Values in the Polish Cultural Tradition

Polish Philosophical Studies, III

edited by
Leon Dyczewski

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication

Table of Contents

Part IV. Polish Values for a Global Age

Foreword and Acknowledgments

George F. McLean

It is important to situate that present volume as part of a project in Eastern Europe begun by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy in the mid 1970s. In the general conferences of the International Society for Metaphysics, it became manifest that real progress in philosophy in Central and Eastern Europe would require extended and in-depth discussion between philosophers with diverse methodologies, insights and experiences. As a result, during the 1970s and 1980s ten joint colloquia were organized with the Philosophy Institutes of the Academies of Science of Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Lithuania and the USSR, each with the participation of six philosophers from other parts of the world. The topics themselves were important: person and action, rationality and historicity, morality and the political order. But in each case, once a topic was opened, the discussions ranged broadly and deeply, gravitating to the foundational issues of human dignity and sociality. They were rare occasions to encounter and test at length truly different philosophical orientations in rigorously scientific discussion, and with a sense of cooperating in the common human search.

Horizons were opened, seeds of transformation were planted, the harvest, when it came in 1989, was sudden and dramatic. It opened great new possibilities, but offered little direction and even less coordination. In these circumstances it appeared that a first philosophical step in rebuilding the social life of the region was for the different peoples to retrieve the resources of their traditions long submerged under a rationalist universalism. To look back, however, could not mean simply a nostalgic lethargy, for too much needed to be done in circumstances of great change. Consequently, a joint project was set, linking the research oriented philosophy institutes in the region and focused on the theme: Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Foundations for Social Life.

The major academies and university centers each undertook to specify their own sub-topic under this broad rubric according to the needs of its people and the combinations of competencies and research of its scholars. In a period of great turmoil and disorientation, this project provided a concrete way of taking the first step, namely, to reappropriate the deeply humanizing and religious resources of their cultures, to reflect deeply on how these had been submerged, to inventory the competencies in philosophy which could be drawn upon, and to begin to reformulate the issues.

Representatives of the different teams met for mutual critique of their drafts volumes, which were then revised. The results of this first phase of the cooperative effort by philosophers of Central and Eastern Europe have been published as a series of eight volumes, each from the Philosophy Institute of a different Academy of Science or University in the region. Each volume tells part of an heroic history and a courageous response perhaps most manifest in this present volume from Poland. It has been proceeded by two other Polish volumes in this series.

The first is *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativit*y, itself an historic work. Indeed, from some points of view and in retrospect, it was the crucial philosophical move in ending the ideological hegemony of communism.

In order to appreciate this it is important to note that by 1978 the Polish philosophers in Krakow, led by Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, had interwoven the classical Christian philosophy of Thomas Aquinas with the phenomenology of Roman Ingarden to form a contemporary philosophy of the person and its implications for human solidarity. This philosophical anthropology had been

worked out as an intentional alternative to the heavy weight of Marxist ideology. But even before it confronted the Marxists it was already under attack from the more traditionalist scholastic philosophers of Lublin. Was this philosophical anthropology truly ready then to challenge the ruling ideology?

In these circumstances The World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies worked with Cardinal Wojtyla to convoke a meeting of 60 philosophers from other countries with an equal number from the two camps of Catholic philosophers in Poland. Its purpose was to test out the new philosophy of person and solidarity and to provide what was to be its final tuning before it squarely confronted the megasystem which Gorbachev in 1992 would describe as having spread "everywhere social strife, animosity and unparalleled brutality." The contents of that meeting were published in Krakow in 1980 in samizdat form under the title *The Human Persona and Philosophy in the Contemporary World* (in this series its title is *The Philosophy of Person*).

Its effects were quick to follow. Within three months, largely because of this philosophical vision, the Roman Church in a most dramatic move elected Cardinal Wojtyla of Krakow as the first non-Italian Pope in over 400 years. Not incidentally, the next time there was a labor dispute in Poland it was played by this book. That is, in view of the dignity of the human person and the nature of human sociality articulated in final form in this work no government offer or compromise was acceptable unless worked out with the participation of the persons involved. In these terms *Solidarnoz* took flesh, first as a labor movement, but very soon as a movement of the entire people spreading from the cities across the countryside. Against this, suppression proved ultimately futile; all moved inexorably toward the first free election in Central and Eastern Europe in August, 1989.

Providentially, as dawn broke on the first day of freedom for Eastern Europe the morning after this election, a team of social scientists from The Catholic University of America stepped gingerly out of the rail station in Lublin and swung up onto the bus to join their peers from the Catholic University there for a conference on *Public and Private Social Inventions in Modern Societies*.

During these sessions the results of the election -- the historic sweep by Solidarity -- were coming in, and by the end of the conference it was clear that once again there would in fact be room for a private sector in Polish life. Indeed, the challenge which suddenly had burst upon Poland was not how to reconstitute an unrealizable socialist utopia (*perestroika*), but how to develop a convergence of private initiatives in family, education, religion, economics and politics for a public effect. By the end of that very year the Polish lead had been followed throughout the entire region as civil society became the new watchword for the redevelopment of central and Eastern Europe.

The present volume goes more deeply into this story. For it was not by accident that Poland was able to lead all to countries of the region to freedom. For centuries, much of its under the foreign occupation, the Polish people had not only kept their own identity but saw themselves as striving for all: "for our freedom and yours".

This volume is the story of that heritage. As the preface and Chapter I by Professor Leon Dyczewski, OFM, will introduce the volume at length there remains here but to note that this great tribute to the Polish people and its culture is the work of a devoted team of scholars he assembled and coordinated at the Catholic University of Lublin. It reaches deeply into the Polish Spirit, which for centuries replaced the state and repeatedly brought the Polish nation through to national rebirth and renewal. That Spirit has been embodied also in the working as well as in the output of this team. The biographical sketches below provide details on each member.

Preface

Leon Dyczewski

Today we talk much about a united Europe, about a federation of states without borders, about a common economic market and a common culture. But in this process of unification nations want not to vanish, but to maintain their identity. This desire is by no means counter to, but in the interest of Europe in the process of its integration with itself and in the global context. Its welfare and comfort, its unified organizational and technical structures, its expanding free time and communications needs to be complemented by the diversity and vitality of the different ways of perceiving and feeling, by lively imagination, spontaneity and creativeness. This will be possible only if the distinct character of cultures is maintained both for great nations and small ethnic groups. In order to protect the future from colorless, monotonous uniformity, we cannot afford that even the tiniest ethnic group still existing within its boarders atrophy. Only if we preserve its cultural diversity will Europe and the world be vital and interesting.

Uniformity wearies and leads to death, but the beauty of diversity enchants, wings our steps, and stimulates our growth. Enlightened minds today are aware of this, and therefore the increasingly intensely promoted cause of a united Europe and a global community is accompanied by voices which ever more loudly raise the issue of the identity of particular nations and ethnic groups. Defending themselves against being dissolved in vast waters, they want to know more than hitherto about what they are, about their roots, about the direction they should take in their development. For self-awareness is a sign of maturity, not only of individuals, but of whole groups. Increasing interest in this subject is to be found not least in Poland.

What does it mean to be Polish? What is the essence of Polish identity? How is my individual reality intertwined with the reality referred to as Polish character, nationality or descent, as Polish culture, or as the Republic of Poland? Do I always have to be a Pole; and is it worth while to be a Pole?

How many times have these questions been posed! They have been posed over and over again in every epoch, for each generation formulates both questions of this kind and answers to them in their own way, based upon their own experiences and considerations. But in this diversity there are values which occur constantly, patterns of behavior which are always opportune and valid, events and monuments which evoke common respect, and a net of indispensable relations. All these features taken together form the quality of being a Pole. Even if it is difficult to answer immediately the question of what this quality is or what it means to be a Pole, we realize very well that to be a Pole means something different than being Japanese or French.

Generally we characterize the specificity of Polish values and culture by means of a description of ideas, beliefs, events, heroes, products of art and industrial achievements that took place within the area of the basin of Vistula, from the Carpathian mountains to the Baltic Sea, from Lithuania, Bielorussia and the Ukraine to Germany. The worst form of characterizing Poles is using stereotypes predominant in particular epochs, created most frequently by men of letters and by foreigners. This is often interesting material and helpful in explaining many problems, but most of the time such stereotyped descriptions are drastically subjective. For all stereotypes contain superficial judgments, based neither upon broader experience nor on deeper reflection. Worst of all, they arise from prejudice and emotional reactions. Hence they are not true, but the proverbial distorting mirror.

The texts included in this book characterize Polish identity by means of values. Values are the most essential element of any culture, and therefore also of Polish culture. Being the motive power of action and the basis of its evaluation, they are included in everything that happened in the past and that now exists in Polish society. Each chapter bespeaks one particular value or a set of interrelated values. They were chosen in the following way: From several dozen items determining Polish culture 25 values were selected which the authors considered to be the most representative. Then a double procedure was applied for their further selection: a) Among these 25 values those most often quoted by the authors of analyzed works were selected; b) The 25 values were presented to 56 `judges' to choose those they considered most typical for the Polish culture and still relevant and valid. In this way a set of values was created which are acknowledged as fundamental for Polish culture: its core, axis and center. They constitute also the basic structure of this publication. The only values essential for the Polish culture not addressed here in a separate chapter are inner freedom, the personal sense of dignity, honor and individualism. These values are found throughout the whole work and find expression in particular chapters.

The set of values presented here as typical of Polish culture was shaped throughout the entire history of Polish society. They are inherent in its ideals, strivings, events, heroes, beliefs, laws, edifices, images of the past and visions of the future, in patterns of behavior, rituals and customs, in literary works, songs, proverbs, sayings and commonly repeated jokes; briefly in literally all products of culture.

This set of values is so important for Polish culture that none of them may be rejected; all of them taken together determine whether a particular element of an alien culture may be accepted by Poles. That, for instance, is what determins that the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, in spite of its utility for many institutions and its being a point of reference for everyone who arriving in Warsaw, still does not fit into its frame. Despite the fact that for forty years it has stood in the middle of the city, it is still an alien element, disapproved by Poles.

We hope that characterizing Polish identity and culture by means of its fundamental values renders most fully its specificity and distinctness in relation to other cultures, and at the same time brings us closer to an answer to the question: what does it mean to be a Pole? We hope also that this team effort may prove helpful in formulating the question of how to be a Pole today. Perhaps, too, it will contribute, as its authors desire, to shaping the kind of attitude towards Polish identity expressed by John Paul II in the homily during the Mass on Agrykola in Warsaw in 1991: "I love my Nation. I was not indifferent to its sufferings and to limitations on its sovereignty, to its oppression. Now I am also not indifferent to the new challenge of liberty we all must face?" It will be easier to proceed into the future and the components of Polish culture will be more beautiful and enriching for the others if we know what and who we are.

Values and Polish Cultural Identity

Leon Dyczewski

Culture as a Set of Meanings

Culture may be understood as a manifestation of rational and free human action; as such it is distinguished from, or even opposed to, nature. All that one does in expressing oneself as human through one's action is culture. This is the most general, anthropological understanding of culture. Culture can also be taken in a distributive sense; then it is understood as the manifestation of the identity of a given social group, society or a nation. In this sense we speak of an American, Chinese, French or Polish culture. We differentiate particular cultures for we are convinced that they have specific features that make them distinct one from another.

In both the anthropological and the distributive approaches culture is seen as a specific totality. Here we are interested above all in the cultural whole of society and nation, especially of the Polish nation. However, before we pass to more detailed questions concerning this matter, we have first to answer the question of what forms the cultural whole of a society, nation, or any other social group. To put the question in another way we can ask what differs the cultural whole of one group, society or nation from the cultural entirety of another group, society or nation. There are different answers to this question, but all of them may be reduced to three categories which distinguish the different methodological approaches to the problem of social groups, societies, and nations.

Culture as a Set of Distinctive Characteristics

Former voyagers, missionaries and early inquirers into culture, as well as present tourists coming into contact with a culture that is new to them describe its elements, especially those they did not meet in their own culture and which strike them with their distinctness. They pay attention first of all to the differences between cultures. They are interested first of all in language, beliefs, rites and customs, literary texts, objects, buildings -- generally speaking with the products of a culture. Today such an approach to culture is specific to ethnographers. As it is easy to describe products of culture and to delineate the borders of their appearance, so they are treated as the main determinative factors of culture; through them are characterized the cultures of societies, minor social groups, cities and villages. From such a view on culture emerged the so called descriptive and enumerative definitions of culture. For example Edward Tylor writes: "Culture or civilization is a complex totality including knowledge, beliefs, art, laws, morality, customs, and all other capacities and habits acquired by men as members of a given society."

Culture as Structure

Together with the development of research on culture, especially on the cultures of primitive societies, a tendency arose to look into the cultures of all societies and nations first of all for the connections between their elements and for the essence of their integration. But, as notes a leading representative of this investigative approach to culture, Ruth Benedict, such an object of study is beyond the reach of our experience, and therefore it is difficult to comprehend and to determine.

This task is even more difficult to perform in the case of developed cultures, of societies having a long and complicated history, than it is with cultures of primitive societies. Culture is seen here not as a set of original elements, but above all as a specific system with its proper and unique organization of these elements.

Since the thirties of the twentieth century this systemic or structural approach has prevailed in cultural research. In every system of culture four categories of elements are distinguished: material-technical, social, ideological, and psychic (emotions and attitudes). These elements are so intertwined as to form a specific harmonious whole. Therefore, a culture of a given society is more than just a sum of products and personal features. According to Clyde Kluckhon, what is essential for a culture are not its elements themselves, but the relations of connection and dependence between them.

Each culture is, among others, a totality of interdependencies, a set of its parts ordered and interconnected. These parts do not constitute the reason of the totality, but they compose it -- not necessarily in the sense of some perfect integration, but as ingredients that we can isolate only by means of abstraction.

Leslie A. White and Bethem Dillingham highlight the interconnections and influence of particular elements of a system of culture on one another as an essential factor distinguishing one culture from another. They call this phenomenon a principle of relationality. It constitutes the fundamental feature of each society, protects against reducing its culture to a sum of elements, and forms its specific quality. Therefore, the specificity and distinctness of a given culture is decided neither by the multiplicity of its elements nor by their originality, but by the connections between them and the way these connections are structured. Florian Znaniecki refers to this phenomenon as the "cultural order," calling it also the "axio-normative order". The relational character of the elements of culture, their arrangement according to given principles, stressed also by Stanisław Ossowski.

The connections between the elements of a culture, the essence of their integration, endow with specific features the human behavior and products of each society. They too determine the specificity and distinctness of a culture. A social researcher pays more attention here to acts of behavior and to their connections than to objects. He or she links culture to traits of personality characteristic of members of a society, to the predominant personal types and to the stereotypes ascribed to it. On the basis of this understanding of culture Ralph Linton defines culture in the following way: "Culture is a configuration of learned patterns of behavior and of their results, whose components are shared and transmitted by members of a given society."

Culture as a System of Meanings

The third systematic approach to understanding culture seeks its significance, that is, the meaning of the culture of a given group, or society. It, too, grasps culture as a system of interconnected elements, but begins from the position that the most important phenomenon proper to these connections is that they endow the particular elements as well as the whole with meaning. It is these connections that determine that in various cultures even identical elements mean something different, evoke different impressions, cause different experiences, and incite different actions.

The connections of elements create specific significative codes, that is, particular elements and their whole systems are understandable only for those who endow them with meaning and who use them as they are used in interpersonal communication. Systemic understanding of culture

is here inseparably interlaced with interpersonal communication. Hence, culture is a definite set of specifically interrelated elements, where both these elements and their connections bear definite meanings for the people who use them. Umberto Eco, continuing in this respect the stance of Ferdinand de Saussure, says that "culture is a system of signs used for interpersonal communication."

Each society creates its proper system of signs, fully understandable only for its members. For people living outside a given society even objects and acts playing a prominent role in it can have no significance or be only partially comprehensible. The eminent example is the Polish custom of sharing wafer leaves (*opłatek*) on Christmas Eve. During this rite Poles express their mutual benevolence, greet one another, forgive mutual harms and offences, deepen the sense of brotherhood among themselves, as well as with all people and with all creation. If they are Christians, they associate this rite with Jesus' breaking of bread and express the basic conviction that all should share their goods with their neighbors. The rite of *opłatek* is accompanied by feelings and emotions so strong that very often it brings tears to people's eyes. Such a rite is unknown among Germans who live across the Polish border; even if introduced, it would not have the same significance in interpersonal communication it has for Poles. For the rite of *opłatek* contains values, events, and experiences which are understandable only for Poles, which is why it has for them an exceptionally great meaning. It is hardly possible to imagine a Christmas Eve supper in a Polish family without this rite.

The culture of a society is formed by these elements and such of their connections that serve interpersonal communication in the frame of this society. They produce a specific net of meanings, woven over generations, in which only those are able to move easily who grow up in it and cocreate it. Cultural products and their connections derive their cultural character from persons who currently are aware of them and use them. In this dependence upon persons who make use of them is rooted the personal character of culture, a trait that no culture is able to eliminate. That is why the culture of each society is just such as are the members of this society or group. On the other hand, the personality of the members of a given community is the same as its culture.

This is a semiotic understanding of culture. Florian Znaniecki was a precursor of this approach. He stressed that we should not examine the elements of culture, or even their connections, but the way they are understood and the role they play in motivating human action, that is, how they present themselves to participants of a given social situation.

The essence of culture -- writes Jerzy Smolicz and Margaret Secombe interpreting Znaniecki -- lies in the meaning or in the complex of meanings held by a group of people to be the basis of their daily life. Culture is formed neither by material objects *per se*, nor by products of art, nor by thoughts and ideas of individuals taken in themselves. It is rather a set of meanings ascribed to them in the thought and action of the members of social groups. The objects and products enumerated above may be analyzed, according to S. Ossowski, as cultural correlates.

Such an approach to exploring culture was not called by Znaniecki semiotic (that is to say, pertaining to significance), but humanistic. Talcott Parsons consistently applied this approach in his works, understanding culture as a specific organization of ideas, models and values, as well as artifacts of action, playing a symbolic and a communicative role. Such an understanding of culture now prevails among researches. They emphasize that it is not material objects, products of art, or ideas that determine the specificity and distinctness of culture of a society -- these may be common to many societies. The determining role falls to meanings attributed to the thoughts and actions of members of a society within which they occur. In this approach culture appears to be a dynamic phenomenon, in an objective as well as in a subjective sense.

Culture is a dynamic phenomenon in an objective sense for in certain periods the same elements of culture and their connections may be vivid and rich in content and play an important role in a society's interpersonal communication, but in other periods they may even be forgotten. Societies also constantly create new elements of culture and new connections of already existing elements, thanks to which interpersonal communication is expressed in still new forms and consolidated in still new artifacts.

Culture is dynamic in a subjective sense for the same individual may use certain elements of a culture and their connections in interpersonal communication in a more active and creative way in one moment, and forget them utterly, or even reject them in another. For instance for someone in some particular moments of life a cross, a Polish national banner or a wedding ring can bear intense communication with oneself and others, but on other days, or even over many years, these elements may play no role at all.

In such an understanding, culture constitutes for members of each group, of every society a certain *universum* of symbols. All the individuals that belong to a group or a society grow up and live in it. It encompasses them in all aspects of their lives: it determines values and norms, it shapes their way of seeing themselves and the world, their emotional reactions and behavior, their judgments of the past and their vision of the future, as well as forms of creating and ways of using cultural artifacts. It urges them to pose questions about the sense of life of individuals and societies, about the sense of culture itself.

The question arises then if individuals are autonomous in the face of the symbolic *universum* of the societies in which they live. This problem will appear several times in this work; but we should say now that a person living in the symbolic *universum* of a society, acting in it and in accord with it, does not have to follow all the values and rules of conduct it proposes. One may contradict them -- which ability manifests her or his autonomy. But the essence of a person's autonomy lies not so much in the possibility of contravening her or his cultural *universum* as above all in creativity. This has been formulated accurately by Jan Szczepański:

In my opinion an essential manifestation of autonomy is creativity, not only the 'great' creative activity of artists, scientists, politicians, reformers, but also the 'small' creativity of the members of a society, making small discoveries in their everyday work and efforts, creating improvement and innovations, spawning new ideas and views that in the process of their synthesis and accumulation constitute the progress of societies. As a social being man resolves his life problems imitating solutions that already exist, following in others' tracks, repeating known patterns of action; behavior of this kind constitutes continuity and permanence of societies. Creativity, on the other hand, brings new elements to life and makes progress possible.

An individual living in the symbolic *universum* of his or her society oscillates between: a) an attitude full of adaptation to the symbolic *universum*, assuming in most cases a form of conformism, and b) an attitude of open rebellion against it, taking most frequently a form of a durable discontent with one's symbolic *universum* and its total critique. The most desirable attitude is the creative autonomy of an individual. This expresses itself in acceptance and continuation of the basic elements of an established symbolic *universum*, in discontent with some of its elements or even in rebellion against them, and in introducing new values and innovative actions. A stance of this kind guarantees the preservation of a cultural identity and a development of the symbolic *universum*. Each symbolic *universum* is a work of all its members: of the greatest,

most creative artists, as well as of unknown, average individuals, for all realize themselves in it as human beings.

Socio-Cultural Groups -- Nation and Religion as Factors Creating Culture

Interdependence of Social Systems and Systems of Culture

Culture understood as a system, above all as a system of symbolic communication, presupposes the existence of subjects of this communication. Culture is always somebody's culture. Human subjects create it, communicate it and express themselves in it. They enter into various dependencies (Robert K. Merton) or interactions (T. Parsons). These subjects are, according to F. Znaniecki's formulation, actors who in acting enter into numerous relations with one another. To put it simply, persons as subjects of communication are interrelated with one another in various ways and form specific social systems, called also social groups or structures.

A social system is a set of interpersonal dependencies, distances, hierarchies, actions in an organized and unorganized form. The essential elements of this system are human persons as subjects and objects of action; the system functions thanks to culture in which it perpetuates itself. Culture forms "a platform of social contact" or, as C. Geertz puts it, its "context." It facilitates and fills with content human interactions, it directs human actions and evaluates them. Without cultural interaction individuals would not be possible, for people would not be actors.

There is an interdependence between social systems and systems of culture. Though ontologically cultures are secondary in regard to social systems, the latter could not exist without the former; they always occur together. Adam Rodziński formulates this interdependence in the following way: "Persons as subjects of action are not something secondary in regard to that in which they exist. The person is a fundamental and primary point of departure in respect to culture. There is no person who would not create culture, but there is also no person who would be able to develop without culture." Therefore F. Znaniecki states that persons are "primary values," and that cultural products and their connections constitute "secondary values"; that is to say, cultures are not equivalent to "human beings". They are only "human artifacts or natural objects, endowed with value by human attitudes". The actions of individuals and groups "interweave primary and secondary values," that is, human subjects and culture.

The interdependence of the system of culture and the social system is strongly accentuated by T. Parsons and R. Merton. Both ascribe to the cultural system a unifying, orienting and normative function with regard to the social system. Theirs is a relation of dynamic interdependence. Changes in one system entail changes in the other. Changes in social systems are caused by the occurrence of new social, economic and political situations, not compatible with some hitherto existing elements of cultural systems. Changes in cultural systems are most frequently induced by values and patterns of behavior flowing from other cultures. As a result of changes taking place in one or in the other system there occurs a disintegration that manifests itself in crises pertaining to some of the systems or to both of them. In striving for reintegration also new elements of culture are being formed and new connections between them, as well as new forms of interpersonal communication. If this does not happen a system of culture and the social system collapses.

Systems of culture correspond to given social systems and *vice versa*. M. Fortes highlights this aspect, writing: "culture is a totality only inasmuch as it is tied up with a clearly distinct social structure." Therefore each social system has its structure; conversely, each culture is related to a concrete social system. The overlapping of these two systems strengthens the specificity and

distinctness of both of them. It makes them sufficient for the individuals and groups existing within their frames. The same individuals belong at the same time to a social system and to its system of culture, forming together one sociocultural complex.

By a sociocultural complex we refer here to social groups that are sufficiently rich and creative for members to make versatile development within their frames. Thus we are talking about huge pluralistic sociocultural systems referred to most often as societies -- for instance a Polish, German, Ukrainian, or American society. Most frequently mentioned among factors or notes that play a great role in shaping the complex are ethnic groups (in most cases one nation), religions and groups that managed to create their own independent state.

The Role of Nations in Shaping Sociocultural Systems: Nation may be defined and characterized by means of many and manifold features. Among these the following seem most relevant to our topic:

- A nation is a large social group. Its members are convinced of their descent from common ancestors; they are therefore tied by bonds of blood. This conviction evokes in principle positive attitudes towards their own nation as a totality and towards its particular members; it constitutes an important basis for the vivid character of national bonds. A nation has a common language which enables unrestrained mutual communication by its members, an evident sign of the distinctness of the nation in relation to others.

- A nation occupies a certain territory, or at least dominates it, which contributes to frequent and multiform contacts.

- A nation has its common history and its common treasure of laws, beliefs, costumes, edifices, literary works, songs, heroes, and various material products.

- A nation shares events and experiences, as well as a common destiny, and it is often persuaded about its particular mission among other nations.

Within a nation there exist and interweave with one another multiform groupings and categories of individuals. They influence one another mutually in a direct or indirect way; their mutual relations may or may not be normalized. There are subordinated, often enforced relations, or relationships based on a consensus that has been worked out together, at the roots of which lie common interests; or else there may be mixed relationships, having in themselves something from both of the above mentioned types, which in most cases assume a form of subordination. The population forming a nation is tied by organizational and structural bonds. In this multitude of groups some are more numerous and influential; these play a leading role in shaping the totality of the life of a nation.

A nation having such features is a dynamic group, capable of autonomous development, and forming its own social system and culture. A crucial role in this process is played by leading groups, that is, elites. They endow a nation's social system as well as its system of culture with final form, creating an appropriate social structure and promoting certain values, norms, patterns of behavior, and material products. Nations want to be sovereign and autonomous in creating their own social and cultural systems. That is why in our contemporary history, where a form of democratic coexistence of nations has not yet been worked out, nations strove, and they still do, to gain their own statehood. Examples are states that have been recently created: Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia. These nations strive to create their own states because it guarantees them sovereignty and autonomy in shaping their social systems and systems of culture. A majority

of today's existing European states emerged on the basis of a nation. Many in Europe shed much blood in their struggle for sovereignty and autonomy. They did not always attain the goal of their struggle, but strengthened their culture, which developed often in spite of the efforts of dominating powers.

The Role of Religion in Shaping Sociocultural Systems. Processes similar to those described above in relation to nations occur also in the case of religion. Its impact in shaping social systems is great, but it plays an even greater role in forming systems of culture. Generally speaking often a nation forming its social system assumes one religion or one of its denominations, for religion is a particularly important factor. It integrates and maintains social systems and systems of culture, and does so for two fundamental reasons:

a) religion has a universal character and contributes to overcoming ethnic and social limits; and
b) religion draws on ultimate reasons, and by the same token provides people with the strongest kind of motivations, not only for the sake of individual sanctification and salvation, but also on behalf of sociocultural systems. Hence the majority of European states acknowledged one religion (or one of its denominations) as established, making it a state religion or at least favoring it among the others.

Nationalization of religion in Europe took place in consequence of assuming the Treaty of Augsburg in 1555. The prevailing majority of states then accepted the principle formulated by this treaty: "*cuius regio, eius religio*" ("the one in power decides the religion"). In the majority of German lands and in all Scandinavian countries Protestantism was in force; Catholicism was dominant in Austria and France; in Russia the Orthodox denomination already reigned for a long time. The king of Poland and Lithuania, Sigismund II Augustus, holding that "he is not the king of human conscience", did not introduce the Augsburg principle. Therefore on the territory of the Polish Commonwealth, even if its population was chiefly Catholic and Catholicism had a privileged position, there lived and developed communities of different Christian denominations, as well as Jews, Moslems and Karaites.

Religion (in the sense of an ideological system and of an institution) as a factor integrating social systems can ennoble and strengthen actions on their behalf, but can also favor the development of fanatic attitudes, ideologization and politicization of a nation. It then supports, or even initiates, actions directed against other religious and ethnic groups.

Types of Sociocultural Systems

Both nation and religion play an important role in shaping sociocultural systems. They can be more or less national and more or less religious. Taking these two criteria into account, we can distinguish three types of sociocultural systems:

Uninational Sociocultural Systems. The social system and system of culture are based on one nation by which both are formed. An example of such a structure is Israel. Here social system, system of culture, nation, and religion are so strictly interconnected that they are identical in the practice of life. These four systems are unified even more strongly by the state. So there is no citizen of the Israeli state who would not at the same time be a Jew, engage in Jewish culture,

transmit it to the next generation, and create it. The Jewish sociocultural system does not accept a not-Jew, that is, somebody who ethnically and culturally is not a Jew. It is an exceptionally closed society for the ethnic bond, that is, the bond of blood is an indispensable condition of being a member of the Jewish society. This is a feature an individual must be born with; it cannot be acquired. Affiliation to the Jewish sociocultural system is rather a matter of being attached or ascription than of voluntary membership.

Throughout the ages what changes is only the groups which lead, but always in the frame of the mentioned systems. In ancient Israel it was priests and Levites, now it is business people and politicians. This change is proof of a diminishing role of religion in shaping this sociocultural system. Apart from God -- Jahweh, who hitherto was its basis -- an increasing role is played by a consciousness of the nation's common destiny, especially of the so-called holocaust from the period of the last world war, which fact and ideology unites Jews dispersed around the world with increasing power. Thus, for instance, the monument of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising commemorating thousands of Jews who died in it plays a much greater role in unifying Jews than the Warsaw synagogue. The museum of the holocaust in Washington probably will mean more for the unity of Jews in America than the most splendid synagogue in the USA, or perhaps even in Jerusalem.

National Sociocultural Systems. The case of Israel is exceptional in the history of currently existing societies, where in most cases the situation is more complex. That is, apart from the basic nation playing a major role in forming a sociocultural system, there exist still other ethnic and religious groups which are of minor or even no importance in this process. Either they are not numerous, or they are not admitted by the leading nation to participate in the entire life of a sociocultural system, or they separate themselves from the leading nation and close themselves in their own sociocultural system. In all these cases minority groups, if they join at all the general sociocultural system, do so in a rather external way; that is, they find a way of living within it without shaping it. They adapt to the social system, but they still remain in their own system of culture. Individuals that are fully incorporated into the totality of a sociocultural system assimilate and cease to belong to the group of their origin which treats them as aliens.

Such a society has an eminently national character. Gradually groups of ethnic and religious minorities melt into it. Such a process took place in the majority of European countries in the XIX century. Classical examples are Prussia and subsequently the Second and the Third German Reich. France also has to be reckoned among the typically national states.

Culture-based Society. Within the structure of a social system there exist various ethnic and religious groups, rather numerous and dynamic. But most often by reason of its significance one nation plays the role of creator of the social system, creates a state and either imposes on other groups features of its own social system and culture, or they joint it voluntarily and spontaneously. In mutual coexistence all ethnic and religious groups progressively form a common sociocultural system, based on assigning or subordinating all groups and categories of individuals to general social interests.

The basic structure of a social system is formed here by a state-creating nation. On the basis of its culture a general social culture is shaped which integrates all individuals and particulars as well as the ethnic and religious elements. But this does not mean that all a society's members think and feel the same way or that they strive towards identical goals. Ties shaped on the basis of culture are wider and more inclusive than class, professional, or administrative ties, or even than bonds of

family and religion which are fundamental for social systems. On the other hand, close interconnections between a general culture, a state-creating nation, and other ethnic or religious groups provide culture with a strong emotional accent and root it in local communities, as well as in its historical context. In cultures shaped in this way, even if the culture of a state-creating nation is dominant, it is enriched by other ethnic and religious groups which are included as well into its frame.

A general social culture preserves regional and environmental diversity. It unites a social system which it dominates in the sense of creating a common symbolic *universum*, that is, a basis of interpersonal communication. Affiliation to a culture thus shaped, having national traits and maintaining at the same time its universal character, is decided neither by bonds of blood, nor by place of residence. In this type of society and in the frame in which occur the strivings of its constituent categories of individuals and groups meaning is decisive.

Pluralistic Sociocultural System. This society is formed by various ethnic and religious groups. Even if some of them are more numerous and influential than the others, they all have equal rights and are tolerant and open to one another. In principle such a system is supraethnic (that is, supranational) and suprareligious. Its stability and potentials are based not on one nation or on one religion, but on acceptance of higher values by all ethnic and religious groups, by all categories of citizens. These values cannot be too many. The most basic of them seem to be: respect for human rights, the sovereignty of a sociocultural system, safety, liberty, development and welfare. Here it is the social system that dominates the culture. It is more uniform, consistent, and above all operates more efficiently. Consequently, its culture, especially in the domain of its products, is more diversified. Various languages and their dialects continue to be spoken, a variety of literary texts occurs, as well as a diversity of edifices, costumes, customs, songs, and other similar elements. In any case, ethnic groups tend to defend their cultural distinctness, being much more willing to accept a common social system.

Such a sociocultural system is rather a model than a factually realized pattern. In present sociocultural systems some ethnic groups still dominate, imposing their cultures on others. Even societies that constitutionally accepted pluralistic models of culture, such as Canada or Australia, are still far from their realization. In both societies the culture of the English ethnic group dominates and the population of English and Irish descent plays a key role in their social systems. Anglo-Saxon domination is a fact also in the USA, where much is being said about multiculturality. In southern states of this country the leading role is taken over by the Hispanic population.

A question arises, therefore, whether a sociocultural system can be shaped without a leading role being played by some nation or ethnic group in this process. If yes, then that is still a rather distant future.

Danger of Ideologization and Politicization of a Nation

Mutual relations between a state-creating nation and other ethnic and religious groups in the frame of the same society can take very different shapes: from harmonious coexistence, expressed in mutual toleration and cooperation, to destroy and persecuting one another. This depends on many and diverse factors. Let us highlight here specifically the ideologization and politicization of a nation.

Ideologization of a nation is a transitory attitude in the passage from accepting one's nation as a basic social and cultural value to elevating it to the rank of the highest value, to ascribing to it perfection and superiority, and to a conviction that the nation has been chosen to perform a mission in relation to other ethnic groups. This attitude assumes forms of ethnocentrism, megalomania, nationalism, xenophobia and chauvinism. Having achieved the highest social and cultural value in the consciousness of its members, the nation claims to be also the highest political value. It then seeks to strengthen its position in the structure of the state in which it exists, as well as among other nations. This tendency is in most cases accompanied by a Manichean division of ethnic groups into good and bad, developed and undeveloped, friendly and hostile. These evaluations entail awakening or even persecuting other ethnic groups in one's own social system and in the societies of neighboring nations, and an effort to develop an inferiority complex in them. This constitutes a serious obstacle to be proper development of the nation's own sociocultural system.

Ideologization and politicization of one's own nation form in principle two radically different types of attitudes towards other ethnic groups: a) separation and isolation, and b) destructive aggression. Between these two extremes there are many intermediate attitudes.

The attitude of separation and isolation manifests itself in cutting oneself off from other ethnic groups, in raising barriers protecting one's own nation from alien influence, always considered noxious. This is done out of concern to preserve the integrity of one's nation and to maintain all the positive features ascribed thereto.

The attitude of destructive aggression manifests itself in subjugating, conquering, exploitating, or even exterminating ethnic and religious groups.

Both attitudes may appear simultaneously, as was the case of German national socialism whose concern about the "purity" of the German nation isolated it from other ethnic groups, at the same time subordinating some of them and condemning other groups to extermination. In the case of the development of both one and the other type of attitude -- the more so if both occur at the same time -- the sociocultural system becomes uninational and monocultural. By the same token, it sentences itself to closure and underdevelopment.

National Sovereignty through Culture

This phenomenon occurs in cases of rich and developed cultures, where culture plays an exceptionally active and creative role with regard to the nation, of which it is at the same time its own social system. Culture is more creative and consolidated than its own social system. Such a state of things develops above all in two situations.

In the Situation of a Pluralistic Sociocultural System. Each ethnic or religious group, in order to preserve its identity, is active and creative. They learn how to cocreate culture with other ethnic and religious groups without loosing their identity. By the same token, each maintains its own sociocultural system, being a subsystem in relation to the general system of a society and culture.

In the Situation of Threat Weakening, or even Destroying the Social System by another State. Culture then comes to the fore performing an integrative function in support of the social system. Such a situation can exist over a long period of time, as was the case for instance in Ireland under English domination, in Serbia when ruled by Turkey or in Poland in times of partition. Austria, Prussia and Russia divided Polish territory among themselves and incorporated it into their states. In spite of that, the weakened Polish social system continued to exist. It existed thanks to its culture

and the culture then developed strongly, crystallized and became more visibly distinct from the German, Austrian and Russian cultures. The nation lived and developed without its own sovereign social system, but it was sovereign thanks to culture. It is also thanks to culture that an awakening of national awareness took place in the lower layers of the Polish society. The Polish nation in all its social strata became increasingly aware of its ethnicity and cultural distinctness. Hence, even if the state is helpful in the development of a national culture, it is not indispensable. Many nations and their cultures were shaped without the blessings of their states, and often in spite of the state.

Polish culture was able to develop in such unfavorable external conditions for before it lost its state it was already shaped by its existence within the framework of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The upper classes of the society, above all the nobility which formed its major part, were perfectly aware of what was Polish culture. They recognized its traits and were proud of it. Thus in times of partitions Polish society had a strong basis that served as a point of departure in shaping the younger generation's cultural identity. This identity motivated the continuous efforts and struggle for regaining independence. Step by step these efforts were joined by the lower social classes, without deriving profit for themselves. The nation was sovereign, or, to put it more precisely, it lived independently thanks to its culture. It was not that the Polish nation nationalized the culture; on the contrary, Polish culture has been permeated by national elements. To this day many authors see here the strength as well as the weakness of Polish culture. With a certain exaggeration Janusz Żarnowski writes of the strengths and weaknesses:

Strength: national elements inspire creativity, introduce emotional factors, endow culture with its own unique countenance and widen the circle of consumers of culture; weakness: hypertrophy renders the Polish culture illegible for strangers, hinders its relations with the world culture, suppresses the sense of proportion, renders impossible objective self-evaluation and leads to negligence of the perfection of artistic forms in favor of an exalted, overemotionalized content with national connotations.

The sovereignty of the nation through culture corresponds perfectly to a presently popular conception of a federation of nations. In order for a nation to be able to exist and to develop, it does not have to have a fully self-sufficient state. It can develop also in a federal national union. Its distinctness and permanence is guaranteed in this case not by a sovereign state, but by culture. A confederation of nations with distinct cultural identities reduces conflict between them, which constitutes a sore point in the existence of national states.

Specific Traits of the Polish Sociocultural System

The Polish sociocultural system, like all European societies existing today, has been shaped on the basis of one nation and one religion: of the Polish nation and of the Christian religion in its Catholic denomination. But both the social system and the system of culture were formed in creative cooperation with many ethnic and religious groups. The Polish nation, by means of mutual treaties or of hegemony, included into the organism of its state large groups of Slavs and many other ethnic groups. Throughout centuries there dominated a model of multiculturality, with concurrent domination of the Polish culture. Multiculturality became particularly apparent and fruitful beginning with the moment of creation of the Polish Commonwealth and of the Great Duchy of Lithuania.

In the same social system there lived together in relative peace and solidarity Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Germans, Jews, Belorussians, Ruthenians, Tatars, Armenians, Karaites, and many other minor ethnic groups. This multiethnicity often generated tensions and impeded effective functioning of the social system, but culturally it enriched this system to a great extent. Gradually unification of the multiethnic and multireligious society was achieved, in political terms through unions with Lithuania (the first in 1385, the last in 1569), in the domain of religion through union with the Orthodox Church (1596), on the sociopolitical level through endowing Polish, Lithuanian, and Ruthenian noblemen with the same privileges, and on the cultural level through assuming the Polish culture and language first by nobility consolidated in the common fatherland of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and then by townspeople and peasants.

In the cultural community thus created there was no tendency to eliminate distinctness; differences, mutually enriching existing groups, were rather willingly maintained. So, for instance, Jews founded in 1505 in Lublin Jeshibot, a school of higher education with academic rights granted by Sigismund the Elder. After the Academy of Cracow, it was the second academic school in the Commonwealth, established prior to academic centers in Vilnius (1578), Zamość (1595), and Lvov (1661). In the Commonwealth there existed also a variety of religions and denominations. In 1772 on its territory there were over 10 thousand parishes of Eastern Churches, including 9650 Uniate and 430 Orthodox, 3996 Roman-Catholic parishes, hundreds of auxiliary churches and chapels of both denominations and rites, hundreds of synagogues and Protestant congregations.

Multiethnicity and religious diversity of the Polish sociocultural system was maintained throughout centuries. Even before the outbreak of the Second World War Poland belonged to the most ethnically and religiously diversified states of Europe. The census of 1931 registered, in a total population of 31,915,800, the following linguistic and ethnic groups: 21,993,400 people spoke Polish (68.9 percent), 3,222,000 (10 percent) Ukrainian, 2,732,600 (8.6 percent) Jewish (Hebrew), 1,219,600 (3.8 percent) Ruthenian, 989,900 (3.1 percent) Belorussian, 741,000 (2.3 percent) German, 138,700 (0.4 percent) Russian, 878,600 (2.8 percent) used other languages or did not declare their native language. Nationality was joined with religion: Poles were most frequently Roman-Catholics, Belorussians and Ukrainians Greek Catholics (Uniates) or Orthodox, Germans Protestants, and Russians Orthodox. Catholics formed the largest group -- 75.2 percent.

