, more or less directly, some of the charges that had been levelled against him. He related how a mysterious, irresistible impulse had driven him to sea, and how he had, accidentally, become an English author. In addition to that, by narrating some anecdotes from family history he made "Polish life enter English literature"⁴⁰²).

In the "Russian" novels, and especially in *Under Western Eyes*, he revenged himself upon the inveterate enemies of his country. In 1905, inspired by the Russo-Japanese War, he wrote a powerful indictment of Russia, entitled "Autocracy and War".

It has been suggested that one of the reasons why Conrad wanted to become an English sailor, rather than to join some other navy, was that England at the time was the natural enemy of Russia. If war had broken out, Conrad would thus have had the opportunity to fight Russia on the side of its most powerful opponent⁴⁰³). Similarly, his written attacks on Russia were rendered more effective because they were delivered in English. They had behind them the political and literary prestige associated with England and English. Perhaps it was this that Conrad had in mind when he wrote in *A Personal Record*:

The appearances of this perishable life are deceptive like everything that falls under the judgement of our imperfect senses. The inner voice may remain true enough in its secret counsel. The fidelity to a special tradition may last through the events of an unrelated existence, following faithfully, too, the traced way of an inexplicable impulse.

It would take too long to explain the intimate alliance of contradictions in human nature which makes love itself wear at times the desperate shape of betrayal⁴⁰⁴).

400) In a copy of *Romance* offered to Curle, Conrad has written: "In this book I have done my share of writing. ...The last part is (like the first) the work of Hueffer, except a few pars. written by me. Part second is actually joint work. Parts 3 & 4 are my writing, with here and there a sentence by Hueffer." *Notes by Joseph Conrad written in a set of his first editions in the possession of Richard Curle with an Introduction and Explanatory Comments* [by R. Curle]. With a Preface by Jessie Conrad (London, 1925), p. 23.

401) E.g. *Szwoleżerowie Guardii, Było to pod Somosierrą* and *Huragan* by Waclaw Gąsiorowski and *Szwoleżer Stach* by Walery Przyborowski.

402) Conrad to J. B. Pinker, October 1908, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 87.

403) See K. W. Zawodziński, "Nieuwzględnione motowy decyzji życiowej Conrada" ("Some Neglected Motives of Conrad's Decision"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 195 (September 1927). Cf. Hugh Clifford's article on Conrad: "...his first adventure, undertaken when he was a mere lad, was a journey to Constantinople, his ambition being to fight for the Turks, then at war with Russia, the hereditary enemy of his country." (Hugh Clifford, "The Genius of Mr. Joseph Conrad," *The North American Review* [New York], 571 [June 1904], p. 844.)

404) *A Personal Record*, pp. 35-36.

Not only was his patriotic conscience now more at ease, but he could also ward off any accusations of a lack of patriotism by referring to *his* contribution to the national cause. And so, when the unprecedented success of *Chance* gave him financial security, he decided at long last to revisit Poland.

What characterized above all Conrad's last visit to Poland, which took place in the summer of 1914, was its mood of peace and reconciliation. This time Conrad really returned home. He no longer felt an outcast and an outsider, as he had done in 1893⁴⁰⁵). He had proved himself both as a sailor and as a writer. He had answered most of the accusations which had been directed against him. He had also managed in some measure to resolve the inner conflict. It is both ironic and significant that the arrival of this inner peace coincided with the beginning of the decline of his artistic power. His fame was rapidly spreading in Poland. Now he would acquaint his wife and children with his past and show them that "il y a quelque chose derrière moi"⁴⁰⁶). Such was the tenor of the recollections which he wrote on his return to England, of the letters which he sent to friends at the time and of his behaviour during the visit. The same mood of peace and reconciliation was to dominate *The Rover*, the last novel he completed.

In Poland Conrad renewed old friendships, meeting amongst others his school-friend, Konstanty Buszczyński; he made new acquaintances, such as the Cracow lawyer, Dr. Teodor Kosch; and generally, mixed freely in Polish society. In Zakopane he met Żeromski, Żuławski⁴⁰⁷) and Nalepiński⁴⁰⁸). He also read a certain amount of contemporary Polish literature⁴⁰⁹).

After his return to England these new bonds did not weaken. He wrote two further articles on "The Polish Problem". When the Poles were fighting the Bolsheviks, he supported them in public as well as in private. Moreover, from then on he took a much livelier interest in the fortunes of his books in Poland. In 1922 he personally corrected a Polish translation of "Il Conde"⁴¹⁰). In 1921 he translated into English a play by a young Polish dramatist, Bruno Winawer, and published it under the title of *The Book of Job*⁴¹¹). Winawer in his turn translated Conrad's dramatic

405) Jan Perłowski met Conrad in Poland in 1893, and has described the meeting in an article entitled "O Conradzie i Kiplingu" ("About Conrad and Kipling") *Przegląd Współczesny* (Cracow) (June 1937), pp. 16-39.

406) During his visit to Cracow in 1914, Conrad is supposed to have said to Retinger: "Dear Joseph, it is a great happiness to me that at last I have come here with my wife and sons and have shown them that *il y a quelque chose derrière moi*." (Retinger, *op. cit.*, p. 134.)

407) Jerzy Żuławski (1874-1915), Polish poet, dramatist and novelist.

408) Tadeusz Nalepiński (1885-1918), Polish poet.

409) According to Aniela Zagórska, Conrad read in Zakopane the works of Wyspiański, Prus, Żeromski, Sieroszewski, Strug and Kossak-Szczucka. Returning the first volume of Prus's *Emancypantki* (*Emancipated Women*) he is supposed to have exclaimed: "Ma chère, mais c'est mieux que Dickens!" Aniela Zagórska, "Kilka wspomnień o Conradzie," *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 312 (December 1929).

410) See Wacław Borowy, "Conrad krytykiem przekładu swojej noweli 'Il Conde'" ("Conrad as a Critic of a Polish Translation of his Short Story 'Il Conde'"), *Studia i rozprawy* (Wrocław, 1952), II, pp. 61-72.

411) Bruno Winawer, *The Book of Job; a Satirical Comedy*, translated by Joseph Conrad (London, 1935).

adaptation of *The Secret Agent*, and staged it in Cracow. (The *première* was held at the "Bagatela" theatre on 26 March 1923.)

In the last few years of his life, Conrad frequently had Polish visitors who brought him books and news from Poland.

Borys Conrad has told the present writer that shortly before his death, Conrad began to think seriously about returning to Poland and settling there permanently, so that in the traditional Polish fashion he could lay his bones in his native soil. This is corroborated by Jessie Conrad who writes:

We had talked over that project many times during those last months. Directly John had embarked upon a successful career we, the old folks, were to divide up what of the home we could not take with us between the boys, and return to his beloved land. It was a dream — and a dream that was never realized. But the fact that he indulged in it has led me to send all the family papers in Polish for safe keeping to lie with those of his father in the Library in Cracow. Either of his descendants can go to see them, if there should arise any need, otherwise they will remain safe, and in good company⁴¹²).

In the introduction to the *Letters from Conrad*, Edward Garnett relates his last meeting with Conrad:

On the last visit I paid to "Oswald's" Conrad had been fatigued, I think, in the week, by visitors, transatlantic and others, pressing in with their homage, and after our last hour's talk together something moved me as we said good-night, to put his hand to my lips. He then embraced me with a long and silent pressure. The next morning as we stood talking in his study, when the car was announced, he suddenly snatched from the shelf overhead a copy of the Polish translation of *Almayer's Folly*, wrote an inscription in it and pressed it into my hands. When I looked I saw that the date he had written in it was the date of our first meeting, thirty years before⁴¹³).

The book Conrad offered to Garnett may have been picked from the shelf at random. However, it is also possible to interpret Conrad's gesture as a deliberate and meaningful act. He chose for the man who had helped him in his first steps as an English author, the book which marked both the beginning of his literary career and of their long friendship. Moreover, he offered it not in the original English, but in a translation into his own language, which he felt he had deserted but to which he was now returning through achievement.

Conrad never really lost contact with Polish literature. There were periods when his ties with Poland weakened, but they were never completely severed. Moreover, his relationship to Poland and things Polish was complicated by the problem of mixed loyalty and a sense of guilt. It was inevitable that a literature so charged with emotion for Conrad should have an effect on his imagination and writing.

412) Jessie Conrad, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

413) *Letters from Conrad*, p. xxxlii.

Chapter V

THE POLISH VIEW OF CONRAD

An examination of Conrad's Polish background leads one to expect to find traces of Polish literary influence in his work. This is indeed the case. However, in spite of the fact that Conrad's first biographer, Jean-Aubry, urged, as far back as the 1920s⁴¹⁴), that a serious study of the influence of Polish literature on Conrad's work should be undertaken, nothing in any sense comprehensive has so far been done.

For obvious reasons only Polish critics were in a position to deal with the subject; but for a long time they seemed to be the most reluctant and the least interested to do so. In fact, the only writers who took the trouble to study Conrad's Polish background seriously, before the Second World War, were two foreigners: Jean-Aubry and Gustav Morf. Neither, of course, could judge Conrad's debt to Polish literature. The best Polish book on Conrad, Józef Ujejski's *O Konradzie Korzeniowskim* (*About Conrad Korzeniowski*) which appeared in 1936, apart from giving some interesting and penetrating general criticism, discussed at length Conrad's personal relationship to Poland, and especially his efforts to influence English public opinion when the fate of an independent Polish state hung in the balance. Except for one or two vague suggestions, Ujejski left the subject of Conrad's Polish literary background untouched.

Ujejski's book, though better in kind, is typical of Polish pre-war criticism. There were, broadly speaking, two approaches to Conrad. Either one turned a blind eye to his origin and considered him purely and simply as an English author⁴¹⁵), or one was so absorbed by his Polish origin that one could discuss nothing but his personal relationship to Poland. Unfortunately, the second approach was more common. Thus, shortly after Conrad's death, a tiresome dispute as to his attitude to Poland and his adoption of the English language submerged genuine criticism in fruitless sophistry for a number of years⁴¹⁶). It is worth remarking, however, that the polemic greatly popularized Conrad's work, so much so, that, in a matter of years, his name became almost a household word in Poland.

414) See Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, "Rozmowa z pierwszym biografem Conrada," *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 71 (May 1925); also Edward Woroniecki, "Conrad a Polska," *ibid.*, 175 (May 1927).

415) For instance, in his introduction to a Polish edition of Conrad's works (Józef Conrad Korzeniowski, *Pisma wybrane - z przedmową Stefana Żeromskiego* [Warsaw, 1923]) Żeromski stated emphatically that "not a single fibre links Conrad's purely artistic achievement with Polish literature." (*Elegie* [Warsaw, 1928], p. 344.)

416) Some of the contributions to this dispute are: Witold Chwałewik, "Czy Conrad jest pisarzem polskim?" ("Is Conrad a Polish Writer?"), *Mysł Narodowa* (Warsaw), 39-41 (1926); Zbigniew Grabowski, "Dlaczego Conrad pisał po angielsku?" ("Why Did Conrad Write in English?"), *Kurier Poznański* (Poznań), 287 (1925); Wacław Grubiński, "Nierozumna szczerobliwość" ("Imprudent Generosity"), *Kurier Warszawski* (Warsaw), 72 (1927); J. N. Miller, "Słów kilka o Josephie Conradzie i o godności narodowej tu i tam" ("A Few Words about Joseph Conrad and about National Dignity Here and There"), *Kurier Polski* (Warsaw), 232 (1924); Artur Prędski, "W sprawie Conrada" ("Concerning Conrad"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 220 (March 1928).

Meanwhile, the serious critics concerned themselves mainly with the philosophical aspects of his novels⁴¹⁷.

Conrad's popularity, however, reached its height during the war years. In Poland, he was the favourite author of the resistance movement⁴¹⁸; abroad, his books were very popular with the Polish forces. His tragic philosophy, with its insistence on loyalty, courage and honour, fitted the mood of the time.

After the war, the inevitable reaction against Conrad, and all he stood for, was accelerated by the emergence of a new ideology, Marxism. The Marxists, with their firm belief in social progress, found Conrad's all-embracing scepticism unpalatable. In 1945 the newly formed literary monthly, *Twórczość* (*Creative Writing*), published an essay by Jan Kott, entitled "O laickim tragizmie; Conrad i Malraux" ("On the Lay Tragic Spirit; Conrad and Malraux")⁴¹⁹. Having labelled Conrad "the last bourgeois moralist", Kott argued that Conrad's ethical system was purely formal. He then went on to say that such a system, by glorifying heroism and fidelity for their own sake, could be exploited for the most reactionary purposes, and thus serve to uphold and consolidate capitalism⁴²⁰. Several Polish critics vigorously contested Kott's arguments⁴²¹; nevertheless, in 1950, when the official advocacy of "social realism" was at its height, Conrad's books ceased to be published.

The recent revival of interest in Conrad, occasioned by the centenary of his birth, did however include Poland, since it fortunately coincided there with the so-called "thaw". In the past few years, numerous Polish publications on Conrad have appeared both in Poland and abroad⁴²². Moreover, for the first time greater attention is being paid to Conrad's Polish literary background. It seems that at last the old emotional attitude has given way to something more objective in character, and,

417) Of particular interest are: Maria Dąbrowska, "Tragizm Conrada" ("Tragedy in Conrad"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 63 (March 1925); —, "Prawdziwa rzeczywistość Conrada" ("Conrad's Concept of Reality"), *Ibid.*, 285 (June 1929); —, "Społeczne i religijne pierwiastki u Conrada" ("Social and Religious Elements in Conrad's Works"), *Ibid.*, 424 (January 1932) (all three articles have been reprinted in Maria Dąbrowska, *Szkice o Conradzie*) and Stefan Kołaczkowski, "Józef Conrad (Korzeniowski)", *Przegląd Współczesny* (Warsaw), 12 (January 1925).

418) Jan Józef Szczepański in an article, entitled "Conrad mojego pokolenia" ("Conrad and My Generation") [*Życie Literackie* (Cracow), 307 (December 1957)] relates how the reading of *Lord Jim* led a boy to a piece of bravado which resulted in his death. See also Maria Młynarska, "Lord Jim w powstaniu warszawskim" ("Lord Jim in the Warsaw Uprising"), *Conrad żywy*, pp. 262-266.

419) *Twórczość* (Warsaw), 2 (September 1945), pp. 137-160; the essay appeared in a revised form in Jan Kott, *Mitologia i realizm* (Warsaw, 1946), p. 115 ff.

420) It is interesting to note that this was not an original approach. As early as 1925, Upton Sinclair had written about Conrad's moral code: "What is this code? The answer is, the code of the British merchant service. Its primary purpose is the protection of the ship, a valuable piece of property. So, in place of an imaginary God in a speculative heaven, we have a vaguely suggested Owner on the shore. This Owner is the force which creates the shipping industry and keeps it going; He is the goal of loyalty for officers and crew. Agnosticism upon closer study turns out to be Capitalism." (*Mammonart; An Essay in Economic Interpretation* [Pasadena, California, 1925], p. 374.)

421) Replies to Kott included: Maria Dąbrowska, "Conradowskie pojęcie wierności" ("Conrad's Concept of Loyalty"), *Warszawa*, I (1946); Antoni Gołubiew, "Poprawiam Kotta" ("I Correct Kott"), *Dziś i Jutro* (Warsaw), 3 (1945).

422) Among these are: *Conrad żywy*, edited by Wit Tarnawski (London, 1957); *Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski; Essays and Studies*, a reprint from *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), 1-2 (1958); *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*, edited by Ludwik Krzyżanowski (New York, 1960); Róża Jabłkowska, *Joseph Conrad 1857-1924* (Wrocław, 1961); *Wspomnienia i studia o Conradzie*, edited by Barbara Kocówna (Warsaw, 1963).

paradoxically, Conrad is being considered now much more of a Polish writer than he used to be before the Second World War.

* * *

What kinds of Polish literary influence have the critics so far discussed?

It has been noted, for instance, that some of the most popular themes of Polish romantic literature also appear prominently in Conrad's work. One such theme is that of betrayal.

Polish romantic literature emerged at a time when Poland was under foreign domination. When a country is occupied by a foreign power, the resentment and hatred which the vanquished feel towards their oppressors soon seeks an outlet in subversive action. This action must of necessity take the form of underground activity. The basis of all secret organizations is mutual trust. Hence, the most dreaded enemy is not the enemy soldier but the traitor, the informer and the government spy. In such circumstances loyalty is the virtue of virtues and treachery the crime of crimes. This specific moral climate of Poland under the partitions was naturally reflected in the literature of the period.

Moreover, it so happened that each of the three great Polish romantic poets came into personal contact with the problem of betrayal. Mickiewicz was severely criticized by his friends for taking an active part in Russian social life during his stay in Moscow in 1826⁴²³). Several years later, even harsher things were said about him when he failed to take part in the 1831 rising⁴²⁴). Słowacki's stepfather, August Bécu, was one of the professors of Wilno University who collaborated with the Russian authorities during the student trials of 1823⁴²⁵). His death by lightning the following year was generally regarded as a punishment from God⁴²⁶). Krasiński's father, General Wincenty Krasiński, who refused to support the November rising of 1830 for political reasons, was also branded by public opinion a traitor to the national cause. No wonder, therefore, that the word *zdrada* ("betrayal") haunts the pages of Polish romantic literature.

The theme of betrayal occurs in one form or another in all the most important poetical works of Mickiewicz: *Grażyna*, *Konrad Wallenrod*, *Dziady (Forefathers' Eve)* and *Pan Tadeusz*. We find it in Słowacki's dramas, in *Kordian*, *Maria Stuart* and *Horsztyński*. It is an important motif in Krasiński's poetic drama *Irydion*. There is treachery in Goszczyński's *Zamek Kaniowski (Kaniów Castle)*, in Syrokomla's *Ułaz* and in

423) Mickiewicz replied to these strictures in a letter to Jan Czeczot and Tomasz Zan, written on 17 January 1827. (Adam Mickiewicz, *Dziela; wydanie narodowe*, edited by Waclaw Borowy and Leon Płoszewski [Cracow, 1949], XIV, pp. 287-292.) It is possible that one of the motives behind *Konrad Wallenrod* was to justify his conduct.

424) In 1831 Maurycy Gosławski wrote a poem "To Adam Mickiewicz Tarrying in Rome during the National Uprising" which ends as follows: "Make haste - leave distant Rome, make haste - for if we conquer, it will be hard to breathe Polish breath without desert. And if we perish beneath the ruins; then, oh bard, in days of woe, he who has not shared our gore and glory will not be worthy to share our grave!" (*Poezye Maurycego Gosławskiego*, with an Introduction by Leon Zienkiewicz [Leipzig, 1864] [Biblioteka Pisarzy Polskich, XXVI], p. 244.)

425) In 1823 the Russian Commissioner, Senator Novosilcov, organized for political reasons a general campaign against secret student societies at the University of Wilno, which led to very numerous arrests and culminated in a series of trials. Among the accused were Mickiewicz and his friends.

426) The incident is referred to in Mickiewicz's *Dziadów część trzecia (Forefathers' Eve, Part III)* (*Dziela*, III, p. 248). For a short biography of August Ludwik Bécu (1771-1824) see *Polski słownik biograficzny*, I, 391-2.

Malczewski's *Maria*. Stefan Garczyński⁴²⁷) wrote a short narrative poem entitled *Zdrajca (The Traitor)*.

Thus it can be argued that Conrad's obsession with betrayal and fidelity was influenced to some extent by his boyhood reading.

Treachery is a two-edged weapon. It can do infinite harm to an organization, but it can also become a powerful tool in its hands. If a member of the organization enters the enemies' ranks and then works from within towards their destruction, he can often achieve even better results than by direct action. This is the thesis put forward by Mickiewicz in his epic poem *Konrad Wallenrod*. However, the Polish romantic poets were interested not only in political strategy, but also in moral issues. Thus, Mickiewicz's Machiavellian thesis became the centre of a controversy. Seweryn Goszczyński, a born fighter and a man of deeds, hailed the poem as "a thunderbolt hurled by the hand of the bard"⁴²⁸). Słowacki, Mickiewicz's chief rival for the position of national poet, was less enthusiastic. In his drama *Kordian*⁴²⁹), written under the fresh impression of the disaster of 1831, he argued that the modern Wallenrod would lack mettle and resolution to perform his task. The strongest criticism came from Krasiński. Taking a moral standpoint, he concluded in the drama *Irydion* that even in the struggle for independence against a stronger enemy the use of immoral weapons was not justified. Conrad uses the Wallenrod idea in *The Secret Agent*, in *Under Western Eyes* and in the short story called "The Informer". A number of Polish critics, among them Maria Dąbrowska, Adam Gillon, Julian Krzyżanowski and Wit Tarnawski, have pointed out this similarity.

Another issue which absorbed the Polish romantic poets was that of commitment. In this case, however, there were no differences of opinion. According to them, not only was it the sacred duty of every Pole to fight against the enemies of Poland, but, what is more, no sacrifice was too great when the nation's liberty was at stake. To press their point home the Polish romantic poets presented a hero, concerned only with his private life and happiness, who is suddenly struck by personal misfortune. It may be an unsuccessful love affair, or a rash act, committed in a moment of passion or weakness, which carries in its wake untoward consequences. Faced with this personal tragedy, the hero suddenly sees the true values and is transformed into an ardent patriot, ready to sacrifice everything for his country. Often this inner change takes place in a mysterious, almost miraculous way. The author does not explain its mechanics, he merely presents us with the results.

Mickiewicz's greatest heroes, Konrad Wallenrod, Robak and, especially, Gustaw-Konrad, undergo such an inner transformation. The same is true of Słowacki's *Kordian*, Krasiński's Count Henry and Garczyński's *Wacław*. In Conrad we find this *leitmotif* in a pure form in "Prince Roman" and in *The Rover*, and some variations on the theme in *Nostramo* and *The Rescue*. Lingard goes through the process, as it were, in reverse, and Decoud is broken by it. It could also be argued that the moral change which takes place in Jim and Razumov is not altogether dissimilar. Like Mickiewicz's heroes, Jim and Razumov break through the shell of egotism

427) Stefan Garczyński (1805-1834), poet and friend of Mickiewicz.

428) In his poem "Proroctwa Ks. Marka," *Dziela zbiorowe Seweryna Goszczyńskiego*, edited by Zygmunt Wasilewski (Lwów, 1911), 1, p. 312; quoted by Wiktor Weintraub in *The Poetry of Adam Mickiewicz* (S-Gravenhage, 1954), p. 132.

429) The title of the drama, which is the name of the protagonist, is an anagram of Konrad.

under the pressure of moral suffering and assume a more responsible attitude towards society.

By some irony of fate, Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Krasiński were all abroad when the rising broke out in Poland, and did not take part in the fighting. Later, each of them felt some degree of remorse on account of their non-participation. Hence, the theme of guilt and expiation plays an important part in their work. In his recent book on Conrad (*The Eternal Solitary*)⁴³⁰ Adam Gillon has shown certain similarities between the treatment of this theme by Conrad, on the one hand, and by the Polish romantic poets on the other.

Recently, Polish critics have tried to relate Conrad's work to more contemporary literature. Róża Jabłkowska and Stanisław Helsztyński stress Conrad's affinities with the positivist writers, with their emphasis on hard work, suffering and devotion to duty. Helsztyński sees in the stern ethical code of the positivists the germs of Conrad's manly outlook on life, his stress on responsibility and his high moral standards of honour⁴³¹.

Tymon Terlecki, on the other hand, links Conrad with the neo-romantic Young Poland movement. Chronologically, Conrad belonged to the generation which produced it. He was "three years older than Kasprowicz and Sieroszewski (b. 1860), four years older than Przesmycki-Miriam (b. 1861), seven years older than Żeromski (b. 1864), eight years older than Tetmajer (b. 1865) and twelve years older than Wyspiański (b. 1869)"⁴³². Together with these writers, he grew up in the shadow of the 1863 disaster, felt choked by the dismal atmosphere of national mourning and longed to escape from it. He shared with the Young Poland writers their escapist tendencies, their romanticism and their "oriental exoticism"⁴³³.

The individual authors who are most commonly mentioned in connection with Conrad are Prus, Żeromski and, recently, Sienkiewicz. Gillon in *The Eternal Solitary* shows an analogy between Wokulski, the hero of Prus's *Lalka (Doll)* and Lingard of *The Rescue*. Both men are romantics at heart who are destroyed by a passion for a frigid and spoiled society woman. "Each betrays the trust that other people put in him"⁴³⁴.

Similarly, according to Gillon,

Conrad has a great deal in common with Żeromski... His [Żeromski's] masterpiece, *Ludzie bezdomni* (The Homeless Man)⁴³⁵, was written in the same year as *Lord Jim* (1900). Its main protagonist, Dr. Judym, is as egotistic in his devotion to social ideals as Jim is to his concept of heroism and personal honour. Jim can have no personal happiness until he has paid the debt he owes to his conscience. Dr. Judym, the self-educated cobbler's son, can have neither father nor mother nor wife. He has devoted himself to the cause of bettering the lot of the poor in order to pay his "accursed debt", and like Jim, he rejects the woman who loves him. Each man pursues his dream unflinchingly, refusing, in Stein's words, to keep still on his heap of mud⁴³⁶.

430) Adam Gillon, *The Eternal Solitary; a Study of Joseph Conrad* (New York, 1960).

431) Stanisław Helsztyński, "Joseph Conrad - człowiek i twórca," *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), 1-2 (1958), pp. 39-60.

432) Tymon Terlecki, "Conrad w kulturze polskiej," *Conrad żywy*, p. 102.

433) Among the Young Poland writers who turned for inspiration to the East were: the poets Antoni Lange and Bolesław Leśmian, and the novelist Wacław Sieroszewski.

434) Adam Gillon, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

435) A better translation of the title of Żeromski's novel would be: "The Homeless."

436) Gillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-8.

Another critic who has often stressed the affinities between Conrad and Żeromski is Wit Tarnawski. In an article, published in *Kultura* in 1957, Tarnawski argues that the pessimistic outlook on life, shared by both these writers, derives from a childhood spent in the shadow of the 1863 disaster⁴³⁷). Elsewhere, Tarnawski compares the strong rhythmic qualities of Conrad's and Żeromski's prose⁴³⁸).

Róża Jabłkowska sees numerous similarities between Conrad's Jim and the hero of Sienkiewicz's *Potop* (*The Deluge*), Andrzej Kmiecic⁴³⁹). Both are "deserters" who redeem their crime by embracing wholeheartedly a public cause. On the other hand, however, her claim that Ursus and Chilo in Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* parallel Conrad's Gaspar Ruiz⁴⁴⁰) and Señor Hirsch⁴⁴¹), respectively, appears more fanciful than perceptive.

An interesting theory, somewhat out of the usual rut of Polish Conrad studies, has been developed by Tarnawski⁴⁴²). Tarnawski suggests that the peculiar narrative technique, involving an intermediary narrator, which Conrad used in "Youth", *Lord Jim*, *Under Western Eyes*, *Chance* and elsewhere, derives not from Henry James and Sterne as some critics have argued, but from the Polish *gawęda* or "literary yarn". The *gawęda* is a loose, informal narrative, told by a speaker in the manner of someone reminiscing. It is often involved and full of digressions. Little attention is paid to chronology. At first, seemingly unimportant details and fragmentary episodes come to the fore, then gradually a coherent picture emerges. By the time the speaker has finished, everything has fallen into place. This form of narration, originating from an oral tradition, first appeared in Polish literature during the romantic period. It was used both in poetry and in prose. Among the poets who used the *gawęda* technique were Mickiewicz, Pol and Syrokomla. The best examples of prose *gawędas* are the memoir novels of Rzewuski, Chodźko and Kaczkowski⁴⁴³), and Fredro's⁴⁴⁴) reminiscences *Trzy po trzy* (*Topsy Turvy Talk*). Tarnawski argues that the *gawęda* style lent itself especially to Conrad, since much of his narrative material was based either on his own memories, or on yarns which he heard from other people.

In these varied ways, Polish critics have discussed the relationship between Conrad and Polish literature. It would obviously be foolish to think of Conrad's work as being exclusively in a Polish tradition; however, the contention of this thesis is not that Conrad wrote Polish novels in the English language, but that his English novels, as might have been expected, are coloured by his experience of Polish literature. Nevertheless, one might expect in a writer subject to such a *general* influence some indications of that influence manifesting itself more obviously. In the remaining chapters a few instances in Conrad's fiction will be discussed where the influence of Polish literature is particularly evident.

437) Wit Tarnawski, "Conrad a...", *Kultura* (Paris) 111-2 (January-February), p. 168.

438) Wit Tarnawski, "O artystycznej osobowości i formie Conrada," *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* (Warsaw), 1-2 (1958), p. 68.

439) See Róża Jabłkowska, *Joseph Conrad* (1857-1924), p. 206.

440) See *ibid.*, p. 278.

441) See *ibid.*, p. 377.

442) See Wit Tarnawski, "O artystycznej osobowości i formie Conrada," *op. cit.*, pp. 70-74.

443) Zygmunt Kaczkowski (1825-1896), novelist.

444) Aleksander Fredro (1793-1876), dramatist. In an article on Fredro's memoirs, Weintraub compares them with Conrad's *A Personal Record*. (Wiktor Weintraub, "Alexander Fredro and His Antiromantic Memoirs," *The American Slavic and East European Review* [New York], XII, No. 4 [1953], pp. 546-8.)

Chapter VI

" KARAIN "

In an earlier part of this thesis we saw that Conrad was familiar with Mickiewicz's poetry. Moreover, according to Maria Kałuska, during his stay in Lwów in 1867, Conrad recited from memory whole passages of *Pan Tadeusz* and Mickiewicz's ballads⁴⁴⁵).

One of the most consummate of the ballads is *Czaty (The Ambush)*. It is subtitled "A Ukrainian Ballad", and might thus have had a special appeal for Conrad who came from that part of the country. The plot is briefly as follows:

One night the old Voivode⁴⁴⁶) discovers that his young wife is out in the garden with her lover. He summons his henchman, the Cossack Nauma, and tells him to prepare guns and powder. They go into the manor gardens and find the wife, sitting in her night-dress in the arbour. In front of her, kneeling, is her lover, importuning her and inquiring why she is refusing his love. At first she repulses his advances, but then, in a moment of weakness, yields to him and falls into his embrace.

Meanwhile the husband and the Cossack, who have been watching the scene from behind some bushes, prepare to wipe out the disgrace. The Cossack, however, shows some reluctance to carry out the deed: he pities the girl. But the furious Voivode orders him to fire. They are to achieve their revenge as follows: first, the Voivode will shoot the lover, so that the woman may see him die, and then, the Cossack is to kill the unfaithful wife. The Voivode tells Nauma to wait for his shot, but the Cossack ignores him and without much more ado shoots the master dead.

The similarity of the story to the central episode of Conrad's "Karain" is obvious⁴⁴⁷).

Pata Matara's sister has eloped with a Dutchman; and Pata Matara calls his friend, Karain, to help him to avenge the dishonour. They set out to find the pair. Their quest is long and on the way Karain is haunted continuously by visions of the girl he is to kill. At the outset of their journey, Karain and Matara have only *krisses* — a kind of Malayan sword — but later they earn a little money and buy a gun.

445) See Roman Dyboski, "Z młodości Józefa Conrada," *Czas* (Cracow), 296 (December 1927).

446) The Voivode was a title in use among the Slavonic peoples, meaning literally, leader of an army, and so applied to rulers, governors or officials of varying degree. In pre-partition Poland, the Voivode (Polish: *wojewoda*; latinized as *palatinus*) was the governor of a province (*województwo*). His duties included the calling of a general levy in the event of war and the dispensing of justice among the Jews.

447) The similarity was first noticed by Kazimierz Waliszewski in "Polski powieściopisarz w angielskiej literaturze," *Kraj* (St. Petersburg), 5 (1904). It was discussed in some detail by Juliusz Kleiner in "Oddźwięk ballady Mickiewiczowskiej w opowieści Conrada" ("An Echo of Mickiewicz's Ballad in a Tale by Conrad"), *Dziennik Literacki* (5 May 1949), p. 4.

Finally, after many years of wandering, they find the runaway lovers, living in a place called Delli. They spend two days and a night watching the Dutchman's house. On the third night they come armed and hide behind a hedge. As day breaks, the Dutchman and the girl come out into the garden. Pata Matara gives Karain the final instructions.

" I shall creep close and then amok... let her die by my hand. You take aim at the fat swine there. Let him see me strike my shame off the face of the earth — and then... you are my friend — kill with a sure shot " 448.

Again, the unexpected happens: Karain shoots Pata Matara, as he is about to strike the girl down with his *kriss*.

Apart from the general similarity, the two narratives correspond in a number of significant details.

In both cases particular care is taken over the order in which the killing is to be done. Although Mickiewicz's and Conrad's order are different, both the authors stress the point. The Voivode tells the Cossack:

" Higher... to the right... careful, wait for my shot, the bullet must first strike the bridegroom in the head " 449).

Conrad is even more emphatic about this. Matara speaks of the order of the shooting, as if it were some kind of ritual:

" When we find them we shall kill her first to cleanse the dishonour — then the man must die " 450).

" Let him see me strike my shame off the face of the earth — and then — you are my friend — kill with a sure shot " 451).

The scene of the ambush in both the narratives is similar. In Mickiewicz's poem the lovers are found in a garden arbour; in Conrad's story they come out of the house and also go into the garden:

" I saw them both. They had come out. She sat on a bench under the wall, and twigs laden with flowers crept high above her head, hung over her hair " 452).

Both the writers make the climax as dramatic and unexpected as possible. In Mickiewicz it comes with the very last word of the poem:

The Cossack cocked his gun, took aim, fired without waiting and shot right in the head — the Voivode 453).

448) *Tales of Unrest*, p. 37.

449) Adam Mickiewicz, *Dzieła; wydanie narodowe*, edited by Wacław Borowy and Leon Płoszewski (Cracow, 1949), I, p. 228.

450) *Tales of Unrest*, p. 32.

451) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

452) *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

453) Mickiewicz, *Dzieła*, I, p. 228.

Conrad's method is less melodramatic. Instead of the final unexpected twist, we have a rapid sequence of images, reminiscent of modern film technique.

"Matara burst out of the thicket; before him the petals of torn flowers whirled high as if driven by a tempest. I heard her cry; I saw her spring with open arms in front of the white man. She was a woman of my country and of noble blood. They are so! I heard her shriek of anguish and fear — and all stood still! The fields, the house, the earth, the sky stood still — while Matara leaped at her with uplifted arm. I pulled the trigger, saw a spark, heard nothing; the smoke drove back into my face, and then I could see Matara roll over head first and lie with stretched arms at her feet. Ha! A sure shot! The sunshine fell on my back colder than the running water. A sure shot!" 454).

The alliterative "sure shot", which has already rung once ominously in Karain's narrative — "you are my friend - kill with a sure shot" — concludes the passage with a force not dissimilar to the rhyming "wojewody" of the ballad.

There is a remarkable verbal echo in the description of the loading of the gun. Conrad writes:

"Matara tipped fresh priming from the hollow of his palm, scraped the flint with his thumb-nail, and gave the gun to me. To me! I took it... O fate!" 455).

And in *The Ambush* we read:

"Here is a sack of Leszno gunpowder — come, look lively — pour in some priming and scrape the flint with your nail" 456).

Mickiewicz is always very particular about describing fire-arms, but it is difficult to find a gun being loaded with such care elsewhere in Conrad.

The Ambush is one of Mickiewicz's later, more mature ballads. It was written about 1828, during his stay in Russia. The main body of the ballads — a cycle of fourteen poems in all — appeared under the collective title *Ballady i romanse (Ballads and Romances)* in Mickiewicz's first volume of poetry in 1822. Although there are no definite echoes of these early ballads in "Karain", their general mood and atmosphere is, in fact, closer to Conrad's story than the mood of *The Ambush*.

Ballady i romanse are dominated by the typically romantic combination of the erotic and the supernatural. In the ballad entitled *Do*

454) *Tales of Unrest*, p. 38.

455) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

456) Mickiewicz, *Dziela*, I, p. 227. The Polish text runs as follows: "Masz tu z prochem leszczyńskim sakiewkę; / Podsyp zapal, a żywo szczyść paznokciem krzesiwo." Gunpowder manufactured in the town of Leszno was famous for its high quality.

przyjaciół (To My Friends), the poet, sitting alone at midnight, thinks about the "ghostliness" of the house and about his beloved. He wants to write something "with terror and with love, about ghosts and about Maryla⁴⁵⁷⁾.

The other very important element in the ballads is folk-lore. Several of the poems are subtitled: "Based on a Folk Song". Nearly all of them are concerned to some extent with popular beliefs. We find in them ghosts, water spirits, devils, magic, charms and talismans. In the ballad *Romantyczność (Romanticism)*, a mad girl sees and caresses her dead lover, who is invisible to everyone else. In *Lilie (The Lilies)* a woman, having murdered her husband, is tormented by his ghost. At one point, like Karain, she thinks he is following her:

She ran straight home... She ran across the meadows and through the groves, she ran and halted; halted and thought and listened: it seemed to her that someone was following her and that something was whispering to her in the surrounding darkness: "It is I, your husband, your husband" ⁴⁵⁸⁾.

In *Switezianka* a water nymph tests her lover's faith by appearing to him in the form of a ravishing woman. In the unfinished ballad *Tukaj*, a dying man is offered life, if he can find a friend whom he can trust as himself.

On the thematic level, Mickiewicz juxtaposes feeling and intellect, illusion and reality, primitive faith and rational unbelief. The closing lines of *Romantyczność* epitomize his romantic credo:

"The girl is out of her senses!"
Shouts a man with a learned air,
"My eye and my lenses
Know there's nothing there.
Ghosts are a myth
Of ale-wife and blacksmith.
Clodhoppers! This is treason
Against King Reason!"
"Yet the girl loves", I reply diffidently,
"And the people believe reverently:
Faith and love are more discerning
Than lenses or learning.
You know the dead truths, not the living,
The world of things, not the world of loving.
Where does any miracle start?
Cold eye, look in your heart!" ⁴⁵⁹⁾

In "Karain" Conrad contrasts, with nostalgia and regret, the primitive

457) Mickiewicz, *Dziela*, I, p. 39.

458) *Ibid.*, I, p. 70.

459) The English translation is that of W.H. Auden, "The Romantic," included in Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), *Selected Poems*, edited by Clark Mills, with a Critical Appreciation by Jan Lechoń (New York, 1956), p. 69.

man's capacity for believing passionately and feeling deeply with the scepticism and cynicism of civilized man.

And it seemed to me, during that moment of waiting, that the cabin of the schooner was becoming filled with a stir invisible and living as of subtle breaths. All the ghosts driven out of the unbelieving West by men who pretend to be wise and alone and at peace — all the homeless ghosts of an unbelieving world — appeared suddenly round the figure of Hollis bending over the box; all the exiled and charming shades of loved women; all the beautiful and tender ghosts of ideals, remembered, forgotten, cherished, execrated; all the cast-out and reproachful ghosts of friends admired, trusted, traduced, betrayed, left dead by the way — they all seemed to come from the inhospitable regions of the earth to crowd into the gloomy cabin, as though it had been a refuge and, in all the unbelieving world, the only place of avenging belief... 460)

In thus appears that Mickiewicz's ballad *The Ambush* which almost certainly inspired the central episode of "Karain", might have also brought in its wake unconscious reminiscences of the other ballads and suggested to Conrad some of the romantic themes and motifs which we find in his story.

Another possible echo of Polish romantic literature is the story of Karain's sword-bearer. Karain relates:

"Then I met an old man.

"You all knew him. People here called him my sorcerer, my servant and sword-bearer; but to me he was father, mother, protection, refuge and peace. When I met him he was returning from a pilgrimage, and I heard him intoning the prayer of sunset. He had gone to the holy place with his son, his son's wife, and a little child; and on their return, by the favour of the Most High, they all died: the strong man, the young mother, the little child — they died; and the old man reached his country alone. He was a pilgrim serene and pious, very wise and very lonely" 461).

The story may have been suggested by one of the most popular narrative poems in the Polish language: Juliusz Słowacki's *Ojciec zadżumionych w El-Arish* (*The Father of the Plague-stricken at El-Arish*). In it an old Arab tells how, during his stay in the quarantine at El-Arish, he lost through the plague his whole family: his wife, three daughters and three sons, and a little child.

In the press interview with Marian Dąbrowski in 1914 Conrad said that later on in life he preferred Słowacki to Mickiewicz. "Do you know why Słowacki?" he asked his interviewer, and replied "Il est l'âme de toute la Pologne, lui" 462).

In 1904 Hugh Clifford published an article on Conrad in *The North American Review*. In it he mentioned "Karain" and "The Lagoon" as "containing some marvellous descriptive passages. Both these stories,

460) *Tales of Unrest*, pp. 48-9.

461) *Ibid.*, p. 42.

462) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in M. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

463) Hugh Clifford, "The Genius of Mr. Joseph Conrad," *The North American Review* (New York), 571 (June 1904), p. 849.

however, dealt with the psychology of Asiatics, and to the expert were interesting rather than satisfying" ⁴⁶³). With regard to Conrad's treatment of Orientals, Clifford wrote:

To me they are interesting, not because they are really Asiatics, but because they represent the impression scored by Asiatics upon a sensitive, imaginative, European mind. Mr. Conrad had seen them and known them, but he had seen as white men see — from the outside. He had never lived into [sic!] the life of brown people ⁴⁶⁴).

In *A Talk on Joseph Conrad and his Work*, written in 1927, he went even further:

It was impossible for any one who had lived amongst the Malayan people, as I had lived amongst them for more than a decade, not to realise at once that the author had none but a superficial acquaintance with the Malayan customs, language and character ⁴⁶⁵).

Unfortunately, Clifford, who was particularly well equipped to examine and judge the authenticity of Conrad's Malaysia, never dealt with the subject at any length ⁴⁶⁶).

In 1937, however, a detailed study of Conrad's Malayan background was made by an American student, Florence Clemens, in an unpublished doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Ohio. Florence Clemens concluded that with respect to geography, history and the external life of the people, Conrad's description of Malaysia was, on the whole, accurate. But, in the realm of psychology, when he tried to go below the surface of Malay consciousness he became untrustworthy. In fact, Florence Clemens writes:

In some instances, it must be confessed, the thoughts and impulses given by Conrad to his Malays are definitely untrue to Malay character ⁴⁶⁷).

For example, according to her, "There is nothing peculiarly Malay in Karain's mental suffering". She continues:

The Westerner under similar conditions may see like imagined figures. Conrad's own Almayer, dying from loneliness and homelessness, found himself tormented by images of the child Nina. On the other hand, a Malay quite sane, let alone one somewhat unbalanced, might have been much more horribly haunted than was Karain because of an undoubting belief inbred since birth that the demoniac spirits of the murdered in no kindly human shape would waylay him in some ghastly fashion ⁴⁶⁸).

464) *Ibid.*, pp. 843-5.

465) Sir Hugh Clifford, *A Talk on Joseph Conrad and his Work*, English Association (Ceylon Branch), February 1927, p. 4.

466) Sir Hugh Clifford (1866-1941) spent much of his life in the Malay Civil Service, and was a well-known authority on Malaysia.

467) Florence Clemens, "Conrad's Malaysian Fiction: a New Study in Sources with an Analysis of Factual Material Involved." (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1937), p. 281.

468) *Ibid.*, p. 238.

Clemens objects strongly to Conrad's description of Matara's ghost. A genuine Malayan ghost would have been "a terrifyingly wicked hantu with horribly unearthly face and perhaps nothing beyond the waist but a trail of flying entrails, or a great oppressive presence, vague as a storm cloud in shape, ominous and malignant" ⁴⁶⁹). Conrad's ghost, like the ghosts in Mickiewicz's ballads, clearly belong to the European folk and literary traditions. On the other hand we are told that the elopement and the revenge themes in "Karain" and "The Lagoon" are very typical. "A common Malay ideal", writes Clemens, "is that family dishonour must be cleared at all costs" ⁴⁷⁰). She then quotes Frank Swettenham, a recognized authority on Malay life:

A Malay is intolerant of insult or slight; it is something that to him should be wiped out in blood. He will brood over a real or fancied stain on his honour until he is possessed by the desire for revenge ⁴⁷¹).

This fanatical insistence on personal honour must have appealed to Conrad who had been brought up in a similar tradition.

Both Clifford and Clemens criticize Karain's psychology. We do not know, however, whether this criticism was also meant to include Karain's impulsive killing of Matara, which, as has already been shown, Conrad almost certainly borrowed from Mickiewicz's Ukrainian ballad. What is certain is that whilst the incident sounds exotic to the English reader, it is by no means untypical of Ukrainian literature and folk-lore. For instance, there is a poem by Taras Shevchenko ⁴⁷²), called *U Tijeji Kateryny* (*Pretty Kateryna*), which ends in a similar bizarre way ⁴⁷³).

Kateryna has three suitors. She promises to marry the one who will rescue her brother from Turkish captivity. Two of the suitors are killed in the process. The third comes back with the "brother", who turns out to be the girl's sweetheart. Kateryna is killed — we do not know by whom — and the two men ride off swearing eternal friendship.

Assuming that "Karain" is a typical example of Conrad's work — and there are no indications to the contrary — it can be argued that the so-called "exotic elements" in Conrad, which have so often been stressed by English critics, originate partly from his experiences in the East and partly from his Polish background, literary and otherwise.

⁴⁶⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴⁷⁰) Florence Clemens, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁴⁷¹) Frank Swettenham, *Malay Sketches* (London, 1895), pp. 3-4; quoted by Florence Clemens, *op. cit.*, p. 241-2.

⁴⁷²) Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), probably the greatest Ukrainian poet.

⁴⁷³) The poem, translated into English by Vera Rich, is included in Taras Shevchenko, *Poems*, edited by George S. Luckyj (Munich, 1961), pp. 92-94.

Chapter VII

« VICTORY »

Between 1906 and 1908 the *Nowa Gazeta* (*New Gazette*) published in instalments a new sensational novel by Stefan Zeromski. It was called *Dzieje grzechu* (*The History of a Sin*), and related in a bold and uninhibited way — influenced by the French "naturalist" school, and especially Zola — the story of the moral downfall of a virtuous bourgeois girl, who, in turn, eloped with a married man, killed her illegitimate child, became the mistress of a cosmopolitan bandit, murdered another lover at his instigation, entered and left an institution for reformed prostitutes, and finally, at the end of her career, sacrificed her life for the man she loved all along.

The novel, surrounded by an aura of scandal, created a great sensation. As soon as its serialization was over, it appeared in book form (1908), published by one of the most famous Polish publishing houses, Gebethner and Wolff. By 1926 it had been re-edited no less than seven times, and is still one of Zeromski's most popular works.

Although *The History of a Sin* has many weaknesses both with regard to structure and content, it bears the unmistakable stamp of a great writer. Side by side with sensationalism, melodrama, forced pathos, sentimentality and careless construction, we have a series of characters and scenes which leave a lasting impression. Indeed, comparing great things with small, an analogy with D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* would not be altogether inapt.

The History of a Sin ends with the following passage:

She raised herself from the ground on her elbows, to see his face. Now she would tell him! She saw him. He stood behind wooden bars. He fixed his large eyes on the darkness of the cave, searching it. Their eyes met. A smile of angelic rapture floated down on to Ewa's lips. But together with the smile blood began to flow again from her mouth.

Once again, the neck slightly, very slightly lifted the heavy head. Ewa felt, that two hands had slipped under her hair and lifted the powerless skull off the floor — and that now she was resting in those kindly hands. She could no longer see him. She knew that she was lying on her back, and that he was kneeling and holding her head in his motionless hands.

Her whole being lit with her earliest girlish smile of happiness and with that smile of divine bliss on her lips she died, seeking his glance in the shades of death ⁴⁷⁴).

⁴⁷⁴) Stefan Zeromski, *Dzieje grzechu*; in *Dzieła*, edited by Stanisław Pigoń with an Introduction by Henryk Markiewicz (Warsaw, 1956), *The Novels*, Vol. VIII, p. 256. Pigoń notes that he has based his text on the 1911 edition which, according to him, gives the most

The last paragraph of the penultimate chapter of *Victory* reads as follows:

She tried to raise herself, but all she could do was to lift her head a little from the pillow. With a terrified and gentle movement, Heyst hastened to slip his arm under her neck. She felt relieved at once of an intolerable weight, and was content to surrender to him the infinite weariness of her tremendous achievement. Exulting, she saw herself extended on the bed, in a black dress, and profoundly at peace; while, stooping over her with a kindly, playful smile, he was ready to lift her up in his firm arms and take her into the sanctuary of his innermost heart — for ever! The flush of rapture flooding her whole being broke out in a smile of innocent, girlish happiness; and with that divine radiance on her lips she breathed her last, triumphant, seeking for his glance in the shades of death⁴⁷⁵).

The similarity of the two passages, both with regard to content and phrasing, is so remarkable that it precludes mere coincidence. Moreover, the virtual identity of the last sentence suggests, either careful memorial reconstruction, or even some form of direct copying, possibly through an intermediary note. It does not necessarily follow that, at the time of the writing of *Victory*, Conrad was fully aware of the fact that he was plagiarising or, at least, of the extent to which he reproduced Zeromski's text. He could have, for instance, jotted down at some point the final paragraph of Zeromski's novel and used it several years later, having, in the meantime, forgotten completely the origin of the jotting. Moreover, there is some evidence that Conrad was particularly pleased with this passage. During his visit to the United States in 1923, he chose it, together with other excerpts from *Victory*, for a public reading which took place at the

authoritative text. For convenience sake, I have used Pigoń's edition; however, I am reproducing here the above passage as it appeared in the 1908 edition:

Podźwignęła się z ziemi na łokciach, żeby zobaczyć twarz. Teraz powie! Ujrzała go. Stał za drewnianymi [sic] kratami. Wielkie oczy wlepił w ciemność jaskini i szukał wzrokiem. Spotkały się ich oczy. Uśmiech anielskiej rozkoszy spłynął na wargi Ewy. Ale razem z uśmiechem krew znowu popłynęła z ust.

Raz jeszcze sżyja tak lekko, tak lekko dźwignęła ciężką głowę. Ewa czuła, że dwie ręce wsunęły się pod jej włosy i dźwignęły z podłogi bezsilną czaszkę - i że ona teraz w tych rękach troskliwych spoczywa. Już go dojrzeć nie mogła. Wiedziała, że sama leży na wznak, a on kłęczy i w nieruchomych rękach [sic! Pigoń has "rękach"] głowę jej trzyma. Spłonęła [Pigoń starts a new paragraph] wszystka w dziewczęcy, najdawniejszy swój uśmiech szczęścia i z tym uśmiechem boskiej radości na ustach umarła, szukając w mrokach śmierci jego spojżenia.

(Stefan Zeromski, *Dzieje grzechu* [Warsaw: Gebethner i Wolff: 1908], II, pp. 307-308. [To the best of my knowledge this edition is unavailable in England.])

475) *Victory*, pp. 406-7.

Conrad worked on *Victory* from May 1912 until the end of June 1914 (see Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 394).

We know that Conrad was familiar with Zeromski's novel from a letter which he wrote to Edward Garnett on 2 September 1921: "I have just read through the Zeromski [sic] novel you mean: *History of a Sin*. Honestly I don't think it will do for translation. The international murderess episodes take but little space after all. The whole thing is disagreeable and often incomprehensible in comment and psychology. Often it is gratuitously ferocious. You know I am not squeamish." There is no indication, however, that this was Conrad's first reading of *The History of a Sin*. (*Letters from Conrad*, p. 309.)

house of Mrs. Curtiss James. He describes the occasion in a letter to his wife:

I gave a talk and pieces of reading out of *Victory*. After the applause from the audience which stood up when I appeared had ceased I had a moment of positive anguish. Then I took out the watch you had given me and laid it on the table made one mighty effort and began to speak. That watch was the greatest comfort to me. Something of you. I timed myself by it all along. I began at 9.45 and ended at exactly at 11 [sic]. There was a most attentive silence, some laughs, and at the end when I read the chapter of Lena's death audible snuffling. Then handshaking with 200 people. It was a great experience ⁴⁷⁶).

It is inconceivable that Conrad could have written in this vein, if he had been aware that one of the passages he had carefully selected for his reading was not wholly his own.

Victory and *The History of a Sin* have more in common than the mere dozen lines which have already been quoted.

Following Heyst's escape to the solitude of Samburan, the most important development in the action of *Victory* is the arrival on the scene of the mischievous trio: Jones, Ricardo and Pedro. Making due allowance for Schomberg's contribution, from this point onwards, they become almost the sole agents in the drama, pushing the passive and helpless Heyst steadily towards disaster.

Similarly, in *The History of a Sin*, Ewa's (the heroine of the novel) final degradation and ultimately her death is the result of her association with an analogous pair of sinister characters: Pochroń and Piąza-Spławski.

Pedro, Conrad's own contribution to the gang, shows obvious affinities with Caliban.

A third individual — a nondescript, hairy creature — had modestly made his way forward and had perched himself on the luggage. The lower part of his physiognomy was over-developed; his narrow and low forehead, unintelligently furrowed by horizontal wrinkles, surmounted wildly hirsute cheeks and a flat nose with wide, baboonlike nostrils. There was something equivocal in the appearance of his shaggy, hair-smothered humanity ⁴⁷⁷).

But the real pillars of the partnership, "plain Mr. Jones" and Martin Ricardo have many things in common with Zeromski's villains.

Pochroń — the "Ricardo" of Zeromski's novel — is a brutal, violent figure; impulsive, sensual and passionate, full of animal spirits and cat-like ferocity.

There was something tiger-like in this look and challenge. Ewa experienced a horrid sensation; it was as if that huge, broad hand, with its huge talons had seized her by the throat ⁴⁷⁸).

476) Conrad to Jessie Conrad, 11 May 1923, *Joseph Conrad's Letters to his Wife* (London, 1927), pp. 91-2.

477) *Victory*, p. 99.

478) Stefan Zeromski, *Dziela*, *The Novels*, VII, p. 148.

Conrad also often uses animal imagery in connection with Ricardo.

After a quick glance over his shoulder, which hunters of big game tell us no lion or tiger omits to give before charging home, Ricardo charged, head down, straight at the curtain ⁴⁷⁹).

Pochron meets Ewa early on in the story and immediately falls in love with her in his own savage way. After a long pursuit, he finally succeeds in hunting her down in a lonely hotel in Austria. There he ruthlessly rapes her and forces her to become his mistress. Pochron showers Ewa with gifts and money, whilst she, in return, acts as a decoy in his criminal escapades. This is the sort of partnership that Ricardo was hoping to set up with Lena.

" You are still thinking about the chance of that swag. You'll make a good partner, that you will! And, I say, what a decoy you will make! Jee-miny! " ⁴⁸⁰)

Pochron and Ewa go about as husband and wife. Similarly, Ricardo tells Lena:

" Listen. When we are going about the world together, you shall always call me husband. Do you hear? " ⁴⁸¹)

The arguments that Ricardo uses to win Lena adumbrate Pochron's conversations with Ewa. What is more, there are faint verbal echoes. Pochron tells Ewa:

" Now, I have the habit of speaking my mind, which is often the case with us gentlemen. Such people as we don't need a child. I live for myself and you live for yourself. Let the child be nursed by a dunce who sits on the soil, who's got a workshop, a hoof in his paw, a bed, a quilt. I was made for walking. And so were you. We are both rovers ".

" Don't you start making decisions about me ".

" No? Well I think you couldn't sit still in one place. Tell me, could you sit still? Isn't it better to make love to every handsome, strong, healthy boy that catches your eye, to visit places, to revel, to gamble, to wander about, to enjoy life, to have fairhaired, sun-burnt men chasing you — than to stay with one, of whom you will get tired in a couple of years, and he of you, to put up with his moods, his boredom, his illnesses?... " ⁴⁸²)

479) *Victory*, pp. 288-9.

480) *Ibid.*, p. 398.

481) *Ibid.*, p. 400.

482) *Stefan Zeromski, Dzieła, The Novels, VIII, p. 93.*

Ricardo, speaking to Lena, says:

"For you! For you I will throw away money, lives — all the lives but mine! What you want is a man, a master that will let you put the heel of your shoe on his neck; not that skulker, who will get tired of you in a year — and you of him. And then what? You are not the one to sit still; neither am I. I live for myself, and you shall live for yourself, too — not for a Swedish baron. They make a convenience of people like you and me. A gentleman is better than an employer, but an equal partnership against all the 'yporcrits is the thing for you and me. We'll go on wandering the world over, you and I, both free and both true. You are no cage bird. We'll rove together, for we are of them that have no homes. We are born rovers!"⁴⁸³)

Plaza-Spławski plays a smaller part in *The History of a Sin* than Jones does in *Victory*, but again the two characters resemble one another in many respects. Both hate and despise women. In each case there is a strong hint that they have homosexual tendencies. Pochroń tells Ewa:

"That Plaza has an aversion for women, you're quite safe with him. I know only too well his asiatic habits. He's partial to sour apples..."⁴⁸⁴)

Like Jones, Plaza-Spławski is the more important member of the partnership. He excels Pochroń in intelligence, will-power and self-control. He is superior to him in social status, being generally known as the Count. He does all the planning and takes all the decisions. He is cool, ruthless, calculating, cynical. In his pursuit of evil there is something distinctly inhuman, almost satanic⁴⁸⁵). Pochroń takes Plaza's superiority for granted and respects him accordingly. Like Jones and Ricardo, Pochroń and Plaza-Spławski have worked together many years, conducting their criminal activities on a large scale, both in Europe and in other parts of the world. In each case the appearance of a woman on the scene leads to disaster.

Lena and Ewa are very different types of women, and it would be absurd to try to draw any close parallel between them. Nevertheless, there exist certain superficial similarities which suggest that Conrad's conception of Lena may have been slightly influenced by his reading of *The History of a Sin*. The most obvious of these, and the one which concerns the action of the two novels as a whole, is the fact that both the heroines elope with the man they love and then, in somewhat similar circumstances, sacrifice their lives with the intention of saving this man. Similarly, both Ewa and Lena are assaulted, with varying success, by a criminal enamoured of them, and are forced to submit to him. Lena's

483) *Victory*, p. 397.

484) Stefan Żeromski, *Dzieła*, The Novels, VIII, p. 113.

Cf. *Victory*, p. 160, where Ricardo tells Schomberg: "He [Jones] funks women. In that Mexican pueblo where we lay grounded on our beefbones, so to speak, I used to go to dances of an evening. The girls there would ask me if the English *caballero* in the *posada* was a monk in disguise, or if he had taken a vow to *sanctissima madre* not to speak to a woman, or whether — You can imagine what fairly free-spoken girls will ask when they come to the point of not caring what they say; and it used to vex me. Yes, the governor funks facing women." See also *ibid.*, p. 102, 114, 116, 127 and 151.

485) See Stefan Żeromski, *Dzieła*, The Novels, VIII, p. 120 and 232. Cf. *Victory*, p. 148, 317 and 329.

submission is of course an act; but neither is Ewa completely sincere when she yields to Pochroń. On more than one occasion, she thinks of murdering him with his own Corsican dagger.

More interesting, however, is a certain trait of Lena's character which Conrad gradually develops in the course of *Victory*; namely, her guilt complex. At first it expresses itself in an uneasiness at having forced herself upon Heyst. She knows that she has encroached upon his solitude and destroyed his peace of mind. She feels unwanted. She fears that she is not good enough for him and that he can never really love her. On her own part, she wants to prove to Heyst how deeply she loves him.

She felt in her innermost depths an irresistible desire to give herself up to him more completely, by some act of absolute sacrifice ⁴⁸⁶).

The arrival of the sinister trio further intensifies these feelings. To her horror she learns that the direct cause of their coming was the scandalous gossip of the frustrated and embittered Schomberg. In other words, she is primarily responsible for the danger which now threatens Heyst. In addition to all this, she begins to feel moral scruples. She tells Heyst about them on the evening of the storm, as they are returning from the woods.

At the very edge of the forest she stopped, concealed by a tree. He joined her cautiously.

"What is it? What do you see, Lena?" he whispered.

She said that it was only a thought that had come into her head. She hesitated for a moment, giving him over her shoulder a shining gleam of her grey eyes. She wanted to know whether this trouble, this danger, this evil, whatever it was, finding them out in their retreat, was not a sort of punishment.

"Punishment?" repeated Heyst. He could not understand what she meant. When she explained, he was still more surprised. "A sort of retribution from an angry Heaven?" he said in wonder. "On us? What on earth for?"

He saw her pale face darken in the dusk. She had blushed. Her whispering flowed very fast. It was the way they lived together — that wasn't right, was it? It was a guilty life. For she had not been forced into it, driven, scared into it. No, no — she had come to him of her own free will, with her whole soul yearning unlawfully. ...

"Are you conscious of sin?" Heyst asked her gravely. She made no answer. "For I am not", he added; "before Heaven, I am not!"

"You! You are different. Woman is the tempter. You took me up from pity. I threw myself at you" ⁴⁸⁷).

Lena's final sacrifice is both an assertion of her love and an act of expiation.

Ewa too is harassed by guilt feelings ⁴⁸⁸). But she has good reasons for this. Her dissolute life plunges her deeper and deeper into vice and crime. Several times she tries to mend her ways and expiate her sins.

⁴⁸⁶) *Victory*, p. 201.

⁴⁸⁷) *Victory*, pp. 353-4.

⁴⁸⁸) See e.g. Stefan Zeromski, *Dziela*, The Novels, VII, pp. 274-5.

After her first elopement, she returns home and helps her family financially by working as a cashier in a café. Later, during her travels across Europe, she meets an old sick poet and spends several months nursing him day and night. When, towards the end of the novel, she enters an institution for reformed prostitutes, she devotes herself completely to others, and is more of an officer than an inmate. Each time, however, she slips back into the old rut; and real expiation does not come until she has sacrificed her life for the man she loves.

It is in this feeling of guilt and the desire for an absolute sacrifice that the parallel between Conrad's Lena and Zeromski's Ewa is strongest.

There is yet another character in *The History of a Sin*, whom Conrad may have had at the back of his mind whilst he was writing *Victory*. One of the lodgers, living in the same house as Ewa's family, is a man called Adolf Horst. In addition to the slight similarity in the sound of the name, he resembles Axel Heyst in a superficial way. He is of about the same age. He has a similar physical appearance: like Heyst he is broad, bald and wears a moustache. Moreover, he is also an amateur philosopher. On his door there is a card saying: "Adolf Horst — Philosopher — 'Do not ring at all'"⁴⁸⁹ (as opposed to the two, three rings indicated on the other doors). He spends most of his time lecturing in a local café to a group of followers. His outlook on life is sceptical and even cynical, but he has a generous nature, and several times offers to help Ewa. At one point she even thinks of marrying him. It is worth mentioning, however, that this parallel might be dismissed as being of little account were it not for the other evidence which we have already discussed.

"Because of the Dollars", which according to Baines was a by-product of *Victory*⁴⁹⁰, also shows certain similarities to *The History of a Sin*.

In the last chapter of Zeromski's novel, Pochroń and his gang set out to rob the offices of a company, whose chief representative and part-owner is Ewa's first lover, Łukasz Niepołomski. They use Ewa as a decoy. However, when Niepołomski opens the door, she warns him and thus gives him time to fetch a gun and to call the police. In the ensuing gun-fight Niepołomski shoots Pochroń in the right hand; but the bandit, using his left, wounds Ewa mortally.

In "Because of the Dollars" a group of rogues try to rob a kindly ship's captain, named Davidson, of his cargo of dollars. Their plot is foiled by a woman called Laughing Anne.

The general outline of Anne's history is not dissimilar to that of Ewa.

"A fellow I just remember, whom they called Pearler Harry, brought her out first into these parts — from Australia, I believe. He brought her out and then dropped her, and she remained knocking about here and there, known to most of us by sight, at any rate"⁴⁹¹.

But, just like Ewa, she remained faithful to his memory all her life. "Harry was the only man she had loved"⁴⁹², says Hollis, the narrator of the story.

489) Stefan Zeromski, *Dziela*, The Novels, VII, p. 10.

490) See Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

491) *Within the Tides*, pp. 178-8.

492) *Ibid.*, p. 184.

Anne, who knows Davidson from the "old days", warns him of the plot; and so, when the rogues attack him he is ready for them. In the chaos that follows, the ringleader, a villainous Frenchman without hands, having realized who has betrayed them, batters Anne to death. He is then shot dead by Davidson⁴⁹³).

The echoes of *The History of a Sin in Victory* and "Because of the Dollars" show that the influence of Polish literature on Conrad was not limited to his boyhood reading, but included contemporary works as well. Moreover, it is yet another piece of evidence, contradicting the once widely held notion that Conrad's fiction is based, almost entirely, upon real people and incidents drawn from real life. For instance, in her little book on Conrad, M.C. Bradbrook writes:

All Conrad's work is based on his personal reminiscences ("More on contacts, and very slight contacts at that, than on actual experience" — Author's Note to *Within the Tides*, p. vii). Of perhaps no other author could it be said that every book he wrote is founded upon real people and incidents of real life...⁴⁹⁴)

This is precisely what Conrad wanted his readers to believe. In order to suggest an intimate connection between his fiction and real life, Conrad often mentioned in his prefaces the original events and people behind his books. Indeed, in one of the prefaces, he maintained that he was incapable of inventing a story: "As for the story itself [Conrad is referring to 'An Outpost of Progress'] it is true enough in its essentials. The sustained invention of a really telling lie demands a talent I do not possess"⁴⁹⁵).

In the "Author's Note" to *Victory*, Conrad describes, at greater length than usual, the originals of all the main characters. He says that he met Mr. Jones

...in a little hotel in the Island of St. Thomas in the West Indies (in the year '75) where we found him one hot afternoon extended on three chairs, all alone in the loud buzzing of flies to which his immobility and his cadaverous aspect gave a most gruesome significance. Our invasion must have displeased him because he got off the chairs brusquely and walked out, leaving with me an indelibly weird impression of his thin shanks. One of the men with me said that the fellow was the most desperate gambler he had ever come across⁴⁹⁶);

while "the physical Ricardo" was a fellow passenger of Conrad's "on board an extremely small and extremely dirty little schooner, during a four days' passage between two places in the Gulf of Mexico whose names don't matter"⁴⁹⁷). Nevertheless, it seems likely that Jones and Ricardo owe more to Żeromski's villains than to the two characters, mentioned by Conrad in his preface.

The similarities between *Victory* and *The History of a Sin* are perhaps of little importance in themselves, but they are an interesting indication of the extent to which Conrad could be influenced by a work of fiction.

493) In 1920 Conrad made a two-act play out of the story which he called *Laughing Anne*.

494) M. C. Bradbrook, *Joseph Conrad - Józef Teodor Konrad Nałęcz Korzeniowski; Poland's English Genius* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 14.

495) *Tales of Unrest*, p. vii.

496) *Victory*, p. xii.

497) *Ibid.*, p. xii.

Chapter VIII

"AMY FOSTER"

Most critics agree that "Amy Foster" is, among other things, a long metaphor for Conrad's own predicament as a foreigner in a strange country. But it has not been hitherto noticed that in order to express this personal theme Conrad used a type of "emigrant story" which was in vogue in Poland in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Poles had been migrating to the New World throughout the century. At first the development was viewed in Poland in a cold, detached manner. It was merely an interesting phenomenon. The numbers of the emigrants were relatively small and they consisted mostly of hardy, enterprising men who left the country in the spirit of pioneers and adventure-seekers⁴⁹⁸).

Then, in the late 1860s a radical change took place. Social and economic factors caused the steady flow of emigrants to increase rapidly till it reached its height in what was known as the "Brazilian fever".

The emigrant of the 1880s and the 1890s was a very different type of person to the sturdy adventurer of the mid-nineteenth century. He was usually an impoverished peasant who was seeking better living conditions abroad. The vigorous propaganda campaign of various travel agencies — many of them highly dishonest — swelled the emigrant tide to enormous proportions.

Soon the matter came to be regarded as a serious social problem. There was a genuine fear of depopulation and of the damaging effect it would have on the country as a whole. The capitalist classes harboured the more selfish fear of being deprived of potential labour. On top of all this came the dreadful stories of the fate of the emigrants. The Polish press came alive to the problem, and a powerful anti-emigration campaign was set in motion. Particularly eloquent on the subject was the progressive magazine *Prawda (Truth)*, published by a group of positivists in Warsaw. It was not long before the subject found its way into literature. Several well-known Polish writers — notably, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Adolf Dygasiński, Wacław Sieroszewski and Maria Konopnicka — wrote about the Polish emigrants⁴⁹⁹).

We shall confine ourselves to three works: Henryk Sienkiewicz's long short story *Za chlebem (After Bread)*, Maria Konopnicka's epic poem *Pan Balcer w Brazylii (Mr. Balcer in Brazil)* and Adolf Dygasiński's novel *Na*

498) The writings of the Polish traveller, Sygurd Wiśniowski (1841-1892), are a good example of this early emigrant spirit. They are optimistic, full of life, energy and enthusiasm. This is the kind of literature that Conrad might have read during his stay in Galicia. Wiśniowski's *Dziesięć lat w Australii (Ten Years in Australia)* was published in Lwów in 1873.

499) Other writers who were concerned with the emigration problem were: Z. Chełmicki, J. Siemiradzki, S. Nestorowicz, Z. Pietkiewicz, W. Nałkowski, S. Kłobukowski, etc.

złamanie karku (Head Over Heels). Not only are these important works in their own right, but they may have exerted some kind of direct influence on Conrad's "Amy Foster". All works were sufficiently well-known for Conrad to have heard about them during his visits to Poland in the early 1890s.

Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Za chlebem* was first published in instalments in the Warsaw periodical *Gazeta Polska (Polish Gazette)* in 1880. Prior to this Sienkiewicz had given a series of public readings of the story in Warsaw and Poznań. These were, on a whole, enthusiastically reviewed by the Polish press⁵⁰⁰.

Za chlebem tells the story of a Polish peasant, Wawrzon Toporek, and his eighteen-year-old daughter, Marysia, who, having been reduced to poverty by an unjust law-suit, are persuaded by a German agent and a Jewish innkeeper to emigrate to America. Sienkiewicz describes at length their hardships at sea, and then the disasters that befall them in the New World. Wawrzon Toporek finally dies of sickness during a flood, and Marysia, having been driven insane by sorrow and nostalgia, drowns herself on the New York waterfront. The story is full of sentimentality and pathos of the Dickensian type.

Maria Konopnicka spent over seventeen years writing *Pan Balcer w Brazylii*. She began the work in 1891 and finished it in 1909. But the part of the poem which is relevant to the present thesis — the first canto, entitled "Na morzu" ("At Sea") and fragments of the second canto entitled "W emigranckim domu" ("In the Emigrant Home")⁵⁰¹ — had appeared and was well-known in Poland several years before Conrad wrote "Amy Foster"⁵⁰².

Pan Balcer w Brazylii is the tragic story of a group of Polish peasants who, having been forced by economic conditions to leave the country, set out for Brazil. After a long and difficult sea journey, in the course of which many of them die, the emigrants reach the "Promised Land". There, only fresh hardships and disillusionment await them. The opening of the second canto, with its simile of the dying bee-hive, sets the tone of the rest of the poem which is, in effect, the account of their protracted agony. The poem ends with some forty of the original thousand emigrants preparing for the return journey to Poland. The remainder have either lost their lives in the process of colonization, or, having finally settled down, are rapidly ceasing to be Poles.

The poem is in the form of a *gawęda* or a yarn; the narrator is the blacksmith Balcer.

The theme of Adolf Dygasiński's novel *Na złamanie karku (Head Over Heels)* is very similar. Again it tells the story of a group of Polish peasants who leave their native village to seek better living conditions in Brazil. Unlike Konopnicka's epic poem and Sienkiewicz's story, the narrative is realistic and matter-of-fact. Dygasiński never tries to force the reader's

500) See Julian Krzyżanowski, *Henryk Sienkiewicz; kalendarz życia i twórczości* (Warsaw, 1956), p. 84.

501) Canto I appeared in the autumn of 1892. Fragments of Canto II appeared in 1894, and the rest of the canto in 1897. Most of the poem was published in the Warsaw monthly *Biblioteka Warszawska (The Warsaw Library)*, but parts of the second canto also appeared in the *St. Petersburg Kraj* and the *Warsaw Wędrowiec*. For an interesting discussion of the poem see Tadeusz Czapczyński, "*Pan Balcer w Brazylii*" jako poemat emigracyjny (Łódź, 1957).

502) Conrad wrote "Amy Foster" in 1901; see Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

feelings. *Na złamanie karku* first appeared in 1891 and, together with his *Listy z Brazylji (Letters from Brazil)*, published in the same year, was one of Konopnicka's main sources.

The story of Conrad's Yanko Goorall⁵⁰³ follows, more or less, the same pattern as the three narratives we have just summarized. He too is prompted by economic difficulties to leave the country. Like Sienkiewicz's Wawrzon, Yanko is approached one day by officials of a foreign agency (in *Za chlebem* the agents are Germans; in "Amy Foster" they are Austrians), who offer to arrange his passage abroad. In Dygasiński's novel, Maryna — one of the main characters — meets a mysterious man who gives her a German pamphlet, describing the "Brazilian Paradise". In both Sienkiewicz's and Conrad's stories the agents are working in close cooperation with the local Jews. Konopnicka's emigrants also express anti-German and anti-Semitic sentiments during their conversations on board the *Kreuz*.

Yanko's rail journey to Hamburg is similar to the one taken by Dygasiński's peasants to Bremerhaven. In each case there is a vivid description of a stay in a Berlin waiting-room. The emigrants embark in German ports and sail on German ships. They travel below decks in overcrowded, squalid berths which are described vividly in all the narratives. To add to their discomfort, the sea becomes rough and they suffer from seasickness. Then, in each story, we have a storm at sea. The emigrants in their plight turn to religion and seek consolation in prayer. All the writers stress the deeply religious nature of the Polish peasant. This is especially noticeable in Conrad who as a rule treats religious sentiments with more detachment.

Yanko's reactions to his new surroundings are similar to those of the emigrants in the Polish stories. He is struck with awe and amazement. Everything is strange and terrifying: the crowds of unknown people, the huge ship, the terrible sea. To convey Yanko's feelings, Conrad describes everything in a naive childlike way, as if he were looking through the eyes of a simple peasant.

"In the morning they were all led down to the stony shores of an extremely broad muddy river, flowing not between hills but between houses that seemed immense. There was a steam-machine that went on the water, and they all stood upon it packed tight, only now there were with them many women and children who made much noise.

.....

"They thought they were being taken to America straight away, but suddenly the steam-machine bumped against the side of a thing like a great house on the water. The walls were smooth and black, and there uprose, growing from the roof as it were, bare trees in the shape of crosses, extremely high. That's how it appeared to him then, for he had never seen a ship before. This was the ship that was going to swim all the way to America" ⁵⁰⁴.

⁵⁰³ In his book on Conrad, Adam Gillon writes about the hero of "Amy Foster": "Even his name is pathetic. Yanko is the Polish *Janku* - the vocative of *Janek* which is the diminutive of Jan (John). Why does Yanko give this form of his name to the strangers in England? Obviously because he is haunted by the memory of his native village where everybody called him in a familiar way. Perhaps he is thus trying to cling to his Polish identity. It is one of Yanko's several attempts to retain the ties with his homeland. And it is the only one which goes undetected and unsuspected." (*The Eternal Solitary*, p. 124.) This is an excellent example of the kind of trap that Conrad critic, with an imperfect

Similarly, in Dygasiński's novel Jagna wonders why so many people enter the ship and none come out. "I don't like it", she tells her husband ⁵⁰⁵). Sienkiewicz's Wawrzon Toporek is also most suspicious of the steamer,

...which day and night went on over the expanse of the sea, which shook, groaned, churned water, breathed like a dragon, and at night trailed after it in a fiery braid of sparks; it seemed to him to be some suspicious and uncanny force ⁵⁰⁶).

In Konopnicka's poem one of the peasants explains that,

"A ship, like a man, must have a name; and this one is called the 'Kreysts', or, as we would say, 'The Cross'. The Pope himself writes out such baptismal certificates in Rome" ⁵⁰⁷).

These lines may have suggested to Conrad the following passage in "Amy Foster":

"He did not know the name of his ship. Indeed, in the course of time we discovered he did not even know that ships had names — 'like Christian people'" ⁵⁰⁸).

Like Sienkiewicz's Wawrzon and Marysia who travel alone on a German ship, Yanko suffers above all from a deep sense of alienation. The people amongst whom he suddenly finds himself are not only different, but act in a positively hostile manner towards him. To make things worse, at first, he can neither understand nor get himself understood by them. In time he learns their language and enters their social structure, by finding himself a job and marrying a woman from amongst them; but, in spite of all, he remains an outsider. This sense of alienation and the feeling of loneliness which results from it, are further intensified by nostalgia for his native country.

In all the stories the emigrants keep on recalling Poland as some lost paradise. Such romantic idealized flashbacks are particularly plentiful in Konopnicka's poem and Sienkiewicz's story. In "Amy Foster" they serve the additional purpose of giving Yanko an extra dimension by showing us his roots.

Nostalgia, the sense of not belonging, and solitude are the forces which finally destroy most of the emigrants. The immediate cause of their deaths are various, but it is homesickness and "the supreme disaster of loneliness and despair" ⁵⁰⁹) that deprive them of the will to live. All the stories end tragically. Conrad's Yanko Goorali dies of heart failure; Sienkiewicz's Wawrzon dies of fever and Marysia commits suicide. Dygasiński's novel

knowledge of Polish, occasionally fall into. *Janko* (transliterated by Conrad as "Yanko") is not the vocative of *Janek*, but a dialect form of the name (cf. *Janko muzykant* - the title of one of the most popular of Sienkiewicz's short stories.) Moreover, although it is true that *Janko* is a familiar variant of the name *Jan*, it is probably the only form of the name that a Polish Highlander would use. Goorali (i.e. *Góral*) is the Polish for a Highlander.

504) "Amy Foster," *Typhoon and Other Stories*, pp. 115-6.

505) Adolf Dygasiński, *Na złamanie karku* (Warsaw, 1893), p. 103.

506) Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Dziela*, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski (Warsaw, 1948), II, p. 116.

507) Maria Konopnicka, *Poezje*, edited by Jan Czubek (Warsaw, 1925), X, p. 16.

508) *Typhoon and Other Stories*, p. 113.

509) "Amy Foster," *Ibid.*, p. 142.

and Konopnicka's poem end with the preparations of a few of the original emigrants for the return journey to Poland. In the meantime the rest have either died, or been destroyed morally. Only those who have enough strength and courage to return to the land of their origin are saved.

The moral of the stories is plain. The Polish peasant cannot live away from his native soil. If his roots are cut, he will either perish or be corrupted by the alien element which surrounds him. Yet he is forced to emigrate because he cannot find a means of livelihood at home. This preoccupation with the problems of the Polish peasant class which we find, in one form or another, in all three of the Polish works, may have influenced in some measure the English setting of "Amy Foster":

With the sun hanging low on its western limit, the expanse of the grass-lands framed in the counter-scarps of the rising ground took on a gorgeous and sombre aspect. A sense of penetrating sadness, like that inspired by a grave strain of music, disengaged itself from the silence of the fields. The men we met walked past, slow, unsmiling, with downcast eyes, as if the melancholy of an over-burdened earth had weighted their feet, bowed their shoulders, borne down their glances.

"Yes", said the doctor to my remark, "one would think the earth is under a curse, since of all her children these that cling to her the closest are uncouth in body and as leaden of gait as if their very hearts were loaded with chains" ⁵¹⁰.

This passage and indeed much of "Amy Foster" is very reminiscent of the spirit of Polish positivism, with its deep sympathy and concern for the less fortunate members of society.

In one respect, however, the story is connected with the contemporary Young Poland movement.

Both the positivist and the Young Poland writers showed an interest in the Polish peasant, but their attitudes differed considerably. The positivist writers saw in the peasant, first and foremost, the victim of an unjust social order. Their main aim was to move the public conscience to improve the social status and the economic conditions of the peasant. In their writings they portrayed the peasant in general terms, simply as a member of an underprivileged class.

The peasants of Dygasiński's novel and Sienkiewicz's novelette are just Polish peasants. The writers do not give them any specific regional characteristics. In fact, in one version of Sienkiewicz's *Za chlebem*, Wawrzon and Marysia come from the neighbourhood of Warsaw, and in another from the Poznań area. There are no significant differences between the two texts ⁵¹¹. In the first canto of *Pan Balcer w Brazylii* Konopnicka lists the various regional groups that are represented amongst the two thousand emigrants; but the ethnic differences are never really developed. The class common denominator is the all important factor. In the first place, Konopnicka's heroes are presented as individual human types; in the second, we are constantly being reminded of their class; hardly ever do we think of them as Masovians, Kurpians or Cracovians.

The Young Poland writers, on the other hand, saw in the peasant a

510) *Typhoon and Other Stories*, pp. 110-111.

511) For a discussion of the textual variants of *Za chlebem* see Jarosław Maciejewski, "Wielkopolskie" *opowiadania Henryka Sienkiewicza* (Poznań, 1957), p. 63 ff.

rich source of fresh and unadulterated energy, capable of instilling new life and inertia into Polish society, and especially the stagnant bourgeoisie. They were interested in the peasant for his own sake. They wrote about "peasant culture". They sought artistic inspiration in popular lore and tradition. Unlike the positivists, they paid a great deal of attention to regional differences.

Two regional groups were particularly favoured: the Cracovians and the Highlanders (*Górale*). Just as the romantic poets were fascinated by the Ukraine and Lithuania, so the neo-romantic Young Poland writers turned for inspiration to the colourful folk-lore of the Cracow region and the Polish mountains ⁵¹²).

The *Góral* has appeared in Polish literature, on and off, since the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794 Wojciech Bogusławski ⁵¹³), the creator of the modern Polish theatre and the first translator and producer of Shakespeare in Poland, wrote a musical comedy entitled *Cud czyli krakowiaczy i górale* (*The Miracle or Cracovians and Highlanders*), in which, as it were in anticipation of the Young Poland movement, he contrasted the folk traditions of the Cracovians and the Highlanders.

In 1832 Seweryn Goszczyński, one of the poets of the so-called Ukrainian school, made a tour of the Tatras ⁵¹⁴), and published in 1853 his *Dziennik podróży* (*Travel Diary*), in which he described the Tatra landscape and the lore and customs of the Highlanders. Goszczyński also produced a number of original works inspired by his association with the Tatra mountains, notably, the prose poem, *Król zamczyska* (*King of the Castle*), and the fragment of an unfinished poem *Sobótka*.

In 1840 the novelist and dramatic writer, Józef Korzeniowski, wrote a tragedy entitled *Karpaccy górale* (*The Carpathian Highlanders*) which tells the story of a Highlander who is forced by society to become an outlaw. Another writer of the same period, who wrote about the Tatra country and its inhabitants, was Apollo Korzeniowski's friend, the poet Wincenty Pol. The Tatras appear both in Pol's poems (for instance, *Pieśń o ziemi naszej* [*The Song of Our Land*] and *Obrazy z życia i podróży* [*Sketches from Life and Travel*]) and in his prose (*Rzut oka na północne stoki Karpat* [*A Glance at the Northern Slopes of the Carpathians*]).

Just before the emergence of the Young Poland movement, Adam Asnyk ⁵¹⁵), the only outstanding poet — apart from Maria Konopnicka — of the post-1863 years, wrote a cycle of poems about the Tatra mountains, called *W Tatrach* (*In the Tatras*).

These, however, were all isolated examples. With the Young Poland movement, there came a real outburst of Tatra literature. The "Tatra Legend", as it came to be called, gave the Young Poland writers an ideal opportunity of reconciling their taste for the exotic with their intrinsic patriotism; for the Tatras, with their impressive scenery and colourful inhabitants, are not only exotic, but also form an essential part of the Polish landscape.

Among the Young Poland writers who wrote about the Tatra moun-

⁵¹²) In a similar way the English romantic poets turned for inspiration to the Lake district.

⁵¹³) Wojciech Bogusławski (1757-1829), actor, dramatist and translator.

⁵¹⁴) The Tatras (Polish: *Tatry*) is the name usually reserved for the highest group of the central Carpathians.

⁵¹⁵) Adam Asnyk (1838-1897).

tains were: Kazimierz Tetmajer, Władysław Orkan⁵¹⁶), Stanisław Witkiewicz⁵¹⁷), Franciszek Nowicki⁵¹⁸), Tadeusz Miciński⁵¹⁹) and Jan Kasprowicz.

In this way there appeared in Polish literature and oral tradition a stereotype portrait of the *Góral*.

Conrad's Yanko Goorall has most of the attributes of this literary stereotype. He dresses like a *Góral*:

"...his hat cocked on the left ear; his habit on warm evenings, of wearing his coat over one shoulder, like a hussar's dolman..."⁵²⁰)

He sings the weird *Góral* songs:

"Many times have I heard his high-pitched voice from behind the ridge of some sloping sheep-walk, a voice light and soaring like a lark's, but with a melancholy human note, over our fields that hear only the song of birds"⁵²¹).

He dances the *Zbójnicki* in the village inn:

"On another occasion he tried to show them how to dance. The dust rose in clouds from the sanded floor; he leaped straight up amongst the deal tables, struck his heels together; squatted on one heel in front of old Preble, shooting out the other leg, uttered wild and exulting cries, jumped up to whirl on one foot, snapping his fingers above his head..."⁵²²)

Although some details of Conrad's portrait of the *Góral* were probably the result of personal observation (Conrad had stayed twice in the Polish mountains), the general outline no doubt owes a great deal to the literary stereotype. Moreover, one is tempted to see more than a mere coincidence in the fact that at the same time that the so-called "Tatromania" was raging in Poland, Conrad also wrote a story about a typical Polish *Góral*!⁵²³)

It is not argued that in "Amy Foster" Conrad consciously borrowed from specific Polish works, but that he followed in the story certain popular fashions of contemporary Polish literature, notably, the preoccupation with the peasant emigrants and the so-called "Tatra Legend", though the possibility of direct influence of some of the works we have discussed is not altogether ruled out.

516) Władysław Orkan pseud. [i.e. Franciszek Smreczyński] (1876-1930), poet and novelist.

517) Stanisław Witkiewicz (1851-1915), painter, critic and short story writer.

518) Franciszek Nowicki (1865-1935), poet and short story writer.

519) Tadeusz Miciński (1873-1919), poet and novelist.

520) "Amy Foster," *Typhoon and Other Stories*, p. 132.

521) *Ibid.*, p. 132.

522) *Ibid.*, pp. 132-3. The *Zbójnicki* (lit. Bandit Dance) is the most popular of the *Góral* dances. It is danced only by men and requires great physical agility.

Conrad's portrait of the *Góral* is so realistic that there was a dispute in Poland in 1934 about the exact region from which Yanko Goorall came. See Waclaw Borowy, "Czy Conrad przedstawił polskiego górala?" ("Did Conrad Present a Polish Highlander?"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 566 (1934); Ludwik Krzyżanowski, "Tatrzański góral i artystyczna telewizja Conrada" ("The Tatra Highlander and Conrad's Artistic Far-sight [lit. Television!]", *Wiadomości Literackie*, 570 (1934); Witold Turno [i.e. Wit Tamawski], "Conrad a Janko Góral" ("Conrad and Yanko Goorall"), *Wiadomości Literackie*, 574 (1934).

523) It is interesting to note that Michał Bałucki, who like Conrad attended St. Anne's *gymnasium*, wrote a poem about a Highlander who is forced to leave the mountains to earn his living. The poem, entitled *Dla chleba* (*For the Sake of Bread*) was later set to music and has become one of the most popular of Polish songs. As a song, it is known by its first line: "Góralu! czy ci nie żal..." ("Highlander! are you not sorry...").

Chapter IX

" PRINCE ROMAN "

During his whole career Conrad wrote only one specifically Polish story. But he poured into it the entire charge of his constantly repressed patriotic feelings. "Prince Roman" is so intensely Polish in spirit and character that it is difficult to believe that in fact it belongs to English literature.

"Prince Roman" is a tribute to a Polish patriot who, on account of his extraordinary devotion to the national cause and the sufferings which he underwent because of it, became a legend in his own lifetime. It is a typical "life" (*żywot*) of a national hero; in fact, a kind of lay hagiography. Polish popular literature since the partitions abounds in such "lives". They could almost be regarded as a separate literary *genre*, akin to the mediaeval *gests* and the legends of good women, and the lives of the saints⁵²⁴).

Many of these "patriotic lives" deal with men who, like Prince Roman, took part in the 1831 rising. The year 1831 is fraught with meaning for Poles. It has become the symbol and apotheosis of Polish patriotism and the tragic struggle for national independence. Conrad himself comments upon it at the beginning of "Prince Roman":

"Events which happened seventy years ago are perhaps rather too far off to be dragged aptly into a mere conversation. Of course the year 1831 is for us an historical date, one of these fatal years when in the presence of the world's passive indignation and eloquent sympathies we had once more to murmur '*Vae Victis*'⁵²⁵) and count the cost in sorrow. Not that we were ever very good at calculating, either, in prosperity or in adversity. That's a lesson we could never learn, to the great exasperation of our enemies who bestowed upon us the epithet of incorrigible..."⁵²⁶)

524) Examples of this kind of writing are plentiful. For instance, there appeared in Paris in 1859 a collection of such "patriotic lives," written by various hands, under the general title of *Usque ad finem* - a familiar motto to Conrad students. *Usque ad finem* contains the lives of Szymon Konarski, Maurycy Gosławski, Artur Zawisza, Michał Wołłowicz, Antoni Ostrowski, Tadeusz Kościuszko and Klaudyna Potocka. A recent example is a similar anthology, entitled *Niezlomni* (*The Unvanquished Ones*), published in London in 1946. Apollo Korzeniowski himself wrote a life of a hero of 1831 (*Żywot generała Kotyjski* [*The Life of General Kotyjsko*]). Major General Denis Benedykt Kotyjsko (1749-1834) was the commander of the Polish forces in Podolia and the Ukraine during the rising.

525) This latin tag constantly cropped up in connection with the Polish uprisings. So much so, that Eliza Orzeszkowa used a deliberate inversion of it, "*Gloria Victis*," for the title of her famous short story about the 1863 rising.

526) "Prince Roman," *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 28.

Just as recent Polish literature has been obsessed by the Warsaw rising and the German occupation of Poland, so the nineteenth century writers kept on returning to the events of 1831 and 1863⁵²⁷).

In *A Personal Record*, the only other work where he wrote about "things Polish" directly, Conrad touched upon both these years.

The material that went into the making of "Prince Roman" is varied in nature and origin. Conrad's childhood memories provided the frame for the story. Most of the details of Prince Roman's life were obtained, almost certainly, from Tadeusz Bobrowski who, according to Spasowicz, the editor of his memoirs, was a great "spinner of yarns"⁵²⁸). *The Bobrowski Memoirs* themselves, which Conrad had received some years before he wrote the story, helped him to refresh his memory. More than that, it appears that Conrad took over certain passages from the memoirs and inserted them almost bodily into his own text. Conrad describes the trial of Prince Roman in his story as follows:

"What happened at this preliminary examination is only known from the presiding officer. Pursuing the only possible course in that glaringly bad case he tried from the first to bring to the Prince's mind the line of defence he wished him to take. He absolutely framed his questions so as to put the right answers in the culprit's mouth, going so far as to suggest the very words: how, distracted by excessive grief after his young wife's death, rendered irresponsible for his conduct by his despair, in a moment of blind recklessness, without realizing the highly reprehensible nature of the act, nor yet its danger and its dishonour, he went off to join the nearest rebels on a sudden impulse. And that now, penitently...

"But Prince Roman was silent. The military judges looked at him hopefully. In silence he reached for a pen and wrote on a sheet of paper he found under his hand: 'I joined the national rising from conviction'.

"He pushed the paper across the table. The president took it up, showed it in turn to his two colleagues sitting to the right and left, then looking fixedly at Prince Roman let it fall from his hand. And the silence remained unbroken till he spoke to the gendarmes ordering them to remove the prisoner.

"Such was the written testimony of Prince Roman in the supreme moment of his life. I have heard that the Princes of the S— family, in all its branches, adopted the last two words: 'From conviction' for the device under the armorial bearings of their house. I don't know whether the report is true. My uncle could not tell me. He remarked only, that naturally, it was not to be seen on Prince Roman's own seal.

"He was condemned for life to Siberian mines. Emperor Nicholas, who always took personal cognizance of all sentences on Polish nobility, wrote with his own hand in the margin: 'The authorities are severely warned to take care that this convict walks in chains like any other criminal every step of the way'⁵²⁹).

527) The events of 1830-1 inspired among others the following: Garczyński's *Sonety wojenne* (*The War Sonnets*), Mickiewicz's poem *Reduta Ordona* (*Ordon's Redoubt*), Pol's poetic cycle *Pieśni Janusza* (*The Songs of Janusz*), Wyspiański's dramas *Noc listopadowa* (*November Night*) and *Warszawianka*, Jeź's novel *Drugie Boże przykazanie* (*The Second Commandment*), etc.

528) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

529) "Prince Roman," *Tales of Hearsay*, pp. 52-3.

In the second volume of *The Bobrowski Memoirs*, in a footnote, we read:

[Maria, Roman's wife,] died in 1831, just before the rising. Prince Roman, who was serving at the time in the Russian Guards, happened to be staying with his parents in Volhynia; he joined the rising and then in due course was taken prisoner. When the examining officer, won over by Roman's parents, suggested in his questions how he should explain himself: that depressed by his wife's death, without realizing the consequences of his action, he joined the rising, Prince Roman replied in writing: "I joined the rising from conviction". Some people maintain that the last words of that reply have been adopted by the Princes Sanguszko as their device, but I never noticed them on Prince Roman's own seals⁵³⁰).

Elsewhere Bobrowski wrote:

Perhaps the great landlords [nobles] had it relatively worst, since first their property invited confiscation, and secondly their names and persons were known to the Emperor Nicholas who had a good memory and who personally confirmed the sentences against the nobility. And thus, after the confirmation of Prince Roman's sentence of banishment to Siberia, he remembered that the Prince's parents might plead with the authorities to get their son imprisoned instead — he, therefore, despatched a special courier with his own hand-written order not to show him the least leniency — and the Prince walked over a year to his destination chained to a rod with criminals⁵³¹).

Similarly, the way in which the old Prince, after he had gone deaf, communicated with other people by means of pencil and paper; as well as the anecdote — at the end of Conrad's story — with the words: "I ask you because, you see, my daughter and my son-in-law don't believe me to be a good judge of men"⁵³²), are direct borrowings from *The Bobrowski Memoirs*.

It is also possible, though not very likely, that Conrad consulted other Polish sources relating to Prince Roman Sanguszko, to reconstruct the patriot's life. The material happens to be fairly copious, but it is difficult to see how Conrad could have gained access to it. Moreover, Conrad's account of the Prince's life is often at variance with historical facts, as has been demonstrated by Ludwik Krzyżanowski in an article entitled "Joseph Conrad's 'Prince Roman': Fact and Fiction"⁵³³).

We also find in Conrad's "Prince Roman" echoes of Polish literature proper. Thus the inn which appears in the story is reminiscent of the

530) Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 372 n.

531) *Ibid.*, I, p. 30.

532) *Ibid.*, II, p. 367 n.

533) In *Joseph Conrad: Centennial Essays*, edited by Ludwik Krzyżanowski (New York, 1960), p. 27 ff.

old tavern in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. Mickiewicz ends his long and vivid description of the tavern by comparing it to an old Jew:

In a word, from a distance the tottering, crooked tavern was like a Jew, when he nods his head in prayer; the roof is his cap, the disordered thatch his beard, the smoky, dirty walls his black frock, and in front the carving just like the *cyces* ⁵³⁴) on his brow ⁵³⁵).

In "Prince Roman" Conrad personifies the inn, in a similar grotesque way:

The roadside inn with its stable, byre, and barn under one enormous thatched roof resembled a deformed, hunch-backed, rugged giant, sprawling amongst the small huts of the peasants ⁵³⁶).

The innkeepers in both the narratives are Jews and bear the same name. Conrad's "Yankel" is a phonetic transcription of the Polish *Jankiel*. Moreover, they resemble one another in their external appearance. Mickiewicz writes:

In the centre of the room stood the host, Jankiel, in a long gown that reached to the floor, and was fastened with silver clasps; one hand he had tucked into his black silk girdle, with the other he stroked in dignified fashion his grey beard ⁵³⁷);

and in Conrad we read:

The innkeeper, a portly, dignified Jew, clad in a black satin coat reaching down to his heels and girt with a red sash, stood at the door stroking his long silvery beard ⁵³⁸).

Both the Yankels are ardent Polish patriots. In *Pan Tadeusz*, where Jankiel is an important secondary character, this is stressed several times:

Though a Jew, he had a fairly good Polish pronunciation, and was particularly fond of the national songs, of which he had brought back a multitude from each trip over the Niemen, *kolomyjkas* from Halicz and *mazurkas* from Warsaw. ...He had also the reputation of being a patriotic Pole ⁵³⁹).

534) Mickiewicz was thinking of the little boxes, containing fragments of the Scriptures, which Jews hang on their foreheads when they pray. (The correct name is "tefillin.")

535) Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz; or The Last Foray in Lithuania*, translated from the Polish by George Rapall Noyes, 2nd edition (London, 1930), p. 95.

536) *Tales of Hearsay*, pp. 38-39.

537) *Pan Tadeusz*, trans. Noyes, p. 96.

538) *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 39.

539) *Pan Tadeusz*, trans. Noyes, p. 97. *Kolomyjkas* and *mazurkas* are popular dance airs; the former Ruthenian, the latter Polish.

In the last book of the poem Jankiel plays on the dulcimer before General Dąbrowski, the Commander of the Polish army. After the concert he addresses the General:

"General", said he, "long has our Lithuania awaited thee — long, even as we Jews have awaited the Messiah; of thee in olden times minstrels prophesied among the folk; thy coming was heralded by a marvel in the sky. Live and wage war, O thou our —"

As he spoke, he sobbed; the honest Jew loved his country like a Pole! ⁵⁴⁰)

Similarly, Conrad tells us that "the Jew Yankel, innkeeper and tenant of all the mills on the estate, was a Polish patriot" ⁵⁴¹).

Both the Jews take an active part in the national resistance movement. Jankiel is a secret courier for the advancing Napoleonic armies and a close associate of Father Robak in underground activity. His inn is the local headquarters and hidden arsenal for the coming uprising. Conrad's Yankel tells Prince Roman of the outbreak of the rising and helps him to join the insurgents.

Although Francis, the Master-of-the-Horse, has probably no specific prototype in Polish literature, he is none the less a typical figure. He has all the attributes of the conventional Polish *szlachcic* ⁵⁴²). In Conrad's own words:

"He was a typical old Pole of that class, with a great capacity for emotion, for blind enthusiasm; with martial instincts and simple beliefs..." ⁵⁴³)

He is an ardent patriot, a devout Catholic and a faithful retainer. When Prince Roman tells him of his intention to join the rising, Francis in deeply moved:

"But as soon as he found his voice he thanked God aloud for letting him live long enough to see the descendant of the illustrious family in its youngest generation give an example *coram Gentibus* of the love of his country and of valour in the field" ⁵⁴⁴).

Francis looks like a *szlachcic*, with "his thick, gray, pendent moustache", and has "the old-time habit of larding his speech with Latin words" ⁵⁴⁵).

The habit of inserting Latin words and phrases into Polish speech and writing has a long tradition behind it, going back to the renaissance. In literature it became known as the "macaronic" style. Examples of it are to be found everywhere: in the *Memoirs* of Jan Chryzostom Pasek ⁵⁴⁶) (17th century), in the works of Ignacy Krasicki ⁵⁴⁷) (18th century), as well

540) *Ibid.*, p. 326.

541) *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 39.

542) *Szlachcic*, a member of the *szlachta* (see note on p. 162).

543) *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 42.

544) *Ibid.*, p. 42.

545) *Ibid.*, p. 42.

546) Jan Chryzostom Pasek (c. 1630-1701), soldier of Hetman Stefan Czarniecki and author of the famous memoirs.

547) Ignacy Krasicki (1735-1801), bishop, poet, novelist and translator.

as in the historical novels of Rzewuski and Sienkiewicz (early and late 19th century), who use it for the sake of local colour.

More significant, perhaps, is the fact that Conrad uses in "Prince Roman" a traditional image to describe the column of Cossacks which the Prince sees during one of his lonely rides.

Polish romantic poets often wrote about war, and, as a result, there evolved a whole system of imagery which was used to depict military operations. For instance, the comparison of a column of soldiers to a dragon, monster or some other reptile seems to have been especially popular. In a poem entitled *Bitwa pod Grochowem* (*The Battle of Grochów*)⁵⁴⁸, Stefan Garczyński describes a column of advancing Russians as follows:

At their head, the commander is rushing about on horseback, the drum is beating — now the neck has thrust its way into the wood; behind it the [rest of the] dragon of soldiery slides its black coils; now from all sides they turn their bayonets at our men, like a jaw-full of teeth⁵⁴⁹.

We find the image also in the third canto of Słowacki's poem *Beniowski*:

Here, in a long, black, ant-like chain the Russian infantry is approaching the little town. There, the cavalry, writhing like a snake out of the ravine, gather, rattle, flow, bend when a bullet whistles above their ears — and straighten themselves up again when it has passed. There, a band of Cossacks like a clump of reeds — here, the gleams of swords — there, of bayonets⁵⁵⁰.

and again in canto five:

And thus like a huge current of sheat-fish⁵⁵¹ or salmon the soldiery made their way through the grass. And thus they writhed like a huge iron serpent which now raises its tail and now its head⁵⁵².

Similarly, Conrad writes in "Prince Roman":

"There were slender gleams of steel here and there in that cloud, and it contained moving forms which revealed themselves at last as a long line of peasant carts full of soldiers, moving slowly in double file under the escort of mounted Cossacks.

"It was like an immense reptile creeping over the fields; its head dipped out of sight in a slight hollow and its tail went on writhing and growing shorter as though the monster were eating its way slowly into the very heart of the land"⁵⁵³.

548) Grochów is a suburb of Warsaw, where on 25 February 1831 Polish insurgent forces under General Chłopicki fought an inconclusive battle against the Russians.

549) *Poezye Stefana Garczyńskiego* (Paris, 1833), II, p. 75.

550) Juliusz Słowacki, *Dzieła*, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski (Wrocław, 1949), III, p. 152.

551) Sheat-fish or sheath-fish, a large freshwater fish (*silurus glanis*) common in the Danube and other rivers of Eastern Europe.

552) Juliusz Słowacki, *Dzieła*, III, p. 200.

553) *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 38.

In form "Prince Roman" is a typical Polish *gawęda* or yarn, i.e. a loose, informal narrative, told by a speaker in the manner of someone reminiscing. As has already been remarked, this form of narration was very popular in nineteenth century Polish literature.

It has also been pointed out that "Prince Roman" contains a key motif of Polish romantic literature: the transformation of a man, concerned only with his own private happiness, into a dedicated patriot. The sight of the Cossack column, eating its way into the very heart of his land, shakes Roman out of the depths of indifference into which he had fallen after his young wife's death:

"He remembered that the day before he had seen a reptile-like convoy of soldiery, bristling with bayonets, crawling over the face of that land which was his. The woman he loved had been his, too. Death had robbed him of her. Her loss had been to him a moral shock. It had opened his heart to a greater sorrow, his mind to a vaster thought, his eyes to all the past and to the existence of another love fraught with pain but as mysteriously imperative as that lost one to which he had entrusted his happiness" 554).

Under the assumed name of Sergeant Peter, he joins the insurgents:

"Thus humbly and in accord with the simplicity of the vision of duty he saw when death had removed the brilliant bandage of happiness from his eyes, did Prince Roman bring his offering to his country" 555).

In a similar way, in Mickiewicz's poetic drama *Dziadów część trzecia* (*Forefathers' Eve, Part Three*), the Wertherian hero, Gustaw, having realised that his personal sufferings are nothing in comparison with the tragedy of his nation, is metamorphosed into the dedicated patriot Konrad. To express the change he writes on the wall of his cell with charcoal the symbolic inscription: "D.O.M. Gustavus Obiit M.D.CCC.XXIII Calendis Novembris - Hic Natus Est Conradus M.D.CCC.XXIII Calendis Novembris" 556). Later, in a solitary encounter with God, Konrad cries out:

To you, God, whom they say feel in heaven,
I have come, I have come: see what power is mine,
How high my wings rise!
But I am a man, and my body is there on the earth,
There I have loved, my heart has remained in my country.
But my love on earth did not rest
On one human being alone,
Like a bug on a rose,
On one family, one century alone,
I love a whole Nation! And I have embraced
All its generations, past and to come;
I pressed it to my breast
Like a friend, a lover, a husband, a father;
I want to raise it up, make it happy,
I would make it the wonder of the world! 557)

554) *Tales of Hearsay*, p. 41.

555) *Ibid.*, p. 44.

556) Mickiewicz, *Dziela*, III, p. 133.

557) Adam Mickiewicz, *The Great Improvisation*, translated by Louise Varèse (New York, 1956), p. [13].

The despairing lover has become the champion of the nation, "with God, or even in spite of God" ⁵⁵⁸).

We find the motif also in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. The protagonist of the poem, Father Robak (his son, Tadeusz, is merely the hero of the love story within the poem) has undergone a similar transformation to Konrad and Prince Roman. In his youth, Jacek Soplica (the real name of Father Robak) fell in love with the daughter of the wealthy magnate, Horeszko. When his suit was refused, he swore revenge. He did not have to wait long for his opportunity. One day, while he loitered near Horeszko's castle, he happened to witness the defeat of a small troop of Russian soldiers who had tried to arrest the old magnate, a renowned patriot. Thinking only of his private grudge, he seized a gun from a Russian soldier and shot the magnate dead. After Horeszko's death, the lands were confiscated and a large part of the estate was given to Jacek as a reward for his intervention. However, he was not fated to enjoy the bitter reward. Tormented by his conscience, and especially by the general suspicion that he was a traitor, he resolved to atone for his crime, by dedicating his life wholly to the national cause. At first he joined the Polish Legions fighting under Napoleon in Italy, but finding the hardships of military service an insufficient penance, he donned the habit of a Bernardine monk. Moreover, to express his humiliation, he assumed the name of "Robak", which in Polish means "a worm". It is in this guise that he appears in the main action of the poem. In the end, he turns out to be a secret agent of the advancing French and Polish armies.

Thus, the general pattern is similar in each case: a man concerned only with his own happiness, is transformed into a dedicated patriot, under the stress of a personal tragedy or disappointment. Moreover, it is interesting to note that, in each case, the inner process is symbolically expressed by a change of name.

"Prince Roman" is so packed with Polish material and sentiment that to a Polish reader there is, perhaps, little to excite curiosity. However, it is a tribute to Conrad's literary skill that an English critic such as Baines has found it a "moving" story, "written with a vibrant sincerity" ⁵⁵⁹). But above all it is a clear indication of how deeply Conrad was involved in the Polish literary tradition.

558) Mickiewicz, *Dziela*, III, p. 155.

559) Baines, *op. cit.*, pp. 373-4.

CONCLUSION

Conrad has never been a popular writer in England. It is possible that there is something intrinsically uncongenial to the English temperament in his writing; but, his relative unpopularity would seem rather to rest on the failure of the English public fully to understand his works. Having spent the formative years of his life in a foreign country and been brought up on a foreign literary tradition, it was inevitable that some aspects of his work would remain alien to his English readers. Indeed, a real understanding of Conrad's work is exceedingly difficult, perhaps even impossible, without some knowledge of the cultural and literary background from which he emerged.

Conrad's Polish literary background has so far received little attention because of the assumption that he was too young when he left Poland to have been affected by Polish literature. Furthermore, it is thought that immediately after leaving Poland, Conrad cut himself off completely from all things Polish. Conrad himself is largely responsible for creating this impression. The feeling of guilt, engendered by his departure from Poland, made him reluctant to speak of his Polish past. Another reason for his reticence about his past was his desire to become a truly English author. The idea of developing into a kind of literary freak was intensely distasteful to him. In his writing he made very little overt use of his Polish background. Apart from the short story "Prince Roman" (which according to Jessie Conrad was to form a part of the semi-autobiographical *A Personal Record*)⁵⁶⁰, there are hardly any direct references to Poland in his fiction. Indeed, as Peterkiewicz has remarked: "It might never occur to hasty readers of his books that they were written by a Pole"⁵⁶¹. Thus, it is generally assumed that before 1895 Conrad's contact with literature was relatively limited. His life has been conveniently sliced into two halves: before 1895 it was all "experience"; after 1895, all "literature". Hence, the need has not been felt to study the influence of a literature which belonged to his childhood and early youth. Moreover, it is sometimes doubted that there is any influence to study.

We have tried to show in this thesis that when Conrad left Poland in 1874 his experience of literature was, in fact, considerably greater than that of an average boy of his age and social background. He owed this, above all, to his father, Apollo Korzeniowski, who, being a writer himself,

⁵⁶⁰ In a copy of *Tales of Hearsay* Jessie Conrad has written: "This story was intended to be included in a second volume of *Reminiscences*. ...Moreover it is the first conscious dip into Joseph Conrad's early family history. Those early days were very much concealed by a sensitive reserve, and even in Poland in 1914, he had evidently forgotten that even to me so much was unknown." (George T. Keating, *A Conrad Memorial Library* [New York, 1929], p. 365.)

⁵⁶¹ Jerzy Peterkiewicz, "Patriotic Irritability", *The Twentieth Century*, 970 (December 1957), p. 550.

introduced Conrad very early to literature and creative writing. It has further been shown that Apollo Korzeniowski was not just "a country gentleman of melancholic and mystical temperament... with some inclination to literary pursuits" ⁵⁶²), but an important literary figure in his own time. Poet, dramatic, critic and translator, he was admired and respected by his contemporaries. Although it is true that his poetry lacked originality and that his dramatic achievements were limited, yet it is wrong, as is the custom with most Conrad critics, completely to ignore him as a writer. Moreover, when one is dealing with Apollo Korzeniowski in relation to Conrad, one should try to see him in the proper context. The circumstances of Conrad's childhood, and especially his unconventional early education, enhanced the influence of the father.

Apart from introducing Conrad to literature, Apollo Korzeniowski also seems to have left a mark on Conrad's thinking. Thus, it is possible to see certain similarities between Conrad's attitude to material progress, to civilization and to Russia, and Apollo Korzeniowski's views on these topics. Both father and son were obsessed by the sombre vision of civilized man surrounded by the forces of barbarism and primeval chaos. As Miłosz has pointed out: "Here we can perceive a clear continuity of theme between the political tracts of the father and the novels of the son" ⁵⁶³). After Apollo Korzeniowski's death Conrad remained for some time under the influence of men who, by sharing his father's background and convictions, confirmed the kind of influence he had been exerting on Conrad.

A radical change took place when Tadeusz Bobrowski became Conrad's chief guardian. Bobrowski differed from Apollo both in temperament and in outlook. He was cautious, realistic and practical, where Apollo had been impetuous, idealistic and a dreamer. Although he lacked Apollo's enthusiasm for literature, he read much and widely. He produced in the course of his lifetime two volumes of very interesting memoirs, which later proved invaluable to Conrad when he was reconstructing his family history in *A Personal Record*. Bobrowski represented the so-called positivist mode of thinking which dominated Polish politics and cultural life after the failure of the 1863 rising. It was a reaction against idealism in politics and romanticism in literature. It challenged most of the beliefs and convictions which had been instilled into Conrad as a child. The fundamental antithesis between the two men who dominated Conrad's childhood and youth immensely enriched his attitude to the world around him: Apollo Korzeniowski grounded Conrad in Polish romantic literature, whilst Bobrowski in his long letters to Conrad introduced him to the positivist outlook; but it also confronted him early with the problem of divided loyalties. There was a similar variety in the cultural milieus with which Conrad came in contact during his early years. These ranged from the hot-house of religion and patriotism of the Vologda penal settlement to the realistic and anti-romantic Galician milieu of the post-1863 years. It is precisely the richness and diversity of Conrad's Polish background that gave him such a magnificent start as a future writer.

562) J.I.M. Stewart, "Conrad", in his *Eight Modern Writers* (Oxford, 1963), p. 184.

563) Czesław Miłosz, "Joseph Conrad in Polish Eyes", in R.W. Stallman, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

Conrad's scission with Poland and things Polish after 1874 was not as abrupt and complete as has sometimes been imagined. He continued to correspond regularly with his uncle Bobrowski. Indeed, there was a period in the late 1880s when they exchanged letters every few days. In these early letters, written to his uncle in Polish, Conrad first learned to express himself in writing and gradually developed a prose style of his own. But above all, linking Conrad with his Polish past, there was the deep, emotional patriotism which had been bred in him as a child. As the first glamour of youth and of the life of adventure wore away, he began to feel a sense of guilt on account of his "desertion" of Poland. This, first, induced him to prove himself as a sailor, and then, to seek achievement as a writer. The inner conflict was intensified when he began to write in English, and was openly accused by his compatriots of betraying Polish literature for the sake of financial gain. An additional complication was his attachment to England. Once more he had to face the problem of mixed loyalty. It is not argued that this is a complete explanation of Conrad's psychological situation, but that this is how Conrad rationalized his predicament. Achievement gradually absolved him of a sense of guilt. Furthermore, he felt that his political writings, and especially his powerful indictment of Russia in *Under Western Eyes*, had rendered his country a service.

As we have already remarked, one of the consequences of Conrad's complex attitude to Poland was his unwillingness to make literary capital of his Polish experiences. Yet, although, overtly, things Polish play an insignificant part in Conrad's fiction, they constitute, at times, an important latent element. We noticed for instance, that some of the major themes of Polish romantic literature also appear prominently in Conrad's works. Among these are betrayal, guilt and expiation, and the transformation of a man into a morally responsible individual under the stress of suffering. Similarly, we saw that the motif of the *agent provocateur* is to be found both in Conrad's novels and in the works of the Polish romantic poets.

However, it is also possible to show more specific instances of Polish literary influence in Conrad's fiction. In "Karain" Conrad uses the plot of a well-known ballad by Mickiewicz. There are numerous echoes of Żeromski's novel *Dzieje Grzechu* (*The History of a Sin*) in *Victory*. In "Amy Foster" Conrad follows certain popular fashions of contemporary Polish writing; whilst "Prince Roman" abounds in reminiscences from Polish romantic literature. Although in some cases, the evidence makes Conrad's debt to Polish literature undisputed, it is unlikely that his borrowings were often deliberate. Apart from perhaps one or two passages in "Prince Roman", most of the echoes are probably unconscious reminiscences of his Polish reading.

In this thesis we discussed four illustrations of Polish literary influence on Conrad's writing in some detail. The examples were chosen partly on account of the strength of the evidence and partly to show the variety of the influence. It must not be thought, however, that this exhausts the subject. It is possible to speculate about other similar echoes of Polish literature in Conrad's works. For instance, Don Balthasar's death in *Romance* bears some resemblance to the murder of Horeszko in Mickie-

wicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. Similarly, the blowing up of the *Emma* in the *Rescue* brings to mind Mickiewicz's poem *Reduta Ordon* (*Ordon's Redoubt*). Or again, Heyst's death by fire in *Victory* is reminiscent of the ending of Mickiewicz's epic poem *Grażyna*⁵⁶⁴. Of course, these are all only tentative suggestions.

Thus we see that the influences of Polish literature on Conrad's writing appear to have been as numerous as they are varied. They include borrowings from specific works as well as echoes of general themes and motifs. Their sources range from romantic poetry to the contemporary novel.

There still remains for us to consider briefly the kind of light that Polish literature can shed on Conrad's work. It should by now be clear that any comprehensive study of Conrad must deal with the problem of desertion or betrayal. It is a problem which obsessed him throughout his life, and which occurs in many of his works. In the context of contemporary English literature, Conrad's obsession with betrayal seems idiosyncratic, and his attitude to it, at times, morbid and hysterical. Against the background of Polish literature, it is a natural interest in a universal moral problem. Indeed, an examination of the theme of betrayal, as it appears in the works of the Polish romantic poets, helps one to understand some of the moral and psychological intricacies of such works as *Lord Jim*, *Under Western Eyes*, "The Secret Sharer" and the *Rescue*.