After World War II Polish society became almost monoethnic and uniconfessional. Today ethnic minorities constitute about 3 percent of the population. But the traditions of multiethnicity and multiculturality are deeply rooted. Polish culture still is characterized by both a broad openness and a relative closedness as well. Its openness makes it assimilate elements of other cultures, perhaps excessively in recent years; its relative closedness determines the rejection of elements that could threaten its coherence and persistence. Consequently, Polish culture today possesses such a set of elements and interconnections that distinguish it from the cultures of the neighbors with which it is still in touch. Stressing its distinctness from the neighbors' culture is important, for its difference from the Spanish, American, or Chinese cultures is evident and does not constitute the basis of identification for persons living in the area between the Carpathians and the Baltic Sea, between Belorussia, Ukraine and Germany.

The specificity, strength, and significance of Polish culture became apparent especially during the last two centuries (the periods of partition, Nazi and Soviet occupation, and the post-war period till 1989), when the Polish social system had to function without its own state or without a sovereign state. It was then that the culture united it, protected it against russification and germanization, and at the same time strengthened it. It developed and consolidated to such an extent that today it dominates the social system. Due to this, Poland is not a national state in the

sense, for instance, of Germany, France and England, but a state having a national culture. If we attempt to order hierarchically the three mentioned systems, in the case of the German society the order would be: state -- nation -- culture, while in the case of the Polish society it would be: culture -- nation -- state. Strong ties linking Poles to the Polish culture make them still feel Pole even after having lived for many years in other societies as emigrants. They enter relatively easily into new social systems as well as into systems of alien states, but they perdure for a long time in their own cultural system.

Compared to other nationalities, Poles integrate more slowly into new societies, and in many only partially. Not rarely they return to the shores off the Vistula, to their native culture, as did Henryk Skolimowski who wrote:

After twenty six years of staying abroad and tasting various cultures: British for six years, American for twelve years, as well as Brazilian, Mexican, Greek, and Finnish, while I admired great achievements of other nations, I am proud to be born a Pole, proud that I have been nourished with values and ideals that so often seem to be impractical, but that still allow you to hold your head high and to look straight into the stars.

. . .

I thanked God that he did not let me be born in some welfare state and that he did not let me avoid bitter and sometimes tragic experiences. Those who did not have these experiences are somehow unidimensional. They lack depth. They do not have any experience of tragedy. Without this ultimate experience of what the human condition does mean you are not able to understand who is man. I thanked God that he did not allow me to be born in the American culture that is so buoyant and so optimistic, but at the same time so shallow. Culture means values. I thanked God that I was not born into the American, but into the Polish system of values. And I often wondered which of Polish values are the most precious and which of them have a universal character.

Values: The Core of Culture

Culture and Values

The most important elements in a culture are its values; they are at the basis of its existence and development. "All cultural phenomena embody some value acknowledged by people." This view is expressed by F. Znaniecki, in whose opinion the world of culture is the world of values. They are primary objects of human experience, irreducible to any categories of the natural sciences. Everything that we call culture is related to them; they determine the culture. They decide about the Polish or German way of life, about a specific way of behavior, about contents and forms of cultural products in Polish or German societies.

What is a value? Today it is one of the most ambiguous concepts. There are many definitions and classifications of values. In the social sciences there are three groups of values: psychological, sociological and cultural. We limit ourselves here to the cultural understanding of values, as this aspect is here of the greatest interest. The cultural approach defines value as: a) objects of a symbolic or a not symbolic character, commonly desired in a given society; b) existential and normative judgments (valuing orientations) commonly accepted in a given society; c) convictions diffused in a given society, determining the desirable judgments and behavior of the members of

that society; and d) convictions concerning a system of values and norms held to be desirable for a given society.

The above understanding of values highlights the following features: a) values are transcendent in relation to individuals, that is, they exist independently of them; b) values have a supraindividual and supratemporal character, and therefore are universal; and c) values have binding power.

In the cultural understanding values exist beyond individuals. Individuals learn values, they experience them and either interiorize them or do not; if they accept them as their own, they also realize them. Cultural values often demand from individuals sacrifices and renouncement; yet they generate happiness and bring benefits. An example of this is death in defense of the liberty of the fatherland, faith or justice: it is not the valuable that brings benefit or happiness to individuals, but what is valuable that renders individuals happy and brings benefits.

A cultural value, which is what we mean here, may then be defined in the following way: a socially sanctioned value typical of a certain culture, which is interiorized by their society's members and helps them make choices; it directs them to their goals and points to means of action; it also strengthens actions in the frame of the same sociocultural domain in which it is rooted. An objective criterion of its significance is its place within a given cultural system of values, or, in other words, its role in this system. A subjective criterion of the significance of a cultural value is its place (role) in the structure of the personality of a concrete individual. From such a definition of cultural values we may draw three deductions.

a) Not all cultural values are equally important for a society, but they form a specific hierarchy. Some of them are so essential that without them a given society would not be what it is; if it lacked them, it would decompose or change essentially. Apart from them, many other values function in a society. They can even be widely spread and popular, but they are not typical. A society loses nothing of its character if they weaken or entirely disappear. The basic criterion of hierarchy of cultural values is the extent to which a particular value serves the maintenance and development of a given society as well as its members, of course in a concrete context with its various conditions.

b) Individuals as well as whole societies in different periods of their lives may appreciate more or less highly some values at different times. This depends above all on the degree of awareness as to their essence, as well as on needs. For instance today people are more aware of a value of their psychic health than were their ancestors, and they know better how to take care of it.

c) The same values may be understood differently and realized in various ways in private life and in the public life of a society. Two factors play a crucial role here: consciousness and external conditions. The same value is realized by individuals fully in certain periods, and only partially (or may even be rejected) in others. For example, an average Pole in times of the partitions or of German and Russian occupation did not work effectively in the state administration sector or in state enterprises, for he was convinced that if he did he would disadvantage his own society. He loafed about, simulating work or even boycotting it. The invaders stated that Poles do not appreciate the value of work, that they were sloppy and lazy. The judgment was in fact overhasty, for the same Poles worked solidly and creatively and were thrifty while working in the private sector, especially while working "on their own".

Cultural values are not given to individuals as ready-made directives for life, they do not impose on actors some clearly settled plan of life, nor do they lay out the way to various kinds of

success in society. Being present in society in multiple forms and ways they are recognized, assimilated, deepened, and realized by individuals in individual manners. They play a double role: they stimulate to actions which accord with them and hinder any action that would be contrary to their content. The barrier which cultural values sometimes pose to innovation may be so strong that even the best organized or rationally planned contrary action, even if beneficial for the society, is smashed upon colliding with them. An example of this phenomenon was the unsuccessful attempt to nationalize private farms and organize State Farms (PGR) in Poland after World War II. The new socialist government tried by all available means to put this plan into practice, but the cultural barrier was so strong that the plan failed. State Farms have been successfully organized only on the grounds of former manors of great freeholders who were legally deprived of their property, and on Regained Territories. Altogether such State Farms included only a quarter of all cultivable grounds, the rest of which remained in the hands of private farmers. Polish peasants did not agree to any form of nationalization of their farms. This was unusual in the whole bloc of socialist countries, for in other countries the new governments managed to put nationalization of agriculture into action much more than in Poland. The Polish peasant valued private ownership of his land. He fought for it in the times of partitions. In all the three sectors into which Poland was divided, he defended it to the last. A private farm was for him not only his place of work and his source of income for maintaining his family, but also a symbol of personal freedom and independence and a bastion of his Polish identity. His grounds had for the Polish peasant almost a sacral character, which made it impossible for him to pass them into alien hands.

The Center of a Culture

In the culture of each society some values play a particularly significant role and are valued more highly than others. They constitute the essence of a culture, its specific character. Some authors refer to these values as fundamental, primary or central, others as leading, dominating or core. How we name them is not so important (here we shall use the term "core" or "central values"); what is important is how we understand them. Central or core values in the culture of a given society are those agreed upon by general consensus and which base the organization of a social system and cultural identity. Their removal by means of "modernization" or from domination by another society leads to the destruction of the social structure, to weakening, or even to atrophy of the whole culture. Jerzy Smolicz, analyzing the role of core values, states that

they act as identifying values, symbolic for a group and for its members. Thanks to them, social groups are identified as culturally distinct communities, able to maintain vitality and creativity in the frame of their own cultures. A loss of core values by a given group leads to its disintegration, to destruction of the authentic and creative community capable of surviving and of transmitting its values to the next generations.

Around such values ideas -- as well as ethical, social, religious and political ideals, beliefs, norms, laws, systems of organization, management, and work, artistic creativity, activities of individuals and groups, patterns of everyday life, literary works, stories, fairy tales, edifices, places of public worship and of national memory, heroes -- all are integrated. These are various cultural products by means of which values perpetuate themselves. Those which most fully embody central values are also the most representative for a given culture; they express its specificity and are its outward emissaries. With the central values and products of the culture are inseparably bound

specific states of mind of individuals, such as patterns of emotional reactions, structures of thought, visions of the past and of the future, and attitudes towards their own national group as well as towards other ethnic groups.

These three elements: a) central values, b) the cultural products that perpetuate them, and c) the psychosociological states connected with both, form the center of the culture of a society, a nation, and each social group. Antonina Kłoskowska calls this set of elements a "canon of culture." The center of culture can be described as follows: an integrated set of central (core) cultural values, the products that perpetuate them and, shaped in connection with both, the patterns of emotional reactions, mental structures, patterns of interpersonal contacts within a society, as well as patterns of relations between this and other societies.

The center of a culture is shaped by the whole history of a given society. It determines its specificity and constitutes the basis of its integration, permanence and development. It marks out a specific vision of the past, present and future of the whole society, as well as of individuals and groups living in it; it directs and evaluates their actions and experiences. In its light individuals and the society evaluate everything that is new and strange, both internal processes and the changes going on in other societies. It decides what elements of other cultures are to be accepted, and which of them are to be resisted. A specific trait of a center thus understood is that it is hard to estimate which of its elements are more important, and which are less. All of them are essential; if one were to lack, the shape of the whole would begin to change. The axis of such a center of culture, around which focus all the others, are its values. But this totality is flexible, that is to say, at one time some of its elements come to the fore, while at other times others emerge. So when, for instance, the autonomy of the society is threatened, such values as liberty and sovereignty gain priority, accompanied by all the others: the whole center becomes more vivid. Such cases increase the popularity of national heroes, songs, national works of art and literature and monuments; they intensify religiosity, the sense of community and family, and the significance of children and mothers.

Each society has such a cultural center. Polish society is not exception. J. B. Orzechowski, a publicist for the Polish revolutionary left of the XIX century, described it in the following way: "Sharing undeniable European goals, we have our own virtues, our own character, laws, history, institutions, briefly: our nationality and individuality."

The duty to know and acknowledge the center binds all normal members of a society. Hence, if in Polish society someone is not aware of the elements which build the center or acts contrary to them, evokes such astonished remarks as: "How is it? You are a Pole and you don't know about this?", or "How can you act this way being a Pole?!"

Content of the Center of the Polish Culture

Passing from theoretical considerations to deliberations about Polish society, we must ask what is the center of the Polish culture, what elements compose it? Efforts at their codification are incessant. These are unusually important, for a relatively precise description of the components of the center of Polish culture would allow one to estimate at least approximately, who and to what extent one belongs to its circle -- whether individuals identify themselves with it and enrich it, or if they are indifferent to it, or even treat it as alien.

Mieczysław Porębski includes in the center of the Polish culture the following elements: land, from the "Sarmatian Alps" (following Długosz) along the Vistula river to the Baltic Sea; the Polish language and literary activity, from the hymn *Bogurodzica* through works of all the illustrious

writers and poets to this day; products of artistic activity, above all images of Our Lady of Częstochowa and of Ostra Brama, of the Sorrowing Christ; works of Jan Matejko, Józef Chełmoński, Piotr Michałowski, Stanisław Wyspiański; the white and red colors of the Polish banner. According to Józef Borzyszkowski, the center of the Polish culture is "a community of people of one language, one religion, at the same time tolerant, loving liberty, ready for limitless self-denial and sacrifices, committed above all to the value of honor, having their particular mission in the history of the neighboring group of nations, and accumulating in their culture many unique elements, attractive for the others." Henryk Skolimowski includes in the center of the Polish culture: obstinacy in the name of ideals, care of great affairs, proper pride (but not coxcombry), a sense of honor, lordliness and romanticism. Jerzy Smolicz, who examined this aspect of Polish identity among Polish immigrants, limits the number of elements forming the center of the Polish culture to three: Polish language, Catholic religion, and an historical consciousness of belonging to the Polish ethnocultural group.

Already the above mentioned definitions of the center of Polish culture indicate that the authors analyzing this question are unanimous on some of its elements, but are not in accord as to the others. So the question of what belongs to the center of Polish culture remains open. Let us try to describe it using the three elements mentioned above: a) values, b) products, and c) psychosocial states.

Values and Psychosocial States. The literature on values in Polish culture is very rich and has above all a popular character. An analysis of several dozen works on this subject showed that their authors hold the following values to be typical for the Polish culture: family, family life, home, love of children, an important role of women as mothers, sense of community, sensibility for transcendent values, religiosity, ability to forgive, lack of revengefulness and cruelty, readiness for self-denial and sacrifices (on a spontaneous basis), respect for moral authorities, hospitality, sociability, generosity, magnanimity, openness to values of other cultures, tolerance, honor, intense sense of one's own dignity, love of freedom, individualism, struggle for the independence and sovereignty of the state, historicism, traditionalism, democracy, distrust towards rulers' decisions, lack of recognition for power, Messianism, irrationalism, search for unusual things, emotionalism, romanticism, care of ideals, optimism, hope in spite of hopelessness, sense of equality, sensibility to questions of justice and a high appreciation of creative work.

Values enumerated above are certainly firmly fixed in the Polish culture, but it is difficult to treat them all as central (core) values. In order to select these, the following procedure was assumed: a) Among the values enumerated above were chosen those that are the most frequently mentioned by authors of the works analyzed as values typical for the Polish culture; b) A list of the above mentioned values was presented to 56 "judges" (persons of various ages) with a request to choose those that are the most typical for the Polish culture. As a result of this procedure, the following values have been recognized to be the most typical for the Polish culture (this is not a hierarchical order): 1) family, family life, home; 2) community, sense of community; 3) love of children, an important role of women; 4) sensibility to transcendent values and to *sacrum*, religiosity; 5) irrationalism, emotionality, romanticism; 6) inner freedom, personal dignity, honor, individualism; 7) ability to forgive, lack of revengefulness and of cruelty; 8) hospitality, sociability, generosity; 9) readiness for self-denial and sacrifices, sense of service; 10) love of liberty, patriotism; 11) optimism, hope in spite of hopelessness; 12) openness to other cultures, tolerance, universalism; 13) respect for creative activities; 14) democracy, sense of civil responsibility, and criticism towards ruling forces.

The above values may be acknowledged as central (core) values of the Polish culture. They are permanently and vividly significant within its frame, and in spite of all changes of political and economical conditions, they do not lose their essentiality and relevance. We should add, however, that the values as described them above are psychosocial states of individuals and of the whole society. For instance, hospitality, patriotism and tolerance may be understood at the same time as values and as psychosocial attitudes. They both occur together, for values, if they are accepted, are inseparably joined with experience and acting. In concrete life, it is difficult to separate values from psychosocial states. They occur jointly and are so described; their separation is only a theoretical maneuver.

If, however, we touched upon the question of psychosocial states of Poles, it should be stressed that one of the fundamental states is rationality combined with emotionality. This juncture makes immediate experience and intuition play a very important role in the Poles' acts of cognition and volition, and charges personal contacts with a rich experiential and emotional load. It should be mentioned also that the reactions of Poles are spontaneous and lively; they are strongly inclined to the past and plan their actions in a rather imprecise way, believing easily in an unspecified future.

Cultural Products. Among products of the Polish culture, strictly related to the above specified values -- known to average Poles, used by other nations to characterize Polish culture, and destroyed, prohibited and concealed by enemies as typical of Poland -- we should list:

- the Polish language (with all its dialects);
- the crowned White Eagle, the white and red national banner, such events as the baptism of Poland, the battle of Grünewald, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the struggle for the existence and subsistence of the nation in times of the partition, as well as of the German and Russian invasions, the nonviolent struggle with the Communist Soviet regime in the post-war years (the "Solidarity" movement);
- the places of religious cult and national memory such as Jasna Góra (Częstochowa) and Ostra Brama (Vilnius), as well as images of Our Lady there, the Wawel royal site in Cracow and the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the Cemetery of Eaglets in Lvov, Auschwitz (Oświęcim);
- the national epic poetry and prose of Adam Mickiewicz and Henryk Sienkiewicz, artistic works of such great artists as Jan Matejko, Fryderyk Chopin, Stanisław Wyspiański;
- the most renowned historical characters and national heroes such as Tadeusz Kościuszko, Józef Piłsudski, St. Maximilian Kolbe, John Paul II; and
- the rites and customs of the so called "Polish year", especially Christmas (above all the Christmas Eve supper and Christmas carols), Easter, All Saints' day, weddings and name day celebrations.

The center of the Polish culture, as may be seen from the above elements, includes the entire history of the Polish society and its whole patrimony. It is a manifestation of its continuity and permanence, and an anticipation of the future. It unites all those who recognize it as their own and makes them Poles. It was shaped throughout the whole of Polish history, but crystallized most in difficult periods when the Polish sovereign state was erased from maps of Europe. It is then that the values, cultural products and psychosocial traits were consciously identified as typically Polish. Culture became at that time the foundation of the existence of the Polish society and Poles concentrated around it wherever they were. In the time of the partition as well as of the German and Russian invasion, in the years of enslavement after World War II when Polish society had no

sovereign government and administration and was unable to run its own economy and politics, it was the creators and transmitters of culture who came to the fore. Culture-creating centers then became the basis of social life, for only these centers were able to exist and to act in a relatively independent manner. When they too had been closed the same role was played by the Catholic Church, often the only relatively independent basis of the life of Polish society. In this situation, creators of culture and clerics were most highly appreciated, and easily took over the role of the politicians. In such a climate cultural leaders and clergymen of the caliber of Adam Mickiewicz, Ignacy Paderewski, Czesław Miłosz, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła -- later Pope John Paul II -- played the role of national spiritual leaders and politicians. No wonder then that so many actors and writers entered the Seym and the Senate of the 3rd Republic of Poland in the first democratic elections after World War II.

In the history of Polish society, the center of culture often played the role of an ideological system, even replacing government in a way. Efforts were undertaken to keep it this way, namely, to urge Poles who were aware of the center of their culture to themselves discern what is in accord with the Polish character, and what is contrary. This was a basic criterion for shaping ordinary, as well as formal, behavior, and for evaluating events, people and entire political and economic systems. This core of Polish culture prompted noblemen and peasants under the Prussian partition to defend their grounds, to cultivate them solicitously, and to found agricultural companies and banks in order to stay ahead of the Prussians. It said to young girls under the Russian partition: "Remember, there are three categories of men whom you are not allowed to treat as men: married men, priests, and, of course, . . . the Muscovites." Such an apparently insignificant saying constituted a difference of the Polish community on the eastern Polish frontier from the Russian culture, where divorces were allowed, and married priests were normal, whereas in the Polish culture divorces were not accepted, and marriages of priests of the western rite were forbidden. The center of culture impelled Polish women under all the three partitions to wear mourning after the downfall of the January uprising (1863-64) as if they had lost the dearest and closest members of their families, so that they came to parties, or even to balls dressed in black, with iron rather than gold or silver jewelry. The same center that determined that Poland would be the only country in Europe to undertake from the very beginning a struggle with Nazi totalitarianism, and, in spite of the overwhelming prevalence of the enemy and of immense losses, did not give up. When the Communist regime was introduced, the country battled it as well or even more. To a great extent it is thanks to the center of Polish culture that the breakdown of the Communist regime began in Poland and not elsewhere. Communist regimes were more accepted in other Socialist countries than in Poland. It is a very common opinion that the society most adapted to the Communist regime was that of the former Prussia, where the cult of state and respect for its institutions and officers were well grounded. There was much less resistance in the Democratic Republic of Germany where loyalty to the system was better implanted than in the Polish People's Republic. The centers of the cultures of the two societies were decisive in this regard.

Cultural Identity

Definition of Identity

"Identity" is an equivocal term. First of all, we have to distinguish between the identity of individuals and that of social groups. Both of them are important for our area of study and both require further explanation. As individual identity, a concept introduced half a century ago by Erik

Erikson, is better elaborated and more univocally understood, we will begin our explanations from this notion.

Individual Identity. Individual identity is most commonly understood as awareness of one's own traits that contribute to the sense of the distinctness of an individual, as well as of his or her likeness with others. This is associated with a sense of continuity in time and with a consciousness of remaining the same person, in spite of changing conditions and of one's own development. Due to identity, an individual distinguishes oneself from the world around one, has a sense of continuity of knowledge, experience and action, and interprets oneself in the context of other persons and objects. The individual's traits are so stable and unique that, knowing him or her, one can foresee without a great risk of mistake his or her actions in concrete situations. This kind of judgments is perfectly expressed in opinions of the type: "it fits him/her", "we could have expected this from him/her," and "it was certain that he/she would say this or act in this way." H. R. Tome draws our attention to the fact that the identity of individuals is shaped in the process of recognizing oneself in the others' reactions and of anticipating the reactions of the others. In other words, an individual with a properly developed identity knows who one is, what one is like, and knows what one wants and what the others expect. This kind of identity may be called the intrinsic identity of an individual or the identity of an *ego*.

Psychologists and sociologists stress that individual identity is formed in a long process of socialization. Its content is taken above all from one's closest environment. One understands its elements in one's own way, accepts them as one's own, and acts according to them. Becoming aware of one's identity, one answers the question: who am I?, at the same time evoking the further questions: where am I from? and what are my roots? These questions refer individuals to groups recognized as their own, with whom they identify more or less, and with whom they are bound through other persons. Above all these groups are family, ethnic (national), and religious. For individuals groups of this type are fundamental. In them the individual personality is shaped and to them it is tied. It can be for instance a Kowalski (Smith) family, a group of Poles, a group of Christians. These groups recognize the individual to be one of their members, and refer to themselves mutually as "we". On the other hand, others count them among this group, and not others. The content of such referents as "his/her", "our", or "alien" is perceived with particular intensity when a given group finds itself in a situation of threat or success, or when an individual that belongs to it is placed outside, for instance away from his or her family, or as an émigré.

We touch here upon a phenomenon that is differently conceptualized and equivocally interpreted. E. Erikson calls it the "identity of a group" and interprets it as a sense of community, which evolves along with the development of individuals and the history of groups. Henry Tajfel calls this phenomenon "social identity" and is of the opinion that it is "the individual's awareness of the fact that s/he belongs to certain social groups, associated by the emotional and evaluative significance that this fact of belonging has for her/him." Małgorzata Melchior in turn defines the social identity of an individual in terms of personal feelings and states that it is a particular "set of self-definitions of an individual concerning one's social classification, by means of which one describes oneself, without differentiating between `me' and `us', and at the same time discerning between `us' and `them', or `the others'." That would mean that individuals classify themselves on their own as Poles, Ukrainians, or Germans. They have a sense of belonging to a certain group and not to others.

Erving Goffman defines the social identity of individuals in a different way. According to him, it is a process of stereotypization and stigmatization of individuals, consisting in ascribing to

them certain features and categories. Hence, on the basis of certain traits perceived in an individual, we would define him or her as a Pole, an American, or a German. We therefore have a conviction concerning what set of basic features a typical American or a typical Pole should be endowed with. Upon meeting someone, we state that she or he has these features to such an extent that we can count her or him among Poles or Americans, that is, we identify her or him with some concrete group.

The difference between these two approaches to the social identity of individuals is clear: the first presents the social identity of individuals as an intrinsic phenomenon, while the other (Goffman's) presents it as a phenomenon existing beyond individuals, but directly pertaining to them. We could say that it is an identity ascribed to individuals. Both understandings of the social identity of individuals complement each other and, in reality, these two aspects occur together. Observing, for instance, an individual from a Polish family living in the United States, friends refer to him/her as a Pole on the basis of perceived features, but the person themselves do not have the sense of belonging to the Polish ethnic group. On the contrary, it may happen that third party observers hold an individual to be an Englishman, whereas the person has the feeling of belonging to the Polish ethnic group in America. Or it can happen that the individual's sense of belonging to a given ethnic group and the identity ascribed by the others are in accord with each other.

Identity of a Group, or Collective Identity. In a most general way we can describe the identity of a group as follows: it is a similar mode of understanding, experiencing, behaving and acting by members of a group in the frame of a present generation, as well as in the life time of many generations. Maurice Halbwachs associates the identity of a group above all with collective memory. Group members have therefore a sense of community and continuity in time and space. They express it most frequently in such forms as "we", "our", "we know", "we feel", "we strive". The sense of community and continuity allows, of course, individual understanding and experience of particular values and products of culture, as well as a specific dissimilarity of psychosocial states. But in a group there exists something like a collective consciousness and a common thought structure, collective feelings, systems of work and action, and a collective image of oneself and of neighbors. In a group there are so many common elements that together they form as it were a kind of a collective soul for thousands and millions of people living in the present, past, and future in the frame of a given space. As individuals outside and whole groups perceive this collective identity, and at the same time perceive a dissimilarity with regard to themselves, they call them "aliens" or "strangers".

In the case of the identity of groups, as well as of the social identity of individuals, we have to do with two pairs of elements:

a) objective and subjective; and
b) self-defining and being defined by other individuals and groups.

The objective element in both cases is the center of the culture. It exists independently of the will and experiences of individuals, or even sometimes in spite of their personal life goals. It constitutes an invariably given proposal for their cognition, striving, and actions. Fluctuation in the members of a group associated with its uninterrupted identity is particular evidence of the fact that there exist in it elements that are more permanent than changing individuals who subjectively identify with the group. Individuals, as well as whole groups, embody in their own way the centers of their culture. They have an image of its importance, they guard it and try to make it vivid, for it

is the foundation of the bonds existing within a group, its permanence and development. Because the social identity of individuals as well as the identity of a group are supported by the center of its culture, it may be called the cultural identity of both groups and individuals. This is a theoretical distinction, for in concrete life they occur jointly and most frequently they are described together.

unctions of Cultural Identity

Cultural identity has many functions with regard to both individuals and groups. As the most important we can enumerate the following:

Cultural Identity Roots Individuals in Social Life. Cultural identity, occurring at the same time in individuals and groups, constitutes in a sense a bridge between them, joining the individual and the social. It binds inseparably the individual existence of an individual and one's private life with the communitary existence of a group. In turn, the communitary existence of, for instance, a family, national, or religious group realizes and expresses itself in the actions and personality features of individuals. So if one says of oneself "I" and the same time: "I am a Pole," "I am a Christian," and others define one just as "Pole" and "Christian", yet, one's existence is not double: individual and national or denominational, but homogeneous. It has a peculiar form of simultaneous existence in two dimensions that are hard or even impossible to abandon. It is not easy to renounce one's being "Polish" or "Christian," and if one decides to do so, one accepts being an "American," "German," Protestant or atheist. This passage, which may be called a second birth of one's cultural identity, is often accompanied by various disturbances, impairments, or even psychic disorders. The original group often excludes such individuals from the set of its members, labeling them as "traitors" and "renegades," and counts them among "aliens".

Belonging to some group, taking root in it, is a basic human need. In this need man's social nature is expressed. Simone Weil in her judgment on this matter goes so far as to state that "rooting and having roots is perhaps the most important and the most forgotten need of the human soul. At the same time it is a need that is very difficult to define. Human beings are rooted if they participate in an active and natural manner in the existence of a community preserving some treasures of the past and gifted with a sense of tomorrow." So if one already has taken roots in a certain group, it would not easy for them to pass to another; it is not be easy to abandon one's original identity in favor of a new one. There is, however, a possibility of combining elements of both identities, but this is a difficult process demanding conscious control on the individual's part and favorable external circumstances.

Cultural Identity as a Link between Cultural and Social Systems. There is a close dependence between social systems and systems of culture, but -- as we have already said -- they are not the same. Cultural identity joins these two elements, and at the same time allows actors to belong to both of them in a different manner. Some people can identify themselves very strongly with their system of culture, but not so much with their social system. Polish emigrants abandon their own social system, but take the Polish culture with them; they still live in it and even develop it while working and acting in the German or American social system. But in normal situations cultural identity supports the individual's participation in both systems at the same time. Social systems develop and perpetuate themselves particularly through their subjective elements. So when streets, buildings, places of work, organizations, social institutions, trees and flowers, that is, the basic elements of a social system are destroyed by some natural cataclysm or war, people living within

its frame rebuild them with considerable effort, often with great sacrifices and much care. Many cities were thus rebuilt many times in their history, for example Warsaw, the capital of Poland. This happens because to these places, with their natural beauty and social infrastructure, are linked the ideas, experiences, strivings and visions of their inhabitants. These subjective elements of cultural identity urge them to reconstruct their objective world, to which they are permanently bound. Therefore, cultural identity causes a group to last in spite of changes, often in spite of its cruel destiny. It expands or reconstructs its environment, preserving something from its former form and creating something new. Cultural identity prompts groups to accommodate their environments to their developing needs, but also to protect these environments from destruction.

Cultural Identity as a Factor of Interpersonal Communication. Cultural identity, inseparably related to the symbolic *universum* guarantees at the same time, and certainly at least facilitates, mutual understanding between persons belonging to the same social group. A Pole communicates perfectly with another Pole, even if one of them lives on the shores of Vistula and the other in Chicago or in Vilnius. In interpersonal communication, it helps to transcend both space and time. So today's Poles wholly understand those Poles who came to the rescue of Vienna, who fought for the Polish school and religious liberty under the Russian and Prussian partitions, who did not surrender the post of Westerplatte in spite of overwhelming numbers, who struggled for their Polish identity in the steppes of Kazakhstan or in Lvov. If they found themselves in similar situations, they would do exactly the same.

Interpersonal communication in the frame of a symbolic *universum* is something other than communication for practical and productive purposes. It is easy to imagine two engineers, a Pole and a Japanese, who fully understand each other in the domain of constructing bridges or cars. In these areas of competence they understand each other certainly better than do their compatriots who are historians or classical philologists. But when they both sit in the home of one, be it Japanese or Polish, in spite of mutual benevolence they have to deal with many incomprehensible symbolic acts and objects. At home they would communicate better with any of their compatriots than with a well educated stranger. Having the same cultural identity creates a climate that in many aspects facilitates interpersonal contacts.

Cultural Identity as a Selective Mechanism. Cultural identity acts as a sort of a filter or -- better -- a living membrane, recognizing at any moment which elements should be let in and which should be barred. Such a function is played by cultural identity, especially with regard to alien elements. It decides which of these elements are to be included in the patrimony of a national culture, and which should be treated only as a passing fashion. Secondly, cultural identity plays a selective role towards the cultural heritage of its own society. It approves and develops some of its elements, and rejects, or even combats, others. For instance the value of tolerance is deeply rooted in Polish culture. This is why all actions contrary to it are very sharply attacked, more violently than in societies in whose tradition this value is not so strong.

Cultural identity better performs its selective function if it is conscious since its realization implies a judgment about one's own as well as about an alien cultural heritage, and about its distinctive elements. Underdevelopment of consciousness in this regard threatens to weaken cultural identity. If this lack of consciousness regards the center of culture and lasts for a longer time, that center becomes less and less understandable, loses its meaning and significance, drops out of interpersonal communication and dwindles. This may result in weakening a cultural identity,

that is, in a change of the culture of a society, or even in its disintegration. This selective function of identity is exceptionally important in an era of great changes.

Dynamics of Cultural Identity

The cultural identity of ethnic (national), religious, or family groups is a dynamic phenomenon: it can develop or wither. To a great extent it depends on the following factors.

Richness and Vitality of Centers of Culture. The vitality of centers of culture manifests itself above all through the fact that these centers, as a whole or through their particular elements, inspire understanding by members of the society, stimulate positive experiences and feelings, shape bonds between people and stimulate them to action and reflection on cultural products. In concrete social life this makes itself manifest, among others ways, through the development of language and customs; through appearance of new ideas, strivings, and events uniting a large number of citizens; through sustaining regional cultures, the development of social consciousness, the building of visions of the future; and through overcoming conflicts and crises.

Harmonious Union of Past, Present and Future. Each society has its history, but it is not a living tradition in every society. It loses this property when in the collective consciousness there appear lacunae or "blank spots," as an effect of eliminating from general education disreputable, shameful, or even horrid events, when the sole task of general education is to provide students with unalloyed story of "social success". Complete knowledge of the past helps better to understand and shape the present, as well as pointing one toward the future. "If we are to know where we are going we have to know where we come from."

So is it also with a nation, as emphasizes Norman Davies. "A nation without history wanders as a man without memory." Joachim Lelewel convinced his compatriots about this truth over 150 years ago, writing: "weak is an edifice whose foundations are not rooted in the ground." So he advised the Seym of 1831 to learn "how to combine the past with the future." Full historical consciousness is essential because its content is composed of knowledge of the group, of acquaintance with its dominant values, norms, and patterns, as well as with a society's weak points.

The knowledge of the history of all that is positive and negative in a society constitutes its cultural identity. The continuity of history is particularly important in a society in which any type authoritarian regime comes to power. "According to G. Orwell, totalitarian regimes bury history in the tomb of memory." They do it deliberately in order to cut the society off from proven effective methods of struggle with such regimes, and in order to limit access to material that could serve the society as a basis for elaborating models of its development more optimal than the one actually in practice.

The Self-image of a Society. According to Levi Strauss, "each culture has its theoreticians." Completing this statement, we could add that each society has its elites. Individual theoreticians and collective bodies of elites together form a full image of their sociocultural system; they determine the center of its culture. They point out factors of development as well as impending threats. They locate their society among others, defining its specific roles, or even its specific mission. So French theoreticians of culture advance the idea that France is a carrier of civilization for countries of Africa and Asia. German theoreticians of culture formulated a thesis that continues to emerge that Germans are carriers of cultures for the East. The idea of being a carrier of culture

even justified their invasive wars with Slavic tribes and states. Theoreticians of culture in Poland, on the other hand, created a doctrine of "the rampart of Christianity," first in regard to the flood of Islam, and recently to the Communist invasion. There were also ideologists of the Polish Messianism who claimed among others that Poland, with its history and culture, is a carrier of higher values for the morally and spiritually decaying countries of Europe.

Stanisław Ossowski, aware of the fact that each society forms a general self image, a specific doctrine and ideology about itself, distinguished between a private and an ideological fatherland. The ideological fatherland is the total image of a society, while the private fatherland is simply the land of one's fathers, an environment in which the individual is born, grows up and works. Individuals can simultaneously belong to both fatherlands: private and ideological. Hence an inhabitant of Podlasie is at heart both rooted in the land of Podlasie and a Pole, just as a Californian is at the same time an American. For one cannot be just a Pole in general, and it is difficult nowadays to be only "from Podlasie". Individuals are rooted in a concrete, local milieu that forms a part of some global environment.

The image, doctrine or ideology of one's own sociocultural system are important, for they offer a specific form of social and private life. This does not at all mean that all members of a society follow its patterns. Yet it binds all in a way, at least in this minimal sense that it rewards behavior consistent with its patterns and stigmatizes contrary behavior. This suggests what kind of action is appropriate and what is to be avoided.

Global images of sociocultural systems, their ideologies, are created by elites, above all by intellectuals. They play an important role for, according to Max Weber, they have the fullest access to the "values of culture" and they claim the right of leadership in the domain of culture. In the opinion of Leszek Kołakowski, they are creators, and their creativity is deprived of practical aspects. They are perceived by society "as those who live `in the world of symbols and for symbols' (Kornhauser), who feel `an internal need to penetrate the veil of immediate concrete experience' (Shils), `whose object of interest is thought and culture, and not administration or production' (Seton-Watson)." So they present themselves to society as those who see, feel, know, and are able to do more than average citizens. Moreover, in their action society perceives aspects of selflessness. Both factors cause lead society to entrust to them the task of formulating its total self-representation. It trusts that they are concerned with its advantage and act on behalf of its common good.

The Balance between the Care by a Society of its Own Cultural Identity and Openness to the Cultural Identity of Other Societies. Care of a society's own cultural identity may cause a dimunition of openness for other cultures, or even complete closure to them. Meanwhile, openness is indispensable for the development of one's own cultural identity. "In isolation culture shrivels and perishes," concludes the *Mexican Declaration*. This thesis has been confirmed by the results of Ralph Linton's research on the development of cultures. According to him, a particular culture draws only about 10 percent from its cultural heritage, borrowing the other 90 percent from other cultures, transforming or integrating the borrowed elements into its own body. A society's own cultural identity must then remain continuously in touch with other cultures; it must be in dialogue with them. This need for the Polish culture was acknowledged, e.g., J. Lelewel when he counseled the Seym in 1831 to "relate our own Polish cause to the strivings of the century."

Sense of Threat. A sense of threat may be caused by external pressure, or any kind of interference with a sociocultural system with the intention of changing, taking advantage, or even

destroying it. The threat may be real or imaginary. All these situations evoke counteractions that help the members of a society define precisely the center of their culture that deserves defense by all possible means. This, in turn, consolidates society and strengthens its cultural identity. All too many examples of this phenomenon are provided by history. At least two taken from the most recent period deserve review.

Germans, passing through a crisis of identity after the World War II, used foreigners to revivify it. Since the beginning of the eighties many nationally oriented politicians represent alien residents living in Germany as a threat for the German society, emphasizing the otherness of their culture and making of them the primary problem of internal state policy. These actions consolidated Germans, urged them to take deeper interest in their culture, to define its specific character and distinctness in relation to foreigners.

Jews in Poland after the World War II actually lost their identity. It began to revive only after the so-called March events in 1968, when a certain number of Polish citizens of Jewish descent, unknown to this day, were removed from their posts and quit Poland. These facts were widely reported and made vivid in the public mind. A sense of threat to Jews in Poland was artificially created with the impression that Jews were persecuted and forced to leave Poland en masse. It could not have been a great number since according to yearbooks the years 1968 and 1969 were not marked with any particular emigration of Polish citizens. In 1968 17,201 persons permanently left Poland; in 1969 it was only 22,473 persons, a number comparable to the year 1967, when 21,857 persons emigrated. Neither the reasons of the anti-Jewish campaign of 1968, nor the number of Jews that left Poland at that time are exactly known to this day. But creating a situation of threat turned out to be very fruitful for revival of the ethnic identity of Jews who were so integrated into Polish society that their neighbors and associates living or working next door did not know their origin. Since that time a revival of Jewish identity can be observed, and is now becoming a renaissance.

Polish Cultural Identity. The problem of Polish cultural identity achieved in recent years has become one of the most urgent subjects of literary and historical analyses, as well as of sociological and psychological research. Questions like: "who are we and what are we like?", "what is our origin and where are we going?", "what are we to hold to, and stand for?", "what can be abandoned without abandoning ourselves?" today require a new and more complete answer, for the reality in which we live becomes less legible for us or even incomprehensible, more divided and uncertain. This atmosphere is caused by rapid political changes and by economic transformations, by the development of general and technical sciences, by a broad opening to other cultures and the development of a mass culture that mixes forms and contents from different epochs and cultures, and creates new ones on their basis. We feel that something is going on with our cultural identity or that something can happen to it. Realizing its changes and its threats, we are more than ever aware of its value; we defend it and look for mechanisms to support its development in entirely new conditions.

The question of the cultural identity of Polish society seems to be particularly interesting, perhaps even more than other European countries, for in recent decades we deal with phenomena which confront Polish cultural identity with serious challenges. Among such phenomena we would enumerate the following.

Instability of the Human Factor. In the period of World War II Polish society lost more than 6 million citizens, and during two post-war generations its population increased by 13,949,000

(from 23,930,000 to 37,879,000). In the face of the present population (around 38 million in 1992) this means that almost half of Polish society was replaced during two generations.

In this period the Polish population was very mobile, both spatially and socially. This mobility was based on three factors: changes of the political system, displacement due to border changes, and industrialization and urbanization characteristic of the epoch. Change of the political system elevated thousands of people from lower social classes and placed them in responsible offices, while demoting other thousands. Industrialization and urbanization changed the proportion of village to urban population in the lifetime of two generations. In 1988 the percentage of urban population (61.2 percent) was close to that of village population right after the World War II (62.2 percent in 1946). Changes of boundaries of the Polish state evoked a real migration of nations. Millions of people moved inside the country from east and south westward and northwards. A huge number of citizens left: from 1952 to 1989 1,094,800 people emigrated from Poland.

These phenomena point to an extensive instability of the human factor, that is, of the group that creates and transfers cultural identity, and hence is of crucial importance for its preservation and development.

Official Change of the Profile of the Culture. In 1945 a socialist political system, based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology and on alliance with the USSR, was imposed by force on Polish society. This meant the rejection or even the persecution of an essential part of Poland's cultural heritage, shaped on the basis of Christian values and connections with Western culture. The new culture, called socialist, imposed by all possible means and methods, was essentially different from that rooted in the Polish society throughout centuries. The greatest discrepancies occurred in the following domains: a) the new culture rejected the absolute value of God and the transcendence of man; b) it proclaimed the priority of the state above the human person; c) it raised struggle to the rank of a principle of social life and development; d) it instituted the primacy of the state above private property; e) it did not recognize the value of the past and of tradition, and even neglected them; and f) it attributed to the state the role of the sole patron of culture and completely subordinated to it all artistic and cultural activities.