An acquaintance with Polish literature can also help one to avoid certain misconceptions. For instance, Irving Howe comments as follows on Conrad's attitude to Dostoevsky and Russia:

One of Conrad's friends, Richard Curle, has written that "Dostoevsky to Conrad represented the ultimate forces of confusion and insanity... He did not despise him as one despises a nonentity, he hated him as one might hate Lucifer and the forces of darkness". Conrad wrote of *The Brothers Karamazov* that it was "an impossible lump of valuable matter. It's terrifically bad and impressive and exasperating. Moreover, I don't know what Dostoevsky stands for or reveals, but I do know that he is too Russian for me. It sounds to me like some fierce mouthings from prehistoric ages". These "prehistoric ages", I would suggest, are a projection of Conrad's own past, the years of his youth which he may well have wished to consign to the blackness of the prehistoric"⁵⁶⁵.

However, as we have already pointed out a number of times, Conrad is merely repeating a traditional Polish attitude. To Mickiewicz, to Krasinski and to Conrad's own father, Apollo Korzeniowski, Russia was the embodiment of the forces of barbarism and primeval chaos which were threatening to destroy civilization.

564) This parallel is suggested by Tarnawski in: "Echa Mickiewiczowskie w twórczości Conrada-Korzeniowskiego", *Mickiewicz żywy*, edited by Herrnia Naglerowa (London, 1955), pp. 166-175.

565) Irving Howe, "Conrad: Order and Anarchy", *Politics and the Novel* (New York, 1957), p. 77.

In addition to this dread of Russia, Conrad shared with many Poles of his own generation a pessimistic outlook on life. His earliest years were spent in the shadow of the disaster of 1863. The books which he read as a boy extolled men who sacrifice their lives, fighting for a hopeless cause. Conrad never forgot the lessons he had learned as a boy. In 1907 he wrote to Garnett:

You remember always that I am a Slav (it's your *idée fixe*) but you seem to forget that I am a Pole. You forget that we have been used to go to battle without illusions. It's you, Britishers, that "go in to win" only. We have been "going in" these last hundred years repeatedly, to be knocked on the head only — as was visible to any calm intellect. But you have been learning your history from Russians no doubt⁵⁶⁶).

This deep-rooted pessimism links Conrad with his Polish contemporaries, and distinguishes him from Wells, Kipling, Galsworthy and most of the other writers of that generation. Indeed, it was probably one of the main reasons why he failed to obtain recognition in his own lifetime. His pessimistic philosophy of life found little response in a country at the height of its economic and political power. It was not until two world wars, and a major economic crisis in between them, had radically changed the mood and outlook of English society that his work could really be appreciated.

It would be wrong and foolish to maintain that Conrad's work is wholly in a Polish tradition; however, the contention of this thesis is not that Conrad wrote Polish novels in English, but that his English writing is coloured to a significant degree by his early experience of Polish literature. To understand Conrad's work fully one must have some knowledge of the literature which excited his imagination in his childhood and youth.

566) Conrad to Garnett, October 1907, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 59.

APPENDIX

For a long time it was taken for granted that in Cracow Conrad went to the famous *gymnasium* of St. Anne. Recently, however, Zdzisław Najder, a Polish critic, challenged this hitherto accepted fact of Conrad's biography. In his "Polskie lata Conrada" ("Conrad's Polish Years")⁵⁶⁷, stressing the unreliability of Conrad's statements about himself and especially of the autobiographical material contained in *A Personal Record* and "Poland Revisited", Najder claims that contrary to what Conrad himself is reputed to have said and what all his biographers have repeated after him, in 1870-71 Conrad was sent not to St. Anne's but to the less well known *gymnasium* of St. Jacek. In his critical biography Baines warily subscribes to Najder's theory⁵⁶⁸. Najder explains in a footnote how he came to make the discovery:

Conrad Korzeniowski's name does not figure on the list of St. Anne's *gymnasium*, printed in the *Memorial Book Celebrating the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of St. Anne's Gymnasium in Cracow* (Cracow, 1888). Nor is it to be found in the records of the school kept in the Voivodship Record Office in Cracow. Moreover, there is no trace in the book of the names of the people who are often mentioned as Conrad's school friends (Buszczyński, the Taubes). There existed at the time another *gymnasium* in Cracow: that of St. Jacek. Unfortunately, the records of this *gymnasium* were destroyed during the last war⁵⁶⁹.

In support of his theory, Najder hints that the *gymnasium* of St. Jacek was nearer Conrad's home than that of St. Anne. This is true, although the difference is not sufficiently great to make this a valid argument. Conrad was living at the time in the educational establishment of Ludwik Georgeon at 330 Floriańska Street. In order to reach St. Jacek's on Sienna Street he would have to walk down Floriańska Street into the Great Square (*Rynek Główny*), and then, walking past St. Mary's Church, take a turning to the left on the east side of the square and half way down it. To get to St. Anne's⁵⁷⁰, he would merely have to cross the Great Square diagonally, walking round the Cloth Halls (*Sukiennice*), go to the extreme right corner on the west side of the square and walk up St. Anne's Street.

567) Zdzisław Najder, "Polskie lata Conrada", *Twórczość* (Warsaw), 11 (November, 1956), pp. 137-152.

568) Baines, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

Oliver Warner, writing in a recent British Council Publication, has no doubt whatsoever about the matter: "Conrad studied at the *gymnasium* of St. Jacek, Cracow, and under a tutor, to whom he confided his wish — it was a determination — to go to sea." Oliver Warner, *Joseph Conrad* (Bibliographical Series of Supplements to "British Book News" on Writers and Their Work. No. 2. Edited by Bonamy Dobrée.), 3rd edition, London, 1960, p. 9.

569) Najder, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

570) The *gymnasium* of St. Anne was situated at the time opposite St. Anne's Church at 196 St. Anne's Street.

When Georgeon's establishment moved to a house at 43 Franciszkańska Street there was then no difference in distance.

In his footnote Najder says that he could not find in the records of St. Anne's the names of Konstanty Buszczyński and the Taubes "who are often mentioned as Conrad's school friends"⁵⁷¹. The vague references to the Taubes in Conrad's Notes to *Nostramo* and *The Arrow of Gold* are insufficiently clear to establish for certain that they attended the same school as Conrad. But Conrad did not have to go to the same school to become friendly with the family. Not only were they, like himself, Bobrowski's *protégés*⁵⁷², but also, for a time, they lived in the same house at 43 Franciszkańska Street. Similarly, Conrad's friendship for Konstanty Buszczyński probably dates from the time when the latter's father was acting as his guardian. As far as Konstanty Buszczyński's schooling is concerned, it appears that if he did go to school in Cracow it was only for a very brief period. According to the *Polski słownik biograficzny* (*The Polish Biographical Dictionary*), he received most of his secondary education in Dresden. The Dictionary does not mention St. Jacek's or, for that matter, any other Polish school⁵⁷³.

There exists further some evidence which both Najder and Baines seem to have missed. The question of Conrad's school had already come up before the war. In 1932 the *Wiadomości literackie* (*Literary News*) published a letter by Ludwik Krzyżanowski which among other things touched upon this problem:

In spite of assiduous efforts the present writer has not found in the catalogues the slightest mention of Conrad's studies at the gymnasium of St. Anne. These catalogues are very accurate, and even the names of private pupils are scrupulously entered. Similarly, a search in the gymnasium of St. Jacek in Cracow which already existed about 1870 failed to yield any results. The only reference to Conrad the schoolboy we owe to the indefatigable research of Mr. Tadeusz Żuk-Skarszewski. It is to be found in "The Protocols of St. Anne's, No. 29", where under the date of 17 September an entry has been made, stating that "Korzeniowski Józef took an entrance examination to the IV-th form"⁵⁷⁴.

It is interesting to note that the "IV-th form" which is mentioned here is also referred to in Teofila Bobrowska's letter to Kaszewski, written some three weeks after Apollo Korzeniowski's death. Bobrowska informed Kaszewski that Conrad

...in accordance with his father's wishes was placed in the pension of the Cracow gentleman Mr. Georgeon — owing to his ignorance of German

571) Najder, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

It is interesting to note, however, that Ludwik Georgeon's two sons, Ludwik and Leon entered St. Anne's in 1880 and 1885 respectively, and are listed in the *Memorial Book* (Jan Leniek, *op. cit.*, p. 218).

572) See Bobrowski, *op. cit.*, II, p. 447 n.

573) For a short biography of Konstanty Buszczyński see *Polski słownik biograficzny*, III, pp. 146-7. Incidentally, Buszczyński was familiarly called "Kostus" (cf. Bobrowski's letters to Conrad of 26 October 1876 and 14 September 1877, and Stefan Buszczyński's letter to Conrad of 28 October 1883), and not, as Najder writes "Kocio" (Najder, *op. cit.*, p. 148).

574) Ludwik Krzyżanowski, "Korespondencja" ("Correspondence"), *Wiadomości Literackie* (Warsaw), 454 (August, 1932).

and Latin he could only go to the second form — we hope that in a year's time he will go to the IV-th form, for both the principal and all the other teachers of the subjects, which are being taught, praise him for his diligence, ability and hard work — if only God would give him health — to which end he is devoting the time he has taken off from his studies ⁵⁷⁵).

How far Krzyżanowski's information is reliable and what strength it carries it is difficult to say.

But above all, contradicting Najder's argument from silence — for it is nothing more than that — we have Conrad's own testimony, recorded by several trustworthy witnesses.

Conrad's first biographer and personal friend, Jean-Aubry tells us quite clearly that in Cracow Conrad went to the *gymnasium* of St. Anne ⁵⁷⁶). Richard Curle, another close friend of Conrad and the author of the first serious study of his work, writes in it:

Conrad was sent to the gymnasium of St. Anne, the foremost public school of the city ⁵⁷⁷).

Moreover, in the preface Curle tells his readers:

The facts in this book relative to Mr Conrad have Mr Conrad's authorization, the criticism is entirely my own affair ⁵⁷⁸).

Yet another close friend of Conrad, J.H. Retinger, himself an old boy of St. Anne's, also says that Conrad attended that school ⁵⁷⁹). Again, in the interview with the Polish journalist Dąbrowski, Conrad is reported to have said:

I left Poland at the age of seventeen. My secret desire was to go to sea, to join the English navy. Yes, straight from the V-th form of the *gymnasium* of St. Anne in Cracow ⁵⁸⁰).

Another interviewer, R.L. Mėgros, claiming the same authority as Curle,

In the following pages accurate quotation of Conrad's actual conversation, which I have recorded in the past in carefully taken shorthand notes, supplies what may be regarded as more interesting and valuable than commentary entirely along the usual lines of literary criticism ⁵⁸¹).

and, furthermore, writing with the set intention of debunking the "witty

575) Teofila Bobrowska to Kazimierz Kaszewski, 12 June 1869; quoted by Ludwik Krzyżanowski, *ibid.*

576) Jean-Aubry writes: "According to his father's wish, he was placed *en pension* with M. Georgeon at Cracow and he attended classes at the St. Anne High School." (*Life and Letters*, I, p. 21).

577) Richard Curle, *Joseph Conrad; a Study* (London, 1914), p. 16.

578) *Ibid.*, p. vii.

579) See J.H. Retinger, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

580) "Rozmowa z J. Conradem"; in D. Dąbrowska, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

581) R.L. Mėgros, *A Talk with Joseph Conrad, and a Criticism of his Mind and Method* (London, 1926), p. 9.

fiction" of such "skilful men of the craft"⁵⁸²⁾ as Ford Madox Ford, tells us:

When he spoke of Cracow, it was just the place which held his old school, "St. Anne's, where I was a scholar... The school was 'on the classical side', you know, along old-fashioned lines... I was good at mathematics, fairly good at history, and my composition could always pull me up in the class"⁵⁸³⁾.

In 1913 Doubleday, Page and Co. published, as a part of the publicity campaign which finally made Conrad a best seller, a booklet, called *Joseph Conrad: The Romance of His Life and of His Books*⁵⁸⁴⁾. It was written by Alfred Knopf, a young, energetic newcomer to the firm, who took a particular interest in Conrad's work. In the short biography, which makes up part of the text, Knopf informs us that Conrad "attended a public school, the Imperial and Royal Gymnasium of St. Anne"⁵⁸⁵⁾. This formula, which the present writer has not found elsewhere in Conrad biography, is of course a translation of the German "Kaiserlich-Königliches" (Polish: "cesarsko-królewski", usually abbreviated c.k.)⁵⁸⁶⁾. It was applied at the time to many public institutions in Galicia and other parts of the Austrian Empire. Regardless of whether Knopf used it for the sake of local colour or with an ironic intention, it suggests that he obtained the information from someone who was well acquainted with the contemporary Galician scene, most probably from Conrad himself⁵⁸⁷⁾.

This kind of evidence does not *prove* that Conrad, in fact, went to the *gymnasium* of St. Anne, but, at least it makes it abundantly clear that he *told* everyone so. Since it is inconceivable for someone to forget the name of a school he attended at the age of 14-15, we are left with one ugly alternative, namely, that Conrad lied deliberately. This, we are asked to believe, he did in order to impress his snobbish friends and public. Admittedly, like most *déclassé* expatriates, Conrad was a bit of a snob, but he was never an impostor.

Why Conrad's name does not figure in the records of St. Anne's *gymnasium* (apart from the brief reference, cited earlier) is indeed a problem. Perhaps the irregularity of his attendance had something to do with it; or maybe he was some kind of external student, receiving a part of his tuition at the Georleon establishment⁵⁸⁸⁾, and attending only select lessons at the school⁵⁸⁹⁾. In any case, it seems both safer and wiser to reject unsubstantiated guesswork and rely on Conrad's own clear and repeated assertions.

582) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

583) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

584) Alfred A. Knopf, *Joseph Conrad: The Romance of His Life and of His Books* (New York, 1913).

585) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

586) In 1850 St. Anne's which had hitherto been known as "c.k. liceum św. Anny", was officially renamed "c.k. gimnazjum św. Anny". (Jan Leniek, *op. cit.*, p. CLXVIII.)

587) Cf. Conrad's letter to Alfred Knopf, 20 July 1913: "To begin with I shall at once revise the notes on me and send them to you, I hope by the same ship with this letter". (*Life and Letters*, II, pp. 147-8.)

588) According to the *Polski słownik biograficzny*, in 1867 Ludwik Georleon was given permission to open a school which had four classes. (Vol. VII, p. 387-8.)

589) Mrs. Danilewicz has told me that this was a common practice in the case of pupils who, for one reason or another, were behind with their studies.

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HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ'S AMERICAN RESONANCE

P R E F A C E

The popularity of Henryk Sienkiewicz all over the world was one of the cultural phenomena which could fascinate not only publishers and booksellers but also sociologists. It anticipated the modern intensive cultural intercourse exploiting more advanced technical means of communication. It pointed to some powerful links among separate national entities and to generally acceptable esthetic standards.

The problem presents special interest for students of literature. Maria Kosko, in her excellent studies, subjected to partial scrutiny the dramatic circumstances accompanying the triumph of the Polish novelist among the general readers in France. The American success of Sienkiewicz's heritage was less spectacular but more impressive. It preceded his vogue in other countries and was more deeply rooted and intimately intertwined with the developments in various fields. Until now, the reception of Sienkiewicz in America has not been examined in greater detail. The present study tries to close the gap.

I. *A triple start*

According to Helena Modjeska (Modrzejewska), the idea of Sienkiewicz's trip to the United States was conceived in her drawing room. At one of her Tuesday parties towards the close of 1875, someone brought news of the forthcoming Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. Sienkiewicz began to describe America in glowing colors. When his tale reached its climax, doctor Karwowski said jokingly to the hostess, « You need a change of air, madame. Why not make a trip to America? » - « That's a good idea », her husband answered. One of the guests exclaimed, « Let us all go. We will kill beasts, build huts, make our own garments of skin, and live as our fathers lived! » They all laughed, and dismissed the idea as an impossibility ¹⁾.

1) *Memories and Impressions of Helena Modjeska; an Autobiography* (New York, 1910), pp. 242-4.

However, the project was not forgotten. At that time America aroused considerable interest in the Polish community. The Positivist publicists watched its speedy economic progress with fascination. Books and articles on American affairs were eagerly read. Some Poles dreamed of mass emigration. As a boy of thirteen, Sienkiewicz himself compiled a peculiar plan for the liberation of Poland: all Poles would go to America, organize an army and return to their native land to fight for its independence ²⁾. As to Modjeska, she and her husband developed a plan to found a settlement in California; and perhaps she also secretly dreamed of playing Shakespeare in English.

The writer was forwarded as a vanguard of the prospective colony. The daily *Gazeta Polska* delegated him as correspondent and covered his expenses. Accompanied by a friend, Juliusz Sypniewski, he commenced his long expedition on February 19, 1876. From the very outset of his stay in America, he set down his impressions in order to prepare a series of reportages to be written in the form of letters. His route was limited: he did not see the capital of the United States, nor visit any major centers of intellectual life. He did not seek contact with any prominent Americans. One of the reasons for this was probably his lame English; at first, he had to communicate with Americans through an interpreter. Nevertheless, he made some very keen observations and his *Letters From America*, printed in Poland, were very well received.

When Modjeska and her companions arrived in California, she concentrated at first on the affairs of the settlement, which, however, soon became a failure. Undismayed by this setback, she devoted herself to the study of English, and made her theatrical debut in San Francisco. Her appearance was enthusiastically acclaimed. Sienkiewicz witnessed her triumph and accompanied her on the subsequent tournee to other American cities, simultaneously providing reports to the Polish press. The writer still remained an inconspicuous reporter and sought contacts mainly among Poles and other immigrants.

The stage successes of Modjeska in San Francisco aroused some interest in Polish affairs among the local public. Sienkiewicz exploited this opportunity for a political objective. He wrote an article in Polish on the Russian danger in Central Europe. It was allegedly translated into English by the actress and appeared on September 8, 1877 in the *Daily Evening Post* in San Francisco under the title « Poland and Russia, The Czar's Government in Poland and on the Danube ». As it included some sharp anti-Russian sallies, it had to be printed anonymously. Modjeska mentioned it in her *Memoirs and Impressions*, published at first in 1909 by *The Century Magazine* in several instalments, and in 1910 as a separate book. Nevertheless, for many years the article remained unknown and not until 1965 did a London weekly bring it to public attention ³⁾.

In his political essay Sienkiewicz wanted to achieve a double objective. First of all, he treated it as an occasion for telling Americans as much as possible of Poland's past and present; secondly, he intended to discredit the Russian policy in the Balkan Peninsula. He demonstrated

2) *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Sienkiewicza*, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski, in *Dzieła*, v. LVIII (Warszawa, 1954), p. 29.

3) Jacek Bukowiecki, « Pierwszy artykuł polityczny Henryka Sienkiewicza », *Wiadomości*, IV, 982 (London, January, 1965).

that the role of Russia as liberator of other nations was incompatible with her traditional policy of tyranny and oppression. As to the Russian ambition to head the union of all Slavs, the treatment of the Poles and the Ukrainians disqualified the Russian regime completely. The writer singled out another nation as a natural bridge between the West and the East:

Did such a link exist? History answers, yes. That link was the Ruthenian nation by its Unitarian Greek-Catholic religion; by its Latin Byzantine culture. The Ruthenian nation is neither a pure Russian nor a pure Polish nation. Its language keeps the middle course between the Russian and Polish tongues like a gradual transition from the one to the other. Being historically united with Poland, and therefore with the general European culture, it was, by its geographical situation, influenced by the Byzantine culture also. Its Catholic religion has something in common with the Eastern Church. It has the liturgy in its native language; it admits the marriage of the priests, &c. [...] That nation was the link to a possible union of the Eastern and Western Slavonians, regarding ethnography and civilization ⁴⁾.

The hostile attitude of the Russians towards the Ukrainians proved more than anything else that they did not want a union. Instead of supporting the Ukrainian nationality, they made every effort to destroy it. The same policy was adopted towards the Uniates. The horrible persecution of the Greek Catholic Church in all territories belonging to the Russian Empire revealed the real purpose — absolute domination.

The article was written with much persuasive power and passionate vigor. One of its drawbacks was the excessive abundance of material, definitely indigestible for the average newspaper reader. The translation contained some obvious deficiencies, and several dates and proper names were distorted. This was one of the exceptional cases in which Sienkiewicz attacked the Russians directly, unrestrained by censorship.

Sienkiewicz's second American publication also passed practically unnoticed, although the editor made no attempt to conceal the author's name, ignoring his wishes to remain anonymous. In 1884, an American monthly *The Catholic World* printed the short story « Paul » ⁵⁾ which was a translation not of the better known tale « Z pamiętnika poznańskiego nauczyciela » (« From the Memoirs of a Poznań Teacher »), but of its earlier version « Z pamiętnika korepetytora » (« From the Memoirs of a Tutor »). This initial variant had for its locale not Prussian occupied Poznań, but the Russian partition and condemned the treatment of Polish children in the Russianized schools. Naturally, it would be impossible to print such a story in Warsaw. For this reason it appeared in *Gazeta Lwowska* in the Austrian partition. As a precautionary measure, the author signed the tale with three x's. Later he changed the content slightly and transferred the incidents to the German partition of Poland. The Russian censorship had no objection to a story castigating the Prussians. This disguise did not deceive the readers who realized that the criticism was also applicable to Russian schools. The American periodical

4) *Daily Evening Post* (San Francisco, September 8, 1877).

5) « Paul », tr. by W. R. Thompson, in *The Catholic World*, IV (1884), pp. 406-19.

received the initial version and neglecting the author's security disclosed not only his full name but also his literary pseudonym Litwos. Curiously enough, in Poland the text published in *Gazeta Lwowska* was ignored for many years. The author's identity was not disclosed until 1926 ⁶⁾. By an amusing coincidence, this mystery was not deciphered by Polish scholars for half a century, while in America it was an open secret.

Having returned to Europe, Sienkiewicz rapidly increased in literary stature, for his *Trilogy* made him a celebrity. Almost immediately after publication, his short stories and historical novels were translated into many languages, — with the exception of English. For well-nigh a whole decade, the Polish novelist remained practically unknown in the English — speaking world. Likewise, his successes in several European countries produced no significant resonance in England and America.

The unintentional conspiracy of silence was broken by Scotland. In April of 1889, *The Blackwood Literary Magazine* published an essay entitled « A Polish Novelist — Henryk Sienkiewicz ». Its unsigned author posed a question: Why has such scanty notice been accorded to Poland? He asserted that Polish literature was « immeasurably superior to that of Russia ». He pointed out that comparatively few people in France and Germany, and very few in England, knew « the names of a Rzewuski, Słowacki, Kaczkowski, Kraszewski, Kołontaj [sic!], Wistocki [sic!], Korzeniowski or Zaleski, though many of these names deserve to be as widely known as are those of Dumas and Turgenev » ⁷⁾. Such were the preliminary remarks preceding the introduction of Sienkiewicz. The critic defined him as the finest Polish novelist, past and present, and second to none now living in England, France, or Germany: « Dumas, Turgenev, and Bret Harte — the mixture sounds bizarre enough — as incongruous in theory as a dish composed of salt herring, pineapple, and gingerbread; yet there is no doubt that it is precisely to this combination that Henryk Sienkiewicz owes his success. He has Dumas' facility for conceiving and carrying out a complicated historical romance; he has much of Bret Harte's dry humor and laconic pathos; and a good deal of Turgenev's melancholy suggestiveness, with some of his delicacy of touch » ⁸⁾.

As to the novelist's biography, the critic gave the wrong date of birth but seemed to have been well-informed. He pointed out the importance of Sienkiewicz's Californian adventure, and mentioned the novelist's early collective edition of sketches and novelettes. He discussed the *Trilogy* briefly but with considerable skill. In his opinion, never yet had a Polish author the courage to lay bare the errors and crimes of his countrymen so frankly and impartially. Some weaknesses of these historical romances were disclosed: excessive length in the treatment of historical episodes; exaggerated heroism of the knightly heroes; and uninteresting treatment of the heroines (except in the third work). No

6) Cf. *Kalendarz*, op. cit., pp. 113-14.

7) « A Polish Novelist - Henryk Sienkiewicz », in *The Blackwood Literary Magazine*, CXLV (Edinburgh, April, 1889), p. 498.

8) *Ibid.*, p. 498.

nevertheless, Sienkiewicz's *Tritogy* was recognized as important, not only for Poland, but for the entire literary world:

His masterly style well calculated to display the beauties of the Polish language to their fullest extent, and triumphantly to demonstrate its superiority to all other Slave [sic!] tongues. His descriptions of nature are as picturesque and artistic as they are vivid; and his analysis of character — that is, of masculine character — cannot be overrated. Every single figure of his frequently overcrowded canvas stands out before us in broad relief — firm in outline, delicate in shading ⁹⁾.

The reviewer did not overlook the message of the work and delineated it with much understanding for the Polish plight. He did not attempt to give a synopsis of the major works but to inform the readers of Sienkiewicz's craft. For this purpose he chose two tales, « Bartek the Victor » and « Janko the Musician » which he carefully analyzed, quoting many lengthy passages of the texts. He spoke warmly of other short stories, especially of « The Lighthouse Keeper ».

This important article in the Scottish journal, which had remained too long in oblivion, was an excellent introduction to closer acquaintance with the Polish novelist. However, it was a poor substitute for actual translations of his works. This initiative was intercepted by an American.

II. *Introducing Curtin*

Jeremiah Curtin was born on September 6, 1835 in Detroit, Michigan ¹⁾. His ancestors were mainly of Irish descent. He spent his childhood in the rural district of Greenfield, Wisconsin and for some time was engaged in farming. At the age of twenty-four, he was admitted to Harvard College. There he became an ardent student of languages. In 1863, he received his degree and moved to New York with the intention of becoming a lawyer. However, he continued to study foreign languages, acquiring considerable proficiency in Russian. This passion he did not abandon throughout his whole life; according to the memorial plaque in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, he spoke seventy languages.

Curtin's command of Russian enabled him to obtain the post of Secretary at the American Embassy in Petersburg. His superior was Cassius Marcellus Clay, one of the picturesque figures in American politics, who kept his ambassadorial post from 1861 to 1869, with only a brief interval. In the prevailing atmosphere of the strengthening Russo-American political ties, Curtin felt in his proper element. He made acquaint-

⁹⁾ *Ibid.*, pp. 499-500. Curiously enough, the anonymous author also mentioned the earlier anti-Russian version of the short story « Z pamiętnika poznańskiego nauczyciela ».

¹⁾ This figure was given by Joseph Schafer in his introduction to *Memoirs of Jeremiah Curtin* (Madison, 1940), p. 5. For some unknown reason H. E. Segel in his recent article « Sienkiewicz's First Translator, Jeremiah Curtin », *Slavic Review*, XXIV (June, 1965), p. 190, changed this date to 1838.

tances in different social circles and met many influential people. Even the Tsar deigned to praise his fluency in Russian. He spoke in public on various occasions, especially at banquets ²⁾.

At first, it seemed that Minister Clay had every reason to be satisfied with his secretary. Yet this idyllic relationship was short lived. Curtin was accused of a misdemeanor: he allegedly appeared in public inebriated and lightheartedly contracted financial debts among the Russians. The ambassador demanded his recall to the United States. His secretary repaid in kind by accusing his superior of mere jealousy and asked some of his American friends to intervene on his behalf. The unpleasant affair dragged on for some time but its result was foreclosed. Curtin lost his position and his career in the diplomatic service came to an end.

At this point Curtin concentrated on scholarly pursuits. He held a position in the Bureau of Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institute. He studied comparative ethnology and devoted exhaustive research to the folklore of American Indians and Mongolian tribes. In addition, he collected fairy tales and legends of Ireland and other countries. In connection with his research, he visited many countries in Europe, Asia, and South America. An indefatigable traveller, he was unable to establish a permanent home. In spite of his diligence at research, he did not achieve any spectacular success for quite a long time. Financial difficulties also seemed to be a problem.

Curtin's intimate relations with the Russians were not severed. Occasionally, he took an active part in the receptions organized as a result of official diplomatic visits in America. He maintained contact with some influential Russian politicians, e.g. Witte and Pobyedonoscev. Acquainted with Russian literature, he translated into English several works by prominent novelists: Dostoevski's *The Idiot*, Gogol's *Taras Bulba*, A. K. Tolstoy's *Knyaz' Serebryanyj*, and Zagoskin's *Yurii Miloslavsky*. Yet these endeavors did not produce any significant resonance.

Curtin's interest in Polish literature and particularly in Sienkiewicz arose in 1888. He provided two different explanations as to its origin. His first rather prosaic comment was made known in an article published in *The Century* in July of 1898. During his work at the Smithsonian Institute, he had an opportunity to observe that the Polish novelist gained considerable popularity among the Russians. This aroused his curiosity; he ordered a copy of the *Trilogy* from Poland and as soon as he perused its first part, he came to the conclusion that it was an outstanding work, deserving to be made known to the American community. However, his *Memoirs* revealed a more dramatic story:

One afternoon when going home I noticed that a man who sat near me in the car was reading a Polish magazine. The car was crowded; and I was soon able to get a seat at his side. When I addressed him in Polish, his face lighted up, and he was eager to know who I was and where I learned his language. Then, speaking of the magazine he held in his hand, he said that each month he anxiously awaited its arrival, for a story, written by Sienkiewicz, was appearing in it serially. He offered to loan me

2) This information was based on his *Memoirs*, *op. cit.*, and the introduction by Joseph Schafer.

the back numbers of the magazine and that evening he brought several to my rooms. The following day I ordered from Poland a copy of Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy: With Fire and Sword, The Deluge, and Pan Michael*. As I followed the course of Slavonic literatures with more or less care, I knew that the works of this author had aroused interest among Poles and Russians, and that they were voluminous; but when I saw thirteen volumes of more than four thousand pages brought in and laid on the table, I thought: "Here is a good deal of a good thing". I had ordered this *Trilogy* to read, not to translate, and I thought to put it aside for a season of more leisure. But on looking over *With Fire and Sword* the opening chapters seemed so vivid, and the style so striking, that I read the work through without delay. "American readers would be delighted with this book; they ought to have it. I will translate it". That was my immediate decision» ³⁾.

Curtin's knowledge of Polish prior to the translation of Sienkiewicz's works was not definitely ascertained. Julian Krzyżanowski stated that Curtin was translating *With Fire and Sword* from Russian. Only after having learned sufficient Polish, was he able to translate other works from the original text. Likewise, Szermentowski, in his *vie romancée Pan Henryk*, attributed to Dr. Benni the remark that «this American ethnographer» learned Polish for the specific purpose of translating Sienkiewicz.

Recently, H. B. Segel intimated that Curtin's first contact with Polish coincided with a visit of the Russian fleet to New York during the Polish January Rising. He also considered the possibility that Curtin learned the language from immigrants in Wisconsin. The translator's own statement on this matter was explicit: «I had studied Polish in college, working it out by myself as I had worked out Danish» ⁴⁾. Later he added that in 1865 in Petersburg he studied Slavic languages: Serbian, Bohemian, Polish, and Lithuanian [sic!] ⁵⁾. There is no reason to distrust his statement. It is evident that Curtin owed his knowledge of Polish mainly to self-tuition, which coincided with his academic studies and the Petersburg interlude.

Translating, for Curtin, was a marginal occupation which he did not permit to interfere with his regular work. During his grappling with the *Trilogy*, he continued his studies on the traditions and medicine of the American Indians, simultaneously translating some Russian fiction. He also did not change his nomadic way of life. Nevertheless, his industry and productivity was amazing. This he owed in part to his wife, Alma Cardell Curtin, a meek anonymous assistant, who did a lot of the spade work. Sometimes she would devote twelve to thirteen hours a day to copying the script. At first, she wrote a draft copy following her husband's dictation and later she made a clean copy complying with all corrections. The final manuscript of *With Fire and Sword* totaled 1,400 pages.

The publication of the novel presented some difficulties. Curtin sent it to the Alden Publishers, the firm that had printed his translation of

3) *Ibid.*, pp. 410-11.

4) *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

5) *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Taras Bulba. They returned the script with a comment that in America Polish and Russian subjects were too remote and too foreign. Now Curtin addressed himself to Little, Brown and Company in Boston, who had already published his *Myths and Folklore of Ireland*. The response was favorable. In October 1890 the final text was despatched to the publishers. Yet, the translator set himself an additional task. Being reluctant to offend his Russian friends, he drafted a preface dedicated to the historical background of the novel.

With Fire and Sword appeared in 1890. When the translator sensed that it was well received, he assailed other parts of the *Trilogy*. He resolutely grasped a lifetime opportunity and exploited it with untiring energy; he translated almost everything the Polish novelist had written, not only the novels and short stories but also the plays and sketches. Whenever he found it advisable, he added introductory remarks. He duly maintained his ties with Little, Brown, and Company, who relied on his ability and only once turned to another translator — when Curtin was still busy with the *Trilogy* and news came of the international success of *Without Dogma*; its translation by Iza Young was as isolated instance which was not repeated.

In order to speed up his work, Curtin translated the text directly from the initial instalments printed in the newspapers. This created additional complications, as occasionally issues were lost and it was necessary to order duplicates. Sometimes the work proceeded in the most fantastic surroundings. There was no attempt to make a selection of Sienkiewicz's writings; his earliest works were at times included in volumes containing his mature fiction. Some of the volumes compiled in this way turned out to be a mixture of works of unequal caliber.

After the tremendous success of *Quo Vadis?*, the competition with other publishers was inevitable. For this reason, it was of paramount importance for Curtin and the Boston firm to acquire exclusive rights from the author. Above all, it was advisable to establish direct contact with the novelist. Their personal acquaintance took place in 1897. Curtin attributed this meeting to mere coincidence:

In Ragatz I met Sienkiewicz for the first time. I arrived at the Quellenhof about the luncheon hour... In the dining hall, much to my surprise and delight, the manager informed me that he would seat me at the table d'hote next to a Polish gentleman named Sienkiewicz, a writer. When Sienkiewicz learned who I was, he expressed much pleasure and also some surprise, for I had appeared at his side unexpectedly and, as it happened, he was reading just then the American edition of *Quo Vadis?* ⁶⁾

The coincidence was so marvelous and so convenient that a suspicious mind would consider it prearranged. Yet it spelled the beginning of a cordial friendship between the novelist and his translator, severed only by Curtin's death. It was based on mutual confidence and respect. The American valued Sienkiewicz highly as a writer and became interested in other Polish belletrists. He found time and zest to translate *The Argonauts* by Eliza Orzeszkowa and *The Pharaoh and the Priest* by Bolesław

6) *Ibid.*, pp. 645-46.

Prus. He even considered translating a book on Sienkiewicz by Stanisław Tarnowski.

The translator visited the author in Poland nine times and once paid a visit to the writer's family during his absence. He was hospitably entertained by Sienkiewicz in Zakopane; the culminating episode was a carefully planned excursion to Lake Czarny Staw. Twice Sienkiewicz received Mr. and Mrs. Curtin at his country residence, Obłęgorek, donated to him by the Polish people on the occasion of his silver jubilee. Here they enjoyed many cordial and intimate conversations.

As Curtin pointed out in his *Memoirs*, he paid a fee of 25,000 francs to the writer on behalf of Little, Brown and Co. This was not a mere gesture of generosity as the writer made Curtin his sole authorized translator. Also Sienkiewicz entitled him to make eventual stage adaptations of some of his novels. Finally, he gave Curtin exclusive rights regarding the publication of his future works in all English speaking countries; the translations were to appear simultaneously or even prior to their Polish originals. The document granting these privileges was compiled in such a way as to impair Sienkiewicz's rights to his own works:

I, Henryk Sienkiewicz, give and convey to Jeremiah Curtin the exclusive right to translate all my works from the Polish into English, and to have those translations published in America and the British Empire. I further agree to furnish Mr. Curtin with the original Polish manuscript of each and every book of mine in convenient parts periodically, in proportion as I write it, and thus to continue till each such work is finished, and not to publish said work in Polish till it is published in a magazine or some other serial form in Curtin's English. On completion of this serial publication I shall have the right to begin immediately the serial publication in Polish of said book and continue till it is finished, but the time occupied in publishing it is not to be counted as less than already occupied in publishing the English translation. Till the expiration of that time I will not publish said work in book form in Polish ⁷⁾.

The value of such a binding statement from the writer's point of view could be properly assessed if the financial advantages were known; however, Curtin did not quote them in his *Memoirs*. It came out that Sienkiewicz did not comply to the clauses of the contract. He published the initial chapters of the novel *On the Field of Glory* in the periodical *Biesiada Literacka*. At Curtin's request to stop further printing and to change its beginning, the novelist failed to comply. On the margin of this incident Curtin generously remarked: «Sienkiewicz is a man of genius, and as such must be pardoned much. I am a busy man with no time for contention» ⁸⁾. Joseph Schafer, editor of the *Memoirs* rightly observed that Curtin also was no business man ⁹⁾.

7) *Ibid.*, p. 691.

8) *Ibid.*, p. 692.

9) *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

Despite the occasional squabbles, the discovery of Sienkiewicz brought Curtin tremendous advantages. His financial problems came to an end and he could afford such luxuries as a world tour. The royalties inherited by Mrs. Curtin produced considerable income long after her husband's passing. Moreover, as translator of the Polish novelist, Curtin acquired in the English-speaking world no less notoriety as an author of scholarly works. He also earned recognition from Poles all over the world. They were proud to make his acquaintance and expressed their gratitude and respect. He was cordially received by Cardinal Ledóchowski and the noted painter Siemiradzki in addition to being a welcome guest in the homes of Stanisław Tarnowski, Count Branicki, and many others.

III. *Translating and translators*

Curtin took full advantage of the privileged position granted him by the belletrist. Many translators of the period concerned were modest, self-effaced individuals whose names remained practically unnoticed. Curtin widely publicized photographs in which he appeared side by side with Sienkiewicz and reprinted the authorization received from the novelist. He behaved not as a mere translator, but almost as co-author. Taking liberties, he dedicated separate novels by Sienkiewicz to various prominent American and Polish friends. He proudly proclaimed his outstanding role in introducing Sienkiewicz to the English-speaking world; this merit was emphasized in an anonymous brochure *Henryk Sienkiewicz: The Author of Quo Vadis?* printed by his Boston publishers ¹⁾.

Moreover, Curtin felt entitled to impress upon the readers his historical opinions, which were in opposition to the views expressed in the *Trilogy*, as well as some other writings. It was doubtful whether such prefaces were really necessary. Historical fiction usually reflected the partial judgements of their authors. Yet, it was not habitual to precede them with a refutation of their real or alleged falsehoods. Besides, Curtin was not a historian and possessed none of the qualifications for becoming an authoritative judge of the intricate problems concerned. He simply intercepted a purely Russian point of view, without ever questioning its veracity. He did not even pretend to be an independent umpire scrutinizing the views of both parties and was satisfied with a flat rejection of the novelist's viewpoint.

Curtin depicted the role of Poland in the East in a purely negative way. He did not ascribe any constructive ideas to Polish statesmen and bluntly wrote: « The Poles, though intellectual, sympathetic, brave, and gifted with high personal qualities that have made them many friends, have been always deficient in collective wisdom; and there is probably no more astonishing antithesis in Europe than the Poles as individuals and the Poles as people » ²⁾. On the other hand, the translator attributed

1) *Henryk Sienkiewicz: The Author of Quo Vadis?* (Boston, 1898). A greater part of this brochure was reprinted in *Current Literature*, XXIII, 2 (February, 1898), pp. 116-18.

2) *Henryk Sienkiewicz, With Fire and Sword; An Historical Novel of Poland and Russia*, tr. by Jeremiah Curtin (Boston, 1890), p. XIII.

to the Russians strength of character and intellectual gifts that made them among the first, though many men have felt free to describe them in terms exceptionally harsh and frequently unjust. Such generalizations had certainly little in common with the content of the *Trilogy* where Sienkiewicz had carefully avoided any direct mention of the Russians; Curtin's remarks would have been more proper in a political pamphlet than in a preface to a literary work.

In his interpretation of historical data, Curtin relied exclusively on Russian sources. Some of the facts he used could have signaled to him that the interests of the Cossacks and the Muscovites were not identical (such as the pro-Polish attitude of Yuri Hmelnitski and Teterya). However, he treated the Ukraine as « Little Russia » or simply as South Russia. He intimated that « the triumph of Poland [over the Cossacks] would have left no place for Moscow on earth but the place of subjection ». In other words, he interpreted the Russian aggression as a legitimate self-defense. Sienkiewicz made the Polish victory at Beresteczko the final and culminating episode of *With Fire and Sword*; Curtin's introduction lingered over the subsequent Polish defeats. Still not satisfied with these comments, Curtin added a description of the Ukrainian submission to Muscovy in the preface to *The Deluge*, although this novel had little in common with the conflicts in the East.

Sienkiewicz, who read these commentaries, raised a mild protest. In a letter to Curtin, he pointed out the existence of the Ukrainians as a separate nation, different from the Muscovites; they succeeded in maintaining their language and were subjected to persecution both in the Ukraine and the whole Russian Empire. After the downfall of the Polish Commonwealth, they were forcibly converted by the Russians to the Orthodox Church ³⁾. Curtin's reaction to this protest was never revealed and he never altered a single word in his comments which were reprinted time and again in the new editions of the *Trilogy*. Some of the early American reviewers trusted the translator and duly repeated his notes as a voice of objective historical truth.

Although being in disagreement with Sienkiewicz's views, Curtin treated his texts fairly enough. Several critics suggested that the English renderings of some novels should have been curtailed for the author's sake; Curtin did not adhere to these advices. His enthusiasm for Sienkiewicz's works remained unabated. He made sincere efforts to do them due justice. When the publishers were in a hurry, he protested that he had not time enough to correct the proofs. Not only did he take responsibility for the rendition of the content but he tried to reconstruct the style of the narrative:

The choice of the word often strengthens the power of a sentence. In *Quo Vadis*, as well as in the books which preceded it, I strove to be faithful in the strictest sense of the word, that is faithful to the letter and the spirit. I tried to make a translation which would produce, as nearly as possible, the same effect on Americans as the original produced on Sienkiewicz's countrymen; the lilt of the language which he uses must be preserved, as well as his statements. Idioms, too, should be preserved wherever it is possible ⁴⁾.

3) Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Dziela*, v. LV, ed. by J. Krzyżanowski (Warszawa, 1954), p. 60.

4) *Memoirs*, op. cit., pp. 530-31.

These ambitious intentions were at variance with the practical results. A modern assessment of Curtin's translations must be severe. His command of Polish was insufficient and many subtleties of the original escaped his attention. He made occasional slips not only in the historical novels in which archaisms and Latinisms presented special difficulties, but also in the contemporary fiction and short stories. His attempts to maintain the original idioms were exaggerated and at times produced many amusing effects. Yet Curtin succeeded in impressing the novelist with his accuracy: one day he awoke him early in the morning asking for the meaning of the expression « wciórności », which could hardly be found in the dictionary and was practically untranslatable ⁵⁾.

Curtin admitted that his design was to please the American readers. However, his translations were made available to the entire English reading world. It was not surprising that the British critics discussed his achievements in a less favorable way than did their American counterparts. The reviews printed in the *Athenaeum* (London) usually castigated Curtin with considerable vigor, even though they praised his initiative and endeavor. Typical were the remarks written concerning *The Deluge*:

Curtin is congratulated for his courage and diligence; but we cannot altogether congratulate him on the way in which he has done this work. His knowledge of Polish is considerable. His painstaking is commendable. The only downright blunder of any importance that we can discover is when he mistranslates « Ognista wstęga zmieniała się w koło ogniste »... On the other hand, he is literal to absurdity, his English is commonplace and sometimes slangy, while his attempt to simplify the difficulties of Polish orthography by means of an arbitrary and wholesale system of transliteration [sic!] of his own invention is an absolute insult to the Polish nation and to common sense ⁶⁾.

As to the *Children of the Soil* (*Rodzina Połanieckich*), *The Athenaeum* remarked once more that Mr. Curtin's English was stiff and studded with curious Americanisms. A stilted manner was communicated to the dialogue by using « thou » in the conversation of friends and relatives. The attempt to render Polish names phonetically was not unreasonable; still they acquired « an uncouth and unfamiliar appearance » in print. The reviewer also observed that « Monachium » was the Polish for « Munich », and that the saying « *Tu, felix Mashko, nube* » did not mean « Thou, Mashko, art fortunate in marriage », but referred to the line addressed in olden times to the Imperial House of Austria ⁷⁾.

Similar was the verdict of Edmund Gosse. In his opinion, Curtin's version created the impression of being extremely faithful, but unhappily the translator's style was inelastic and dense to such a painful degree that the reader was constantly wearied and often puzzled by what, no doubt, was brisk and lucid enough in the Polish original. Nor were the German versions any happier. The abridged French edition of *Without Dogma* and the fragments of the *Trilogy* (which only Mr. Curtin seemed

5) Eugeniusz Szermentowski, *Pan Henryk* (London, 1956), pp. 346-47; 375.

6) *Athenaeum*, 3384 (London, September 3, 1892), p. 318.

7) *Ibid.*, 3593 (September 5, 1896), p. 320.

to have the courage to attack in its entirety) gave a more favorable impression of the style of the novelist ⁸⁾.

The American reviewers were usually more lenient. Commenting on *The Deluge*, the *Critic* did not hesitate to call the author most lucky to have Jeremiah Curtin for his translator. He was considered eminently suited for his task, doing the work full justice, and giving the reader an impression of the true spirit of the original ⁹⁾. The *Literary World* said of the stories included in *Yanko the Musician* that they were extremely well translated ¹⁰⁾. The Boston *Evening Gazette* wrote of *Hania* that the tales had been admirably translated by Curtin ¹¹⁾. *Current Literature* assured its readers that Curtin « has succeeded, probably, as far as any man can, in informing his English text with the spirit of the original » ¹²⁾. It became almost a custom to pay a compliment to the translator in addition to other remarks.

There were, however, some voices of dissent. They came from more conscientious and experienced critics who were acquainted with Slavic languages and the technique of translating. Nathan Haskell Dole, who wrote one of the earliest reviews of *Quo Vadis?* and bestowed high praises on the novelist, had some reservations about the translation. He conceded that it lacked « little of the highest art », and he commended some passages for their musical swing and rhythm. On the other hand, he noticed an annoying number of places where the typical Slavic mixture of tenses was maintained. He accused Curtin of rendering Polish phrases into literal English, producing thereby an awkward effect, e.g. when he saw « her lips of a queen » when « queenly lips » would have been more natural. The critic added several other remarks of a similar nature but concluded that « taken as a whole, the translation should be not only praised but even admired » ¹³⁾. The *Literary World* expressed its gratitude for the English version but nevertheless found it to be faulty. It commented that in his desire to reflect the poetry and passion of the Polish writer's style, Curtin sometimes failed to make himself clear to his readers. He employed « barely » for « scarcely » and occasionally misplaced the modifying adverbs. Other critical remarks referred to the wrong interpretation of certain Latin expressions. Still the overall opinion was that the translator's results deserved admiration ¹⁴⁾.

Despite the various reservations, the majority of reviewers accepted Curtin as a fair representative of Sienkiewicz on American soil. « The translation is made with Mr. Curtin's accustomed brilliancy, flecked by an occasional blur like "shady eyelashes", "to molden the pain" — more expressive than idiomatic », wrote one reviewer of *On the Field of Glory* ¹⁵⁾. « Jeremiah Curtin has translated the book with his usual faith-

8) *Living Age*, XIV (May 22, 1897), p. 527.

9) *The Critic*, XVII (February 27, 1892), p. 125.

10) *Literary World*, XXIV (December 2, 1893), p. 423.

11) Reprinted in *The Literary News*, XIX (February, 1898), p. 47.

12) *Current Literature*, XXX (April, 1901), p. 402.

13) *The Bookman*, IV (November 1896), pp. 249-50.

14) *Literary World*, XXVII (December 12, 1896), p. 446.

15) *The Nation*, LXXXII (March 1, 1906), p. 183.

fulness and sympathy with the author's genius », seconded an anonymous critic in *The Outlook* ¹⁶⁾. *The Arena* also voiced an approval: « Mr. Curtin's work as a translator is too well known to need comment here. In the present volume as in his previous work he has admirably preserved the distinctive Polish atmosphere of the study while giving us a finished production » ¹⁷⁾.

The *Knights of the Cross* gave an additional impulse for justifying the shortcomings of Curtin's style — by his alleged design to imitate the medieval diction. *The Outlook* resolutely made an unexpected statement: « The rugged quaintness of the style is skilfully rendered by Mr. Curtin who knows when to use literalism as an aid to the translator's art, and when to avoid it as a detriment to literary effect » ¹⁸⁾. Similarly, the *Literary News* wrote: « As usual, Jeremiah Curtin has made a somewhat stiff literal rendering that adds its tittle of rudeness to the archaic simplicity of the whole » ¹⁹⁾.

There was no doubt that many objections raised against Curtin's translations were fully justified. Nevertheless as a popularizer of Sienkiewicz's works, he reached his objective. He succeeded to convey to his contemporaries so many values of the original texts that the American public ranked the novelist among the leading writers of the world. Some Americans felt flattered by the fact that one of their countrymen discovered a prominent foreign author and made him available to all English speaking readers. This note of pride sounded in the pamphlet published as a refutation of the criticisms by E. Gosse ²⁰⁾.

Curtin's success was due considerably to his speed and diligence. He introduced Sienkiewicz in an auspicious moment and fulfilled his self-imposed duty with utmost dedication. In spite of his other obligations, he found the time and energy to meet the demands of the publishers and his public. He exploited his friendship with Sienkiewicz but his own stature as a scholar added to the prestige of the novelist. However, his shortcomings deprived Sienkiewicz's works of their greatest asset — clarity and the mature harmony of style. This was probably one of the reasons why Sienkiewicz was valued in America as master of rude effects, lacking subtlety. One may doubt whether any other translator would have been able to do him full justice; but a serious attempt, in this respect, by a better qualified writer could have been more successful.

Curtin was not the first translator of Sienkiewicz into English. This distinction belonged to W. R. Thompson who translated « From the Memoirs of a Tutor ». Besides Curtin, there were at least forty-four translators who dabbled with Sienkiewicz's texts, adapting them for English readers. Twenty-seven of them worked on a more ambitious

16) *The Outlook*, LXXXII (February 17, 1906), p. 376.

17) Amy C. Rich, *The Arena*, XXXV (May 1906), p. 559.

18) *The Outlook*, LXV (June 23, 1900), p. 458.

19) *The Literary News*, XXI, 7 (July, 1900), p. 194.

20) H. S.: *The Author...*, op. cit. Cf. also H. B. Segel, op. cit., p. 208; and *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 11.

scale and managed to translate at least one of the novelist's more important works:

- Babad, Nathan: *The Irony of Life (Rodzina Połanieckich); The Third Woman (Ta trzecia)*.
Bay, J. Christian: *Lillian Morris (Przez stepy)*.
Benecke, Else Cecilia: *Bartek the Conqueror*.
Binion, Samuel A. and Malevsky, Stefan: *Pan Michael; Quo Vadis?; Let Us Follow Him*, and others.
Blackett, Eveline: *Across the Plains*.
Britoff, Henry: *The Field of Glory*.
Bullick, Thomas see Hlasko, Vatslaf.
Dahl, B.: *Knights of the Cross* (abridged).
Drezmal, Max: *Whirlpools; In Desert and Wilderness*.
Gardner, Monica M.: *Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall*.
Gonski, Casimir: *Letters from America* (fragments).
Heyman, Jan: *Quo Vadis?*
Hlasko, Vatslaf and Bullick, Thomas: *Let Us Follow Him*.
Hogarth, C. J.: *Quo Vadis?*
Kennedy, Harriette E. and Umińska, Zofia: *Hania*.
Malevsky, S. see Binion, S. A.
Morley, Charles: *Letters from America*.
O'Connor Eccles, Charlotte: *Peasants in Exile (Za chlebem)*.
Ralf-Sues, Ilona: *Lighthousekeeper*.
Savoie-Carignan, E.: *So Runs the World; On the Sunny Shore; Whose Fault?*
de Soissons, S. C.: *So Runs the World*.
Słupski, Sigismund see Young, Iza.
Smith, William: *Quo Vadis?*
Strom, Ronald: *Letters from America*.
Tyszkiewicz, Alicja: *The Teutonic Knights*.
Umińska, Zofia see Kennedy, H. E.
Young, Iza: *Without Dogma*; and with Słupski, S.: *For Daily Bread*.

Besides this, minor items or fragments were translated by the following persons:

- Borski, Lucia: « The Mountaineer's Tale » (« Sabałowa bajka »).
Coleman, M. M.: a number of minor items.
Cooledge, Grace: « Słowacki's Address ».
Delano, Aline: « A Hindoo Legend » (« Dwie łąki »).
Fronczak, F.: « H. K. T. ».
Jopson, M. P.: « Yanko ».
de Kreuter, Victoria: « The Blessing » (« Bądź błogosławiona »).
Luter, Stanley (with M. M. Coleman): « God's All-Seeing Eye » (« Sabałowa bajka »).
Ostafin, Peter A.: « Yanko ».
Peterson, Virgilia: « The Angel » (« Jamioł »).
Thompson, W.R.: « Paul » (« Z pamiętnika korepetytora »).
Tuck, Ella M.: « Life's Secret » (« Pójdźmy za nim »).
Wachowski, J. P.: « On Mount Olympus ».
Zakheim, Eda and Rulh: « Letters from America » (fragments).
Zelczak, Helen: « To the Witch's Mount and Back » (« Jak się pan Lubomirski nawrócił i kościół w Tarnowie zbudował »).
Żebrowski, Rev. Walter: « Johnny the Musician ».

Some of Curtin's competitors earned a degree of recognition. The *Literary World* wrote of *Without Dogma* that it was excellently translated by Izak Young ²¹). The *Literary News* also emphasized that the translation of this novel was excellent ²²). Among the many translations of *Knights of the Cross*, at least one reviewer found Curtin's rival superior: « Into the question at issue between rival publishers we will not here enter, but Mr. Binion's translation seems smoother, and in his presentation the plot becomes more intelligible and therefore more enjoyable » ²³). The *Athenaeum* wrote about another version of the same novel, edited by John Manson, that it ran smoothly ²⁴). Yet these sporadic successes of the competitors did not undermine Curtin's prestige and until the end of his life he was tacitly recognized as the most authoritative exponent of Sienkiewicz's masterpieces.

After Curtin's death, two major novels were made available. The translation of *The Whirlpools* by Max Drezmal (the first Pole to be appointed in 1894 to be Chicago Board of Education) was greeted benevolently by the *Review of Reviews*: « The translation seems to be very well done, although a few of the purely Polish expressions are rendered, we think, with somewhat too literal English » ²⁵). But William Morton Payne, who had reviewed many other books of Sienkiewicz, had a different opinion and expressed it without mincing words: « Unfortunately, the translator of his [Sienkiewicz's] other novels is dead, and the new has fallen into the hands of a literary journeyman whose intentions may be of the best, but whose performance is stiff and ungainly. The translator's only idea of dealing with an idiomatic or picturesque phrase is to put it into bald and literal English, leaving the reader to puzzle out the meaning as best he may » ²⁶). The opinion of *The Independent* was practically identical: « ...Mr. Drezmal is a poor substitute for the translator of the earlier novels, the late Jeremiah Curtin. Mr. Curtin was no stylist, but Mr. Drezmal does not even command English idiom. Again, Mr. Curtin used to soften the Polish names for us in some degree and give us a key to the pronunciation. In this volume it is discouraging to come upon Jastrzeb in the first line and Kryzcki [sic!] in the third » ²⁷). The verdict of the *Catholic World* was limited to the statement that the translation was poorly done. Richard Barton in *The Bellman* found Drezmal's work painstaking and thorough but the translator constantly misused « shall » and « will » and was clumsy in the treatment of idioms ²⁸).

It would seem that such severe criticisms would disqualify Mr. Drezmal. Yet, he was not dismayed and his rendering of *In Desert and Wilderness* was more favorably received. *The Book News* gave warm commendation: « A book that must be read in translation often suffers at the hands of the "middlemen". But the lively spirit and vivid style of the original have been so thoroughly well preserved by the translator

21) *Literary World*, XXIV (May 20, 1893), p. 155.

22) *Literary News*, XIV (May, 1893), p. 145.

23) *Literary World*, XXXI (May 3, 1900), p. 68.

24) *Athenaeum*, 3889 (May 10, 1902), p. 592.

25) *Review of Reviews*, XLII (July 10, 1910), p. 123.

26) *Dial*, XLIX (July 16, 1910), p. 42.

27) *The Independent*, LXIX (August 25, 1910), pp. 424-25.

28) *The Bellman*, IX (July 2, 1910), p. 842.

Max. A. Drezmal, that one gets none of the impression of second-hand goods so often received from a cruder translation »²⁹⁾. On the other hand, the reviewer of the *Catholic World* soberly remarked: « Max Drezmal has evidently taken greater liberties with the Polish than the other translator, but we cannot say that he has succeeded any better »³⁰⁾.

Such contrasting statements demonstrated the instability of the criteria applied to the translators. Most reviewers were unable to compare the translation with the original text and relied heavily on their intuition and general impression. Curtin retained his leading position by force of mere inertia. He certainly played an historical role which made him practically irreplaceable: his translation of *Quo Vadis?* was reprinted as late as 1961 without revision.

IV. Welcoming the Trilogy

As early as July 5, 1890, the *Literary World* informed the public of the publication of this « strong historical romance, covering the remarkable period of Polish history ». For the sake of his readers, the reviewer briefly repeated the information provided by the translator in the preface. Slavishly following Curtin's suggestions, he made the Poles responsible for fatal political errors, and he lingered over the contrast in the character of the Poles, extremely compatible in their personal feelings but deficient in collective wisdom. As to the literary value of the novel, the reviewer was most favorably impressed:

The whole panorama of a land under stress of war is here unfolded with imaginative breadth and clear detail. The scenes of camp life, genial in the hours of truce or breaking into the tremendous confusion of battle fairly Homeric in the winged phrases which describe it; figures of men, kingly, heroic or gross and even comic; of women — the virago, half-noble and half-peasant, the proud and gentle princess, or that Polish feminine type which has been defined as resembling « punch made with holy water »; the stately daughters of Zbaraska [sic!] with their coquettish maid of honor — all these pass vividly before the eyes of the reader, in an atmosphere which seems to resound with strange voices, with the beat of drums and brazen clash of cymbals, with a song and the untunable sharp cry of Tartar pipes « mingled in a kind of mighty note, wild and sad as the Wilderness itself ». It is a romance which, once read, is not easily forgotten¹⁾.

After this impressive eulogy, a review printed on July 19, 1890 in *The Critic* sounded almost like an anticlimax. It surely reflected the spirit of summer vacations; it suggested that the novel should be reserved for a long, monotonous journey by rail, or for time spent at a

29) *The Book News*, XXX, 8 (April, 1912), p. 593.

30) *Catholic World*, XCV (July, 1912), p. 548.

1) *Literary World*, XXI (July 5, 1890), pp. 216-17.

summer resort. Despite the critic's frivolous attitude, he left no doubt that he considered *With Fire and Sword* a brilliant literary work. Its heroes were brutal, but winning, after the fashion of their epoch. From the beginning to the last page, the novel absorbs the reader giving him no respite. Military adventures, the sack of cities, the torture of captives, the flight of the heroine, the ambition of rival leaders, the sacrifice of patriots, all these incidents succeed each other in every chapter, « and lest the bloody history of so many years of warfare should pall upon dainty appetites, the author has interwoven with his theme a tale of heroic love surviving many a rude test to arrive at the happy ending » ²⁾.

A different tone sounded in *Public Opinion*. The critic was already aware that Sienkiewicz had made his name by the *Trilogy*. He did not hesitate to rank this work among the strongest historical novels of the century. Although the narrative was rapid and complicated, it was not difficult to understand its development: indeed, the effect of reading the book was of great simplicity. The novel was a reminder of Polish freedom, recently thrown into obscurity by the amazing progress of the Saxon races in constitutional freedom: « But the strength with which the wind of liberty blew over central Europe in previous centuries is a testimony which the rulers of the earth need to remember whenever they think of building for the future. Some of the spots where liberty has made its most heroic defenses are now despised. But there is in a man an indefinite capability of renovation and resurrection » ³⁾. It was certainly amazing that this review, one of the earliest in the United States, penetrated so deeply the concealed message of the writer.

The Literary News defined *With Fire and Sword* as a tremendous work in subject, size, and treatment. This opinion was substantiated by a comparison with other masterpieces: « As a historical novel, it has nothing to rival it except Count Tolstoi's *War and Peace*... There is a Homeric spirit in its descriptions, and its heroes ride across the stage, shining in armor and stained with blood with a largeness of step like Agamemnon and Achilles. At the same time there is nothing unnatural or overstrained... The adventures are most extraordinary, but not more so than the times made natural, and the primitive characters of the "dramatis personae" make their frank passions equally faithful. As a story teller, Sienkiewicz rivals Dumas, and the reader follows on unwearied from chapter to chapter with the thrill of absorbing adventure... As a historical novel *With Fire and Sword* is entitled to a place in a very high rank by the side of *War and Peace*, and as a novel of chivalrous adventure, by the side of *The Three Musketeers* » ⁴⁾.

Confrontation of Sienkiewicz with Homer, Tolstoi, and Dumas seemed to the early reviewers the best way of describing the character of the novel. A sketch in *The Nation* added an association with Shakespeare. From all other knights and warriors it singled out Zagłoba, as a wonderfully portrayed character: « Most prominent of all, Zagłoba — sot and braggart, "an evil tongue but a golden heart", befriended by the Fates, his every act of cowardice turned into seeming heroism, whining at danger, but facing it for love of friend and country; swearing, swilling,

2) *The Critic*, XVII (July 19, 1890), pp. 29-30.

3) *Public Opinion*, IX, 15 (July 19, 1890), p. 354.

4) *Literary News*, XI, 7 (July, 1890), p. 198.

toasting, whimpering, but ever accomplishing; wit and bully, a Falstaff for greed and swagger, a Prospero for tender care of the beautiful Helena — is a creation of which any author might be proud, and from whom, notwithstanding the gruesome places through which one has accompanied him, one parts with affection and regret »⁵⁾. This impressive praise of Sienkiewicz's hero was an indirect tribute to the translator who managed to convey so effectively the author's intentions.

A few criticisms were also leveled. The book was found to be unnecessarily loaded with horror. Even if history did impale its war victims on stakes, still the author might have spared the readers this sight. The novel was also considered too lengthy. Realizing that the critic risked appearing weakly Anglo-Saxon, he insisted that 776 pages of closely printed octavo devoted to battles, drinking bouts and fantastic adventures smacked of overplus. Nonetheless, he admitted that many an eye would moisten for brave Podbipienta and a tear shed at the eight-hundredth page of a historical romance would be an eloquent testimony to the power of the novelist⁶⁾.

The significance of *With Fire and Sword* became more manifest after the publication of the second part of the *Trilogy*. William Morton Payne remarked that the two works might fairly be considered as a single novel, for the story was continuous, and many of the characters still remained on stage. He advised his readers not to be deterred by the size of the narrative:

It is true that life is short, but the shortest life has periods of enforced idleness, caused by temporary disablement, or railway and steamship journeys, in which such a work is a boon of the most positive sort. For, « *experto crede* », this book is emphatically of the kind which best fills such gaps in the routine of life, it is intensely, absorbingly interesting from first to last; it is full of the best kind of fighting and love making, the two permanent elements of all healthy romance; it has a great but unfamiliar historical background, and its characters are of the most living in fiction. Indeed, nothing short of genius could have created the character of Zagłoba, most valiant of trenchermen and wine bibbers; most valiant in battle (when put to it), although greatly preferring stratagem to open fight, the part of Ulysses to that of Hector; most valiant also in encounters of wit and in self-praise. Really his creator has almost added a new type to literature, has provided Falstaff with a companion and a foil. Sienkiewicz is no drawing-room novelist; his theme is war — semi-barbarous war at that — and none of its grim horrors are spared. He has as much realism as Tolstoi, although of a healthier sort; he realizes the historical setting of his romance as fully as does his master; and he does what the latter does not — he presents us with a variety of characters so strongly individualized that it is impossible to forget them. Moreover, he exalts and glorifies the emotion of patriotism as few other writers have done⁷⁾.

5) *The Nation*, LII, 1337 (February 12, 1891), pp. 141-42.

6) *Ibid.*, p. 142.

7) *Dial*, XII (April, 1892), pp. 427-28.

Readers of *The Deluge* were usually dazzled with its incidents. A different view was expressed in the London *Athenaeum*, a journal well-known to Americans. The critic conceded that the novel abounded with such episodes as battles, duels, abduction, and other stirring adventures of every sort; but it was also inspired with human interest and emanated enthralling vividness and contagious enthusiasm. It would be wrong to define it as a romance of the Dumas type. In this respect, it was the very contrast of the Hungarian novelist Maurus Jokai who piled incident upon incident until the startling denouement. Sienkiewicz's method was altogether different: he was always simple, natural, and tranquil. His portraits, as those in Tolstoi's *War and Peace*, conveyed the impression of personal reminiscences. He made his narrative of events as vivid and circumstantial as if he had invisibly been their personal witness. The plot was reduced to the role of a mere thread running through and binding together the separate episodes: an idyll was embedded in an epic ⁸⁾.

If some reviewers considered *With Fire and Sword* too lengthy, then this criticism was likewise applicable to *The Deluge*. *The Nation* castigated the author for this weakness. The adventures were not only enacted, but related and re-related by different characters in the book. Finally, the reader would find himself in the position of a musical critic at Bayreuth who wondered why Wagner had not spared himself the trouble of repeated explanations on the stage, by allowing the persons of the drama to go out between the acts and purchase a book of the play. Condensation would have been easy and would have lessened the impending danger that the readers would be limited to the patient reviewers and to Mr. Charles Dana, to whom the translation was dedicated. In spite of this facetious mood, the general verdict of *The Deluge* was favorable. The critic enjoyed its speedy tempo and the skilful portrayals of characters. He called Olenka Minerva-like and defined Kmicic as a figure whose rages, hates, furies of vengeance and loyalty would appeal to the coolest imagination. The author was successful in making his numerous kings, princes, and hetmans remarkably well-differentiated ⁹⁾.

The Spectator repeated the advice concerning a desirable abridgement and even reproached Curtin for not performing this operation for the sake of his readers. Quite apart from its mere length, the novel would be improved artistically by considerable compression. Yet, the reviewer called Kmicic a powerful creation. He did not estimate the work as faultless but said that it presented passages which no European novelist need be ashamed to acknowledge ¹⁰⁾.

In one of his « Literary Chats » the editor of *Harper's Magazine* concentrated on Zagłoba. Although the note was published in May 1892 when *The Deluge* was already available, it was based exclusively on *With Fire and Sword*. The critic grasped the full meaning of the inimitable Polish Ulysses. Most interesting, although unconvincing, were the initial passages stressing the significance of new literary types:

The creation of a new character in the world of fiction is as important in many ways as the coming into real life of a person of

8) *Athenaeum*, 3384 (London, September 3, 1892), p. 318.

9) *The Nation*, LIV, 1402 (May 12, 1892), p. 362.

10) *The Spectator*, LXIX (July 1892), p. 25.

consequence... To put the case very strongly, and with all the apparent advantage on the side of the real, will the Englishmen of 1910 rather give up Mr. Pickwick than Mr. Gladstone — suppose either is to be dropped out of the national possessions? It is true that Hamlet has given the world of critics almost as much trouble as Henry VIII has given the historians, but his case is exceptional. Speaking generally, the fictitious character has the advantage of the real in that he is not a prey of the biographer. His life does not need to be constantly rewritten on the discovery of new evidence. He has not to be exposed or whitewashed or defended. As he was originally created he is a constant quantity, a definite pattern to be followed or avoided, or, as it may be, to be simply enjoyed. It is with unmixed pleasure, therefore, that we welcome a new type in fiction ¹¹).

As an isolated novel, *Pan Michael* received a cooler reception. William Morton Payne stated that the work contained fewer memorable episodes than *With Fire and Sword* and *The Deluge*; he also remarked that its culminating episode of the siege of Kamenyets did not equal in impressiveness the magnificent account of the siege of Chenstohova ¹²). *The Literary World* and *The Nation* praised the heroine Basia, « that tender-hearted hoyden », attesting to Sienkiewicz's limitless inventive powers ¹³). *The Critic* spoke of *Pan Michael* as chivalrous, manly, tender, and terrible, but a little unreal.

On the other hand, only the last part of the *Trilogy* allowed the critics to view the majestic structure of the whole cycle and its guiding idea. *The Literary News* pointed out that the novelist achieved for Poland what Wagner did for Germany, what Dumas did for France, and Walter Scott for all English-speaking people. In Sienkiewicz's novels, the historical characters appeared not as mere puppets or shadows, but as very real men and women. His warriors fight, love, hate with Homeric simplicity. They have their Nestor, their Agamemnon, their great Achilles sulking in his tent. The scene is full of life and action. There are so many descriptions of war that sometimes the reader is tempted to exclaim « something too much of it ». And yet nowhere has there ever come a more powerful plea for peace than from the pages of *With Fire and Sword* ¹⁴).

William Morton Payne felt secure in his opinion that from every point of view this Polish *Trilogy* deserved to be ranked among the greatest of all works of historical fiction. It portrayed an epoch with unsurpassed vigor. From the artistic point of view, to have created the character of Zagłoba was a feat comparable to Shakespeare's creation of Falstaff and Goethe's creation of Mephistopheles. The other heroes were truly representative of their respective races — Pole, Tartar, and Cossack. As to the heroines, only great masters could have created a gallery of equally noble and lovable women. The work was certainly superior to the average literary production called "current literature". The real secret of the Polish novelist's power was explained by his ability to penetrate beyond

11) *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXXXV (June 1892), p. 153.

12) *Dial*, XVI, 181 (January 1, 1894), p. 21.

13) *Literary World*, XXIV, 26 (December 30, 1893), p. 459; *The Nation*, LIX, 1524 (September 13, 1894), p. 198.

14) *Literary News*, XIV (November, 1893), p. 336.

the conventional surface of life. Love, patriotism, and religion were given unchecked play in his work happily completed. It was indeed a work « for strengthening the hearts »¹⁵⁾.

One of the controversial aspects of the *Trilogy* discussed time and again by American reviewers was the excess of cruelty. The importance attached to this problem was partly due to the fact that some reviewers were women, e.g. the unsigned reviews in *The Nation* were written by Emma N. Ireland and Adelaide Solberg¹⁶⁾. To such complaints *The Critic* firmly replied that the era depicted in these novels was fierce and terrible so that the works were not exactly boudoir brochures or « *Petit-Maitre* » precociousnesses; it was not surprising that they reeked with sweat and blood and included scenes of intolerable ferocity. The readers felt that they were walking the ground with Homeric heroes, with Titans and with demi-gods. Although the psychological novel was in vogue, Sienkiewicz's tales of action were also good and after a surfeit of subjective and introspective stories, stimulating to mental power and manliness¹⁷⁾.

The *Trilogy* met with general approval and established Sienkiewicz's reputation in America as supreme master of fiction. He was admired for his ability to inspire his characters with life. In order to demonstrate his art, the critics confronted him with the greatest authors, both ancient and modern. They appreciated his narrative zest which made his books irresistibly fascinating. They recognized their moral power, comforting to human hearts. Little was said of the national message of the *Trilogy* but it was not overlooked. The qualities of Sienkiewicz's style, so highly valued by his countrymen, were practically ignored; this was unfortunately one of the drawbacks of reading the *Trilogy* in translation.

V. *Wrestling with the present*

Without Dogma, which had been well received in Germany and France and had considerably enhanced Sienkiewicz's literary stature in Russia, had less appeal to the American public. Some critics frankly admitted that people preferred the novels of incident and cared not for fiction, overladen with psychological deliberations. In this respect, there was a significant difference between British and American readers. Some refined English critics considered the novel commonplace, while Americans found it excessively sophisticated.

The London *Athenaeum* obviously overlooked or ignored the English translation of *Without Dogma* and relied instead on the French version. The verdict was devastating in its severity and laconism. As a curiosity it deserves to be quoted in full:

Sans dogme is one of those dull diaries of the lover's state of soul which was fashionable from 1805 to 1820, relieved, however, here

15) *Dial*, XVI, 181, loc. cit.

16) Their names were disclosed in « The Index of Contributors », in *The Nation*, I (1953), pp. 200 and 227; II, p. 450.

17) *The Critic*, XXIV (February 24, 1894), p. 126.

and there by little touches of brilliant modern wit, but relieved, alas! how seldom ¹⁾.

The American reviewers were more considerate. *The Literary World* expressed its view that the novel was too prolix for Americans, for whom the devil should show his designs more speedily; but they would best appreciate the reserve and righteousness of the heroine. As to its literary value, the critic was favorable and confronted the book with the atmosphere of the *Fin de Siècle*. He spoke at some length on the content of the book and its psychological complications. The time-worn plot was made dramatic in its power and was treated with freshness. The moral aspect of the work was discussed with some embarrassment:

Anida's [sic!] purity, gentleness, and firmness impart a moral atmosphere to the volume which the perversities of Leon's reasoning would else make diabolical. That at last he should conquer himself is also moral; but if a diary were an autobiography it would be as unwise as a revelation of folly and frailty as was the diary of Maria Bashkirtseff. As it is fiction, our dislike of its subject-matter is limited by the extreme skill with which the material is handled. Anida does not reason, she simply takes alarm at innuendos and does the right, bound by its dogma; while her lover, without a creed, endeavors to bend her to his view of life. The recoil which he experiences when he learns her child to be born whose father is her husband is masterly in its analysis of emotions. It is, in fact, the very best treatment we ever remember of such a theme, for by analysis it becomes a theme rather than a condition or act... Mr. Sienkiewicz dissected pessimism as a realist, investing his process with all the glamour of romance. His realism, moreover, is not the photography of trivialities, but of greatness, natural or distorted. Whenever action occurs it is simple, direct, in opposition to the indirectness of reasoning as one wishes rather than as facts are. There are many inimitable but unforced epigrams, such as « a genius without portfolio », referring to lack of occupation ²⁾.

The Nation, which published one of the earliest American reviews of the novel, was startled by Sienkiewicz's versatility. The historical novels had made the reading public believe that the Polish author was a new Dumas. The recent work proved that he was also a Turgenev, a Tolstoi, a Balzac, « and something besides, different from any one of these, — a something which we can only call Sienkiewicz, a name henceforth to be its own and only description ». Once more it was repeated that his historical novels were defaced by an overplus of horror. His contemporary novel showed the most sordid side of life's experiences. Obviously, both works were not written for the Anglo-Saxon public. Yet, *Without Dogma* was confronted with a Shakespearian character:

The hero of the novel is a sceptic who treats sceptically even his own scepticism. His phrases bring Hamlet to mind; he also considers himself a victim of « *l'improductivité Slave* » and a « genius

1) *Athenaeum*, 3537 (August 10, 1895), p. 189.

2) *The Literary World*, XXIV (May 20, 1893), p. 155.

without portfolio ». The fatal habit of pausing to philosophize keeps him back from happiness at the moment when he has adopted a creed, the love of Aniela. After she has married another man, he finds how irresistible the power of such « dogma » may be. He devotes his energies to winning the woman back. Only the sight of her suffering checked him from time to time, and only her spiritual simplicity saved them from the more dignified tragedy of death. The awful candor of Leon's self-analysis made *Without Dogma* breathtaking like all true pictures of mortal weakness. Only now and then had literature afforded such a smiting appeal to human consciousness as in this remarkable book ³⁾.

The reviewer drafted a brief synopsis of the novel and defined it as « the autobiography of passion ». In conclusion he remarked that to the majority of readers delighting in the record of deeds rather than of thoughts, these 420 pages of introspective analysis of the soul's emotions would offer little that was attractive. But the book would be found rewarding by all explorers in the realm of psychology. They would pronounce *Without Dogma* one of the notable novels of the year ⁴⁾.

An even more distrustful evaluation of the reader's psychological curiosity was conveyed in *Public Opinion*. It recommended *Without Dogma* as a wonderful novel, dealing with some « very curious mental conditions ». The reviewer admitted that the plot resembled many other stories but that it was worked out with originality and genius. The inner developments of the hero's souls were laid bare with all the skill of a most acute analyst. The work had little chance to become popular but it was a strong and powerful novel ⁵⁾.

The Literary News reprinted an essay on *Without Dogma* from the *New York Times*. It stressed the contrast between the Catholic surroundings and the hero, who was at heart a pagan. It was quite an achievement to construct a diary of so many pages without wearying the readers. The author fascinated the critic by his « full power of detail and his poetical talent which made him capable of taking a minor incident and dressing it up in the happiest manner » ⁶⁾.

A surprising tribute was paid to *Without Dogma* by Rev. George McDermot. In his essay « Henryk Sienkiewicz », he glorified Aniela as an embodiment of feminine charm and placed her among the most enchanting females in world literature. According to him, Sienkiewicz was a creator, in other words, a maker of men and women « like Homer, whose Nausicaa is so charming, as a great critic said, that one shrinks from making her the subject of prosaic comment; like Dante, whose Francesca's gentleness is an unutterable pain; like Shakespeare, whose Rosalind is the ideal for whom the soldier would face death... In her own way, Aniela in *Without Dogma* deserves a place with these perfect embodiments of pure and tender imagination. We say that neither Goethe

3) *The Nation*, LVI (June 29, 1893), p. 476.

4) *The Critic*, XXIII (September 16, 1893), p. 182.

5) *Public Opinion*, XV (June 17, 1893), p. 200.

6) *The Literary News*, XIV (May 1893), pp. 144-45.

nor Byron... has in the Margaret of the one or the Medora of the other shaped anything so womanly as Aniela » ⁷⁾.

A belated review in *The Literary World* based on one of the reprints of the novel was proof that after all the readers did not reject the work. The reviewer deemed that the moral wholesomeness of *Without Dogma* was debatable. The hero's character and fate could be interpreted as a momentous warning, while the heroine's fidelity to duty illustrated the author's positive message. However, the man's reasoning and conduct made the novel an antithesis of sane and sound ethics. Anyway the work was noteworthy for its clear and terse expression of thoughts, more often left unexpressed in the mind than put into words; and as an analysis of character, it showed the power and skill of a master hand ⁸⁾.

Children of the Soil (The Połaniecki Family) was acclaimed without such scruples. Nathan Haskell Dole, invariably sober and sympathetic toward Sienkiewicz's works, saw in the novel an image of the everyday life of the Polish capital. In a brief synopsis, he skilfully disentangled various ramifications of the plot. It involved a great number of actors but all of them stood out with utmost distinctness, absolutely unblurred, painted with all the minute accuracy of a verbal Meissonier. As a literary genre, the work was a *chronique intime*, as well as a *chronique scandaleuse*. This ingenious confrontation with French literature rightly outlined the two structural components of the novel. Dole called the work « a wonderful revelation of human pettiness and human genuinenesses ». The characters were evidently true to life: « Their hidden motives, revealed under the dissector's scalpel, are seen to be working as they must work not only as Poles, but as fellow-mortals with kindred hearts and souls. Long as the story is — longer as it might easily be — you would not have it shortened: you would not object to knowing what became of Pan Zaviłovsky, or of the adventurer Mashko, or of several others who flash out into the darkness like sparks from an anvil » ⁹⁾.

In an essay on the novel in *The Critic*, the starting point was the comparison of the work with the tale « Master and Man » (« Khozyain i rabotnik ») by Leo Tolstoy. The Russian writer developed the idea that to give was more blessed than to receive. Although its underlying traits were not so noble, the same motif could be traced in Sienkiewicz's bulky novel. Still it demonstrated that it would be impossible for the Slav to keep out of love, or to follow his own interests consistently rather than those of his neighbor's. As the eccentric Professor Vaskovski has put it, the future would belong to this race, the youngest of the Aryans. However, the Polish writer was by no means as earnest, nor in any way as great a writer, as the Russian. Tolstoy did not care for decadentism; Sienkiewicz often referred to it ¹⁰⁾. The reviewer felt the novel was interesting primarily for its image of a specific epoch with its currents and undercurrents.

William Morton Payne discussed the change of the title introduced by the translator, who substituted *Children of the Soil* for *The Połaniecki*

7) George McDermot, « Henryk Sienkiewicz, First Part », in *The Catholic World*, LXVI (February 1898), pp. 652-53.

8) *The Literary World*, XXX (August 19, 1899), p. 259.

9) *The Bookman*, I (July 1895), pp. 396-97.

10) *The Critic*, XXVI (June 15, 1895), p. 435.

Family. (Another translator, N. Babad, introduced a third title, *The Irony of Life*). The critic justified the change which, in his opinion, harmonized with the tenor of the narrative. It dealt, for the most part, with Poles, bringing into frequent prominence that attachment to country — in the sense of « pays » rather than of « patrie » — which should be considered as one of the most valuable elements of national character, whether in Poland or elsewhere. This aspect of the novel lurked in the saying of Marynia that more than once when she went out to the fields, she felt nearer God. Połaniecki and his friends were, at first, city-dwellers but eventually were brought into intimate relations with the soil ¹¹⁾.

Payne placed *Children of the Soil* mid-way between the highly analytical and introspective *Without Dogma* and *The Trilogy* with its glowing scenes and its tremendous sweep. The novel offered none of those aberrations of tendency to which many modern novelists weakly resorted. Men and women participating in the plot were masterfully delineated. Marynia was made « saintly without being insipid, sweet without being tiresome ». The most ingenious statement concerning the novel was reserved for the conclusion:

The strength of the book is in its entire sanity, its freedom from exaggeration of sensationalism, and its psychological insight. It must be reckoned among the finer fiction of our time, and shows its author to be almost as great a master in the field of the domestic novel as he had previously been shown to be in that of imaginative historical romance. Yet we must, in conclusion, express slight preference for the chronicler of the seventeenth-century Commonwealth over the novelist of nineteenth-century Warsaw. The « fierce wars and faithful loves » of the former represent an even higher reach than the delicate delineations and sober philosophies of the latter. But, viewed in either aspect, the work of Henryk Sienkiewicz has already earned for him a place in the foremost rank of living novelists ¹²⁾.

The Athenaeum raised some of the points marked by Dole and Payne but was more conservative. It emphasized that *Children of the Soil* could not rival the historical novel *With Fire and Sword* which made the name of Sienkiewicz famous throughout Europe, but as a study of Polish life and manners, it could interest the English-reading public. It was more like the charming sketches « Yanko the Musician » and « Bartek the Victor ». Some characters were found to be vigorously drawn, and Litka and her mother charming. The scene of Litka's death resembled a similar scene in *Dombey and Son* by Charles Dickens.

The two contemporary novels of Sienkiewicz did not impress the American readers as much as the *Trilogy* but they definitely confirmed his prominent literary stature. They were a demonstration of unusual versatility. Their superb craftsmanship was unanimously acclaimed. Some reservations were held as to their moral aspect. Strangely enough, *Without Dogma* provoked more objections than *Children of the Soil*, while in Poland, the opposite was true. No American critic castigated Połaniecki for his unscrupulous selfishness. The trait, which so many

11) *The Dial*, XIX (July 1, 1895), pp. 20-21.

12) *The Athenaeum* (Edinburgh, September 5, 1896), p. 320.

Polish critics found revolting — a lack of anything extraordinary in his character — was valued by Payne as one of the outstanding qualities of the entire work. Americans also sensed a touch of irony and the author's reluctance to petrify definite moral standards. This dwarfed the caliber of the work but made its moral aspect more acceptable. On the whole, the American discussion concerning both novels was lively and penetrating; in comparison with the Polish vehement reaction it was sobering and constructive.

VI. *The making of a best seller*

The first Polish instalments of *Quo Vadis?* appeared at the end of March 1895 and two weeks later Curtin began their translation. He steadfastly continued to work at it despite adverse conditions. The publishers issued the English version in the fall of 1896. Hence, the American readers were able to enjoy the novel almost concomitantly with the author's own countrymen.

Nathan Haskell Dole was the first to greet *Quo Vadis?*; his review appeared in 1896 in the November issue of *The Bookman*. It was written in an enthusiastic manner. It confirmed Dole's own theory that the historical novel was a more convenient medium to awaken interest than the prosaic chronicle. The novelist can bend material to suit his objective, and adorn the narrative with all the flowers of imagination. The historian's Muse Cleo must be content to sit on the shelf.

Sienkiewicz, relying on a sentence taken from Tacitus, made Petronius the protagonist of his exciting drama and utilized his « Supper of Trimalchio »; he made him a lovable character. Vinitius he drew with an even freer hand. When Aeneas entered the temple in Carthage, he was amazed to see the walls decorated with scenes from the Trojan War. Sienkiewicz conceived his story in a somewhat similar manner. He made it a marvelous succession of colossal scenes glowing with dazzling colors. He painted the panorama of the Forum, with all its wealth of temples and shops, and its jostling throngs from all parts of the known world. He depicted the orgies of Nero, the gladiatorial games in the Circus Maximus, the conflagration of the city, and the brutal, almost unbearable scenes of the persecution of the early Christians. These episodes were contrasted with the serene, eloquent, and noble pictures of Christianity.

Dole compared *Quo Vadis?* with several other historical novels but he had no doubt as to Sienkiewicz's superiority. He concluded his essay emphasizing the thrilling fascination of the work: « It is said that if a person standing at the foot of Niagara merely touches the awful sheet of water with a finger, he is drawn irresistibly in; and so if a person begins this book, the torrential sweep of its immensity becomes instantly absorbing. It is one of the great books of the day » ¹⁾.

A critic in *Public Opinion* looked at the novel from the point of view of the public. He predicted that *Quo Vadis?* would have many

1) *The Bookman*, IV (November 1896), p. 249.

enthusiastic readers: « *Quo Vadis?* is grand in conception and marvelously vivid in detail. Dealing as it does with Rome in the days of Nero, the burning of Rome and the martyrdom of Christians afford a series of pictures which, in the hands of a master of fiction, could not but be thrilling. The scenes in the arena are depicted with minuteness and fidelity to history which bring the awful scene before us with a terrible vividness ». Petronius was shown by the novelist as the leisure-loving, generous, just man, and the author made him the mainspring of the narrative. The martyrdom of St. Peter became a fitting end to the bloody catalogue of crime. Sienkiewicz's reputation was already made; but had it not been, this book would have convinced the reading world as to the measure of his ability as a creative artist ²⁾.

The Catholic World discussed *Quo Vadis?* as early as December 1896. The reviewer saw in it a valuable addition to other books relating to the early period of Christianity. This novel was so powerful that not all would be strong enough to read it through. The portrayal of the daily life of pagan Rome, under the monster-minded tyrant, was made enthralling. Vast pictures fill the canvas of the narrative, majestic in their conception, gorgeous in their coloring, and full of real life and movement as the « vitagraph ». Every line of the work exhibits a mind stored with a knowledge of the people, their habits, their tendencies, their houses, their divinities, their institutions, — everything indeed that characterized the Romans as leaders of an ancient civilization. Nero is marvelously depicted; Petronius represents the class of wealthy fops and literati of that degenerate period.

The critic felt that some scenes would have been far better omitted. Of course, the drastic episodes were inserted by Sienkiewicz for a different purpose than in the works of Emile Zola. The Polish novelist put them in deliberately; yet, they were unnecessary and marred the effect of other pictures which sank deep into the soul. This could also be said of the scenes in the amphitheater. The details of carnage and cruelty were too long drawn out. On the other hand, the Apostles Peter and Paul were masterfully painted, and the addresses and prayers which the novelist put into their mouths revealed a true conception of their respective mission and the spirit of their joint teachings. No other work presented a more vivid idea of the curious moral conflict between Roman paganism and clandestine Christianity ³⁾.

In reviewing twenty-six different books in *Dial*, Payne gave prominence to *Quo Vadis?* He was aware that the choice of the theme might produce an unpleasant impression, since other writers had vulgarized it. He recollected with disgust the long series of books, by well-meaning but ill-equipped evangelical writers, whose tracts in the guise of historical fiction had done their utmost to pervert the subject. The atrocious taste and historical recklessness of such books as, for example, one by Dean Farrar, had caused the reader to hesitate about having anything to do with it. Yet, *Quo Vadis?* was a book of another category. Sienkiewicz wrote it from the standpoint of an artist and historian of culture. It had nothing to do with the sectarians or apologetic tractarians.

2) *Public Opinion*, XXI (November 19, 1896), p. 665.

3) *The Catholic World*, LXIV (December 1896), pp. 411-12.

Payne resolutely classified *Quo Vadis?* as one of the greatest historical novels ever written:

As a romance of classic antiquity its position is almost unique. In seeking for works with which to compare it, we naturally bring to mind two classes of books, the one represented by *Hypatia* and *The Last Days of Pompeii*, the other by such products of the German school as the classical novels of Herren Ebers, Hamerling, and Dahn. Now, the books of the former class, fascinating as they are, suffer from their lack of historical insight and their burden of rhetoric; while the books of the latter class, although written from fullness of knowledge, are so devoid of dramatic and literary inspiration, so mechanical in their structure and action, that they are not easily readable at their best, and at their worst, are appalling examples of everything that works of fiction should not be.

These comparative reflections illustrated well the prejudices which Sienkiewicz's new work had to overcome.

In Payne's opinion, *Quo Vadis?* embodied the best qualities of both categories of novels and remained relatively free from their defects. The author put himself into the life of the Neronian era and made the readers see it from the inside. His knowledge of Roman history and literature was so ample and so thoroughly assimilated that he was able to invest his romance of antiquity with the same semblance of reality that he had shown in the *Trilogy*. The historical figures of Nero, Petronius, Peter, and Paul of Tarsus were drawn with force and insight; the fictitious figures of the lovers, Vinitius and Lygia, were made into credible creations of real vitality. The descriptions of the Roman feasts, Christian assemblies, the burning of Rome and the ghastly spectacles of the arena were described with a realism that even Zola could not easily have surpassed. The interest in the book, whether historical, descriptive, or imaginative, was absorbing, and did not flag from first to last. « That anyone should have written such a book would be remarkable; that it should have come from the author of the Polish *Trilogy* and *Children of the Soil*, and in such prompt succession, is one of the most astonishing facts in recent literary history » ⁴⁾.

A sober appreciation of the novel in *Poet Lore* differed from other early repercussions. It called attention to some weaknesses in the narrative, as for instance, the unconvincing transition of Vinitius from cruel selfishness to Christian love and charity. To present such a sudden change as a plausible development without the intervention of the supernatural would tax most students of human nature. No wonder that the process of evolution as painted by the novelist became rather external than vital. However, the reviewer conceded that the romance was skilfully interwoven with the historical events. He considered Nero the most powerfully portrayed character of the book. The Emperor's nature, at once artistic and egotistic, indulged in the most consummate cruelty,

⁴⁾ *The Dial*, XXII (January 1, 1897), pp. 19-20.

amalgamated with colossal vanity. Nero impersonated an intricate and deeply rooted antinomy which could be also traced in modern times:

Nero is a being who creates evil in order that he may enrich his artistic experiences, and all to what end? Not even that he may produce great works of art, but simply that he may gain the plaudits of the multitude and pose before them as the supreme master in all things from epic poetry to buffoonery. He stands as a terrible warning to those who contend that the true artist must perforce write out of his own experiences instead of out of his sympathies. The logical outcome of the persistence in this theory would be exactly such a thirst for creation of experiences as that shown by Nero. Following upon the heels of the artificially prepared experience comes the utter annihilation of sympathy and the death of all true art » ⁵⁾.

Scores of other reviews appeared in the dailies, and they undoubtedly contributed to the widespread resonance of the novel, although their influence was more ephemeral. Some of them were reprinted in various periodicals. The *Literary News* repeated the view of the *Chicago Tribune* that the subject chosen by the greatest Polish novelist for *Quo Vadis?* was of tremendous interest to the whole Christian civilization, « and right grandly did the author rise to it ». The work drew a masterly picture of Roman life at the critical moment when Christianity ceased to smoulder and began to blaze. The world needs such books at intervals to remind it again of the surpassing power and beauty of Christ's central idea. The climax of the novel, the scene in the arena, is so thrilling that beside it, the famous chariot race in *Ben-Hur* seems tame ⁶⁾.

The American was fascinated with Sienkiewicz's stupendous and unexpected success. It admitted that English-speaking people have been eagerly on the outlook for the truly great work of fiction which would redeem the closing quarter of the brilliant nineteenth century from the decadence in fiction. In their self-conceit, they counted on it coming from a British or an American pen. They classed the foreign product as too flashy or too dull for their cultured taste. At last, the anticipated great work did appear, but it hailed from a Nazareth unknown to Anglo-American maps:

To poor Poland belongs the rare glory of having given a story book that belongs to all Christendom, a book that can be read, and will be read, over and over again by readers learned and simple of every civilized land, because it retells the most precious, most thrilling history in the world's annals with a newness of detail, accurate with the research of a century of scholarship, and with the master-hand of a splendid but also a restrained dramatic artist. There seems to be more artistic genius to the square mile in Poland than in the larger lands, though its dreadful language keeps us from knowing it. But, so far as a limited observation permits the criticism, Polish genius in music and song dazzles by its beauty and fire more than it evokes calm satisfaction over its lasting charm. The time has come to revise this flimsy verdict ⁷⁾.

5) *Poet-Lore*, I (IX) January 1897), pp. 147-48.

6) *Literary News*, XVIII (January 1897), p. 30.

7) *The American*, XXVI (January 9, 1897), p. 28.

The critic praised the novel as a product of noble imagination, as an exceptionally faithful transcription of ancient life and history, and as a fascinating story of romantic love and tragic fate:

Given the adequate poetic gift for the first requirement, the great range of sound scholarship for the second, and the mingled art and essential skill for the third, then add the capacity for laborious construction of these materials into an edifice so well-proportioned that no part obtrudes over the other, and the builder himself least of all, what else is possible to say but that such a book is destined to rank among the shelf-ful of world books whose authors lose proper credit for their profoundly hard development of their gifts in being lightly labeled as born with genius ⁸⁾.

The review ended with an assurance that it would be short of impertinence to occupy space by remarks which could be nothing but variations of praise for subject, treatment, style, and the wealth of unfamiliar lore it bestowed so unpretentiously.

The importance of the fact that outstanding literary works could emanate from countries other than Great Britain and America was reaffirmed in *The Critic*. The reviewer drew attention to the increased number of prominent foreign authors, such as Jokai and d'Annunzio. Recently, Poland avenged her political wrongs by the triumphant assertion of artistic mastery with Henryk Sienkiewicz. In *Quo Vadis?* the novelist abandoned his native land and proved that his acquaintance with the ancient world was far more than superficial. Still, he avoided the peril of excessive learning which would make the literary work a mere digest of the Dictionary of *Classical Antiquities*. He had chosen a period full of dramatic and psychological significance, and had so fully seized its possibilities in these directions that the archeological details fell into their proper place as accessories to the presentation of the subject, and did not block the progress of the human interest ⁹⁾. The review referred to the treatment of the Christians who were made less lifelike and less conspicuous. It attributed this alleged drawback to the deliberate intention of the writer, resulting from the general knowledge of the era concerned. He gave full light to the known and accepted life of the day, and let the budding principles stand, as they were, in comparative shadow. Whatever the reason, no other figure in the book was delineated so completely and so sympathetically as that of Petronius Arbiter, the real hero of the story. Equally lifelike was Chilo, whose unexpected end ranged among the most powerful strokes of the novel.

Just as other contemporaries, the critic pointed to the abundance of picturesque and striking scenes. He exalted the calm tenderness of a quiet sunset typical for those episodes in which Saints Peter and Paul appeared. He thought, however, that the title of the book was unhappily chosen, for it required explanation and was based on a secondary incident unessential to the development of the narrative. Posterity did not confirm

8) *Ibid.*, p. 29.

9) *The Critic*, XXX (February 27, 1897), pp. 144-45.

this criticism, and soon the expression « *Quo vadis?* » became one of the universally known American sayings ¹⁰⁾.

The Atlantic Monthly emphasized that « the Polish literary giant » wrestled with the most difficult and most importunate historical problems: how it happened that the Empire of Christ came to replace, in its own seat, the Empire of the Roman Caesars. He brought to his great novel some great qualifications — a thorough acquaintance with the records of the time, a virile and prolific imagination, the elemental force and unspent passion of the Slav, along with his natural proclivity to mysticism. These valors were fused by the ardor of an apparently recent conversion to the ideas of what the French call *Néo-Christianisme*. Christ did not appear in the novel but the apostles Peter and Paul found ready credence with open-minded Romans who attached no supernatural significance whatever to the circumstances.

Observing an analogy between the ancient world and the contemporary period, the critic repeated Petronius' statement that where Christian religion began Roman rule would end, and attributed a similar attitude to contemporary rulers:

The foremost apostle of the new Christianity, the Slavic Tolstoi, has embraced poverty as ardently and unreservedly as did the saint of Assisi, or those « men of the spirit » who fled in the wake from the tyranny of a ruthless ecclesiasticism to the snowy solitudes of the winter Appenines. From this point of view, so powerful a writer as Sienkiewicz could hardly fail to present an impressive picture of the first great Christian persecution, and the truth is that he succeeded in restoring that dreadful period after a somewhat new and altogether masterly fashion.

The attempt to associate *Quo Vadis?* with the Neo-Christian movement was the most momentous remark of the review. As to the literary value of the novel, it was highly praised:

No writer, whether of history or of fiction, whom we remember, has drawn so living and speaking likeness of the emperor Nero as has this Polish novelist. No one else has made that curious moral monster so consistent in his inconsistencies, so inevitable both in his fatuities and in his enormities, so clear to the mind's eye in the uncanny and repulsive peculiarities of his person. There is a description in chapter seven of an imperial banquet, at which the Christian maiden Lygia was forced to appear, which illumines one of the most hackneyed of subjects, and seizes the imagination with irresistible power ¹¹⁾.

The almost unanimous choir of veneration was soon disrupted by a few dissonant voices. *Munsey's Magazine* of April 1897 mentioned *Quo Vadis?* as a book which laid some claim to historical interest, yet its story was allegedly lost in the romance; the cruelty of the brutal age of Nero was brought back into individual lives. *The Academy* noticed in the novel some typical qualities and vices of Slavic fiction: a certain rude

10) Burton Stevenson included the title *Quo Vadis?* in *The Home Book of Quotations, Classical and Modern*, 4 ed. (New York, 1944), p. 1637. He also quoted a sentence from *With Fire and Sword*: « To whom life is heavy, the earth will be light », p. 406.

11) *The Atlantic Monthly*, LXXIX (May 1897), pp. 709-10.

vigor of conception and picturesque power over masses of detail, but also a certain incapacity to discriminate or to use detail as the background ¹²).

A sharp condemnation of *Quo Vadis?* came from the prominent English critic Edmund Gosse, whose review of Sienkiewicz's works was made available in the United States: it was reprinted from *The Contemporary Review* in *The Living Age* ¹³) and its synopsis appeared in *The Literary Digest* ¹⁴). It repeated the same judgment which was raised by some earlier American reviewers — that the theme chosen by Sienkiewicz had been too often abused; but unlike them, he drew devastating conclusions denying to *Quo Vadis?* any literary value. His reluctance was so strong that he even did not feel it necessary to get acquainted with the text, relying on the resumes of previous reviewers:

If I have not read *Quo Vadis?*, it is partly because life is short, and partly because I have an invincible dislike to stories written for the purpose of « contrasting the corrupt brilliance of Paganism with the austere and self-reliant teaching of early Christianity ». One knows all the « business » by heart — the orgies, the arena, the Christian maiden with her hair let down her back, the Roman noble's conversion in the nick of time, the glimpse of the « bloated and sensual figure of the emperor ». It all lies outside the pale of literature; it should be reserved for the Marie Corellis and the Wilson Barretts. That Sienkiewicz has taken up such facile theme, and that (as I gather from the epitomes of the plot) he has treated it in very much the old conventional way, lessens my respect for his talent. An American admirer states that « the spiritual elements in the character of St. Paul have received virtually no artistic recognition ». I dare say not; but the Polish novelist should have collaborated with Dean Farrar if he wished to succeed in that direction. Another admiring reviewer says St. Peter « tells the story of the Crucifixion with artistic lifelikeness ». I feel that I shall never contrive to read *Quo Vadis* ¹⁵).

In all fairness to the critic, it should be stated that his guesses regarding the content of the novel were somewhat arbitrary. He ignored Petronius who represented the pagan world, but nonetheless was made so attractive and amiable that he overshadowed the Christian characters. Nero was not always conventionally repulsive, and in one moment he even behaved like a true artist and a sensible ruler. The conversion of Vinitius did not proceed so speedily and smoothly as Mr. Gosse anticipated, and Lygia was also less stereotyped than he suggested; when Vinitius saw her for the first time she was naked and resembled more a pagan goddess than a pious Christian maiden.

Some American critics disagreed with Gosse's verdict. Yet his essay was damaging to the writer's reputation. In some circles there were

12) *Munsey's Magazine*, XVIII (February 1898), p. 790.

13) *The Living Age*, CXXIII (May 22, 1897), pp. 517-27.

14) « The Author of *Quo Vadis?* », a resume of the essay by Edmund Gosse. *The Literary Digest*, XV (May 22, 1897), p. 98.

15) Edmund Gosse, *op. cit.*, *The Living Age* (May 22, 1897), pp. 526-27. Other English reviewers were more considerate, e.g. T.P. O'Connor, M.P., admitted that he was no lover of the historical romance, but in a lengthy review studded with many quotations from the novel he defined Sienkiewicz as « one of the master spirits of our time », comparable to Tolstoy. Cf. « In the Days of Nero », *The Graphic* (June 5, 1897), p. 702.

readers who preferred to seem subtle and sophisticated rather than merely enthusiastic. Now prevailing opinion began to recognize the *Trilogy* as Sienkiewicz's highest literary achievement and considered *Quo Vadis?* as a melodrama which owed its popularity to reasons which had little in common with literature. The problem of Sienkiewicz's Christian novel was discussed ironically in *Harper's Magazine* in the section entitled « Editor's Study »:

Any story about the early Christians and about their persecutions is sure to attract wide and alert attention. The public also knows about Nero who is believed to have sat on the terrace and played on some sort of a musical instrument after he had set Rome on fire... It was difficult for us to imagine the great wilderness of the steppes, and to feel the whirlwind of barbaric and semi-oriental passion that swept over them in the sixteenth [sic!] century. The author, however, was on his own ground there by inheritance and traditions. He created his world out of materials native to him; and wrote without self-consciousness. In Rome he was under the disadvantage of being in a field foreign to himself; his work smells of the laboratory and the study — in a word, it necessarily becomes somewhat archeological... But there is something more to be said. He is a genius, and a short story by him, called « Let Us Follow Him », showing the effect of the crucifixion upon the pagan mind, is evidence of his ability to throw himself into the past without committing the fault he has fallen into in *Quo Vadis?* It would seem as if the great novelist had been affected by the modern wave of sensationalism that has swept from their moorings so many writers, and had yielded to it. This is not saying that there are not powerful scenes in *Quo Vadis?*, scenes that make the reader hold his breath. It is not saying that the author has abandoned his power of creation — witness the character of Petronius. But *Quo Vadis?* is really a melodrama, and not to be compared as a work of art — that means an enduring work — with *With Fire and Sword*, *The Deluge*, and *Pan Michael*, nor with that intense study, *Without Dogma* ¹⁶⁾.

It was evident that the critic indulged in developing general theories instead of analyzing the novel concerned. Superiority of « Let Us Follow Him » was hardly acceptable. *Munsey's Magazine* (February 1898) also attributed the reason for the success of *Quo Vadis?* to its tendency but approved of this attitude. In the past, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* acquired a similar degree of popularity. Obviously, the books which the people, not the critics, were eager to read and which have been sold by the tens of thousands, were those that dealt seriously with the powers which moved souls, not bodies. Naturally, such a judgment reversed the previous opinions in which admiration for Sienkiewicz's craftsmanship prevailed.

Some doubts regarding the educational aspect of the novel were refuted by *The New York Times* and its attitude was fully endorsed in this respect by the *Catholic World*. Sienkiewicz's artistic and moral sense was emphasized: the novelist pointed to evil when he felt obliged to do so but did not enjoy it and did not demonstrate it excessively. He had enough strength and talent not to overstep the measure, and having

16) *Harper's Magazine*, XCVI (March 1898), p. 644.

shown the horrid things as it was his duty, to turn away from them as soon as possible.

The *Catholic World* did not hesitate to qualify Sienkiewicz as a Catholic writer. Of course, he did not write his works for young misses. Nor did he fill his novels with angels and Arcadian shepherds. He painted his heroes with their vices and realized that man had different evil propensities. But the air one breathed from his novels was healthy and pure. When he represented a vicious and scandalous situation, it was obvious that this situation was not his own, was not the principal object of his fancy. As an artist, he had to adopt an esthetic attitude but his moral nature remained honest ¹⁷⁾.

Notwithstanding the controversies among the critics, *Quo Vadis?* was in 1897 undoubtedly « the book of the year ». This was the headline adopted by *Overland Monthly* for a review published in August 1897. It began with the prediction that this most popular book would be as widely read in fifty years and would be recognized as one of the greatest historical novels of all time. It was not only a novel of plot and action but also a mirror of the time of Nero that was unsurpassed by the works of any history student. The love affair inserted in the narrative was one of beauty and purity, little in keeping with the time. Other critical remarks referred to allegedly excessive use of Latin names and terms, and the portraits of the two apostles which did not match historical role ¹⁸⁾.

The praise of Joseph L. French was unreservedly enthusiastic. His essay « *The Author of Quo Vadis?* », published in March 1898 in *The National Magazine* suggested that some critics did not like the novel because they were opposed to any didactic messages in fiction. However, the literary brilliancy of the work checked their disapproval. Besides, it was debatable whether Sienkiewicz had an avowedly religious purpose in writing this novel. He made himself immortal as the historical painter in his earlier works based on the most picturesque period of his native land. Recently, he applied the same narrative method to the ancient past, and *Quo Vadis?* was the result :

It has remained for the man without a country — the Pole, — to write the great book of Christianity. The objectors to the moral purpose in art would long ago have crushed a weaker production. For to those to whom the message is still potent, it thrills through every page and dominates every scene — the power of the Christian revelation — whether by the force of direct presentment or equally by contrast. The book comes to all Christian readers as a grand special plea for Christianity, presented by a literary genius of the highest order, at a time when the forces of liberal thought are being stirred to palpable purpose. When and where, indeed, has a love story so overpowering been offered to a Christian civilization in any guise? And the force of that love story as a message to civilization consists in the fact that it is a love inspired and consummated despite overwhelming obstacles only through the great mystic power of Christ ¹⁹⁾.

17) *The Catholic World*, LXVII (May 1898), pp. 284-85.

18) *Overland Monthly*, XXX (San Francisco, August 1897), pp. 185-86.

19) *National Magazine*, VII (March 1898), pp. 538-39.

In the meantime, the public avidly sought the novel which was soon firmly rooted in the lists of best sellers. This not only startled the critics but the publishers and booksellers as well. *The Book News* posed several provocative questions without trying to answer them: « What makes a book sell? Can *Quo Vadis?* be an accepted standard, and if so, when will the success be repeated? For that book leads or stands high in four of the five lists that follow. And those relative sales are of the work in regular and fine cloth bindings. The paper-covered reprints and editions have sold thousands strong — but do not count in the comparisons drawn here » ²⁰).

Some explanation was suggested by Andrew Lang in his essay « New Testament Novels » published in *Current Literature*. The author was not very fond of such fiction. It always consisted of the same elements. Yet it attracted not only the average readers but also « *les raffinés* ». Perhaps in modern times they played the same role as medieval Miracle Plays. They filled up the space which the imagination left vacant. Although the critics' sense was offended, no real harm was done ²¹).

In substantiating the success of *Quo Vadis?*, Rev. George McDermot did not turn to the past. He believed that in this « great novel » the forces of the present were at work. The instability, passion, and violence of the Roman populace reflected the discontent of the European masses. Modern rulers experienced the same dread and recent social and political troubles were comparable to the Roman rabble for bread and circuses. These analogies helped assess the character and the role of the *arbiter elegantiarum*, to whom the critic devoted a brilliant analysis:

So we have the nineteenth century embodied in Petronius Arbiter, with the transcendent alchemy of imagination by which a great student of the first century and the nineteenth can at will invest himself with either. The shadow of a name behind the Satyricon could not, as the critics suppose, be a figure so delicate, so indifferent, so subtle, and so strong [...]. He is a perfect host; we sit with him at his table enchanted by the genial cynicism as if he were a friend, though he professes no faith in friendship. We can complain of the « divine » Nero certain that the courtier will not betray us; we can speak with reverence of the gods, sure that this sceptic will respect us. He is a perfect gentleman, this Epicurean created by the only imagination moulded in Catholic belief, expanded by Catholic heroism, pruned of extravagance by Catholic moralities. The author's soul has gone into this creation. His own passionate, Polish Catholic heart beats in the equable pulsations of Petronius... In him he vivifies his own hopes and disappointments, his speculative difficulties, his social and religious creeds; imparting to the product of his heart a cast from the critical consistency of the pure intellect which makes the entire conception of an able and jaded man of the nineteenth century a Roman of the first ²²).

²⁰) *The Book News*, XVI (February 1898), p. 367.

²¹) *Current Literature*, XXIV (September 1898), pp. 203-04.

²²) *The Catholic World*, LXVI (February 1898), pp. 659-60.

VII. *The confusing miniatures*

The growing interest of the American public in Sienkiewicz encouraged the publishers to print not only his novels but also his minor works. Curtin, wrestling heroically with the *Trilogy* and other bulky romances, still found sufficient time and enthusiasm for translating the novelist's shorter tales. At first, he endeavored to select the material. In 1893 Little, Brown and Company published a volume entitled « *Yanko the Musician* » and *Other Stories*. Besides « Yanko », it included « The Lighthousekeeper of Aspinwall », « Comedy of Errors », « From the Diary of a Tutor in Poznań », and « Bartek the Victor ». Except for « Comedy of Errors », Curtin managed to assemble in this anthology some of the best tales ever written by Sienkiewicz. In the following year, « *Lillian Morris* » and *Other Stories* was made available; this publication was a mixed bag. It included the title story, « Sachem », « Yamyol », and « The Bull-Fight ». An essay which was included demonstrated the novelist's versatility.

The next bulky volume of short stories *Hania*, containing 548 pages, appeared in 1897. Besides the title story and its prologue, « The Old Servant », nine other tales were included belonging to the period of Sienkiewicz's literary maturity. They were « Tartar Captivity », « Let Us Follow Him », « Be Thou Blessed », « At the Source », « Charcoal Sketches », « The Organist of Ponikla », « Lux in Tenebris Lucet », « On the Bright Shore », and « That Third Woman ». The tale « Let Us Follow Him » was also printed as a separate booklet. At the same time, other publishers began to print competitive anthologies compiled by other translators. Fenno of New York opened the campaign with « *Let Us Follow Him* » and *Other Stories* and *After Bread* (coupled for some reason with « An Excursion to Athens »). Altemus of Philadelphia published the volume *After Bread* (reprinted as *For Daily Bread*) in which « An Artist's End » and « A Comedy of Errors » were likewise included.

The confusion was compounded when the Boston firm issued another massive volume called « *Sielanka* » and *Other Stories*. The title was misleading, since among the seventeen items included, the perplexed reader could find two plays, « On a Single Card » and « Whose Fault? » plus three essays: « The Bull-Fight », « A Journey to Athens », and « Zola ». Some of the stories were already known to the public from previous publications. A few of them belonged to the earliest period of Sienkiewicz's career and were considered by him as unfit for printing. No wonder that the effect was discouraging: « The seventeen chapters included in *Sielanka* are some stories, some modern comedies, and records of travel... All show in some degree the touch of the master hand, but all seem commonplace to those who know the superb heights of which the author is capable »¹⁾. The youthful novel *In Vain* appeared in print in 1899. Curtin compiled still another small selection of Sienkiewicz's legends which was printed in 1904 as « *Life and Death* » and *Other Stories* and contained five miniatures. Other translators and publishers did not remain idle. The bookstores were flooded with cheap reprints of Sien-

1) *The Literary World*, XXIX (December 10, 1898), p. 435.

kiewicz's writings; « Let Us Follow Him » alone reappeared at least twenty-seven times.

This mass production contributed to the novelist's resonance among general readers, but was not good for his prestige. His reputation as a supreme craftsman was hardly applicable to the immature writings of his youth. The casual comments by the translators did little in averting this misunderstanding. Separate volumes usually lacked any definite structural cohesion. Titles were haphazardly tampered with. Works well-known from earlier editions reappeared in new volumes creating disappointment to those purchasers who expected to buy new fiction.

The ensuing mess irritated the more conscientious critics. They realized that the author was not responsible for the created chaos but they inevitably viewed him in a less favorable light. They hoped to find in every work of the writer glimpses of his mature genius, and were naturally dismayed at what they found. The early weaknesses were applied to the novelist's whole literary heritage. Some comments printed in « Novel Notes » in the *Bookman* sounded like an ominous warning:

The youthful works of a distinguished writer ought, as a rule, to be read only by a small circle of his most devoted admirers. His first essays are almost a family affair, a very private matter, like the first tooth or the photograph of his pudgy infant face. But this story appears to be an exception, for it has many characteristics of the author's mature writings. The volumes of short stories published under the titles of *Hania* and *Sielanka*, respectively, contain much that is no whit better than *In Vain*, from which we may infer that Sienkiewicz matured very suddenly or did not mature at all in certain respects. The latter inference, ruthless as it seems in the case of so admired a writer, has some justification when we consider the treatment of the emotions even in his latest works. There are no subtleties of suggestion, no indirect effects, but a free, frank use of the Romantic artillery. The characters fling themselves about and weep and pale and gnash their teeth quite as they do in this story of his ardent youth. It would be difficult to arrange the writings of Sienkiewicz in chronological order from internal evidence. Exuberance in his case did not seem to diminish with advancing years ²⁾.

The dissatisfaction was most pronounced at the peak of Sienkiewicz's fame. In connection with *Hania*, the *Literary World* protested that the translator injured the reputation of the great novelist when he decided to follow *Quo Vadis?*, a powerful novel which had a well-deserved success, with a volume of immature and commonplace tales. « *Hania* », the most ambitious [sic!] of the published stories, contained some interesting scenes of Russian [sic!] life and some clever studies of the peasant type, but contained little that would be worthy of the author of *With Fire and Sword* and *The Deluge* ³⁾.

The same periodical discussing *In Vain* took into consideration Curtin's note that this tale had been written by a boy of eighteen [sic!] and

2) *The Bookman*, X, 4, (September 1899), p. 87 (« Novel Notes »).

3) *The Literary World*, XXIX (February 19, 1898), p. 60.

sought some excuses for its shortcomings. Yet the general verdict was severe: « It cannot be said that in this boyish attempt any signs appear of the splendid quality developed later in the great *Fire and Sword* series... The tale ends dimly and inconclusively — nobody is made happy, everything is left in confusion — which is the sort of ending that a book by a very young author is pretty sure to have, cheap melancholy being the delight and solace of youthful minds, and the easiest way out of all difficulties of construction » ⁴⁾.

Speaking of the volume *Lillian Morris*, *The Critic* rightly remarked that it contained an ill-assorted quartette. The title-story was called prolix and lacking construction. In fifty pages it would have been admirable; in one hundred and fifty pages it became tedious, though with passages of delicate feeling, resembling glimpses of starlight. The last of the stories was simply a description of a bull-fight at Madrid, well-written, but too long and no more a story in the same sense as other tales of the volume ⁵⁾.