In 1989, thanks to the firm nonviolent and solidary struggle of the society for sovereignty and democracy, the country underwent a change of political systems -- from atheistic totalitarianism to democracy. The new system searches support in an utterly different, even if inconsistent, ideology. One part of the society pleads for Christian principles of social life, another part for liberal and areligious rules and foundations, and still another is faithful to the socialist ideology.

In consequence of these changes many lacunae appeared in the social consciousness of many significant social groups. Uncertainty occurred as to what is true and what is wrong, along with mistrust towards authorities and lack of some clear vision of the future. Such psychosocial attitudes do not support the formation of cultural identity.

Deliberate Weakening Layers of Society Important for Culture and the Formation of New Cultural Elites. Extermination by both invaders in the years of the World War II -- Germany and USSR -- as well as the actions of the new socialist government in the years directly after the war almost completely destroyed strata of the populace important for social and cultural life: landed proprietors, gentry, bourgeoisie and rich townspeople. Above all the intelligentsia, which since the XIX century played a leading role in Polish society, was vitiated in this process. As a result of World War II, one third of all instructors in Polish schools in 1939 and almost one fifth of the diocesan clergy had been killed. After the war a majority of the former intelligentsia were removed

from the official culture-creating milieus as well as from institutions of culture, or they were put under strict control. The new political order created a new social stratum destined to shape a new sociocultural system. This was the Polish United Workers' Party. In 1988 there were 2,132,043 members, exceeding by almost half a million the number with university education (1,679,000 in 1987), that is, the intelligentsia. New people succeeded to important offices in all domains of social life. Culture had been politicized and threatened to infect the cultural identity of the Polish society.

The phenomena described above were dangerous for the Polish cultural identity, for they implied a so called de-radication, detaching culture from its ground understood literally and symbolically, that is, from our whole heritage. It is easy to maintain a family, regional, or national culture when people from one generation to another live in the same buildings, work in the same factories, and stick to the same structures and organizations; when all material possessions pass on to children and grandchildren; and when people are able to find entries with annotations on their birth, baptism, or wedding in parochial (or municipal) registers. It is, however, much more difficult when people move and their life environment is destroyed. Then the sociocultural system has consciously to maintain and develop its identity. Culture then becomes a main link between generations and grounds people who are in transition. Cultural identity has in such cases to gain its autonomous existence and to become not only a factor providing continuity of culture, but also a culture-creating factor. This was the case of the Polish society after World War II.

The phenomena mentioned above tore at the social system for a certain time. It damaged the system deeply in some domains, but did not manage to change Polish cultural identity. In spite of many changes in the domain of culture, generally speaking the cultural identity of Poles was the least damaged in comparison to neighboring countries which underwent similar situations. Moreover, in overcoming these difficulties it emerged strengthened, just as in times of the partitions.

Summary

Cultures delineate borders no less distinctly than do political treaties, and these borders are less expensive than political boarders. Without walls, barbed wire, watch-towers, soldiers and customs officers. People know where one culture ends and where the other begins. Even if the borders of cultures are made perceivable by dividing lines, the zones of contact or, to put it more precisely, of blending are relatively wide.

With the ability to travel and relatively easily to cross the borders of cultures we sense that we are more sure of ourselves and more unrestrained in our own symbolic *universum*, looking for a job or an apartment or shopping. Communication with the others also becomes easier. Recognition of this phenomenon entails greater interest in one's own, as well as in alien, cultures. Culture is no longer taken for granted; there is increasing need to study it and consciously to cocreate it. Also the phenomenon of cultural identity ceases to be a quasi-automatic process binding individuals with the societies in which they were born and educated. Of course, birth and education still play a crucial role, but the cultural identity of individuals goes beyond these. It points toward the development of societies which individuals themselves choose and shape as their own, and which they find satisfies their needs and desires. This possibility -- much more frequent now than before -- imposes on societies a duty to pay greater attention to culture. It must allow all members of society to breathe freely, to produce, to be creative and to develop. It must be a culture rich in content and forms, and above all benevolent towards all people so that as human beings all feel well therein.

Chapter II
Family, Family Values and Home

Leon Dyczewski & Barbara Jedynak

Andrzej Zajączkowski, describing and analyzing the "Polish nobile Republic," states that it had the "structure of small neighborhoods." Broadly understood the kernel of these neighborhoods were its families. Zofia Jabłonowska, analyzing the Polish society in a later period, when Poland was already erased from the map of Europe, calls it "a nation of families." Both statements are quite right and highlight the fact that family, family values and family home played a great role in Polish culture and have not lost their significance to this day. It is difficult to trace precisely the sources and reasons of such great importance of these values for individuals as well as for social life in Poland. They are manifold. Putting aside the generally accepted thesis that these values are deeply rooted in the Slav culture and that Christianity only strengthened them by enriching them with new contents and forms for their realization, it is worth focusing on a few other factors that have consolidated the presence of the above mentioned values in the Polish culture, and then to point to manifestations of their actuality today.

Historical Factors Shaping Family, Family Values and Family Home

The Large Percentage of People with Full Rights in Polish Class Society

In contrast to other European countries, the population of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had a large percentage of nobility. Some authors say (probably exaggerating) that before the partitions nobility formed as much as a quarter of the Polish-speaking population. It was a very diversified social layer: from great land owners to the poor. In the times of the partitions the minor nobility constituted 95 percent of this social group. It is important, however, that it consisted of people enjoying full civil rights, whereas the rights of other groups, equally numerous, were very limited. Noblemen, even if their farms were poorer than those of free peasants, outstripped them by the very fact that they were independent in what they owned and what they did. Before the law the nobility, even if only within limits of their farms, were equal to voivodes, as is claimed in a saying noblemen repeated with delight. It gave them a sense of certainty. The houses they built had stable foundations, and they took care of them as best they could. On their grounds, even if not extensive, they took delight in their independence, feeling in their houses as lords and receiving whom they wanted and how they wanted. Their legal status, together with their relative welfare, enabled them to be in touch with wide circles of family and neighbors. Indeed, family was not restricted to the nearest relatives. Cousins and other relatives were included even to the fourth and fifth degree of kinship. Special names were created for even the most remote kinds of kindred. Godparents were also considered family (most frequently they were just relatives). The sense of kinship was so vivid among noblemen that it extended over the whole social group. The nobility addressed one another as "brother" or "Mr. brother" (*panie bracie*), even if there was no factual kinship. Especially the poorer nobility had a strong sense of family values. In central Poland, above all in Mazovia and Podlasie, noble families founded their own neighborhoods and villages called "yeomen's settlements" (*zaścianki*). They derived their names from names of families which lived there; for instance in a settlement called Krzymoszyce there

lived only the Krzymowskis. Strangers who wanted to find someone in such places had to know the names of the person's grandparents or great-grandparents, for first names were often repeated even within a single family. People from other countries that visited Poland had the impression that everybody is everyone's family. Even if descriptions of family life of that time refer first of all to nobility, the sense of family values was vivid among peasants and townspeople as well. Polish peasants willingly imitated the patterns of family life in noble mansions, just as the nobility took delight in the wide net of family connections.

Family above Divisions

Poland belongs to those rare societies in Europe that did not go through sharp religious or ideological divisions. When such divisions occur in a family, they weaken or even break family ties. Thus the XVI century Reformation, and subsequently the great French revolution of the XVIII century disintegrated families. Some authors are of the opinion that small families appeared in Europe as early as the time of the Reformation, above all in Germany and Scandinavia. Families then split and became isolated from one another because of denominational differences, or consequent upon unforeseen social promotions or demotion. In Poland, even if denominational or, in the XIX century, ideological differences appeared, they did not evoke such radical family divisions as in the countries of Western Europe. Family ties turned out to be stronger than religious or ideological differences. A much more important factor that differentiated families was the attitude towards invaders and imposed governments: in principle Poles avoided contact with those family members, relatives or cousins who collaborated with alien authorities.

It is worth mentioning a certain particularity of Polish family law that supported the family. In Western countries all family property passed into the hands of one heir, most often the first-born son. His brothers and sisters had to content themselves with some form of lifetime endowment, and either to leave the family home or be maintained there by their elder brother. Even if this law efficiently ordered matters of interitance and was economically advantageous for many family members, it could cause a sense of injustice and distance towards the closest family members and dampen family ties. According to Polish law, whose beginnings are to be sought in pre-Christian times, family property belonged to all its members, rather than it to just one heir. It was divided among all the children and all had equal rights to it. A sense of family and a related sense of justice clearly predominated over economic calculation. Hence fragmentation of family property in Poland was always greater than in Germany or France. This is true till this day, but family ties remain tight.

Features of a Polish Home

The home plays an immense role in a Polish family. The contemporary model has been shaped gradually and is reflected in many records. It is diversified and went through various stages of development. In the distant past it was characterize best by a nobleman's house or mansion. This particular model was overcome by other social layers and influenced other types of homes: the intelligentsia home, peasant home or worker home.

In the Old Polish literature as well as in the Sarmatian memoirs (Mikołaj Rej, Jan Kochanowski, Jędrzej Kitowicz) the mansion home is described as "upright and dear," "ancient," "God-fearing," hospitable, safe, cheerful, with characteristic alleys, trees in the courtyard, a road leading to the mansion and an entry gate. Later descriptions of mansions drew on the same

Sarmatian model and related them to family, childhood, free land of the fathers, and national and religious traditions. The mansion of Soplica in Mickiewicz's epoc *Pan Tadeusz* is a synthesis of the experiences of the family home and the national as well as religious memory of the Polish society. Writers of later generations, including our own, return to this pattern. Home became as much a real as an ideal entity, dreamt of and unique. It was transformed into a fundamental value to which everyone can refer in any moment of his or her life, especially in moments of misfortune, loss and separation. Such a vision of home was included by Maria Konopnicka in her poem "A Song on Home":

> Do you love home, that house with an old roof
> That tells us stories of ancient days and deeds
> Familiar sight of moss-grown threshold;
> It welcomes you from all your thorny ways

History

The Polish home is closely related to the Polish nation. This relation deepens and acquires its specific traits especially in the period of partitions and subsequently during the Nazi occupation as well as during the domination by the Communist regime. Maurycy Mochnacki, analyzing the situation of Polish society at the time of the November uprising (1831) states that the enslaved nation found a special form of life, a "home existence" or a "being-in-the-family" that gave it the possibility of opposing despotism. The nation gained a special power and was transformed in the inner strength stored in the "fathers' nest," that is, in the family. This "inner way of being" conditioned the survival of the nation, and became a source of its capacity for renewal, independent of the form of political existence which had been lost. Mochnacki says that it became a feature distinguishing the Polish culture from the cultures of the invader states. Those cultures, based on despotic systems unlike the Polish culture, did not survive the decomposition of their state forms, for they did not develop an "organic way of being," that is, home and family. Polish homes, as proves the author of *Powstanie narodu polskiego*, bear the whole mystery of Polish insurrections, for they managed, through their proper system of values ("home virtues"), to educate a free people who avenged despotism, and to preserve the inner, domestic history of the nation.

Adam Mickiewicz developed his conception of the Polish home in a similar manner. He based his theory of home on a conviction that in the situation of division of culture into official and hidden forms earlier ways of life and customs undergo essential transformations. The home privatized and absorbed what had been destroyed or suppressed in public life. Thus, to a certain degree it lost its character as a quiet nest, but introduced instead new values, preserving and creating above all an "inner home tradition". Mickiewicz wrote about it, among others, in the text "On the National Spirit" (*O duchu narodowym* -- 1832). Homes, like churches and cemeteries, became special places. They preserved tradition, memory and faith, forces that, according to Mickiewicz, are most essential in the process of vivifying and sustaining national feelings. "Hence, it is easy to prove," he wrote, e.g.,

that the main and indeed the national formatino were for us the opinions and feelings of ancient Poland. They live to this day in the memory of our parents, relatives and friends, are revealed in conversations, and are collected in various moral and political maxims. They guide common judgments concerning people and events, rewarding some with praise and punishing others with

rebukes. This inner home tradition is composed of remnants of opinions and feelings that once filled the minds of our ancestors. After the collapse, destruction and suppression of public opinion, these remnants were sheltered in the homes of the nobility and of the general populace. In a body that is ill and weakened blood and vital forces gather around its heart where they are to be sought and redistributed throughout the whole body. From these traditions there must emerge the independence of our country and its future forms of government.

According to Mickiewicz, in a home that preserves the national memory the living or spoken language has a particular role. It is, as he wrote, the "content of its whole historical and family life"; it constitutes its unique climate and testifies to the deepest bonds of the nation. Oral tales, songs, legends, stories and poems preserved the memory of ancient and new events, carried forward living truths, and constructed a moral world of free people.

Ideals

The pattern of domestic behavior was due to faith in the existence of deep relations between Providence and the earthly world of action. The entire model of Polish culture had, according to Mickiewicz, its roots in religion; it is there that the nation found the strength necessary to overcome the adversities of its history. "Faith in direct connections between the supernatural world and the earthly domain, he wrote, constituted the moral and political strength of Polish society. There was a need to appeal to this faith whenever the nation's leaders wanted to find the force for resistance or the strength for action." Persistence in the Catholic faith supported also the indissolubility and continuity of some forms of domestic life, influencing the consistency of families and their spiritual bonds. National life was specifically intertwined with religious life, drawing from it support and its highest sanction.

The author of *Pan Tadeusz* thought that the Polish home needs heroic elements, and that family life is supported by the great acts of its fathers and sons. They constitute the realm of "living" -- not just of theoretical -- truths. Heroes and saints should be held in "life-giving" reverence.

Those who maintain that the world does not need miracles any more, that nations do not need heroes and that homes do not need holy patrons should taste in their own families the fruits of their materialistic doctrines as genuine formulas of deadness. Expelling from his family saints and heroes, the father will himself become a stranger in his own house, having no longer anything to say to his wife, children, and servants.

The domestic life of Poles in Mickiewicz's conception should have an heroic style, bringing to the fore Poland's exceptional destiny and history and its relation to great ideals. A particular role in shaping this heroic style of the Polish homes was ascribed to women by the poet, especially in his lectures on Slavic literature.

The ideals of family developed in Poland had some influence on other cultures, for instance on Slovak culture. Among the writings of Ludovit Štur (1815-1856), father of the Slovak movement of national rebirth, one text is entitled *Conventional and Public Life* (1845), evidently inspired by the Polish reflection on the home culture in the period of enslavement. Štur developed his conception of home in the conditions of "an enslaved land" and nation. It cannot be an egoistic home, gathering to celebrate only one's dear little family, but one that would form its members as

a "civil community". Home is to prepare family members for heroic acts, and develop in them resistance against enslavement. Štur made a sharp critique of homes developing only such simple, basic virtues as love of a peaceful life, assiduousness, provident care of other family members and docility. Such patterns lead to selfishness and lack of interest in matters of a higher rank; they cause spiritual depravation and bring about a slave mentality. Selfish homes cultivate specific customs, cherishing mainly events of family life: baptisms, weddings, guest receptions, burials, etc. According to him in more developed and spiritually more advanced countries these matters occupy a more modest position in family life and are celebrated "simply and shortly". Homes should stress in their customs acts that are significant for national life, thus resisting the threat of slave mentality. Štur, just as Mochnacki and Mickiewicz, developed a postulate of deepening domestic life and of relating it to public life and matters. Home life should constitute a basis generating noble acts and the "higher unity" which is indispensable for maintaining and developing national identity.

The Polish home in the period of partitions created new sets of values and corresponding patterns of behavior and symbols. It created as well its own specific language and augmented the roles of family members: grandparents, mothers, fathers, and children. Elder family members (grandfathers, grandmothers, mothers) took on the responsibility of introducing into the consciousness of young Poles "eagles' ideals," that is, the ideals of liberating actions. Memoirs offer us many descriptions of patriotic home meetings, where the process of a specific transmission of liberation ideals and of love of the fatherland took place. Such meetings were held in a particular atmosphere of concentration and conspiracy, so that the songs sung, the melodies played and the stories told did not put the enemies on their guard. The history of the nation was formed by stories about heroic acts of relatives and neighbors, as well as of great Poles. It was a vivid history, thrilling, expressed often in music and song. This climate gave rise to such peculiar customs as patriotic baptisms, when sabres were crossed over the head of the "baptized" as a sign of accepting him into the community of knights of freedom, not slaves. The fact that the "baptized" belonged to the Polish national community was manifested by special garments, the Cracovian regional costume, which since the time of the Kościuszko insurrection had been a sign of liberty. Combining the signs of the sabre and the cross was very characteristic for the whole style of patriotic customs, uniting the culture of liberty with religious culture.

Patriotism

As time went on customs changed, as well as the ceremonies associated with familial and religious feasts: Christmas, Easter, All Saints and All Souls Day. Especially Christmas Eve, so much celebrated in Polish homes and families, in the post-insurrectional period changed its traditional spontaneous joy with suppers where the entire family met, filling the house with joyful chatter. Many families experienced heavy losses (after the 1863 uprising in Lithuania the repression introduced by the general-governor, Michail Muraviov, called *Vieshatiel* ("the Hanger"), afflicted almost every family). So on this day they recalled especially those who had been killed or were absent. Empty seats were left for them at the table, letters and poems were read, past events were recalled, the Polish motive dominated moods and memories. The feast of Christmas began to be associated with faith in regaining liberty; celebrants mixed Christmas carols with patriotic songs. This was so in the country as well as in various places of exile, wherever Polish patriots were present. The custom of singing Christmas carols together with patriotic songs at the table Christmas Eve has been preserved till this day.

House interiors were also decorated with patriotic elements: little crucifixes, various trinkets with the emblem of the Eagle, clocks playing the Dąbrowski Mazurka, and souvenirs from battle fields and prisons -- relics left behind by those who had been killed or were lost. History intruded into the silence of family nests and left its traces. The home was integrated into sacred history and the living history of the nation. It became a peculiar place and was transformed into "the Eagle's nest," a "citadel of Polish identity," a "temple". We find the same aura in the famous series of paintings by Artur Grottger related to the 1863 uprising (*Warszawa I, Warszawa II, Polonia, Lithuania*).

Some paintings from the series represent house interiors and doorways. Wincenty Pol devoted a special commentary to the home. He drew attention to the fact that thresholds and front galleries played a special role in the architecture of Polish noble mansions. They were related to the way of living of small communities, welcoming and saying good-bye to their members. Going out to the gallery meant cordiality, hospitality, friendship, joy. Passing the threshold of the house obliged its masters to a particular care of the guest, according to the saying "When a guest comes, God comes into the house".

W. Pol wrote about the function of front galleries in Polish houses:

Front galleries of castles and wooden mansions are a proper and distinctive feature of our architecture. . . . Nowhere else had they such significance. What a crown is when placed on the top of a family shield for its coat of arms, that is a gallery for its house or mansion. From there orders were given, there groups of peasants came with wreaths and greeting bows, on them banquets were given when there was not enough room in the house, or when it was too sultry inside. On galleries last blessings and farewells were given to dear ones, stirrup-cups as well as welcomes. The expression 'family threshold' has something touching and tender in it, not to be found anywhere else.

Religion and Tradition

Chapels and altars constituted an indispensable element of domestic life, gathering families everyday and focusing their thoughts on family and patriotic matters. Memoirs from that period also report the phenomenon of an increasing influence of religion on family life. There are significant differences between domestic religiosity of the end of the XVIII century and the second half of the XIX century. This concerns in particular these homes where only women were left. The atmosphere of tension, fear, threat and hope found expression in faith in God, in His love and power.

Household religious and patriotic customs were shaped to a great extent by mothers of families. In appreciation of their merits in this domain they were given the name of Polish Mother (*Matka Polka*). Mothers combined in themselves traditions of the culture of noble mansions, Christian religion and folk culture.

Strengthening the roles of mothers, fathers and grandfathers in cultivating national and religious customs with clear patriotic significance was an effort at creating, in the words of W. Pol, the "private life" of the nation -- a credible history of the nation lived in its family homes. Home became the particular place of initiation of young family members into their history, thereby transforming itself into a "temple of national customs" (Stanisław Staszic, Adam Mickiewicz, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski).

Polish houses, set in country landscapes, were bound with the Polish land. On this land their foundations were raised, and there they lasted to the end, sharing the land's destiny in times of partitions and later in the context of the post partition period. One can speak about a particular axiological indissolubility of home, house, land, and landscape in the Polish noble culture. The consistency of all these elements was strengthened through reference to the divine order of the world. The Catholic religion strengthened Slavic bonds linking man to the soil, nature, and to one's home. Noble customs preserved many rites and patterns of behavior related to this axiological sphere (the significance of thresholds, kissing the ground, sowing rites, farewell and welcome rites, attachment to yard, trees, etc.).

The Polish home followed its members wherever Polish political immigrants went, forming a "living protest" against the country's political situation. It was an element of the nation's common manifesto rejecting violence and tyranny. In this frame Polish traditions and customs were cultivated. Many houses and apartments of Polish immigrants became home institutions where fellow Poles used to gather. They were places of creative work and of political activity, but they were also often poor and wretched. Descriptions of interiors of émigrés' apartments suggest a peculiar selection of images that synthesize Polish identity, expressed in a choice of paintings, objects, and signs having a well defined depth of meaning (crucifixes, Eagles, images of Our Lady, portraits and busts of Tadeusz Kościuszko, Kazimierz Pułaski, Stefan Czarniecki).

These expressed a vivid need of dwelling among objects and signs that were especially dear, recalling a reality of which Poles were deprived, as well as its world of values. At the same time, these objects indicated the ongoing process of a certain stereotypization of the symbolic sphere in an enslaved culture. A certain group of symbols separated itself from the others, symbols that were always valid and vivid were recalled and functioned in the common consciousness. They cocreated a closed world, characterized by its peculiar signs, fully comprehensible and felt only by members of the community inflicted by misfortune.

The process of transmitting cultural values from one generation to another in Polish homes from the time of partition did not end upon regaining liberty. Only the formulas and stylistic accents of patriotic customs changed; family groups interested in participating in national traditions even widened.

Workers' Homes

Thusfar we have analyzed above all noble mansions as the most "genotypical" for other types of homes. Country houses, as well as the emerging intelligentsia and worker homes, remained in the sphere of influence of the mansion culture. Especially country and worker homes were in position to generate a common cultural language of behavior and symbols integrating the nation. Memoirs of authors coming from the *szlachta* (noble) layer provide interesting materials for understanding the penetration of the noble into other cultures. J. Kitowicz wrote of peasant homes in his "Description of Mores". The "dwellings of the minor *szlachta* did not differ much from peasant cabins," but reflected the value patterns of noble mansions. The depth and stages of these similarities were dictated by the rhythm of history, general wellbing, scope of rights and possibilities of participation in the exchange of values.

All liberation tempests influenced village life, for what happened with the habitants of the greater and smaller mansions was of interest to villagers and peasants and left more or less conscious traces in the values of peasant homes. Known and accessible documents of peasant consciousness (folk songs, recorded narrative tales, legends, folk art, and, later on, letters, memoirs

and periodicals) suggest that from the Kościuszko insurrection and before to a certain degree the Bar confederation began a long and complicated process of permeating peasant cabins with liberation traditions. It is no accident that Franciszek Karpiński in his lamentation on the partition of Polish lands made a hero of a Sokal beggar wandering from one village to another and announcing the bad news (*Pieśń dziada sokalskiego*). The insurrection "insignia" (scythe, Cracow cap, russet overcoat) were taken from the peasant culture. The emerging world of liberation ideas needed organic references to folk culture and increasingly profited from its elements.

The symbolic cultures of the noble mansions and peasant cabins differed. Many customs and patriotic objects remained illegible for the peasant culture and needed translation into a simplified language for reception into the different surroundings. Servants' halls, churches, taprooms, dramatic folk spectacles, religious feasts and the accompanying indulgences, pilgrimages, processions, etc. worked out specific simplified codes able to carry on the patriotic values of the nobility. Fidelity to the faith of the ancestors, to soil, and to family were essential components that helped to introduce the patriotic values of the *szlachta* homes into village cabins. Peasant homes were unable to create the whole complicated "patriotic theater". The peasants' Poland was the land near their cabins. It was marked by crucifixes standing by the roads, by village churches with adjacent cemeteries, and by mansions hidden behind clusters of trees.

The XIX century and the subsequent period of regaining the Polish state brought a considerable influx of memoirs written by peasants (also by emigrants) and of peasant literary activity. Further, the destiny of peasant homes was more closely related to national history. New generations of peasants engaged more and more intensively their villages and cabins in Polish affairs, the more so as they were able to produce their own leaders and authors. A new value emerged: the sense of honor and responsibility for Polish destiny. These values, previously typical of the intelligentsia and *szlachta*, came now more and more strongly to the fore in peasant and worker homes.

Worker homes appeared last and were not formed in proximity to the mansion culture, as was the case of peasant homes. Yet they assimilated (often through genealogies of fathers and mothers) values and traditions proper both to nobility and to the peasants. This process, as it seems, was characteristic for the period between the 1st and the 2nd World Wars (for instance among railway workers, especially in families of enginers, ironworkers, better qualified employees, plant supervisors, and construction foremen).

The homes of Polish workers, described in memoirs, the press, films and novels are characterized by written culture, a strong sense of class solidarity (*Sól ziemi czarnej, Perła w koronie*) and by working out some characteristic, nonsentimental ways of fighting for the country's existence and independence (Silesian uprisings). Around these values a specific set of customs and an ethos of worker homes were clearly formed in the second Polish Republic.

The homes of the intelligentsia, on the other hand, were shaped in the second half of the XIX century under the strong influence of the noble mansion culture, system of values they assumed. They were anxious to distinguish themselves from peasant and worker homes (*Ci ludzie* by Helena Boguszewska) as is documented by a whole variety of memoirs. These homes had their bards (Stefan Żeromski) who created their permanent and culture-creating legends. Elements shaping their mores and values can be enumerated in the following order: cult of nobility, geneologies, imitation of the mansion culture in Sarmatian sociability, respecting etiquette, strong commitment to liberation ideals (testified by constant influx of the intelligentsia into liberation movements), high esteem for education and symbolic culture, tendency to transform houses and apartments in moments of threat into domestic institutions assuming essential social functions, cultivation of a

conviction about the intelligentsia's extraordinary social role, commitment to Promethean values and to work for society (*Siłaczka, Ludzie bezdomni, Uciekła mi przepióreczka*), striving for self-analysis, constant conventionalization and novelization of the nation's collective memory, and modern patriotic customs.

Manifestations of Family Values and the Way Polish Homes Function in Contemporary Times

As family values and the life of Polish homes manifest themselves in the most different ways, it is not possible here to present them all. We will therefore point out only those which seem the most typical of present Polish culture.

a. Various studies made in the seventies and the eighties indicate that the highest values of the young generation of Poles are a happy marriage and a happy family life. These prevail notably over all other values chosen by this group. Young people, irrespective of whether they come from happy or unhappy families, in a greater number than in Western countries desire to establish their own families and to have children.

b. The family has a decisive influence in shaping the life attitude and the system of values and norms of the younger generation. Research indicates that the transmission of culture in families is broad in content. Various family customs are maintained, even if they are no longer fully understood by the younger generation. Here the oldest generation plays a great role. Even if grandfathers, or, as it is increasingly the case, great-grandfathers, have lost much of their former formal authority over their adult children and grandchildren, they still enjoy considerable moral authority. Especially strong ties bind them with their grandchildren. A considerably "intergenerational arch" is a frequent phenomenon, that is, children have deeper contacts with their grandparents than with their parents.

c. Circles of relatives have shrunk in the last years, with fewer members than before, but the bonds maintained with the relatives who are left are richer in content and more emotionally intense. This is a matter of a selection of relatives. Close contact is kept with those relatives who are close by some other reason than bonds of blood alone: proximity of habitation, ease of interpersonal contacts, common interests, or shared business affairs. In spite of this selectivity, contacts with other relatives also are sustained, but these are sporadic and limited to family feasts such as weddings, burials and less frequently baptisms. Namedays and birthdays gather more and more persons from outside the families as more friends are invited. Weddings and burials gather the whole family of several dozen people, often more than a hundred. There is a deeply interiorized duty to invite these events all family members, including those with whom no relations otherwise are maintained, or with whom only occasional letters are exchanged. Family bonds pertain to the dead as well as to the living. No other Western people visits the tombs of their dead as generally as in Poland: on the All Saints Day trains and roads are overcrowded as almost all Poles travel to visit the graves of their dead.

d. The family is the institution where, above all and in the first place, aid is sought in crises and in difficult situations, rather than in specialized institutions as is the case in many Western countries. It is also the family that helps in looking for apartments, jobs or other aspects of life.

e. These strong and vivid family bonds, broader than just a circle of parents and children, make the so-called nuclear family model unpopular in Poland. Much more often than in Western countries the so-called broader family pattern operates in its two basic forms: a) as a

multigenerational family living under the same roof, where adult family members have a common or separate household; and b) as a multigenerational family in which adult children live separately, but in the vicinity, and remain in constant touch, visiting and helping one another in need, both spiritually and materially. Sociological studies conducted in cities, both in old and new neighborhoods, show that more than half the families with grandparents are multigenerational bound in various degrees by common households or at least by common habitation. Certainly this is caused partially by housing problems, but strong family bonds also matter a lot in this context. Adult generations, especially the younger, prefer separate over common living space, but in the vicinity, preferably in the same building or block or no farther than within a ten or twenty minutes walk, so that it is possible to visit and help one another without great difficulties. This life form of adult generations may be called intimacy from a distance.

f. Polish homes in the period between the First and the Second World War were shaped at all social levels; all had many common features. These similarities became apparent in the years of Nazi and Soviet occupation during the time of Stalin, as well as in the subsequent years of the communist regime. Piotr Łukasiewicz stresses that during the German invasion broader communities or microcommunities formed on the basis of family ties and friendships. In the homes there was an ongoing process of transmission of national and religious traditions. Services and even the production of goods were organized on a home or family basis, as well as help for friends and for strangers. Łukasiewicz states: "When almost all public institutions, above all the national state, had been destroyed or suspended, homes -- by the very fact of their existence -- seemed to testify continuity of social life. . . . Normal daily domestic life from before the invasion was able to survive." The same role, but in a different way, was played by family and home in the period of the communist regime. To a considerable degree thanks to strong family bonds and to Polish homes the society did not yield to enslavement, but felt free and lived as free people. Thanks to families there were two life streams on the shores of the Vistula: one official, based on imposed structures, and the other unofficial, based on families and on the Polish home. Knowledge of family bonds and acquaintance with Polish homes helps to understand better the fact that in a society in which all associations and organizations -- except the official ones -- were forbidden there were so many such associations. See, for example, the *Lexicon of the Political Opposition 1976-1989*, where the list of political organizations is eight pages long, not to mention hundreds of nonpolitical associations and organizations. To a great extent living family bonds and the specificity of Polish homes facilitated the emergence and development of so many organizations and associations, especially familial ones.

g. Traditions of Polish homes and family values are also one of many factors conditioning the lower divorce rater and the greater number of children in Polish families in comparison with neighboring countries, though these had the same legal and social conditions as Poland and were even better-off economically (e.g., Czechoslovakia, Hungary). Now an increase of divorce rates and a decrease in the number of children are observed in young families, though the reasons of this tendency remain unknown.

Family, family values, and home are precious values in the Polish culture. Commitment to home and to the relatives among whom one grows up, to memories and to family souvenirs, longing for the warmth of the family circle and nostalgia for the charming years of childhood, and the sense of belonging to a family are still strong in the younger generation, in spite of their greater sense of independence. Young people in Poland are tied to their families longer and more

comprehensively than in Western countries. Even when they become independent, they remain closely related.

Chapter III
Community as a Value and Model of Life

Jan Turowski

Community or communality is a value and a model of life. It differs both from an individualistic and from a collectivist way of conceiving relations between individuals and society, and between the common good and that of individuals. From a sociological point of view, communality means a pattern of conduct of individuals in important domains of social life consisting in societal actions, co-responsibility and decision making; this is in contrast to an individualistic or herd-like form of action. It means also a sociocentric orientation of individuals. It is their conviction, view, and feeling that the good, goals, needs, and interest of individuals has always in the past, is now, and will in the future be achieved best by means of a co-responsible realization of the common good, that is, the good of all persons united in common action. In this sense, communality as a desired model of life appears in the social consciousness as a value.

Thus understood, communality asserts itself in four most essential domains of individual and social life, that is: family life, local communities, religious groups, and political life. As communality in family life was broadly discussed in the chapter "Family – Family Values -- Home", here we shall focus on the three other spheres of life.

Local Communities

Communality as a model of life, of joint decision making and cooperation manifests itself in the structures and function of local comminities in Poland. In the preindustrial period the structure and the mode of functioning of villages and small towns as territorial groups was based on the principle of spontaneous cooperation, even if regulated by customs and usages. Villages and towns were socially interconnected by a net of closer and broader family, as well as neighborhood, relations, which obliged members to mutual services and help. Especially the communitary character of life, including cooperation in economic and sociocultural domains, common work and celebration of feasts and entertainment in village communities was broadly known and described. See as an example *Peasants* by Władysław Reymont, which was awarded the prestigious Nobel prize.

A traditional village community was a group, according to Józef Chałasiński, that satisfied the most important common and elementary social needs, and regulated all patterns of conduct and behavior of its members. Village communities as closed and complete small societies embraced individuals in all their interests of life and directed these interests in a specific and uniform way.

Village communities regulated the three field system of use of land (based on a specific division of the land); the use of common grounds (*nawsie*) in the middle of villages, as well as of forests, meadows and pastures; the provision of mutual help in field and construction work, the borrowing of tools, etc. These communities coordinated all domains of life by informal methods of communication, creating specific forms of customs and systems of informal sanctions.

People's needs in such domains as information, social life, entertainment, or free time were satisfied through the formation of specific village "news centers" and "institutions" of cultural life in houses of local story tellers, authorities or craftsmen, in village inns and in front of churches.

Traditional local communities satisfied people's needs for social esteem and for the evaluation of conduct by the opinion of village members which punished by means of informal but sharp sanctions.

This informal organization of villages became insufficient when, as early as in the XIXth century, the nobility and aristocracy lost their titles as owners of patrimonial villages and towns. This was replaced due to the enfranchisement of peasants and their being granted ownership of their land, the popularization of trade, a monetary economy, and the introduction of local county and state administrative structures.

Of course, these transformations were long lasting and complex. They brought about the disintegration of the structure and organization of villages as local communities. At the same time they contributed to their reintegration based on new principles in the form of a system of intentional associations and organizations, as well as local government.

The direction of changes in the structure and organization of villages and towns as local communities was from spontaneous cooperation to formally organized cooperation, even if many elements of spontaneous solidarity remained in such structures. Communality as a pattern and model of action still exists, even if it appears in modified or changed forms.

Various specialized unions and associations became the basic elements of this new organizational structure. In rural areas it was volontary economic associations and socioeconomic unions. As early as the end of the XIXth century there developed in the Polish territories small loan and savings banks, cooperative creameries, farmers' clubs, village youth associations, clubs of village housewives, etc.

Similarly in the cities the socioeconomic structure, including craftsmen's workshops, stores, and counting houses, began, along with various formal associations of economic and sociocultural character. At the fore of these unions were trade guilds and crafts. Subsequently, in the course of social development, came joint stock companies, unions of entrepreneurs, and associations of tradesmen and craftsmen. Apart from their economic activity they also played a role in such domains as professional training, sociocultural and social life. A role in integrating the population of villages and cities was played also by parishes, and in their frame various religious sodalities often with also non-religious activities.

The fullest expression of communality in shaping local communities was the development of local governments on the Polish territories in the XIXth century in the form of county and municipal administration. This development culminated in the period between the first and second World War.

After World War II the policy of the socialist state interrupted the processes of reintegration of local communities in Poland. A centralized, one party administration system was introduced, reaching the lowest levels of the social organizational structures. All social organizations, associations, and socioeconomic unions were cancelled or merged, of course from above. New leaders for these organizations were imposed by the upper levels of the Communist Party. In the course of time several bureaucratized socioeconomic organizations were consolidated in the country as well as in the cities. Similarily, the idea of local self-governments was dismantled. Counties, whether municipal or rural, were not self-governing communities, but the lowest units of the hierarchically constructed state administration, ruled by the members of one party.

The socioeconomic and political revolution going on in Poland must face the need to reconstruct local self-governing communities in villages, counties, and cities -- communities based on the model of communal, not collectivistic action.

Communal Forms of Religious Life

Religious life in Poland was characterized, in the past as well as now, by a rich variety of social forms. If highly developed countries are marked by a certain individualization of religious life, in Polish society, even with the atrophy of some communal forms of religious experiences, many traditional forms of religiosity still retain their vigor. Also new forms of socially experiencing union with God have emerged.

First of all, religious life goes on in families, where parents shape the attitudes of their children. Sociological research shows that the family plays a decisive role in shaping and transmitting religious commitment and faith to the younger generation. Many authors stress that continuity of religious beliefs and practices between generation prevails. So that we can speak of "inheriting" religiosity.

This, however, is not entirely true, for some sorts of family practices or rites -- such as praying together in the morning and in the evening, common praying of the rosary or singing the "godzinki" (a set of Marial hymns based on the liturgy of hours) -- vanish or are in crisis. But various new forms of religiosity develop and some ancient religious family customs persist, such as whole families going together to the church, common reading of religious writings and scriptures, observing church feasts (in spite of the fact that they are not legal holidays). The communal trait of religious life in families does not vanish.

Poles are still characterized by the social character of basic religious practices, such as masses, celebration of Christmas, Easter, Marian feasts, and participation in spiritual retreats, days of prayer, missions, etc. The main factor here is not the number of people who participate, but readiness or inclination to pray together with others, in groups or crowds, common prayers and singing of religious songs, experiencing an aura of religious exaltation, and their sense of solidarity with their fellow believers. This communality of religious life manifests itself in religious practices and the mass participation of believers in processions held during major feasts, above all the processions on Corpus Christi. The development of communal forms of religiosity was favored by the pastoral activity of the Catholic Church in Poland, which in the years 1960-1980 developed a mass pastoral action on the parish, diocesan, and national level, and subsequently created special forms of pastoral care for farmers, factory workers, health service workers, etc.

Another manifestation of the communality of religious life in Poland are pilgrimages to places and cities sanctified by traditions of miraculous events and of widespread cult. There is even a renaissance of pilgrimages. In spite of views that they are relics of the past now in decline, they became forms of a commonly practiced movement of renewal of religious life. They are practiced in the form of 1-2 day local pilgrimages and of the multi day national pilgrimages to Częstochowa -- of pilgrimages of whole professional groups, such as farmers to Częstochowa or miners to Piekary in Silesia. Especially a mass participation of youth in these pilgrimages is to be noted. "A specifically sacral dimension with far reaching influence on young people," states Janusz Mariański, was the Warsaw pilgrimage to Częstochowa, referred to as a "wandering spiritual retreat". In 1966 this pilgrimage had 10,000 participants, and in 1978 as many as 30,000, of whom 80 percent were young people -- high school and university students or professionals." Mariański observes the fact that the pilgrimage movement, so popular in Poland, is changing its character from regional and local to national, from a movement with a folkloric tinge to a universal ecclesiastical movement with the accent upon seeking a deeper religious experience and practicing Christian life.

Expressions of the communality of religious life are the various movements aimed at the deepening or renewal of the religious life recently formed in Poland. An essential trait of these movements is their base in small communities.

The most broadly developed is the "oasis" movement (*Światło -- Życie*; "Light and Life") since 1969. This is a continuation of previously organized, so-called touristic, prayer camps. The main form of action of this movement consists in organizing in the holiday season two week spiritual retreats. They attract mainly the young. The movement develops as action of informal groups. According to some estimates, in the years 1979-984 some 300,000 young people participated in the "oasis" retreat sessions.

Apart from the most widely known and popularized informal groups, there exist and function in Poland also various movements of renewal of religious life whose range is more modest or that are only emergent, such as the "Solidarity of Families" movement, the movement for defense of the life of the unborn, the movement for the propagation of sobriety, etc. All arise "from below", from the ranks of believers, and are characterized by a communality of action.

New customs appear in connection with religious events. One of them is a family reunion on the occasion of the child's First Holy Communion. Godparents come, often from distant places, to participate in the event. There is a revival of such customs as consecrating organizational banners, celebrating patriotic masses, anniversaries and various jubilees or meetings preceeded by participation in an inaugural Mass.

Characteristic of all these religious practices, rites, and customs is their social and communal character.

Communality in the Sphere of Political Life

Communality in the sphere of political life, that is, in the functioning of the state and its organizations, manifests itself in many institutions which at the moment of their foundation were not known in other European countries. In Poland relatively early a system of parliamentary monarchy was formed in which through their deputies consisting of magnates, nobility, and clergy the electorate participated in various decisions. The parliament was called Seym. Some seeds of this institution appeared as early as the Piast dynasty, that is, in the period of the patrimonial state. In the middle of the XVth century the Seym was already a permanent institution, and in 1493 the Radom Seym passed the constitution *Nihil novi*. The constitution contained regulations limiting royal power, namely, it forbad the king to introduce new taxes without the Seym's consent and interdicted the restriction of existing civil liberties and issuance of decrees concerning public law without the consent of the parliament. In the course of history the competencies of the Seym expanded until it became the highest legislative body in the state.