Occasional words of praise were sometimes so exaggerated that they sounded ridiculous. *The Literary News* quoted an opinion from the *Boston Evening Gazette* of February 1898, where *Hania* was estimated as superior to *Quo Vadis?*: it allegedly represented a higher art quality, since it had no novel and gorgeous background against which to pose the humble figures. The anonymous reviewer felt that the volume demonstrated rare power in character-drawing, a power and a warmth of feeling capable of converting a cold statue into a living, moving, suffering human being. This praise referred above all to « The Old Servant ». Another quality observed in the tales was their quiet humor merging into tenderness. The material was skilfully brought forth, « put into position, and welded into the gold of art » ⁶⁾.

One of the more balanced essays on Sienkiewicz's short stories was written by George Merriam Hyde for *The Bookman*. The critic noticed that « *Hania* » was written in the same vein as *Children of the Soil*; yet its love scenes were reminiscent of the Polish *Trilogy*, with the usual infusion of tenderness and humor to relieve its abruptness. « Charcoal Sketches » allegedly induced Mr. Hankiel, « a man of taste », to lure Mr. Sienkiewicz back to Poland. « Tartar Captivity » was considered next in importance. Standing alone, this tale struck the reviewer with the consistency of tone which no one of the other stories exhibited. In conclusion Mr. Hyde emphasized that the tales displayed an outdoor breeziness, an oblivion of latter-day complexities, and were decidedly refreshing ⁷⁾.

Critical voices were overwhelmed by a hollow chorus of approval. The glamor of Sienkiewicz's name was so effective that it tempted some less resolute reviewers to seek merits even in the writer's earliest works. *The Literary News* informed the readers that *In Vain* was an instructive picture of Polish University life and had the charm of novelty, at least to the English public. It displayed well the mental ability and general calibre of the Polish student and via a love story expressed a philosophic

4) *The Literary World*, XXX (July 8, 1899), pp. 219-20.

5) *The Critic*, XXV (December 29, 1894), p. 445.

6) *The Literary News*, XIX (February 1898), pp. 46-47.

7) *The Bookman*, VII (March 1898), pp. 75-76.

view of life. The narrative showed « in a masterly way the relation of men to men, and by contrast it revealed the feelings and attitude of men to women »⁸⁾. Such obscure reflections were more confusing than informative.

The Nation's assessment was rather overstrained:

Henryk Sienkiewicz is no less story-teller than novelist. Witness five stories of his recently given us in a translation by Jeremiah Curtin, viz. « *Yanko the Musician* » and *Other Stories*. Artist to the finger-tips, Sienkiewicz in this little volume is touching, tragic, droll, by turns. There are many ways of conveying truth. Sienkiewicz's way is to tell, and then to leave inference to the reader. He gives facts with exquisite fidelity, but what the reader most feels is the subtle suggestion of fact under the facts. The wonderful union of truth within and truth without, made more wonderful by the non-insistence upon either, is the especial hall-mark of this craftsman, whose scope seems boundless. The stories deal with the sorrows of Germanized Poland, with the loneliness of exile, with the comical rivalries in the grocery business of a new American town, with the degradation and ruin of the Polish soldier fighting for Prussia in 1870. In all these there is one likeness, the magnetic attraction of the author's pen-point for the particular incidents which they signify. In this he resembles Maupassant, with whose stories they worthily class themselves⁹⁾.

Yet in spite of the confusion created by indiscriminate publishing, American literary opinion classified Sienkiewicz's short stories and tales with much perspicacity and common sense. Most critics distinguished « *Yanko the Musician* ». *Book News* defined it as singularly touching¹⁰⁾. *The Dial* pointed out that the volume in which this story was enclosed exhibited the remarkable genius of the Polish novelist in a novel light¹¹⁾. *Literary World* estimated « *Yanko* » as the most finished story¹²⁾. Many tributes were paid to « *The Lighthousekeeper of Aspinwall* ». *Book News* classified it unreservedly as a little masterpiece¹³⁾. *The Literary World* wrote of it: « ... there is a tropical charm in "The Lighthousekeeper of Aspinwall" which all but counterbalances its slight lack of artistic handling »¹⁴⁾. This last story was often reprinted in various anthologies.

The political implications of Sienkiewicz's tales were not dismissed. Speaking of « *Bartek the Victor* », *The Critic* called it an admirable study of character, and added: « Sienkiewicz is a poet realist, — a realist plus a warm heart. But his art portrays a melancholy people, who have been misunderstood or belittled, whose homes have been invaded, whose pride has been crushed. They are diverting, these tales that he writes; but they are terrible, intense things, and except when the pathos is a trifle overstrained, they bear the semblance of reality, and they occasionally

8) *The Literary News*, XX, 8 (August 1899), p. 245.

9) *The Nation*, LVIII (April 12, 1894), p. 277.

10) *Book News*, XII, 136 (December 1893), p. 147.

11) *The Dial*, XV, 179 (December 1, 1893), p. 343.

12) *The Literary World*, XXIV, 24 (December 2, 1893), p. 423.

13) *Book News*, XII, 136 (December 1893), p. 147.

14) *The Literary World*, XXIV, *loc. cit.*

touch of beauty »¹⁵⁾. For *The Dial* « Bartek », although richly supplied with incident, was essentially a psychological study of the Polish peasant soldier¹⁶⁾.

There was no unanimity as far as the « American » tales were concerned. The London *Athenaeum* did not value them highly for two reasons: Sienkiewicz when off his own ground did not write so well, and his humor had not the strength of his pathos¹⁷⁾. *The Dial* spoke of « Comedy of Errors » as a sad failure in the author's attempt to be humorous¹⁸⁾. *The Critic*, on the contrary, in discussing the same story called its humor « delightful »¹⁹⁾.

« Let Us Follow Him » was praised on various occasions. *The Literary News* repeated after the *Literary Review* that this story had power, simplicity, veneration, and absolute belief in the mission of the Master. As an example of inspired fiction, it was called « unique, compelling, engrossing »²⁰⁾. The reviewer stressed another noteworthy excellence of the Polish author — that he always knew where to stop. *The Literary World* hailed the publication of « Let Us Follow Him » in a separate volume, warranted by the interest attached to this story as a nucleus of *Quo Vadis?*²¹⁾. On the other hand *The Review of Reviews* ruthlessly criticized the tale and even ridiculed it:

Without the slightest desire to impute irreverence to the author, it must be said that so far from improving upon the biblical account, his description of that scene [crucifixion] seems utterly trivial and unnecessary; indeed, the whole story is weak and commonplace — the last qualities one would expect to find in a volume over his name had not we had so many doleful examples of the results which attend the efforts to supply the public demand for « more » from a popular author²²⁾.

VIII. *The medieval scares*

Mass readers in America valued Sienkiewicz mainly for *Quo Vadis?* and a few short stories, especially « Let Us Follow Him ». His stature in the literary world was due mainly to the *Trilogy*. Other works also met with qualified approval but did not produce such dazzling effects as the Polish series of historical romances. It was not surprising that the news of the novelist's work on a new large historical novel on the Polish past aroused considerable curiosity. The publication of the first part of

15) *The Critic*, *op. cit.*, p. 445.

16) *The Dial*, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

17) *Athenaeum*, 3465 (March 24, 1894), p. 375.

18) *The Dial*, XV (December 1, 1893), p. 343.

19) *The Critic*, *loc. cit.*

20) *The Literary News*, XIX, 8 (August 1898), p. 228.

21) *The Literary World*, XXX, 1 (January 8, 1898), p. 11.

22) *The Review of Reviews*, XVII (February 1898), pp. 239-40.

Knights of the Cross provoked a number of reviews, although the complete text was as yet not available.

In « Books of the Week », *The Outlook* signalled the publication of a « great Polish historical novel ». The reviewer reported that in this new work the author's force, variety, and tremendous exposition of primitive passions equalled his famous *Trilogy*. He successfully re-created the life on the borders of Poland in medieval times, when the country was semi-barbaric and only nominally Christian. The Polish knighthood, less polished but just as heroic as that of Western Europe, appeared in full light. Coarseness and cruelty pervaded the story, as occurred at the time and in places depicted; for this reason, it would not please a squeamish or overdelicate taste. It certainly was not a book for the average young person; it was strong meat for the literary digestion of those who could laugh over Falstaff and see some good in Rabelais. However, it would be wrong to suspect any immoral tendency, something that could never be traced in Sienkiewicz's historical fiction ¹⁾.

The Bookman pointed out in « Chronicle and Comment » that despite the tumultuous welcome accorded *Quo Vadis?* and later stories, the novelist's return to the romance of Polish history was an event of signal interest. Yet instead of reviewing the first volume, the critic wrote of Sienkiewicz's life and literary career, including his trip to California ²⁾. *The Literary News* was content with reprinting the verdict pronounced in *The Beacon*, which described the book as a thrilling work making one's blood now freeze with horror and now boil with indignation:

It is on the whole a terrifying story, but it holds the reader spell-bound, whether it rises into airy grace or dips into dread realism. It gives a powerful picture of the times in the strong love story, showing how the growth of Christianity was retarded by the excessively horrible crimes and abuses committed by the Knights of the Cross... It is a book that has great historical value but whether it is profitable reading or not will depend on how thoughtfully one reads it, and on how much spring one has to recover from dazzlingly brilliant descriptions of murder and torture, of burning eyes, pulling out tongues, dishonoring women and turning them and men, too, to idiots and maniacs. People ought to know about the early history of Christianity, to be sure: but not everybody in these days of nerve strain will be able to complete the reading of *The Knights of the Cross* without a sensation of mental exhaustion ³⁾.

One may recall that similar objections had been raised in connection with the *Trilogy*. Naturally, it was even easier to apply them to *Knights of the Cross*, where the cruelty of the Teutonic knights was demonstrated with especial emphasis. In July, *The Literary News* cited a passage from the *Chicago Post*, which also gave prominence to the scenes of horror inserted by Sienkiewicz into his medieval novel. However, the reviewer did not disqualify the author and observed that he adopted the technique

1) *The Outlook*, LXV (January 20, 1900), p. 181.

2) *The Bookman*, I (February 1900), pp. 517-19.

3) *The Literary News*, XXI, 2 (February 1900), p. 34.

of scene painting, not miniatures; his method was crude, glaring, unkempt — but effective ⁴⁾.

More severe were the conclusions drawn by the reviewer of *The Independent*. He also labelled the novel as a strong and in places lurid, not to say repellent piece of work. Another sin of the novelist was that of excessive length so that it was impossible even to give the synopsis of his narrative:

Love, kidnapping, savage fighting and, indeed, the whole panorama of fourteenth century romance and picturesque brutality in Poland during the wars between the Poles and the German Knights of the Cross, is pictured vividly on an immense canvas. While we have never had the extreme enthusiasm for Sienkiewicz that most people seem to be proud of, we acknowledge his powerful imagination, his large mastery of romantic composition and his crude yet effective dramatic style. *The Knights of the Cross* is, upon the whole, a disagreeable romance. Brutality prevails in it. Many of its scenes are worse than merely brutal, and the greater areas of its action are filled with a base, if not debasing, atmosphere ⁵⁾.

The Outlook which had greeted the appearance of the first volume of the novel, devoted to it more attention after the completion of its publication. It repeated once more that although *Quo Vadis?* was more widely known, Sienkiewicz's Polish romances were of greater value. The complications of Polish history, the harsh names of people and places, and the cruel episodes repelled some readers, but these difficulties overcome, one would find himself in the grasp of a master of fiction. In *Knights of the Cross* the humorous whimsicality of Matsko and the chivalry of the era were depicted with the same skill as the sweet and gentle traits of Danusia ⁶⁾.

The Literary News did not blame the novelist for all cruelty and horror, for these elements belonged to the epoch concerned. Perhaps no one had more successfully caught the much talked of « historical atmosphere » than the Polish writer had in this fourteenth century tale. The narrative reeks with blood, cruelty, and superstition. It pulses with untamed vigor and passion. A great order of professedly religious knighthood gives itself over to ambition, tyranny, and oppression, and consequently it creates enemies enough to be overwhelmed by them in one desperate encounter ⁷⁾.

The reviewer of *Public Opinion* reasoned in a similar way, but did not relieve the Poles of their historical responsibility. Those who read Sienkiewicz's novels learned much of the Polish character, the pride and cruelty of the feudal lords, their jealousy of each other and of their sovereign. All that went far towards explaining the ultimate downfall of the kingdom. Having read *Knights of the Cross*, one could recall that fourteenth century England, with its peasant rebellions, its hangings and quarterings, was not a pleasant place; but it would seem a very Eden of

4) *The Literary News*, XXI, 7 (July 1900), p. 194.

5) *The Independent*, LII (February 1, 1900), pp. 323-24.

6) *The Outlook*, LXV (June 23, 1900), p. 458.

7) *The Literary News*, XXI, 7 (July 1900), p. 193.

peace and safety compared with this land of Poland. As to the narrative technique, the critic praised the speed and ingenuity of incidents which never slackened until the very end of the story ⁸⁾.

An analogy between the modern policy of the Prussian administration and the conduct of the Order of the Cross was simply ignored. There was an attempt to associate the content of the novel with current events, but it had nothing in common with the novelist's design. The *Literary Era* of January 1901 dwelt on the militant attitude of the strange religious brotherhood which by accretions of diverse nationalities settled on the Baltic and founded the power now known as the Kingdom of Prussia. It added that recently a similar tragedy took place... in South Africa where the English Government waged a ruthless war against the Boers ⁹⁾.

Probably the most spirited recommendation of the novel appeared in *Munsey's Magazine* in November 1901. It was a rather belated echo of the work. The reviewer noticed but one defect which might deter prospective readers, that is, its bulky size:

But once begun, there is no leaving it. It outmusquetaires Dumas; in dash, vigor, splendid action, and breathless interest it is a magnificent romance. The school of small romantics, with their invincible heroes and impossible feats, is outdone — doubly outdone — for while Sienkiewicz's characters are, like theirs, of super-human strength and unbelievable skill, they are also, unlike the others, convincingly real. The reader never pauses even to smile at his own absorption. He is as sure that these knights of the Cross could bend the forest trees, break the bars of dungeons, and unaided, put to flight small armies, as that he has bacon for breakfast or that his tailor's bill is due. If an impertinent doubt ever crossed his brain, he would brush it aside with the assurance to himself that in the thirteenth century, [sic!] of course, men did these things ¹⁰⁾.

The general response of American critics to *Knights of the Cross* was not unfavorable. Yet the book never reached the acclaim as did Sienkiewicz's other romances. The key lay in the feeling of « unpleasantness » due to an accumulation of horror. The political implications of the novel were fully assessed as late as the Second World War, when it appeared in a new translation in London with an introduction by Lord Vansittart.

Some objections raised against *Knights of the Cross* were not applicable to Sienkiewicz's novel on Sobieski, which was received with a feeling of relief. The first American review of *On the Field of Glory* appeared in *Public Opinion* on February 10, 1906. Surprisingly enough, it considered this novel more historical than many histories, as it allegedly gave a more accurate picture of ancient Poland than any more sober narrative. Readers would find in this work many reasons to account for Poland's past glories and also many reasons for her passing ¹¹⁾.

8) *Public Opinion*, XXIX (July 12, 1900), p. 56.

9) *The Literary Era*, VIII (January 1901), p. 33, « Old World Themes » by Henry F. Keenan.

10) *Munsey's Magazine*, XXIV (November 1901), pp. 314-15.

11) *Public Opinion*, XL (February 10, 1906), p. 187.

The Independent wrote of the novel with more ardor. It stated that Sienkiewicz, once again, displayed the splendid swordsmanship of the incomparable Pan Michael, introducing a worthy successor who could fight five duels in rapid succession and come off without a scratch. These Polish nobles fought and loved and lived with an intensity not to be found elsewhere, leaving the reader breathless and his eyes dazzled by the sharp gleam of flashing swords. In comparison with them, other heroes would seem bloodless. Sienkiewicz truly deserved the Nobel Prize for « the greatest work in literature of an ideal tendency », for his romances, in spite of the brutality of their characters and their crude morality, were written for a higher purpose than the amusement of the public, and served for strengthening the hearts ¹²⁾.

Payne, the avowed reviewer of Sienkiewicz's writings, confessed in *The Dial* to some disappointment upon finding that the great victory of Sobieski was only anticipated in this novel. In this respect, the critic agreed with President Theodore Roosevelt who wanted the battle ¹³⁾. The title was labelled a misnomer, as the tale was in reality a story of private interest, a love story of freshness and charm, a story of strange manners and exciting adventures. Payne was aware that some of the younger Polish critics had been charging the Sienkiewicz school of fiction with sterility; yet the novelist could refute this accusation by pointing to some of his colleagues, in particular to Gąsiorowski, whose book *Napoleon's Love Story* had been recently translated into English ¹⁴⁾.

The Outlook began its review of the novel with a nostalgic reminder of the *Trilogy*. Once more Sienkiewicz succeeded in overcoming the English reader's natural reluctance to conquer the rough nomenclature of peoples and places, to get involved in the confused war-history, and to forgive some unpleasant realism in the depiction of warfare and cruelty. This was due to a love story of passion and intensity, to fighting of the most thrilling kind, and to lively descriptions of Polish country life. Humor was supplied by a band of four brothers named after the evangelists. The novel was not a masterpiece but it provided wholesome and fascinating reading ¹⁵⁾.

The Nation gave a spirited synopsis of the novel adding a remark that whoever had read and liked Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy* would also enjoy *On the Field of Glory*. Amy C. Rich discussed its historical background and emphasized that it was only through the wise strategy of King John Sobieski and the valor and determination of the Poles that the Turkish invasion was repelled. As to its literary qualities, the love story was powerful and fascinating, a number of characters well-delineated and the pictures of national life truthful ¹⁶⁾.

The Catholic World drew attention to a fine story full of action and to the interplay of all the great human passions. In the finale, the author gave a thrilling description of the military review held by Sobieski before his departure to war. The readers could witness with their very eyes the whirlwind evolutions of that magnificent Polish cavalry that afterwards

12) *The Independent*, LX (February 22, 1906), p. 457.

13) *Memoirs by J. Curtin*, op. cit., p. 859.

14) *The Dial*, XL (March 1, 1906), p. 153.

15) *The Outlook*, LXXXII (February 17, 1906), p. 376.

16) *The Nation*, LXXXII (March 1906), p. 183.

ground into dust the regiments of the Sultan before the walls of Vienna. And just as the Zagloba trio of novels, the book was supplied with the same abundance of sword play ¹⁷⁾.

The review of the novel in the *Literary Digest* appeared under a self-explanatory title: « Melodrama from Poland ». It interpreted the novel as a series of pictures of Polish character and life. The material was charmingly handled; yet probably Sienkiewicz himself would have been surprised if anyone called *On the Field of Glory* a great book. Some opinions quoted from various dailies were flattering to the novelist. *The New York Globe* called it « romantic, dramatic, poetic, and intensely human by turn ». *The Boston Herald* rated it, significantly enough, much in advance of *Knights of the Cross* in absorbing interest. *The New York Tribune* defined it as entertaining and illuminating; the *Brooklyn Eagle* found it a powerfully told story, vigorously dramatic ¹⁸⁾.

The reaction was favorable but moderate. It lacked confrontation with other prominent works of fiction. Nonetheless, a comparative approach was adopted by *The Review of Reviews* of June 1906, where the novel was discussed in a sketch, « The Three Slavic Writers ». Some of the general remarks exalted the pioneer role of Sienkiewicz in America and his literary stature. Their frankness was certainly disarming:

Despite the great reputations and great gifts — of Lermontov and Pushkin, Gogol and Gontcharov, Dostoevski, Turgenev, Tolstoi, Gorki, Russian literature has made but a slight impression outside Europe. For Americans, perhaps, the steppe is too dull, the *muzhik* too slow, and the Nihilist too fond of philosophical abstractions. Be this as it may, the only Slav novelists who have gained a large cis-Atlantic audience are Tolstoi and Sienkiewicz. The venerable giant of Yasnaia Polana may never publish another romance, whereas from the Varsavian, — hale, hearty, and sixty, — more tales are to be expected ¹⁹⁾.

By comparison, the reviewer felt that Sienkiewicz's last novel would not enhance the author's fame but neither would it affect it. Its straight, swift, lucid narrative method would be able to captivate readers. An inevitable contradiction, typical for this category of fiction, was marked: Sienkiewicz spoke with awe of the bloodthirsty fanaticism of the Turks, but he admired the Christian cutthroats for « patriotism » ²⁰⁾. Other Slavic writers discussed were Gansiorowski, « another Pole », and Me-rejkovski.

As in many previous cases, the reaction of the English critics was cooler and more detached. *The Bookman* (London) of October 1906 ridiculed once more the abundance of strange Slavic names by quoting an appropriate passage. The reviewer ironically dissected the plot, in which the romance was overshadowed by the bloodthirsty brawling of unpronounceable warriors. If Sienkiewicz was to be believed, and he appeared to have steeped himself in the history of the time, Poland in the seventeenth century resembled Donny Brook Fair. « There is abun-

17) *The Catholic World*, LXXXIII (May 1906), p. 263.

18) *The Literary Digest*, XXXII, 21 (May 26, 1906), p. 808.

19) *The Review of Reviews*, XXXIII, 6 (June 1906), p. 757.

20) *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

dance of incident, though of a monotonous kind, and the style certainly does not lack vigor. But, as the preface points out with undeniable truth, "a full appreciation of the book depends to some extent upon our owner of entering into the national spirit which pervades it". At the risk of seeming insular we must confess that this "national spirit" is antipathetic to us »²¹⁾.

Even more severe was the opinion expressed in the *Athenaeum*. The critic ruefully acknowledged that the author's reputation would secure an abundance of readers for *On the Field of Glory* but in his eyes it was disappointing. It contained some agreeable material and several promising scenes but the whole narrative produced a commonplace effect. The novel lacked all the higher qualities necessary for making a good romance. There was very little history in it, although the preface treated it as a historical novel. The story was of adventure, love, and intrigue, and as such it was tame. Most of the characters were conventional and dimly presented. The translation certainly did not improve the effect²²⁾.

Undismayed by critical repercussions in other periodicals, *The Independent*, reviewing the most outstanding novels of the year, listed *On the Field of Glory*; however, in this list of twenty-one titles, it was placed in last position. Sienkiewicz's name was preceded, among other authors, by Eden Philipotts, Winston Churchill (*Coniston*), Pierre Loti (*Disenchanted*), and Antonio Fogazzaro (*The Saint*). A few words sufficed to justify the choice: « We boast of outgrowing emotions, and our sentimentality wears a prim, ethical, square toed look which does not lend itself readily to romantic purposes, so it is very well for Sienkiewicz and the rest of them to keep those fields of glory which lie behind us. We have fields of glory now, but we lack the gloryfying instinct »²³⁾.

IX. *The double farewell*

Whirlpools was published in America in 1910, after an interval of four years after the publication of *On the Field of Glory*. The vogue of Sienkiewicz was past its peak but he was far from forgotten. William Morton Payne confronted the new novel with its logical predecessors — *Without Dogma* and *Children of the Soil*. For the first time, it seemed that he felt somewhat embarrassed. The content of *Whirlpools* was, in his opinion, a rather labored effort to give organic shape to a great mass of undigested material. It referred to the socialistic and agrarian unrest of modern times and to the confusion among the leaders of the community. The novelist did not develop any definite program, or an orderly system of ideas; and this was the least to be expected from one so bitterly satirical and destructively critical of his contemporaries. The dismal narrative was made gloomier by the accidental heroine, a victim

21) *The Bookman*, XXXI, 181 (London, October 1906), p. 46.

22) *Athenaeum*, 4111 (August 11, 1906), p. 153.

23) *The Independent*, LXI (November 8, 1906), pp. 1158-61.

of the surrounding chaos. Yet the pessimistic forecast of the imminent peril voiced by Gonski was hardly justified ¹⁾.

Richard Burton saw, in the novel, a picture of the author's country torn by different factions and subjected to the fierce onslaught of socialism. This gloomy vision reflected the author's opinion that this land was in a bad way; only deep love, joined with intelligence, and faith in the sterling quality of its people would save the nation; for cosmopolitanism without or blind revolution within its borders, the writer had no patience. The lengthy dialogues revealing the present political and social conditions of the Polish land halted the story and made its narrative a slow-moving one; however, in the second part the writer made it more interesting and conducted it skilfully to a tragic conclusion ²⁾.

The Nation adopted a somewhat similar judgment. It reproached the novelist for his interpretation of the modern Polish life and character, both national and individual, which lacked to an alien eye force and definition. The narrative was written in an elegiac, even plaintive mood which reached its peak in the final chapter where the word « whirlpools » was inserted. As a study of Polish society and politics, the novel exhibited familiar Slavic features. The Anglo-American reader would notice a touch of the uncomfortable, the mawkish, the nightmarish in the typical mental and emotional processes of the Slavs, producing a repulsive effect close to hysteria ³⁾.

An opposite attitude was expressed by *The Catholic World* which took Sienkiewicz's alarming premonitions with utmost gravity. It heard in the work a bugle call to all Polish patriots. The twelve million Poles under Russian occupation have continued their fight against Russian tyranny with unabated vigor. Yet the doctrines of the Russian socialists and atheists have secured a foothold in their land. This created chaos which could spell a defeat in the struggle for the restoration of Poland. *Whirlpools* rang the pitiful cry telling the world of the terrible trials of a conquered people, of their wrongs and frustrations. Moreover, the novel had world-wide interest and application. Sienkiewicz made Poland the battleground of the imminent conflict but the real background was the world, for every society was subjected to similar dangers. Gronski, who apparently was Sienkiewicz's official spokesman, showed that socialism was unable to solve the pressing agrarian and economic problems; he predicted a gloomy future. To this statement an unbeliever added: « Hear, sir, an atheist, or at least a man who has nothing to do with religion. Knowledge without religion breeds only thieves and bandits » ⁴⁾.

The reviewer was convinced that the pen of Sienkiewicz had not lost its power. The novelist presented his portrayal of the Polish community with telling lines and vivid colors; his analysis of characters was marvellous. He gave the readers a Poland in its nobility, its peasants, and its rabble, detached and accurate. The novel was classified as an important literary event: « To Poland itself the book must be a sort of patriotic classic; to us it is invaluable as the apology against Socialism of a keen observer and a deep student ». Only one weakness was revealed and that

1) *The Dial*, XLIX (July 16, 1910), p. 42.

2) *The Bellman*, IX (July 2, 1910), p. 842.

3) *The Nation*, XCI, 2355 (April 18, 1910), pp. 144-45.

4) *The Catholic World*, XCI (August 1910), p. 689.

was a surplus of exaggerated realism. It was sufficient to indicate the filth; it was superfluous to expose it and hold it long before the readers' eyes ⁵⁾.

The Independent interpreted the novel so literally that it ridiculed its content. It intimated that *Whirlpools* was inspired with the same patriotic motifs as the famous *Trilogy*; however, now the foes of Poland were not the Swedes, the Turks, and the Germans but the socialist and agrarian agitators. Their victim died repeating the question, « For what? for what? ». The futility of the book was comparable to the mood of Galsworthy's drama *Strife*. Sienkiewicz had no solution for his countrymen who still suffered from the ancient and irradicable faults of the Polish character. Yet these modern Poles were certainly less interesting than the bloody heroes of the *Trilogy*, the most remarkable series of historical novels written in recent years ⁶⁾.

In a review published by *The Book News* in August 1910, Ruth Norcross considered *Whirlpools* to be a psychological novel. She opened her reflections with an eulogy of Sienkiewicz as a student of human nature. In her opinion, probably no other contemporary writer had so thorough an understanding of human passions, and certainly no one was more skilful in painting them for the reader. Sienkiewicz's dissection of characters was scientific; he analyzed every impulse, every temptation so that one could follow the heart throbs of each figure, rather than reading the novel for passing amusement. These words sounded like a distant echo of the fascination produced by *Without Dogma*, but were a mere reflection of the heroine of *Whirlpools* and her dramatic career.

The reviewer concentrated almost exclusively on the love affair and its intricate entanglements. She reproached the author for describing some incidents with unseemly frankness of detail. The character of the hero, in spite of his grossness, appeared as honorable, courageous, and generous. The treatment of a peasant girl, in a different manner than a woman of his own rank, was but a part of his nature, inherited from the generations of his ancestors. As to the heroine, her beauty, her womanly constancy and affection were no less to be commended than her loyalty to her own self-respect, which she placed higher than mere happiness. The book was reckoned as a masterpiece of its kind, clever throughout, with brilliant dialogues and poetic descriptions ⁷⁾.

In Desert and Wilderness was written for youth, but Sienkiewicz's reputation ran so high that after the publication of the book, the usual machinery of literary criticism was put in motion. This caused some undue misunderstandings. *The Nation* sensibly but pointlessly declared that the story had none of the vivid panoramic quality which had taken the author's earlier readers by storm. The reviewer indulged in discussing the psychological aspect of the novel. The fact that both childish heroes were motherless went far towards accounting for their adventures: no pair of judicious mothers would have been likely to permit their children to set out in native hands on a long journey at such a restless time.

5) *Ibid.*, p. 690.

6) *The Independent*, LXIX (August 25, 1910), pp. 424-25.

7) *Book News*, XXVIII, 12 (August 10, 1910), pp. 907-08.

Unluckily (or luckily for the storyteller) the Arabs in whose charge the children were supposed to travel were members of the Mahdi's tribe, and the kidnapping took place almost at the very start. This gave Stash a chance to show his strength and prowess, and he behaved according to the best traditions of the honorable company of boy heroes. In conclusion, the critic did admit that the story was rather for children than adults; yet, he assured the readers that the « ... pictures of desert life and its interpretation of boy and girl character were upon a much higher plane than that of the ordinary story of the general type » ⁸⁾.

The Catholic World definitely approved of the novel. The reviewer went as far as to declare that the romance of the African wilderness confirmed Sienkiewicz's international fame. As it had happened in *Quo Vadis?*, he had again departed from his usual Polish ground and history. This time he had chosen a setting of weird fascination — the African desert with its lure and adventure, its mysterious and terrible desolation. The subsequent comparison with a second rate English writer Robert Hichens was not very flattering for the Nobel Prize winner, even though the critic admitted that the Polish novelist made his scenery as vivid and as passionate as his English counterpart. His plot, too, was healthier than any yet achieved by Hichens. The narrative was told with the strength and brilliancy associated with the name of Sienkiewicz and was decidedly an achievement ⁹⁾.

The Book News leniently discussed the incidence of the novel, as Africa was still a land where anything might have happened. Moreover, the most unlikely story narrated by Sienkiewicz would acquire swing carrying the reader along in spite of the restraints of reason. The author maintained suspense so skilfully that no providential occurrence, however unlikely, would raise a stumbling block of skepticism. It is one of the books one cannot lay aside till it is finished. It also brings much valuable information regarding the animal and vegetable life of British East Africa and the Egyptian Sudan. Having read it, one would almost know the essentials for the equipment of an exploring expedition ¹⁰⁾.

Still another laudatory note appeared in *The Independent*. The reviewer confided that, having read it, he had a curious impression that the volume was illustrated, so vivid was the mental picture of the African desert in his mind; yet, the only real illustrations were the word paintings of the novelist. The older members of the family will be stealing this book from the children and reading it first, once they begin the exciting journey from Port Said to Mombassa ¹¹⁾.

The acceptance of *In Desert and Wilderness* in America was possibly more benevolent than in the author's native land, where it found due recognition only in recent times. Obviously, Sienkiewicz's narrative zest did not lose its fascination. Yet the rays of his renown provided now more light than warmth: former confrontations with Homer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Goethe, Scott, and Balzac were substituted by a comparison with a minor English author.

8) *The Nation*, XCIV (May 30, 1912), p. 540.

9) *The Catholic World*, XCV (April 1912), pp. 112-13.

10) *Book News*, XXX, 8 (April 1912), pp. 592-93.

11) *The Independent*, LXXII (June 1912), p. 1279.

X. Among publishers and booksellers

The enthusiasm of the translators, the lively activity of the publishers, and the favorable repercussions in the American press combined to make Sienkiewicz a very popular writer. The general public seemed to outdistance the critics. The official attitude in the literary world towards *Quo Vadis?* was more reserved; yet the novel broke all popularity records. From England came a cautious estimate of the novelist's literary rank, but although hints from Great Britain were usually taken seriously, in Sienkiewicz's case they were practically disregarded.

Sienkiewicz's success on American soil drew some confusing statements. In his *Memoirs*, Curtin wrote that the success of *With Fire and Sword* was immediate and striking. The book was received with so much enthusiasm that he began to translate *The Deluge* at once ¹⁾. A quite different view was given by Little, Brown and Co. in a brochure *One Hundred Years of Publishing, 1837-1937*:

Mr. Curtin has been called the greatest linguist this country has ever produced. He convinced Mr. John Murray Brown and Mr. McIntyre of Sienkiewicz's importance, and in 1890 his translation of Sienkiewicz's *With Fire and Sword* was published. Sienkiewicz was unknown in the United States and the sale of *With Fire and Sword* in its first year was only 1,922 copies. The Polish names Hmelnitski, Skshetuski, Vishnyevetski, Zayontchkovski, bothered American readers. Next came *The Deluge*, in 1891, which sold only 1,585 copies in two years. The third novel in the trilogy, *Pan Michael*, was issued in 1893 and sold 1,655 copies that year and 777 the next. This must have been most discouraging; patience was needed and fortunately Mr. Brown and Mr. McIntyre kept their belief in the greatness of Sienkiewicz. At last, in 1896 *Quo Vadis, a Narrative of the Time of Nero*, appeared... ²⁾.

The quoted figures surely did not appear encouraging. Were they to be trusted? Assuming they were correct, Curtin's statement in the *Memoirs* that *With Fire and Sword* had instant success would be false. However, Curtin did not publish this information during his lifetime and would therefore not expect to gain any advantage from falsifying the truth. Another argument is still more convincing. The copies of *With Fire and Sword* reprinted in 1896 contained a note on the front page: « Seventh edition ». As the book was offered for sale in 1890, the obvious conclusion must be drawn that it was reprinted every year, even before *Quo Vadis?* This would appear not to be a publishing disaster. Moreover, *The Deluge* reappeared in 1891, 1892, and 1895. Correspondence with the present management of the firm confirmed, to some extent, the advanced doubts. Of course, the *Trilogy* did not become really popular in America.

There were no complaints for the sluggish sale of *Quo Vadis?* It swept the country in its many editions. Its expansion may be determined with a considerable degree of exactness owing to the lists of bestsellers tabulated at monthly intervals by *The Bookman*. These reports emanated

1) *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 445.

2) *One Hundred Years of Publishing, 1837-1937*. (Boston, 1937), p. 38.

from various cities all over the United States and invariably contained but six titles. Some centers supplied figures with accuracy while others were less systematic. Occasional gaps were inevitable. Yet these figures have much instructive value.

The territorial expanse represented by the lists was enormous. It stretched from coast to coast encompassing twenty-nine American localities and two Canadian cities. *The Bookman* also published some general bookselling reports despatched from the East (New York) and the West along with some valuable comments. All these materials demonstrated the scale on which the machinery set into motion operated to make the book available to the whole American community.

Naturally enough, the sale reached its peak only after a lapse of several months from the date of publication. In the case of *Quo Vadis?*, this interval was short, as can be seen from the accompanying table.

Position of Quo Vadis? in the bestseller lists

	D 1896	J 1897	F	M	A	My	Je	Jl	Ag	S	O	N	D
New York Dctn.	6	1	3	1	1	3	2	3	2	3	1	4	1
New York Uptn.	2	2	2	2	2	5	3	0	2	1	0	0	3
Albany, N. Y.	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Atlanta, Ga.	0	3	0	0	1	4	0	0	2	1	4	3	1
Baltimore, Md.	0	0	5	1	2	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Boston, Mass.	2	1	3	1	2	3	4	3	2	5	0	1	1
Boston, Mass.	2,3	1	1,1	2	2	0	3	0	3	2	0	0	0
Buffalo, N.Y.	4	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	4	5	3	0	4
Chicago, Ill.	0	3,2	4	2	1	2,3	3	4	4,6	3	2	4	1
Cincinnati, Ohio	0	3	5	2	1	3	0	3	4	4	0	0	1
Cleveland, Ohio	1	0	4	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Denver, Col.	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Detroit, Mich.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	5	0
Indianapolis, Ind.	0	0	3	2	1	2	0	4	3	6	5	0	0
Kansas City, Mo.	4	0	0	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Los Angeles, Cal.	5	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	4	5	1
Louisville, Ky.	0	2	2	2	5	5	0	0	1	1	3	2	4
New Haven, Conn.	0	2	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
New Orleans, La.	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Omaha, Neb.	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	4
Philadelphia, Pa.	6	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	1	2
Pittsburgh, Pa.	2	0	2	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	6	0	1
Portland, Ore.	0	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Rochester, N.Y.	0	1	0	5	5	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	1
San Francisco	6	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	4
Salt Lake City	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	0	4	0	1	1
St. Louis, Mo.	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	5	6	1
St. Paul, Minn.	4	0	3	3	1	3	0	0	4	3	1	0	1
Toledo, Ohio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	1
Waco, Texas	0	0	0	3	3	5	0	0	5	4	2	6	0
Worcester, Mass.	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montreal, Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0
Toronto, Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	1	0

In December 1896, it was entered on the booksellers' list thirteen times; Cleveland was the first city to assign it first place. As of January 1897, the novel took a permanent position on these lists and remained there for about eighteen months.

For the entire year 1897, *Quo Vadis?* occupied first position 102 times, second place 49 times, third place 42 times, and more distant positions also 48 times. According to figures available, the novel had the greatest popularity in New York, Boston, Buffalo, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Omaha,

Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Portland, and San Francisco. This did not mean that it was neglected or ignored in other states. If it appeared in the reports during several months and suddenly disappeared, this did not indicate that people stopped buying it: the explanation was usually to be found in faulty and irregular reporting.

In discussing the lists of bestsellers, the editor of *The Bookman* repeated time and again that in different months *Quo Vadis?* was at the top in the whole United States. The regional correspondents fully endorsed this opinion, which was also confirmed by other enquiries. The triumph of *Quo Vadis?* was more impressive in comparison with other books whose success was more ephemeral. Sienkiewicz's universal acclaim, lasting for over one year, was an unheard of phenomenon.

To the amazement of booksellers and publishers, no signs indicated the eclipse of the novel at the beginning of 1898. On the contrary, its sale proceeded with undiminished intensity. Luxurious editions in two volumes, carefully illustrated and bound, which Little, Brown and Co. put on the market before the Christmas holidays, were quickly sold out, although the prices amounted to six and twelve dollars per copy, a considerable sum at that time. The firm reprinted Sienkiewicz's earlier novels hoping the author's celebrity would speed up their sale. This calculation was quite justified. Moreover, the report from Chicago promoted *With Fire and Sword* to the front of the bestsellers, followed immediately by *Quo Vadis?*

It was not until the summer months of 1898 that the name of Sienkiewicz began to disappear for good from the lists of bestsellers. Was this proof that the reading public abandoned their favorite author? Indeed not. A new holiday reprint of *Quo Vadis?* disappeared completely from the shelves as quickly as its predecessor. Simultaneously cheap pocket editions flooded the book stores and found eager purchasers; yet, these were not accounted for in the booksellers' reports. The author became his own most dangerous competitor.

The phenomenal sale of Sienkiewicz's books could not pass unnoticed by other publishers. As the demand of the market was practically unlimited, sooner or later competitive editions were bound to appear. There were no formal obstacles prohibiting such competition. Russia did not belong to the copyright agreement. Since Sienkiewicz lived in the Russian partition of Poland, his works lacked any protection in the American Union, unless the text in Polish was published in America within six months of the publication in Poland. Of course, this condition was not fulfilled.

In December 1897, Altemus of Philadelphia issued another translation of *Quo Vadis?* which sold for \$ 1.25. This was the beginning of a publishing wrangle in which many firms were involved. Little, Brown and Co. was compelled to reduce its prices. This was achieved through mass editions and the inevitable deterioration of quality. In May 1898, American booksellers could read the following full-page advertisement in the *Dry Goods Economist*:

A New Edition of *Quo Vadis* The Most Successful Novel of the season. 600,000 copies already sold, and it is still the best selling book everywhere. The publishers have just issued a special limited

edition in the Beacon Series of the Authorized Unabridged Translation by Jeremiah Curtin. 12mo; 550 pages. Paper. Retail price, 25c per copy. Trade price, 9c per copy. *On the Bright Shore* By Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of *Quo Vadis* Royal Series No. 45 A. *That Third Woman* By Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of *Quo Vadis*. Crown Series No. 45 A. *Hania* By Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of *Quo Vadis*. Crown Series No. 46 A. Authorized Unabridged Translation By Jeremiah Curtin. Cheap Edition. 12mo. Paper. Entered as Second Class Matter Retail, 25c each. Send for quotations or quantities. These special editions have been purchased by THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY 39-41 Chambers St., New York to whom orders should be sent direct, without delay. A quick sale is predicted to these editions. Little, Brown & Co., Publishers, 254 Washington Street, Boston ³⁾.

In spite of this energetic counteroffensive by the Boston publishers, apparently Altemus quickly sold its entire stock of the novel, since in the following year it published a reprint. The firm also printed a volume of short stories. Moreover, Ogilvie of New York made their debut as Sienkiewicz's publishers with a new translation of *Quo Vadis?* by William E. Smith. In such competitive climate, prices had to fall. Perhaps the record was beaten by Street in New York, which offered the novel to their customers at ten cents a copy.

Attempts were made to determine with some degree of precision how many copies of *Quo Vadis?* were offered to the American readers. The collected data seems to prove that previous calculations were too conservative. The quoted advertisement in the *Dry Goods Economist* stated that 600,000 copies had been sold on the eve of publication of a cheap edition. And this was only the start of its distribution on a really massive scale. Besides, at least twenty-three other publishers were interested in propagating the novel. It is therefore reasonable to conjecture that the total number of copies sold in America had reached millions.

The British were also impressed by Sienkiewicz. He had some admirers among English critics who not only approved of the *Trilogy* but of *Quo Vadis?* as well. However, the general attitude of the English remained more detached and they observed with ironic wonderment the rapture of American readers. *The London Academy* published a jocular poem called «Columbus Sienkiewicz» which was duly reprinted in *The Outlook* on March 12, 1898:

Let Peary seek his Arctic goal;
His countrymen prefer a Pole
 Less brumal and uncertain;
And Roe and Howells the prolix
Must bow to Henry Sienkiewicz
 Democratized by Curtin.

3) The facsimile was included in *One Hundred...*, *op. cit.*

Of all that Sienkiewicz has writ
Quo Vadis is the favorite
From ocean unto ocean;
And Trilby's antics, once the rage,
As tame beside this crowded page
Of Christian emotion.

In Michigan they will not look
At aught but Sienkiewicz's book,
Nor gentlemen, nor ladies.
In Illinois and Maryland
No reader will extend a hand
Except to reach *Quo Vadis*.

Ohio, Massachusetts, Penn-
sylvania, Mississippi, Tenn-
essee, Louisiana,
Wisconsin, Texas, Washington,
North Carolina, Oregon,
Virginia, Montana,

And Delaware and Idaho,
Columbia, New Mexico,
Nebraska, Maine, Missouri,
Rhode Island, California,
Connecticut and Florida,
All share the Polish fury ⁴⁾.

Real life played even more amusing tricks to Sienkiewicz than the versifiers. *The Bookman* of July 1897, quoted a headline from the literary column of a Kentucky newspaper: « RICHARD HARDING DAVIS — The author of *Quo Vadis*, *Springtime Prose*, and *Stories of the West* » ⁵⁾.

The list of American publishers who printed works by Sienkiewicz included at least thirty four firms:

Altemus, Henry, Philadelphia
American News, 9-15 Park Place, New York City
Aurora Editions
Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Ind.
Benziger, 98-100 Park Place, New York City
Burt, 114-120 E. 23rd St., New York City
Caldwell, Atlanta, Ga.
Columbia University Press,
Conkey, W. B., 140 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.
Crowell, 426-8 W. Broadway, New York
Dodd, 4th Ave. and 30th St., New York
Donohue, M. A., 407-429 Dearborn St., Chicago
Dutton, E. P., (Everyman's Library), 31 W. 23rd St., New York
Federal Bank
Federal Book Co.
Federal Pub. Co., Madison, Wisc.

⁴⁾ *The Outlook*; LVIII (March 12, 1898), p. 669.

⁵⁾ *The Bookman*. V, 5 (July 1897), p. 1.

Fenno, 18 E. 17th St., New York
 French, Samuel, 25 W. 45th St., N.Y.
 Garden City Pub. Co., Garden City, N.Y.
 Globe Books, 175 5th Ave., N.Y.
 Grosset and Dunlap, 1140 Broadway, N.Y.
 Heritage Press
 Hurst, 354 4th Ave., N.Y.
 Limited Editions Publications
 Little, Brown & Co., Boston
 Lupton, F. M. (sold to Federal Bank)
 McClelland, 215 Victoria St., Toronto, Canada (coop. with Little,
 Brown & Co.)
 McKay, David, 604-608 Washington Sq., Philadelphia
 MacMillan, 66 5th Ave., N.Y.
 Munro's Sons 17 Vandewater St., N.Y.
 Neely, F. Tennyson, 114 5th Ave., New York
 Nelson, Thomas, 381-85 4th Ave., N.Y.
 Ogilvie, J.C., 57 Rose St., N.Y.
 Street and Smith, 7th Ave. & 15th St., N.Y.

It would be a frustrating task to try to collect all the American editions of Sienkiewicz's works. They were so avidly read that the cheaper editions were completely worn out or simply vanished. Even the compilation of their bibliography presented considerable difficulties. The bibliography published in the fifty-ninth volume of *Dziela*, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski, listed mainly British editions and mentioned only nine American reprints of *Quo Vadis?* Closer research did reveal that it was reprinted in the United States at least sixty-one times, including two abbreviated versions and a dramatic paraphrase.

In America *Quo Vadis?* outlived Sienkiewicz's other works. It was retranslated after World War II by Jan Heyman. It appeared in the *Great Illustrated Classics* series, published by Dodd, with an introductory note by Allen Klots. Limited Editions Publications prepared a reprint of the novel with an introduction by Harold Lamb and illustrations by Salvatore Fiume. This fine edition, available to subscribing members, was printed at the Officina Bodoni in Verona (1959). Cheaper reprints appeared in 1960 and 1961. *Quo Vadis?* was recommended for high schools and it can be found in practically all American public libraries. Naturally, the motion pictures contributed to its universal popularity; although the scripts vulgarized the content, they did provide an incentive for moviegoers to get acquainted with the novel itself.

Sienkiewicz's contemporary novels disappeared from the market even before the First World War. The *Trilogy* was still reprinted in 1928, 1941, and again in 1950. The selected short stories were occasionally unearthed from oblivion and reappeared in anthologies. Dagobert Runes included «The Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall» in his *World Literature* (1956); «Yanko the Musician» reappeared in *Stories of Many Nations* (1942) and in *Polish Authors of Today and Yesterday* edited by Irena Moraska (1947). *Letters from America*, ignored during the novelist's lifetime were at first printed on several occasions in small excerpts. Charles Morley, at first, translated «The Chinese in California» and later a major part of the whole text which appeared in 1959 under the title *Portrait of America: Letters*.

XI. Quo Vadis? on stage

Jeremiah Curtin expected there would be adaptations of Sienkiewicz's works for the stage in America and England. In his *Memoirs*, he noted that the novelist gave him full authority to dramatize all his books, with the exception of *Knights of the Cross* ¹⁾. Yet although *With Fire and Sword* was performed as a play in Paris in Sarah Bernard's theater with considerable success, American theatrical producers did not seem to be interested in dramatizing the *Trilogy*. However, they were tempted to produce *Quo Vadis?*

Some troubles occurred in connection with the theatrical rights. Curtin reported that on the strength of his contract with Sienkiewicz, he gave Miss Jeannette L. Gilder, editor of *The Critic*, permission to dramatize the book. On the other hand, the novelist granted the same privilege to Wilson Barrett in England. Asked for an explanation, he admitted that he had entirely forgotten of his earlier obligation and promised to rectify the error. But it was already too late, and Barrett refused to withdraw. Curtin's claim was apparently justified, but it was futile, for in addition to Miss Gilder, four other authors wrote dramatized versions of *Quo Vadis?*. Protracted correspondence between Sienkiewicz and his editors proved ineffective ²⁾.

The performances were staged primarily in 1900. The New York Theater opened its season on April ninth with a paraphrase of *Quo Vadis?*. The author of the text was Stanislaus Stange and the music was composed by Julian Edwards. *Old Testament* plays had been generally accepted as material suitable for drama but the use of the *New Testament* was not approved. In 1884, an idealistic Jew staged a Passion Play; he met with such strong opposition that the spectacle ended in financial ruin for the pioneer who committed suicide ³⁾. At the end of the nineteenth century, the atmosphere was more liberal and *Quo Vadis?* had a four week run. The cast consisted of the following:

Vinitius - Joseph Haworth
Petronius - Arthur Forrest
Nero - Edmund D. Lyons
Tigellinus - William F. Clifton
Aulus Plautus - Richard Buehler
Caius Hasta - Marcus Ford
Chilo Chilonides - Horace Lewis
Vitellius - W. T. Melville
Poppoea - Alice Fischer
Eunice - Maude Fealey
Glaucus - Edwin Varrey
Lygia - Roselle Knott
Pomponia - Margaret Fealey ⁴⁾

1) *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 691.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 772.

3) Archie Binns, *Mrs. Fiske and the American Theater* (New York, 1955), p. 130.

4) T. Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage From the First Performance in 1732 to 1901*. (New York, 1903), III, p. 611.

Stange's version was rather short. It was divided into four acts with six scenes. The scenery allowed for some simplifications: 1) Room. 2) Garden of Aulus Plautius. 3) Garden of Nero (with palace not necessary). 4) Room. 5) Garden with burning of Rome (Burning of Rome did not need to be visible). 6) Arena in the rear; the upper part of a wall visible only; sky scene would do for this; a cross was cut in it covered with a piece of printed canvas, which could be drawn back to disclose the cross ⁵⁾.

Another producer chose Miss Gilder's version for the Herald Square Theater performance. The production was sumptuous and the cast included twenty-four actors:

Petronius - E. J. Morgan
Vinitius - John Blair
Nero - Robert Fischer
Tigellinus - T. B. Bridgeland
Chilo - Frank J. Currier
Lucan - William Herbert
Aulus - Harrison Armstrong
Father Linus - Myron Calice
Croton - Howard Truesdale
Hasta - Robert L. Gemp
Vitellius - W. V. Ranous
Vestinius - F. Husted
Glaucus - Willard Simpson
Gulo - Joseph Damery
Little Aulus - Little Arthur
Lygia - Bijou Fernandez
Pomponia - Hattie Russell
Eunice - Grayce Scott
Poppoea - Minnie Monck
Miriam - Anna Barclay
Acte - Engel Summer
Lygia - Jane Marbury
Calvia - Gertrude Magill
A Slave - Dollie Thornton ⁶⁾

The Star Theater opened a new season on August eleventh with a performance of *Quo Vadis?* dramatized by Aiden Benedict ⁷⁾. Sienkiewicz's name reappeared on the posters at H. R. Jacobs' Third Avenue Theater; at the Grand Opera House, where *Quo Vadis?* opened on March 18, 1901; and at the Eagle Theater ⁸⁾.

Glenn Hughes pointed out that the dramatizations of Sienkiewicz's novels staged in 1900 at the Herald Square and the New York Theaters, written by Stanislaus Stange and Jeannette Gilder, could not boast themselves smash hits, but both won some measure of success. « The former proved the more palatable and was seen for 96 performances.

5) A copy of the adaptation of *Quo Vadis?* by S. Stange has been preserved in the New York Public Library.

6) Allston Brown, *op. cit.*, III, p. 394.

7) *Ibid.*, II, p. 342.

8) *Ibid.*, p. 235.

In December 1900 the play was revived with a revised cast headed by Wilton Lackaye and continued for 32 performances » ⁹⁾.

The vogue embraced other cities. In the Boston Theater, Fred C. Whitney's production began on November 12, 1900 and continued for six weeks. The play was beautifully staged, and acted by Wilton Lackaye, Aubrey Boucicault, Edmund D. Lyons, J. B. Lyons, J. B. Booth (the third actor by that name), Frank Mordaunt, Carlotta Nilsson, Elita Proctor Otis, Bijou Fernandez, and others. The adaptation was by Stanislaus Stange ¹⁰⁾. His version was likewise performed at McVicker's Theater in Chicago, and later brought to the Adelphi Theater in London (May 1900) ¹¹⁾.

The Literary Digest printed a few general remarks on the dramatization of *Quo Vadis?* and pointed out that Stange's version attracted less critical interest than Gilder's, although the latter had the additional asset of being authorized by Sienkiewicz. As a matter of fact, the novelist probably was not acquainted with this version and relied on the good offices of Curtin. *The Literary Digest* quoted two reviews of the performance. In the *New York Evening Post* the critic wrote:

There are readers who do not place *Quo Vadis* in the first rank of contemporary fiction, and who are a little doubtful whether it is the spiritual or the carnal spirit that has made it so attractive to the multitude, but no admirer of it can justly accuse Miss Gilder of not treating it with proper respect and sympathy. She has followed the main outline of the story as closely as could reasonably be expected, has been equally sincere and uncompromising in her portrayal of the profligate and savage sensuality of pagan Rome and the religious exaltation of the Christian martyrs, and has avoided the sentimental and disingenious claptrap which was so conspicuous and offensive in *The Sign of the Cross*. Whatever the defects of her play - and some of them are sufficiently obvious — she has not subordinated sense to spectacle, or condescended to mere trick for the sake of pleasing the groundlings ¹²⁾.

Special praise was reserved for the last act. Instead of making any attempt to show the arena itself, the producer let the audience see Ursus' exploit through the eyes of the courtiers sitting in the imperial box. Quite a different verdict was pronounced by William Winter in *The Tribune*:

Three hours of stage Christianity, punctuated with three ghost-seeing deliriums, three agonized partings, two suicides, one sermon, one ballet, and one wrestling-match — such is the *Quo Vadis*, made by Miss Gilder and sanctioned by Mr. Sienkiewicz that was produced last night in the Herald Square Theater, and was received with abundant applause by a crowded house. It is not a play; it is a synopsis; but it contains, roughly thrown together, many of the

9) Glenn Hughes, *A history of the American Theatre*. (New York, 1903), p. 327.

10) Eugene Tompkins, *The History of the Boston Theater 1854-1901* (Boston, 1908), p. 478.

11) M. Willson Disher, *Melodrama; Plots That Thrilled*, London, 1954), p. 124.

12) « Dramatization of *Quo Vadis?* » in *The Literary Digest*, XX, 17 (April 28, 1900), p. 511.

incidents of a popular tale... All these religious plays are very much alike, and they are all tiresome. They please, however, a large class, that habitually shuns the theater but would rally to see an abstract of the Old Testament, and therefore they have their use. To others the stage seems scarcely a fit place for an exposition of the scheme of spiritual salvation. Each to his taste ¹³⁾.

Poor Miss Gilder could find some consolation in a favorable attitude adopted by *The Bookman*. An anonymous reviewer spoke of her paraphrase as « in many respects a very excellent piece of work ». In the past, very few dramatizations of successful novels did not disappoint admirers of the corresponding books. Miss Gilder's version was found well-constructed, well-staged, and well-acted. Had it been put on stage in the early part of the season, it would most likely have enjoyed a success beyond that of *Ben-Hur*, to which it was superior in every respect. It needed a great amount of dexterity to faithfully adhere to the spirit of the novel and at the same time produce so logical and complete a play. The dramatic text was thoroughly intelligible to the playgoer who had never read a line of Sienkiewicz. Miss Gilder also managed to give the drama that stamp of vastness which was the very essence of the novel. On stage, as in the novel, the spectators saw « all imperial Rome — its legions, its luxury, its baseness — and yet... never for a moment allowed to forget the loves of Vinitius and Lygia and Petronius and Eunice » ¹⁴⁾.

Despite some reservations, the Herald Square Theater performance could be termed a success. *The Critic* commended E. J. Morgan as the « arbiter of elegance ». Flattering words were devoted to the acting. Miss Bijou Fernandez, who played Lygia, was « most happily cast » and won the triumph of her life. Some words of praise were also addressed to D. H. Hunt, the manager, who « has lavished money and intelligence in giving the play every advantage in the way of cast and scenery » ¹⁵⁾.

The stage effects, necessary for the spectacle, required a great deal of ingenuity. Some amusing reminiscences on this subject were included in the book *Plays and Players, Leaves from a Critic's Scrapbook*:

You remember *Quo Vadis*, no doubt? When the play was produced great posters depicted a naked damsel on the back of the bull, and a gigantic man grasping the bull's horns and breaking its neck. Rather a piquant stage situation, you thought, and hastened to the theater. But you didn't see there any naked lady on a bull's back while a giant broke the creature's neck. You saw the spectators looking excitedly into the wings at the stage hands, and telling each other that the bull's neck was being broken. Of course, its neck had to be broken, and the audience had to know it was broken, or the story couldn't go on. But since modern actors are not trained to break the bull's neck, it had to happen off stage ¹⁶⁾.

13) *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

14) *The Bookman*, XI (June 1900), p. 296.

15) *The Critic*, XXXVI, 3 (March 1900), p. 391.

16) Walter Pritchard Eaton, *Plays and Players, Leaves From a Critic's Scrapbook* (Cincinnati, 1916), p. 338.

Another American echo of *Quo Vadis?* was its travesty *Quo Vass Is?*, a dramatic parody in one scene, performed in the Yiddish theaters. It was included in a special charity performance held on September 6, 1900, for which tickets were sold at a special auction. It exploited the motif of detection inserted in the novel and dealt with the literary crimes of Zero, as well as with the burning of rum by the W. C. T. U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union). It ridiculed the artificial and pompous style of the translation, with frequent obsolete expressions. Fragment of the text was preserved by Norman Haggood:

Ross. — I have just returned on the *limitus vestibulus* from Ashbury Park.

Hopper (*Petrolius*). - You must have a *thirstus fit* to float a gallery. Thou art an easy *Marius*.

Finishus Ross told about the mystery of Lythia's drawing a lobster on the sand, and Warfield, who was superbly picturesque as Hilo, a hobo philosopher, admitted, « Verily, this stumpeth me ».