The Seym was formed as a collective body and included the royal council. It was transformed later into the so-called senate, consisting of dukes, magnates, the highest royal officials, and a chamber of deputies, representing the nobility. The debates of the Seym were presided over by the king. Since the XVth century general assemblies of the Seym have been held in which decisions concerning the most important affairs of the state were made. The form of the Seym, as well as its competencies and the participation by deputies of social strata of that time (except peasants and the bourgeoisie) expressed the principle of communality in the political system of the state. This contrasted with the unlimited or even absolute monarchic power in many European countries at that time.

Communality appeared also at lower levels of the political life of the country. Since the XIVth century assemblies of regional nobility were held in Poland, constituting an institution of self-government. During these assemblies, called "little Seyms" (*sejmiki*) decisions were made concerning affairs of the particular region. Local (county) assemblies from the end of the XVth century elected deputies to the parliamentary chamber of deputies. Also general local assemblies of elected noble deputies and senators were convoked in order to discuss important matters and to prepare drafts of resolutions for the coming session of the Seym. A noblemen's democracy was very well developed enabling the nobility actively to participate in the political life of the country. In the course of time this democracy broadened excesively, paralyzing the functioning of the state and leading to abuses of the rights of nobles. Nevertheless, in no other European country in the XVIIth and the XVIIIth century was royal power as restricted as in Poland.

This state of affairs manifested itself through the institution of *liberum veto*, demanding that decisions made in the Seym be made unanimously, and causing a rupture of the assembly and cancellation of previously passed decrees upon protest by even one deputy. The rule of unanimity was in force in Poland in the XVIIth and the XVIIIth century and was cancelled only upon the Four Years' Diet in 1791, which undertook a general reconstruction and change of the political system of the state. *Liberum veto* was used and abused by the three neighboring countries: Russia, Austria, and Prussia, aiming in the period of electoral kings to take control of Poland, seizing Polish territories and depriving Poles of their own independent state.

From the historical and realistic point of view the institution of *liberum veto* is considered one of the internal reasons of anarchy and lawlessness among the nobility, and in consequence of the loss of independence of the Polish nation. From the theoretical and idealistic standpoint, however, it may be described as an understanding of "communality" and common decision making in which the will of individuals could not be violated, especially because the opinion of representatives of particular lands or parts of the country was at stake.

Another example of communality as a pattern and model of common decision making in political life is the institution of free election in Poland from 1572 till the fall of the Polish state in 1795. After the childless death of the last patrimonial monarch and the expiration of the Jagiellonian dynasty the Polish Seym elected the king from a circle of foreign and Polish claimants to the Polish throne. In this way the citizenry, even if represented only by magnates and nobility, as well as high state functionaries, elected their king by themselves. The institution of choosing the king by means of a free election persisted in Poland for two centuries. It existed nowhere else in the world in this form. It opened for the neigboring states the possibility of interfering with internal Polish affairs and caused conflicts, seditions, and struggles between noble fractions. Yet in its design it was a democratic institution transferring the power to decide about an affair of such great political weight as the election of the king to the whole electorate of that time.

From the perspective of over one thousand years of history of the Polish nation it is clearly apparent that communality of action and the principle of common decision making appears over and over again as one of the values and features typical for Poles. This communality was combined at the same time with preserving the civil liberty of individuals. But then came the times of the XVIIth and the XVIIIth century when freedom degenerated more and more with every passing decade into the "gold freedom" and licence of Polish magnates and nobility. Communality was squandered and wrecked, for it was not the common good and the good of the state, but the interests of magnate's families or the egoistic interests of the nobility that directed political conduct. Neighboring states made use of this weakened sense of responsibility for the common good and

of political morality to induce unrest by means of intrigues. Subsequently they suported internal conflicts and used military force to bring about the fall of the Polish state.

Communality as a value and a pattern of conduct had to be revived through the long years of struggle for independence.

Basic Elements of Polish Religiosity

Czesław Bartnik

Sensitivity to transcendent values and detachment proper to the *sacrum*, by individuals and whole social groups, best expresses their religiosity. In the Polish society this religiosity was Christian for over a thousand years, but it also contains many elements of ancient Slavic culture. Throughout subsequent epochs the Christian understanding of God, forms of worship, sacraments, structures of the church and saints, as well as norms of life, pervaded the culture of inhabitants of the Polish Crown, and subsequently of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and of the Second Polish Republic. Christianity, in constant touch with the culture of Slavs living in the area between the Oder and the Dnieper and between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathians, enriched it with something new that became a principle of growth without destroying what was precious and proper. It is difficult to characterize the whole religiosity of the Polish society in a short outline. We shall limit our description to: 1) presenting the most general and basic values and religious ideas; and 2) showing how they were felt and expressed by poets and writers, that is how they were recorded in Polish literature. Artists are capable of depicting in the most accurate way the soul of the nation, of which religiosity constitutes its fundamental part.

The Transcendent

God as Goodness

The principal idea which, in a sense, revolutionalized life in our culture, was the revelation of God as Personal Love, shed in human souls, in the world and universe, in society, and penetrating our entire being. In Christianity, this meant that there were no separate "gods of culture," especially gods who would fight with God, such as Utnapishthim, Agni, or Prometheus. God himself is "culture," in the sense that He fulfills man in an absolute and infinite way, that is, that persons find their personal fulfillment in God. Slavic religion did not put love in the first place, but it was not cruel in the way presented by German scholars. Perun -- god of thunder -- incarnated himself into Świętowit, Rujewit with his "swallows of love," Porowit -- god of force; Porenut -- god of goodness, and Jarowit (Jaryła) -- god of life (see -- A. Gieysztor). At the base of these ideas and images, just as in the majority of religions, lay, however, some apprehended goodness of the gods in regard to men. Slavs saw this goodness not only in the beyond, but also here on earth. It was a "historical" concept of God, conceived as "the Lord of human fate and destiny". This understanding manifests itself already in the name "god" (in Polish *bóg*; *bagha*) which means granting good fate, happiness, the good. This is reflected in the concrete divine names: Radogost, Dadżbór, Spor, Rod, Dola, and others. Something of the divine fate is contained also in signs of "gratious and great works" in people, probaly represented in statues (the so called stone pies -- *baby*), representing divine gifts in man. In any case, the concept of Divinity itself manifests the Polish trust, perhaps all too idealistic and emotional, that God in history will enable us overcome all evil and attain the good.

Moreover, between Christianity and the religion of the central Slavic tribes an inner harmony was achieved relatively easily due to a rather similar dualism according to while the God of

Goodness created spirits and man, which Satan created matter and the world of things (A. Gieysztor). That is why human existence is directed by the good God, and evil destiny, anti-history is steered by the "black god," the "bleak god". In the world of the good reigns order, on which man should rely as on the Divine Love, and thus is created the highest culture, that of the Human Spirit. In the world of the evil chaos and hatred dominate; this is anti-culture and anti-religion. In the middle of humanity there grows a divine tree of life, love, hope, rightness, clemency and dreams bearing seeds of infinity and immortality. Because of human sins the visible world will be terminated by fire and a "great deluge".

In human history in the last resort the God of goodness, mercy, clemency, forgiveness, and the common way to heaven wins. Polish nature -- to this day -- includes forbearance for misdemeanors grounded in something related to love, among others lenience towards sins *contra sextum*. However, J. Dowiat is not right in claiming that the Slavic gods did not at all sanction morality.

On the other hand, the cult of the God of Goodness expressed itself easily and quickly through cult of Jesus Christ, Son of God, or *Bożyc*. *Bożyc* realizes the ideal of humanity in the Father, cares about everything, is the image of God in history, and took human destiny upon himself, both its sadness and its joy; he agreed to suffer for us and comes to us, among others, in the form of an infant and enters also in the world of every child. Christ -- *Bożyc* -- is love both human and divine, a sacrificial love, suffering and redeeming evil. Moreover, various signs of love appear through angels and people, especially those most common and simple. That is why spiritual Polish culture has been dominated, in spite of everything, by seeing and perceiving the world as intrinsically determined by love, great and tender, and by ideas which derive therefrom. Such a vision persists to this day, even if in the last decades it has begun to be on the defensive, faced with degeneration of the Polish spirit, with the "bleak god," preached by bad people and proclaimed by intemperate hatred.

Mother of God

It is difficult to say whether it is a peculiar Polish mysticism, or Polish longing for another world, or also the cult of Perperuna (Dodola), Perun's female companion, or still something else that caused an immediate development of cult of the Mother of God (Bishop J. Wojtkowski). In this vivid cult Divine Love married in a visible and real manner human love, also in its interhuman and social form. The mother of God was worshipped from the beginning -- maybe since Dąbrówka? -- and without interruption. Jan Długosz called her *Regina mundi et nostra*, that is, the Queen of the world and of the Polish society, or simply the Queen of Poland. Through the Virgin Mary Christian love gained a lyrical, domestic, ecclesiastical, and social dimension. She easily evoked in Poles the attitude of service to others, to the Fatherland, to Family and Home. Some mystical "Marian rainbow" has been stretched across Poland, finding its reflection not only in cult, but in the ambiance of the home, literature, art (for instance in the amber objects of devotion from the Xth century), in the tones of social life, in the "warming" of community, and in the first distinct traits of general Polish mysticism. The Marian motive, in the beginning was praised in songs and sculptured or painted in a very simple way; in the course of time its expression reached summits of subtle spiritual culture (Konrad Górski).

The Absolute Value of Life

The Christianization in Poland followed a conviction common in our culture that religion cannot be a matter of decrees, legislature, science, political conjuncture or mythology, but is an absolute reality, for it comes directly from God and is God's gift. Religion is the reality above all realities. By the same token, it is life, and God is God of life, Source of life, Guardian of life, Savior from death, Carrier of life. Also images of Perun, Mokosza, Swaróg, and Rod prepared the way for the living Christian God, the Giver of life. The mystery of God is the mystery of life; the mystery of life is the mystery of God. That is why the personal God has in himself life in the proper meaning of the word; it is He who gives life to man and to other creatures. It is He who has the fullness of life and absolute power over it, who preserves and dispenses life, who creates the economy of life on earth. Hence religion and culture are certain forms of life, of its duration, growth, protection and preservation from death.

Therefore, from the very beginning of Christianity in Poland, Poles did not raise their swords for or against religion and culture, did not kill in defense of the ancient religion or for the propagation of the new. The reason for the death of the five "martyr brothers" was a robbery. And thus every death inflicted for reasons other than defense of life, especially spiritual and eternal life, will henceforth mean a radical negation of God and culture. For this reason the lives of hostages, slaves and enemies were spared, amnesty was broadly applied even to criminals, and masochistic whippers (in the XIIIth century) were assailed. This is why there was no need to proclaim *treuga Dei* (interdiction of armed encounters from Saturday evening to Monday morning). No recluses (ascetics walling themselves up alive) were accepted. The death penalty for the nobility was abolished (in the XVIth century) on favor of banishment. And too severe religious orders, threatening health and life, were eliminated, etc.

Culture and religion are life, and whatever destroys life is anti-culture and anti-religion. Temporal life may be sacrificed only for eternal life. Even temporal life is inviolable and not subject to human decrees, unless they are protective of life; it should be subjugated to no one's manipulation or will. Hence Polish thought defends human life, especially the life of the weakest, from its very beginning. It has a great understanding of nature as an expression of divine life in the world, created by the Lord of Life. The mystery of the living and vivifying God encompasses the culture and religion of the nation, even if today, under alien influences, respect for life, especially of the unborn, is drastically diminished. This threatens the collapse of one of the pillars of the Polish national identity. Killing the unborn evidently is a crime not only against God, but against the nation, for it aims at extermination of the nation and submitting it to slavery under the mighty enemies of Poland.

Immortality

Christianity teaches, in accord with the Old Testament, that "for immortality God created man; He rendered him in image of His own eternity" (Wis 2, 23). After Christianity pervaded the Polish lands the idea of immortality began to radiate even more as a basic motor of temporal life. Polans, Vistulans, Lędzians, Mazovians, Ślęzans, Redrussians, Kiovian Polans knew this already before Velos (Vołos), Trzygłów and Trojan -- three forms of the god of heaven, earth, and the nether world. But the idea of individual, familial, and clan immortality increased in popularity through contact with Christianity (Aleksander Brückner). Christianity made this truth clear, binding it on the one hand with teachings about Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell, and on the other with morality that leads to these "domains." Hence temporal life gains a superhistorical perspective. There is, however, no predestination, as in St. Augustine's writings or in Islam. Nor is there total death

eternal life is no abstraction. Eternal life becomes like daylight, enlightening history and destiny, as well as a source of morality, courage, and a dauntless sense of action directed toward glory. Over the Kingdom of Poland stretches the Eternal Kingdom. The road to this other kingdom leads through the Polish land and through living in the Polish way in the presence of Poles. At the same time, eternity constitutes the highest motive for music, architecture, literature, art, mores, and the artistic construction of social life. The countenance of eternity is reflected in Polish events, on the Polish territory, in Poles. Temporal Polish identity transforms into "eternal" Polishness.

The Immanent

Faith in Man

Christianity and the Polish national character was marked by an unusual faith in man. In Western culture quite a few orientations were doubtful about man or questioned his value, seeing him as some sort of evil, a total departure from God, a product of uncertainty and "mistrust". This image was and remains connected with doubting God as Creator and Savior. The Polish culture and Christianity, in contrast, focused all created reality in man, as if "absolutizing" him and perceiving in him the highest, "infinite" value and future. Reality equals man; the human person equals the essence of created reality.

In Poland there was a similar reevaluation of all human communities. Besides, the whole society, together with its social, political and economic life, has been closely related to universal morality (Florian Konieczny), even if our neighbors considered it a naive Polish utopia. It is true that in the beginning there existed among Polish tribes, as everywhere in the world, clan revenge, slave trade (trading in natives and captives), the buying and unrestricted dismissal of wives, trading in children, burning wives and servants together with a deceased *czestnik* (the old Slavic word for dignitaries), no rights for women to own or inherit estates, and according to some sources human sacrifices, as was certainly the case among the Prussians (J. Dowiat). But in spite of these phenomena, there glowed a faith in man and in the human community that burst forth at the moment of contact with Christianity. F. Konieczny formulated a theory of four "civilizational moments" decisive for the formation of a proper stable civilization: indissolubility of monogamic marriage, abolition of slavery through recognition of everyone's personal dignity, liquidation of private justice (or the law of revenge), and liberating religion upon its dependence upon the state. It is in this direction that Poland evolved and still evolves. Christianity strove to elevate the role of women in social life, to abolish slavery, and to treat captives with clemency and aliens with mercy. It did away with private justice, returned to the mores of local communities (*opole*), and fought from the beginning for the separation of the political and religious power -- and in consequence, for the subjugation of the political power to universal ethical laws. As early as 1197 there began the practice of contracting marriages in the church before the priest, rather than in private homes; monogamic marriage was prescribed even for princes, and marriages were recognized as indissoluble. In the XIIth century women were endowed with the right to inherit and own estates, as well as with public protection. Increasingly, captives and slaves were liberated and endowed with land (W. Sawicki, Bolesław Kumor, M. Jagusz).

Bodies of the deceased were no long burned, and by the same token the practice of burning living servants or henchmen was dropped; asceticism, obedience, self-control, and justice were taught; severe punishment for ecclesiastical and public crimes was introduced; robbery of homesteads was eliminated, the populace was educated in the spirit of high dignity as Christians

and citizens; charitable activity was developed; the custom of participation in Mass on Sundays and feast days came into practice; and people were taught respect for man in his individual and social dimension (Jerzy Kłoczowski). Riots after the death of Mieszko II (died in 1034) had rather the character of anarchy and a decentralized political struggles; the murder of St. Stanislas from Szczepanowo must be attributed to the theocratic ambitions of the king as well as to the mental illness he inherited from his mother, Rycheza, like his brother, Ladislaus Herman. As a matter of fact, in the course of its Christianization Poland became more and more itself. Compulsion, tyranny, oppression, persecution of the weak and the poor disappeared. There was no native cruelty, regicide, rapacity, plundering. Later, there was no killing of tyrants, even such as Suvorov, Novosilcov, Paskiewicz, Muraviov, and others. Thus, faith in man coincided with faith in a logic and sense of social life. There was always one crucial matter at stake: the human person is the sense of state, society, religion, and culture. This conviction was accompanied by the faith that humanity shall prevail.

The Polish Family and Home

To the Christian concept of the Church, family, and home corresponded, since the XIIth century, the idea of the sanctity of the family and home: reverence for parents and the elderly, catechesis for children and those who were not converted, common prayer, individual prayers (mostly the *Our Father*, and later the *Hail Mary*), litanies, penances, fasting, asceticism with pedagogical traits, familial participation in masses (at least outside chapels, if the chapels were occupied by the families of the town, castle, or local magnates), and since the XIVth century *godzinki* – the singing at home of religious hymns based on the liturgical hours. As already mentioned, marriage ceased to be a secular institution and became a sacrament before the priest and the Church. The glory and respect for women, their significance and role, increased rapidly especially in family life. In the families of princes this played a role in sociopolitical life. In any case, the real Polish home began and a home culture developed: familial mores became more noble, family traditions were idealized, the cultural level of patterns of family behavior rose, the "architecture" of the familial being was perfected. Relations between families gained in dignity, putting an end to quarrels, robberies and armed assaults. In terms of Christianity familial unity began to be founded in baptism and confirmation, in tonsure (*postrzyżyny*) and the sacrament of marriage, in the Gospel and Eucharist, and in science and art in wealthier families. Already in the XIIIth century the family was understood broadly in religious terms and more and more humanistically (Konrad Górski, Wacław Schenk). Poland became a land of families and spiritual homes. The original habit of neglecting children was transformed through seeing in them the image of the Infant Jesus, so that in the XVIIth century parents addressed their own children as "Your Love" (*wasza miłość*). Similarly, every family member was seen as an expression of human and divine love. Thus, the home culture was focused above all on love, the source and goal of the family.

The Mystique of Opole

Christianity, coming from the sunny city-states of the Mediterranean basin, melded in Poland with the idea of *opole*, neighborhood, settlement, human site related to the ground (field -- *pole*). In any case, whereas in neighboring countries most frequently separate houses were built in villages, in the Kingdom of Poland they were built in long rows, often in compounds, one near

another, constituting closed settlements among swamps, little islands, or forests. Nature was imaged as the soil breeding man, rather than mountains, deserts, steppe, or sea. In the mythology of origins there are elements of this image: beekeepers, farmers, foresters, hunters operating in waters and forests, home craftsmen, men integrated into the "natural environment". But the natural and material images were only background for images of groups of close relatives constituting small communities. Thus, *opole* constituted a dramatic, liturgical, cultural, labor-related, and political category. It largely influenced social concepts and shaped the spiritual form of the nation as a set of such local communities. Most characteristic was the opening to the other as someone who is equal and free -- a theater for cohabiting in the visible social scene. Some authors consider this individualism. But even if there was an element of individualism in this social system, it occurred in small and well defined communities. There was no great contrast between villages, cities, great institutions, or even cloisters. Everything was covered with the palette of colors of this peculiar landscape: minor scale emotions, longing, the maternal character of the soil, a closeness of things and a world, and realism in religion.

At the base of social categories was the people, transformed in the course of time into "nation," with its mystique of *opole* or local neighborhood. Social stratification, classes, the pride of magnates, even of the hierarchy of the church, and pseudo-intellectualism were considered a "betrayal" of the people, of the original human equality and unity, or just tomfoolery. Christianity and the Polish identity in the country were, and remain, most stable, real and "warm," even as they are hidden under misery and a certain mistrust towards the "fashionable world". Of course, the country had externally different appearances in the times of Piasts, the Jagiellonian dynasty, Romanticism, the "Groups of the Polish People," the modernist period at the beginning of this century, the 2nd Republic of Poland, and under the German occupation and Marxism. But Poland's basic profile remained the same: the Polish peasantry is the cradle of the Polish people.

Some authors (for instance, Brückner) said that Poles were religiously weak, because they did not fight in the name of religion. But that is a misunderstanding. From the model of *opole*, Poles took over a religiosity of depth, silence, peace, co-understanding, a mystique of the soil, a sense of the eternal identity of man. The center of the world is the native community of the people and the native field (*pole*). In the country the church, Polish culture and fatherland were present, even if in a different form than in literature. That is why on the anniversary of the Union of Horodel (1861 -- celebrated on October 10), amidst the frightening canons of Chruszczow, in the forefront of the procession of Poles goes a peasant in a russet overcoat, carrying a cross.

Opole spread shaping Polish culture in-depth: first directly; later, since the time of the Jagiellonian dynasty, indirectly, especially through clergy until it became impossible for plebeians to take high offices even in the Church; and last but not least, through the hidden and subconscious noble mystique of the Polish soul. This mystique of *opole* intensified the development of Christianity and the overall culture of the nation, being both wise, balanced, without pseudo-intellectual buffoonery or purely verbal disputes, and entirely native. This "primordial" nation, began its existence and lived for long without laws constituted for its life. Similarly, peasants were Christian and Polish in every part of the partitioned Poland, even if the upper classes constantly escaped into gnosis, freemasonry, utopias, ideologies, and even sometimes open treason. Christianity in Poland and national culture grew and still grows from *opole*.

Church

Clergy United with the Nation

For the *opole* structure of life of it became very characteristic that Christianity united more closely with the people, first in the country, and since the XIXth century also with workers and townspeople. Christianity has been accepted by the people as an essential help in maintaining their identity and dignity as active subjects. The consciousness of the country quickly began to express itself through its more outstanding individuals. After generations of missionaries from the West and the South, from Ireland and Scotland, from Franco-Gallia, Italy, Moravia, Bohemia, and others there appeared vocations among the peasants, whose longing for the vast world attracted them to the total service of religious and native ideals. At first bishops were newcomers who were better educated, but soon this dignity was bestowed on people from the peasantry provided they received proper education. From the beginning priests in the Polish church were in great majority from the country, which throughout ages was a kind of "micro-Poland". Hence, it is no wonder that the unusually liberal pre-humanist, Gregory from Sanok (1477), archbishop of Lvov, was a peasant, as was the greatest man of letters of the Renaissance times, Klemens Janicki (1516-1543), author of the "Lives of the Polish Kings" (*Żywoty królów polskich* -- 1563). The Poland of the Piasts was almost entirely "country Poland," and its basic culture creating element were peasant priests. They introduced spontaneous and uneducated peasant culture into the forum of the great Poland and transmitted to villages the great ideas of the world.

In the late Jagiellonian epoch peasants were no longer allowed to become bishops, but they filled monasteries and all the parishes. In them Christianity found support, together with culture, literature, art, historical consciousness, economy and local politics. Priest, coming mostly from villages, helped to cultivate the soil, to shape village structures, and to teach crafts; they supported family and social development and education at all levels. Even if sometimes despised, they were always mediators between the world of the noble and wealthy and the world of peasants. They were also present on the courts of the powerful, in the army as chaplains, in mass levies as well as in mercenary troops, in infantry from Wybraniec, among the hussars, in delegations of deputies, in religious missions, in insurrections, among the exiled, in concentration camps (as St. Maximillian Kolbe), in social movements (Fr. Piotr Ściegienny, Fr. Stanisław Stojałowski, Fr. Piotr Wawrzyniak), in partisan squads, in the Polish troops in Soviet Russia (Franciszek Kubsz, chaplain of the Ist Army), in trade union movements (Jerzy Popiełuszko), etc. Many fought in arms, many raised Poland from the ruins through vitalizing institutions, and many others performed only simple pastoral work. But almost all expressed the spirit of the Polish peasantry and served it with the highest ideals. Catholic priests often were imitated by the clergy of other denominations, such as the first representatives of the Polish National Church. In any case, in Poland there sprang up -- although not without problems in details -- an indissoluble universal unity between the lower Catholic clergy and the country, Polish culture, and the fatherland. The lower clergy did not constitute a class in the strict sense of the word, but was rather an emanation of the Polish peasantry, expressing the spirit of the country, living in its context, weeping and rejoicing with it, serving it, and, last but not least, learning from it. This group drew -- and continues to draw -- upon the cultural riches of its area. This culture is never technically and materially the highest, but always has much "common wisdom" and always remains native. Hence, in a new way, the Church and the country are important carriers of the national culture in Poland. In the country and in the Church, in the Polish people and the people of God, great Polish minds seek new inspiration.

The Spirit of Church Unity

We know well that no religious union can originate without a proper, high, and universal culture. Christianity too remained united only where it was supported by one and the same Roman culture or a culture affiliated to the Roman; where other cultures were involved sooner or later it split. Eastern churches and German protestantism provide perfect examples. Polish culture, in spite of its distinct specific traits, has proven to be high and universal enough to create -- in the past and now -- good foundations for efforts of unification of the separated factions of Christianity. Here we refer especially to the Orthodox churches, for Protestantism is too distant. But uniquely in Poland there was a long lasting interProtestant union under direction of Feliks Krzyżak from Szczebrzeszyn, ratified by the Seym of Piotrków in 1555, as well as the accord of Sandomierz in 1570 between the Polish Brethren, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Stancarists. The climate of Polish culture favored also a process of unification of other denominational groups.

For essential reasons, the union between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches could be more successful. It is characteristic that when in 1054 the church was split into Western and Eastern, into Catholicism and Orthodoxy neither the Polish clergy nor the Polish kings -- Kazimierz Odnowiciel, Bolesław Śmiały, Władysław Herman, Bolesław Krzywousty, up to Kazimierz Jagiellończyk -- nor the Ruthenian successors of St. Włodzimierz the Great (1015) wanted to accept this fact. Thus, contacts between Poland and the Ruthenians were in no way disturbed it the ecclesiastical level. It was not accepted that the holy church could have split. Daniel of Halicz (1264) could easily surrender the diocese of Uhrsk and Chełm without any problems and obtain the crown from the Pope in 1254. Poles did not fight with the Orthodox, sending missions only to non-Christians, mostly in the Baltic countries. In the unifying council of Lyon in 1274 Poles did not participate due to the regional disintegration of the country, but they supported the union at home.

The problem increased at the moment of the unification of Poland and Lithuania. Of course, a kingdom prefers to have one religion if it is not surviving only by a policy of *divide et impera*. But the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was composed of Catholics and Orthodox. So, Vitold and Jagiełło worked towards an ecclesiastical union of the East (Kiev) with Rome, and achieved some results. Kievian metropolitans Cyprian (1406) and Gregory Cambałak (1420) united their church with the church of Rome, which influenced the situation of the church in Poland. Slavs wanted one church, above all because of fear of Moscow. In 1437 a Kievian metropolitan, Isidore the Greek, applied for access to the universal union of Florence. In Poland King Władysław Warneńczyk, pleased at the union of Florence promulgated in Buda (Hungary) on March 22, 1443, made equal the Ruthenian and Latin clergy. From the ecclesiastical side the union was supported by cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki (1423-1455), a friend of Isidore. Nevertheless, Moscow imprisoned Isidore and created a second metropolitan see on their territory. The union revived under Kievian metropolite Gregory in 1458 and lasted 80 years. It was cancelled only by a deserter from the union, Metropolitan Jonas (1523), a friend of Moscow, but appointed to this post by king Zygmunt Stary.

Support for the union was declared by Ivan IV, the Terrible (1547-1584). The Holy See trusted him and admonished Poland for its skepticism in this matter. But it soon turned out that it was only a political maneuver of the czar, directed against Poland.

In 1577 an initiative of unification was undertaken by the Orthodox Bishops in the Polish and Lithuanian territories, working to raise the level of life in the Orthodox church. From the Catholic side the idea was taken up particularly by the Jesuits (Stanisław Warszewicki, Piotr Skarga,

Stanisław Sokołowski), as well as by other men of letters writing about social and political matters: Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, Stanisław Orzechowski, Card. Stanisław Hozjusz, and Jan Zamoyski. From the Orthodox side Prince Konstanty W. Ostrogski, appointed by the Polish king protector of the Orthodox, was initially hesitant, and then opposed the union. Finally, the union was passed between the 6 and 10 of October, 1596. It consisted, as a matter of fact, only in acknowledging the power of Pope by those who hitherto were Orthodox. But this time Latin Polish Christians did not rise to the occasion in social and political matters: Uniate Bishops were not given seats in the senate, no contact were made with prominent representatives of Orthodoxy, the Orthodox people -- according, unfortunately, to the spirit of the time -- were not addressed. In consequence, the Union started to disintegrate into disuniates, reuniates, neouniates, and the Catholic Ukrainian church. Nevertheless, in its religious dimension the Union persisted and exists to this day. Even if Poles did not appreciate the Uniates because of fear of Russification, only non-Polish authorities persecuted them, sometimes shedding blood. Polish culture showed much openness for differences of rites, mores, languages, symbols, and ways of life.

In a more Christian way, even if on a much lesser scale, union was achieved with the Armenian Eastern church on the Polish territory. First of all, between Poles and Armenians had there were no obstacles due to some political threat. Armenians obtained their national and ecclesiastical privileges already from Kazimierz the Great in 1356. In 1380 they founded, with the permission of Ludwik the Hungarian, their first diocese in Lvov, and obtained confirmation of their privileges in 1388 under Władysław Jagiełło and in 1443 under Władysław Warneńczyk. Formally the union was signed in the name of Archbishop Gregory II (1415-1440) in 1439, and then strengthened in 1627 under archbishop Mikołaj Torosowicz (1681). In a sense it exists to this day. In any case, the Catholic Church in Poland and the Armenian church always maintained very close and familial relations. Here the nobility of both cultures, Polish and Armenian, played a great role.

"Polonization" of Christianity

Another interesting phenomenon is the far-reaching polonization of Christianity in Poland. The perception was that Christ lived and acted in the whole world, but particularly in Poland; Mary was a Polish woman; the apostles were Poles. We observe an interesting "nostrification" of the biblical history of salvation: in songs, poems, language, in medieval Nativity plays and student performances, in Mass ceremonies and paraliturgical celebrations, and in feasts repeated every year. Aleksander Brückner, Janusz Tazbir, and Mieczysław Brzozowski note this phenomenon particularly in the XVIth and the XVIIth century. The sacred history happens in Poland: the baptism of Christ is in the Vistula, the crucifixion is on Golgotha hill in Cracow. The heavenly world appears through Polish signs. The devil Boruta is like a fallen Polish nobleman; the vows of king Jan Kazimierz from April 1, 1656 were like an election of Our Lady as Queen of Poland together with *pacta conventa*; Mary and saints wear Polish costumes, Polish saints are particularly revered: F. Jaroszewicz (1771) enumerates as many as 350 saints. Alien saints obtain Polish traits; the ecclesiastical and liturgical calendar is strictly related to the Polish agricultural and geographical calendar (destroyed only by the contemporary reform of the ecclesiastical calendar); all victories over enemies are liturgically celebrated, only Polish vestments were used in the liturgy (P. Brygierski, F. Lekrzycki, Wespazjan Kochowski, and others).

Sarmatism is a separate chapter of the polonization of Christianity. This intensifies a certain Polish Messianism -- reaching as far back as Gallus Anonymus and Wincenty Kadłubek -- consisting supposedly in a message of evangelical goodness among the nations and in giving an

example of Christian rebirth, transformation, and sacrifice for humanity (Mikołaj Rej, Stanisław Orzechowski, Piotr Skarga, Jan Jurkowski, Wespazjan Kochowski, J. Dębołęcki, and many others). According to the theology of Israel it is held that God in some spiritual way chose the Polish nation, led it to the Polish land, and installed there the Arck of the Covenant, faith and liberty (Łukasz Opaliński, Jan Białobocki, Jan Sobieski). Christianity in Poland is supposed to have some *ad intra* mission, including keeping the covenant, guarding the faith of the fathers, maintaining accord and harmony in life, social peace, proper opening to the whole world and its cultures, together with the defense of Christianity in Europe (Jan Ostroróg, Mikołaj Sęp-Szarzyński, Łukasz Opaliński, Jan Andrzej Morsztyn, Zbigniew Morsztyn). The mother of God is to be the Queen of Poland, protecting social amity, proper social service, spiritual liberty, subtle sentiments, and equality before God in the community of lords as brothers (*Panowie Bracia*) -- (Stanisław Orzechowski, Andrzej Maksymilian Fredro, Jan Białobocki, Łukasz Opaliński, and others). Thus originated the idea that the real Polish culture draws from the content of the Bible, but at the same time makes this Bible present and realizes it on the Polish soil in a concrete way. For this reason Polish culture is full of spirit, and above all free from fanaticism, particularism, narrow-mindedness, and xenophobia.

Bibliography

Bartnik, Czesław S., *Formen der polnischen Theologie in Polen*, Regensburg, 1986.

---------, Czesław S., *Idea polskości*, Lublin, 1990.

Borkowska, Urszula, *An Outline of History of Poland*, Lublin, 1981.

Brückner, Aleksander, *Dzieje kultury polskiej*, vol. 1-4, Cracow, 1981.

Brzozowski, Mieczysław, *Kulturowe i historyczne uwarunkowania kaznodziejstwa Tomasza Młodzianowskiego*, Lublin, 1988.

Chołoniewski, Antoni, *Duch dziejów Polski*, Rzym, 19465.

Chrześcijaństwo a kultura polska. V Kongres Teologów Polskich, Lublin 14-16 IX 1983, ed. by M. Jaworski, K. Kubiś, Lublin, 1988.

Davies, Norman, *Heart of Europe. A Short Story of Poland*, Oxford, 1986.

Frycz, Modrzewski Andrzej, *Commentariorum de Republica emendanda libri V*, Basel, 1554.

Giertych, Jędrzej, *L'Eglise en Pologne orientale*, London. 1963.

Gieysztor, Aleksander, Herbst Stanisław, Leśnodorski Bogusław, *A Thouand Years of Polish History*, Warsaw, 1964.

Górski, Konrad, *Zarys dziejów duchowości w Polsce*, Cracow, 1986.

Kłoczowski, Jerzy, Müllerowa Lidia, Skarbek Jan, *Zarys dziejów Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, Cracow, 1986.

Koneczny, Florian, *Polska w kulturze powszechnej*, vol. 1-2, Cracow, 1918.

Kultura Polski średniowiecznej X-XIII w., ed. by J. Dowiat, Warsaw, 1985.

Kumor, Bolesław, Obertyński Zdzisław, and others, *Historia Kościoła w Polsce*, vol. 1-2, Warsaw, 1974-1979.

Nossol, Alfons, *Das Phaenomen Kirche in Polen*, München, 1982.

Naród-Kościół-kultura. Szkice z historii Polski, ed. by A. Chruszczewski *et al.*, Lublin, 1986.

Ostroróg, Jan, *Monumentum pro Reipublicae ordinatione*, Poznań, 1455.

Orzechowski, Stanisław, *Quincunx, to jest wzór Korony Polskiej*, Cracow, 1564.

Rechowicz, Marian *et al.*, *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, vol. 1-3, Lublin, 1974-1976.

Sens polskiej historii, ed. by A. Ajnenkiel, J. Kuczyński, A. Wohl, Warsaw, 1977.

Tazbir, Janusz, *Geschichte der polnischen Toleranz*, Warsaw, 1977.

\--------, *Zarys historii Polski*, Warsaw, 1979.

Tymieniecki, Kazimierz, *Cechy moralne narodu jako wynik historii*, Poznań, 1926.

Wąsik, Władysław, *Historia filozofii polskiej*, vol. 1-2, Warsaw, 1959-1966.

Weunryb, B., *The Jews of Poland*, Philadelphia, 1973.

Wkład Polaków do kultury świata, ed. by M. A. Krąpiec, P. Taras, J. Turowski, Lublin, 1976.

Wyszyński, Stefan, *Kościół w służbie narodu*, Rzym, 1981.

<div align="center">

Chapter V
Religiosity in Polish Literature

Stanisław Cieślak

</div>

Polish literature from its beginning was inspired by the values, contents, and metaphysical qualities provided above all by the Christian religion, and Catholicism in particular. Therefore it is no wonder that the *sacrum* that it perceives is its dominating artistic experience. That is why religion played in Poland a culture generating role, and, *vice versa*, literature inspired and contributed to religion.

The influence of religion on literature expresses itself in many ways. Religion determines literary topics, provides material for metaphors and ensures such values references to the Bible, and the invocational and moralizing character of texts. Moreover, it is an important component of the tragic and comic character of human existence. Religion also affects genre structures and inspires the construction of literary worlds, presented according to the demands of a religious ethics.

The experience of the *sacrum* constitutes in literature, especially in lyrics, a certain space between the human "I" and things. In this space the human subject, as Georges Brazzola argues, hears words whispered by things, deciphers messages encrypted into depths of existence, learns to apprehend the specific "something more" appearing beyond the empirical perception of the world.

Sacrum provides an artistic experience of fulfillment, consisting among others in poetic or narrative attempts on everything, even on impossibility. This is to confirm the paradoxical character of human existence and to proclaim its glory when the human subject realizes that it exists really only in the presence of the loving God.

"Peace – Blissful but Struggling –Existence under Heaven"

This elliptic phrase taken from Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński defines most accurately the scope of experiences with the *sacrum* in the first centuries of our literature. To make this "struggling" efficient, Polish spirituality invokes the mediation of Mary, the Most Holy Mother of God. Her cult was reinforced in Poland by the Franciscans. It was they who wrote the lives of the saints, annals and chronicles; but they also created charming statues of Madonnas with the Infant Jesus. They did not care too much about mystical images, but rendered instead an ideal of earthly beauty, and thus aesthetically influenced the observer.

The first monument of Polish literature, *Bogurodzica* from the XIIIth century, is a prayer invoking the support of the Mother of God in "struggling" and referring to her with various distinctive names: *Bogurodzica* (Mother of God; "Mother-to-God"), Virgin, exalted by ("with") God, chosen by the Son and the Lord and thus entitled to become a medium through which the Lord sends his graces and guarantees "everlasting stay" (*przebyt*) in heaven after earthly life. The anonymous author as if at the same time highlights and obscures Mary's presence, providing an artistic expression of the theological truth of mediation in mediation.

On the other hand, a full image of Mary is presented by *Dolors of Our Lady under the Cross*. Mary is here a subject who speaks, reticent in expressing her pain, remaining in the shadow of the cross, unhappy and weeping, similar to Franciscan statues from Cracow.

Equally eagerly contemplated in Polish poetry is the sanctity and divinity of Christ the Lord who saves the world through his passion and death on the cross.

Jan Kochanowski, the most prominent poet of the Polish Renaissance, was the first in his literary writings to depart from such a direct approach. For him faith was something much more difficult than only filial love of Christ and Mary. The object of his numerous artistic inquiries was God the Father, present in his writings as a strong "Thou," as object of desires and strivings, both fascinating and frightening. It is this "Thou" who is creator and giver of love, provides help, sends his grace, and involves the cognitive, volitional, and emotional capacities of the human "I". This "Thou" also leads a dialogue with man, expressing itself through signs, codes and hierophanies in order to allow man to unite with him as the highest value of good, truth, and beauty.

In his masterpiece of 1562 *Czego chcesz od nas, Panie . . .* ("What may you want from us, O Lord, for your generous gifts"), structured as a prayer, the poet confesses: "The church will not embrace you". That is why, confronted with the "lowness" of his own position, man is dependent on intuitive cognition, he must recognize signs and codes through which God communicates with him. This process of recognition is accompanied by admiration and emotional excitement. What dominates, however, is the sense of joy because of being in touch with God, as well as of discovering hidden meaning and sense in signs and codes that, as a matter of fact, are hierophanies. Man creates out of them a complex, total image that we could conventionally call a "hierophanic landscape". Components of this landscape are: abyss, sea, earth, heaven, stars, rivers, herbs, day and night, personified seasons. To be sure, these are data of everyday experience, but they exceed it through their deeper references. The "hierophanic landscape" is ordered by two lines -- vertical and horizontal:

Thou, O Lord, hath raised the whole world; heavens
Embroidered by thee with lovely stars; thou
Hath laid foundations of the earth prodigious
And cover'd its nudity with its countless herbs

These two spheres intermingle: the *sacrum* from above penetrates the earthly *profanum*. The structure of the poem -- a poetic prayer -- points to this kind of experience whose measure is the maxim "Love everything in God" (*amare omnia in Deo*).

Kochanowski's writings carry on an ardent dialogue of man with God as ways of his justifications are sought. The experience of God's proximity allows the human subject to utter various remarks about life, nature and human duties. This attitude, however, does not suppress unconcerned and bluff humor, sometimes a drunkard's joke, or even obscenities. In spite of that, the source of the poet's fascination is always man, set before the countenance of God. This topic occurs in all his writings, only the accent differs. The lyrical subject is enchanted by the beauty of creation, seeks union with the highest Beauty, defines itself as an accidental being, banteringly absolutizing oneself and others, for it understands that man cannot be the final reason and goal for himself. So he looks the more ardently for a possibility of self-transcendence in close touch with the absolute Being, seeing in him the Creator and Goal of human existence.

Man and the human world are in Kochanowski "God's playground," "God's clown". But in these images there is nothing pessimistic, offending human dignity. The opportunity of participation in God's transcendence assures man a privileged position among other creatures, guarantees openness of heart, clearness of conscience, sensitivity to beauty and common human

happiness. On this occasion he gained still other gifts, such as modesty, sense of justice, and ability to cultivate civil virtues.