Hopper. — Let us go to the *boozorium*.

Field, the boy *Smallus*, to Fay Timpleton, his sister Lythia. — Thou art a *punkin ball* player. Thou wilt never get to the *ninus*. — Lythia recounted that Zero had promised to read a poem to the populace. — Didst not see the populace leaving the town as thou camest here? — Tell me your pipe story, and how you twisted that neck of the *jackaxe*. — Weber. It wasn't a *jackaxe*. It was a wild, *untameable borax*. — Thou didst what no other person don't before — ¹⁷⁾.

XII. *Image of the novelist*

Sienkiewicz's popularity in America aroused considerable interest in the author's biography, his native background, and his personal habits. Facts concerning the writer acquired value as news and were eagerly inserted in literary periodicals. This vogue began in 1896, even before the publication of *Quo Vadis?* It still lasted at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Chronological priority belongs to the essay « A Polish Summer Resort » by Archibald Cary Coolidge, published in *The Nation* in 1896 ¹⁾. During his stay in Poland, Coolidge spent some time at the mountain resort of Zakopane: among the residents he recognized Sienkiewicz and drew a concise silhouette of him. He noted that the belletrist's acquaintance was eagerly sought. In order to avoid being lionized, the novelist was chary of meeting his countrymen, preferring to let himself be admired at a distance.

In « General Gossip of Authors and Writers » in *Current Literature*, the reporter observed that the seventy-five copies of *Quo Vadis?* in the

17) Norman Haggood, *The Stage in America 1897-1900* (New York, 1901), pp. 107-08.

1) *The Nation*, 1632 (October 8, 1896), pp. 268-69.

Mercantile Library of New York were inadequate to satisfy the demand of a single quarter of the city. A brief biography which followed this information was based on reliable sources. Notwithstanding Sienkiewicz's frequent travels abroad, he was defined as intensely Polish in taste, pride, and tender patriotism: This unique combination, the love of country mingled with the breadth of the true cosmopolitan, the reverence of the past mingled with a hope almost prophetic for the future — these are the qualities which make his contributions to literature of deep and permanent value » 2).

An entertaining sketch by Curtin called « The Author of *Quo Vadis?* My Acquaintance with Sienkiewicz » appeared in *The Century*. It contained the story of the first meeting of the novelist and his translator at Ragatz; an interview devoted mainly to Sienkiewicz's method of writing a book and his literary favorites; and a visit in the writer's summer residence in Zakopane, with an excursion to the Black Lake (Czarny Staw) as a culminating point. The material enclosed in the essay was reprinted in Curtin's *Memoirs* and partly translated into Polish, with some regrettable distortions 3).

Occasional errors or misunderstandings were inevitable. Speaking of Sienkiewicz's California period, *Munsey's Magazine* intimated that the writer moved westwards... as a gold digger. Like Bret Harte's, his digging was not an immediate success; but as in the case of the American author, his labor with the pick was a valuable experience that led him to ultimate victory with the pen. His stories of Western life were well received in Poland, and the result was that writing became his life's work... 4).

Current Literature reprinted excerpts of an interview with Sienkiewicz from the *London Daily News*. It mentioned some interesting details of the writer's method of work. The novelist was described as impeccably dressed and remarkably well-preserved for his age. He seemed to be the « perfect type of Polish gentleman, of that aristocracy which is inferior to none in Europe ». Comments on the creation of *Quo Vadis?* differed slightly from information available in other sources 5).

Henry F. Keenan, a regular contributor to *The Literary Era*, spoke of Sienkiewicz's resonance in his own country where *Quo Vadis?* was rated far below the *Trilogy*; he also called attention to the deep impression produced by *Quo Vadis?* in France 6). The same periodical published a comprehensive report of Sienkiewicz's jubilee 7). In February 1902, it reported one of the earliest hints of the novelist as possible candidate for the Nobel Prize. Two names reached the full body of the Swedish Academy: Sully Prudhomme and Francis Mistral, both Frenchmen. As to other names, Tolstoi received three votes; Ibsen three; Sienkiewicz,

2) *Current Literature*, XXIII, 2 (February 1898), pp. 116-18.

3) « The Author of *Quo Vadis?* My Acquaintance with Sienkiewicz » in *The Century*, LVI, 3 (July 1898), pp. 428-32. Cf. *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Henryka Sienkiewicza*, in *Dziela*, vol. LVII (Warszawa 1954), pp. 310-316.

4) *Munsey's Magazine*, XVIII (March 1898), p. 1935.

5) *Current Literature*, XXXI, 2 (August 1901), p. 230.

6) *The Literary Era*, VIII, 1 (January 1901), p. 9.

7) *Ibid.*, VIII, 4, pp. 199-200.

Ossip Loui, and Hauptmann two each; Edmond Rostand, Gabriele d'Annunzio, and Freytag one each ⁸⁾.

The article « The Country of Sienkiewicz » by Louis E. Van Norman, printed in *The Bookman* (February and March, 1901) was devised on an ambitious scale. It described the places where the incidents of the *Trilogy* had taken place. The illustrations were abundant and of excellent quality: a portrait of the novelist by Leon Wyczółkowski, four illustrations to *With Fire and Sword* by Juliusz Kossak, three photos of Zbaraj, three of Częstochowa, six of the landscapes associated with *Pan Michael*, and so forth.

Current Literature provided much information on the imminent twenty-fifth anniversary of Sienkiewicz's literary debut. The author of the note was visibly impressed by the universal homage paid to the writer by his countrymen. Mention was made of the expected message from the Tsar of Russia who was well-known to readers of Sienkiewicz's novels: « The question has arisen as to the propriety of a reply from the novelist of Poland, whose people cannot politely acknowledge the Russian yoke and whose aspirations for nationality no one has done more than Sienkiewicz to advance. To address the Czar in the Russian language would be to incense his countrymen, while to use Polish would be ungracious, to say the least. In a former emergency of this kind, Sienkiewicz tactfully employed Latin, of which he is a master » ⁹⁾.

Another interview with the novelist by Louis E. Van Norman appeared in *The Outlook*. Besides the remarks on Sienkiewicz's method of writing, the interviewer gave a vivid reportage of the celebration organized on the occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of the Jagellonian University in Kraków. The inconspicuous presence of the novelist acquired unexpected prominence:

In the ancient church of Panna Anna [sic!], where the degrees were being bestowed, sat a great company of local dignitaries and visiting delegations from all over the world. Count Stanisław Tarnowski, rector of the University, in his flaming crimson and ermine, presided. At his right hand, in plain evening dress, stood President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins. He was responding to the address of welcome for the universities of America. Said he: « America thanks Poland for three great names: Copernicus, to whom all the world is indebted; Kościuszko, who spilled his blood for the independence; and Sienkiewicz, whose name is a household word in thousands of American homes, and who has introduced Poland to American people ». The novelist, who was in the audience, arose and bowed, blushing consciously, and the audience fairly went wild. One of the gigantic side-marshals, in slushed buff waistcoat and vermilion-tipped boots, who stood near the writer, fairly shouted in his enthusiasm. « That's it », he cried approvingly when I translated the speaker's words, « that's it. As long as Sienkiewicz lives — *Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła* » (Poland is not yet lost) ¹⁰⁾.

8) *Ibid.*, IX, 2 (February 1902), p. 225.

9) *The Bookman*, XII, 6 (February 1901), pp. 568-78; 7 (March 1901), pp. 30-42.

10) « A Visit to Sienkiewicz » in *The Outlook*, LXVIII, 14 (August 3, 1901), pp. 823-32.

In an essay « Henryk Sienkiewicz and His Polish Novels », the author referred to Mr. Van Norman as a man who « has penetrated into Poland and dressed in sirdak and armed with *ciupaga* » sought the novelist in his villa in Zakopane. Rumors spread that Van Norman was writing a book on the country of Sienkiewicz; he did write an essay ¹¹⁾. Another ambitious project was concerned with a monograph by Stanisław Tarnowski which Curtin promised to translate. This book never materialized, for the publishers were reluctant to take what they considered a financial risk ¹²⁾.

Gradually news of the novelist began to become scarcer and even the Nobel Prize awarded him in 1905 did little to enhance his renown among general readers. However, his portraits reappeared time and again, probably more often than of any other foreign author. They were included in many of his books, usually in the company of Jeremiah Curtin. He was photographed full face and in profile, in his study and in the garden, in a hat and bareheaded, with an umbrella or with a book. The familiar portraits by Wyczółkowski and Pochwalski were also reprinted ¹³⁾.

The triumph of *Quo Vadis?* stimulated critics to assess the author's whole literary contribution and to define his position in universal literature. Such was the ambitious objective by Rev. George McDermot; he wrote an essay over twenty pages long entitled « Henryk Sienkiewicz ». This was printed in the February and May issues of the *Catholic World* in 1898. The priest viewed the novelist as a Catholic writer and attributed some analogies to him and Cervantes pointing to the Catholic atmosphere surrounding both writers. Sienkiewicz's Shakespearean motifs were analyzed with much ardor. The critic was sensitive to the Polish character of Sienkiewicz's works, even if they were laid in a different setting. The scale of reflections was gratifying, although it lacked systematic consistency. Esthetic judgments were often acute and pleasantly worded:

We are not aware that an attempt has been made to fix the place of Sienkiewicz among writers of prose fiction. There is no recognized standard of taste in any case by which novels are to be judged... The immediate impression he produces is that of power; possibly the rudeness of a giant's strength; but this is a superficial view like that of the critic who ran away from his works stunned by the

11) *Current Literature*, XXX, 4 (April 1901), p. 404.

12) *Memoirs*, op. cit., pp. 692-93.

13) An incomplete list of portraits of Sienkiewicz in American periodicals includes: *The Bellman*, XXI (December 2, 1916), p. 711; *Book Buyer*, XX, 6 (July 1900), p. 432; *The Bookman*, I (July 1895), p. 376; X (February 1900), p. 518 (S. with his daughter); XL (January 1915), p. 476; *Canadian Monthly*, XXVI (March 1906), p. 491; *Century*, LXXIX (January 1910), p. 371; (February 1910), p. 551; *Chautauquan* XXXVI (October 1902), p. 32; *The Critic*, XXI (February 24, 1894), p. 132; XXXVI (March 1900), p. 391 (with Curtin); XLIX (April 1906), p. 294; *Current Opinion*, LXII (January 1917), p. 50; *The Dial*, LXI (November 30, 1916), p. 449; *The Independent*, LIX (December 14, 1905), p. 1415; *The Literary Digest*, XV (June 12, 1897), p. 189; XVI (December 18, 1897), p. 1001; XXII (February 23, 1901), p. 221 (Wyczółkowski); XXXII (May 26, 1906), p. 808; LIII (December 2, 1916), p. 1467; *The Literary News*, XIV (November 1893), p. 336; XXI (July 1900), p. 193 (with Curtin); *The National Magazine*, VII (March 1898), p. 538; *The Outlook*, CXIV (November 29, 1916), p. 716 (full-page beside Emperor Franz Josef); *The Review of Reviews*, XXV (January 1902), p. 7; XXVI (October 1902), p. 442; XXXII (September 1905), p. 267; LV (January 1917), p. 98. Also a fine portrait in *Library of the World's Best Literature*, XXIII, p. 13398 (full page).

battery of Polish names... The merit of Sienkiewicz is that he creates real men and women; he does this with a certainty of touch that never loses power, never blurs the image in the mind, never pours one into another's mould ¹⁴).

Charles Harvey Genung was another devoted admirer of Sienkiewicz and in his essay in *Library of the World's Best Literature*, he declared that « with all the confidence that one can ever attach to human judgment upon a living author » Sienkiewicz might be pronounced the greatest creative genius in the field of fiction at the end of the twentieth century ¹⁵. The critic even defended the novelist against « the clique of Polish critics » who applied to him the policy of silence. Speaking of *Without Dogma*, he noticed in it a hint of Bourget but found Sienkiewicz superior. In his opinion, the novelist also surpassed Zola and Flaubert in the quality of his realism. Genung preferred the short stories with a Polish background to the American tales which « lacked the intimate touch ». He valued *Quo Vadis?* and *Children of the Soil*. But in his opinion, only the *Trilogy* secured the novelist's place among the great creators. This was another modification of the verdict, pronounced by Edmund Gosse.

The title of Stanley E. Johnson's essay « The Author of *Quo Vadis?* » did not correspond to its content; it covered all known works by the novelist. It was an important publication, inasmuch as it appeared in a journal which was addressed to teachers and for this reason had widespread resonance. Johnson was obviously well-acquainted with other criticisms on the writer and subjected some of them to discreet scrutiny. Personally, he liked Sienkiewicz not just as an artist but as an educator as well. He contended that the postscript to the *Trilogy*, disclosing the author's desire to strengthen the hearts, applied to the other works.

Praise of the *Trilogy* was contrasted to American novels, which in Johnson's opinion had not as yet reached greatness. One of the reasons for this failure was a lack of due perspective. It was possible for the Polish author to write his great *Trilogy*, « an immortal prose epic of his people's struggles », largely because he was separated from them by two hundred years. He took men from history and demonstrated what was noble, great, and inspiring in their lives. Johnson was more cautious in his assessment of *Quo Vadis?*, although it was evident that he valued the work highly: « If Sienkiewicz has shown us, as we are bound to believe he has, the melting of a pagan heart, by the impelling influence of Christ's teaching, it should serve to strengthen the hearts of those who are his followers today, and whose pathway is strewn with fewer thorns ». He also spoke of the consummate subtlety in the delineation of the deft cynicism of Petronius. In conclusion, Sienkiewicz was ranked among the greatest writers:

The last critic of a writer is posterity, from whose hand, in later centuries, is awarded the prize we call « immortality ». It is a society whose membership is unlimited, but whose members are few. The English language has its Shakespeare, its Milton, its

¹⁴) *The Catholic World*, LXVI (May 1898), pp. 181-83.

¹⁵) Charles Harvey Genung, « Henryk Sienkiewicz » in *Library of the World's Best Literature*, ed. by Charles Dudley Warner (New York, 1899), XXIII, p. 13399.

Emerson — men who possessed the trait of universal genius. Homer, Virgil, Dante, Hans Andersen, Molière, Caesar, Cicero, and the whole list, come quickly to the lips of all, because their thoughts are household words. And to these deathless names we are told we can safely write the name of Henryk Sienkiewicz ¹⁶).

In the same year 1899, an essay « Henryk Sienkiewicz » by Virginia M. Crawford appeared in *The Month* and then was twice reprinted in collective volumes of her essays ¹⁷). At that time, this was probably the most comprehensive review of the novelist's life and works available in English. It contained a number of minor poignant observations. Miss Crawford was reluctant to identify Sienkiewicz with any particular school: « By his luxuriant imagination, his buoyant optimism, and by the faith, the patriotism, and the love of chivalry that illuminate his pages he belongs to the romantics. But he is a realist in the veracity of his descriptions, in the grim reality of his battle scenes, and in his relentless pictures of war and all its attendant horrors » ¹⁸). The general stance taken by Crawford was reminiscent of Edmund Gosse's. It amounted to the statement that Sienkiewicz's claim to be an artist of first rank was based only on his works dealing with the Polish past and present: « It will not be as the author of *Quo Vadis?*, but as the interpreter of the genius and the aspirations of a now vanished nation, that his name will be honored in the future » ¹⁹).

The sketch « Sienkiewicz as a War Novelist » by Jane H. Findlater appeared in the English periodical *The National Review*. Later it was reprinted in America by *Living Age*, and did not pass unnoticed. It was primarily based on *The Deluge* but did contain some general remarks applicable to all the historical novels by the belletrist. It intimated that the true War Novel was the modern epic; this was the reason why such works were scarce — epics not being written everyday. The trend of recent fiction was against the epic style; the fashion favored quickly-developed plots where the interest should be kept at boiling point from the very outset. However, war novels still maintained their dignified stature. The genuine ones were not really about men and women whose role was subordinate: « a nation is the hero we follow, a mourning, wasted land is the heroine we grieve over: the impersonal assumes personality for us — we hold our breath over the fate of armies, not of individuals... ». Such works were written by the three modern authors — Tolstoy, Zola, and Sienkiewicz; but only Sienkiewicz wrote with the spirit of the Ancients ²⁰).

An essay by Count S. C. de Soissons which was printed in *The North American Review* contained nothing original but did include a number of minor remarks presenting considerable interest. The critic stressed that *With Fire and Sword* overstepped the boundaries of historical romance: in its grand style, it almost resembled a poem, and owing to the exactitude

16) Stanley E. Johnson, « The Author of *Quo Vadis?* » in *Education*, XIX (June 1899), p. 617.

17) « Henryk Sienkiewicz », in *Studies in Foreign Literature* by Virginia M. Crawford. London 1899 (and 1908), pp. 248-75.

18) *Ibid.*, pp. 256-57.

19) *Ibid.*, pp. 275.

20) Jane H. Findlater, « Sienkiewicz as a War Novelist » in *Living Age*, CCXXX (August 24, 1901), pp. 489-90.

of historical content, it could be regarded as artistic history. No other historical romance reached such a height. Walter Scott often falsified and embellished the epoch; Dumas toyed with, rather than felt history. *Without Dogma* owed its initial impulse to Paul Bourget's *The Disciple* which Sienkiewicz had discussed with his friends but the apparent likeness was really vague. *Children of the Soil* was compared with Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and *The Newcomes*. The critic observed that:

It is not *un roman à thèse*; although it proves certain truths, they are proved without pedantry and without preaching. In a theme novel, the author takes one of his philosophical ideas, and creates characters and episodes in order to prove it. Sienkiewicz acts differently. He does not accept a theme *a priori*. He observes characters, as they are, he sees these characters fall away, more or less, not from rules and formulas purposely invented by him, but from the laws of human nature, life, conscience, and logic, binding on everyone. He points out these deviations ²¹⁾.

Finally de Soissons discussed, at some length, the tale « Let Us Follow Him » and boldly defined *Quo Vadis?* as the author's finest artistic achievement.

Six larger essays on Sienkiewicz, published between 1898 and 1902, seemed to anticipate some general discussion or even a book. But such expectations did not materialize. The sketch by L. Phelps included in his book *Essays on Modern Novelists* (1910) contained a few keen remarks. The interest in the writer faded as suddenly as it had arisen. It was partly revived after the author's death. Monica M. Gardner, who published some of her essays on Krasinski in American Catholic periodicals, printed an essay on Sienkiewicz in the *Polish Review* edited in London. *The Catholic World* of April 1918 contained an article « Henryk Sienkiewicz » by Annie Kimball Tuell. The critic gave an impressive outline of Sienkiewicz's literary heritage, with one significant omission — *Quo Vadis?*. She noted that the novelist had little heart to recall the spectacle of a triumphant Poland, as it was demonstrated in *Knights of the Cross*, and even in *On the Field of Glory* where the plot ended before the glory began. His « corrective criticism » was given with candor and without abatement. He looked into the past in order to discover the permanent springs of national energy. The atmosphere of his writings was breezy and sound:

The very romance of Sienkiewicz's novels is as healthy as the wind blowing from the clean steppes. Here is a stirring land of thrilling change and sweeping chance, apt for Cossack glory and Cossack vengeance, for the hanker of Tartar rapacity or for the stealing of brides. Here love is fair as from the foundation of the hills, but dipped with danger and quickened by the rest of hovering tragedy. Here, too, with superb literary generalship, are fought the recurring battles, compelling in their mastery and their tingle of martial enthusiasm, sufficient for the beguiling of any pacifist, however conscientious, if caught off his guard. Let him even once watch Volodyovski at a duel, and like one of our novelist's converted

21) *The North American Review*, CLXXV (August 1902), p. 189.

priests he will reach for the imaginary sabre which ought not to be at his side. Here too, we must own, is a frank brutality in the unglorified handling of horrors, an apparent relish for their description which passes at times the measure even of historical thoroughness. But brutality Sienkiewicz would maintain to be far more respectable than the niceties of fastidious decadence ²²).

In July 1919, *The Sewanee Review* published another fine essay on Sienkiewicz written by Lacy Lockert of Kenyon College. It was a comprehensive study based on the knowledge of the novelist's works as well as on previous American research which the critic had the good grace to cite. It pointed out that although around the turn of the century the author of *Quo Vadis?* was a household name throughout America, little attention was paid to Sienkiewicz's passing. This lapse of public interest was not unnatural:

It was on *Quo Vadis*, published at the very crest of the Romantic Revival of the nineties, that Sienkiewicz's broader fame rested, and the qualities of that book which fascinated the Anglo-Saxon world were rather a grandiose sensationalism and religious appeal than genuine values which alone can secure permanent fame. *Quo Vadis* had the genuine values too, but they were obscured by the gush over its spectacular side and its superficial resemblance to such books as *Ben Hur*. It was treated as a « best-seller », met the ephemeral fate of a « best-seller », and was tarnished thereby in the minds of the truly judicious. As for the general public, they looked for more of the same sort from its author, and they did not get it. They got, instead, the kind of fiction which Sienkiewicz had written before his great popular success — fiction which here and in England had won the highest appreciation of a select but small circle of readers ²³).

The essay did not contain any original ideas but its informative value was good. It seemed that the author was well-qualified for further study of the Polish writer but unfortunately no such work appeared. Monica Gardner's book *The Patriot Novelist of Poland: Henryk Sienkiewicz* published in London in 1926 was written in a highly emotional pitch and primarily discussed the short stories and the *Trilogy*. A minor essay appeared in the volume by Anne Russell Marble (*The Nobel Prize Winners*, 1925) ²⁴), with some unnecessary errors.

Three sketches commemorated the centennial of the novelist's birth in 1946. One of them, written by Eleanor H. Schlingen, appeared in *The Catholic World*; it was an homage paid to the author's literary and national achievements ²⁵). The renowned Polish poet, Jan Lechoń, wrote a fine sketch entitled « The Elderly Gentleman with the Rose ». It repeated the accusation, occasionally voiced by other Polish critics, that Sienkiewicz turned away from the everyday Polish life and misery and settled

22) Annie Kimball Tuell, « Henryk Sienkiewicz » in *The Catholic World*, CVII (April 1918), p. 21.

23) Lacy Lockert, « Henryk Sienkiewicz » in *The Sewanee Review*, XXVII, 3 (July 1919), p. 208.

24) « Honors to Polish Fiction » in *The Nobel Prize Winners* (New York, 1925), pp. 264-69.

25) Eleanor L. H. Schlingen, « Henryk Sienkiewicz, 1846-1946 » in *The Catholic World*, CCV (December 1946), pp. 25-58.

on the Olympus of comfort wrapped in the splendors of the past. The average poor Polish man needed bread, work, and a comfortable home, yet the novelist offered him a fairy-tale ²⁶⁾. The author of the third essay was Wacław Lednicki, who returned to the author of the *Trilogy* on two other occasions ²⁷⁾. His mature judgment helped to establish an objective assessment of Sienkiewicz's literary stature.

XIII. *Political skirmishes*

The forgotten debut of Sienkiewicz as publicist in America was evidence of the tremendous obstacles which had to be overcome in order to evoke widespread interest in the Polish cause. What could not be achieved by direct approach, was reached in an indirect way, through fiction. Sienkiewicz's books were read, reviewed, and discussed. Their dramatized versions were performed in the theaters. They were valued as the most representative works of the period and compared with the greatest literary masterpieces. They overcame the natural reluctance to complicated historical developments, unknown geographical settings, and unpronounceable names.

The *Trilogy* turned Poland from a hazy sentimental vision into reality. The tales and short stories portrayed her modern plights. Americans were impressed by the fact that a representative of a nation which did not exist on the maps of Europe earned international fame. In this way, Poland partly avenged her political subservience. Some readers claimed that the *Trilogy* and its characters justified the downfall of the country and Curtin's prefaces encouraged such comments. But the artistic revelation of the works acted as a positive message.

Although *Quo Vadis?* had no visible bearing on Poland, its resonance was of even greater importance. Critics became aware that the son of an enslaved nation spoke on behalf of mankind and represented the eternal truths, eagerly sought after at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the literary critics went as far as to suggest a veiled comparison of Sienkiewicz's good news with the advent of Christ, and Poland with Nazareth. The political implications of Sienkiewicz's writings could not be ignored. In 1900, Payne published an article called «A Twenty Years Retrospect; Transatlantic Literature» in which he briefly outlined the recent literary events in various European countries — Russia, France, Germany, England, Belgium, Holland, Italy. He assigned to Sienkiewicz an exceptional status:

It is within very recent years, that is, within the last decade, that the astonishing novels of Mr. Sienkiewicz have come to be known throughout the world, and have restored Poland to the literary map of Europe, although the political map has no place for it. It would

26) *The Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*, IV (1945-46), pp. 79-82.

27) Wacław Lednicki, *Henryk Sienkiewicz 1846-1946* (New York, 1948); a fragment of this appeared in *The Polish Review*, IX (April 1949); see also *Bits of Table Talk on Pushkin, Mickiewicz, Goethe, Turgenew, and Sienkiewicz* (The Hague, 1956) and *Henryk Sienkiewicz: A Retrospective Synthesis* (s'Gravenhage, 1960).

hardly be an exaggeration to describe the writer as the most remarkable genius who has appeared in Continental literature during the period which we are now reviewing. In his work the consciousness of a noble race becomes intimately revealed to us — more intimately, in fact, than in the poems of Mickiewicz, or even in the music of Chopin — and the great part played by Poland in the history of Europe is made known to us ¹⁾.

Even more explicit was the article inserted in *The Chautauquan*, a monthly published by a renowned educational center. Its author Louis E. Van Norman did not hesitate to emphasize that the novelist succeeded to overcome the American indifference towards « the Polish threshold of Russia »:

... though it is mother of Copernicus and Sobieski, of Kościuszko and Pulaski, of Chopin and the Reszkes, of Sembrich, Paderewski and Sienkiewicz, to Americans Poland is perhaps the least known of all civilized countries. Until the famous trilogy of historical novels by Henryk Sienkiewicz appeared, the popular knowledge of Poland in the United States began with a hazy memory of Kosciuszko and ended with a dilettante acquaintance with Paderewski — and there was nothing between. Sienkiewicz has introduced to the world of today the real Poland, « that unhappy nation murdered by its neighbor nations » ²⁾.

The author was aware that the Polish question remained an ever present « ghost that troubles » at every European council. In his opinion, the Pole of today was no more conquered and absorbed by the three partitioning powers than the Norwegian was conquered and absorbed by Sweden. This national persistence made Poland so fascinating to the student and traveler.

In his instruction for the students Van Norman recommended the *Trilogy* as the best preparation for a trip to the Polish land: this work was « Poland and the Poles crystallized into literature ». These three novels would give the very best obtainable « snap shot picture » of the people. They would show the patriotism, religion, art — which three words summed up the mainspring of Polish national life in modern times as in the centuries gone, and were the touchstones of Polish life and history. The list of other books was embarrassingly short, and it included another work of Sienkiewicz — *The Knights of the Cross*. Speaking of Warsaw, the critic did not fail to remark that the writer's house on « Spolna Street » was considered the shrine of literary Poland, and most travelers stopped to look at it ³⁾.

There were other signs of increased interest among Americans in the Polish plight. *The American Catholic Quarterly Review* published in 1898 a long article « The Later Religious Martyrdom of Poland » by Reuben Parsons, D. D. It was preceded in the previous issue by a historical outline of the Catholic-Orthodox Union in the Polish lands. Speaking of the « History of Roman Catholicism in Russia » by Count Dimitri Tolstoy

1) *The Dial*, XXVIII (May 1, 1900), p. 330.

2) « The Polish Threshold of Russia » by Louis E. Van Norman. *Chautauquan*, XXXVI, 1 (October 1902), p. 32.

3) *Ibid.*, pp. 33 and 47.

(1864), the American author called it a travesty of the truth. He described the persecutions of the Uniates in 1839 by Siemaszko and reported the cruel and shocking conduct of the Russian administration in more recent times ⁴⁾. Thus the facts to which Sienkiewicz had unsuccessfully tried to draw attention in his anonymous article in 1877 became now more generally known.

The novelist was recognized as a semi-official political ambassador of his country. His opinions on Poland were treated as authoritative, even though sometimes they reached America distorted. *Review of Reviews* in January 1906 printed a portrait of the writer and accompanied it with a note elaborating his alleged political views:

Henryk Sienkiewicz, the eminent Polish novelist, whose literary success has just won him the Nobel prize for literature, and who is indeed entitled to be the spokesman of his people, recently declared that he believed the Russian liberals would give Poland autonomy. The Poles, he further declared, will remain part of Russia if they get self-government. Neither Poland nor Russia, in his opinion, is ready to become a republic. If the Poles revolt politically, it will not be against Russia, but against the bureaucratic government. M. Sienkiewicz concluded his remarks to the journalist who interviewed him with these rather significant words: « We love to think of our independence, but, while we are strong enough to demand freedom from Russia, we are not strong enough to defend it against Germany! » ⁵⁾.

The name of the journalist who spoke with Sienkiewicz was not disclosed. As a matter of fact, the novelist was restrained in his pronouncements against Russia and concentrated on the anti-German action. He published eleven motions protesting the Prussian anti-Polish policy. Some of them reached the United States. The *Literary Digest* (January 1902) inserted an entry « Sienkiewicz and the Polish School Children ». Readers could learn from it that « the illustrious author of *Quo Vadis* recently addressed to a newspaper of Kraków an impassionate letter » in which he denounced in violent terms the interdiction of religious instruction in the Polish language in the schools of the German partition. He also opened a public subscription for the benefit of all those who have been sentenced to imprisonment, and thus were reduced to abject poverty. The source of this information was the Paris newspaper *The Figaro* ⁶⁾.

In 1908, the Polish community was shaken by the Prussian government's bill authorizing the administration to buy out Polish estates at prices arbitrarily fixed. Such a law would be practically equivalent to forcible dispossession of Polish landowners. It inspired a protest addressed to world opinion. Sienkiewicz signed the message and sent it to various newspapers and periodicals all over the world, as well as to many prominent persons in different nations. The text vigorously denounced this bill and made an appeal for the moral defense of the Polish case.

The Outlook, one of the popular American weeklies, approached the controversy in a specific way. In order to dramatize the issue and to

4) *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, XXIII, 89 (January 1898), pp. 71-96.

5) *The Review of Reviews*, XXXIII, 1 (January 1906), p. 15.

6) *The Literary Digest*, XXIV, 2 (January 11, 1902), pp. 57-58.

observe an impartial approach, the editors reprinted the Polish address, but they also invited a German author to represent the Prussian viewpoint. Thus, readers were given an opportunity to read and compare the two contrasting opinions. The attitude adopted by the periodical was also expressed; it was based on the arguments introduced by both opponents ⁷⁾.

« An Insult to Civilization » was the title of Sienkiewicz's message directed to world opinion. It was strongly worded: the anti-Polish bill was defined as « the wild, mad lucubration », « a shameful outrage », « barbarity », « an unprecedented crime », « the greatest iniquity and infamy in the history of the twentieth century ». Curiously enough, the reply of the novelist's opponent was a historical review of the alleged persecutions of peaceful and industrious German victims by aggressive Poles. In his repartee, the enslaved part of Poland looked almost as a rapacious wolf and the German Empire as a tortured lamb. He intimated that national self-preservation was the legitimate guiding motif behind the Prussian policy.

Now the editors considered themselves sufficiently equipped for an impartial judgment. They began their statement by informing the readers of the general situation of the Polish people. They emphasized that although the Poles have been divided into three parts and lived under the domination of three European powers, they were unified in customs, manners, speech, and religion. In Austria, they recently cooperated with the administration; in other partitions, they were in constant opposition — for obvious reasons. Germany wishes to assimilate them, and the Poles refused to be assimilated, hoping for the reunion of their nation. They exasperated their oppressors by their fiery temperament and lack of moderation:

But no faults of Polish racial, social, or political character can excuse political injustice towards a people who have notably stood for liberty, who have been the bulwark of Christianity in eastern Europe, the shelter of the Jews, the rescuer of Austria from the enslavement of the Turk, and last, but not least, an aid in our revolution. Sobieski, Kosciuszko, Pulaski, stand high in the list of heroes. To appreciate what Poland has done in other domains, those of literature, science, and art, one has to mention the names of Martin Gallus, the chronicler; of Copernicus, the mighty astronomer; of Mickiewicz, Poland's greatest poet; of Lelewel, the historian; of Matejko, the painter; of Chopin, Moszkowski, Paderewski, Sembrich, and de Reszkes in the world of music, and Modjeska in that of the drama; finally, of Sienkiewicz, one of the most eminent living novelists... ⁸⁾.

The editorial summary condemned the harsh Prussian regulation forbidding children to speak Polish within the precincts of the government schools. It found no justification for the dispossession of the Poles by legal means. How would the Scandinavian settlers in the American Northwest regard it if the government of Minnesota suddenly decided to

⁷⁾ Cf. Mieczysław Giergielewicz, « Sienkiewicz's Political Duel » in *The Polish Review*, IX, 4 (Autumn 1964), pp. 65-72.

⁸⁾ *The Outlook*, LXXXVIII, 10 (March 1906), p. 532.

Americanize the state by forcible expropriation? This analogy was more appealing to the American public than were historical considerations. The proposed bill was bad both politically and morally. The irritation of the Germans stemmed from the fact that the Poles seemed to be increasing proportionally faster in numbers but the use of brute force could only aggravate the situation:

Surely such wide-awake statesmen as the Kaiser and his Chancellor must recognize that the long day of aristocracy and autocracy is drawing to its close, to be succeeded by one of democracy and liberty. In Canada, Latins and Anglo-Saxons, representing different races, languages, religions and customs, live amicably side by side. Germany aspires to be a colonial power. So far, German colonization at home and abroad has not been a marked success. We suggest Canadian liberty as worthy of imitation by Germany ⁹⁾.

There is no doubt that Sienkiewicz's appeal scored in America a major success. It would be worth while investigating this matter more thoroughly. This would require a closer study of the daily papers in which political affairs were more frequently discussed than in literary periodicals. The impact of such small triumphs preceding by only ten years the fulfilment of the Polish hopes should not be underestimated.

Occasionally Sienkiewicz appealed to Polish Americans. In 1906, he wrote them an open letter on behalf of the Warsaw Committee of Assistance to people unable to work. He worded his request carefully being aware that the financial situation of the Polish immigrants was still far from prosperous and that they had to struggle for their daily bread. For this reason, every penny sent by them would be highly valued by their countrymen in Poland. The Polish land needed these gifts, as it suffered under the pressure of two major disasters: hunger and ignorance, for years purposely upheld by the oppressors. The writer did not ask for new endeavors but wished to get permission to use a part of their contributions for educational purposes ¹⁰⁾.

In 1910, Sienkiewicz was invited to the unveiling ceremony of the monuments to Kościuszko and Pułaski in Washington. In a letter dated April 1910, he declined this invitation for reasons of health which made him unable to speak at public gatherings. He took this opportunity to express his credo regarding the emigrants of Polish descent:

You are a particle of the power of the United States, yet you do not cease to be an element of Polish strength. You are representatives of your metropolis in the country of the greatest freedom in the world, and profiting by its great institutions in an honest, noble and legal way you testify that the Pole has matured to freedom, that he is capable of making use of it and that the restoration of Polish freedom is in the interest of mankind.

The letter ended with the words: «Hail to the memory of Pułaski and Kościuszko! Hail to you! Long live Poland and long live the United States!» ¹¹⁾. Consulted about a proposed monument of Mickiewicz in

9) *Ibid.*, p. 533.

10) Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Dziela*, op. cit., LIII, pp. 193-95.

11) *Ibid.*, pp. 196-97.

Chicago, the writer supported the idea but was not sure whether it could be realized in view of the financial crisis of the American Union ¹²⁾.

Despite the novelist's protracted periods of silence, he was invariably acknowledged by American critics as a champion of national liberty. This recognition of his patriotic standing became especially striking after his death. *The Literary Digest* included an obituary entitled « Poland's Lost Champion ». It conceded that two sons of Poland, Sienkiewicz and Paderewski, have scarcely known any other thought since the war began than the woes of their country. It repeated after the *New York Evening Sun* that the writer's service to Poland was a pious rite, inspired by the will to preserve the historical consciousness of the people in their triple bondage. It was unfortunate that he died at a moment when « the distress of his country, mocked by proclamation of counterfeit liberty and harried by the German recruiting officers, seemed at its deepest » ¹³⁾.

Henry Adams Bellows' « Sienkiewicz and the New Deluge » dealt with the *Trilogy*. Its intense nationalism and the difficulty in pronouncing such names as Szczaniecki or Rzendzian stood at first in the way of its success. However, a world that has been forced to learn « Przemyśl » did not regard Poland as so remote as to be utterly unknown. That Poland has become a matter of intense interest was due largely to the novelist:

It may be that, at the end of his career, he foresaw in this second deluge an outcome different from that of the one he described so vividly. If this should be true, if Poland should emerge from the struggle once again as a nation, it will have owed much to the great men who, like Sienkiewicz and Paderewski and de Reszke, have carried their country's name throughout the world. For the rehabilitation of Poland must depend largely on the world's interest and sympathy, and in helping to win this, the author of *Quo Vadis?* has accomplished more for his country than all the generals and statesmen in its unhappy history ¹⁴⁾.

Sienkiewicz's death was overshadowed by political events and by the passing of one of the popular American writers, Jack London. But the cause which he considered his main objective was already generally known to the American public and became the subject of open press discussions. Such was the introductory remark in the fine article by Annie Kimball Tuell published in April 1918:

Henryk Sienkiewicz should have died when there would have been time for the word of literary honor. As it is, he has gone to his grave with but a cursory acknowledgement of his eminence in the world of letters. His genius has represented most familiarly, to the Western world, Polish character and Polish patriotism, but at this acute crisis in Polish history, individual tribute to that genius dissociate from its nationalism, has been withheld as an impertinence. Any critical memorial for Sienkiewicz, if we indulge it at present, must be but the recognition of his service to the « hope of Poland », that Poland which, in the restrained words of a Sienkiewicz appeal, « has deserved well of humanity » ¹⁵⁾.

12) *Ibid.*, pp. 198-99.

13) *The Literary Digest*, LIII (December 2, 1916), p. 1467.

14) *The Bellman*, XXI (December 12, 1916), pp. 710-12.

15) *The Catholic World*, CVII (April 1918), p. 17.

Six years later *The Independent* described the ceremonial transport of Sienkiewicz's remains from Vevey, Switzerland to the Polish capital. The headline of the note read « A Posthumous Triumph » ¹⁶⁾.

XIV. Conclusion

It was not the purpose of this study to compile an exhaustive register of Sienkiewicz's American repercussions but to point out their highlights. This review was mainly based on the perusal of the more popular American periodicals and a few newspapers, if reprints from them appeared in literary discussions. For the sake of comparison, a few British publications were occasionally mentioned. Attention was centered on the early period when the direct fascination for the writer was still at work. Most of the reviewers were anonymous; nevertheless, the names of some critics and biographers could be established:

Bellows, Henry Adams (*The Bellman*)
Burton, Richard (*The Bellman*)
Coolidge, Archibald Cary (*The Bookman*)
Crawford, V. M.
Dole, Nathan Haskell (*The Bookman*)
Findlater, Jane H. (*National Review*)
French, Joseph L. (*National Magazine*)
Genung, Charles Harvey
Gosse, Edmund (*The Living Age*)
Hoyt, Frank W. (*The New York Evening Post*)
Hyde, George Merriam (*The Bookman*)
Ireland, Emma Norton (*The Nation*)
Jenkins, Herbert Franklin (*The Boston Transcript*)
Johnson, Stanley (*Education*)
Keenan, Henry F. (*Literary Era*)
Lang, Andrew (*Current Literature*)
Lockert, Lacy (*The Sewanee Review*)
Ludlow, James (*The Independent*)
McDermot, George (*The Catholic World*)
Norcross, Ruth (*Book News*)
Norman, Louis E. Van (*The Bookman*)
Payne, William Morton (*The Dial*)
Phelps, W. L.
Price, Gordon Pryor (*The New York Times*)
Soissons, S. C. de
Solberg, Mary Adelaide (*The Nation*)
Tuell, Annie Kimball (*The Catholic World*)
Williams, Talcott (*Book News*)

Some critics included in the above list, such as V. M. Crawford, Jane Findlater, and Edmund Gosse, were British, yet their essays reappeared in the United States and their opinions were adopted in America. To

16) *The Independent*, CXIII (November 29, 1924), pp. 438-39.

these contributors, whose writings were published during Sienkiewicz's lifetime or a few years after his death, a number of more recent scholars and critics was to be added, among whom Americans of Polish extraction played an increasingly prominent role.

Although the review of Sienkiewicz's American critics is not complete, it does demonstrate that the resonance of the Polish novelist in America was rather underestimated. Sienkiewicz's stupendous acclaim was dramatized by the numerous reprints of his works and the ruthless competition among publishers. For about two decades, every new book by the author of *Quo Vadis?* was received as a major literary event, deserving careful consideration, and dutifully reviewed. As most of Sienkiewicz's novels were made available in America almost immediately after their publication in Poland, the reaction of the American public was spontaneous and free from any outside instigation.

The widespread appeal of the novelist in America was accentuated by the publication of his works in different languages. As to the Americans of Polish descent, they simply reprinted the original texts, whether in separate volumes ¹⁾ or as supplements to the dailies and periodicals. A Polish clergyman compiled a posthumous eulogy of the writer in Latin ²⁾. *The Deluge* and *The Knights of the Cross* appeared in Lithuanian ³⁾, *Quo Vadis?* in Greek ⁴⁾, *After Bread* in German ⁵⁾.

Much had to be said of the shortcomings and fallacies of the translators. Nonetheless, the defective renderings by Jeremiah Curtin did hold their ground and although they met with some justified disapproval, they were accepted benevolently by the general readership. They enabled the public to grasp and enjoy the salient merits of Sienkiewicz's writings. No one succeeded in replacing Curtin. On the other hand, the weaknesses of the translations could have been partly responsible for the novelist's accelerated eclipse.

In France the laurels earned by Sienkiewicz provoked a virulent upsurge of xenophobia directed against all foreign authors ⁶⁾. An adverse process took place in America. The surprising popularity of an obscure Slavic writer acted as an eye-opener: it amounted to the admission that Anglo-Saxons were not the only race capable of creating outstanding literary works. Encouragement for closer contact with world literature was an obvious and natural outcome. As a result, Sienkiewicz paved the way for other foreign writers. In this respect, he outpaced the prominent Russian novelists, even though their works forestalled him chronologically on American soil.

Although the early critical response was usually flattering, it was

1) *Quo Vadis?* was reprinted by Paryski Publishing Co. (Toledo, Ohio, n.d.), 872 p. (with a brief vocabulary, pp. 9-20, and a map of Ancient Rome).

2) Tomasz Miślicki, *Diatribe in Henricum Sienkiewiczium* (Chicago, 1917), 18 p.

3) *Tanas* (*The Deluge*), istoriszka apysaka Henryko Sienkiewicziaus. Versta isz lenkiszka. Atspauda isz «Dirvos». Kasztals Kun. A. M. Miluko. (Shenandoah, Pa., 1900); and *Kryżowci* (*Knights of the Cross*), istorine apysaka. Iš lenkų vertė Kazys Jakunas (Brooklyn, N.Y., 1956), 2 vols., illus.

4) Errikou Siegiebieits. *Quo Vadis?* Poù úpagels; en Nea 'Yorkē, Bibliopólie! on 'Atlantidós.

5) *Ums Hebe Brod* Eine Answanderergeschichte von Heinrich Sienkiewicz. Familien-Bibliothek (Einsiedeln, N.Y., 1884).

6) The dramatic story of this chauvinistic reaction was told by Maria Kosro in *Un «Best-Seller» 1900 Quo Vadis?* (Paris, 1960), pp. 93-117.

far from being unanimous. A significant contrast existed between the attitude of the sophisticated critics and the average readers. The experts argued that the *Trilogy* was Sienkiewicz's greatest achievement; they spoke more or less kindly of his contemporary novels; they occasionally praised his short stories; but as to *Quo Vadis?*, the initial enthusiastic welcome was substituted by a cool appraisal, due to the influence of English criticism as well as to independent reasons. As to the public, it was not affected by this controversy and cheerfully acknowledged a preference for *Quo Vadis?*. A number of critics considered the general readers unable to appreciate psychological novels; seemingly they preferred novels of adventure.

Recently it became almost habitual to define Sienkiewicz's realism as mild and polite ⁷⁾. The novelist's American contemporaries thought otherwise. One of the most frequent accusations leveled by American reviewers was the excess of cruelty and horror, making some of his works intolerable. There were various reasons for this criticism. Catholic critics intimated that although Sienkiewicz's intentions were not immoral, he made the portrayal of the negative aspects of life unnecessarily expansive and infectious. Other objectors were guided by esthetic considerations. Protests by women were especially vociferous. A touch of bigotry could be felt in this sentimental reaction which, however, did not seem to bother the general reader.

Another frequent reservation concerning the novels was their excessive length. Sometimes this verdict was extended to the short stories. Since a majority of the authors of historical novels committed the same sin, this judgment was not properly assessed. On the other hand, the most expressive homage was paid time and again to the Polish writer's narrative zeal and unusual ability to stimulate and hold the reader's interest. The author was also greatly admired for his skill in drawing human portraits and reviving the atmosphere of the past.

Sienkiewicz did not create a vogue in America, as he did in some other countries, e.g. Italy and France. His name did not affect other spheres of life, the theater and cinema being the natural exceptions. But he was read as widely as circumstances permitted. His works were available in American homes. The public sought his books in bookshops and libraries. The title, *Quo Vadis?*, became proverbial. The author was admitted to school life as one of the recommended writers. Discussion of Sienkiewicz in the American press was prolific, independent, and creative. As a whole, it was valuable not only as a contribution to the story of Sienkiewicz's literary career, but as a small yet interesting chapter in American literary criticism.

It was regrettable that the full impact of Sienkiewicz's American resonance was relatively little known in his native land. It was one of the impressive tests of the writer's literary influence. The divergencies of opinion were not deprived of instructive value and occasionally showed certain aspects of the author's heritage in a more convincing way than was possible among his own countrymen. A recent revival of interest in Sienkiewicz coincides with the rapid expansion of Slavic studies. This interest concentrated on the technical skill of the belletrist points the way towards a further systematic research.

7) Cf. Waclaw Lednicki, *Henryk Sienkiewicz; A Retrospective Synthesis* ('s Gravenhage, 1960), pp. 76-77.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. BOOK REVIEWS

CHILDREN OF THE SOIL (RODZINA POŁANIECKICH)

Athenaeum (Edinburgh), CVIII, 320; September 5, 1896.

Some characters are vigorously drawn, e.g. the whimsical sceptic Bukatski. Litka and her mother are charming. Yet the book cannot rival the author's historical novels. The translation is stiff and studded with curious Americanisms.

Bookman, I, 396-98; July 1895. (Nathan Haskell Dole).

The movement of incidents is slow; it is a *chronique intime*, as well as a *chronique scandaleuse* but as a psychological study and picture of life it is a great work comparable to *Romola* and *Anna Karenina*. The translation is readable but not faultless.

Critic, XXVI, 435; June 15, 1895, No. 695.

The book has some Slavic characteristics and is comparable to *Master and Man* (*Khozyain i robotnik*) by Tolstoy. Yet the Russian tale pays little attention to decadentism, whilst Sienkiewicz's novel is full of it and throws much interesting and amusing light on some current doctrines and fashions of the hour.

Dial, XIX, 20-21; July 1, 1895. (William Morton Payne).

The strength of the book lies in its entire sanity, its freedom from exaggeration and sensationalism, and its psychological insight. It must be classified among the finer fiction of our time. However, the critic voices a slight preference for the chronicler of the seventeenth century Commonwealth over the novelist of the nineteenth century Warsaw.

THE DELUGE (POTOP)

Athenaeum (London), No. 3384, 318; September 3, 1892.

The author has proved that the historical romance is not dead. The novel is confronted with the works of Jokai and Dumas; in contrast to them, *The Deluge* is not a mere romance of adventures. Sienkiewicz is always simple, natural and tranquil.

Athenaeum (London), No. 3600, 561-62; October 24, 1896.

Sienkiewicz is compared with Anthony Trollope and Tolstoy. The reviewer gives a lengthy resume of the novel and severely criticizes the translation.

Critic, XVII, 125; February 27, 1892.

Some scenes of the novel are most graphically and picturesquely written. Yet the thread which holds the incidents together is not sufficiently strong; the first volume will be read with interest but the second should have been condensed. The reviewer repeats the historical reflection contained in the preface by J. Curtin and calls the Ukraine « South Russia ».

Dial, XII, 427-28; April 1892. (William Morton Payne).

The novel is too long but absorbingly interesting. Nothing short of genius could have created the character of Zagłoba. Sienkiewicz has as much realism as Tolstoy, although of a healthier sort: he realizes as well the setting of his historical romance but his characters are so strongly individualized that it is impossible to forget them.

Harper's Magazine, LXXXV, 153; June 1892. (*Editor's Study*).

The great sweep of this romance is beyond a boy's love of action, of vital force, of adventure, of deeds done splendidly, and he will be obliged to the writer for quickening his pulse and giving him once more the thrill of primal heroism. So skilful is the author that the reader will never doubt that his characters really lived.

Nation, LIV, 362; May 12, 1892, No. 1402. (With photograph).

The novel is considered too lengthy. It includes scenes of thrilling interest to the history of the Polish-Swedish War; most impressive is the siege of Częstochowa. The many kings, princes, and hetmans are remarkably well differentiated.

Spectator, LXIX, 25; July 1892, No. 3340.

The novel should have been abridged by the translator. *The Deluge* is less of a historical romance than of a history proper into which fictitious episodes have been interpolated. The book is not altogether a success but it contains pages which no European novelist need be ashamed to acknowledge.

HANIA

Bookman, VI, 278-79; December 1897, No. 4.

Announcement of the publication of *Hania* with the author's portrait.

Bookman, VII, 75-77; March 1898, No. 1. (George Merriam Hyde).

Although Sienkiewicz likes broad rather than fine effects, he is also a skilful portrait painter. The critic distinguishes *Hania* and *Tartar Captivity*; he defines *That Third Woman* as a boyish, rollicking farce.

Critic, XXXII, 43; January 15, 1898.

Hania and *The Old Servant* are charming in that old-fashioned charm which characterizes only a very limited amount of fiction. Of other stories, the most striking and satisfactory are *Tartar Captivity* and *Charcoal Sketches*.

Dial, XXIV, 184; March 16, 1898, No. 282.

The volume is quite worthy of the genius which the author possesses. Yet it is uneven and some of the sketches attain no more than mediocrity. The others exhibit raciness, vitality, and artistic restraint comparable to the tales of Turgenev. *Hania*, *Tartar Captivity*, and *Charcoal Sketches* are masterpieces in miniature.

Literary News, XIX, 46-47; February 1898, No. 2.

In *Hania* there is a rare power of character-drawing; this applies above all to the old servant, father of *Hania*. Sienkiewicz showed his power to deal with the humble and to make them interesting.

Literary World, XXIX, 60; February 19, 1898, No. 4/604.

In *Hania*, the most ambitious story of this volume, there are some interesting pictures of Russian life and some clever studies of the peasant type, but little that is worthy of the author of the *Trilogy*.

New York Times, 15; December 4, 1897.

Charcoal Sketches lays bare the life of a Polish village, as Tolstoy has exposed that of a Russian community. It is a horrible but forceful picture. The book would have a great sale were it the first one instead of being ninth with the reputation of *Quo Vadis?* to advertize it.

IN VAIN (NA MARNE)

Bookman, X, 87; September 1899.

Some of Sienkiewicz's short stories are not better than his youthful novel *In Vain*. Even in his latest works there were no subtleties of suggestion, no indirect effects, but a free, frank use of all the romantic artillery. The incidental descriptions of student life are interesting.

Literary News, XXX, 219-20; August 1899, No. 8.

An instructive picture of Polish university life. The story shows in a masterful way the relationship of men to men. It is not winning but it compels attention.

Literary World, XXX, 219-20; July 8, 1899, No. 14.

A remarkable book to be written by a lad of eighteen. But there are no signs in it of the splendid quality of *With Fire and Sword*.

THE IRONY OF LIFE *see* CHILDREN OF THE SOIL

THE JUDGMENT OF PETER AND PAUL IN OLYMPUS

Literary World, XXXII, 110; July 1, 1901, No. 7.

A brief informative note of this publication with a remark: «The allegory yields a pleasant lesson».

KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS (KRZYŻACY)

Athenaeum, No. 3889, 592; May 10, 1902.

The novel will not increase Sienkiewicz's popularity. Youthful readers may find some pleasure in this tale of knightly adventures but it is too long and too flamboyant.

Book Buyer, XX (New Series), 431-32; July 1900, No. 6.

By special arrangement with the author the book appeared in English prior to its complete publication in Poland. The success of *Quo Vadis* exposed him to the attentions of all those piratical gentlemen who adorn the publishing business. His authorized publishers gave the completed book in a fine dress.

Bookman, X, 517-19; February 1900.

Sienkiewicz's return to the romance of the history of Poland is important news. The critic adds some general remarks on the Polish novelist.

Book News, XVIII, 345; September 1899, No. 25 (reprint from *New York Mail and Express*).

The novel, judging from its first volume, promises to be as long as *The Deluge*, but none who reads it will for one moment regret the time thus spent. This is a tale of chivalry, not of its flower in Spain or France, but of its earlier, grimmer days, when its graces were still new to the eastern peoples just emerging from chaos, though they honored its virtues.

Current Literature, XXVII, 104-06; February 1900.

A brief synopsis of the novel and a reprint of its portion — the first meeting of Zbyszko with Danusia.

Current Literature, XXVII, 282; March 1900.

Condemnation of the firm which published the first part of the novel without informing the public that it was only a part of the work.

Dial, XXVIII, 402; May 16, 1900, No. 334. (W. M. Payne).

The novel has the same strong types of character, the same union of fierce passion and tender sentiment, the same raciness of diction, the same blending of religion and patriotism, and the same fine historical perspective that so enthralled the readers in the earlier romances.

Dial, XXIX, 128; September 1, 1900, No. 341. (W. M. Payne).

Written after the publication of the second volume of the novel. The critic finds the climax impressive, but considers the novel inferior to the *Trilogy*. Fighting grows monotonous, and Zbyszko does not make as satisfactory a hero as Kmita or Pan Michael. If this comparison did not occur, it would be difficult to praise sufficiently the author's strong-souled figures swayed by primitive passions, his brilliant ingenuity and racy humor.

Independent, LII, 323-24; February 1, 1900.

The narrative is as romantic as *Ivanhoe* and as stirringly attractive as the best works of Dumas. Yet it is too long for a synopsis. The critic does not nurture extreme enthusiasm for the writer, but respects his powerful imagination, his mastery of romantic composition and his crude yet effective dramatic style.

Independent, LII, 555-56; March 1, 1900, No. 2674.

The reviewer discusses the unauthorized translation by Samuel Binion and expresses the hope that the American public will decide what favor ought to be extended to an edition published against the will of the writer.

Literary Era, VIII, 93; January 1900. (*Old World Themes* by Henry F. Keenan).

The episodes of lawlessness set forth by the author in his usual fervid style gain something of actuality when the readers see a similar tragedy taking place in South Africa.

Literary News, XXI, 34; February 1900, No. 2.

The critic only read the first volume and praised it for its wonderful descriptions. He defined it as a powerful portrayal of medieval times, when the growth of Christianity was retarded by crimes and abuses by the Knights of the Cross. The novelist accumulated too much horror. Not everybody would be able to read the novel without a sense of mental fatigue.

Literary News, XXI, 193-94; July 1900, No. 7.

The review discusses the complete work. The novel reminds one of a scene-painting: it is crude, glaring, unkempt yet effective. Perhaps no other novelist was more successful in rendering historical atmosphere. The work pulsates with the untamed vigor of conflict and passion.

Literary World, XXXI, 67-68; March 3, 1900, No. 5.

Acquainted with only the first volume of the novel, the reviewer was disconcerted with the Polish background and his own lack of historical knowledge. He considers the Binion translation smoother, the plot more intelligible and hence more enjoyable.

Literary World, XXXII, 104; July 1, 1901. (*Henryk Sienkiewicz*).

In his new novel Sienkiewicz has again almost risen to the height of the glorious *Trilogy*. He shows remarkable power for being capable of dismissing the present century from his consciousness and flinging himself into the past. No one thinks or argues in this book after the fashion of our day.

Munsey's Magazine, XXIV, 314-15; November 1901. (*Literary Chat*).

Once begun, the novel must be read. In dash, vigor, splendid action and breathless interest it is a magnificent romance. The knights are of superhuman strength and unbelievable skill; nevertheless they are convincingly real.

Outlook, LXV, 181; January 20, 1900. (*Books of the Week*).

Written after the publication of the first volume in Curtin's translation. The story holds one's attention relentlessly and leaves the reader impatient for the appearance of the second volume.

Outlook, LXV, 232; January 27, 1900. (*Books of the Week*).

Binion's translation lacks the literary pungency of the Curtin version but appears to be accurate and painstaking.

Outlook, LXV, 458, June 23, 1900. (*Books of the Week*).

The novel surpasses *Quo Vadis* in strength, intensity, and character-creation. Harsh names and the abundance of cruelty act as deterrents but these differences overcome, one finds himself in the grasp of a master of fiction.

Public Opinion, XXIX, 59; July 12, 1900, No. 2.

There is much in Sienkiewicz's book besides blood-letting and love. The author paints the Polish character with all its vices which explain the ultimate downfall of the kingdom. The speed of the narrative never slackens nor does the interest flag till the story is done.

LET US FOLLOW HIM AND OTHER STORIES

Literary News, XIX, 228; August 1898, No. 8. (After *Literary Review*).

The story is unique, compelling, and engrossing. Sienkiewicz knows where to stop; his power, earnestness and balance are always present.

Review of Reviews, XVII, 239; February 1898.

The story is weak and commonplace. The description of the crucifixion is trivial and unnecessary. Of the five stories in the book *Sielanka* and *Orso* are the best and exhibit the author's feeling for nature and his strength in describing the animal man.

LIFE AND DEATH AND OTHER STORIES (DWIE ŁĄKI)

Book News, XXII, 972-73; May 1904.

The first tale is a wonderful, concise, and comprehensive presentment of vital truth. Each story in the volume is a gem to grace a literature.

LILLIAN MORRIS AND OTHER STORIES

Critic, XXV, 445; December 29, 1894.

The title story is too prolix; the description of the bullfight suffers from the same weakness. *Sachem* is the best thing in the book.

Dial, XVII, 334; December 1, 1894, No. 203. (William Morton Payne).

The volume hardly suggests the genius that conceived the great Polish trilogy. In dealing with American themes, the writer is not at ease. Still, there is a certain impressiveness in a tale of a band of forty-niners who took the overland route to California.

ON THE FIELD OF GLORY (NA POLU CHWAŁY)

Arena, XXXV, 558; May 1906. (Amy C. Rich).

The love story is powerful and fascinating; all the characters stand out in bold relief — strong, typical, and virile. The translator admirably preserves the distinctive Polish atmosphere.

Athenaeum, No. 4111, 153; August 11, 1906.

The book is disappointing, due not so much to the author's incompetence as to an absence of all the higher qualities. The story is tame, most of the characters conventional and dimly presented. The translation lacks ease and must be called indifferent.

Bookman (London), XXXI, 46; October 1906.

The critic, irritated by unpronounceable names, finds the plot disjointed. The romance is overshadowed by the bloodthirsty brawling. The style does not lack vigor, but the « national spirit » makes the novel antipathetic.

Canadian Magazine, XXVI, 491; March 1906, No. 5.

The novelist has woven a wonderful romance of great brilliancy and strong character drawing; in no other book has he displayed his great genius more strikingly. He tells a charming love story of remarkable intensity, and gives the reader acquaintance with characters equalling in vigor and interest those of the great trilogy. Curtin's mastery of Polish and remarkable power in interpreting Sienkiewicz have received world-wide recognition.

Catholic World, LXXXIII, 263; May 1906.

The novel makes the reader witness with his very own eyes the whirlwind evolutions of that magnificent Polish cavalry that afterwards ground into dust the regiments of the Sultan before the walls of Vienna.

Critic, XLVIII, 574; June 1906, No. 627.

The hero is a knightly ideal — chivalrous, manly, tender, and terrible but a little unreal. Other remarks refer to the *Trilogy*.

Dial, XL, 153; March 1, 1906. (W. M. Payne).

It is disappointing that the great victory of Sobieski was not shown. The novel is a love story of freshness and charm and a narrative of strange manners and exciting adventures.

Independent, LX, 456; February 22, 1906.

Other heroes seem voiceless after reading this novel. These Polish nobles fight and love and live with an intensity not to be found elsewhere. The love theme is alluringly human. It is eminently proper that Sienkiewicz should this year have received the Nobel Prize.

Independent, LXI, 1158-61; November 8, 1906.

The novel has been listed last on the list of twenty-one best books of fiction for the year.

Literary Digest, XXXII, 808; May 26, 1906. (*Melodrama from Poland*).

A charming love story and a fine portrayal of Polish life. However, probably the author would be surprised himself if anybody called this novel a great book. Opinion of four newspapers is quoted.

Nation, LXXXII, 183; March 1, 1906.

The new novel is reminiscent of the *Trilogy*. Readers will be pleased to learn that it does not include any battles which leaves more leisure for love-making and home-scenes. The four brothers Bukoyemski make themselves derided, feared, and in the end well-liked by their fellow countrymen, whom the reader follows at an Anglo-Saxon distance.

New York Times, XI, 94; February 17, 1906. (M. Gordon Pryor Rice).

The more proper title of the novel would be « On to the Field of Glory ». It is not a historical novel, but a fine old-fashioned story of love and honor. It gives a true and vivid picture of the epoch, unlike the many tepid tales wrongly called « historical ». When the writer is concerned above all with the spirit of his characters his work can never be archaic, « but must always be essentially modern and far reaching in its appeal. This is the gift of the mighty. We recognize it in Shakespeare and in Scott; we greet it in Sienkiewicz ». Curtin's translation is as idiomatic and picturesque as though it were the original vehicle of the story.

Outlook, LXXXII, 376; February 17, 1906.

The novel has the same qualities as the *Trilogy*; the author succeeds in overcoming the English reader's reluctance to witness the coarseness and cruelty of the period concerned. A love story of passion and intensity, fighting of the most thrilling kind and dramatic personal feuds are brilliantly presented.

Outlook, LXXXII, 756-59; March 31, 1906.

The novel is discussed with a little group of recent books disclosing thoroughness of workmanship. Sienkiewicz's narrative has much of the fire, action, humor, and stirring historical interest.

Public Opinion, XL, 187; February 10, 1906.

Readers of Sienkiewicz will find many reasons to account for Poland's past glories and for her passing; his novels are more historical than many histories.

Review of Reviews, XXXIII, 757; July 1906. (*Three Slavic Writers*).

The novel will not enhance Sienkiewicz's fame nor affect it; yet his straight, swift, lucid narrative method captivates the reader. Besides Tolstoy, Sienkiewicz is the only Slavic author who gained a large cis-Atlantic audience.

Saturday Review, CII, 274; September 1, 1906.

The critic does not approve of the eulogy of the novel offered in the publisher's preface but he praises Curtin for the translation.

Spectator, XCVII, 336; September 8, 1906.

The story lacks coherence and the narrative cannot be called very pleasant reading.

PAN MICHAEL (PAN WOŁODYJOWSKI)

Critic, XXIV, 125-26; February 24, 1894, No. 627.

The *Trilogy* is a monumental work of historical fiction. We feel that we are walking the ground with Homeric heroes, with demigods. The epoch is

fierce and terrible, and the novels reek throughout with sweat and blood; they are stimulating to mental power and manliness. We close the book with a sigh of regret.

Dial, XVI, 21; January 1894, No. 181.

The infrequent appearances of Sobieski are impressive. The interest is splendidly sustained and the siege of Kamieniec reminds the reader of the siege of Częstochowa in *The Deluge*.

Literary World, XXIV, 459; December 30, 1893, No. 26.

The *Trilogy* is a vision of another age and civilization. One walks among Homeric heroes who are yet ignorant that the proper use of fig leaves is to hide the truth and are not ashamed of the instincts of the natural man. The character of Basia is like the flight of a bird, so unrestrained and natural it is. All the glow and fury of description culminates in the story of the siege.

Nation, LIX, 198; September 13, 1894, No. 1524.

Zagłoba, the Falstaffian hero of the earlier novels, is still the same delightful braggart, busybody, and wit. Sienkiewicz has infinite patience in historical research, utmost skill in elaboration of detail, remarkable power in creating characters and making the past seem the present. Basia, that tender-hearted hoyden, is one more proof of his inventive power.

QUO VADIS?

Academy, No. 1301, 399; April 10, 1897.

The novel has some typical qualities of Slavic fiction: a rude vigor of conception and a picturesque power over masses of detail, yet it lacks vital unity. The « archeology » is admirable. Less successful are episodes with Christians: the author's « Asiatic manner » could not be reconciled with the peace of the early Church.

American, XXVI, 28-29; January 9, 1897.

English-speaking people believe that a revival of fiction may come only from a British or an American writer. Poland produced a story-book that belongs to all Christendom and which will be read in every civilized land. It is a fascinating story with an exceptionally faithful description of the ancient world.

Atlantic Monthly, LXXXIX, 709-11; May 1897.

The book is linked with the Neo-Christian movement, represented also by Tolstoy. No writer has drawn such a living and speaking likeness of Nero. The imperial banquet is a scene which illumines one of the most hackneyed subjects and seizes the imagination with irresistible power.

Bookman, IV, 248-50; November 1896. (Nathan Haskell Dole).

The novel is a marvelous succession of colossal cartoons drawn with free hand glowing with dazzling colors. Nero and his satellites are confronted with the serene and noble portrayal of Christianity and its effects. The novel is so thrilling that it completely absorbs the readers; it lacks little of the highest art.

Bookman, XII, 450-51; January 1901.

In a note « The sources of *Quo Vadis*? » Professor A. Schenz points out Professor Sabatier's opinion that the historical background of the novel is similar to *Antechrist* by Ernest Renan; however, this analogy does not impair the merit of Sienkiewicz.

Bookman (London), XII, 18; April 1897.

This is a novel of the old-fashioned, leisurely, ample, and solid character. The chief interest in the book is Petronius. Its excellent workmanship and the warm humanity deserve high praise.

Book News, XV, 437; May 1897, No. 177. (Talcott Williams).

Sienkiewicz is the Scott of the Polish national revival. *Quo Vadis?* is no better than his earlier romances and at some points unequal to them but its subject has caught the public eye.

Book News, XVI, 281; January 1898, No. 185.

The mixture of religion and sensuality partly explains the vogue of this work; yet it is one of the greatest novels of the century.

Book News, XVI, 367; February 1898, No. 186.

A question is asked as to what makes *Quo Vadis?* popular and whether it can be accepted as a recognized standard.

Catholic World, LXIV, 411-12; December 1896.

The plot is insignificant but the depiction of daily life in Pagan Rome is entrancing in its power. Every line discloses a thorough knowledge of the people, their life, and their surroundings. In the bacchanal orgies, some episodes would have been far better omitted. No other work gives a more vivid idea of the curious moral conflict between the pagan world and Christianity.

Chautauquan, XXIV, 752; March 1897, No. 6.

A romance of great power and force. Petronius Arbiter as well as Nero are faithfully portrayed, in strong contrast to whom are Saint Paul and Saint Peter.

Critic, XXX, 144-45; February 27, 1897.

There is an objection to the Christian element which is less life-like; this is due to the deliberate design of the author in order to give full-light to the accepted life of the day and to let the new principles stand in comparative shadow. Petronius and Chilo are the best portrayals in the novel which abounds in picturesque and thrilling situations.

Critic, XXXVI, 390-401; March 1900.

A report of a performance of *Quo Vadis?* at the Herald Square Theater in New York with a full page photograph.

Current Literature, XXIV, 203-04; September 1898, No. 3. (*New Testament Novels* by Andrew Lang).

Books based on the New Testament are reminiscent of the old Miracle Plays and perhaps they do good; not only the public but also sophisticated people are addicted to the early Christian romance.

Dial, XXII, 19; January 1, 1897.

Quo Vadis? was written from the standpoint of a historian of culture who is also an artist. It is one of the greatest historical novels ever written. The author's knowledge of Roman history and literature is ample and thoroughly assimilated; in this respect he is superior to other writers. The portrait of Petronius is a masterpiece of delineative art. The best incidents are those which precede the death of the two apostles.

Dial, XXIII, 334-35; December 1, 1897. (*Holiday Editions*).

A note on the special luxury edition of *Quo Vadis?* which should become one of the successes of the holiday season.

Harper's Magazine, XCVI, 644; March 1898.

Quo Vadis? is the poorest work of its brilliant author. Its success results from the fact that any story about the early Christians and their persecution is sure to attract attention. The novel smells of the laboratory and the study. *Let Us Follow Him* is a better illustration of the writer's genius.

Literary Digest, XV, 98; May 22, 1897.

A resume of the article on Sienkiewicz by Edmund Gosse.

Literary Digest, XV, 188; June 12, 1897, No. 7. (*Sienkiewicz's Latest Romanance*).

The book is comparable to Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* but it is one continuous procession of dramatic pictures that leaves the reader small chance to catch his breath. Nero's revels are painted with lurid colors in which lust and passion are realistically treated.

Excerpts from the reviews published in London *Academy*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *Current Literature*, supplemented with a passage from J. Curtin's interview with Sienkiewicz printed in *The World*, and a portrait of the novelist.

Literary Era, IV, 170; May 1897.

A note on the article on Sienkiewicz by Edmund Gosse (reprint from *Academy*).

Literary News, XVIII, 30; January 1897.

A masterful picture of Roman life at the critical moment when Christianity ceased to smoulder and began to blaze. The climax is thrilling.

Literary News, XVIII, 354; December 1897.

The narrative and its treatment are irresistible. Ancient Rome during the critical period of its existence has never been made so real as in the pages of this great work of fiction. The Holiday Edition is recommended.

Literary World, XXVII, 445; December 12, 1897.

In his recommendation of the Holiday Edition, the reviewer points out that no work of its class excited a more prolonged impression.

Living Age, XIV, 517-27; May 22, 1897. (*Henryk Sienkiewicz* by Edmund Gosse).

Contains high praise of the *Trilogy* and a negative statement on *Quo Vadis?* which the critic did not read. The talent of Sienkiewicz is one of breadth and vigor rather than of subtlety.

Munsey's Magazine, XVII, 148-49; April 1897. (*Literary Chat*).

History is lost in the romance. We see Rome lying terrorized under a mad and bloodthirsty tyrant.

Munsey's Magazine, XVIII, 789-90; February 1898. (*Literary Chat*).

The author attributes the popularity of *Quo Vadis?* to its Christian background. The books avidly sought after are those which deal seriously with the unseen, with the powers which move souls, not bodies.

Outlook, LV, 463; February 1897.

Rome in the time of Nero would appall an ordinary novelist but Sienkiewicz cannot be judged by ordinary rules. He may be excused for some excesses of

realism which to a writer of lesser genius would be fatal. In power and effectiveness this book is without rival in recent fiction.

Overland, XXX, 185-86; August 1897.

The novel is the book of the year and one of the greatest historical novels of all time. Although many characters are drawn with a master hand, Petronius is the hero of the narrative. There are too many Latin words and the portrayals of Peter and Paul are inadequate.

Poet Lore, IX, 147-48; January 1897.

The conversion of Vinitius is improbable; Lygia's influence is due only to her resistance and her patience in suffering. The romance has been skilfully interwoven with historical events. The best portrayal is of Nero who is at once artistic and egotistic; it refutes the opinion that the artist must rely on his own experiences instead of his sympathies.

Public Opinion, XXI, 665; November 19, 1896.

The novel is grand in conception and marvelously vivid in detail. Petronius is the mainspring of the action. *Quo Vadis?* displays to the reading world the full measure of Sienkiewicz's ability as a novelist.

SIELANKA AND OTHER STORIES

Athenaeum (London), No. 3716, 47-48; January 14, 1899.

The reviewer singles out *Bartek* for its tender pathos blended with national color, *The Diary of the Tutor of Poznań*, *Yanko the Musician*, as well as *The Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall*. The weird pathos and the religious note of the volume are entirely Slavonic. The translator is praised.

Independent, LI, 426-27; February 1899.

A brief formal note of the publication which contains eleven stories and dramas « all more or less touched with the vigorous originality of Sienkiewicz ».

Literary World, XXIX, 434-35; December 10, 1898.

The book includes some stories, modern comedies, and records of travel. All show the touch of the master hand but seem second rate in comparison with the superb heights reached in his other works.

THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS see KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS

THROUGH THE DESERT AND WILDERNESS (W PUSTYNI I PUSZCZY)

Athenaeum (London), No. 4401, 255; March 2, 1912.

The reviewer dislikes precocious boys who put their elders and betters to shame behaving like truly chivalrous gentlemen.

Book News, XXX, 592-93; April 1912, No. 8.

The story is most unlikely but the suspense of the narrative is so well sustained that the scepticism of the reader is silenced. It is one of those books which one cannot lay aside until it is finished. It likewise gives much useful information about Africa, evidently the result of first-hand observation.

Catholic World, XCV, 112; April 1912.

The novel is written with the strength and brilliancy attributed to Sienkiewicz and is decidedly an achievement.

Literary Digest, XLIV, 599; March 23, 1912.

An instructive and thrilling wonder-tale.

Nation, XCIV, 540; May 30, 1912.

The book is written for children but its pictures of desert life and the central characters are upon a higher plane than those in the ordinary stories of the general type.

WHIRLPOOLS (WIRY)

Bellman, IX, 842; July 2, 1910. (Richard Burton).

The dialogue revealing the political and social conditions of Poland halts the story. The second part of the book is more interesting, and the incidents are conducted skilfully to the tragic conclusion. As a picture of a country torn by different factions the book is gloomy, yet it obviously contains much of truth.

Book News Monthly, XXVIII, 907-08; August 1910, No. 12. (Ruth Norcross).

Taken as a whole, the story is neither pleasant nor pretty. Nonetheless, there is hope that the heroine will be strong enough develop to the nature of the man so that happiness for both of them will follow. The book is clever throughout with brilliant dialogue and poetic description; it is a masterpiece of its kind.

Catholic World, XCI, 689; August 1910.

The novel has world-wide interest and value. However, its realism has been exaggerated; it was not necessary to expose so much filth.

Dial, IL, 42; July 16, 1910. (William M. Payne).

The book lacks structural cohesion and presents a great mass of undigested material.

Independent, LXIX, 424; August 25, 1910.

This is a powerful story of Poland's life. The reviewer stresses the hopelessness of the author's verdict.

Literary Digest, XLI, 216; August 25, 1910.

The novel is a customary display of Sienkiewicz's usual power and directness.

Nation, XCI, 144-45; August 18, 1910.

As an interpretation of modern Polish life, the story lacks both force and definition. The mood is elegiac and even plaintive.

Review of Reviews, XLII, 123; July 1910.

The critic praises the dialogue and the psychological insight. The translation seems to be very well done.

WITHOUT DOGMA (BEZ DOGMATU)

Athenaeum (London), No. 3537, 189; August 10, 1895.

The reviewer became acquainted with the novel in French translation and devoted only five lines to it, voicing his disgust.

Critic, XXIII, 182; September 16, 1893.

Readers delighting in the record of deeds rather than of thoughts may find the book unattractive. But it will deeply interest all explorers in the realm of psychology. This is one of the notable novels of the year.

Dial, XIV, 341; June 1, 1893, No. 167. (*Recent Fiction* by William Morton Payne).

The novel, quite different from Sienkiewicz's previous works, is a human document. It is a masterpiece of psychological analysis. Although written in the forbidding form of a diary, it holds the reader's attention. The translation is not perfect either in style or accuracy but it will serve.

Literary News, XIV, 144-45; May 1893, No. 5.

Ploszowski is at heart a pagan. The author portrays him as an illustration of Slavic improductivity. The book belongs to a high order of fiction.

Literary World, XXIV, 155; May 20, 1893.

Obviously the work was not written for the Anglo-Saxon public. The awful candor of Leon's self-analysis takes one's breath away. Rarely has literature afforded such a smiting appeal to human consciousness as in this remarkable book.

Literary World, XXX, 299; August 19, 1899, No. 17.

The critic emphasizes the power and skill of self-analysis and psychological introspection. He poses a question as to whether the story is morally wholesome.

Nation, LVI, 476; June 29, 1893.

The book was not written for the Anglo-Saxon public.

Public Opinion, XV, 200; June 17, 1893, No. 11.

The author gives a profound psychological study. The novel is strong and a powerful production.

WITH FIRE AND SWORD (OGNIEM I MIECZEM)

Book News, XXII, 1161; July 1894, No. 263.

Information on the reissue of Sienkiewicz's books at a popular price with a remark that his novels can stand reprinting.

Critic, XVII, 29-30; July 19, 1890.

From beginning to end, the attention of the reader knows no respite. The dramatic incidents follow each other on every page. The translation of this brilliant novel has been done with uncommon care and spirit.

Harper Magazine, LXXXIV, 964-65; May 1892.

This brilliant war novel stirs the blood in responsive animation. Apart from the masterly drawing of character, the work unveils with extraordinary power the events of the seventeenth century linked with the clashes between Poland and Russia. Zagloba is a great creation.

Literary News, XI, 198; July 1890, No. 7. (reprint from *Providence Saturday Journal*).

The novel is a tremendous work in subject, size, and treatment. As an historical novel, it is comparable to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. There is a Homeric spirit in its descriptions. As a story teller Sienkiewicz rivals Dumas.

Literary World, XXI, 216-17; July 5, 1890.

This strong historical romance has a large epic quality and a vivid national spirit. Events and personages dash past at a tireless pace. The just proportions of the artistic in fiction have not been overlooked in the abundance of detail. It is a romance which cannot be easily forgotten. As to the historical background, the reviewer relies on the views of the translator, J. Curtin, as expressed in the preface.

Nation, LII, 141-42; February 12, 1891, No. 133.

Zagłoba is a creation of which any author might be proud. The book is unnecessarily loaded with horror. The characters are painted with fidelity and skill, each one bursting with the rude and vigorous life of the time.

Public Opinion, IX, 354; July 19, 1890, No. 15.

The book has power in mass and in detail, in comprehensive grouping of persons and events, and in brief descriptions of transient aspects of the story. The incidents are rapid and complicated, yet the effect of reading the novel is of great simplicity. Nothing in Russian or other continental literature is worthier of our attention.

YANKO THE MUSICIAN AND OTHER STORIES (JANKO MUZYKANT)

Athenaeum (London), No. 3465, 375; March 24, 1894.

The reviewer emphasizes the political background of the anti-Prussian stories.

Book News Monthly, XII, 146-47; December 1893, No. 136.

Of the five stories included in the volume *Yanko the Musician* and *The Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall* are singularly touching. The simple story of the lighthouse attendant is a masterpiece.

Book News Monthly, XII, 191; January 1894, No. 137.

The idyll of a lighthouse keeper condenses the essence of Polish history in a few pages.

Critic, XXIV, 163-64; March 10, 1894, No. 629.

Sienkiewicz's tales are not for entertainment; they portray a melancholy people whose homes have been invaded, whose pride has been crushed and life maimed.

Dial, XV, 343; December 1, 1893, No. 179.

The three initial stories are exquisitely pathetic sketches. *Bartek the Victor* is essentially a psychological study of the Polish peasant-soldier and it comes near to being a masterpiece of its kind.

Literary World, XXIV, 423; December 2, 1893, No. 24.

Yanko the Musician is the most finished story. The critic notices « tropical charm » in the descriptions of *The Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall*; he also singles out *A Tutor's Diary* and praises the translator.

Nation, LVIII, 277, April 12, 1894, No. 629.

In this volume Sienkiewicz is touching, tragic, and droll by turns. He gives facts with exquisite fidelity, leaving the conclusions to the reader. As a short story writer, he is comparable to Maupassant.

II. BIOGRAPHICAL AND GENERAL ARTICLES

Bellman, XXI, 710-12; December 2, 1916.

« Sienkiewicz and the New Deluge » by Henry Adams Bellows.

One of the best obituaries written after the novelist's death. The one Polish author to win a genuinely international reputation succeeded in producing the most widely read novel of half a century. According to Bellows, the success of *Quo Vadis?* was due not so much to its subject as to Sienkiewicz's genius. The fame of the *Trilogy* lagged after that of its younger brother; but the World War revived its memories.

Bibliographical Quarterly, CVC, 117-38; January 1902.

« Sienkiewicz and his Contemporaries », by M. H. Dziewicki.

A disorderly outline of the state of Polish literature at the end of the nineteenth century. (Printed anonymously).

Blackwood Edinburgh Magazine, CXLV, 498-513; April 1889.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz: A Polish Novelist ».

A brief biography with an appreciation of the short stories and the *Trilogy*, and a detailed resume of « Bartek the Victor » and « Janko the Musician » with many quotations. The appearance of the three historical novels written by Sienkiewicz was an important literary event, not only for Poland, but also for other nations. The author's masterly style displays the beauties of the Polish language, and demonstrates its superiority to all other Slavic tongues.

Book News, XV, 437; May 1897.

« With the New Books », by Talcott Williams.

Poland in the past twenty-five years has had a literary renaissance. Sienkiewicz is the Scott of this national revival. *Quo Vadis?* is no better than his previous novels but its subject has caught the public.

Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences, IV, 79-82; 1945-46.

« The Elderly Gentleman with the Rose », by Jan Lechoń.

Develops the idea that the novelist, unlike other writers, escaped into the past, thereby earning an applause.

Bookman, X, 517-19; February 1900.

« Chronicle and Comment ».

A biography of the writer which includes some errors.

Bookman, XII, 50-51; February 1901, No. 6; XIII, 30-42; March 1901, No. 7.

« The Country of Sienkiewicz », by E. Van Norman.

A reportage of an excursion to Poland with photos of Sienkiewicz's portrait by L. Wyczółkowski and four illustrations to *With Fire and Sword* by J. Kossak, plus 14 other illustrations.

Reprinted XLIV, 412-26; December 1916, without illustrations.

Catholic World, LXVI, 652-61; February 1898; LXVII, 180-91; May 1898.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by Rev. George McDermot.

A comprehensive review of Sienkiewicz's works viewed on a comparative background; fine remarks of Petronius as the author's self-portrait.

Catholic World, CVII, 17-31; April 1918.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by Anne Kimball Tuell.

One of the finest American essays on Sienkiewicz, recognizing the author's merit and prestige.

Century, LVI, 42832; July 1898, No. 3.

« The Author of *Quo Vadis?*; My Acquaintance with Sienkiewicz », by Jeremiah Curtin.

Meetings of Sienkiewicz and his translator in Switzerland and Poland and their discussions on literary and general subjects.

Century, LXXIX, 185-205, 360-80, 549-65, 697-712, 877-90; LXXX, 85-103; December 1909 - May 1910.

« Modjeska's Memoirs; the Record of a Romantic Career ».

Two portraits of Sienkiewicz (p. 370 and 551).

Cosmopolitan Magazine, XLI, 468-74; May-October, 1906. (« The Nobel Prizes: Purposes for which the Inventor of Nitroglycerin and Dynamite Left his Vast Fortune », by Vance Thompson).

In Sienkiewicz the Swedish Academy honored racial and national patriotism. It was not so much to the author of *Quo Vadis?* that they gave the prize of 1905 as it was to the patriot whose work kept alive the Polish ideal. The novelist is a practical worker in the cause of freedom, and more than once he felt the snaffle of the law.

Critic, XXI (XXIV), 132; February 24, 1894, No. 627.

« The Lounger ».

A short biographical note, including a few errors, with a portrait. Californian escapade mentioned.

Critic, XLVIII, 294; April 1906.

« The Lounger ».

Brief remarks on Sienkiewicz. Contains a portrait.

Current Literature, XXIII, 116-18; February 1898, No. 2.

« General Gossip of Authors and Writers ».

A biography of Sienkiewicz with only a few minor mistakes and a eulogy of his literary career. He is defined as « intensely Polish in taste, pride, and tender patriotism ».

Current Literature, XXIII, 116-18; February 1898, No. 2.

A long excerpt from an anonymous pamphlet *Henryk Sienkiewicz: The Author of Quo Vadis*, published by Little, Brown & Co. in Boston.

Current Literature, XXX, 278; March 1901, No. 3.

« General Gossip of Authors and Writers ».

On the preparations for Sienkiewicz's Silver Jubilee, with some marginal information, e.g. the correspondence between the novelist and Nicholas II.

Current Literature, XXX, 402-406; April 1901, No. 4.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz and his Polish Novels ».

A very enthusiastic review with many quotations from the belletrist's works. Refers to the reportage by Van Norman and his stay in Poland.

Current Literature, XXXI, 230; August 1901.

« Sienkiewicz at Home ».

Details on the author's private life.

Current Opinion, LXII, 50; January 1917.

« Passing of the Greatest Modern Master of the Historical Novel ».

An obituary, based partly on the essays from the *Boston Transcript* (by Herbert Franklin Jenkins) and the *New York Evening Post* (by Frank W. Hoyt).

Prominence was given to the *Trilogy*. Several dates and the details of the writer's stay in California are false.

Dial, LXI, 449; November 30, 1916.
« Novels of Sienkiewicz ».

A brief posthumous tribute.

Education, XIX, 615-20; June 1899.
« Author of *Quo Vadis?* », by S. E. Johnson.

An important essay stressing the moral values of Sienkiewicz's writings. The critic recognizes the writer's desire of strengthening the hearts in his whole literary heritage. He defends *Quo Vadis?* against its critics.

Independent, L, 239-41; July 21, 1898.
« The Historical Novel », by James M. Ludlow.

Sienkiewicz's start of *With Fire and Sword* is a jungle of wretchedly written Polish history. Scott still remains prince of historical fiction.

Independent, CXIII, 438-39; November 29, 1924.
« A Posthumous Triumph ».

Tells of the transfer of Sienkiewicz's ashes from Switzerland to Poland.

Literary Digest, XXII, 221-22; February 23, 1901.
« The *Trilogy* of Sienkiewicz as an Interpretation of Polish National Life », by Louis E. Van Norman.

This is an excerpt from his article « The Country of Sienkiewicz » printed in *Bookman*, February 1901. Contains Wyczółkowski portrait.

Literary Digest, XXII, 281-82; March 9, 1901, No. 10.
« Silver Jubilee of Henryk Sienkiewicz ».

An excerpt translated into English from *Magazin Pittoresque* (January 1 and 15, 1901).

Literary Digest, XVIII, 1001-1002; December 18, 1897, No. 34/400.

A report on an article on Polish literature by Stanislas Rzewski with interesting comments.

Literary Digest, XXIV, 57-58; January 11, 1902, No. 2.
« Sienkiewicz and the Polish Children ».

A report on an impassioned protest by the novelist against the introduction of religious instruction in German by the Prussian administration. The French newspapers *Eclair* and *Le Figaro* are quoted.

Literary Digest, LIII, 1467; December 2, 1916.
« Poland's Lost Champion ».

A posthumous article stressing Sienkiewicz's patriotism.

Literary Digest, LXXXVIII, 56-60; January 23, 1926.
« How Genius Calls to Genius ».

Admiration of Reymont for Sienkiewicz.

Literary Era, VIII, 93; January 1901, No. 1.
« Old World Themes », by Henry F. Keenan.

On the popularity of Sienkiewicz in France and Poland.

Literary Era, VIII, 199-200; April 1901, No. 4.

Report on Sienkiewicz's jubilee celebrations in Poland.

Literary Era, IX, 225; February 1902, No. 2.

In a communique on the literary Nobel prize Sienkiewicz is mentioned as one of the candidates supported by two members of the Committee.

Literary News, XIV, 336; November 1893.

« The Works of Henryk Sienkiewicz ».

The article has been based mainly on the *Trilogy*. One may feel overwhelmed by harrowing descriptions of war; yet nowhere came a more powerful plea for peace than in *With Fire and Sword*.

Literary News, XXIII, 32; January 1902, No. 1.

« Literary Miscellany ».

« Sienkiewicz at Home ». A reprint from the *New York Tribune*.

Living Age, CCXXX, 488-96; August 24, 1901. (Reprint from *National Review*).

« Sienkiewicz as a War Novelist », by J. H. Findlater.

Sienkiewicz, Tolstoi, and Zola, each produced a great war novel and each approached this subject in a different manner. All were « modern » but the Pole wrote with the spirit of the Ancients.

Munsey's Magazine, XVIII, 935; March 1898.

« Literary Chat ».

Informs the readers that the novelist stayed in California where he became a gold digger, like Bret Harte (sic!).

Nation, No. 1632, 268-69; October 8, 1896.

« A Polish Summer Resort », by Archibald Cary Coolidge.

Some interesting notes on Sienkiewicz during his stay in Zakopane.

National Magazine, VII, 538-542; March 1898.

« The Autor of *Quo Vadis* », by Joseph L. French.

A warm praise of *Quo Vadis?* completed with a brief review of the author's biography. In connection with the Californian interlude, the critic intimates that America may claim to have been the true nursery of Sienkiewicz's genius. The light of religion and morality shines through every page of the novelist, a devout Catholic.

North American Review, CLXXV, 176-93; August 1902, No. 549.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by S. C. de Soissons.

A review of the author's work up to *Quo Vadis?* « Hania » was the only story appreciated by the critic. He valued highly the *Trilogy* but considered *Quo Vadis?* to be Sienkiewicz's greatest achievement.

Outlook, LVIII, 669; March 12, 1898.

« Columbus Sienkiewicz ».

Reprinted from the London *Academy*. An amusing versified joke on Sienkiewicz's popularity in the U. S. A.

Outlook, LXVIII, 823-32; August 3, 1901, No. 14.

« A Visit to Sienkiewicz », by Louis E. Van Norman.

An interview with the writer discussing his method of writing a novel and a brief description of the observances of the five-hundredth anniversary of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow.

Outlook, LXXXVIII, 531-33, 542-44; March 7, 1908.

Sienkiewicz's protest against the Prussian land policy, with a reply by a German opponent and an editorial supporting the Polish position.

Outlook, CXIV, 711, 716; November 29, 1916.

« Sienkiewicz, Patriot and Novelist ».

An obituary with a full page portrait. States the *Trilogy* is far more brilliant than *Quo Vadis?*, which lacks sincerity.

Poland, 14-16; January 1926.

« Because of the *Trilogy* », translated by Kate Zuk Skarszewska.

Reymont's first acquaintance with the *Trilogy*. Reprinted as « A Torch is Rekindled » in *The Golden Book*, 328-32; March 1934.

Polish Review (London) I, 92-98; January 1917, No. 1.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by Monica M. Gardner.

A brief resume of Sienkiewicz's literary heritage. Concludes that he has been known to general English public by one book only — *Quo Vadis?*.

Polish Review, IX, 65-72; Autumn 1964, No. 4.

« Sienkiewicz's "Political Duel" », by Mieczysław Giergielewicz.

Story of an American echo of Sienkiewicz's protest against the dispossession of Polish landowners by the Prussians.

Polish Review, IX, 51-62; Summer 1964, No. 3.

« Serialization and Structure in the Novels of Henryk Sienkiewicz », by David J. Welsh.

Structural devices due to the novelist's technique of publishing his major works constitutes the topic.

Polish Review, X, 3-21; Summer, 1965, No. 3.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz to Jeremiah Curtin: Some Unpublished Letters », by Jerzy R. Krzyżanowski.

Comments on letters not included in *Dzieła* under the editorship of Julian Krzyżanowski.

Review of Reviews (The American Monthly), XXXIII, 14-15; January 1906, No. 1.

« Nationalistic Stirrings in Poland » and « Poland Fears German Intervention ».

Contains Sienkiewicz's political statement.

Announces the news of Sienkiewicz's award of Nobel Prize. Portrait.

Review of Reviews, XXXIII, 757; June 1906, No. 6.

Confrontation of Sienkiewicz with Russian literature.

Review of Reviews, LV, 98; January 1917.

« Greatest of Modern Poles ».

A memorial tribute to Sienkiewicz.

Sewanee Review, XXVII, 257-83; July 1919.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by Lacy Lockert.

An ambitious and valuable study of the novelist's heritage and literary stature.

Slavic Review, XXIV, 189-214; June 1965, No. 2.

« Sienkiewicz's First Translator, Jeremiah Curtin », by H. B. Segel.

An objective appreciation of Curtin's shortcomings and advantages.

Thought; Quarterly of the Sciences and Letters, XIV (LV), 579-93; December 1939.

« Henryk Sienkiewicz », by Józef Birkenmajer.

Brief biographical sketch pointing out the writer's psychological insight; a eulogy of Zagłoba as one of the most renowned humorous characters.

III. TEXTS OF SIENKIEWICZ IN AMERICAN PERIODICALS AND ANTHOLOGIES

« The Angel » (« Jamioł »), tr. by Virgilia Peterson. *Poland*, 418-21; September 1931.

« Be Happy! » (« Bądź błogostawiona »), tr. by S. C. de Soissons. *Munsey's Magazine*, XVIII, 356-60; January 1898.

« The Blessing » (« Bądź błogostawiona »), tr. by Victoria de Kreuter. *Poland*, 18-19; January 1930.

« The Chinese in California » (excerpt, *Listy z Ameryki*), tr. by Charles Morley. *California Historical Society Quarterly*, 301-16; December 4, 1955.

« The Death of Radziwiłł » (excerpt, *Potop*). *The Universal Anthology*, XIV, 263-74, ed. by R. Garnett, L. Vallee, Alois Brandl. New York, 1899.

« For Daily Bread » (« Za chlebem »), tr. Charlotte O'Connor Eccles. *The Ave Maria*, XXXIV, pp. 288-93; 311-15; 340-43; 368-71; 402-05; 424-28; 452-57; 483-86; March 12 - April 30, 1892, No. 11 - 18. (A brief biographical note, pp. 257-58).

« A Hindoo Legend » (« Dwie łąki »), tr. by Alina Delano. *Poet Lore*, XV, 48-51; April 1904, No. 11.

« I Must Take a Rest » (« Muszę wypocząć »). *Current Literature*, XLI, 114-16; July 1906.

Knights of the Cross (excerpt telling of the first meeting of Zbyszko and Danusia, *Potop*). *Current Literature*, XXVII, 104-06; February 1900, No. 2.

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ZYGMUNT L. ZALESKI
(Paris)

LA PRESENCE DE LA POLOGNE ET D'AUTRES PAYS SLAVES DANS
LA VIE ET DANS L'OEUVRE DE BALZAC

La présence des éléments slaves se manifeste chez Balzac sur trois plans:

Il s'agit, premièrement, des personnages slaves — polonais avant tout — dans la « Comédie Humaine » ¹⁾.

En second lieu une exploration s'impose pour faire en quelque sorte l'inventaire des amitiés et des contacts slaves dans la vie même de Balzac. Ces relations slaves gravitent certes autour du personnage central de beaucoup le plus important, Mme Hańska, mais qui cependant n'épuise pas toute la richesse scintillante des rencontres avec les Russes et les Polonais avant tout ²⁾.

Troisièmement, il nous semble nécessaire de poser et approfondir le problème slave, surtout russo-polonais, du point de vue des préoccupations politiques très vivaces chez Balzac. Ce problème a été effleuré à peine — en ce qui concerne la Pologne seulement — dans le magistral ouvrage de Bernard Guyon ³⁾.

Il a été abordé également dans quelques articles, entre autres dans celui de Milan Markovitch, « Balzac et la Question d'Orient » ⁴⁾.

Ce problème mérite d'être traité dans toute son étendue et dans toute sa signification morale et psychologique.

Sans vouloir insister spécialement sur les personnages slaves de la « Comédie Humaine », remarquons cependant que le compartiment russe est ici relativement pauvre. Quelques profils furtivement aperçus, quelques allusions sans véritable importance... Il est vrai que Balzac a formé ici de vastes projets. Il s'est proposé d'écrire un roman consacré à la campagne de Napoléon en Russie, mais vue du côté russe précisément. Ce projet figure même sous le titre de la Bataille dans le prospectus de la « Comédie Humaine ». Il avait également l'intention d'écrire un drame tiré de l'histoire de la Russie, « Pierre et Catherine ». Ni l'un, ni l'autre de ces projets ne sera jamais réalisé.

1) Le problème des personnages slaves dans la *Comédie Humaine* a été amplement traité par plusieurs balzaciens. Citons: Sophie de Korwin-Plotrowska, *Balzac et le Monde Slave*, *Madame Hańska et l'Oeuvre Balzacienne*; H. Altszyler, *Les Polonais dans l'Oeuvre de Balzac*; M. Fernand Baldensperger a réservé une place importante à quelques personnages slaves dans *Les Orientations Etrangères chez Honoré de Balzac*.

2) *Lettres à l'Etrangère* contiennent une multitude de références à ce sujet.

3) *La Pensée Politique et Sociale de Balzac*.

4) Dans les *Etudes Historiques*, nouvelle série, n° 6, Avril-juin 1945.

Le compartiment serbe est plus favorisé. Sous l'influence de Charles Nodier, de Mérimée et sa « Guzla », et du « Voyage en Orient » de Lamartine, Balzac semble s'intéresser réellement — affirme M. Markovitch ⁵⁾ — aux fastes de la Serbie et surtout à la femme du peuple serbe. On trouve les traces de cet intérêt dans « Un Début dans la Vie », sans parler d'une fugace allusion dans « Massimila Doni ». C'est surtout la femme serbe qui attire l'attention passionnée du romancier. La « frêle et chétive Péchina » que Balzac introduit dans ses « Paysans », « mince, fluette, brune comme une feuille de tabac », elle possédait une force incroyable. « Quoiqu'elle eût à peine la taille d'un enfant de son âge, elle avait, dit Balzac, un air vieux... avec son visage au teint de topaze à la fois sombre et brillant, sombre par la couleur, brillant par le grain du tissu ». Balzac, dit Markovitch, étudie dans Péchina « un autre aspect de la psychologie méditerranéenne, celui de la précocité » et il le fait, ajoutons, avec une véritable tendresse mêlée d'une pertinente acuité.

Enfin les personnages polonais de la Comédie Humaine méritent un moins bref examen. Il sont nombreux, les plus nombreux parmi les figures slaves. Bien entendu c'est à l'Etrangère, Mme Hańska, que nous devons cette richesse des figures polonaises dans l'oeuvre balzacienne. N'oublions cependant pas que Balzac tellement sensible à toute la chatoyante complexité des événements de son époque fait connaissance des émigrés polonais et aussi de certains Russes avant de connaître sa future femme. L'influence de Mme Hańska cristallise ces données, rehausse peut-être le sens de toutes ses expériences éparses qui devaient cependant se produire avant l'irruption de l'Etrangère dans la vie de Balzac ou indépendamment de leur rencontre épistolaire.

Voici par exemple une remarque en apparence insignifiante (et combien significative pourtant dans son ingénue spontanéité!...) qui échappe à Balzac dans une petite nouvelle écrite en mai 1831, « Le Patriotisme de Clarice ». (La première lettre de Mme Hańska à Balzac, n'oublions pas, est écrite en février 1832). Cette Clarice ruine un comte russe « entiché de son autocrate »... pour l'empêcher de « grossir les bataillons que doit nous envoyer Nicolas »... « Ce que voyant... je me suis dévouée — dit-elle — non comme cette jeune polonaise dont on célèbre la haute vertu, en me ruinant... j'ai préféré ruiner l'ennemi » ⁶⁾. Amusante et ironique antithèse qui semble jaillir comme une étincelle au choc des événements, mais qui éclaire une attitude. Avec le temps cette attitude se stabilise et se précise, et l'amour dessine le geste intérieur. D'autre part, sans attendre l'initiation de Mme Hańska, Balzac s'intéresse aussi à la Russie. Voici par exemple un compte rendu publié le 17 mars 1830 d'un livre de J.B. May sur Saint-Petersbourg et la Russie en 1829 ⁷⁾. Cette double « expérience russe et polonaise » de Balzac s'amplifie et s'approfondit avec le temps sans lui faire éviter toutefois certaines généreuses contradictions et quelques touchantes illusions.. Bien au contraire, son robuste « égocentrisme » doublé d'une large générosité d'esprit lui impose en quelque sorte « les devoirs » de vivre pleinement ce monde d'antinomies internes dans toute son hallucinante intensité.

5) Balzac et les Serbes, *Rev. de Littér. Comparée*, avril-juin 1950 pp. 362-370.

6) H. de Balzac, *Oeuvres complètes*. Paris, Calmann-Lévy, tome XX p. 287.

7) Balzac y blâme l'auteur pour ses « divagations » sur la Russie, ce peuple « appelé à jouer un si grand rôle dans l'avenir ».

Dans une lettre à Mme Hańska écrite à propos de Louis Lambert et de Séraphita, Balzac confesse: « Politiquement je suis de la religion catholique, je suis du côté de Bossuet et de Bonald et je ne dévierai jamais. Devant Dieu, je suis de la religion de Saint Jean, de l'Eglise mystique, la seule qui ait conservé la vraie doctrine. Ceci est le fond de mon coeur... ». Et il ajoute encore: « On saura dans quelque temps combien l'oeuvre que j'ai entreprise est profondément catholique et monarchique » ⁸⁾. Cette pathétique confiance destinée sans doute à rassurer l'orthodoxie catholique de Mme Hańska — bien à son aise pourtant dans la sphère du mysticisme — révèle non pas tant le tourment intérieur de Balzac que sa volonté de demeurer « multiple », de garder toute la richesse contradictoire de ses pulsions créatrices. Est-ce une « juxtaposition » à l'orientale ⁹⁾ selon la fine remarque de M.F. Baldensperger, des deux attitudes incompatibles?... ou un simple désir cartésien des idées « claires et distinctes »?... Probablement, ni l'un, ni l'autre tout à fait... Il s'agit moins ici de commode compartimentage intellectuel que du droit de s'épanouir librement, pleinement, dans le cadre des devoirs sociaux et politiques aussi librement acceptés: un monde wronskien d'antinomies qui tend à s'organiser suivant l'axe des nécessités sociales.

Cet aveu, conciliant le libre élan mystique et la soumission à l'ordonnance puissante de la doctrine catholique et monarchique, éclaire aussi, indirectement du moins, quelques contradictions « russes et polonaises » de Balzac. En effet, tout en affirmant avec un noble courage et une éloquence émouvante sa sympathie, mieux, son admiration pour les émigrés polonais anciens combattants de 1830, ainsi que pour ceux du temps de la grande révolution, il n'hésite pas cependant à se reprendre. D'un côté, il dit dans la « Fausse Maîtresse »: « La nationalité polonaise par le fait d'une odieuse réaction gouvernementale (en France) était alors tombée aussi bas que les républicains la voulaient mettre haut. La lutte étrange du Mouvement, contre la Résistance, deux mots qui seront inexplicables dans 30 ans, fit un jouet de ce qui devait être si respectable: le nom d'une nation vaincue à qui la France accordait l'hospitalité, pour qui l'on inventait des fêtes, pour qui l'on dansait et l'on chantait par souscription; enfin une nation qui, lors de la lutte entre l'Europe et la France, lui avait offert 6.000 hommes en 1796, et quels hommes! ». Plus tard, il dira: « Cependant n'allez pas inférer de ceci que l'on veuille donner tort à l'empereur Nicolas contre la Pologne ou à la Pologne contre l'empereur Nicolas... La Russie et la Pologne avaient également raison, l'une de vouloir l'unité de son Empire, l'autre de vouloir devenir libre » ¹⁰⁾.

C'est évidemment un gage donné à la sagesse et au réalisme ou si l'on veut à l'opportunisme politique de la monarchie de Juillet. Mais ne chicanons pas le grand écrivain sur ce mot: « également », placé en quelque sorte entre le droit à la liberté et le droit à une conquête unificatrice! Ensuite, comme pour atténuer l'effet de son apparente « neutralité », Balzac ajoute: « Disons en passant que la Pologne pouvait conquérir la Russie par l'influence de ses moeurs, au lieu de la combattre par les armes, en

⁸⁾ Lettre citée par M. J. Van der Elst dans son article: *Autour du livre mystique: Balzac et Swedenborg* où il appelle Séraphita « une Ode amoureuse dédiée à l'Etrangère ». *Revue de Lit. Comp.* 1930, p. 99.

⁹⁾ « L'Orient juxtapose, l'Occident organise », F. Baldensperger, *Orientations étrangères*, op. cit. p. 211.

¹⁰⁾ *La Fausse Maîtresse*, Paris, Albin Michel, p. 341.

imitant les Chinois qui ont fini par « chinoiser » les Tartares et qui chinoiseront les Anglais, il faut l'espérer. La Pologne devait poloniser la Russie Poniatowski l'avait essayé... » ¹¹⁾.

Dans cette comparaison aussi paradoxale qu'imprévue ne retrouve-t-on pas une influence indirecte de l'entourage de Mme Hańska où, à côté de patriotes chevaleresques (Wenceslas Rzewuski), existent des partisans de l'accommodement, voire de l'abandon et des tractations équivoques. Cependant dans cette idée chimérique sur le devoir de la Pologne de « poloniser la Russie » on entend comme un écho lointain quoique singulièrement amplifié d'une vieille croyance polonaise en une « mission occidentale » de la Pologne en Russie... Occidentaliser (« latiniser » comme on disait alors) les Russes, d'ailleurs avec leur consentement latent, telle apparaissait, en effet, cette mission pacifique inscrite parmi les possibilités historiques et avec laquelle il est vrai, le roi Poniatowski n'avait rien de commun ¹²⁾.

Il est curieux dans tous les cas, de voir Balzac renouveler — presque sous forme de boutade — ce thème désuet.

La position de Balzac, en face du problème historique de la Pologne est par ailleurs noble et courageuse. Ne va-t-il pas jusqu'à se demander dans les « Splendeurs et Misères des Courtisanes », si le martyr de Marie-Antoinette ne fut pas une expiation pour la complicité de sa mère dans le crime des partages?... D'autre part, il veut saisir sur le vif — semble-t-il — autant par « observation » et « divination » — quelques traits caractéristiques de la psychologie du peuple polonais, comme s'il croyait y trouver une explication des grands revers de la Pologne, mêlés de tant d'actions éclatantes. Il est difficile de ne pas admirer sa franchise abrupte alliée parfois à une exquise délicatesse... après avoir « cité » le mot blessant de Rastignac (« il est gentil quoique Polonais »), Balzac continue en apparence sévèrement: « Sans vouloir offenser les bannis, il est permis de faire observer que la légèreté, l'insouciance, l'inconsistance du caractère sarmate autorisèrent les médisances des Parisiens qui, d'ailleurs, — ajoute-t-il — ressembleraient parfaitement aux Polonais en semblable occurrence. L'aristocratie française, si admirablement secourue par l'aristocratie polonaise pendant la Révolution, n'a certes pas rendu la pareille à l'émigration forcée de 1832. Ayons le triste courage de le dire, le Faubourg Saint-Germain est encore en ceci débiteur de la Pologne » ¹³⁾.

Après avoir jugé ainsi l'émigration polonaise de 1831, (il semble être assez bien informé des affaires des émigrés, par exemple des dissensions entre le camp du prince Czartoryski et celui de Lelewel), Balzac élargit le champ de ses explorations ou plutôt de ses « divinations » des choses polonaises. C'est dans la « Cousine Bette » — où l'élément polonais est mêlé si intimement à la vie ardente de la communauté parisienne — que l'on trouve une série de remarques générales non seulement sur l'émigration, mais sur la nation polonaise et sa pathétique destinée. Tout d'abord la position de la Pologne et le caractère des Polonais: « L'Ukraine, la Russie, les plaines du Danube, le peuple slave enfin, c'est un trait

11) *Cousine Bette*.

12) Cf. Antoine Martel, *La langue Polonaise dans les Pays Ruthènes*, Lille, 1938. Voir surtout la conclusion de ce remarquable ouvrage. Voir aussi J.A. Chliapkin, *Saint Dimitri de Rostow et son temps*, Saint-Petersbourg, 1891 et Z.L. Zaleski, *Le Dilemme Russo-Polonais*, Paris, Payot, 1920.

13) *La Fausse Maîtresse*, éd. cit. p. 343.

d'union entre l'Europe et l'Asie, entre la civilisation et la barbarie. Aussi le Polonais, la plus riche fraction du peuple slave, a-t-il dans le caractère les enfantillages et l'inconstance des nations imberbes. Il possède le courage, l'esprit et la force; mais, frappé d'inconsistance, ce courage et cette force, cet esprit n'ont ni méthode ni esprit, car le Polonais offre une mobilité semblable à celle du vent... » ¹⁴⁾.

Puis une constatation d'allure romantique et quelques « hypothèses » que l'histoire, selon Balzac, aurait pu réaliser: « Aussi le Polonais, sublime dans la douleur, a-t-il fatigué les bras de ses oppresseurs à force de se faire assommer, en recommençant ainsi au XIXe siècle, le spectacle qu'ont offert les premiers chrétiens. Introduisez 10% de sounoiserie anglaise dans le caractère polonais, si franc, si ouvert, et le généreux aigle blanc règnerait aujourd'hui partout où se glisse l'aigle à deux têtes. Un peu de machiavélisme eut empêché la Pologne de sauver l'Autriche qui la partagea ».

Bien qu'il faille distinguer les opinions de l'auteur de celles des personnages de ses romans, rapprochons de ce qui précède, l'aveu de H. de Marsay dans le « Contrat de Mariage »: « Les Polonais se battent seuls en Europe pour le plaisir de se battre, ils cultivent encore l'art pour l'art et non par spéculation ».

Enfin en guise de conclusion, une sorte de recommandation conforme d'ailleurs aux tendances politiques de Balzac: « Le jour où cette nation, uniquement composée de courages sanguins, aura le bon sens de chercher un Louis XI dans ses entrailles, d'en accepter la tyrannie et la dynastie, elle sera sauvée... » ¹⁵⁾.

C'est ainsi — disons-le, en paraphrasant une remarque suggestive de M.A. Bellessort — qu'il essaie de saisir et « d'approfondir... les causes de la réalité » historique qui doivent lui « fournir » ses personnages polonais. En effet, il les invente dans le cadre de cette réalité, il les installe pour ainsi dire dans l'espace de ce polonisme à la fois sentimental et raisonné qui apparaît si nettement dans son oeuvre.

Après cette incursion fugitive parmi les opinions sur la Pologne et la Russie exprimées par Balzac en passant dans la « Comédie Humaine », touchons au problème des personnages qui, nous l'avons dit plus haut, a déjà trouvé plusieurs interprètes. Bornons-nous ici à quelques remarques indispensables du point de vue de l'économie de notre travail. D'abord, les figures féminines polonaises. La Seule dont l'état-civil semi-polonais est souligné par Balzac, Wanda de Mergi (« l'Envers de l'Histoire Contemporaine »), représente un aspect secondaire de la féminité polonaise. Cette « coquette à froid », comme la caractérise J. Topass, est un être humain maladif, souffreteux et comme plongé à dessein dans sa morbidesse aux caprices chatoyants...

Mme de Korwin-Piotrowska souligne avec raison que, grâce à Mme Hańska, la femme polonaise a trouvé une large place dans les créations de la « Comédie Humaine ». Depuis Eugénie Grandet et la Fosseuse (« Médecin de Campagne »), depuis Modeste Mignon jusqu'à la Cousine Bette elle-même « c'est un composé de ma mère, de Mme Valmore et de votre

14) *Oeuvres complètes*, VII^e P. 355.

15) *La Cousine Bette*, Paris, E. Flammarion, pp. 228-229.

tante »¹⁶⁾ — écrit Balzac à l'Etrangère — sans parler de Séraphita¹⁷⁾ et de Mme de Mortsauf¹⁸⁾ jusqu'à Adeline Hulot enfin... La figure d'Adeline (Adeline = Eveline), cette sacrifiée, cette presque sainte crispée dans son attitude de martyre et y trouvant peut-être quelques secrètes délices, nous apparaît, en effet, comme un message vivant de Balzac possédé par son amour « impénitent »... On y perçoit, à travers un hommage déférent, une sorte de reproche déguisé pour cette « incorruptibilité » de l'amour tellement soumis aux conventions sociales, si intense, et à la fois, si réservé et si distant...

Si l'on passe sur quelques personnages tout à fait épisodiques (Abramko, Adrien, Kouski, ou encore le sympathique et candide comte Adam Laginski de « l'Autre Etude de Femme ») — toutes les figures polonaises masculines sont réunies dans les trois romans: « La Recherche de l'Absolu » « la Fausse Maîtresse », « la Cousine Bette ». — Hoene-Wroński, que Balzac a connu semble-t-il depuis 1827, s'incarne non seulement dans le personnage ardent d'Adam de Wierzchownia, mais apparaît aussi comme un inspirateur de toute cette apologie romanesque du génie de la recherche scientifique, sacrifiant son bonheur à son hallucinante passion. Mme de Korwin-Piotrowska suppose que pour construire le personnage de Balthazar Claes, Balzac a utilisé la personnalité du chimiste polonais Chodkiewicz. C'est possible... Les analogies sont patentes... Mais ne peut-on voir dans Wroński également une source plus proche, un modèle plus familier?... Cette sorte de dédoublement est bien plausible... Laissons d'ailleurs le plaisir d'établir ces parentés aux passionnés des conjectures généalogiques... A moins que Balzac lui-même ne nous guide dans ce dédale... C'est précisément le cas de Thadée Paz qui porte le prénom de Wyleżyński, un cousin de Hme Hańska. Ici Balzac avoue lui-même: « Je lui ai donné le caractère et les sentiments de votre pauvre cousin »¹⁹⁾. Or, Paz et Lagiński, le premier surtout, apparaissent comme des stylisations intenses d'un certain « donquichotisme » que Balzac semble apercevoir ou deviner chez les Polonais de son époque, sinon « déduire » de sa propre conception du caractère polonais.

Wenceslas Steinbock, enfin ... Quel personnage pour les amoureux de l'analyse littéraire!... Apparence romantique et pourtant rien de romantique dans cette peinture sobre, chaude, nuancée et si pleine d'une indulgente discrétion!... C'est ici qu'il semble aisé de surprendre le procédé de Balzac, arrivé à sa rayonnante et complète maturité. Une parcelle du « réel » saisie dans un fulgurant éclair... Et puis le double miracle de multiplication et de transfiguration. Enfin l'art prestigieux entre tous, de construire cette personnalité vivante qui se conserve et s'épanouit à travers toutes les vicissitudes de l'existence. C'est ainsi que la « fiction » romanesque de Wenceslas arrive à être saturée du « réel »: unité mouvante

16) Il s'agit de Rosalie Rzewuska.

17) F. Baldensperger, op. cit. chap. IX, « En marge du Livre Mystique » pp. 169-185.

18) Mme de Mortsauf, « Curieuse synthèse » de Mme de Berny et de Mme Hańska, affirme Mme de Korwin, Op. cit. p. 255.

C'est Mme de Korwin qui a signalé aussi la transposition d'Eveline Hańska dans quelques personnages féminins de Balzac, entre autre Francesca Colonna d'Argaiolo (Albert Savarus¹⁾. Dans une étude encore inédite elle a identifié la Princesse Rosalie Lubomirska comme prototype d'une héroïne balzacienne (Conférence faite en 1950 à la Bibliothèque Polonaise de Paris).

19) *Lettres à l'Etrangère*, 11 octobre 1844.

dans son identité continue... Le caractère de Wenceslas Steinbock demeure très humain. Il est à la fois bien représentatif de ces émigrés polonais, héroïques sans doute, mais déracinés trop brusquement et respirant mal dans l'atmosphère capiteuse et enivrante de Paris.

Lancé dans le flux puissant du plus « dynamique » roman, où s'ébat toute une génération engagée passionnément dans la grande aventure de la vie, il sombre paresseusement dans son tiède bonheur. Artiste et sensuel, au passé héroïque — sa meilleure parade contre les adversités semble être une sorte de passivité indolore. Il symbolise l'échec d'un héros dépouillé de son tragique destin, peut-être même de son destin tout court...