This does not mean that doubt was alien to this poetry. We meet it above all in "Lamentations" (*Treny*). The reflection that the author draws from his grief touches the sense of existence of the human person, of his or her rooting in life and ways of transcending his or her own limitations towards new horizons and values. The questions of the "where from" and "where to" of life are the basic motive of this reflection. Its final discovery remains the statement that man is really human when he directs his eyes towards that which is infinite and transcendent, for, as the poet says, "miserable are earthly pleasures". This does not mean in turn that temporal life is to be conceived as the exclusive domain of God and his reign. According to Kochanowski, this life serves to solve matters assigned by God to men as tasks. In the last lamentation we read:

> To this hold, o my son, and man's destiny
> Support as humans do. One is the Lord
> of sorrow and reward

On the other hand, Marian sensibility was entirely alien to Kochanowski. However, it was exploited by the poets of the second half of the XVIth century. Mary was for them "Mother of the Polish Crown" (Stanisław Grochowski), a gentle, lovely, and gracious Mother in whom they seek "consolation and mediation"; "full of grace," "for centuries praised for her glory," "a living altar of bread" (Sebastian Grabowiecki), "an example of holy humility and innocence" (Paweł Ciekliński). These are only some examples of poetic contemplation of Our Lady. The same contemplation is cultivated by the poets of the end of the XVIth and the beginning of the XVIIth century. Mother of God is for them an example of virtues, especially of obedience; she is also a protectress of the church, guarding the teachings of her Son against all kinds of deformations. For it was the time of struggle not only for inner human truth, but also for the totality and integrity of the church -- the time of the Reformation and Counterreformation.

Poetic Theology of Jewels and Plants

In 1601 Polish literature was enriched by "Rhythms or Polish verses" (*Rytmy albo wiersze polskie*) by Mikołaj Sęp-Szarzyński, a Protestant converted to Catholicism. His poems outshine the works of other authors through their boldness of thought. Sęp's thought is close to Spanishmysticism. He claims that human life is "struggling" with Satan, world, and flesh; victory over them brings real peace which is the Savior himself. Sęp -- as a typical representative of Sarmatism -- did not highlight, however, the "dark night" of human soul nor ways and paths leading upwards; he preferred struggle, he loved it, for he knew that peaceful bliss is often subject to abuse. "Gold, scepter, glory, pleasure, beautiful countenance," symbolizing life in peace, lead away from happiness founded for man by God. The drama of human existence is therefore displayed in two dimensions: the first, "weak, forgetful, and split in himself," man is condemned to uncertain struggle that he has to undertake if he wants to be authentically human, and the second, consciousness that the body is formed from earthly elements, that "it is hard not to love but that loving consoles little" and that these elements generate fear of this existence. That is why the author entitles the sonnet with his explicit point of reflection: "On the perishable love of things of this world" (*O nietrwałej miłości rzeczy świata tego*).

Sęp, a righteous Sarmate, *Polonus defensor Mariae*, could not forget the Virgin Mary. His sonnet "To the Most Blessed Virgin" (*Do Najświętszej Panny*) astonishes with paradoxes. We find there the Mother of God, "incomparable Virgin, the second adornment (of humanity after Adam before his fall), miraculous Mother of her own Creator," exalted over the choirs of angels, enjoying genuine bliss, a real moon for human souls. So the author is interested neither in the virginity of Our Lady nor in her maternity, much discussed by the reformers, but in her assumption into heaven, thanks to which she became mediatrix of God's light.

> But thou hath rais'd as a morning dawn
> Show us desired brigthness of the Sun

concludes one of poems. After the pains of struggling with "flesh, Satan, and the world" comes twilight, as if after the night of the senses as presented by St. John of the Cross.

In Sęp's poems there are distinct anthropological references. Man appears here as someone who fights for his "existence for heaven's sake" when he realizes the "temporality of things of this world," someone to whom Mary reveals "the desired splendor". He struggles, situated between darkness and light, appearances and values, temporality and real perdurance. Military metaphors serve to describe the states of his experiences and religious feelings. It is these features that make Sęp's poetry distinct among the poems of other authors.

The seventeenth century writers, mostly educated in Jesuit colleges, took intense interest in theology, especially in Mariology, developed by them in a poetic way, synthesizing all that had been expressed in matters of spirit by the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. We easily recognize in their poetry topics dear to Kochanowski: aquatic metaphors, sailing as the sense of life, hierophanies of the Sun, the stars, heavens as signs of invisible realms. Man and his environment here are still "God's playground". But, in order to express their religious sentiments and commitments, with the greatest predilection these authors turn to the world of gemstones and plants.

Wacław Potocki in his "The New Jerusalem" (*Nowe Jeruzalem*) enumerates twelve jewels, as "marked with apostolic names": jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sard, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, hyacinth, amethyst. They constitute the foundations of the city through which flows "the river of crystal waters," with trees of life growing on its shores. Klemens Bolesławiusz, when he wants to render homage to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary also employs to this type of metaphor. Thus, Our Lady is compared to beryl, emerald, sapphire, carbuncle, chrysolite, topaz, agate, ligure, onyx, and jasper. But it is as if this series of gemstone metaphors did not satisfy the poet; in the conclusion, Mary is moreover a pearl whom he invokes to illuminate the darkness of death, to scare out the devil, for "the Most Holy Lady, gloriously presented in the Sacred Scripture, surpasses the beauty of flowers and the nobleness of precious stones". Similarly Wespazjan Kochowski praises Mary in his "Virgin Garden" (*Ogród Panieński*), as does Walenty Odymalski. Piotr Hiacynt Pruszcz ends his apology of Mary (*Tota pulchra es o Maria*) with the a confession:

> Most splendid art thou, o Mother of God
> More than gold, gardens, pearls, stars, sun, and roses

The Bible and a rose is Mary for Józef Bartłomiej Zimorowicz in his "On the day of visitation of the Virgin Mary" (*W dzień nawiedzenia Panny Maryjej*). Klemens Bolesławiusz in "Virgin,

being a Mother, embraces the Child" (*Panna, będąc Matką, piastuje Dzieciątko*) uses all the possible metaphors of gems and flowers to praise the Mother of God. She is able even to turn a circle into a square, she has reared the flower of her womb that became a garden, for which she is praised by legions of the heavenly court.

Equally bold is Wespazjan Kochowski in his "The Most Holy Virgin Mary -- the sealed garden" (*Ogród zamkniony Najświętsza Panna Maryja*). Mary for him is a garden of astounding beauty. In it are cedar, cypress, sycamore and terebinth, and the living water disseminate the taste of their flavor. A little bit more modest in his wording is Kasper Twardowski ("Rose and Lily"; *Róża i lilia*), but he allows himself a daring bachelor's comparison: when speaking about Mary's smile he notices "a pearly fence of teeth" and the "ruby brush" of her tongue. Jan Libicki solves the mystery of Mary's virginity with a question:

You ask how was the Savior from a Virgin born?
The way a scent comes forth from herbs and flowers.

The poetic mariology of the Baroque period often contented itself with contemplating Marian feasts. Józef Bartłomiej Zimorowic ("A Hymn for the Day of Assumption of the Virgin Mary"; *Hymn na dzień wniebowzięcia Panny Maryjej*) personifies various natural phenomena: stars stopped, the moon forgot her course, elements, speechless, adored the Assumption. In a similar way Wojciech Chrościcki describes the Visitation and praises the day of birth of the Mother of God ("The Second Song on the Birth of Our Lady"; *Na narodzenie NMP pieśń druga*).

Baroque poetry adores God through Jesus Christ, in particular through his world redeeming passion. Łazarz Baranowicz, comparing the crucified Christ to a pearl encrusted cross of that time, is the first Polish author of concrete poetry, visually entitling his poem with the sign of a cross with an inscription ALBA on its arms. This visual form -- supported by words -- serves the poet to express his conviction that Christ is even more precious than a pearl, a pure value (ALBA), for he gave his life innocently and became a way leading to heaven.

In the poetic theology of gems, pearls occupied a privileged position. If precious gems served to make present sacral values, pearls were helpful in identifying divinity. Walenty Odymalski ("This Precious Pearl"; *Ta droga perła*) shares with us such a reflection about the divinity of Christ:

. . . he, infinite
hid by a splendid wonder all his godly treasure
In his humanity, in which he wrapped became conceal'd as in
a pearl conch.

In such a lyric context nothing is simpler than to use a hyperbolic apposition stating that in his beauty and value Christ "exceeds pearls and precious gems". Thus, Christ is something far more precious than carbuncle, than sardonyx adorned with its innocence, than emerald representing charm, than diamonds, sard, beryl, sapphire, jasper, chrysoprase, chrysolite, amethyst. As Christ's power is infinite, even the sum of all the properties of gemstones cannot equal his might. This symbolism that, as a matter of fact, may be called "jeweler's theology," inventive in its metaphorical diversity, draws our attention to the artistic labor whose ambition it was to bring the mystery of the God-man closer to our understanding.

Christ was also represented in the Baroque poetry through numerous images of his passion and death. Jan Andrzej Morsztyn ("For Good Friday 1651"; *Na Wielki Piątek 1651 r.*) provides us with such images and emotions. There are also plenty in Wespazjan Kochowski's "The Seventh Greeting of the Countenance of Christ Our Lord"; *Siódme pozdrowienie twarzy Pana Chrystusowej*). The confession of a sinner who recalls Christ's sufferings is put in antitheses and oxymora by Wacław Potocki in his "9th Song" (*Pieśń IX*). This poetry provides us also with occasional prayers: by Adam Wieszczycki ("The Third Lily Flower in the Garland of God's Love"; *Liliowy w wieńcu miłości Bożej trzeci kwiat*) to the Infant, by Adam Wasilewski ("Jesus' heart, heart divine"; *Serce Jezusa, serce ubóstwione*) to the Heart of Jesus; by Łazarz Baranowicz ("Christ is Sailing, Adored by the Wind"; *Chrystus żegluje, wiatr mu hołduje*) to Christ the Coxwain, leading each human ship to heaven.

Another way of developing poetic theology in the XVIIth century were ambitious enquiries concerning the essence of relation between God and man. In "Collection of Spiritual Rhymes" (*Setnik rymów duchowych*) by Sebastian Grabowiecki God is the Lord in the highest, who warms human hearts with a "beam of grace". Man could not exist without this grace ("Rhyme 51"), for its beam warms the human soul, "surrounded by ice". Grabowiecki loved metaphors of fire. For him, the "living flame" of God's sanctity scares away the dragon (Satan), aiming at taking control over human souls ("Rhyme 80"). This divine flame is identified by the poet also with benevolent solar rays, thanks to which forests, hills, rivers, and the whole earth "abound with bliss". The human task is to recognize it and avoid yielding to "erroneous hope" ("Rhyme 154").

Some of Grabowiecki's texts resemble the writings of the Spanish mystics. The fire of God's grace, even "the slightest sparkle," purifies human hearts from darkness, so that the sight could perceive the Lord and thus ensure the "eternal joy" of the soul ("Rhyme 175"). Kasper Twardowski wrote in a similar vein. His fire was also innocuous, even beneficial, for it brought hope, caused benign tears, the swoon of the soul, and warmed up bowels. Thanks to it man deprived himself of himself as his body and bones "burnt with the fire of heavenly love" ("The Torch of Love"; *Pochodnia miłości*). "God is fire himself" -- Twardowski entitles one of his texts -- "in fire he came from heaven". Through Christ he lighted the fire of love needed by man who should burn with a "holy prayer," sustain its flames with meditations about the mysteries of the Lord, and finally become, out of such heavenly thoughts, himself "a burning stove".

Poets of the Baroque do not want to yield to the splendors and pleasures of the world. Wespazjan Kochowski judges them critically and inventively ("Family of pride"; *Familia pychy*):

Family Hubris, Profit, Splendor, earthly Beauty
Health, Strength, Fortune, Vigor, Freedom, Unrestraint
Office, Glory, Fame, Reason, Sanctity, and Virtue --
These are fans of pride of our earthly life.

Above all, however, this poetry is amazed by the fragility and instability of human existence on earth. "Amidst continuous circling passes fugacious time away" -- stated Daniel Naborowski ("Shortness of This Life"; *Krótkość żywota*), associating time with a circle, and, by the same token, with the mystical figure of Fortune. The only sure thing in this world is the craddle or grave, if man is unable to open himself for the action of God's transcendence. Symeon Połocki, an Orthodox monk writing in Polish ("Man is a Bubble"; *Człowiek jest bąbel*) doubted entirely man's privileged position among other creatures:

/He/ is a bubble, glass, ice, fairy tale, shadow, dust, and straw
Dream, point, voice, sound, wind, flower -- nothing to call
a king.

"Hierophantic landscapes" according to patterns left by Jan Kochanowski were hardly ever used in the Baroque Sarmatian poetry in Poland. It preferred to talk about God and man using metaphors of precious gems, plants, fire, water, and thus describing human spiritual experiences, rises and falls, sins and frailties and proclaiming God's glory. In spite of that, some artistic works are close to the above mentioned patterns. Stanisław Grochowski, for instance, was persuaded that the whole world praises the might and "charming radiance" of its Lord ("The Sun and the Moon speak"; *Słońce i miesiąc mówią*). Christ is in this text a peculiar light, since it surpasses both "solar" and "lunar" brightness. Józef Jan Wadowski used a paraphrase of a hymn from Daniel's prophecy (III 57-88; "All Creatures, Praise the Lord"; *Wszelkie stworzenia chwalcie Pana*), inspired also by Kochanowski's hymn "What do you want from us, O Lord, for your generous gifts" (*Czego chcesz od nas, Panie . . .*). Józef Baka ("A Text about God's Love"; *Tekst o miłości Bożej*), praising the infinite goodness of the Creator, admitted that

Animals, lively birds, mighty elements
Ants and worms teach us; they are our school
In which we learn your mercy,

So he recognized a hierophany in the whole work of God's creation. The originality of the poetical expressions of the sense of the *sacrum*, sensitivity to transcendent values and the diverse forms of religiosity that occur in Baroque times are impressive. The XVIIth century way of perceiving the *sacrum* did not, however, go beyond the frames determined by the Catholic and Orthodox religion. The poetry of this time may be treated as a record of the religious thinking of Poles and as an amateurish, because poetic, theology.

Flashes of the *Sacrum* among the Clouds of the XVIIIth Century Deism

The culture of the XVIIIth century in Poland judged many values to be uncertain. Beauty ceased to have its transcendent character, and became only an aesthetic category, confirmed by history. Poetry, sensitive to metaphysical qualities, was no longer an art of guessing spiritual elements behind the surface of things perceived by the senses. What counted was the practical force of the word that was supposed to help make the world better, to support social and political reforms, or to amuse with laughter from various human vices.

The paradox of the literature of that time consisted in the fact that it was created overwhelmingly by people sanctified with the priesthood, yet it was not attracted by an enchanting call of God. The instinct for beauty did not force the authors to treat earth and its landscapes as a reflex of heaven, but contented itself with the surface of things, with the common experience of mores and with their threats. That is why the poetry of these times was rather a rhymed journalism, and journalism was a way of making politics. Prose in such conditions was a way of describing states of public consciousness.

The writings of Elżbieta Drużbacka were a modest flash of literarily represented experiences of the *sacrum*. In her "Collection of Spiritual, Panegyrical, and Worldly Rhymes" (*Zbiór rytmów duchowych, panegirycznych i światowych* -- 1752) she put in verses the lives of saints as well as

her own moral and religious feelings. In her poem "Describing Four Seasons of the Year," imitating Kochanowski, she anthropomorphized the world, seeing in it God's signs.

On the other hand, the poetic activity of Konstancja Benisławska was a joyful flash of the *sacrum*. Her "Songs sung to myself" (*Pieśni sobie śpiewane* -- 1776) in the far Livonia were written in spite of the literal fashion supported by three poet-bishops: Adam Naruszewicz, Ignacy Krasicki, and Jan Paweł Woronicz, as well as by Tomasz Kajetan Węgierski, Franciszek Dionizy Kniaźnin, Stanisław Trembecki and later Franciszek Karpiński Her poems constitute a poetic meditation inspired by such prayers as "Our Father" and "Hail Mary". What astounds in them are the neologizing inventiveness, the phonic diversity and, above all, the depth of mystical rapture and ardent ecstasies of the soul experiencing the direct touch of God.

Who is man before God's countenance -- asked the poetess restlessly, answering herself: "a feeble mud hut," "a poor fellow," a sinful little woman, a perishable creature, whom the Son of God ordered to call God "father". Death should not be something terrible for us, for, depriving us of life, it shows us at the same moment God, without whom even heaven would be hell. As in Kochanowski, man is a mockery ("Song II," "Our Father . . ."; *Pieśń II, Ojcze nasz . . .*). That is why the poetess prays:

O Father! Make me your daughter, give strength
To renounce deadly flesh of the old base Adam
For I am wrongly born from him, crippled and wounded
Inclined towards the world, desirous of blood.

Benisławska's prayers are always supported by ethical experience. When the poetess meditates over subsequent phrases of "Our Father" or "Hail Mary," she paints as if internal landscapes, thanking Christ for daily bread, asking for the grace of sanctity, telling all creatures to praise their Lord for they are signs of His might and goodness.

Quite another type of religious feelings and experiences is expressed in the poetry of Franciszek Dionizy Kniaźnin. This leading representative of sentimentalism wrote pathetic odes ("To God"; *Do Boga*; "To the Mother of God"; *Do Bogarodzicy*), entirely deprived of mawkishness. God in his poetry resembles for this reason the austere Jahoveh of the Old Testament. Even if he is the guarantee of the sense of human life, who may even be invoked to have mercy on the fallen Poland, it is rather not possible to open before him one's heart.

The works of Franciszek Karpiński present themselves somewhat differently. His set of "Songs of Piety" (*Pieśni nabożne*, 1792) contains ritual, moral, religious, supplicatory, and patriotic songs and poems. In them God is a righteous and merciful Father, Savior of human kind. He takes care of his servants, listens to complaints, supports in frailness ("A Song on God's Mercy"; *Pieśń o miłosierdziu Boskim*). "The Morning Song" (*Pieśń poranna*) and "The Evening Song" (*Pieśń wieczorna*) were most popular thanks to their simplicity of wording, easily followed melodies and sincerity of feelings. But Karpiński was also a sophisticated master of the word. His Christmas carol "On God's Nativity" (*O narodzeniu Pańskim*) is an artistical performance composed of a series of antitheses and oxymorons used to make present the mystery of the Word who deigned to become Flesh and to live among us:

God is born, power quakes
Lord of heavens stripped and naked;
Fire freezes, splendor fades

Knows our bounds the Infinite;
Despised -- cover'd with glory
Mortal -- reigns over the ages . . .

Next, metaphors serve to describe the mystery of the Crib to which shepherds arrive and kings come with their gifts. In accord with Franciscan spirituality, God comes to abide among "his beloved people," blessing houses, cities, villages, and the "dear fatherland," for he takes care of poor men who are given the favor of experiencing their proximity even before kings. By this literary accomplishment Karpiński outstripped all the achievements of the XVIIth century masters -- Stanisław Grochowski and Jan Żabczyc -- in the domain of Christmas carols. He was able also to combine religious qualities with patriotic needs.

Transcendent Ways of Worshipping God in Romanticism

One of the features distinguishing the culture of Romanticism in Poland is its discrediting of the exaggerated claims of reason. In his program ballade "Romanticism" (*Romantyczność*) Adam Mickiewicz wrote:

. Feeling and faith appeal to me stronger
Than glass and eye of the wise

According to this confession the author had to find such measures of transcendence for the heroes of his compositions that they can make present whatever is above "glass and eye of the wise". In a poem "Ode to the Youth" (*Oda do młodości*), an expression of his youthful enthusiasm, he praised these measures with following phrases: "reach where sight cannot reach," "break what reason cannot break," recognizing in youth the basic component of the world order, without, however, any biological connotations. The consequence of this had to be also acknowledgement of faith as a factor leading to awareness of God. For Mickiewicz, devotee of the Mother of God, it is she who was supposed to help in this awareness. The poet dedicated the work to her in beginning his poem "Hymn for the Day of Annunciation" (*Hymn na dzień Zwiastowania N. P. Maryi* -- 1820).

The incarnate God and His Mother are frequent objects of Mickiewicz's poetical reflection. He always finds for them subtle artistic forms of expression. Christ should be an educative model for young Poles, for them also awaits the death of martyrs ("To the Polish Mother"; *Do Matki Polki*). God is the absolute Master, creator of the world of spirits and human hearts, communicating with man by means of images painted "on the azure of heavens," for man could not otherwise grasp the thoughts of his Creator. God is also a doctor of souls, a confessor, and a psychotherapist, with whom man can "chat" (*gadać*), finding an attentive listener ("An Evening Talk"; *Rozmowa wieczorna*). God, Creator and Benefactor, is in Mickiewicz's poetry a frontier of reason for those who believe only in reason, who -- as the poet argues -- "go and hunt" God in the way of those who went to capture Christ and bring him to Pilate's court. The wise, if they only could, would proclaim the death of God ("The Wise"; *Mędrcy*) or would confirm his existence if only he let them explain his entity, for instance through "hierophantic landscapes" that he would create himself ("Reason and Faith"; *Rozum i wiara*). God is also giver of blessed tears when the lyrical subject, a mature man, epitomizes and judges his life ("Tears were Gushed"; *Polały się łzy*; "Regrets of a Waster"; *Żale rozrzutnika*).

In Mickiewicz's poetic activity experiencing the mysteries of faith had a serious impact on the way he experienced Poland, especially after the fall of the November uprising. Poland appeared to Mickiewicz almost as a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. Analogies between the passion of Christ and the sacrifice of Polish martyrs constituted the essence of the prophetic message in the third part of "The All Saints Eve" (*Dziady*) The sacrifice of Christ brought to the world redemption, and the sacrifice of Poland will also bring salvation to the world. Evil in this world, spreading not without the fault of nations claiming to be Christian, is a moral scandal as well as an impenetrable design of God. He uses Poland as his epiphany so that nations can understand their own fault so that his plans could be fulfilled.

In this drama, against the backdrop of the experiences and spiritual transformations of its characters, there is a great dialogue on understanding these divine designs. One of these characters is Konrad, a great poet endowed with an unusual strength of spirit, an individualist and egoist comparing himself to God in his creative abilities. He wants to reign over souls in order to rule the world by love, not by wisdom. It is because God lacks love, that there is so much suffering everywhere. For this suffering, as well as for the helplessness towards evil, Konrad charges God. Had he power, he would organize a happy world, based on love, even against people's will. He admits to be such a tyrant of love, a dictator of hearts, launching a dangerous challenge:

> And, if they resist,
> Let them suffer and perish. . . .

This is a fatal perspective. A quite different point of view is proposed by the second interlocutor, humble servant of God, a Bernardine monk. Piotr wishes to save Konrad, to rescue him from a moral downfall through prayer and brotherly care. He is a personification of Franciscan humility, which is a means of maintaining unity with God, of endowing history with meaning, a way of self-transcendence. That is why only Piotr understands that the sufferings of Poland are a divine epiphany, that through them will come, with God's consent, true liberty of Poland and other nations. In spiritual polemic with Konrad he may feel the winner. It is to him that it is given to see the future of Poland, just as he experiences its crucifixion for its own liberty and for the liberty of others.

So it is not pride, not great individuality, even not mighty talent that are measures of the self-transcendence of individuals, but Franciscan humility, assuring the possibility of meeting God who recompenses our misery with gifts we did not dare to dream of.

The extent to which Mickiewicz was dependent upon Franciscan spirituality is witnessed by *Pan Tadeusz*, the national epoc of Poles. The poet created in this work a certain model of Polish identity and hierarchy of values, ordering the course of action based on the universal brotherhood of beings created by God. That is why animated and personified nature feels, loves, enjoys, becomes angry, supports people, provides impressions. Above all, however, it neutralizes the action of history that smells blood and divides the continuity of time into a series of periods hostile to man.

In a world thus conceived, a special role is played by a certain Jacek Soplica, a squabbler obsessed by pride and pleasures of life. He is characteristic of nobility and becomes a soldier for the Polish cause, a partisan of divine laws, a Bernardine priest. He combines in his life various discordant elements, achieving what may be called elevating the *profanum* to the range of the *sacrum*. This is a permanent feature of a well understood priesthood, as well as of a righteous and meaningful life in general.

In Mickiewicz's poem events happen also on a metaphysical level. They are formally initiated by an apostrophe to the Mother of God opening the epoc, imagined as represented on the two icons especially dear to Poles: Our Lady of Częstochowa and Ostra Brama, and closed by a fragment at the end of the poem describing a celebration of a Marial feast of Our Lady of Flowers that does not exist in the calendar of the Catholic liturgy and has been invented by the poet.

The second great poet of this epoc, Juliusz Słowacki -- similarly to Mickiewicz -- based the whole literary axiology of his works on the Christian faith. He lived it so dramatically that sometimes he behaved as a religious dissenter, defending his views in spite of the tradition of the Church.

Słowacki began his artistic adventure with an ardent prayer to the Mother of God that was intended to carry the appeal for liberty of the nation, the blood and labor of insurrectionists, before the throne of God ("A Hymn"; *Hymn*). Already as an *emigrée* in numerous poetical prayers he expressed his filial adoration of the Father (*Hymn*), prostrated before him, humbled himself under the burden of sins ("So help me, o God"; *Tak mi Boże dopomóż*). He gave thanks for the gift of talent ("I believe"; *Wierzę*), asked for help for his nation ("O Lord, if you close the ears of your nation"; *Panie, jeżeli zamkniesz słuch narodu*), and augured the coming of a Slav pope ("Amidst discord God rings a huge bell"; *Pośród niesnasek Pan Bóg uderza . . .*). But this artist with the soul of a mystic was also capable of a sober asssessment of the convictions confirmed by the most renowned authorities. He ridiculed the universal sense of the Polish sacrifice proclaimed by Mickiewicz, he laughed at Pope Gregory XVI who did not want to acknowledge Polish claims to liberty, and yet at the same time created some strange world of gnosis ("Fr. Marek";*Ks. Marek*; "A Silver Dream of Salomea"; *Sen srebrny Salomei*) with no rational laws, where inconceivable misfortunes destroy collective life, where mysterious signs from beyond the earthly realms reach the earth, where prophecies come true. In the last years of his life he created an image of himself as a mystical thinker, spiritualizing the represented world and elaborating an allegedly primordial ethical codex ("Genesis from the Spirit"; *Genezis z Ducha*). Słowacki was persuaded that by means of illumination man is capable of penetrating the mysteries of being. He hoped that everything exists through the Spirit and for the Spirit, inspired by St. Augustine's *Confessions* and by St. Francis' "Song of Creation". Beings are subject to metempsychosis, constantly changing forms of existence and striving towards ever more complex states, and never moving back.

The poet was especially interested in work of the Spirit in the history of Poland. The Spirit certainly was incarnate in the first rulers of Poland and endowed Polish identity with its essence, perceivable even in the symbolism of Polish topographic names. Słowacki expressed his views on these matters in the poem "Spirit the King" (*Król Duch*), but he did not complete his enterprise, writing only five rhapsodies. As a matter of fact, his main intention was the one defined in his prayer at the end of "Genesis from the Spirit": "Allow that this unique way of bifurcations and enlightenments, way of love and understanding, shine stronger and stronger with suns of knowledge . . . and that it lead your people [o God], marching now on a dolorous way, to the kingdom of God".

The next great poet of the epoch, Zygmunt Krasiński, was also a believer in ideas of genesis. Słowacki held that he was led to this "by flashes of his mind" and awaited impatiently the effects of the synthesis that it guarantees. This eminent artist liked to examine history (*Iridion*), understood as nobody else the mechanisms of the function of social movements ("A Non-Divine Comedy"; *Nie-Boska komedia*), and recognized individual human ambitions with the precision of a psychoanalyst. Inclined to Dantesque moods, he passed through such fashionable maladies as melancholy and spleen, but managed to avoid the Romantic fashion of quarreling with God. He

held Christianity for the only value in reference to which all ethical and social concepts should be judged. He confirmed the vanity and senselessness of social revolts, for they are contrary to the sense of divinity. Non-divinity, in strong conflict with divinity, is human fury, hatred, revenge that leads to the fall of civilization and depreciates man reducing him to the level of a zoological species. Only acceptance of God and fidelity to God's design of the world can assure the development of history. Pankracy, who rejected this order of things, at the end of "A Non-Divine Comedy" dies in the face of the countenance of the real Master of history with a confession "*Galileae vicisti!*"

Krasiński also believed that, in God's design and thus understood, Poland awaits great deeds. Poland is the people of peoples, and therefore is destined to bring the kingdom of God into modern times, morally transformed and faithful to the spirit of love and faith.

These ways of transcending were alien to Cyprian Kamil Norwid. He was a faithful son of the Church, and even tried to enter the religious community of Resurrectionists (*Zmartwychwstańcy*). He developed his own original thought and ways of its artistic expression in continuous clash with the reflection of Romanticism.

If he prayed through his artistic realizations, he did it as if learning the world in the experience of soul. For he understood prayer as a labor of Love from which man takes real happiness ("A Monologue"; *Monolog*). Following St. Francis, he asked Mary that the will of her Son be fulfilled ("Mary, Lady of Angels"; *Maryjo, Pani Aniołów!)*.

Norwid, as an artist and as a man, with "premeditation" strove for sanctity, finding for it "words proper to things" in his poetry. He broke with the natural appearances of things as for him sanctity was always something more; thus he appealed to his imagination. In his "Prayer" (*Modlitwa*), he wrote:

Though everything you talked to me, o Lord!

Enumerating things, affairs, plants, values, qualities of spirit, he stated finally: "I am a stigma," a sign readable only in God's presence. That is why he prayed, changing the sense of the words of "Our Father": "Thy will be done, not as it is on earth," and confessing that everything, that is, "dreams, feelings, songs, thoughts and actions" tend towards God, "the acting cause" (*przy-czyna*).

Such is also the relation between God and man in Norwid. Man is an elevated creature, for God made him a "stigma," that is, his sign, and prized him in the following way: "Your angel have I in my chest and worship" ("A Prayer").

Equally interesting is Norwid's mariology ("To the Most Holy Virgin Mary"; *Do Najświętszej Maryi Panny*; "A Litany"; *Litania*). Paraphrasing the Loretto litany, Norwid records states of spiritual excitement, wants to approach and appease the guardian angel, tormented by human "bodily vices," and finally develops reflection concerning the relation between the Mother of God and Christ.

In this text Mary is the Mother of God as well as our Sister in humanity. Thanks to her man can shorten his infancy and approach her Son, thanks to her we can address him with less fear and, above all, "melt into tears" contemplating the great Love. The drama of human existence would be unbearable indeed, for it would be determined by "the past drunk with poisons of sin" and by "the void future"; that is why it is soothed by Our Lady, Sister in humanity. Christ, says the poet, is the one who "is not indebted with time," but at the same time is human, for he was raised and buried by the "womanly Person" who was "the biggest Confidant of the Cause".

The Norwidian sense of the *sacrum* is in accord with the traditional teaching of the Church. Nobody, however, in the Polish literature prayed as ardently and so realized the influence of sanctity on human life as did he. Through the incarnate Word, the *profanum* has been elevated above the expected measure, becoming an important component of the divine plan of salvation and, finally, humanizing man.

The time of Polish Romanticism was a time of searching the possibilities of individual self-transcendence desired in order to praise the Transcendence presented by the Catholic Church. It was also a time of joining affairs of the nation suffering from political enslavement with the highest metaphysical values. Artistic activity was then almost always on the edge of blasphemy, if we can call blasphemy attempts to rationalize the sufferings of people who deeply live the truths of the Catholic faith.

The Positivist Practicality towards the *Sacrum*

Monism with regard to nature, organicism, evolutionism, determinism in thought, and in social praxis so-called "organic work" and democratic ambitions -- all could not neglect common feelings, especially religious sentiments and experiences. Therefore, prosaic works could not neglect in the worlds of imagination they constructed the meaning-conferring role of religion in individual and collective life. That is why heroes of eminent works by Bolesław Prus, Eliza Orzeszkowa, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Maria Konopnicka, and others pray to God in words of their own or prayers proposed by the Church. Eliza Orzeszkowa in her novel "On the shores of Niemen" (*Nad Niemnem* -- 1888), depicting a panorama of the life of Poles in that area, used an interesting way of sacralizing the space around Niemen as a natural environment developed by Polish civilization. It was threatened by the policy of russification practiced by the invaders aiming at eliminating Polish identity. This stylistic maneuver consists among others in sanctifying two graves that become symbols of national pains and sites that are sacred for the whole neighborhood. In other words, they are hierophanies of the Polish identity defended at the price of the civilizing labor of Jan and Cecylia (the first grave), initiated in the Jagiellonian epoch, as well as at the cost of the blood of martyred soldiers of the January uprising. They are buried in a grave where provincial noblesmen and a rich landowner have been interred. Edifying acts of love of the neighbor are committed by the most popular character of the Polish XIXth century prose, Stanisław Wokulski (Bolesław Prus, "The Doll"; *Lalka* -- 1890). Professor Dębicki, a hero of another novel by Prus (*Emancypantki* -- 1894), philosophizes about the value of suffering and proves the existence of a personal God, whose might "does not frighten at all; we think about it without fear, with trust and hope, like children about their father."

Henryk Sienkiewicz dedicated his "Trilogy" (*Trylogia* -- 1884, 1886, 1888) to hope, desiring to induce trust in God's justice. Though it tests the nations, finally it brings the joy of fulfillment. He indicated lacunae in the Christian understanding of ethical principles in his other novels, such as "Without dogma" (*Bez dogmatu* -- 1891) and "The Połaniecki Family" (*Rodzina Połanieckich* -- 1895). In *Quo vadis* (1896) he puts us in touch with the sanctity of the first Christians in ancient Rome in the times of Nero.

The positivist fashion of libertine thinking was the object of attack by Teodor Jeske-Choiński. Heroes of his novel were granted the grace of spiritual rebirth.

Poetry, composed mostly of syllabic verses with distinct syntax and well ordered rhymes, humbly petitioned the Lord. Intellectual novelty evaporated from these poems, together with artistical creativity. These lacks were compensated by sincerity of confessions, pathos of emotions,

and fidelity to the truth of the catechism. A master of such poetry was Maria Konopnicka, writing, liturgical texts, as before her had Alojzy Feliński with his "Hymns for the holy Mass" (*Pienia do Mszy św*). Adam Asnyk laid his filial trust "At the Feet of the Cross" (*Pod stopy krzyża*), and Wiktor Gomulicki praised the Lord through purity of dreams and begged for mercy for the beloved city of Warsaw.

The Franciscan Trace and Modernistic Struggles with God

The honesty of representatives of the Polish fin-de-siècle -- called modernists in the Polish tradition of literary critique -- was not exhausted in desperate hedonism, in praises of absinth, coffee, punch, champagne, hashish, and lust. They relished nirvana, death, eschatological depths, all kinds of spiritism, and holism in particular. This justified a joke that the Polish soul at the end of the XIXth century was most strongly marked both by Satan and by Tatry (a mountain chain in Poland, discovered and exploited by artists at that time).

But in this enchantment by the Tatra mountains there was an element of fascination with the person of St. Francis of Assisi, his spirituality and his attitude towards nature and people. For it is an undeniable fact that St. Francis, at least in the Austrian and Russian sectors of the partitioned Poland, impressed Polish minds. There were three eminent expressions of this influence. The first is esthetic exploitation of the great cultural symbol of St. Francis. The second is the figure of Albert Chmielowski who entirely overwhelmed the intellectual elites of Cracow and Galicia by rejecting his career as a painter and taking care of the miserable and homeless. Finally, the third is a founder of numerous religious communities, popularizing Franciscan spirituality among the social masses -- Honorat Koźmiński.

The figure of St. Francis of Assisi was known already in Old Polish literature, and took solid roots in the romantic literature, inspiring the impression "Genesis from the Spirit" by J. Słowacki, quoting "The Song of Creation". During the fin-de-siecle period the spirituality of St. Francis was popularized among the educated part of the society thanks to "The Little Flowers of St. Francis," translated by Leopold Staff and enjoying great popularity, as well as splendid artistic works by Jan Kasprowicz ("A Hymn of St. Francis"; *Hymn św. Franciszka*), Tadeusz Miciński("Stigmas of St. Francis"; *Stygmaty św. Franciszka*), and Jerzy Hulewicz ("To St. Rebel"; *Do św. Buntownika*), to mention only the most outstanding examples.

Kasprowicz has his hero speak about the grace of stigmata and disclose in a long monologue the sense of spiritual experiences. In this way he brings closer to the public the concept of the sanctity of Francis and Clare, for whom holiness means "being a happy sharer of immortal life." The Francis of Miciński, on the other hand, experiences the grace of stigmata, suffers and rejoices. Stigmata hurt, and Francis, listening to the whisper of flowers, worries above all that he might unwillingly stain the flowers with his blood. The extent of the development of this fascination with St. Francis's sanctity is testified by the characters of numerous pieces of prose, not to mention the unusually abundant devotional literature. They are most frequently figures, mysterious in their past, who pass through dramas of spiritual metamorphosis, thanks to which they give up the life rules they confessed hitherto in order to sacrifice themselves without restraint to some kind of service, either patriotic, public, or to the poor in a religious community. This dynamism of lives of these heroes constitutes the inventive essence of the Franciscan topos. Stefan Żeromski uses it in "Converting Judas" (*Nawracanie Judasza* -- 1916), creating the interesting character of brother Guide, with distinct traits of Albert Chmielowski. Brother Wysz in Tadeusz Miciński's *Nietota* ("*Nietota*. A Mysterious Book of the Tatras" -- 1910) is a figure endowed with all features of

Franciscan spirituality. Lipce Roch, a character from "Peasants" (*Chłopi* -- 1904-1909) by Władysław Reymont lives and works like a Franciscan Tertiary. The painter Wysz in Adam Krechowiecki's novel "*I am*" (*Jestem* -- 1894) has traits of character proper to brother Albert.

The literature of Polish modernism had its clashes with God. The most famous, because in an original artistic form, is to be found in "Hymns" (*Hymny* -- 1904) by Jan Kasprowicz, especially in his "God the Holy, God the Mighty" (*Święty Boże, Święty Mocny*) and in *Dies irae*, depicting, by means of numerous symbolizations and onomatopoeic series, a procession of humanity marching towards its demise. It is accompanied by the original mother of sin, blondhaired Eve, and by Satan. Utilizing the tradition of religious hymns -- *Dies irae* is ascribed to a Franciscan, Thomas of Celano. Quoting them abundantly the poet asks about the role of God in the world in which evil prevails, about the sense of suffering of the innocent, about God's salvific power. Provocatively he demands a sign of his presence, and because God remains silent he forlornly calls Satan to occupy the empty space left by God.

Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer in moments of despair ("Unfaithful"; *Niewierny*) had accounts to settle with God. But before he proclaimed that he does not believe in anything he asked God that he give himself to men. Bolesław Leśmian in his pantheistic but also biblical way, and even atheistically oriented Andrzej Niemojewski tried to find the best forms of artistic expression when they allowed characters of their works to transcend themselves before God's transcendence. A similar attitude was represented by Leopolf Staff when he wrote: "Who seeks yo has already found you" and "everyday meet me your signs" ("Signs"; *Znaki*).

Through depths of adoration, desperate doubting, atheistic negation, the ability of self-transcendence, which is evidently an art of taming pride and of perseverance in deciphering signs, symbols, codes, and recognizing hierophanies the literature of the Polish modernism rendered present the *sacrum* of God's transcendence. It attempted to understand the sacral sense of things as suggested by the great saints of the universal Church. On this occasion, it tried to decipher the truth about the fallen (Stanisław Wyspiański, *Klątwa* -- 1909) or the decent man. It always remembered him as expressed by the words of Stanisław Brzozowski: "The most difficult is to awake Christ in man convinced about his virtue". "Speaking with every single man you have to speak as if you spoke with Christ, and you have to act as if it were Christ." On such a basis the Polish intelligentsia shaped their attitude, in large part leftist or inclined to the left, learning to understand *dolori et amori sacrum* -- *the sacrum* in pain and love.

In the Same Way -- and the Differently

Polish literature prayed ardently and heretically for a war of nations that was supposed to bring the nation its desired freedom. God was asked for it by Mickiewicz, by Stanisław Wyspiański appealing to "educe action from the faith of centuries" (the hymn *Veni Creator*), and by the poets of the Polish Legions, Józef Mączka and Józef Relidzyński, calling the Lord to bless the military actions of their army. When the miracle of independence came true, literature, in all its creative ambitions, departing from various religious positions, rendered homage to the One who is the Lord of ages.

Janusz Korczak humbled himself before the Lord searching for expressions to name the human debility that equals God's greatness ("Prayer of Debility"; *Modlitwa niemocy*). Bronisława Ostrowska read the signs of nature as traces of God's presence ("You, who poured into the morning of life such a joyful charm"; *Któryś wlał w ranek życia taki wdzięk radosny*). Emil Zegadłowicz, with his revolutionary attitude towards social order, contemplated images of the Lord's passion

("With an olive branch"; *Z gałęzią oliwną*), and Witold Wandurski, persuaded to Communism, attempted to inquire into the sense of the words uttered by Christ on the cross. Julian Tuwim, whose attitude in life may be called agnostic, was the author of moving religious poems. One of them "O Christ" (*Chrystusie*), an expression of longing for Christ, was for years sung in Polish Churches. Tuwim made pacts with God, asked for grace for "all habitants of the world" ("A Prayer"; *Modlitwa*), and at the time of the second World War for "grandiosity of hearts" that will found the coming great Poland ("A Litany"; *Litania*). Tuwim was in his poetry a *homo religiosus*. The exaltation of prayer and a thirst of grace were not alien to him, for he understood that the fullness of poetic ethos may be gained by an artist only if his word is ready to measure its strength with the Immeasurable. That is why he compared poets to barbarians who got acquainted with God.

The richness of religious lyrics of the period between the first and the second World War in Poland is evident in a group of poets who saw in the possibility of transcending the lyrical I a chance for artistic fulfillment. Kazimierz Wierzyński expressed this ambition ("I do not Know if You Exist, O God"; *Nie wiem czy jesteś Boże*):

> I want to pull out something from behind me
> . . .
> From behind of everything that here
> Is devoid of all content
> From there, from above, where eternity
> Plays and rustles with clouds.

His poetry convinces us that he pulled "something" out, learning humility before God's transcendence. This allowed him to recognize his real self through admiration for the beauty of creation or through enduring the victories and defeats sent by God as graces and punishments of the national community with which the poet identified himself.

The literature of the period between the world wars in Poland was strongly influenced by Franciscan spirituality. The Polish nation was moved by such centers as Niepokalanów ("The City of the Immaculate"), founded by Fr. Maximilian Kolbe. His popular religious magazine *Rycerz Niepokalanej* "The Knight of the Immaculate"), popularized ideals of the Militia of the Immaculate (also founded by Fr. Kolbe), supporting in the masses the knightly ethos, close to the Sarmatian commitment expressed in a saying *Polonus defensor Mariae* ("Pole -- a defender of Mary"). Another center, widely influencing intellectual milieus was founded and led in Laski by the Franciscan Sisters Servants of the Cross. In Laski a couple of intellectuals quit Judaism or bade farewell to their religious indifferentism which came from positivism. In a periodical *Verbum*, edited by this group, they discussed Catholic literature, bringing Polish and foreign writers closer to the Polish public, even though they disliked Franciscanism.

The seven hundred year anniversary of St. Francis's death inspired some authors who in their own way wanted to interpret the message left in the Franciscan model of sanctity. They wondered anew that St. Francis was conquered by God, that he let himself be transformed into a holy wonderworker, God's beggar, and yet combined in himself medieval with modern art. Leopold Staff, who stressed Franciscan spirituality already in the modernist period of his poetic activity, rendered homage to him. In the later period of his poetry Staff, using biographical data, evoked such features of this spirituality as the joy of life, humility, uncompromising love of God through all His creatures, traces of His wisdom ("The Poor of Assisi"; *Biedaczyna asyski*; "Colors of

Honey"; *Barwy miodu* -- 1936). Józef Wittlin in turn asked God through the intercession of St. Francis for the possibility of reconciling man with the world and for the conversion of this world, so mindlessly devoted to materialism ("Repentance in Assisi"; *Skrucha w Assyżu*):

> To your basilicas we bring our hearts burning with faith
> We change our dollars in di Spirito Sancto bank
> . . .
> With your bleeding hand, sealed with a stigma divine
> Make eternal peace between the world and us.

Other poets too wrote about St. Francis: Artur Maria Swinarski, Beata Obertyńska, Jerzy Liebert ("Little Birds of St. Francis"; *Ptaszki św. Franciszka*).

The character of St. Francis also interested prose authors. Zofia Kossak-Szczucka ("Without Arms"; *Bez oręża* -- 1937) sketched his interesting psychological silhouette, and called him "God's madman" in a hagiographical collection bearing the same title (1929). Pia Górska wrote a biographical novel ("St. Francis, Servants of God"; *Św. Franciszek, Sługi Boże* -- 1921).

Poetic mariology did not disappear from the literary landscape in the period between the wars. Beata Obertyńska ("Be praised, Mary"; *Bądź pochwalona*) called Mary "Mother of beautiful love" and "Genitrix of the King of Glory". Jan Lechoń prayed to Madonna as depicted in her icon from Częstochowa ("Our Lady of Częstochowa"; *Matka Boska Częstochowska*). Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, departing from conventional poetic images of the Mother of God, greeted her like a buddy: "Hi, Madonna," adorned her with cowslips, and called her Ark, Victory, and Muse. Nobody hitherto wrote in such an unceremonious manner about the Mother of God, which is why Stefan Sawicki considered this poem "religiously suspicious."

Unsuspicious and doctrinally correct poems to the honor of Mary were written by other poets. Jerzy Liebert ("A Lithany to the Virgin Mary"; *Litania do Maryi Panny)* asked for intercession so that faith may grow. Calling Mary "a cedar footbridge" and "a guide of hearts," he praised her as having been introduced to the greatest extent of all people into the divinity which became man in her Son. An author of many lyrical Marian works, Kazimiera Iłłakowiczówna composed prayers ("To the Hidden Mother of God"; *Do Matki Boskiej ukrytej*) and litanies ("To Our Lady of Ostra Brama"; *Do Matki Boskiej Ostrobramskiej*). Through innovatory literary means, she confirmed the common devotion of Poles. Jalu Kurek, among representatives of the avant-garde, not only was sensitive to the action of the *sacrum*, but also adored the Madonna represented in the form of a folk statue. He used such sophisticated metaphorical expressions as "Blessed are thy feet bleeding with lips of mothers" ("To the Mother of God"; *Do Matki Boskiej*).

The *licentia poetica* of the period between the wars made it possible to highlight sacral values. It identified them most usually with the ecclesiastical, that is, religious understanding of the *sacrum*. Among works of numerous writers we find successful artistic performances whose subject of literary reflection is God, Mary, the saints. If we look for the sources of lyricism between the inner being of things and the inner being of the human "I," then the sanctity perceived in these works will also point to its religious source.

Poets and writers as well as all other human beings are called by God. The works they produce may contribute directly to creating and shaping religion, just as the religion they live contributes to their literary activity. The imagined worlds of the great novels of the interwar period confirm this truth. They drew from components provided by the publicly professed Catholic faith: examples are "Crusaders" (*Krzyżowcy*) by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka, "Nights and Days" (*Noce i*

dnie) by Maria Dąbrowska, or "The Early Spring" (*Przedwiośnie*) by Stefan "Żeromski," a work born from opposition to Catholicism. The same truth was also confessed by Maurycy Szymel, speaking about God hidden "in the light of Sabbath candles," and "descending to a small, smoking synagogue" ("A Prayer to My God"; *Modlitwa do mego Boga*). It was understood by Józef Czechowicz when, addressing the Lord "hidden in conches of the firmament" ("A Prayer of Grief"; *Modlitwa żałobna*), he stated that even flowers are a manifestation of something else, not necessarily identical to them.

But the artistic labor of the period between the wars was not only in the service of kerygma of the Catholic Church. Maurycy Szymel, Janusz Korczak, and others manifested their sentiments and commitments without having anything in common with the Church. An interesting case is an example of poetic negative theology. This was developed by Władysław Sebyła when in the mood of pious prayer he wrote "Our Father, who are not" but who *is* at the same time, "in heaven, blue and void" ("Our Father"; *Ojcze nasz*). Thus, God is, necessary, after all even if only to maintain the logic of words, imminently breaking into the poem.

A Half Century of "Struggling" for Divine Truth and Human Dignity

The years of the second World War open a half century of "struggling for God's truth and for human dignity in Polish literature." Poet-soldiers of the Warsaw uprising, such as Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński, Tadeusz Gajcy, Andrzej Trzebiński, Wacław Bojarski, Zdzisław Stroińskiconfirmed this truth with their own life. There is no despair in their poems, even if they are full of apocalyptic scenes. Similar to the literature of Romanticism, they convince us that Poland has a special role to perform among other nations. Hence, everything that is Polish acquires in them a religious, messianic sense.

Also elder writers nourished such convictions. Antoni Słonimski compared the chosen character of the Polish nation with that of the Jews ("The Ultimate Reign"; *Regnum ostatnie*). Józef Wittlin deplored extermination of the Polish Jews ("To the Polish Jews"; *Żydom w Polsce*), and the afflicted Poland he saw as the Dolorous Mother standing under the cross. The Mother of God became a hero of numerous works written during the war. In Baczyński, she taught Polish mothers how to suffer ("A Prayer to the Mother of God"; *Modlitwa do Bogarodzicy*); in Mieczysław Jastrun's "Escape" (*Ucieczka*) she is warned against a street roundup. The Mother of God was given diverse names and was now called Our Lady of the Soldiers (of the Warsaw uprising), Our Lady of Forests, Our Lady of Soldiers, Our Lady of Stalags, Our Lady of the National Army (*Armia Krajowa*), the Hidden Our Lady, Our Lady of the Fighting Poland, Our Lady of Kozielsk, and, traditionally, Our Lady of the Polish Crown.

The war poetry utilized all possibilities provided by genres of religious literature. It made reference to religious feasts and celebrations. It refreshed Christmas carols, hymns, lenten lamentations, antiphons, legends, and popular prayers.

One feature makes this literature distinctive in a quite unique sense -- hatred of enemies was quite alien to it. Its poems and novels prayed for the intention of the oppressed, for its own nation, it prayed God to absolve the nation from the fact that it had become for the world love, truth, and a cause of remorse, as in the poem by Józef Maciej Kononowicz, "When the Shadow of the Cross" (*Kiedy cień krzyża*). And they begged, as in the poem by Kazimiera Iłłakowiczówna, for mercy for enemies ("A Prayer for the Enemies"; *Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół*):

Have mercy, O Lord, on Germans

. . .
On the people hurled by folly and dread
. . .
On those who are bent before a false god.

Poets drew different conclusions from experiences of the war. Wojciech Bąk, expressed most fully the experience of the Polish community during the war and directly thereafter. The Communist regime began, without consent of the nation, to try on the Polish identity a Deianira's gown sewn according to Russian standards. In the collection "The Fifth Gospel" he warned against human malice to prevent its return. Referring to biblical figures and Christian symbols ("This Happens in the Twentieth Century"; *To się dzieje w dwudziestym wieku*), he wrote that everything is possible:

Until from Adam a new shape emerges
New and upright, the shape of a new Adam.

But very soon in the Polish literature from Adam emerged a "Hegelian devil". Thanks to him, those who such a short time ago wrote splendid religious lyrics now organized the sounds of words so that it is only him they praised. Nothing was any longer possible -- neither doubts nor filial revolt, neither quarrel nor even request, for the devil allowed only admiration of himself. Reflection on the passing of human time has ended, everything had to be started from scratch.

Neophytes of the Communist religion, before they convert again to Christianity, will fight even more ardently with attitudes of Christian humanism, represented by a group of writers who remained faithful to its ethos Kazimiera Iłłakowiczówna was. Condemned to remain of the margin of life. Kazimierz Wierzyński, Jan Lechoń and the others remained in exile to witness the truth and save the honor of the enslaved nation. The values of Christian culture were defended by writers related to the editorial board of *Tygodnik Powszechny* ("The Universal Weekly") in Cracow: Stefan Kisielewski, Hanna Malewska, Antoni Gołubiew, Leopold Tyrmand, Zofia Starowieyska-Morstinowa, Jerzy Zawieyski, Zbigniew Herbert. They were accompanied by writers from other milieus, such as Wojciech Bąk, Zofia Kossak-Szatkowska, Władysław Jan Grabski, Jan Dobraczyński, Maria Kuncewiczowa.

A particular place in the literature of the whole period after the second World War is occupied by the literary activity of Roman Brandstaetter, a convert from Judaism, who willingly used Franciscan motives ("A Return to Assisi"; *Powrót do Asyża*; "Two Muses"; *Dwie muzy* -- 1965; "Other Flowers of St. Francis"; *Inne kwiatki św, Franciszka* -- 1976). His way of writing is faithful to the biblical intuition ("The Song about my Christ"; *Pieśń o moim Chrystusie* -- 1974; "Jesus from Nazareth"; *Jezus z Nazaretu* 1967-1972). In his texts there is no romantic wrestling with God; they are, however, full of ambition to meet Him and to learn more about Him, to strengthen one's faith. Similar content is evoked in the author's dramaturgical writings ("Return of the Prodigal Son"; *Powrót syna marnotrawnego*).

Traditional Franciscanism, especially the figure of the saint of Assisi, is present in writings of many contemporary writers: Kazimiera Iłłakowiczówna, Kazimierz Wierzyński, Jan Twardowski, Anna Kamieńska, Jacek Łukasiewicz, Józef Szczawiński, Sergiusz Riabinin, Teresa Ferenc. They present the saint as patron of ecology, and stress his role as a great moral authority for the corrupted world; they make him a mediator in bringing God closer to contemporary man. Fascination with the sanctity of St. Francis is the subject of prose of Ewa Szelburg-Zarembina. To this she devoted

a trilogy: "In Love with Love" (*Zakochany w miłości* -- 1961), "Her Name was Clara" (*Imię jej Klara* -- 1964), "And the Door Opened." "Meditations about brother Elijah" (*I otwarły się drzwi... O bracie Eliaszu medytacje* -- 1971).

Another form of Franciscanism in Polish literature is fascination with St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, as this saint touched the sensibility of contemporary generations of Poles. It reflects a special set of motives: the value of personal sacrifice in the name of love of neighbor, the knightly ethos of fight with the evil, uncompromising philosophy of action in spite of commonsense obstacles, finally the cult of the Virgin Mary. The spiritual silhouette of this saint inspires many contemporary writers. Interesting poetic writings were devoted to him: Bogdan Ostromęcki, Maciej Józef Kononowicz, Jerzy Stanisław Sito, Sergiusz Riabinin, Ziemnowit Skibiński, Feliks Rajczak, Kazimierz Kozłowski OFMConv. The saint is also present on the prose of Jan Dobraczyński, Gustaw Morcinek, Jan Józef Szczepański.

The connection between aesthetics and the power and charm of nature often leads to discovering sanctity. In such a way, artistic creativity really becomes listening to watchwords and mysterious messages, according to the above mentioned intuition of G. Brazzola. Hidden connections reveal themselves and encoded messages concealed in existence are made clear. The writer perceives then this specific "something" on earth and in heaven.

In this manner Zbigniew Bieńkowski proceeds in his poem "Infinity" (*Nieskończoność*, in: "Three Poems"; *Trzy poematy* -- 1959). He listens -- through accumulating epithets, parabolic comparisons, astonishing personifications, innovative catecheses -- to what infinity says. The poetic *ego* confirms in this way its status and essence, pointing beyond itself to greatness that at the same time attracts it and frightens it. There, from the infinite distance, it perceives finally "the huge eye of Providence, always open, as if it never had an eyelid" A similar practice we may meet in Wisława Szymborska. In her poem ("A Talk with a Stone"; *Rozmowa z kamieniem*; "Salt"; *Sól* -- 1962) a stone is proud of its sense of sharing, its power is overwhelming, it is eternal. Szymborska's poetry is never satisfied with finding "common miracles" in this "best of all worlds" ("People on the Bridge"; *Ludzie na moście* -- 1986).

Beginning from fidelity to biological truth, Ernest Bryll ("A Little Animal"; *Zwierzątko* -- 1975) first discovered aquatic symbolism, especially symbols of the ocean. Then he let himself be fished out of "the dark silence", putting himself with trust into the hands of the Divine Hunter, reconciling with Him, telling about Him and praising Him in Christmas carols and in poetic prayers. Anna Kamieńska wrote through a similar evolution: from the biological truth of life to poems that are records of mystical enthusiasm. She asked in them that "her heart may grow from love" ("An Everyday Prayer"; *Modlitwa codzienna*), for she already knew "that what is always myself boils and surges over my body" ("The Body"; *Ciało*). Kamieńska's poetry, without denying the truth of *homo libidinosus*, discovered *homo religiosus* who tastes of the heavens.

Zbigniew Herbert was never satisfied with discovering traces, signs, and codes in the universe. The heroes of his poems discover the Highest Name in themselves, in their conscience, in the sacred place -- as St. Bonaventure would say. God gives himself to them attracting them with the beauty and diversity of the world, even if this world ("A Prayer of Mr. Cogito -- A Wanderer"; *Modlitwa pana Cogito -- podróżnika*) above all makes them recognize man's limitless finiteness.

Czesław Miłosz's experience of God's transcendence often recalls the method of apophatic theology. We never know if life fulfills the plans of the hidden God. Poetry becomes a kind of wisdom, a sort of light kindled over the mind -- a universal purifying light -- so that from within the *ego* might itself express the need of contact with God or so that God himself might speak,

For only He is able to enlist all pain
Reconciliations, bliss, fear, ecstasies,

("An Argument"; *Argument*; "Chronicles"; *Kroniki* -- 1988).

Then poetry becomes like a natural mystical experience (*Oeconomia divina*; "Where the Sun Rises and Where it Sets"; *Gdzie wschodzi słońce i kędy zapada* -- 1974). Such a poetry knows also spells of prayer (*Veni Creator*; "A City Without Name"; *Miasto bez imienia* -- 1969). It claims the right to be in the direct presence of God without processions with statues, and praises the magnanimity of the Spirit of Enlightenment.

It is impossible to describe all literary experiences, perceptions, discoveries of the holy and touches of God's transcendence. The lyrics of Józef Szczawiński are sometimes inspired by liturgical ceremonies. The bible is the domain of Tadeusz Nowak, Mikołaj Bieszczadowski, Jan Bolesław Ożóg, and Roman Brandstaetter. "The Miracle of the Lasting God" (*Cud trwającego Boga*) is discovered in the lyrics of Tadeusz Szaja. The four elements stimulate the artistic activity of Zbigniew Jankowski, but his poems are acts of a revolution in faith that finally convince us that the world is meaningful, for it is founded by God. The carnal metaphysics in the poetry of Szymborska, Janusz Stanisław Pasierb, Zbigniew Dolecki, Andrzej Piotrowski always refers us to "what boils and surges over our body," as Anna Kamieńska writes. The poetry of Anna Pogonowska and Bogdan Ostromięcki confirms the constant presence of God's transcendence, and some of their works have simply the nature of religious acts. The poetic reflection of Maciej Józef Kononowicz warns against time deprived of the *sacrum*. "You come from sign and in sign will you turn" -- admonishes the poetry of Mieczysław Kucner ("In the Rhythm of Analogy"; *W rytmie analogii*; "Trying to Be Honest"; *Próba wierności* -- 1976). Drawing inspiration from modern physics he states that nothing brings profit without "the Lord of the unitary field" and of "inconceivable plans" who allows us to drink transcendence and to settle in human destiny. There is reflection on the limited character of human perception of the Word in the poetry of Stanisław Jerzy Sito. Christ, the Mother of God, angels, devils and liturgy are independent subjects or bases of metaphors in the rich lyrics by Zdzisław Łączkowski.

To confront the inexpressible, to confirm one's humanity was an ambition of many contemporary writers. Andrzej Biskupski prays to God "who does not exist," like in Sebyła, for he is unthinkable as a pure thought. Nevertheless, he is practically indispensable, for man is a handicapped being, for whom God is a value in his egoistic calculation (*François Villon*, "Community"; *Wspólnota* -- 1976).

The generation of writers debuting in the eighties discovers the subjective context of their works in participation in God's transcendence.

An exceptional phenomenon in recent Polish literature is the artistic activity of a milieu consisting of about forty priests. We can meet there members of the church hierarchy, of religious orders, as well as usual workers in the Lord's vineyard. Karol Wojtyła is a poet and a dramaturge who developed poetic contemplation. In his poems ("Thinking Fatherland"; *Myśląc ojczyzna*; "Considerations on Fatherhood"; *Rozważania o ojcostwie*) man finds the sense of his existence in God, deeply hidden and inducing us to think and look "deeper and deeper". In his drama "A Brother of Our God" (*Brat naszego Boga*) the author "attempts to penetrate man" in order to show, by means of scenic structures, the dynamics of the everyday influence and presence among us of a great Franciscan, brother Albert Chmielowski.

A poet whose works significantly marked the sensibility of contemporary Poles is Jan Twardowski. He develops a Franciscan type of poetry, full of cheerfulness, wilful, joking and ironic. In this poetry the world laughs with clouds, trees, plants, insects, animals; there laugh also God, the Mother of God, and saints. The object of jokes are learned theologians, grandiloquent preachers, all too modest priests. Twardowski's poetry does not acknowledge any dualism between *sacrum* and *profanum*, it rarely resorts to mediation of hierophanies. In its world everything has its unique and autonomous value.

Janusz Stanisław Pasierb banters that his writing is inspired by some demon of the south, for he started to write in his forties. So he wanders, learns and assesses landscapes of European culture, willingly using biblical motives and his experiences of the Holy Land ("Experiences of the Land"; *Doświadczenia ziemi* -- 1989). But this poetry is also a praise of matter in that in it has been constituted the mystery of human transcendence, elevating the human subject to God.

Bonifacy Miązek, a subtle poet and an inquiring literary critic, Franciszek Kamecki, Janusz Ihnatowicz, Paweł Heintsch, Kazimierz Wójtowicz, Jerzy Czarnota, Kazimierz Kozłowski OFMConv. -- to name only these personages -- determine the course of a stream that, following Paul Ricoeur, may be called without exaggeration "poetry of shining meaning. This poetic style teaches us respect for the work of creation, restores laughter to the sense of joy proper to the children of God, makes present sanctity and divinity convincing that they are accessible for human will if only man opens to the action of Grace. Finally, this poetry leads its readers in the sphere of this darkness that breeds a thirst of Transcendence.

If contemporary poetry is a more or less mature artistic awareness of what joins earth and man with heaven, then also prose in its represented worlds -- though necessarily horizontally oriented, if we are to believe Gustaw Herling-Grudziński -- never can renounce sacral values. "We will never get rid of the temptation of perceiving the world as a secret code, always insistently trying to find a key to it: a blessed temptation, a living source of all civilizations, a secret writing of gods. But in the nature of this divine secret code lies in spite of incessant efforts and attempts the impossibility of its hieroglyphic character being deciphered."

This wise reflection is confirmed in the prose writings of this author, in which *sacrum* and *profanum* are always present with "marvelous naturalness and latitude". His "Another World" (*Inny świat*) is a work that reveals the truth about a man who was subject to practices of the Gulag Archipelago, where "forging souls" meant releaving man of all values and reducing him to a merely zoological level.

Ethical subjects, resulting from the Christian way of conceiving values, are present in very popular novels by Tadeusz Konwicki ("The Polish Complex"; *Kompleks polski* -- 1989) and Andrzej Szczypiorski ("The Beginning"; *Początek* -- 1989). Both authors point to the lack of ethics and to its bitter consequences in the lives of the characters of their books. In Szczypiorski this is a concrete lack of love of neighbors.

Christian ethical inspiration is visible in many other works of contemporary prose. It constitutes the basis of evaluation of the represented world in the novels of Tadeusz Nowak and Wiesław Myśliwski. Similarly interesting prose emerges from biblical inspiration. Jan Dobraczyński, Roman Brandstaetter, Jerzy Andrzejewski, Julian Stryjkowski are authors of eminent works of this type.

An interesting literary practice of contemporary prose writers consists in making reference to important events from the history of the Church. Teodor Parnicki wrote several novels inspired by such motives. Events in the Council of Constance served Apoloniusz Zawilski ("The Mission"; *Misja* -- 1986) to prove how great importance they had for the destiny of the Polish state. But not

all writers use such events in this manner; some treat them instrumentally. Jerzy Andrzejewski, in order to describe the terrorizing power of the political police in Poland and the way of functioning of the totalitarian regime, creates a parabolic story ("Darkness covers the earth"; *Ciemności kryją ziemię* -- 1957), referring to practices of the Spanish inquisition. Andrzej Szczypiorski describes the disaster of pest and famine, causing lawsuits and accusations of imaginary heresies in the city of Arras in 1458, knowing that the reader will associate these events with experiences of the Polish Communist reality in 1968.

Maria Jasińska-Wojtkowska, examining religious motives in the Polish prose of 1976, enumerates 46 items in which they occur, though with various intensity. This fact, even if taken only statistically, seems very significant.

Concluding Remarks

Polish literature never despised the values suggested by religion. In various literary periods they played different roles, but Polish writers hardly ever neglected these motives. Sometimes seemingly distant from any metaphysical sentiments, their works revealed essential values of the*sacrum*, most often of a religious nature.

It is commonly known that poetry tries to shed light on what is concealed in persons and objects. It follows the traces and deciphers codes to make their depth present to its readers. In this way it describes sacral feelings and sensibility to transcendence and to the action of Grace. If it is able to persuade readers to yield to these qualities, it becomes a religious act, leading to God.

Prose, on the other hand, usually is horizontally oriented, for its vocation is to create epic universes. Wherever in their construction it refers to religious or ethical values it facilitates the human fulfillment of readers brought up in Poland in the context of its Christian culture. Even a functional way of treating these motives cannot stifle the final message of such works, for spontaneously they point out the lack of love and the deficiency of ethics in individual and public life.

<div align="center">

Chapter VI
Patriotism and Sovereignty

Ewa Jabłońska-Deptuła

</div>

A land of a difficult unity. Land of people looking for their own ways.
. . .
Finally, a land torn out for a time of almost six generations,
Torn out on the maps of the world! And as much so in lives of its sons!
A land united, through its extraction, in hearts of Poles -- as no one else.
K. Wojtyła, *Stanisław*

Patriotism and sovereignty -- these two values are deeply impressed in the consciousness of Poles who for two centuries have been struggling for their independent state. This fact is among others testified by "sagas" of families distinguished for their patriotism. Their stories illustrate two essential lines, approaches or streams in the struggle for sovereignty: one is armed action, the other is a long term, steady reconstruction of the existence of the state. It is not easy to separate these two intermingled streams, one of "struggle" and the other of "persistence". For struggle gave witnesses to persistence, according to the words of a soldiers' song that eventually became the Polish national anthem:

Poland did not perish yet
As long as we live
What the alien powers took
We'll regain with sabres

Persistence, expressed in various forms and shapes, is also a sort of struggle.

Over decades there formed in the Polish mentality a particular ethos of freedom, present in both of the lines mentioned. Freedom became for the Poles a "sacred cause". This sacralization of striving for liberation had two justifications:

1) Striving towards sovereignty had the nature of a "Christian duty"; service to God and to the Fatherland were treated in terms of obligations towards both fatherlands, "heavenly" and "earthly". The practice of joining in one watchword "God and the Fatherland," taken over from the tradition of the free Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the XVth century, gained new justification in a Poland partitioned by three neighbor states. In the time of partitions Poles fought for their own free state, struggling at the same time against religious persecution and oppression suffered by the Catholic Church, particularly afflicted in partitions remaining under control of non-Catholic: Prussia and Russia.

2) Each of the subsequent attempts to regain independence contained strong religious elements, based on a conviction of the goodness of God who supports "the good and right cause". The fact of including religious motives set apart Polish insurrections from "Godless revolutions," as liberation movements of the XIX century were usually named after the French revolution of 1789. This made it more difficult for governments of that time, including the Holy See, to classify the Polish liberation movement. This tried to restore the established political order and to deny the legal right of the states ruling over the partitioned lands of Poland, and in this it claimed divine

legitimization. Reactions to Polish insurrections were extremely diverse: from spontaneous acceptance to sharp condemnation.

The practice of joining continuous efforts to regain sovereignty with religious motives had also another dimension, namely, a conviction that Poles have a "mission" to perform among nations, the vision of Poland as a "forerunner of liberty," a conviction that Poland opposes abusive political power and lawlessness. Restitution of the Polish state was not only necessary for political balance in Europe, but was also a requirement of international justice.

Struggle

The striving for liberation, so lively in the last two centuries, began when the borders of the Polish Kingdom were still formally intact, that is, at the time of the Bar Confederation (1768-1772). They related to a four year period of guerilla warfare initiated in defense of the individual rights of noblemen and of the Catholic faith. A spontaneous armed movement, quenched and resurging in various parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and anti-reformist in its foundations, played a very important role in the process of deepening and widening the awareness that Poland ceased to be a sovereign state if the Russian army was stationed on its territory. Independence began to become a primordial value and was fought for decades to come.

Especially the minor nobility, hitherto entirely dependent on mighty aristocrats and manipulated by their interests, realized the state of affairs. This fact was very important for the future liberation movement. For "brothers in nobility," especially Polish yeomen, began to move to the cities as a result of socio-economic changes and transferred there certain patterns of patriotic behavior. Moreover, the number of the nobility in the Commonwealth was considerably large. Nobility endowed with full civil rights (including the right to elect the monarch) constituted from 10 to 25 percent (as for instance in Mazovia and Podlasie) of the whole population.

Independence and sovereignty became new categories of thinking, permanently inscribed into the awareness of a considerable number of the habitants of Polish lands. One of its first effects was a reaction to the treachery of the Diet of Targowica. Poles began then an uneven struggle with the overwhelming power of the Russian army. In these struggles there participated an army recruited from members of many social strata. It was not only a traditional "levy in mass," consisting exclusively of noblemen, that defended the country.

Subsequent patriotic upheavals, mobilizing Poles for attempts to regain their sovereign state, took place under different conditions.

The Kościuszko insurrection (*insurekcja kościuszkowska*) was the last war between the failing state and its two powerful invading neighbors: Russia and Prussia. The leader of the insurrection, Tadeusz Kościuszko, a hero of struggles for liberty of the United States, popularized the idea of a "Fatherland common for all". This involved peasants in the fight for liberation, who "feed and defend" according to an insurrectional slogan, and townspeople. The Kościuszko insurrection was a breakthrough in patterns of patriotic behavior for the Polish peasantry and the bourgeoisie.

The generation witnessing Poland's disappearance from the maps of Europe hardly realized that the nation could last, even for many centuries, without its proper state, and that it can reemerge from the period of enslavement with a broader awareness that Poland is a "common Fatherland".

After the fall of the Kościuszko insurrection, sealed by the third partition of Poland, through which the final annexation of the Polish territory by neighboring countries was completed, there began decades when

. . .

on the altar of self-governance
burned sacrifices of generations -
an excruciating cry for liberty
stronger than death.
K. Wojtyła, *Myśląc Ojczyzna . . .*

Stanisław Staszic's had said that "even a great nation may fall; but only a mean nation can perish". Polish society did not want to be mean and the will of fight for free existence did not vanish. Henryk Dąbrowski -- escaping the tutelage of Suvorov, responsible for the slaughter of Prage in 1794 -- laboriously founded Polish Legions in far off Italy, stating in his appeal: "The intention of Poles is to defend the common cause and to live as free, or to die for freedom". The Polish ethos of sovereignty has included since then the inscription from epaulettes of the legionary Lombard squads: "*Gli uomini liberi sono fratelli*" ("Free people are our brothers") and the slogan "for your freedom and ours," a watchword that, after nearly 150 years, found on the Italian lands a new realization in the battle of Monte Cassino.

The dramatic story of the Legions and Napoleon's instrumental way of treating the Poles constitute a different problem and one that we cannot analyze here. What is essential is that a desperate exclamation of Tadeusz Czacki, the later founder of the Krzemieniecki Lyceum: "Poland is already wiped off the list of nations!" was balanced by the words of a hymn of the Legions, which later was to become Poland's national anthem: "Poland did not die yet as long as we live". Further history was determined by a drama of choice between despair and hope, continuously present over the one hundred years of existence as a nation deprived of its sovereign state.

The November uprising (1830-1831), destroying the political order established "once and for all" at the Congress of Vienna, already had a different character from that of the Kościuszko insurrection. Initiated by a local "plot of cadets," it was turned by the December Seym proclamation into a national uprising. It was a moment of utmost importance for Polish liberation traditions, for this act was committed -- in the month of the subsequent dethronement of Tzar Nikolai I -- by deputies recognized as legal representatives of the will of the nation. The legality of this act, later considered by some a political mistake, was never questioned in the Polish consciousness. Also from a Christian point of view, the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas entitled one to oppose political power that would be depraving, imposed, and bear the traits of tyranny. In the common consciousness this theological justification was, however, secondary in relation to traditions inherited from the free Polish Republic, which was never ruled by an absolutist power. In the XIXth century attempts to regain independence there was no differentiation, so typical for radical social movements, between power coming from God and power established by the people. Subsequent Polish uprisings were above all movements of struggle for independence, in which social problems and the question of political systems were secondary. What was vital, on the other hand, was the conviction that only the nation possesses power. The notion of the nation, identified for a long time with the stratum of nobility, underwent a steady augmentation of meaning in the time of the partitions. What was essential was the persistent memory of the right of constituting and approving political power, realized in the Polish tradition through the royal elections. Moreover, in the Polish state power was entrusted under certain conditions (*pacta conventa*, Henritian decrees), and if they were not fulfilled, it was possible to refuse obedience to the king. Thus there were elements of a contract between the monarch and his subjects. Here we find one of important factors explaining why the Polish society was particularly resistant to the idea of accepting power imposed by invaders as their own. What was decisive was the awareness that the

nation cannot be deprived of its will and its right to be the possessor of power. That is why it was so important that the November uprising had been proclaimed national and that it was accompanied by dethronement of the monarch by those who expressed the will of the nation, that is to say, by deputies gathered on the Seym.

An unclear distinction between the notion of nation and society, emerging at the time of the November uprising, was hardly legible. This was true not only for European governments of that time, whose attitude towards Poland was hostile or neutral, but also for genuine sympathizers of the Polish cause. An example is a thesis, popular at that time, that "religion is an instrument of freedom". It opposed the practice of using religion for the purpose of subduing people to the imposed state power. It corresponded to liberal Catholicism represented by de Lamennais and by its main press organ "L'Avenir," which enthusiastically welcomed the Polish insurrection. But the points of reference were different. For the French liberals the point of reference was the people, whereas in the statement of Polish insurrectionists the subject of action was the nation. This state of affairs would have its further consequences in the romantic Messianism that had a remarkable influence on the Polish ethos of liberty throughout several generations.

In 1830/1831 for ten months there persisted a *sui generis* self-governing form of independent state power, acting openly and plainly, with its own government, assembly of national deputies, and a regular army. Such an insurrectional *status quo* gained the approbation of the local Church, in spite of the objections or even later condemnations by the Holy See (Gregory XVI's bull *Cum primum* of 1832). It is not important how many Polish hierarchs and priest had a negative or reserved attitude towards the uprising, or how many of them actively supported it in their statements, pastoral letters, sermons, and through expansion of religious and patriotic celebrations. What is essential is the general approval of the Polish Church for the nation's right to self-governance, seem as grounded in Christian traditions of the past.

An insufficient perception of the social problems in striving for regaining sovereignty was one of reasons of the fall of the uprising of 1846. Initiated in the Austrian partition, this uprising was intended to spread over the whole Polish territory. Emissaries of the Polish emigrants widely propagated the cause of peasants, and the first act of the Cracowian National Government was a decree granting peasants ownership of their land. Nevertheless in this most economically neglected sector of Polish lands there burst out bloody peasant riots, known as the "Galician slaughter". Among factors shaping this reality we should mention the particular misery of the Galicians, the egoism of the majority of landowners, the low intellectual level of clergy educated in Josephian seminaries, and the exceptional perfidy of Austrian authorities. Apart from the distinct social aspect of the situation, there were also reasons of a broader nature. The reign of the "arch-Catholic" emperor did not generate to the same extent as in the other two partitions, mechanisms of self-defense against both religious and national persecutions. The way to conscious patriotism was different in this part of Polish territories, especially in the last decades when Galicia was granted wide autonomy.

The context of the uprising of 1863 was totally different from that of 1830. The later armed attempt to regain independence was undertaken after a long and sharp oppression and after a quarter of century of uninterrupted martial law. It was the moment of a certain political alleviation due to a change on the throne of Tzars and to Russia's defeat in the Crimean war. The outburst of the uprising was preceded by an intense patriotic indoctrination.

Religious and patriotic manifestations united people and sealed the union between the Church and the nation, between the Polish identity and Catholicism. Moral pressure brought to bear on the

invasive governments, as well as a broad *non violence* movement contained elements of ecumenism, for people of various denominations and religions marched side by side.

The need for a new armed action aiming at regaining sovereignty was not so clear as in the case of former uprisings. Young people, unknown to anybody, prompted struggle at the moment when there were perspectives of gaining numerous liberties and a far-reaching autonomy. The January uprising was directed, as it seemed, once and for all against the whole established order of partitions. In the place of imposed political power an order was proposed that would be based exclusively on the idea of a sovereign nation. The uprising burst in a moment when doubts spread as to the very possibility of regaining sovereignty by means of armed revolt.

The January insurrection, in contrast to that of November 1830, was prepared and developed in conditions of conspiracy. In 1830 and in 1831 there were no essential doubts with reference to the legality and obedience towards the insurrectional government. In 1863 there emerged the following questions: do insurrectional authorities who acknowledged their armed action as a national uprising constitute a legal representation of the nation? May they be held as a mandatory of the nation? Have they the right to appeal to abolish "the tyrannous power"? The act of joining insurrectional forces and actions was not a gesture of subordination to an openly operating institution of national power, for this remained clandestine to the very end.

Decisions to participate in struggles were personal, marked by choices that were difficult, not only from the moral, but also in a way from the religious point of view. This latter aspect was related to prohibitions, continuously repeated by the Holy See, forbidding belonging to secret plots (these restrictions pertained above all to clandestine organizations such as freemasonry). That is why during the January uprising even pastoral actions of priests (and the participation of clergy was exceptionally great) had a different character than in the case of the November uprising. Many people might have had doubts about such gestures as taking an oath of loyalty to a National Government that remained clandestine, as consecration of banners, as proclaiming insurrectional decrees from pulpits, as dispensing sacraments to "rebels who destroy public order". (This was extended by established invasive authorities, not only to those who fought in insurrectional squads, but also to those who even sympathized with the uprising.)

Finally the option for independence won, the conviction that the right to sovereignty is not contrary to Christianity. This option denied the principle of legality to the established invasive power and strengthened the religious component, so characteristic of Polish striving for liberation. But making the decisions to join the uprising was more complex as many sober minded people saw the military hopelessness of the struggle. They feared oppression that would subjugate the nation. In this uneven struggle a peculiar ethos of desperate patriotism was formed for people who:

. . .
went to fight as nobly as they could
to offer lives fulfilling their duty
whose name was simply struggle for their freedom
and to proclaim that POLAND DID NOT DIE YET!

The fullest personification, a symbol of the generation of the January uprising was Romuald Traugutt -- the last leader and dictator of the uprising -- a Christian of great caliber, who sacrificed himself for the cause of independence.

Ardent patriotism developed also in subsequent generations of Poles. They undertook their struggle for freedom in contrary and uncertain conditions, giving proof of their will to attain a

sovereign existence for the Polish state. So, for instance, after long decades of enslavement and oppression a small group of desperately determined patriots again reached for arms at the dawn of the first World War, creating the Polish Legions. Their determination was reflected in their soldierly song: "they threw their lives on the stake". Then the situation was repeated in the incredibly difficult conditions of the struggle for liberty during the second World War. Poles resisted the Nazi onset for over a month in 1939. They would have resisted longer if the Red Army had not entered from the east. They fought "for your liberty and ours" on almost all battlefronts of the second World War. They wanted to decide themselves about the nature and existence of their state and that is why, in unfavorable circumstances, afflicted and exterminated by the German invasion, they began on August 1, 1944 the Warsaw uprising. They yielded to violence and to pacts concluded behind their backs. Nevertheless, the Polish will of freedom was not extinguished for, according to the words of Karol Wojtyła (*Myśląc Ojczyzna...*):

> . . . liberty . . .
> is something we discover always anew
> as a gift
> that comes
> and as a strife
> of which we never have enough.

Persistence

Strife, related to the incredibly strong love of freedom, meant not only armed attempts repeated in every generation, but also the already mentioned stream of persistence.

Continuous attempts to destroy the Polish identity and the distinct character of Polish lands both in the Austrian (till the period of autonomy) and in the Prussian partition, even if they were brutal, retained however some appearances of legality. The worst was the situation, under the Russian reign, of total autocracy (*samodierzshavie*). The Tzar joined in his hands the secular and the religious power, he located himself above the law. We can put an equation mark between total autocracy and lawlessness. The most drastic persecutions bred the most acute resistance. This was either direct, expressed in conspiratorial actions or even in fighting, or functioned as if subcutaneously, in various actions within a frame of apparent legality. Experiences of self-organization and of arranging underground actions acquired under alien governments proved to be useful during the second World War. In the field of education and self-education they bore fruits also after the war, and occurred in new forms in the time of the martial law after December 13, 1981.

The main stream of persistence ran along the lines of neighborly, familial, and religious connections. In preserving Polish identity and in deepening its awareness Polish customs played a great role, differentiating between "us" and "them". Families of landowners or of noble descent, settled in towns, cultivated customs of family, social, and religious life as their distinctive identifying feature. For peasants it was above all their folk customs, the mores of their fathers. The extent to which "Polish custom" included a specific codex of ethical conduct is testified by the fact that a correlate of the expression "family custom" was the expression "old Polish virtue," denoting a deep sense of human dignity. There was a common conviction that the Polish custom or style of life is in accord with Christianity. Mores regulated life from cradle to coffin, influenced relations of family clans, and were embedded into the rhythm of farm work and of the seasons. They were

accompanied -- or rather indissolubly associated -- with rich religious mores of agricultural type, joining the secular calendar with that of liturgy. Mores were important both for social layers profiting from the written culture, in which the literary tradition played an important role, and for the much broader strata enjoying only oral culture. They were commonly respected as a significant discriminative factor.

It is characteristic that the number of people who, having suffered such long lasting and various forms of enslavement, yielded to denationalization and willingly renounced the moral heritage of their fathers were very scarce and on the margin of the society. The groups of elites that consequently assimilated foreign customs and culture were not very numerous. It is significant, moreover, that fascination with foreign culture stood in principle in no relation to the cultural influence of the invaders ruling over partitions.