Ajoutons pour conclure provisoirement ce chapitre sur les personnages que les « intuitions » et « divinations » balzaciennes de la réalité polonaise semblent correspondre ici aux réactions spontanées de la communauté française, réactions amplifiées, exaltées chez le grand écrivain, ramenées enfin à l'ordonnance d'une accueillante compréhension. Et dans tout ceci point d'indice de « complexe de supériorité » quelconque...

Tout au plus un sentiment presque familial de droit d'aînesse qui autorise parfois à dire un mot plus rude sur un ton bourru, mais qui rehausse encore la valeur de cette souriante fraternité. C'est dans cette atmosphère quasi-familiale, où la sympathie et l'admiration alternent avec la mâle brusquerie d'un blâme ou d'un reproche, que semblent aussi évoluer les personnages polonais de Balzac — ces fictions romanesques plus réelles que la réalité.

* * *

La liste des contacts et des rencontres personnels de Balzac avec les Slaves est bien longue et malgré une série de très consciencieuses prospections de M.F. Baldensperger, Mme de Korwin et tant d'autres, il serait utile, pour notre sujet d'en établir un inventaire plus complet. Cette tâche n'est pas aisée si l'on veut donner à cette liste toute sa vivante signification. Bornons-nous provisoirement — quitte à les compléter ensuite — à ces quelques très brèves indications, en soulignant en même temps que ce sont avant tout les contacts slaves avant « l'irruption » dans la vie de Balzac de Mme Hańska qui nous intéressent. Le nombre de ses rencontres « préhanskiennes » est d'ailleurs très limité, insignifiant presque. La liste des contacts slaves — russes et polonais — qui se sont produits sous les auspices de Mme Hańska, est par contre bien longue. Indépendamment de Mme Hańska, Balzac a rencontré des Slaves — des Polonais avant tout — dans le cercle de Mme George Sand qui, selon son expression familière, était « farcie de Polonais ». C'étaient des émigrés en première ligne et qui sont entrés dans son orbite grâce à Chopin et à Mickiewicz.

L'entrée en scène de Mme Hańska devait en tout cas non seulement accentuer certains aspects de cette « évolution slave » chez Balzac, mais rendre en même temps plus colorées et plus authentiques, toutes les expériences polonaises et russes du grand écrivain. Ainsi ses rencontres et contacts slaves aussi bien russes que polonais semblent désormais s'ordonner suivant l'axe de cette nouvelle et durable passion. Dans tous les cas, non seulement l'insurrection de 1830, mais aussi l'émigration de 1831 — ces deux faits d'ordre différent quoique découlant l'un de l'autre — n'ont pas manqué de frapper l'esprit observateur et la sensibilité de Balzac.

Nous savons qu'il a rencontré plusieurs éminents émigrés polonais : Wroński en premier lieu, Chopin et Mickiewicz ensuite. Nous connaissons une sorte de portrait de Wroński publié par Balzac dans les « Martyrs ignorés », sous le nom de Grodński et qui correspond bien à celui que Balzac esquisse dans une lettre à Mme Hańska, le 1er août 1834 : « Je dois voir ce soir — écrit-il — un illustre Polonais, Wroński, grand mathématicien, grand mystique, grand mécanicien, mais dont la conduite a des irrégularités que les gens de justice nomment des friponneries et qui, vues de près sont les effets d'une misère épouvantable et d'un génie si supérieur qu'on ne saurait lui en vouloir. C'est dit-on, la plus forte tête de l'Europe ». Nous savons combien cette rencontre qui date probablement (suivant M. F. Baldensperger) de 1827, a été féconde littérairement parlant. S'il s'agit de Mickiewicz, Balzac confie à Mme Hańska ses impressions à deux reprises. Le 3 avril 1834, il écrit : « J'ai reçu à dîner votre cousin Zalouski et Mickiewicz, votre poète chéri, dont la figure m'a plu beaucoup » et, une semaine après, il revient encore à Mickiewicz : « J'ai bien admiré la sublime figure de Mickiewicz; quelle belle tête!... ». Les traits suivants rapprochent d'ailleurs Balzac de Mickiewicz : le culte de Napoléon (Balzac comme Mickiewicz est « Napoléonien » et non « Bonapartiste »), certaines vues sur la psychologie russe et jusqu'à l'admiration pour Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire et sa conception de l'unité de la nature!...

Quant à Chopin, Balzac fut l'admirateur ardent de sa musique. Dans une lettre (28 mai 1843) à Mme Hańska, Balzac introduit ce pittoresque parallèle entre Liszt et Chopin : « Il (Liszt) a un grand talent d'exécution sublime; mais il n'a pas le génie de la composition. Vous ne jugerez Liszt que quand il vous sera donné d'entendre Chopin. Le Hongrois est un démon; le Polonais est un ange ». Cette antithèse, remarquons-le, ne semble avoir rien de péjoratif pour le grand musicien hongrois.

Notons encore que suivant M.F. Baldensperger, le titre même de la « Comédie Humaine » serait né d'une double influence — suggestion — du titre de la « Comédie Divine » de Dante et de la « Comédie Infernale » de Sigismond Krasinski, titre dont Balzac a pris connaissance par le truchement de l'ami intime de Krasinski, Henri Reeve, fondateur de *Fortnightly Review*, qu'il rencontre suivant M. Ch. Dédeyan, le 2 février 1835 ²⁰).

Nous savons d'autre part, que Balzac fréquenta aussi de nombreux Russes de marque : la fille du Prince Kozlowski, Sophie (Sofka) comme il l'appelait familièrement et peut-être le prince lui-même ²¹) la Princesse Golitzine, la comtesse Orloff, la Princesse Bagration, Mme Kisielev d'ailleurs polonaise de naissance et beaucoup d'autres.

En remettant à plus tard la continuation de cette exploration aussi intéressante en elle-même qu'utile pour notre sujet, remarquons encore que l'établissement de cette liste des relations slaves et même la simple identification des personnages expose à des méprises et à de sérieuses difficultés. A titre d'exemple qu'il nous soit permis de signaler que les savants éditeurs de l'admirable édition des « Oeuvres Complètes » ont cherché bien loin pour identifier le nom écrit défectueusement — il est vrai — par Balzac : Dewitte (dans un passage d'une lettre à l'Étrangère,

20) Voir Charles Dédeyan, *Balzac et l'Angleterre dans Balzac. le Livre du Centenaire*, Paris, Flammarion, 1952, p. 284.

21) Cf. G. Struve, *Un Russe Européen : le Prince Pierre Kozlowski*. Rev. de Lit. Comparée, Octobre-Décembre 1950, pp. 521-546.

où il fait allusion à Odessa). Il s'agit certainement du général de Witt dont la liaison avec la soeur de Mme Hańska, Caroline, est bien connue. Or, les éditeurs, pour identifier ce personnage sont allés jusqu'à un certain Baron G. de Witte, érudit et archéologue belge né à Anvers en 1808 ...

* * *

Balzac est avant tout le créateur génial d'un univers romanesque où s'affrontent toutes les passions humaines et où se confrontent toutes les réalités sociales de son époque. Cependant, sa prodigieuse personnalité ne demeure pas insensible non plus aux problèmes plus abstraits d'ordre moral, philosophique, religieux, politique... c'est sur ce dernier terrain qu'il nous paraît intéressant d'étudier un compartiment certes limité, mais où l'attitude de Balzac s'exprime souvent avec une abrupte netteté qui n'exclut pas une ondoyante complexité. Bien plus, ce problème est plein de résonances non seulement politiques, mais psychologiques et morales.

« En politique on fait tout ce qu'on veut, quand on le peut », écrit-il avec une franchise désinvolte dans un de ses articles de la « Chronique de Paris »²²). Cette formule d'allure si réaliste et dépourvue de toute sentimentalité, permet à Balzac d'apprécier la valeur politique de la Russie sans abandonner la liberté de sentir et de juger les affaires de Pologne dans toute leur dramatique signification.

Mais comment se développent, se précisent et s'enchainent ces deux motifs de préoccupations politiques balzaciennes?...

Avant d'aborder ce problème pareil au déroulement d'un complexe contre-point, essayons d'élucider une question chère à certains balzaciens. Il s'agit de Mme Hańska, et de son influence sur Balzac dans le domaine des choses slaves. Si Mme de Korwin dans sa thèse citée plus haut semble voir dans Mme Hańska presque l'unique inspiration de Balzac dans ses explorations slaves et polonaises en particulier, M. Léonid Grossman dans son ouvrage « Balzac en Russie »²³), la rend responsable de la totale indifférence du créateur de la Comédie Humaine à l'égard de la réalité russe. « Balzac — dit-il — ne s'est intéressé ni au peuple russe, ni à sa poésie, ni à ses idées, ni à ses mouvements sociaux, ni à ses aspirations »²⁴). « Malgré ses trois voyages — insiste M. Grossman — Balzac est passé à côté de la Russie qui ne lui donne aucune idée créatrice et n'inspire aucun de ses romans... Il faut y voir — conclut-il — l'influence de Hańska qui méprisait profondément tout ce qui était russe »²⁵). M. Milan Markovitch considère par contre que c'est précisément Mme Hańska qui a « fait de lui (de Balzac) un russophile convaincu »²⁶).

22) *Chronique de Paris*, 13 mars 1836.

23) Léonid Grossman, *Balzac en Russie*, Paris, Zelouk, 1946 pp. 183-186. Déjà en 1937 M. Léonid Grossman avait publié un ouvrage en russe sur le même sujet: *Balzac en Russie dans Littératureno Nasledstvo*, Moscou 1937, tomes 31-32 pp. 149-372. Bien que l'édition française postérieure de 9 ans garde pour le lecteur étranger toute sa valeur et surtout toute sa signification, il est opportun de signaler que le texte de l'édition russe, plus étendu, présente de sensibles différences tant au point de vue de la méthode que de la documentation. L'ouvrage russe contient en effet, un grand nombre de documents photographiques et — chose importante — quelques photocopies de lettres originales de Balzac citées parfois dans l'édition française sous forme de « retraductions ».

24) *Ibid.* P. 186.

25) *Ibid.* P. 186.

26) Milan Markovitch, *Balzac et la Question d'Orient*, pertinent article publié dans l'organe de la Société des Etudes Historiques, avril-juin 1949, P. 13.

Il serait piquant de suivre les péripéties de cette controverse engagée depuis bien longtemps d'ailleurs et qui continue autour de l'Etrangère, malgré la chevaleresque et — semble-t-il décisive — mise au point de M. Marcel Bouteron.

Est-ce un ange inspirateur et protecteur — comme le veut Mme de Korwin-Piotrowska ou un démon abject et malfaisant à qui M. Grossman délivre d'ailleurs un singulier brevet de puissance?... Tout dernièrement encore, Mme Colette a essayé de bannir de la vie prodigieuse de Balzac « cette dame slave » qu'elle accuse « de ne l'avoir rendu ni assez heureux ni assez désespéré » ²⁷⁾.

Il suffit de jeter un coup d'oeil sur le quatrième volume des « Lettres à l'Etrangère », récemment publié par M. Bouteron, pour se convaincre que ni le premier reproche, ni hélas le second ne cadre avec les faits. Accueillons avec un sourire déferent cette petite injustice féminine du prestigieux écrivain et concluons simplement avec M. Bernard Guyon que Mme Hańska était pour Balzac « la femme de sa vie » : « Elle tient dans son corps, dans son esprit, dans son âme — dit-il — une place unique, royale » ²⁸⁾. Et Balzac lui-même avoue : « Je m'y suis attaché (à Mme Hańska) par tous les liens humains : l'amour, l'amitié, l'ambition, la fortune, l'orgueil, la vanité, le plaisir, la certitude » ²⁹⁾. En réalité, le seul point qui nous intéresse ici, ce n'est pas l'Etrangère elle-même, mais la grande passion, où la sensualité et la sensibilité, le désir, l'admiration et l'adoration ont créé un climat propice au jeu d'échanges, sinon d'influences intellectuelles (dans le domaine religieux par exemple) ³⁰⁾. Bien plus, c'est peut-être à l'abri de ce pathétique éloignement — qui semble illustrer et confirmer la maxime célèbre de La Rochefoucauld — c'est à l'abri de cette mystique présence amoureuse que Balzac pouvait travailler plus librement, plus intensément, plus douloureusement aussi à la création immense de son oeuvre.

En regardant de plus près notre problème, rappelons qu'ici encore loin d'attendre l'initiation de Mme Hańska, Balzac s'intéresse à la Russie et surtout à la Pologne bien avant sa rencontre même épistolaire avec l'Etrangère.

En brûlant quelques étapes — d'ailleurs sans importance spéciale pour notre sujet — arrêtons-nous à l'année 1830, l'année des révolutions en France et en Belgique tout d'abord ... L'ombre de la Russie se profile à l'Est, sombre et menaçante. Suivant les ordres du Tsar Nicolas Ier, le roi de Pologne imposé par le traité de Vienne, l'armée polonaise devra marcher la première contre les révolutionnaires de Bruxelles et de Paris ³¹⁾. Mais au lieu d'aller combattre les révolutionnaires, elle se révolte et,

27) Colette, de l'Académie Goncourt *Souvenirs sur Balzac*, le *Figaro*, 18-19 novembre 1950, reproduit dans Balzac, *Le Livre du Centenaire*, op. cit., pp. 16-18.

28) *Lettres à l'Etrangère*, IIe, P. 19.

29) Bernard Guyon, *La Pensée Politique et Sociale de Balzac*, Paris, Colin, 1947, p. 676.

30) A propos de Modeste Mignon Balzac affirme dans une lettre écrite à Mme Hańska le 17 mars 1844 : « Oui, exécuter ce que vous avez inventé m'a paru la plus délicate des jouissances et vous lirez peut-être votre oeuvre dans les Débats avant le Dépit Bourgeois ». *Lettres à l'Etrangère*, vol. II, p. 331. Il faut y mettre la part du feu, c'est-à-dire la part de l'exagération amoureuse. Cependant, plus loin, il insiste encore : « Modeste Mignon c'est votre Nouvelle devenue un magnifique roman ». *Ibid.* p. 336.

31) Lettre du Tsar Nicolas Ier au Grand Duc Constantin du 6-18 août 1830. *Recueil de la Société Historique russe*, Saint-Petersbourg 1911, t. 132, pp. 36-37.

selon le mot de Lafayette, « elle se retourne contre le corps de bataille ». L'invasion de l'Occident est arrêtée.

La révolution de Varsovie est accueillie partout avec une profonde émotion. A Paris, l'opinion demande que la France intervienne pour aider les Polonais en lutte. Le Gouvernement — surtout le parti dit de la « Résistance »³²⁾, quelque peu embarrassé — s'y oppose par toutes sortes d'atermoiements et de réticences. Quelle est à ce moment la position de Balzac?... Partisan du « Mouvement », suivant les impulsions du libéralisme et en réalité de son patriotisme révolutionnaire et jacobin, il lance, dans une longue série d'articles, des appels éloquents et parfois frénétiques en faveur d'une intervention armée immédiate. Il parle en homme politique autant qu'en homme de coeur.

Le 18 décembre 1830 — la Révolution de Varsovie a commencé on le sait le 29 novembre — il écrit : « La question entre l'Angleterre et nous est à Anvers; entre nous et la Russie, elle est à Varsovie.

« Eh bien, Varsovie est à nous... En quelques jours, une immense révolution politique s'y est accomplie, simple peut-être, eu égard à la Pologne, mais d'une incalculable portée relativement aux destinées Européennes.

« Ce fait aurait été dans les mains d'un grand homme d'Etat — confirme Balzac — la cause déterminante d'une prompte et vive agression. La Pologne devenant une nation au lieu d'être une province, reconquérant sur la Russie son ancien territoire, ayant pour alliée naturelle la Porte Ottomane, la Suède, le Danemark — formerait de puissantes barrières — à cette dévorante autocratie dont il faut rejeter la tempestueuse volonté vers les contrées du Caucase.

« La Russie a des déserts à peupler, à cultiver et sans cesse elle veut s'occuper de nos villes, les convoiter, les régir... Elle est asiatique et non européenne... ». Ici suit une longue démonstration de la nécessité d'intervenir : « ... parce que — conclut Balzac — l'Europe est en feu, l'Angleterre impuissante et l'armée française en marche... »³³⁾.

La lettre suivante publiée le 31 décembre est plus pressante, plus haletante : « Le principe de non-intervention — s'écrie Balzac — est une erreur de la faiblesse. Si nos idées d'indépendance nationale succombent en Pologne et en Belgique, nous ne résisterons pas comme en 1793 pendant vingt ans à l'Europe... »³⁴⁾.

Le principe de « non-intervention », dira-t-il dans ses Lettres sur Paris publiées en 1831, est un principe en vertu duquel une mère doit laisser ses enfants chez elle quand la maison voisine est en flammes... »³⁵⁾. Et cette sorte de parabole est précédée par un raisonnement fort curieux : « Nous sommes arrivés, dit-il, à un état à contre sens d'inertie, à une pose négative si curieusement égoïste que les événements de l'Italie excitent à peine l'attention chez nous. Les malheureux doctrinaires, les protocolistes, les non-interventionnels ont tué l'enthousiasme. Il y a trois

32) Ce terme de « Résistance » se rapportait alors à ceux qui résistaient au mouvement soutenu par l'opinion de toute la nation en faveur de la solidarité européenne pour faire triompher la liberté. Est-il permis d'ajouter que la dernière guerre mondiale a donné à ce mot une acception tout à fait différente pour ne pas dire symétriquement opposée.

33) *Le Voleur*, du 20 décembre 1830.

34) *Ibid.*

35) *Lettres sur Paris, Oeuvres Complètes, Oeuvres Diverses*, 11, PP. 133-134.

mois, chacun, faisant le sacrifice de ses intérêts, aurait volé aux frontières pour secourir la Belgique, la Pologne, délivrer l'Italie, briser le honteux traité de 1815... Aujourd'hui ces masses sont rentrées dans les calculs étroits de la personnalité, parce que le Gouvernement avait pris les allures de la Restauration »³⁶⁾. Et voici encore des extraits des « Lettres sur Paris » qui éclairent bien la position de Balzac : « Il y a, dit Balzac, je ne sais quelle jeune audace à proclamer à l'exemple de Napoléon que, si la France doit avoir la guerre, elle aura l'avantage en attaquant ses ennemis ». Car, souligne-t-il, « il s'agit en deux mots du partage de la Russie ou de celui de la France. Napoléon avait bien compris la question, et 1831 sera le commentaire de 1813. Il faut éclairer le Nord pour ne pas lui laisser conquérir le Midi à la plus profonde obscurité. La grande figure de la Barbarie, Ropstochine (il s'agit de Rostoptchine), ce caliban de Moscou!... a fait jadis reculer la civilisation par un épouvantable incendie »³⁷⁾.

Dans son enquête sur la politique des deux ministères, Balzac continue à soutenir opiniâtement son point de vue interventionniste : « Bonaparte a péri faute d'hommes, il avait tout amené sur le champ de bataille, tandis que la Restauration a peut-être succombé sous le poids d'une génération inoccupée. Il fallait marcher entre ces deux écueils... Or, il me semble — dit-il — qu'il n'est pas besoin d'avoir fait un stage dans les bureaux de la guerre pour concevoir que nous avions alors les éléments d'une lutte terrible. Les Polonais avec dix fois moins d'armes, ont arrêté les armées russes, les ont vaincues, les ont détruites³⁸⁾, et les malheureux n'avaient pas comme nous des peuples pour les seconder dans leur duel avec le colosse moscovite ».

« Aujourd'hui, remarque Balzac, les seules guerres possibles, étant... des guerres nationales, le peuple ne se battant plus pour ainsi dire que pour son propre compte... Aussi dans l'enthousiasme où nous étions, l'armée eût tendu la main à la Pologne, pendant que d'autres bataillons eussent à la fois marché vers l'Italie et le long du Danube. Ces routes-là nous redevaient tout à coup familières; car chaque soldat sentant sa brillante mission de gloire et de liberté, les baïonnettes eussent relui d'intelligence »³⁹⁾.

Et voici une sorte d'accent patriotique et politique à la fois que met Balzac sur cette campagne en faveur de l'intervention : « Si l'on eut laissé le peuple suivre son allure, il eût marché droit au Rhin. Et profitant de la stupeur européenne, la France aurait ressaisi elle-même ses frontières ».

« Le 1er septembre — note Balzac en observateur avisé — il y avait encore de l'enthousiasme; mais le 1er novembre, il était déjà remplacé par une indifférence curieuse à observer. Les événements de Belgique, ceux de Pologne, vinrent réveiller nos sympathies, nous rendre un espoir de guerre après lequel nos imaginations couraient comme un vaisseau cherche la brise... »⁴⁰⁾.

Il serait d'autre part intéressant de suivre la courbe pathétique de ces lettres-articles qui interprètent les événements de Varsovie et se

36) *Ibid.* 133.

37) *Ibid.* 97.

38) Ces paroles écrites vers la fin de la guerre russo-polonaise correspondent visiblement aux succès de l'armée polonaise de la première phase des hostilités.

39) *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 39, p. 356.

40) *Enquête...*, op. cit., p. 358.

colorent de leurs teintes. Chaque nouvelle heureuse de bataille gagnée provoque un cri de joie et chaque insuccès est accueilli avec une courageuse détermination...

Et quand la lutte inégale — faute de solidarité européenne précisément — évolue vers la défaite, Balzac n'abandonne pas sa position. Indigné et cinglant, il s'écrie le 26 février 1831 : « Et nous leurs frères, nous, baptisés avec eux dans le sang de Lutzen et Bautzen, dans les neiges de la Russie, nous auront fait pour eux le voeu stérile, restant les bras croisés, occupés à décider qui, du Ministère ou de la Chambre mérite mieux le prix de l'anarchie ». Le même jour, il écrit dans « le Voleur » : « Puissent les hommes de Kalish (ville de Kalisz en Pologne) mourir, pour que la patrie vive. Voilà des paroles sublimes qui, des rues de Varsovie, vont retentir dans le monde et sauveront les Polonais de l'oubli, si par hasard, ils ne triomphaient pas; mais ils triompheront; mais en ce moment ils triomphent!... ».

Et parfois sa voix s'enfle comme pour accompagner un geste large et généreux : « La France attend que les efforts de la Pologne soient satisfaits pour rendre à la Pologne le sang qu'elle nous a jadis prêté. Les peuples ont leur honneur et leur probité comme les particuliers » ⁴¹⁾. Une autre fois, il dénonce avec une amère ironie : « Le peuple polonais se lève et l'on nous fait rasseoir. Nous avons, dit-on, besoin des arts, de la paix. Les Polonais sont nos remplaçants... Ils mourront pour nous et nous vivrons pour eux..., afin de les immortaliser » ⁴²⁾.

Le 17 mars 1831, il publie dans la Caricature un petit dialogue satirique intitulé Héroïsme en robe de Chambre. Balzac y essaie encore de caractériser la situation européenne. Il parle du tsar Nicolas et constate que les Polonais se trouvent toujours sur la route de Paris et arrêtent la marche de futures conquêtes. Le tsar appelle le maréchal Dybitch-Zabal-kanski et lui demande de tuer tous les Polonais et puis d'aller à Paris, où — dit-il — « tu attendras mes ordres ». « Vous voulez bien, Sire, répond Dybitch, que je remette les bottes de conquérant... Et bien, je vous promets de ne les quitter que sur la place du Carrousel pour les faire décrotter par les Parisiens!... ».

Le 28 juillet 1831, Balzac écrit dans la Caricature à propos du discours royal consacré à la Pologne : « ... mais que dire, oh!... que dire de l'andante si faussement amoroso de l'hymne avec tam-tam sur la Pologne, sur l'héroïque Pologne!... Abomination!... Malédiction!... Exécration!... Les voûtes de la Chambre auraient dû s'abîmer sur des paroles si plates, sur un style aussi lâche!... ».

Enfin, le 6 octobre 1831, il publie dans le même journal une parodie de la glorification du Gouvernement qui a abandonné la Pologne, la Belgique et l'Italie. Dans cette parodie, il fait exécuter une cantate composée

41) *Lettres sur Paris*, op. cit., p. 105.

On retrouve la même idée sous la plume généreuse de Balzac dans son *Enquête*... : « Enfin nous avons menti à 14 siècles de générosité, nous avons comprimé nos sympathies en n'allant pas au secours de la Pologne, en ne lui rendant pas le sang qu'elle nous avait prêté jadis. C'était à la fois une ingratitude et une faute »; *Oeuvres diverses*, 11, p. 358. A rapprocher ici un passage de la *Fausse Maîtresse* cité plus haut.

42) *Lettres sur Paris*, op. cit., p. 120.

soi-disant par M. Viennet sur l'air de « La Parisienne » et se terminant par ce refrain :

« Les Russes viendront,
Nous échineront
Nous occiront et nous pacifieront
Je vous prie de le croire
Au Ministère honneur et gloire! ».

* * *

C'est avant la rencontre de Balzac avec Mme Hańska que s'accomplit également ce qu'on appelle la « conversion légitimiste de l'auteur de la Comédie Humaine, cette évolution complexe et quelque peu compliquée où va s'affirmer dans son « système » la croyance en l'efficacité politique « du pouvoir fort dans la main d'un seul »⁴³⁾. Le culte de Napoléon semble présider à ce revirement, ce culte ou confluent les sentiments d'un patriotisme révolutionnaire intense ainsi que l'appétit d'efficacité et d'unité. Napoléon, s'écrie Balzac dans les « Contes Bruns », « le plus beau pouvoir connu — tout arbitraire et tout justice — le vrai roi!... N'a-t-il pas fait de l'Europe la France!... ». Psychologiquement parlant, cette évolution correspond visiblement chez Balzac à une poussée intérieure pour dompter la dispersion de ses propres forces, pour dominer leur tumultueuse anarchie et les soumettre à l'unité dense et trépidante de sa volonté créatrice. M. Bernard Guyon dans la conclusion de son magistral ouvrage sur la « Pensée politique et sociale de Balzac », constate « la coexistence » en lui-même (en Balzac) et sans accord possible des généreuses impulsions de son cœur et des exigences de sa raison, de ce qu'il appelle son « système ». « Cette hésitation fondamentale — dit-il — donne à son oeuvre une signification souvent équivoque... »⁴⁴⁾.

Je crois plutôt qu'il faut attribuer cette impression « d'hésitation fondamentale » et de « signification équivoque » à la structure en quelque sorte « pluraliste » de la personnalité de Balzac. Il est essentiellement « plusieurs »; ses « moi » différents, je veux dire, semblent se succéder en agissant avec la même intensité. Il semble vivre son existence comme un immense spectacle théâtral, où il joue, en les créant, tous les rôles dans leur haletante diversité. Au delà et au-dessous de ces mirages vivants, il y a certes une réalité unique qui est Balzac lui-même dans sa complexe et dramatique identité; mais nous ne l'apercevons le plus souvent qu'à travers ces deux séries de personnages: les héros de ses romans, les attitudes de l'homme lui-même.

L'entrée en scène de Mme Hańska devait accentuer certains aspects de cette évolution et rendre en même temps plus colorées, plus authentiques toutes les expériences polonaises et russes de Balzac. Ainsi toutes ses rencontres et contacts slaves aussi bien russes que polonais semblent désormais s'ordonner suivant l'axe de cette nouvelle et durable passion.

En 1835, Balzac achète, nous le savons, la « Chronique de Paris » et y publie dans chaque numéro un article consacré à la politique étrangère. A lire attentivement ses bulletins intitulés « Critique Politique (Extérieur) », on a l'impression d'une véritable campagne de presse...

43) *Lettres à l'Étrangère*, 22-26 janvier 1843, vol. II, p. 106.

44) Bernard Guyon, *op. cit.*, p. 704.

45) *Chronique de Paris*, 16 avril 1836.

En effet, tout en demeurant fidèle à ses enthousiasmes pour la cause polonaise, tout en flétrissant « les trois complices d'un crime » — trois cabinets assassins d'un peuple ⁴⁵⁾ — Balzac s'efforce de reconsidérer les relations franco-russes suivant le calcul de politique pure. Et cédant sans doute à un préjugé tenace d'anglophobie, il affirme: « Il faut être aveugle pour préférer l'alliance anglaise à l'alliance russe. Quel intérêt français serait blessé si les Russes occupaient Constantinople » ⁴⁶⁾.

« L'Angleterre, écrit Balzac le 20 avril 1836, ne veut pas plus le salut de l'Empire d'Orient qu'elle ne veut le rétablissement de la Pologne... Elle veut... la ruine de toute concurrence qui partage et diminue ses profits ». Et le 13 avril, il a déjà écrit: « Ainsi dans ce long duel (Russie-Angleterre), les deux adversaires se montrent également habiles et prudents; mais nous persistons toujours à regarder la Russie comme plus puissante et plus rusée que sa rivale ». C'est pourquoi Balzac affirme (17 avril 1836) que « l'Alliance anglaise ne donnera jamais que les plus déplorables résultats. L'Angleterre ne laissera jamais la France gagner un seul pouce de terrain; elle aura toujours une arrière-pensée... La Russie et la France réunies peuvent tout au profit l'une de l'autre; et l'autocratie britannique est sur mer d'une insupportable tyrannie. Notre ennemi n'est pas l'aigle à deux têtes, avec lequel nous n'avons qu'à gagner par les relations commerciales qui s'ouvriraient entre la Méditerranée et la mer Noire, notre ennemie perpétuelle est l'Angleterre, tous les siècles précédents interrogés répondent affirmativement » ⁴⁷⁾.

Non sans une certaine réserve, Balzac insistait déjà dans son article du 10 mars 1836: « L'abaissement de l'Angleterre pourrait bien être la pensée cachée au fond de la politique continentale actuelle; sa marchandise menace toutes les industries, et son désir si naïvement exprimé de maintenir sa suprématie maritime, est une déclaration de guerre à toutes les marines. Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, l'alliance anglaise est beaucoup plus immédiatement dangereuse pour la France que ne l'est l'alliance russe... ».

A voir la chose de près, il n'y a pas de contradiction insurmontable entre l'attitude passionnément interventionniste en faveur de la Pologne en 1830-31 et cette sorte de campagne de presse de 1836 en faveur d'une alliance franco-russe. La campagne interventionniste de 1830 portait un caractère moral et politique à la fois. Elle exprimait, comme le dit M. Bernard Guyon, une « réaction intime du peuple français », réaction pleine d'un dynamisme patriotique généreux. Cette attitude comporte une vue agressive mais en même temps singulièrement clairvoyante sur les dangers que pourrait représenter la Russie pour la civilisation occidentale. Après la défaite polonaise de 1831 qu'il considérait comme une défaite de l'Occident, Balzac envisageait le problème russe du point de vue de politique pure. Et s'inclinant devant le poids des événements, il saisissait très exactement la valeur de la Russie comme une pièce importante sur l'échiquier de la politique internationale. Calculateur affectant un amoralisme politique absolu, mais calculateur passionné et dont la clairvoyance fut peut-être quelque peu obscurcie par ses sentiments anglophobes, Balzac préconisait l'alliance franco-russe contre la suprématie maritime anglaise.

46) *Ibid.*

47) *Ibid.*, 17 avril 1836.

Le facteur polonais — même du point de vue de cette « politique pure » — gardait cependant pour lui une valeur appréciable en tant qu'une virtualité politique toujours vivante, compliquant le jeu russe et facilitant ainsi le maintien du rôle primordial de la France. « Deux points, affirme-t-il, étaient vulnérables en Russie... la Turquie et la Pologne »⁴⁸). Une autre fois, il fait cette curieuse remarque: « ... Bernadotte pourrait à lui seul par sa position, rétablir l'équilibre européen. Il suffit de voir l'assiette actuelle des forces russes pour juger quel mal ferait l'agression d'une puissance régulièrement constituée, quand l'insurrection polonaise, prête à renaître au premier prétexte, a tenu la Russie en échec pendant deux ans »⁴⁹).

D'autre part, malgré sa campagne en faveur de l'alliance franco-russe, Balzac n'hésite pas à exprimer des vues singulièrement perspicaces au sujet de la politique russe: « Que l'Allemagne et la France le sachent, la Russie vise à un empire universel, elle est prête à descendre en Europe aussi bien que se répandre en Asie »⁵⁰). Dans le même article il ajoute: « Le dernier soulèvement de la Pologne a été une occasion unique au XIXe siècle... De 20 ans en 20 ans, elle (la Russie) double sa population, elle agrandit ses territoires en pleine paix comme en guerre »⁵¹). A ces paroles rapprochons encore cette curieuse remarque: « ... La Russie ne peut plus rien demander à la paix: elle a usé la paix comme moyen de conquête »⁵²).

Et voici encore comme un aveu d'un doute mêlé d'une amère résignation: « ... Que peut-on attendre de gens qui joignent au fanatisme religieux, le fanatisme politique de l'Empereur russe est une divinité moderne, il obtient l'obéissance aveugle qu'imprimait Mahomet, sans être prophète. Il s'agit donc bien de la civilisation actuelle dans la lutte qui commence entre l'Angleterre et la Russie; la question est de savoir si dans son état actuel, la civilisation vaut la peine d'être défendue et si elle se défendra »⁵³). Mais le principe de la « politique pure » oblige: « En politique, dit Balzac à propos de la politique de la France en Belgique, la générosité veut dire niaiserie ».

Cependant, obéissant sans doute à sa nature passionnée et spontanément généreuse, Balzac n'hésite pas à défendre jusqu'à un certain point du moins, le droit offensé dans l'affaire de Cracovie. A plusieurs reprises, presque dans chaque numéro de la *Chronique de Paris*, il revient à la charge pour interpréter ingénieusement, subtilement les événements de Cracovie. D'autre part, il ne se lasse pas d'attaquer Thiers pour sa politique de complaisance facile envers l'Ambassade de Russie et aux dépens des émigrés polonais. C'est ainsi par exemple qu'à propos de trente Polonais renvoyés de Paris sur l'intervention russe, il écrit avec une corrosive ironie: « Monsieur Thiers aura sans doute l'ordre de Saint-Alexandre-Newski. Nous ne savons pas s'il y a beaucoup d'esprits à trouver extraordinaire que le Gouvernement russe fasse son métier: Nous aurions aimé voir ces feuilles

48) *Chronique de Paris*, du 24 février 1836.

49) *Chronique de Paris*, du 9 avril 1836.

50) *Chronique de Paris*, du 24 février 1836.

51) *Chronique de Paris*, du 24 février 1836.

52) *Chronique de Paris*, du 30 mars 1836.

53) *Chronique de Paris* du 24 février 1836.

(les journaux libéraux) rechercher dans quel intérêt le cabinet français avait obéi aux injonctions de M. de Pahlen » ⁵⁴⁾.

* * *

La vie — son amour passionné pour l'Etrangère — a cependant imposé à Balzac un rapprochement avec la réalité russe et ukrainienne. Les trois voyages — en 1843, 1847 et 1849 — entrepris pour voir Mme Hańska et finalement pour l'épouser le 14 mars 1850 à Berdytchev, lui ont donné l'occasion de contacts plus directs avec quelques représentants officiels russes tout d'abord et puis avec des milieux de Saint-Petersbourg et de Kiev, ce « Rome orthodoxe » ou « Rome des Tatares » ⁵⁵⁾ comme il l'appelle familièrement dans une de ses lettres.

Ces voyages conduisent Balzac à Wierzchownia, dans un milieu de « confins », ces anciennes marches orientales de la Pologne, dont l'ambiance demanderait d'ailleurs à être plus longuement caractérisées. Vestiges d'une ancienne poussée guerrière et colonisatrice, sentiment d'une mission à remplir, déformation et dissipation de ce sentiment au contact de la dure réalité présente...

De la fenêtre de son luxueux appartement au château de Wierzchownia, Balzac apercevait alors cette autre réalité — la terre d'Ukraine — qu'il confondait probablement avec celle du conquérant russe.

Or, ces voyages à Wierzchownia ont obligé Balzac à faire plusieurs démarches officielles et officieuses, parfois laborieuses, sinon désopilantes qu'il accomplissait d'ailleurs avec une patience exemplaire en regimbant toutefois de temps à autre. Ses lettres, ses demandes, ses remerciements adressés aux autorités russes, publiés récemment en partie par M. Grossman et avec plus de soin par Mlle Collon-Bérard ⁵⁶⁾ ainsi que dans l'appendice du IV^e volume des Lettres à l'Etrangère, présentent en général un mélange amusant de déférence protocolaire et de remarques ou de confidences assez imprévues. « La Russie — dit-il par exemple — dans une lettre au chef des douanes à Radziwiłłów est actuellement ma maîtresse, et la France ma femme légitime. A l'exemple de bien des maris, je passerai plus de temps chez ma maîtresse que chez ma femme » ⁵⁷⁾.

Mais d'autre part, ces démarches épistolaires et personnelles ont provoqué de curieuses réactions du côté officiel russe. Voici ce que note dans son journal un certain Balabine, fonctionnaire de l'Ambassade de Russie à Paris, après la visite de Balzac : « ... un petit homme gros et gras, à la physionomie d'un boulanger, à l'aspect d'un cordonnier, au volume d'un tonnelier... ». Et je vous fais grâce de la suite de cette tirade qui se termine par cette remarque insolente : « Il (Balzac) n'a pas le sou, donc il va en Russie; il va en Russie donc il n'a pas le sou » ⁵⁸⁾. Haussons les épaules et passons.

Mais voici qui semble plus grave... Après la démarche de Balzac à l'Ambassade pour obtenir le passeport nécessaire — c'est le chargé d'affaires russes à Paris, Kisielev qui écrit à son ministre Nesselrode une lettre où nous lisons : « ... Comme cet écrivain (Balzac) se débat tou-

54) *Chronique de Paris*, du 30 avril 1836.

55) Lettre à Mme Hańska, du 3 juin 1844.

56) *Rev. de Lit. Comp.*, avril-juin 1950, pp. 348 et suivantes.

57) In L. Grossman, *Balzac en Russie*, op. cit., p. 159.

58) *Ibid.*, p. 21.

jours dans les difficultés financières et qu'il est en ce moment plus gêné que jamais, il est bien possible qu'une spéculation littéraire soit un des objets de son voyage... Dans ce cas, on pourrait profiter des besoins d'argent de M. de Balzac qui possède encore une certaine popularité ici ainsi qu'en Europe en général afin d'utiliser la plume de cet écrivain pour donner un démenti au livre de M. de Custine qui nous est hostile et calomnieux »⁵⁹).

En effet, la propagande russe très active à Paris (Gretch, J.M. Tolstoï, Labinski, d'origine polonaise, Golovine et d'autres...) tentait par tous les moyens de discréditer de Custine. Il s'agissait d'un ouvrage bien connu du marquis Alphonse de Custine, « La Russie en 1839 », publié en 1843 juste avant le voyage de Balzac. En parlant à Mme Hańska de ce volume, Balzac fait à son propos quelques remarques acérées : « Si l'on retranche de ce livre, dit-il, toutes les idées du prince Koslofski dont le nom peut se dire, puisqu'il est mort, si l'on supprime les deux ou trois romans que l'Empereur y a mis, il ne s'y trouve que des épigrammes sur des choses qui sont une nécessité de climat, des vues complètement fausses sur la politique, des descriptions de la magnificence russe, et des lieux communs très élégamment habillés. Mme de Staël, dans quelques pages de ses « Dix Ans d'Exil », a mieux peint la Russie, que ne l'a fait M. de Custine »⁶⁰). Notons que Balzac précédemment ami obligé de Custine, s'était depuis longtemps fort éloigné de lui. En réalité les relations de Balzac avec de Custine semblaient osciller entre une franche amitié et une sourde rancune. Il est à noter que cette critique fort caustique et franchement injuste, qu'on retrouve et dans ses lettres à Mme Hańska et dans sa « Lettre sur Kiev » n'a pas été publiée du vivant de Balzac.

Pour revenir à la propagande russe à Paris et son visible embarras provoqué par la publication de la Russie en 1839, disons que Balzac se rendait compte de sa fiévreuse activité. Dans sa lettre du 24 avril 1844, il raconte à Mme Hańska plaisamment : « Il est venu ici M. Gretch, à qui les Polonais de Paris ont joué le tour de mettre en son nom des cartes dans toutes les maisons où il est allé, avec ce titre : Grand-Espion de la Russie ». Et il ajoute : « Il (Gretch) a fait des brochures contre M. de Custine et contre M. Saint-Marc Girardin et dans sa dernière qu'on a portée au « Débats » au moment où j'y arrangeais la musique de « Modeste Mignon », il y a un passage, où il est dit qu'on a déploré en Russie que je fusse venu à Petersbourg sous le coup des circonstances custiniennes... »⁶¹). En se moquant de Gretch et de son manque d'esprit, Balzac ajoute : « C'est désespérant pour Petersbourg! Décidément, il faudrait que le Colosse se décidât à avoir à Paris un journal russe ».

La lettre du chargé d'affaires russes à Paris, Kisielev, semble avoir confirmé ces préoccupations de la propagande russe après la publication du livre de Custine. Mais cette lettre a-t-elle eu des suites?... A-t-on réellement essayé « d'utiliser la plume » de Balzac en utilisant ses « besoins d'argent »? Cela ne me paraît pas impossible. Mais dans ce cas, quelle a

59) *Ibid.*, p. 23.

60) *Lettres à l'Étrangère*, t. 1, p. 456; *Lettres sur Kiev, Oeuvres Complètes*, t. 40, p. 655. Voir aussi G. Struve, *Un Russe Européen, le Prince Kozlowski*. R.L.C. octobre-décembre 1950, p. 544.

61) Lettre à Mme Hańska du mercredi 24 avril 1844. Il s'agit de l'examen de l'ouvrage de M. le Marquis de Custine intitulé : « La Russie en 1839 », par M. Gretch au Comptoir des Imprimeurs unis, 1844.

été la réaction de Balzac...? Quelle a été son attitude en face de la « tentation »?...

Considérons les faits. Il est certain que Balzac entreprend son voyage pour Wierzychownia avec une réelle curiosité et surtout avec des « préjugés favorables » pour le régime autocratique russe. Une sorte d'admiration pour le pouvoir absolu et pour la personne même de Nicolas 1er cadre bien avec ses convictions « légitimistes » sinon « absolutistes ». En effet, le légitimisme de Balzac s'est transformé chez lui en un engouement visible pour le pouvoir absolu. Cette métamorphose s'explique aisément si l'on tient compte du véritable culte que professait Balzac pour Napoléon. La monarchie légitimiste représente avant tout la continuité du pouvoir. Napoléon incarnait pour lui le postulat de puissance et d'intégrale efficacité. L'Empereur de Russie devait unir et la continuité et l'efficacité. Il est vrai que Balzac reste toujours sceptique sur la possibilité même de cette double réalisation : « Il n'y a pas, dira-t-il, de pouvoir absolu sur cette terre ».

Mais cette dialectique politique est singulièrement renforcée sinon commandée par une dialectique passionnelle, par l'exigence impérieuse de son amour. Toutes les suppositions affirmant que Balzac était prêt d'abandonner la nationalité française et devenir Russe par l'intérêt qu'il portait à la Russie ou par l'intérêt tout court s'évanouissent si l'on se reporte aux nombreux textes où il déclare simplement qu'il accepterait d'être Russe si cela lui permettait de vivre avec sa future femme. « Vous ne savez pas, écrit-il à Mme Hańska en octobre 1843, de Berlin, ce qu'est ma situation. Oh, chère, tous les malheurs, mais vous! La Russie, mais vous! Enfin vous! ». Une autre fois, il affirme qu'il pourrait également vivre en Suisse... Mais c'est probablement la lettre du 22-26 janvier 1843 qui éclaire le mieux sa position. Il y exprime, en effet, son admiration pour l'empereur Nicolas 1er avec une rigueur un peu compassée, il est vrai. Cette admiration a un double motif, elle correspond à son « système » politique et — à la fois — à la politique de sa passion. « Je vous remercie de m'avoir dépeint la famille impériale. J'ai, sans avoir jamais vu l'Empereur de Russie, de la propension pour lui : 1^o) parce que c'est le seul souverain dans l'acception de ce mot, c'est-à-dire maître et gouvernant par lui-même et que cela réalise toutes mes idées sur la politique qui est dans son essence exprimée par ces mots : Le pouvoir fort dans la main d'un seul; 2^o) parce qu'il exerce le pouvoir comme on doit l'exercer; 3^o) parce qu'il est au fond très aimable avec les Français qui vont voir sa ville. Ainsi, si l'Empereur devait vivre cinquante ans encore ce que je lui souhaite, n'aurai-je aucune répugnance à devenir Russe... ». Mais quelques lignes après, quel repentir, quel changement du climat sentimental!... D'une plume enchantée il trace une véritable apologie de Paris pleine d'admiration et de tendresse ailée. « Il y a seulement à Paris, dit-il, un air qu'on ne retrouve nulle part, un air plein d'idées, plein d'amusements, plein d'esprit, saturé de plaisir et de drôlerie, puis une grandeur, une indépendance qui élève l'âme!... ».

Et voici encore dans une lettre du 8 novembre 1844 : « ...Si cette séparation durait encore, j'irai à Petersbourg et je dirai à votre auguste empereur : « Voilà un Russe de plus, mais je veux ma mie, ô gué!... Allons, il vaut mieux souffrir et vivre un jour dans ce délicieux Paris!... ».

Mais ses opinions sur le pouvoir du tsar et sur sa personne demeurent chez lui à peu près intactes lors de son troisième et dernier voyage en Russie. Dans sa « Lettre sur Kiev » (inachevée) il dit expressément : « J'ai

depuis longtemps exprimé mon admiration pour le pouvoir absolu, en mettant cette réserve (citée déjà plus haut) : « Il n'y a pas de pouvoir absolu sur cette terre... Je préfère le gouvernement d'un seul homme à celui de la foule » ⁶²).

Par contre — rappelons-le — ni son projet d'écrire un roman consacré à la défaite de Napoléon en Russie, « La Bataille », ni cet autre projet d'un vaste drame historique russe, « Pierre et Catherine » — n'aboutissent. La réalité russe semble l'avoir déçu. La duchesse Dino, nièce de Talleyrand, et qui a eu l'occasion de rencontrer Balzac à l'Ambassade de France à Saint-Pétersbourg, écrit le 16 octobre 1843 : « Balzac dit de la Russie autant de mal que Custine, seulement il ne publiera pas ses impressions de voyage » ⁶³). Balzac semble le confirmer directement et indirectement : par ses écrits et surtout par ses silences.

D'autre part, il semble fort irrité sinon affecté de cette atmosphère de malveillante suspicion qui s'épaissit autour de lui à l'occasion de ces voyages orientaux. Il le confesse à plusieurs reprises à sa fidèle correspondante. « Le bruit court ici, écrit-il le 14 novembre 1843, que je réfute Custine et que je suis revenu avec une charge de roubles-argent. Je ne déments que les roubles et vous savez le reste!... ».

Moins de trois mois après, le 31 janvier 1844, il reprend le même sujet : « Il est impossible de dire plus de sottises qu'il ne s'en dit sur mon tour en Russie et il faut laisser dire. Ce qui me cause le plus de contrariétés, c'est le sot rôle qu'on me donne ainsi qu'aux plus grands personnages. On dit que j'ai refusé des sommes énormes pour écrire une certaine réfutation... Quelle sottise!... Votre Souverain est trop spirituel pour ignorer qu'une plume payée n'a pas la moindre autorité ». Et après un passage plutôt coléreux à propos de Custine, il écrit avec une sorte d'amère consolation : « Quand on verra paraître le « Petit Bourgeois de Paris »... et qu'on saura que j'ai fait répéter Marcadet, tous ces cancans de sots et de cent mille niais se tairont et l'on comprendra que je n'écris « ni pour ni contre la Russie ». Est-ce à mon âge, quand on est pur de toute opinion politique, qu'on se crée des « antécédents »?... » ⁶⁴).

En effet, si l'on met à part ses opinions (légitimistes-absolutistes) et « sa campagne de presse » en 1836 en faveur de l'alliance franco-russe, Balzac n'a écrit réellement « ni pour ni contre la Russie » et les quelques appréciations qui lui échappent çà et là semblent pencher plutôt vers le « contre » que vers le « pour ».

Dans sa « Lettre sur Kiev » par exemple, Balzac va parler de tout, de l'Autriche, de la Galicie, des Juifs, des émigrés polonais en France dont il critique vivement l'attitude (sous l'influence de Mme Hanska et de son milieu probablement), il parle de tout et même de la Russie. Il fait quelques remarques sur le « tchine », qu'il compare au « grade dans l'Empire Chinois ». Mais il s'étend surtout sur l'obéissance russe. « Obéir, obéir quand même, dit-il, obéir au péril de la vie, obéir lors même que l'obéissance est absurde et froisse l'instinct! Cette obéissance caractéristique constitue la différence radicale entre la Russie et la Pologne. Et si plus tard, dans un temps imprévisible — conclut-il — la Russie envahit

62) *Oeuvres complètes*, op. cit., *Oeuvres diverses*, III, p. 653.

63) In L. Grossman, op. cit., p. 81.

64) Lettre du 31 janvier 1844, *Lettres à l'Étrangère*, II, p. 284.

le monde, elle devra tout à son esprit d'obéissance,... L'obéissance est toute la charte de la Russie » ⁶⁵).

Et bien, sans vouloir nullement idéaliser le grand écrivain, sans vouloir surestimer ses scrupules, mais en tenant compte de sa fierté, de son indépendance de créateur ⁶⁶) et de sa généreuse sensibilité, je me hasarde à formuler ici en guise de conclusion une hypothèse.

Si Balzac, malgré ses trois voyages, « a passé — comme le dit M. Grossman — à côté de la Russie », s'il n'a pas peuplé ses oeuvres de personnages russes comme il l'a fait avec les Polonais, ce n'est pas à Mme Hańska, mais à l'indiscrétion de la propagande officielle russe qu'on le doit avant tout.

C'est en défendant son grand trésor de l'indépendance artistique qu'il choisit le silence. Il pouvait parler de la Russie en homme politique partisan de l'alliance franco-russe, en psychologue analysant librement la vertu de l'obéissance, mais non en tant que romancier-créateur. Il lui fut impossible de conférer aux héros russes le fameux « état-civil plus réel que la réalité... ».

* * *

Cette exploration du domaine slave dans la vie et l'oeuvre de Balzac, nous permet de constater avant tout, l'intérêt qu'il porte aux choses slaves. Cet intérêt semble être motivé tout d'abord par la présence des représentants slaves en France. Il s'agit avant tout des émigrés polonais et en second lieu des Russes, résidant à Paris.

D'autre part, ce sont des éléments politiques qui touchent directement ou indirectement la France et où les pays slaves ont joué un rôle important, tels que l'insurrection polonaise de 1830-1831 et la position grandissante de la Russie dans la politique européenne. Une certaine anglophobie semble estomper encore ses préventions anciennes contre l'Empire des tsars.

En troisième lieu — « last but not least » — agit ici la présence de Mme Hańska, Polonaise, mais d'une Polonaise aux tendances nettement conciliatrices pas rapport au régime autocratique russe. Sa position sociale et l'attitude générale de sa famille influencent fortement l'évolution de la pensée politique de Balzac dans le domaine des affaires slaves. Cette présence de Mme Hańska lui permet en même temps de prendre une plus ample connaissance du milieu slave, polonais avant tout, et d'éteindre d'une façon plus directe et plus intime cette réalité slave — polonaise, russe et jusqu'à un certain point ukrainienne — cette réalité qu'il devait approcher dans ses voyages à Wierzchownia sans la pénétrer d'ailleurs autrement que par le côté politique, par son aspect pittoresque plutôt superficiel ou par quelques contacts personnels avec les hommes.

Si l'élément slave — polonais avant tout, russe et serbe — occupe une place importante dans la « Comédie Humaine », le témoignage balzacien — dont la spontanéité est troublée parfois par la présence de

65) *Oeuvres complètes*, op. cit., *Oeuvres diverses*, III, pp. 674-676. Notons ici que, encore le 25 septembre 1840, Balzac écrit dans la *Revue Parisienne*: « ... l'alliance russe, la seule qui puisse faire avoir à la France, et la Belgique et le Rhin ».

66) « Tout homme doué... du pouvoir de créer — affirme Balzac — devrait ne jamais oublier de cultiver l'art pour l'art lui-même, de ne pas lui demander d'autres trésors que ceux qu'il verse dans le silence et dans la solitude ».

Des artistes, *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 348.

Mme Hańska — garde cependant une valeur morale et politique indiscutable.

* * *

Monsieur Zygmunt Markiewicz, Professeur de Littérature Polonaise à l'Université de Nancy, a bien voulu parler longuement dans un article intitulé: « Balzac polonophile ou admirateur du tsar », publié dans la « Revue Internationale d'Histoire Politique et Constitutionnelle »⁶⁷⁾, de mes articles et communications sur « l'Attitude de Balzac à l'Égard du Monde slave ».

Tout en qualifiant avec amabilité mon interprétation comme « extrêmement intéressante et pleine de remarques profondes, de haute valeur philosophique », il me reproche... « d'avoir négligé un peu la réalité historique ».

Inévitablement, Monsieur Zygmunt Markiewicz se sert des mêmes textes et citations de Balzac que moi, en les interprétant toutefois avec une certaine sévérité pour l'auteur de la Cousine Bette.

C'est ainsi qu'il arrive à la conclusion, simplifiant quelque peu les données du problème, que Balzac envisage les affaires de la Pologne « en fonction des rapports entre la France et la Russie ». « Chaque fois, dit-il, que sur l'horizon de ces deux pays, apparaissent des nuages — 1812, 1830 — les relations franco-polonaises s'en ressentent aussitôt. Par contre, quand on constate un « beau fixe » sur le baromètre des relations franco-russes, les sympathies pour la Pologne, aussi bien dans la politique que dans la littérature, qui en suit les répercussions, s'estompent au lointain.

Les hésitations de Balzac entre la Pologne et la Russie sont la parfaite illustration de ce fait historique ».

J'admettrai la formule de l'éminent Professeur de l'Université de Nancy en l'élargissant toutefois ou plutôt en la complétant, et je dirai que l'attitude de Balzac envers la Pologne et la Russie évolue en fonction... mais en fonction de plusieurs variables indépendantes. Parmi ces variables je citerai :

1^o) La position de la France envers la Pologne et la Russie qui n'est pas d'ailleurs — soulignons-le — à identifier avec celle du gouvernement français (précisément pendant l'insurrection polonaise de 1830).

2^o) Les idées politiques de Balzac qui changent aussi avec le temps.

3^o) Les contacts et relations de Balzac avec de nombreux Polonais et Russes parmi les émigrés « Fanandels » et plus tard parmi les proches et les parents de Mme Hańska.

4^o) Enfin Mme Hańska elle-même, « l'Amour de sa vie », devenue sa femme et dont l'influence s'est fait sentir de deux manières: manière directe par sa personnalité morale et intellectuelle, bien complexe, en tout cas point « unilinaire » subissant des influences souvent contradictoires, mais apte cependant à admirer les valeurs réelles indépendamment des partis et des coteries, Mickiewicz par exemple, « son poète chéri »⁶⁸⁾ pourtant un émigré. Indirecte par la nécessité même (pour Balzac) de se conformer aux différentes conditions qu'imposaient par exemple ses voyages en Russie et plus tard la possibilité même du mariage.

67) Tiré à part sans date, dédicacé le 2 août 1956.

68) Suivant l'expression de Balzac lui-même, citée plus haut.

La « réalité historique », les péripéties et le caractère de divers personnages de la famille ou de l'entourage de Mme Hańska me semble jouer dans l'oeuvre de Balzac un rôle secondaire.

Leur influence n'est en effet qu'un reflet du foyer essentiel, celui de Mme Hańska elle-même.

En prospecteur fidèle des choses polonaises dans l'oeuvre de Balzac, je me suis attaché avant tout à lire attentivement les textes et à les coordonner autant que possible avec les péripéties biographiques du génial romancier.

Ce n'est pas sa polonophilie — d'ailleurs variable — qui m'a frappé, mais le volume même, l'étendue et l'intensité de l'attention et des remarques qu'il consacre aux choses polonaises sans parler du nombre des personnages polonais qu'il a fait vivre dans son oeuvre. Cette place réservée aux choses et aux personnages polonais est de beaucoup plus importante par exemple que celle réservée par Balzac à la Russie.

Il est cependant nécessaire de constater que malgré toutes sortes de critiques et de variations d'opinion de Balzac sur les choses polonaises, fluctuations et même contradictions qui correspondent d'ailleurs à la diversité et aux contradictions d'opinions des Polonais eux-mêmes de son temps, il est difficile de ne pas admettre une sorte de « préjugé favorable » qui se profile spontanément dans toute cette scintillante diversité d'opinions de Balzac sur la Pologne et ceci en dehors et antérieurement à la rencontre de Mme Hańska. Ces préjugés favorables correspondent peut-être — si l'on admet cette terminologie psychanalytique — à la tendance du *super-ego* de la collectivité française de cette époque saturée de souvenirs napoléoniens et impressionnée par les événements de 1830.

Dans tous les cas, si l'on veut se rendre compte de l'aménagement moral véritable de ce compartiment polonais et slave dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Balzac, il est indispensable, certes, de reconnaître non seulement les limites et la complexité chatoyante, parfois contradictoire de l'influence de Mme Hańska sur Balzac, mais avant tout de se laisser pénétrer et en quelque sorte contaminer par la bouleversante existence morale du grand écrivain dont la nature semblait être sculptée par une implacable volonté d'exubérance, de tendresse et de grandeur ⁶⁹⁾.

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69) Notons ici en passant que vouloir expliquer, comme l'essaie le Professeur Markiewicz, les variations politiques du grand Romancier par « La duplicité du père de Balzac, dont ce dernier tenait plusieurs traits de caractère » me paraît quelque peu gratuit. S'il est permis d'introduire ici ce facteur d'hérédité psychologique, j'oserai plutôt chercher dans ses antécédents ancestraux une sorte de prédisposition à comprendre, à saisir et à imaginer cette étourdissante variété des caractères humains qui peuplent l'oeuvre immense de Balzac où se côtoient un cousin Pons, un Paz, un Père Goriot, un Steinbock, un Père Grandet et même un Vautrin.

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