In this persistence in maintaining Polish identity in partitions an important role was played by the Catholic Church. There were no theocratic tendencies in Poland, but the clergy was treated with respect. In the time of enslavement the clergy was controlled, pressured, and oppressed, and the hierarchy of the Church was to a great extent made dependant on the invasive regimes. In spite of that, the clergy generally opted for the nation. Despite the weakness of some people in the Church there was no process of dechristianization on the Polish lands, so characteristic of the XIXth century Europe. Poles remained faithful to their traditional religiosity with its wide scope of customs and mores. In the country torn up between three neighboring powers, the Church was the only official public Polish institution existing in all three partitions that, in spite of all decisions and pressures, retained the right to gather people and to speak to them in Polish. In a society in which the ability to read and write was had by only about 30 percent of the people there was exceptional significance to common, communal religious acts: singing, prayer, events gathering people coming from all social layers, moral direction given in confessionals to duties towards the Fatherland, as well as the national ethos, incessantly transmitted from pulpits, even if in a camouflaged form. Many patriotic elements were included in religious rites, especially in paraliturgical ceremonies, rooted in a rich Polish tradition. Moreover, in decisive moments the clergy supported acts of struggle for independence. Important here was not their immediate participation in attempts of regaining freedom, but rather the mentioned practice of administering sacraments, absolution, and Holy Communion to those who went to struggle, even if they were "conspirators and rebels". This meant, in a way, granting a religious sanction to the cause of freedom, based on a conviction about the connection existing between religion and the just cause, concretely the indispensable right of the nation to sovereignty.

The relocation of the main focus of national life in the sphere of private life, the creation of barriers protecting against invasion by whatever was alien, hostile, and imposed -- all these factors caused that in generations "born in slavery and put in chains in their cradles" (A. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*) the family became the main pillar of Polish identity. As the nation lacked its proper public life, whatever was going on in the sphere of family, home, neighborhood, and private life had a strong -- we may say public -- reference to the life and cause of the nation.

As the process of industrialization was retarded on Polish lands, a special role in "persistence" was played by two types of families related to their land: peasant and landowner. Peasant families, in the painful process of liberation from feudal bonds and obligations, took more and more roots in their land, holding it to be their sacred patrimony. Their strength lay in their unusual determination to persist and in a gradually acquired awareness of their personal dignity and rights. Patriotism was bred here by the experience of "being at home" in terms of religion and

neighborhood, by a conviction that "we have been living here for a long time," and that their fathers' patrimony is a part of a larger unity, the Fatherland.

Families of minor nobility and yeomen living in little manors developed a certain model of being a pillar of Polish patriotism. The mores cultivated in them, in the course of migration to the cities, were transferred to emerging layers of intelligentsia and of minor bourgeoisie.

The times of partitions generated a type of "genuinely Polish family" that, irrespective of social status (many families, as an effect of oppression and economic changes, were subject to pauperization), had considerable ability for self-defense. Its main task was to educate for the future freedom and to unite its members around what -- in the language of our XIXth century ancestors – was called "our sacred cause". Especially strong here was the sense of heritage and of the duty to transmit values held primary. One of main duties was "persistence on the land of our fathers".

In this patriotic formation, we cannot overestimate the formational functions of the Polish home, this "family nest" that protected and immunized against violence. The family home since early childhood put its members into the rhythm of religious life, in moral obligations, formed the need of service for the Fatherland, transmitted "national knowledge and wisdom" (including mores, national songs and history, Polish literature). From their homes Poles inherited a certain codex of moral obligations, constituting a kind of "dowry" for their whole life, but also a certain burden, for it meant a barrier separating two worlds: one's own, familiar and Polish, and the other, alien and imposed. The latter was seen as depraving and aggressive, the world that had necessarily to be confronted. Under the threat of loss of one's identity, it was not allowed to familiarize, to entangle, or to identify with it. Allowing for the necessary points of contact (such as schools and offices ruled by the invaders), Poles were obliged to return always to their compatriots, to serve them, to lead a life deserving the name of a "righteous Pole". This was, therefore, a model of self-defense, a model of a "home fortress".

A "fortress home," being a treasury of certain patterns of behavior and a means of transmission of certain types of sensibility, was a "fortress" only toward elements recognized as "alien". For everything that was "ours," on the other hand, it remained entirely open. It promoted various forms of formal and extra-organizational contacts (so difficult to control for the police), as well as family, neighborly, and social relations. It had significant influence on the process of shaping the Polish public opinion. Thanks to family traditions Poles maintained the autonomy of national life in the private, personal, and individual sphere; the family was the most essential place for the transmission of the patriotic ethos. Education in fidelity to "our own heritage" entailed idealization of the history of the nation according to slogans such as "Blood, Honor, Fatherland," "struggle for your and our freedom," "every threshold will be our fortress". Transmission of the family tradition was woven with sagas full of heroism and knightly deeds, often illustrated with examples taken from lives of closer and more distant relatives. It is characteristic that a similar transmission in families goes on to this day, enriched by subsequent generations. Furthermore, "Polish knowledge and wisdom" was enlarged through clandestine education, in towns as well as in the country. Young people were taught reading and writing in Polish, elements of the history and geography of their native land, catechismal truths, Polish songs and mores. On higher levels, in numerous groups or circles of self-education students completed their knowledge in the area called "knowledge of the native land". How dangerous this "diversion" was for authorities imposed by the intruders is testified by the fact that for instance in the Prussian or especially in the Russian partition underground educative activity was punished as "high treason". In comparing the number of persons oppressed for conspiracy and fight against the invaders and the number of those who were engaged in "handing on the torch," who knows which of these would be greater in number?

In cultivating patriotic attitudes an exceptional role was played by women. A specific trait of Polish society in the time of partitions was the shortage of male elites, both moral and intellectual, for they were decimated practically in every generation by armed acts, exile, deportation, prisons, as well as by political and -- at the end of the XIXth century -- economic emigration. In this situation women, living in "home shelters," less involved in necessities imposed by a hostile and imposed way of life in the partitioned Poland, became guarantees of inner autonomy of the Polish home. That is why the Polish society to a great extent owes its "persistence" to Polish mothers. A great number of biographical testimonies confirms that "on their mother's knees" young generations received religious and patriotic formation, rudimentary and sufficient for their whole life. It was in principle an exigent formation, permeating children with the sense of duty towards their nation, teaching them fidelity to values and readiness for sacrifice.

Testimonies of the past concerning "Polish persistence" point to the role of mothers who, in patriotically engaged families, were aware of the possibility that maybe the young generation will be the next "stones thrown on the trench". It was firmly believed that maybe this fight, or maybe the next will bring the desired freedom, and with it, sovereignty. With equal strength it was sensed that the world of freedom is distant and that still for a long time Poles will have to live "in the shadow of slavery". That is why it was a formation teaching how to cope laboriously with difficulties in attempts to broaden the scope of accessible freedom and of resisting subjugation. Wincenty Pol accurately characterized the content of transmitted values, in his "Song about Our Land" (*Pieśń o ziemi naszej*), giving advice to a young man leaving his family nest:

You will have to wrestle, boy
With yourself, with life, with people
And you must not lie to God
Nor fall down from a single punch.
You will have to weigh, to serve
To keep quiet, suffer, struggle
To destroy what you love
To raise it in other ways!

Such education, passed from one generation to another thanks to such a significant role of women, yielded fruits also in the nearest future. It is difficult, for example, to imagine how without this there would have been possible the survival of the nation during the second World War, the organized resistance of the whole society, or the functioning of the underground state. All this would be impossible without the continuous participation of mothers, sisters, daughters. This resistance contrasted with smoking crematory stoves and with the mouths of executed Poles sealed with plaster by their oppressor who could not stand their cries: "Poland did not die yet!". The Nazi invaders had less respect for women than authorities ruling Poland in the time of partitions, for they were subject to the same Nazi extermination as men.

Polish patriotism and the corresponding educational actions shaping public opinion -- in spite of all possible resentments against oppressors and invaders -- treated with hostility the apparatus of power, but not the neighboring peoples living in the invasive states. The formation that young generations received in their family homes highlighted the sense of solidarity with all those who struggle for freedom. Identification with the liberation strivings of other peoples or nations was one of reasons for the fact that in spite of many decades of enslavement and fight for protection of Polish identity, nationalism (unlike patriotism) in its sharp forms was alien to Polish mentality and

aroused negative associations. That is why it is entirely erroneous to equate with nationalism the love of country, of Fatherland, and of freedom for which so many sacrifices were made.

The shape of Polish patriotism is conditioned by its deepest commitment to freedom, so deep that a religious and national hymn "O, God, who through so many years . . ." (*Boże, coś Polskę . . .*), begging for restitution of the country's sovereign existence, ended with remarkable words:

> Just one your word, O Lord of mighty thunders
> Might resurrect us from the dust of slavery
> And if we deserve your punishment, O Lord
> Turn us in dust, but dust that will be free!
> Before your altar we carry our plea
> Give us back our free Fatherland, O Lord!

A long lasting intertwining of the stream of struggle and the stream of persistence, actual to this day, was based on an unbeatable conviction about Poles' indispensable right to a sovereign existence. In this short sketch we could touch only upon some of the many complex problems and delineate the question of fusion of patriotism with religious attitudes, so difficult to understand for observers from outside.

Even if in our great historical tradition the idea of nation as a subject of state and law, the idea of civil community, was always vivid, yet the long period of lack of sovereignty made it, in a way, distant and sublime, reducing it to some kind of theoretical speculations. Nevertheless, this idea was the basic reason for rejecting the legitimacy of imposed political authorities, both in the XIXth and in the XXth century. Due to historical conditions the main efforts and energy of Poles focused on the cultural and ethnic community and, by the same token, on the question of survival of national identity. It remained obvious that the national community has the right to a sovereign state. But the long lasting dependance on alien nations resulted in the fact that, irrespective of all our appreciation of freedom, creativity in the domain of forms of state and law is to a lesser extent a feature of our national consciousness than is the case of Western countries.

The experience of our own state in the period between the wars was short, and was subsequently deformed and suppressed by the communist regime. Yet in the collective consciousness there remained the heritage of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and of struggles for the independence of our Fatherland. What was preserved was awareness that only the nation is the mandatory of power and that it has a duty to resist illegitimate and imposed governance and to build itself. The key problems remaining for Poles were the problem of liberty and the problem of power mandated by the society.

The liberty of the nation as an ethno-cultural group is indissolubly related to civil liberty and to the realization of human rights. This set of fundamental values lay at the foundations of the "Solidarity" movement that gained the confidence of the society, so long enslaved by the imposed system. That is why Lech Wałęsa addressing the United States Congress could begin his speech with words: "We, the nation . . .", for he was then mandatory of its trust. The opening words of the Constitution of the United States have a broader sense for Poles, for they refer both to national and to state sovereignty, and in them lies hope for their permanence.

Bibliography

Cywiński B., "Doświadczenia sześciu pokoleń," *Znak*, 30 (1979), nr 10-11, pp. 126-133.

Jabłońska-Deptuła E., *Czyż może historia popłynąć przeciw prądowi sumień*, Paris, 1987.

. "Aspetti nazionali e universali della religiosita patriotica Polacca," in: *The Common Christian Roots of the European Nation. An International Colloquium in the Vatican*, Florence, 1982, pp. 1077-1085.

. "Religijna ideologia suwerenności narodowej," *Więź* 25 (1982), nr 4-5, pp. 6-22.

. "Le Romantisme religieux polonais et la religiosite du sentiment patriotique. Colloque franco-polonais," *Lille*, 1981, pp. 1-27.

. "Rodzina w przekazywaniu etosu narodowego wczoraj i dziś," *Spotkania*, 1986, nr 31, pp. 54-82.

Chapter VII
The Defense of Primordial Values

Piotr Paweł Gach

The subject of our considerations will be values that from the XVIIIth to the Xxth century integrated the Polish state and national community, conditioned its undertaking positive actions, and thanks to which we managed to maintain our national identity. They are above all: faith, love of freedom and national independence, tolerance, soil, and language. Before, however, we begin our characterization of the above mentioned primordial values, we have to turn our attention to essential historic factors.

Historical Circumstances

In the XVIIIth century after Russia, the Polish Republic was the largest, country in Europe in terms of territory with 11 million habitants. Culturally and confessionally Poland belonged to Christian Europe. Its territories witnessed a confrontation of two large cultures and traditions: Western and Eastern Christianity. It was at the same time an area of coexistence of different ethnic groups, denominations, and religions. These circumstances not only determined Poland's place in Europe, but also shaped the system of socio-moral values acknowledged by Poles.

There occurred also other factors, resulting from the state system and from the presence of neighboring states. Poland of the second half of the XVIIIth century had a representative political system, associated with the notion of *res publica*, that is, republic (literally -- the common good). This state neighbored upon three monarchies, each being absolutistic apparatuses of political power, and having at their command efficient armies. Formally the Republic was divided into two territories: the Crown and Lithuania, but as a matter of fact it consisted of many regions different as regards economy, culture, and language.

The prevailing denomination of the population was Catholicism, existing in two rites almost equal in terms of quantity: the Latin and the Greek (uniate). There existed also a third rite, the Armenian, incomparably lesser in number. There were about 10 million Catholics. The non-Catholic population did not exceed 1.5 million, and consisted of the Orthodox, Protestants, and Jews, each organized in their own independent structures.

Catholics of the Latin rite constituted the core of the Polish population and inhabited mainly the central and southwestern lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In southeastern regions (the Greek-Catholics) were numerous, belonging either to the Ruthenian or to the Polish ethnic group. In the eastern territories the most numerous were the Orthodox, consisting of the Ruthenian and the Belorussian population. The northeastern part was inhabited by Lithuanians, almost entirely of the Roman-Catholic denomination. In the western areas settled in scattered groups were Lutherans of German, and partially of Polish, descent. Jews, on the other hand, were in various sectors of the Commonwealth, but were better represented in the East, forming a culturally and linguistically closed milieu.

In the frame of Catholicism a particular role was played by the Roman-Catholic Church, organized in diocesan structures and in religious orders, having its representatives in the Senate, its own school system, publishing houses, and printing offices. It exerted an immense influence on the national awareness of Poles, on their behavior and system of values. The structures of this

Church (dioceses and parishes, orders and cloisters) performed mainly pastoral functions, but at the same time (similarly to other countries) they became a formational base of the educational system at all levels, as well as of the social care system (hospitals), of publishing houses and printing offices. These structures represented also economic and social power. They served also as elements of the state administrative system in direct touch with the population (parishes, monasteries). On the end of the XVIIIth and in the XIXth century ecclesiastic structures became the material and personal base of liberation activity aiming at regaining Poland's independence.

Similar to other countries of Europe, Poland belonged to countries divided, although not fully and entirely, into hierarchically ordered feudal strata. On the top of the social pyramid stood the king, constituting a stratum in itself, but without absolute power over other groups. The second group consisted mainly of nobility (*szlachta*), including its richest stratum, that is, magnates, and clergy. This group, endowed with powerful privileges, encompassed as much as 10 percent of the country's population, and in Mazovia even nearly 25 percent. The most numerous third layer, deprived of civil rights, was constituted of peasants together with a thin stratum of bourgeoisie.

The Commonwealth of many nations, as Poland, Lithuania, and Ruthenia were referred to, was a noblemen's democracy, ruled by laws passed by a two-chamber parliament. The nobility, together with the magnates ruled the country, and legally ensured for themselves liberty and land ownership. These elements and law constituted the primordial values from the XVIth to the XVIII century. "The noblemen's nation" set great store by external emblems of these values, such as characteristic clothes, mores, symbols legitimizing and externalizing nobility. To these symbols belonged coats of arms, seals, genealogies of ancestors, prominent seats in churches occupied during liturgical and religious celebrations. The nobility recognized values that to a great extent integrated them internally, promoting the development of bonds within the group. Among these values we should mention family (or neighbor) solidarity, especially strong among members of the middle layer of nobility. Family solidarity secured life and the noblemen's rights -- among others, ownership and hereditary rights, as well as guaranteed social status. A common name and coat of arms created bonds of solidarity exceeding the closest neighborhood. In the situation of ongoing internal disintegration of the state, lack of police and administration, and of the increasing impossibility of executing court judgments, family solidarity provided material help, care of orphans, of the single, the poor, widows, etc. It also protected life and property against abuse by the mighty. Numerous closer and farther relatives guarded the right and fact of belonging to the great family of nobility. Territorial solidarity of noblemen was generated by close and frequent social contacts, as well as around the institution of local legislative and executive meetings (*sejmiki*) in which people met to discuss matters of vital importance to the whole group of noblemen living in a vicinity, to the whole land, county, district. Neighbor solidarity played a great role in the public life, even if peasants were excluded from it, and if it was surpassed by magnates whose interests and properties reached beyond the proximate lands.

Even if material stratification among nobility increased and deepened, and in the XVIIIth century the number of nobility without any property increased, yet the process of disintegration of this social group did not hinder such labels as "a nation of owners," "a nation of possessors," as well as using the above mentioned external symbols, privileges, cultivating customs and mores proper to nobility.

Also the third estate (townsmen, and mainly peasants) was not homogenous, but consisted of various groups that could be differentiated in reference to their relation to the soil, to the degree of dependance, to the category of their properties, their size, as well as on the basis of emerging regional differences. Generally speaking, peasants were legally attached to the soil and made

dependant on nobility be means of bonds of serfdom and obligatory services. They were entirely subjugated to their lords and owners. At the end of the XVIIIth century they were barred from other social strata by many barriers. At that time, they constituted 75 percent of the population of the Commonwealth.

All these "states" and strata formed the Polish nation, feudally structured and peacefully coexisting with other ethnic groups. At the head of all groups, differentiated in terms of ethnicity, law, denominations, economy, and culture stood the king. Apart from the king, the institution of the royal court, a common army, foreign policy, and currency, what other elements united this mass of peoples?

We have mentioned already the sense of territorial and family solidarity, occurring among nobility on the territory of the Commonwealth. For Poles, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, and Belorussians an integrating element, acquiring the rank of a primordial value, was the Christian faith. For a majority of them this meant the Catholic Church. An important integrating element was the same legislative system, the same juridical structure and the same tradition of self-governance (regional seyms and *sejmiki*), and finally the same, even if regionally and socially differentiated, Polish language. An essential value was denominational tolerance, peaceful cohabitation of various population groups, and their coexistence over many centuries.

And yet other factors were missing that could have provided integrative strength: good administration and strong political power, state ideology, a strong army, developed trade and economy, and efficient transportation.

Even if the mentioned system of primordial values was not generally accepted immediately by all ethnic and denominational groups and by all social layers, yet in awards and literature of that time we find confirmation that it really existed and functioned.

Expressions of Primordial Values

In what and in which domains were the primordial values manifested? We mentioned awards and literature that in the period between the XVIIIth and the XXth century were reserved for elites, and only eminent writers of Romanticism dreamt that their books could find the way to peasants' cabins, that they "wander under thatched roofs" (A. Mickiewicz).

It is worth stressing that primordial values have been recorded and preserved in collective memory. They found their expression in songs (plebeian, insurrectional, ecclesiactical) that played an important integrative role in the life of a society divided by political and administrative borders. Usually choral singing was a powerful means of transmitting values, of their popularization, and at the same time of struggle for their realization. The written word constituted a means of struggle for both village population and plebeians from the town, and sometimes for workers. We can say a lot about primordial values of the society by analyzing literature and poetry, folk songs, insurrectional songs, forbidden religious and patriotic hymns, texts of prayers that were composed at that time and that accompanied people in their difficulties and combats. A precious source for analyzing values are also ideological declarations and programs of political associations and parties.

Primordial values also found their characteristic expression in the teaching of the Church, in family education, and in ethical and moral formation. A great number of examples of the realization of primordial values is provided by the activity of the Catholic clergy in the time of the uprisings of the XVIIIth, XIXth, and the XXth century.

We cannot analyze here the above mentioned domains in detail, even if they should be taken into account in a broader study of the subject. Therefore we will focus on some domains and quote characteristic examples that exemplify birth, formation, and configuration of primordial values.

The Oldest and Highest Polish Order Constituted by the Polish King

August II the Saxon in 1705 established the Order of the White Eagle. This was made of very precious metals and granted for life only to the most meritorious citizens. It was not awarded to foreigners. It had a form of a cross enameled in red, with white edges, with a white eagle enameled on its reverse. The cross was, moreover, adorned with diamonds, and on the arms of the reverse of the cross loomed a remarkable maxim: "PRO FIDE, REGE ET LEGE," that is to say, "for faith, king, and law". To the order was added, as its integral part, a star embroidered with gold and silver thread, worn on the left side of the chest. It also included the chivalrous cross bearing the same maxim. According to a binding custom, after the decorated citizen's death the order was returned to the king. The award symbolized values vital in the elite circles of the first half of the XVIIIth century, values that were held to be primordial and worth transmitting from one generation to another.

The primordial values: liberty and national independence, fatherland, language and law were highlighted at the end of existence of the Polish Republic by Józef Wybicki (1747-1822). He was a political activist of the Enlightenment period, codifier of law, participant of the Bar Confederation and of the Kościuszko insurrection, co-founder of the Polish Legions in Italy, and co-organizer of the Warsaw Dukedom and of the Kingdom of Poland. At the same time, he was a writer and a poet, author of a hymn that became the Polish national anthem. In a historical drama entitled "A Polish Woman" (*Polka* -- 1788), written after the first partition of Poland, the author glorified the above mentioned values and the heroism of the Polish soldier, fighting against Turks in defense of these values. He wrote there that soldiers were capable of heroic acts for they defended their faith and fatherland. It is worth quoting a fragment of this work, reflecting the configuration of the values we refer to. They have been, as it were, put in a single series by the author:

Flowers that once adorned our fields
Fed with our compatriotes' blood and sweet
Who preferred death over suffering slavery
From loosing country, language, garments, faith of Poles.

The author held that it is better to die than to consent to slavery, renouncing primordial values. In the changing sociopolitical scene of the end of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth century, Jan Wybicki is counted among the important figures. The evolution of his views and attitudes mirrors the changes that took place in the consciousness of the generation of his contemporaries. Among them there were also changes in the domain of the hierarchy of values, hence in our further considerations we will return to his views and his literary achievements.

In the XVIIIth century, even before 1772 (the year of the first partition of Poland, effected by Russia, Prussia, and Austria), a political battle was fought in defense of the gradually lost liberty. In February 1768, J. Wybicki as a deputy dared to protest publicly in the Seym against Poland's loss of sovereignty, whose evident proof was, among others, the activity of the Russian ambassador Repnin in Warsaw, and his act of kidnapping four Polish senators. This protest led him, under the

banners of the Bar Confederation (1768-1772), to the fight with Russia by means of arms and diplomacy to defend the primordial values of the Polish Republic.

Even if this fight did not bring victory, it constituted the first link in a long chain of actions, a model for further armed fights fought in the large area of the Polish Republic in the name of almost the same basic values. For four years the Bar confederates fought an uneven struggle with the quantitatively superior Russian army. The last site where they defended themselves in 1771 under the command of Kazimierz Pułaski was Jasna Góra -- a Marian sanctuary, and at the same time an armed fortress. At present in the Jasna Góra treasury there is stored a votive order used by the confederates to decorate their leader, Pułaski. This medal deserves closer analysis. It has the shape of a cross, just like the above mentioned award of 1705, in the middle of which there is a round medallion with an eagle enameled in white and an inscription in Latin: "IN HOC SIGNO VINCES" ("Under this Sign You Shall Win"). On the reverse of the Confederates' Cross there is an enameled image of Our Lady of Częstochowa with a characteristic engraved inscription-maxim: "PRO FIDE ET MARIA PRO LEGE ET PATRIA" ("For Faith and Mary, for Law and Fatherland"). These are ideals that may be taken as primordial; they are the ideals for which the confederates fought together with Pułaski.

The armed struggle did not terminate with the fall of the Bar Confederation or after the first partition of Poland. It was continued for long decades on many levels: military, political, religious and moral, administrative and diplomatic. A particularly important role in this domain was played by the long lasting conjunction of military struggle with socioreligious and moral elements. This juncture contributed among others to a relatively rapid popularization and acceptance of the system of primordial values.

The greatest number of wars and insurrections were against Russia (1792 -- a war, 1794 -- an insurrection under the command of Tadeusz Kościuszko, 1812 -- a Napoleonic war with the participation of thousands of Polish soldiers and officers, 1830/1831 -- the November uprising, 1863/1864 -- the January uprising). With the Prussian army Poles fought in 1794, in the years 1806-1809 (Napoleonic wars), and in 1848 (the Great Poland uprising). With Austria Poles wrestled in the period of partitions and of the Napoleonic wars.

It seems that the period of forming Polish Legions in Lombardia in northern Italy, as well as the whole Napoleonic epoch (1797-1812) was of decisive significance for the process of the formation of primordial values. It is at that time that such concepts as fatherland and nation were revised and reevaluated. At the same time, the understanding of these concepts broadened. Poles began to think that fatherland consists not only of nobility, the king, and magnates, but also of the whole population living on a given territory -- as well as of emigrants who were forced to quit their fatherland, but are committed to the same values and willing to realize them on alien lands, of prisoners exiled to Siberia and forced to settle in distant provinces of Russia, and of peasants forcibly incorporated into an alien army.

We can follow the above signaled transformations analyzing the activity of Józef Wybicki and his song "Poland did not Perish Yet" (*Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła*), written in 1797. The character of Wybicki had particular significance for the continuation of struggle for primordial values after the third partition of Poland that took place in 1795. Faced with the changed political situation, he left the country and showed a lot of persistence and stamina supporting his compatriotes' spirit on exile, in France and in Italy. He changed at the same time his understanding of the fatherland, nobility and the nation. In his action of organizing Legions, initiated at Napoleon's order at the end of the XVIIIth century, he saw a continuation of the traditions of Bar and of the Kościuszko insurrection. In his person there merged old and new traditions of struggle for national

independence and liberty, realism of action, faith in the realization of primordial values, and a longing for them.

In the song composed for the Polish Legions organized by general Henryk Dąbrowski in Italy, the song that accompanied Poles in their wrestling for independence from the time of Napoleon to the present and became the national anthem, Wybicki included a program and an unusual manifest. It expressed the vital primordial values that Poles were to embody. This program not only found its way to the hearts of the legionnaires, but became a song of the Polish nation and of related Slavic neighbors as well.

The words of the song implied that the core of the Fatherland consists of free people: peasants, craftsmen and townsmen, Catholics and Evangelicals, the Orthodox and Jews. Irrespective of changing political conditions, they are able to resist alien power and might restore the Fatherland's existence. On their way to freedom and independence people indispensably need other values (such as accord and mutual understanding), moral authorities (such as Tadeusz Kościuszko), historical examples of efficient fighting (as, for instance, Czarniecki victoriously fighting with Swedes), and faith in victory. The contents included in the song "Poland did not Perish Yet" are much richer than the quoted elements, but here we cannot analyze them further.

In an incredibly short time the song became a manifest of the fight for liberty, independence, equality and democracy. Numerous bans, actions of the Austrian, Prussian, and Russian police, army and administration, undertaken at the end of the XVIIIth and during the whole XIXth century did not hinder the popularization of the values included therein. Contained in the text of the "Dąbrowski mazurka" faith in the victory of justice and freedom, in spite of surrounding lawlessness, violence, and despotism, appealed not only to Poles. The hymn was translated and transposed by nations fighting in the XIXth and in the XXth century for similar ideals: Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Bulgars, Russians, and Ukrainians.

Let us consider now subsequently the particular primordial values: faith, liberty and independence, tolerance, and language.

Defense of Faith

This problem was clearly specified in armed struggles undertaken in 1768, 1794, 1797-1812, 1830-1831 (on the territory of Żmudź) and in 1848 in Greater Poland. Defense of the faith was initially understood as defense of the rights and rank that religion enjoyed in the former Polish Republic. In the course of intensification of pressure exerted by the invaders' administration, faced with russification and germanization, the Christian population found support in the Roman-Catholic (Latin) and in the Greco-Catholic (uniate) Church. Later Churches became centers of clandestine passive resistance that, especially in the period of uprisings of 1830 and 1863, transformed itself into active opposition.

Uniates acted in defense of their Church, endangered by liquidation in the Russian partition, already after the first partition of Poland. Jews too stood up for their faith, considering it to be endangered by the invasive authorities.

The Catholic Church in all the three partitions lost the privileged position it had enjoyed within the Polish state. Subsequently, it fell under control of the Prussian, Russian, and Austrian administration. By order of the absolute rulers of these states, the new administration gradually took over Church possessions and goods (belonging to bishops, seminaries, parishes, and cloisters), which constituted the base of existence of many ecclesiastical institutions.

The absolutistic terror of the three partitioners led to a progressive liquidation of whole monastic families, of hundreds of cloisters that, apart from religious and pastoral functions, performed also other important social tasks in such domains as charity, hospitals, education, printing, and culture in general. The society perceived the policy of Russia, Prussia, and Austria towards the Church not only as a form of struggle with the Catholic faith, but also with the Polish identity, with values held as primordial and indispensable. The struggle for faith on the eastern frontier of the Polish Republic, in the Russian and in the Prussian partition had an especially sharp form.

Not only monastic and diocesan clergy took part in this wrestling, but also the population, coming from various social and ethnic groups. As a detailed analysis of this struggle would take too much space, we shall point, only to forms of communal and individual activity of the monastic and diocesan clergy in the period of uprisings (1768-1864), as well as in the whole conspiratorial movement after the November uprising. Forms of engagement of clergy give us also an idea of the social range of struggle for primordial values. In the collective consciousness of the society matters of faith and of the Church were identified with matters of the independence and liberty of the fatherland, and later, of the nation. We signaled above the decisive importance in this matter of the period of forming the Polish Legions in Italy, the Napoleonic period.

A stable and long lasting form of activity of the clergy during the uprisings was the institution of military chaplains, both employed and volunteers. Clergy participated in various institutions and insurrectional organizations, in conspiratorial authorities, and were charged with special missions (tax collection, emissaries, extraordinary commissioners). Both diocesan priests and monks explained the work of the uprisings, provided information about the course of war actions, and transferred necessary data to the fighting Poles. They were also organizers of patriotic services, holy masses and prayers for those who fight for their fathers' faith, for liberty and independence, for tolerance and the possibility of using their native language in churches, schools, and offices. They also composed suitable prayers and hymns expressing these strivings. The clergy organized hospitals for the sick and the injured, as well as medical help and such forms of material assistance to the fighting (as cash, jewelry, liturgical vessels, natural products and food, clothes and military equipment, production of ammunition and various kinds of weapons). Efforts of this kind were not single events, but were repeated in almost all uprisings that burst out from 1768 to 1863.

A very interesting phenomenon from our point of view are the prayers and songs, composed often in extreme conditions, in situations of great danger threatening basic values. The following are typical examples.

In the song "Kościuszko's Cracovian dance" (*Krakowiak Kościuszki*) we find such significant words:

Mean enemies took everything
and menace our faith
They think they will turn
Our souls to them.
We do not want German faith
Nor this from Petersburg
God will help us win
Over tzars and kings.

Social consciousness of the distinctness of the Catholic faith was shaped in opposition to hostile Protestant Prussia and equally hostile Orthodox Russia. These countries cooperated with each other in stifling resistance of habitants of the former Commonwealth, intensifying germanization and russification, undertaking repressive actions, condemning those who resisted to various penalties, prisons, exiles, and even publicly executing insurrectionists. The same penalties were shared by diocesan and monastic clergy. In these condition, faith was more and more understood as a shield against unpredictable blows that can strike the closest family, parish, neighbors, relatives, or brothers in faith (Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Bielorussians), named in various ways in the XIXth century.

Special significance was gained in the XIXth century by two "nests of faith," sanctuaries and increasing numbers of pilgrimage site. In deepening consciousness of the distinctive character of faith on a broader social scope a great role was played by Jasna Góra in Częstochowa with the miraculous image of Our Lady and the Pauline cloister, as well as the former residence of Polish kings with their necropolis and cathedral in the Wawel castle in Cracow. It is about these sanctuaries that the greatest number of works of literature and poetry, press articles, sermons, prayers, and songs has been collected. Many sanctuaries, Calvaries, minor churches played a similar role, but had a regional, local range, for instance in such sites as Vilnius, Berdyczów, Święty Krzyż, Kalwaria Żmudzka, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Kalwaria Pacławska, Kalwaria Wejherowska, Kodeń, Lwów, and at the end of the XIXth century Piekary Śląskie with its cult of Our Lady Protectress of the Polish state, Gietrzwałd -- a Polish Lourdes, and many others.

All great centers of faith and religious and national sites, together with the two largest, found characteristic expression in literature, poetry, songs, in collections of widely distributed song books and prayer books. We shall quote some examples.

Seweryn Goszczyński (1801-1876) wrote: "Cracow! The city old just as the Polish people! The craddle of Polish glory, the nest of Polish faith, the cemetery of the Polish nation" ("Prophecy of Father Mark"; *Proroctwo księdza Marka*, verses 871-873). A very vivid dance song, a Cracovian dance "To the Wawel hill" (*Na Wawel* -- words of Edmund Wasilewski), included such stanzas as:

To the Wawel hill
Go, you brisk Cracovian
Stop there, think and long
On this site of glory
History of your land
Read here on the tombs
Welcome with a hug
Tombs of your commanders

Faith inherited from ancestors and transmitted from one generation to another became not only a shield, but also a hope for the future. It made it possible to survive even the most difficult moments, to survive defeats of all uprisings of the XVIIIth and the XIXth century, as well as the destructive wars of the XXth century. The poet Franciszek Wężyk (1785-1862), accurately expressed this thought: "What can raise us from defeats? -- Plough, language, and faith" ("The Polish Country"; *Wieś polska*, verse 559). More broadly Jerzy Żuławski (1874-1915) wrote on

faith as a value that cannot be renounced or forgotten in his "Response to Kazimierz Tetmajer's `Polish Cause'" (verse 1-13):

> So, you say, all hope is gone
> all slogans faded away
> and there is only despair
> Left for us, despair alone?
> Not this way, my brother-bard!
> As long as on altars burn
> Smokes of our holocausts,
> as the sound of our speech
> sound adorned with stars and rhymes
> fills our prophecies with fire
> and as glitter flags of spirit -
> - we cannot renounce our faith
> Poland did not perish yet!

The defense of the faith was organized and undertaken both by clergy and by laymen from various social strata. Thus, this defense became a necessity for still broader circles of the society. As a result of this determined social attitude, neither Prussians nor Russians managed to liquidate the Catholic Church. But, on the other hand, the Russians managed to delimit, and subsequently to abolish gradually the Greco-Catholic Church, refuge of the Ukrainian population. This process involved many victims, caused sufferings of the Ukrainian population living on western territories of the Russian Empire and in the Kingdom of Poland subjugated by Russia. The uniate population showed resistance, refusing to convert to the Orthodox Church. In spite of the fact of administrative cancellation of the Union in 1875 by Russian authorities, in spite of massive deportations and bloodshed, over 50 parishes (compared with their total number of 270) persisted in heroic resistance till 1905. It was only in 1905 that a decree on tolerance alleviated the difficult situation of the Church in territories governed by Russia. Even if it did not remove all obstacles posed to the clergy in regard to their functions, yet it made possible for nearly 200,000 Uniatesto reconverted from the Orthodox Church that a part of the confiscated churches were recuperated, and that teachers could teach religion in their native language.

Through the struggles and persecutions mentioned above, the Catholic faith (Church) remained the sole public factor unifying people despite of frontiers, and political, administrative and ideological obstacles. Hence there was particular significance for the transfer of primordial values, not to the words spoken in thousands of churches, the hymns sung there and prayers that were uttered, but also to the example and unanimous attitude down by both diocesan and monastic clergy in conspiracies and insurrectional struggles in the face of sufferings and persecutions.

Defense of faith was indissolubly related to defense of independence, and, in consequence, to the necessity of regaining a free fatherland, as well as to the defense of language, tolerance, and preservation of cultural identity.

Liberty and Independence

The term "independence" gained a particular meaning in the course of the tempestuous history of the Polish Republic in the XVIIIth century. It had its history since Stanisław Konarski in 1733.

The main problem of the end of the XVIIIth and of the whole XIXth century became the question: "How can Poles regain their independence?" Several generations tried to find a practical answer to this question. Liberty was regained only in 1918. It cost great sacrifices, sufferings, human lives in every generation, starting from the second half of the XVIIIth century.

To the question of independence pertained the popular political writings of the Bar Confederation and of the Great Seym. In this time Stanisław Staszic identified human rights with the rights of the nation. In the Constitution, passed on May 3rd, 1791, we find a statement that "every nation is free and independent". This thought was developed by Polish emigrants after the disaster of Poland's partition, and in the face of the outdated Enlightenment struggle for "improvement" of the Polish Republic. Striving for recovery of all Polish lands, for independence and the freedom of all habitants of the country was the common goal of participants of the war with Russia in 1792, of the Kościuszko insurrection, as well as of those who took part in later struggles of the XIXth century. The lost war of 1792 in defense of the May 3rd Constitution put an end to the Polish state. In 1793 Poles wittnessed to the second partition, and soon, in 1795, the third.

National hero Tadeusz Kościuszko declared in autumn 1793: "I will not fight for nobility alone; I want liberty of the whole nation and it is for this liberty that I will expose my life". This enunciation is a proof not only of a change of understanding of the nation, but also of the conception of its freedom. Freedom was counted here among values of such a rank that one may sacrifice human life for it. The leading slogan of the Kościuszko insurrection became an appeal written and uttered in many places: "Liberty, Integrity, Independence".

We want to move the whole nation -- wrote Józef Pawlikowski in his popular and widely read brochure -- so there is a need to endow all classes of people with equal freedom". For peasants this freedom meant breaking with the secular tradition attaching them to the soil and the possibility of moving from one place to another. Kościuszko's conviction that the most important part of the nation is the people, and that the hitherto despised "populace," must take part in the insurrection, gained an increasing number of partisans, and became more and more common.

The experiences of the years 1794-1812 showed that peasant soldiers would go to fight together with their squires and accept, at least for the time of the fight, his system of values as their own. This phenomenon of increasingly wide acceptance of common values occurred still in 1831, as we see in the example of the development of the uprising on the frontier of the Polish Republic, where Polish nobility was accompanied by peasants, not always Polish speaking. For the domination of the nobility over the rest of the society was perceivable in many domains.

In the acts of the Kościuszko insurrection, as well as of subsequent liberation uprisings, the word "Fatherland" occured very often, written always with a capital "F". The connotation of this word widened, reaching beyond the sphere of privacy, of the neighborhood, of the circle of acquaintances. The Kościuszko insurrection, like other following struggles, increased the awareness of all habitants of the Polish Republic, and its leading slogan: "Freedom, Integrity, Independence" penetrated all social layers.

In the name of freedom for all, of independence of the Fatherland, of preservation of integrity of the state territory the insurrection appealed to people of all nations and denominations. It recognized all habitants as brothers and compatriots. It addressed also Polish Jews, distinct by their religion and culture. The Leader of the insurrection himself paid a visit in the Cracovian synagogue, and Jews acknowledged the community of interests, the community of primordial values shared with other habitants of the country and undertook struggle in defense of Warsaw side by side with the insurgents. The insurrectionists addressed their appeals to the inhabitants of

neighboring countries, to enemy soldiers, explaining their struggle. In this way, appeals and words revealed a community uniting people deprived of liberty. It is this liberty that brought the Kościuszko insurrection, and bringing liberty, it overcame (just as was the case of Napoleonic wars and uprisings of 1830 and of 1863) borders of social strata, regions, and states.

There were many ways of communicating information about events, forming opinions and evolving a whole system of values. A certain role is played the written word (newspapers, posters, handbills, appeals, brochures, books), but the most important were spoken words of leaders of the uprising, of thousands of priests, monks, chaplains, and parish priests, of officers and soldiers, as well as words recited and sung, not only during struggles and uprisings. After periods of armed actions (1768-1863, 1914-1918, 1920, 1939-1945) there followed other forms of the defense and cultivation of primordial values. Yet especially the Bar confederation and uprisings of 1794, 1830, 1848, 1863 bred many literary works in which motives of love of God, the Church, the Fatherland, liberty and independence, tolerance, and the native language occur very often and intertwine. Poetry and songs, common prayer and religious hymns became bearers of great causes and vital values. Let us quote a couple of examples.

Bishop Ignacy Krasicki (1735-1801), living at the end of an epoch, a prose and drama writer, an editor, a partisan of the "middle way" expressed accurately in one of his works the attitude of service to the Fatheland, the basis of struggle for its existence and faith in its future resurgence:

> Holy love of the Fatherland belov'd
> In your service our troops embark!
> Since our early years to the grave
> We want to stand vigilant on your guard!
> Let us align our steps, strengthen our sight
> Looking for tricks hid by enemies around
> Let us hearten our voices, as bells strong
> Long live Poland, long live, let us cry!
> . . .
> And we will march obedient, oblivious of bars
> And we will fight with zeal for your existence!
> So that we shout rewarded, by our youth assisted
> Announcing your rebirth, o Fatherland, your dawn!

The motive of armed struggle for a free and independent fatherland occurred in many literary works, especially in various kinds of songs. The most popular among them in the course of the XIXth and the XXth century, the "Dąbrowski mazurka," included in its final part the following words:

> . . .
> When, reaching for swords
> Freedom will be common slogan
> And our Fatherland
> Forward march, Dąbrowski
> From Italy to Poland
> Under your command
> We will join our land.

With struggle for liberty of the Fatherland were combined such virtues as courage, sacrifice, attachment and love of the native land. They were also treated as precious values that are to be cultivated, generated in order to achieve primordial values. We may presume, therefore, that they were treated as mediating values, necessary to acquire on the way to the main values. A very strongly mediating value was cooperation, common fight, brotherly help. During the uprising of 1863 it turned out that the sense of integrity of all the lands of the Commonwealth before the partitions underwent far reaching changes. An attempt to evoke insurrection in the Ukraine ended with a fiasco. Only the core of Lithuania came to the rescue. Poles then understood that in the lands of the former Commonwealth live nations that will soon reveal aspirations to have their own independent states.[20] They understood freedom in a different way and did not want to realize these great values together with Poles. Ethnic groups started their way towards nationalisms, towards specifying their distinctness and differences instead of what is common.

In the January uprising of 1863/1864 Poles fought not only for independence and freedom, for integrity of Polish lands, but also for a social reform, for granting peasants their soil.

In the face of the inequality of forces existing between Poland and its three mighty neighbors armed actions ended with military defeats. For half a century there was no perceivable possibility of undertaking armed struggle in the name of liberty and independence. The nation did not renounce these values, nor give them up. In the situation of overthrow after 1864 conclusions were drawn that armed attempts to regain liberty and independence may be undertaken only in a favorable international context.

The harm done to the population inhabiting lands of the former Commonwealth by the invasive states turned out to be acute. For this reason, great attention was paid to wounds, experienced sufferings, but also to dreams of recovery, of returning to normal life in an independent and free fatherland. The experienced assaults did not, however, turn out to be something so horrible as to paralyze imagination and the will to act. The cult of those who fought for primordial values, especially for independence and freedom, did not cease. It lasted without a break to the end of that century and has survived to this day. Hence participants of liberation national fights of the XVIIIth to the XXth century enjoyed the highest respect as real patriots. This cult contributed to a large extent to the survival of primordial values.

Literature gave homage to the heroism of those who fought in the January uprising. At the same time, it gave answers to the question: where is Fatherland if we have no state, no proper government, no administration, army, liberty, and independence?

Let us turn our attention to a poem by a Polish poetess, Maria Konopnicka (1842-1910), remarkably entitled "So What -- Fatherland?" (*Co Ojczyzno*):

My Fatherland is this dear land
Where I first saw the sun and learnt my God
Where father, brothers, and where mother dear
Taught me to say my prayers in native speech.
My Fatherland is this bold spirit of the nation
That lives by miracle amidst cold, wind, and hunger
It is this hope that flourishes in Polish hearts
It is work of the fathers, songs of children!

In her poem "The Martyrs" (*Męczennicy*) Konopnicka wrote:

O, you, national fights
You are our glory!
You sow the future that
We enter bold!
Every clod of our land
Baptized with blood
Wola, Grochów, Ostrołęka
and walls of Warsaw

Even positivist writers did not condemn armed struggle. Referring to the tradition of uprisings, Eliza Orzeszkowa (1841-1910) for instance wrote a book on the January uprising bearing a remarkable title *Gloria victis* ("Glory to the defeated"). Stefan Żeromski depicted the atmosphere of that period in his "Faithful River" (*Wierna rzeka*). We could quote many more examples, but it would be superfluous to list here a full register of different literary motives of fight for liberty and independence.

Primordial values were supported and developed in the social consciousness not only by writers and poets through literature, poetry, and songs. Their proper tasks in the process of preserving these values engaged people also from other social and professional circles -- artists (such as, for instance, Jan Matejko with his immense canvases reminding of great and glorious events and of historical figures), journalists, publicists, historians. An important role in the process of transmission of these values was played by diocesan and monastic clergy, especially increasingly numerous and active feminine congregations, both those who wore garbs and those who did not. The transmission of primordial values, including liberty and independence, came about also during pilgrimages, organized on a large scale, to national and religious sanctuaries, during solemn celebrations of anniversaries of victories, and dedicating monuments and tombs of heroes, great national figures and writers.

Just before the outburst of the first World War especially there increased the number of celebrations of various anniversaries, as well as of expositions of souvenirs left after insurrections. In emigrant circles and within the Austrian partition which enjoyed greater liberty, books, prayer and song books were issued that appealed to liberation aspirations and to the already formed system of primordial values.

In 1918 Poland regained its liberty and independence. The Polish state was restored on a much lesser territory than the borders of 1772 (before partitions) and the aspirations of former generations. A remarkable fact: in the restituted state the *Virtuti Militari* award (constituted during the war with Russia in 1792) was restored, and the first persons decorated with this order were still living participants of the January uprising. It is also then that the "Dąbrowski mazurka," written by Józef Wybicki in 1797, was acknowledged as the national anthem.

Also in the course of the XXth century Poles had to fight for liberty and independence. We should add that at the same time a free Europe was at stake. The first chapter of this epopee was the year 1920, when the Soviet army attacked the whole Polish territory with the clear goal of occupying, after conquering Warsaw, the entire European continent. In August 1920 the Polish army defeated the Soviets. Without this victory, Europe would probably have shared the destiny of Russia under governance of Joseph Stalin. The second chapter of this defense was the second World War of 1939-1945. Poland contributed in three ways to victory in this war: firstly, it stopped the series of capitulations, opposing by means of arms Germany and Russia; secondly, it offered to the allied nations an eight months' period, allowing them to prepare for war; thirdly, through

direct participation of Polish soldiers and officers in the armed confrontation of 1940-1945. For the freedom and independence of their country, but also of the whole Europe, Poles paid a high price.

The country was completely robbed and destroyed by the Germans, and in concentration camps and beyond them there died about 6 million Polish citizens, including over 3 million Jews, nearly 2,000 priests (20 percent of their total number), 30 percent of teachers. Hundreds of university professors were killed, and the intelligentsia was exterminated. Mass murders of Polish officers, committed by Russians in Katyń, Starobielsk, Ostaszków, were Stalin's revenge for the defeat of 1920. No other Western country suffered so much during the second World War.

The independence and liberty of the Fatherland has been the main care, almost the obsession of many generations of Poles. No wonder therefore that these values not only were reflected in literature and art, not only pervaded political, social, and religious thinking, not only constituted the subject of long lasting contentions and discussions, but also became the target of long lasting struggles, uprisings and wars, and were ransomed with sacrifices and suffering. Entire generations worked for them, prayed and fought.

Tolerance

Polish tolerance had its practice, legislation, and theory reaching as far back as the Middle Ages, and developed in the XVIth century. Then Poland was called the "asylum of heretics and paradise for Jews". As a matter of fact, for hundrets of years people were valued here not according to their denomination or religion, but according to their moral attitude and competencies. In the whole history of Poland there were no cases of organized persecutions incited by religious differences. First, however, tolerance appeared in the society, and only then were treatises written that justified that practice.

Tolerance resulted from political realism, was the chance for survival for the multiconfessional, multinational, and multilingual Commonwealth. It also resulted from respect for different religious commitments of the Protestant nobility. On the other hand, interconfessional relations based on tolerance were a part of the general atmosphere of intellectual and public life. This atmosphere was free of fanaticism and excessive irrational zeal. Religious tolerance in the period of the thriving Commonwealth exerted an immense influence on the practice of general social tolerance. The Catholic Church helped in its formation influencing attitudes of its faithful. As far as the Church's teachings are concerned, they were based on the theological axiom of the freedom of God's children's and of God's mercy. Arguments provided by this axiom implied that man is a being who is free even before God, and therefore Christians should be guided by respect for the other and by mercy towards all people, including those of other religious convictions.

Did confessional tolerance at the end of the XVIIIth and in the course of the XIXth century require its continuation in the life of the society deprived of its state? Was this society able to achieve tolerance in these difficult conditions? Was it held as a primordial value? We find a positive answer to all these questions.

Certainly in the time preceeding the fall of the Commonwealth tolerance was held as a value. Gradually, social elites elevated it to the rank of a primordial value. In its name insurrectionists fought in the Kościuszko insurrection, as well as in the November and January uprisings. In the name of national and confessional liberty leaders managed to gather into the insurrectionist armies people of all nations and denominations. All people deprived of liberty, persecuted, forced into new frames of administration, school, economy, army and courts discovered a community of

destiny and heritage that also included tolerance. Since the Kościuszko insurrection, side by side with Roman Catholics in armed struggles took also part Uniates, Protestants, and Jews. The most important concepts of the epoch, independence and equality, were accompanied by tolerance understood as liberty for all denominations.

Tolerance emerged as a precious value in the XVIIIth and the first years of the XIXth century in the ideology of the Enlightenment, along with such values as reason, science, labor, utility and happiness. In principle to these values were opposed the countervalues of fanaticism, prejudice, and ignorance.

The main ideas and values of the Enlightenment were reflected in the ways of conduct, mores, attitudes, literature and the language of its representatives. They permanently united to form the modern humanistic consciousness, with its recognition of the ideals of universal liberty, equality, tolerance, with an important role for knowledge and education, work and the distribution of information.

The rationalism and tolerance characteristic of the Enlightenment were represented, among others, by Stanisław Trembecki (1739-1812). In his poems, dedicated to various social groups, he stigmatized religious fanaticism, in the most complete way in his "Ode on the ruin of the Jesuite order" (*Oda na ruinę zakonu jezuitów* -- 1773). In his collection "A Little Glade, or Rustic Poems" (*Polanka, czyli Poema wiejskie* -- 1779) he praised religious tolerance reigning in propencities of his royal nephew, prince Stanisław Poniatowski. Here is a fragment of the latter work:

> where lives the ancient tribe of Abraham
> And Mennonites, whose blood once sunk in soil;
> Dissidents, looking for taste in their style
> And Romans who in all things believe without doubt;
> This difference of views sometimes incites to harm
> Living together, are you able to live in accord?
> We -- one of the manor habitants said -- feeble pots made
> by divine hands
> We do not seek to quarrel on unthinkable things
> Nor we despise one another as savages do
> More, we help one another in our daily works
> Everyone keeps his mores to the end of his days
> And all his ways of worship, as mother taught him to.
> We used to work together, to rejoice alike
> And to split after death we would not be glad
> So we pray, be it digging or pasturing cows
> We for their conversion, just like they for ours

On May 3rd, 1791, there was passed in Warsaw the "Bill of Government" (*Ustawa Rządowa*) that remained in social memory as the Constitution of May 3rd. The first article of this constitution, even if it ensured the dominating character of the Catholic religion in the state, also guaranteed tolerance for non-Catholic denominations, for -- as it stated -- "the holy faith itself orders us to love our neighbors, so to all people of whatever denomination we owe peace for their faith and governmental protection. That is why we ensure liberty of all rites and religions in the Polish lands according to laws of the country."

To the proclamation of the Constitution neighboring countries answered with canons, invading the territories of the Polish Republic and hindering realisation of the constitutional resolutions. Despite this fact, the Constitution is counted by historians among three great legislative monuments of the XVIIIth century, together with the American constitution of 1787 and the French revolutionary constitution of September 1791.

In spite of political, military, and administrative obstacles tolerance as a value was passed on to the next generation and new cultural formations and gained increasing social approval. Poets and priests spoke of the need of transmitting this value with all its heritage; leaders of subsequent uprisings appealed to it in their addresses and proclamations. A poet, historian, and publicist living at the end of the XVIIIth century, Kazimierz Brodziński (1791-1835) wrote in his poem "Three Legacies" (*Trzy dziedzictwa*) as follows:

> O, ye, mortals! till you live, till you're strong, defend
> Preserve three legacies: of light, of faith, of law.
> In them is all your dignity, and virtues, and bliss
> Without them will destroy you power, ignorance, and
> sorrows
> Through long, dark ways, melted with blood and with tears
> Your ancestors brought them to you throughout centuries
> Transfer them to your successors, strengthen virile vigor
> And there will be a time they will raise their triumphant
> banners

In the Napoleonic era the idea of tolerance was propagated even more broadly, together with other ideals of the Enlightenment and the Revolution. For many Polish Romantic writers (1822-1863) Napoleon combined in himself all their ideals, among others liberty of nations and peoples, unshaken pursuit of the highest ideals (values), and the individuals' power to shape history. Young representatives of Romanticism highlighted the importance of spiritual reasons and values which they opposed to the flat reality. The simple folk became for them a treasury of regional and national values, bearers of "living truths". The leading poet of Polish Romanticism, Adam Mickiewicz, in the foreword to the first volume of his "Poetry" (*Poezje* -- 1822) distinguished two types of culture: the folk (national) culture and the courtly culture of the mighty. He also presented the conflict between two values, individual and national liberty, in his poetic drama *Konrad Wallenrod* in 1828. Turning to folk culture, he showed examples of the coexistence of people of different mores, cultures, and religions.

In the Romantic epoch in the first half of the XIXth century, an interest in the life and customs of Jews emerged and was expressed in writings of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (1757-1841 -- *Lejbe i Siora*), A. Mickiewicz (a beautiful figure of the cymbalist Jankiel in *Pan Tadeusz*), Juliusz Słowacki (1809-1849), Cyprian Norwid (1821-1883), and Teofil Lenartowicz (1822-1893).

At the end of the fifties and at the beginning of the sixties of the XIXth century there came a visible integration of Polish society around the primordial values: faith, tolerance, liberty, and independence. This became manifest especially during spectacular religious and patriotic manifestations in the years 1861-1862, organized in Warsaw and in major cities with participation of all denominations and social layers. Russian troops intervened many times, dissipating and killing demonstrators. In spite of that, people came on the streets to publicly manifest their unity

and protest. They opposed violence, armed interventions, and the fanatism of Russian authorities. This atmosphere is reflected for instance in the "Prayer of the Warsaw Jews" from 1861:

> God, have mercy on maltreated Poles
> A year of sacrifices and sorrows has passed
> But on the tombs of killed compatriots
> We unrolled banners of our brotherhood

Texts of occasional prayers circulated among people, were uttered publicly during religious celebrations, and found social approval. In the Catholic "Prayer for the Fatherland" from 1861 we read

O, God who grant people created by thee tenure of the earth, who divided them into various nations, and who gave to each of them their proper language, mores, borders -- you have implanted in all hearts, apart from love of neighbors, special love of the Fatherland. We ask you to accept these prayers for the beloved Fatherland that we, its sons, bear before your altar. . . . Incite in all habitants of the country a common sense of action and labor. Teach us to profit wisely from all sources of national wealth. Give to good laws in our country their necessary growth, perfection, and endurance. Remove among all states envy, dissolution, and pride. In our Fatherland let only vice and crime alone be ignominy and shame, and let virtue, merits, and skills be the only way to dignities. Eradicate selfishness, feeding itself on the common good: let blind destiny and private interests have no influence on public affairs. Let every citizen, seeing his profit only in prosperity of his Fatherland, be willing and ready to sacrifice for it his goods and even his life. Help us, God! So that we, being such citizens, unified with all our compatriots with bonds of the common Fatherland, and living in perpetuous peace with our neighbors, may love, worship, and adore Thee, Creator and universal Father, now and for all eternity.

During street manifestations people sang the "Dąbrowski mazurka," "The Warsaw anthem" (*Warszawianka*) and the hymn "O, God, who through so many ages..." (*Boże, coś Polskę*), with an invocation:

> Before your altars we bring our plea
> Give us back our free Fatherland, o Lord!
> God, the most holy Lord; through your grand miracles
> Remove from us defeats, slaughters of battles
> Join all your peoples with the chain of freedom
> Under one sceptre of angels of peace

In February 1861 in Warsaw in the course of a religious celebration the first victims were killed by the Russian army. They were people of different denominations. It is a remarkable fact that in the funeral procession accompanying the five deceased many religious officials took part: two Catholic bishops surrounded with clergy, superintendents of Protestant Churches (Lutheran and Calvinist), the head rabbi and the rabbi of Warsaw. In the funeral about 160,000 people participated from viarious denominational communities. Manifestations, lasting from January to October 1861, drew together the people of Warsaw, as well as of other cities; the Polish population collaborated with the Jews, which led to closer approximation between the religions.

In texts of prayers from this period we find also references to the common cultural heritage of the former Commonwealth. They contain invocations of the Mother of God as Queen of lands of the former Polish state, and invoke the community of saints, as it is the case of "A Prayer for Poland" (*Modlitwa za Polskę*) from the years 1861-1863:

O Mary, Mother and our Queen in heaven
Famous from graces in all your three lands
Three lands of yours: Lithuania, Ruthenia, the Crown
Humble, spread themselves out under your feet!
Lithuania, Ruthenia, and the Crown: a three-leaf pansy
O, Virgin pure! Smell this flower, devoted to thee!

The common prayers then had a particular meaning, as did religious gestures, singing, words spoken from pulpits. Religious and patriotic manifestations were interrupted on October 15, 1861 by the introduction of martial law, but their memory was transmitted from one generation to another.

The idea of tolerance was taken over and developed by representatives of the new trend, expanding after 1863, of Polish positivism. Involved here were its ideologues and theoreticians: Aleksander Świętochowski, Piotr Chmielowski, its poets and writers: Bolesław Prus, Eliza Orzeszkowa, Maria Konopnicka, and others. Its leader, Aleksander Świętochowski (1849-1938), was at the same time a publicist, prose writer, playwright, cultural and social activist, historian, and philosopher who all his life propagated the idea of tolerance. He held that without it not only is it impossible to create the "common good," but also no conscious society will form. Hence he justified the need of tolerance in every domain of social life. He considered tolerance to be the primordial principle of humanism that bids respect for human dignity, acknowledges peoples' rights to oppose violence and coercion, and nourishes independent thinking and freedom of action.

Polish positivists wrote that tolerance is accompanied by the idea of pluralism, embracing the ideas and forms of social life, the strivings and interests of its various groups. Therefore they pleaded for tolerance towards other ethnic groups and stigmatized feelings of hatred. Writers of Polish positivism proved that lack of tolerance is an impediment to the nation's development and would contribute to its fall.

Positivism laid the foundations of modern society, urging attention to universal values and indicating the general principles on which society should be based. This influence left a permanent mark on the outlook of Polish society and broadly influenced the way of thinking of intelligentsia of the following generations.

Language

The fundamental factor of national integration in the period from the XVIIIth to the XXth century became the Polish language. In the Enlightenment the struggle for the development and perfection of the Polish language was one of the major issues. The Polish language was purified from alien words taken mainly from Latin, and enriched with economic, legal, and scientific terminology. It was also subject to democratization, and to a greater extent, became a national value. At the end of the XVIIIth century more and more elements of the plebeian, bourgeois, and peasants' everyday speech were used in the high spoken Polish. French survived as the second language of the Polish propertied class.

In the years 1774-1778, at the request of the Commission of National Education a Piarist, Onufry Kopczyński (1735-1817), wrote a "Grammar of the Polish and the Latin Language for National Schools" (*Gramatyka języka polskiego i łacińskiego dla szkół narodowych*). This work elevated the Polish language to the rank of a value of a great importance and shaped the national consciousness throughout many years after the partitions. This grammar was edited 70 times during sixty years; three generations of Poles learned from it.

A threat to the Polish language occurred along with the danger of the loss of the state, but there was no common awareness of this. However, this awareness developed gradually as the society experienced the policies of the invasive states. Prussia, Austria, and Russia strove first at political, administrative, and economic integration of the robbed Polish lands with the rest of lands they owned. Only after administrative and economic integration did they begin russification and germanization of public life. We can assume that just after the third partition, and even until 1830 the threat to the language did not reach further than the elites who managed to counter this phenomenon. Writers and scholars (such as Stanisław Staszic, brothers Jan and Jędrzej Śniadecki, Samuel Bogumił Linde, Kazimierz Brodziński, Stanisław Kostka-Potocki) appealed at this time for the development and cultivation of the Polish language, claiming that this to be the basic duty towards the fatherland and the nation.

In this period, apart from reprints of the grammar by Kopczyński, there was published in the years 1807-1814 a great, six volume "Dictionary of the Polish Language" (*Słownik języka polskiego*). Linde, the author of this dictionary, held that language expresses the feelings, knowledge, and needs of people of "all states and vocations, of all levels of education and enlightenment."

At the end of the XVIIIth and at the beginning of the XIX century there occurred mature and permanent forms of the Polish official and office language, of the language of political pamphlets, press and public statements. Such terms as nation, liberty, independence, uprising, resurgence were widely popularized. We can claim therefore that it is then that the Polish language was elevated to the rank of a primordial value. How was this value propagated and defended?

The language as a value was highly appreciated by people of letters living in the period of Enlightenment, Romanticism, and positivism, as well as diocesan priests, monks, and nuns. It was used in the course of pastoral action, catechizing, school education and everyday contacts with people. In a distinct manner the Polish language was defended by participants of the Great Polish uprising of 1848 and of the January uprising of 1863. It was defended by children, supported by adults, during religion lessons at the time of school strikes in the Austrian partition at the beginning of the XXth century. The battle for the language was fought not only on battle fields, but also in state institutions (considered to be hostile towards the Polish language), in schools, in workplaces, in towns and in the country. The struggle for people's right to use their own language was combined with the struggle for their right to remain a nation. The fight with germanization and russification was won by the Polish nation before the first World War. Also Lithuanians managed to defend themselves against russification by protecting their language. Bielorussians and Ruthenians continued their struggle for language for a long time in the XXth century.

Russification and germanization in lands of the former Polish Republic after the partitions was imposed by means of various methods and with various intensity. The first wave of russification in the Russian partition, that is in lands directly incorporated onto the Russian Empire came just after 1795. In the years 1832-1856 these attempts were greatly augmented. Germanization was initially introduced on a small scale in the Austrian partition at the end of the XVIIIth and at the beginning of the XIXth century. It was subsequently undertaken with much

greater intensity in the Prussian partition in the years 1834-1840 and after 1850. In Galicia the fight against the Polish identity intensified in the mid XIXth century, but subsided in the 1860s never to return. On the other hand, the next wave of intense russification came after 1863, as dependence on Russia increased in the Polish Kingdom as well as in annexed lands. Not only administration, but also the system of education, justice, post offices and transportation -- practically the entire public life, except for the strictly pastoral activity of the Church – were russified. There was similar range to the germanization in the Prussian partition, where attempts to germanize the society, combined with struggle against the Church (in the frame of *Kulturkampf*), were intensified in the years 1872-1878.

When absolutist governance ended in Austria in 1859 the situation in Galicia changed. There was a broadening of linguistic rights for the Polish population. In 1863 the whole of Galicia was endowed with formal foundations of autonomy in the frame of which development of the Polish language and culture was to remain unrestrained. Polish language was restituted in administration as well as at all levels of the system of justice and education. In Galicia there were Polish educational and cultural institutions and presses. Books and other printed matter were issued in Polish, and Polish scholars formed in the Polish Academy of Sciences (*Polska Akademia Umiejętności*), founded in Cracow in 1872.

Long lasting russification and germanization did not result in the spiritual breakdown of the population but, on the contrary, evoked ever greater integration around values held vital and important for Polish society. The reaction of the population was not limited to defensive acts leading to armed struggle. With strong help from the Catholic clergy Poles organized diverse forms of teaching the Polish language. This drew punishments, imprisonments, exiles and various other sufferings. These hardships were suffered not only by organizers, but also by students attending these clandestine courses. In spite of that they were continued in territories dominated by Russia and Prussia till the outbreak of the first World War.

It was of great importance that the Polish language was maintained in the Catholic Church, for it embraced all lands of the former Polish Republic, and exerted considerable influence on strethening national bonds. In spite of actions undertaken by invasive authorities, the language was defended unanimously by diocesan priests, monks and laymen, who together bore the burden of the consequences. A similar role was played in some regions, especially in Masuria and in Cieszyn Silesia, by the evangelical Churches. The Ukrainian and the Bielorussian languages were defended by the Greco-Catholic Church on south-eastern territories of the former Commonwealth until liquidated by force. Russian authorities regarded the Uniate Church as competition, an enemy hindering russification and absorption of the Ukrainian and Bielorussian population. Therefore they abolished it in 1839 in the annexed lands and in 1875 in the Polish Kingdom. The struggle concerned not only language and religious rites, but also their cultural distinctness, which is why there were so many victims. The uniate Church still survived in Austrian Galicia, becoming a base of support that helped the Ukrainian and the Bielorussian population develop their primordial values.

Russification was also a tragic threat to other ethnic groups of the Polish Republic, especially to Ukrainians and Bielorussians, and, to a lesser degree, to the Lithuanians. Russian authorities russifying all existing groups used the whole arsenal of means of pressure and constraint, from law, administration and courts, to the police and army. The Russian Orthodox Church also became a means of russification.

Resistance against russification and germanization took various forms and was stifled with incredible brutality. The matter of language as a value on the Polish territories, in Lithuania,

Bielorussia, and Ukraine was related to other important problems, such as national consciousness, the struggle for liberty and independence, denominational and ethnic tolerance, and the struggle for cultural goods and traditions.

In conclusion we will quote several fragments of Polish poetry and prose of Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Polish positivism that account for the value of the native language.

Franciszek Ksawery Dmochowski (1762-1808) in his poem "To Stanislas August" (*Do Stanisława Augusta* -- pieśń I, verses 345-354) wrote:

> And above all respect your native tongue
> It is the greatest shame to ignore it.
> . . .
> To read in ancient languages, to understand foreign
> Is a good thing, but first you should know your own
> Even though you think high, you write so easy
> You cannot be a writer neglecting its style

The already mentioned Kazimierz Brodziński in his poem "Advice" (*Rada*) stressed that the destiny of a language is bound with the destiny of the fatherland:

> Worship your fatherland always, everywhere
> Even if fate throws thunders on it, still
> It shall prevail when we keep alive
> Polish languages and virtues

A great poet of Romanticism, Juliusz Słowacki in his poem *Beniowski* (verses 133-140) paid attention to the value of language in mutual communication, in expressing thoughts and feelings:

> What I have here in mind is that the tongue
> May express everything that mind can think
> And that it sometimes be as quick as thunder
> And sometimes as sad as dark songs of steppe
> And sometimes gentle just like nympha's songs
> And sometimes beautiful like angels' speech
> So that it fly through all on angel's wings
> Strophes should be the poem's rhytm, not snaffle.

Cyprian Kamil Norwid, a poet, dramaturge, and prose writer spent the major part of his life as an emigrant (1842-1883), incessantly interested in problems of his nation and in its primordial values. To the question of how to defend the language he replied shortly in his poem "The Native Language" (*Język ojczysty* -- verses 8-9)

> Arms of a language -- not swords and not shields
> But masterpieces!

Such masterpieces were created in the course of the XIXth century, both as an emigrant and in the country. Norwid was persuaded that the writer's duty is to enlarge social and individual

consciousness, collective and individual morality, and to fight for the Language, written with a large "L". In this struggle which also had a political character at stake was the original image of the national-culture, independence and liberty, In his poetical treatise, issued in 1869, entitled "On the Liberty of the Word" (*Rzecz o wolności słowa*) Norwid pointed to the rich traditions of the Polish language, to its development and expansion, thinking at the same time that it constitutes the soul of the nation, and expresses its moral and religious character. Here is a fragment of this text (XIII, verses 23-34):

> They had to be both spirit, humility, labor
> And force, and naught -- it's not a meager thing
> So that this Language not burn out at once
> But like an armed fortress, as defensive walls
> Embrace Ruthenia, Lithuania, Prussia. Both in Siewierz
> And in Królewiec sound or in Sandomierz
> Language of populace, of savants, knights, and kings
> This castellanian language of Jan from Czarnolas
> The language that will cry on Judgment Day from ashes:
> "I am woven from Angel's nerves stained with blood
> And I judge you from your feet to heads, for I am
> For all of you -- both breath and moral baptism"

In a poetic manner Kornel Ujejski (1823-1897) expressed the wrestling about the Polish language in his work "Jeremiah's complaint" (*Skarga Jeremiego*).

Another example comes from another epoch and from works of a totally different author, Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy (1874-1941), a translator, publicist, literary and dramatic critic. In his poem "Song on Our Tongue" (*Pieśń o mowie naszej*) he treats language as the highest good, as a value that he compares to a treasure (verses 97, 100-104):

> Our tongue is our holy treasure
> And not a neutral fun:
> Not with blood now but with ink
> Beats today all peoples' heart
> . . .
> Like language -- like nation

There exists also another witness from the XXth century, bearing witness to the highest love of the Polish language as "a holy relic, most dear, unique". In the situation of constraint, in the face of threats to life in a concentration camp, Prof. Kuraszkiewicz, a prisoner for many years, wrote about the role of prelections, lectures, presentations, evenings of songs and poetry as follows:

. . . language saved us from folly, our native language, pure, correct, full of dignity that, what a wonder, they did not manage to take away. They forbad us to use it, even in letters from and to our families, but they did not eradicate it from souls. People sought the pure, beautiful Polish language like a medicine, like a music. It worked like prayer -- calming, giving strength, faith in man and in the world. In it was enchanted the world that we had left somewhere far behind, the world of memories, emotions and fairy tales, the world of science and prayer, the world of peace.

Scarce books smuggled into the camp were protected like treasures against search, paid with bread, borrowed for clandestine reading silent and aloud to whole groups of listeners. Apart from Polish books, Polish songs, most often religious, but also popular and military, had a great psychological and educative value in the difficult conditions of life in the camps. This form of the Polish language was compared by camp prisoners themselves to a vivifying bath, refreshing thoughts and souls, overcoming the camp jargon. That is why they looked for the beautiful Polish language that was "like a meal, like a caress that strengthens, soothes, filling with joy and rapture."

This set of examples from different epochs, from different social circles and situations illustrate the meaning of language as a primordial value. We could quote more. They convince us of the truth of the words of Maria Konopnicka's "Oath" (*Rota*): "We shall not abandon the land of our fathers! We shall not let our language be buried!"

Primordial values were formed in dialogue between various ethnic groups and different social layers. Thanks to these values social bonds and common actions came into being. They endowed with meaning the works and struggles of the society, its artistic and literary creativity. They occurred in literature and were reflected in songs and prayers. The Polish nation and other ethnic groups were engaged in their realization; hence they deserve to be called universal.

<div align="center">

Chapter VIII
Readiness for Sacrifice and the Sense of Service

Tomasz Strzembosz

</div>

The sense of service, readiness for sacrifices and devotion to a cause are strictly interrelated. Service to something or someone simply implies readiness to assume costs; it is an act of subordinating oneself to the cause we serve. Sacrifices are very diverse: of one's time, rest, plans for life, career and family life; of labor and suffering -- even of one's life.

Earlier History

In the history of Poland and of the Polish language the notion of service underwent an essential transformation in both content and range. Even in the early Middle Ages there were "servant villages," constrained to provide certain services on behalf of the bourg, which was the center of power and at the same time a fortified stronghold. The services were paid in labor and natural products. Horsemen bred horses, bakers baked bread, craftsmen produced arms, etc.; these were the so called services to which a servant was obliged. Later there occurred whole groups of people who served somebody who was higher than them on the social ladder. There were various kinds of servants: maidens, manorial servants. Their works was in principle considered to be of little "respect," auxiliary in character, and these servants were strongly dependent on their masters.

Later, at least in the XVIth century, the word "service" gained another, different meaning: a respectable, honorable, voluntary, and non-compulsory service. It meant service to values, not only to people. This service, performed on behalf of great causes, universally perceived as such, endowed those who served with dignity, it elevated them in their own and in the others' eyes. It was service to the king, the country, the church. People used to say "service to His Majesty the King"; there emerged the notion of military service, and of service to the state. This second, respectable and honorable service concerned the state and its institutions (offices, army) and the church (service to God), this was directed to others who were suffering -- to neighbors. Especially during the over one hundred year period of Poland's enslavement (1795-1918) service gained the splendor of a fight for liberty and the good, it sublimated and became an increasingly universal moral duty, entailing sacrifices rather than honors.

A special, triple service: to God, to the country, and to man was undertaken in 1911 by the Polish scout movement, being an emanation of the English scouting accommodated to the Polish conditions of the fight for freedom at that time. The form of the scouts' oath stated: "I have a sincere will to serve with my whole life God and Poland, to carry my willing help to neighbors and to be obedient to the scouts' law".

Service for the country that in the period of the nation's enslavement so easily coincided with assuming sacrifices took also a form of armed struggle in insurrections (1794, 1807-1814, 1830-1831, 1863-1864, 1905-1907), as well as of "organic labor" in the fields of economy, education, and efforts that enlarged civil awareness of large masses of the society. This will of service and readiness to bear sacrifices for the realization of the fundamental goal of regaining independence embraced wider and wider masses of the increasingly aware society. After 1918, that is, after Poland's return on the maps of Europe, the idea of an independent Polish state that became flesh was transformed into the will of its defense at all costs, as well as of service for this state. Through

Polish schools, army, and social organization it reached the majority of Polish citizens and was assimilated by a part of numerous national minorities (constituting in 1931 over 31 percent of the total number of the population). Some of them, especially territorial minorities such as the Ukrainians and Germans, were to some extent hostile towards the young Polish state, striving rather to found their own state (Ukrainians), or to join the neighboring one (Germany). But also among national minorities there were many people who recognized the Polish state as their own.

A test -- perhaps all too severe, but real -- of this attitude of service to the state, as well as of readiness to bear sacrifices, came in September 1939 and the subsequent long six years. These were years when service to the state and performance of duties towards a state apparatus that was crushed and withdrew abroad or joined the underground could not be forced in any way; on the contrary it entailed the most severe repression from the side of the states invading Polish lands. Now, even more than in the XIXth century, service to the state was related to sacrifices. Those who served it often paid the highest price -- that of life, and their deaths were preceded with the torments of prisons, German and Russian concentration camps, torture during examinations, direct confrontation and partisan struggles, continuous exposure to danger, many years of separation from their family, starvation, and diseases. Forms of service on behalf of the lost independence were numerous: from armed combat and conspiracy, through efforts to help people in danger, to tiresome everyday labor. These manifested the humane attitudes of whole groups of people and of individuals.

To get an idea of their aggregate is particularly difficult. They may be glimpsed only in facts that concerned larger communities and were clearly shaped by acts of will. Therefore only a small part of their reality may be registered. Moreover, attitudes of human groups are variable, and depend on circumstances. This state of affairs hinders broader generalizations and imposes on all statements an hypothetical character, requiring further verification. It is easier to register models of behavior than the attitudes related to them. It is easier to grasp actions of elite groups than then broader social basis that -- in spite of its extent -- leaves weaker traces on history. All that we will write in subsequent sections of this paper will therefore have only the value of a first draft, a first approximation that is intended to initiate a discussion.

September 1939 in Poland

The German invasion of Poland caused a whole avalanche of events. It surprised the population of the invaded country and forced it immediately to undertake actions whose previous preparation or even contemplation were simply impossible. From this period we know thousands of facts of dedicated actions of the Polish population, as well as of services provided by Poles: maintaining order, fire protection, public health facilities, security, military aid and transportation. The devotedness of the civil population was clearly proven in the cities that choose lasting defense (Warsaw, Gdynia, Lvov), as well as in those that spontaneously began such actions in a hopeless position (Grodno). Much longer than planned or estimated by the enemy numerous defense sites (the Land Coast Defense around Gdynia, Westerplatte, the Hel peninsula, the Modlin fortress) persisted in the struggle. In over a dozen cases the civil population and paramilitary formations defended their territory even when the army already withdrew (among others, in Silesia and in Pomorze). The attitude of men in the age of recruitment and young men and women about to reach this age was impressive. Many more people applied to the army than it was possible to integrate and arm. Many civilians went with the army counting on incorporation into its units; whole squads, composed of school youth formed in courses of military education reported their readiness to fight.

Youth that did not reach the age of recruitment performed auxiliary service. High school students, scouts, various volunteers constituted the core of the body of defendants of Grodno (September 20-21, 1939), struggling with the Red Army which was beginning its invasion of those territories. Scouts and veterans of Silesian uprisings (1919-1921) fought with Germans in Katowice, even when the army left the city, suffering huge losses both in combat and subsequent executions. The population of Warsaw, in spite of the effects of the three weeks' siege (September 8-28, 1939), was ready to continue the struggle. The decision about capitulation was made not as a result of pressure from the inhabitants of the capital, but because of lack of ammunition and food, as well as the general situation.

The Polish Army, at the beginning was in retreat for the Commander in Chief was awaiting the promised offensive of the Western allies, due to begin on the fourteenth day of the war and was prepared to yield territory to protect the military condition of his army. The army was under the pressure of artillery and air-raids, of fast armored forces that by speed and fire power continuously broke the front line and easily outflanked the Poles. Still at many sites it was ready for effective struggle even at the end of September and the beginning of October. Dispersed units gathered anew, grouping in improvised tactical and operational formations. In the Lublin region and on the lands to the West of Lvov where there were squads withdrawing towards the east under the German pressure, as late as at the end of September there were great battles, such as two fought near Tomaszów (September 20-25) and the battle of Wereszyca. Units of the Polish Army, moving West before Soviet troops that on September 17, 1939 trespassed the Polish border, fought many, often victorious, fights as late as October, 1939. They fought victorious, or at least initially victorious battles with the Red Army near Wytyczne (October 1) and with Germans near Wola Gułowska and Kock (October 2-5). At the front several generals died, but no regimental banner was taken by Germans. At the same time, at higher levels of command there were cases of abandoning still fighting squads (general Juliusz Rómmel), breakdowns and passivity (general Stefan Dąb-Biernacki, general Władysaw Bortnowski). Many people from the Piłsudski establishment, abandoning their posts, escaped to the east taking with them their family and belongings.

Summarizing the September campaign an eminent military historian wrote: "The Polish campaign remained a peculiar phenomenon, characterized by repeated efforts of already beaten units to reassemble in order to prolong the struggle".

The engine of action of both soldiers and civil population was a sense of the need to fulfill one's duty (that is, one's service), a high sense of soldiers' honor, patriotism, and readiness to bear high sacrifices on behalf of the threatened state.

After termination of regular battle of the September campaign there perdured very long, both on territories occupied by the USSR (52 percent of the state territory) and by the Germans, guerilla fighting by small squads of the Polish Army and by the sympathizing population. In some areas they continued even till the middle of 1940 (the lands of Kielce, Białystok, Grodno). In some regions they continued even in 1941 (the Augustów Forests). Uniformed arms and uniform, armed response to terror exceeded the bounds of normal human resistance.

In Defense of the Underground State and the Army in Exile

The last shots of the September campaign had not yet died away when in the West, in France, a new Polish army began to form. It consisted of soldiers who in small units passed through the Romanian and the Hungarian border, of those who already under occupation made their way to

the new army, mainly through the Carpathians, but also through the territory of neutral Lithuania and Latvia, as well as of economic emigrants settled in France before the war who now joined the army. Those who found themselves in Hungary and in Romania in September 1939 were put in concentration camps. They got to the army thanks to widely organized escapes to which the countries' authorities shut their eyes. Those who came from Poland had first to pass through a well protected border zone, then through mountain chains, dangerous especially during the hard winter of 1939/1940. A mass of future soldiers climbed over them. The sense of duty, of service, drove thousands of young people: soldiers in service and in reserves, young people who had not yet reached the recruitment age, those who -- as the poet wrote -- "escaped to arms", to undertake the highest risks in order to be able to keep serving. Those who did not manage were exposed to torture, prisons, and then German or Russian concentration camps. This process of getting through lasted through the whole year 1940, with its peak around May and June, until the fall of France. Later through hermetically tight, protected borders, using previously prepared trails, there passed only couriers, and sometimes also people who burned their bridges, loosing ground under their feet.

During the defense of France in May and June, 1940, Polish military units, more poorly armed and equipped than the French and the English, showed unusual persistence in the fight. Where defeated they got through to places where they could continue their struggle, above all to Great Britain, their last ally. They behaved in the same way later on other front lines: in Norway (April 1940), in the Middle East and in Africa (1940-1941). Polish troops that undertook to fight first in this war proved to have a feature essential to every service: fidelity. Fidelity towards their own destroyed state, towards their allies beaten in the first phase of the war by Germans, fidelity to the oath they took. They did it spontaneously and many times, even then when their allies completely failed (as in the case of France that did not fulfill its obligations in 1939 and easily yielded in 1940) or when their policy was entirely contrary to Poland (as in the case of the United States and Great Britain in the final phase of the war). Polish loyalty included even the Red Army entering Polish lands in 1944. Performing the "Tempest" (*Burza*) action (from Lvov to the line of Vistula) troops of the National Army (*AK -- Armia Krajowa*) reported to Soviet commanders, declaring their willingness to share the fight with the Germans, and posing only one condition: their status of allies, dependent on their own government in London, commanded by the Soviet military authorities only operationally and tactically, and not in questions of politics and ideology. Such situations normally ended up with disarmament and confinement.

Directly after the end of battles of the September campaign of 1939 in the whole territory of the Polish state (in its eastern parts since the middle of September) conspiratorial organizations began to emerge. There were hundreds of them even in the first year of war, embracing the territory of both invasions and engaging thousands of people. Their formation was undertaken by people of all social layers and professions: Polish Army officers of all ranks, intelligentsia, students, priests, teachers, foresters, townsmen, and peasants. There were political and social activist from the period before the war, but also people who previously had not been engaged, rich and the poor, educated and semianalphabetics. This spontaneous mass movement that at the beginning suffered great losses due to ignorance of the principles of conspiratorial work and to taking into account only short term actions (due to belief in a spring offensive by the Western allies) became a basis for the construction of something unknown in other invaded countries -- the Polish Underground State. This state was a result of the conjunction of two independent initiatives: on the one hand, the government in exile that convoked its branch in the country, The On-Site Government Representation (*Delegatura Rządu na Kraj*), and nominated the command of the underground

National Army, and on the other hand, the society that independently created hundreds of political, military, social, cultural, educational, and youth organizations. Thanks to them in the invaded Poland there emerged a consistent system of clandestine life, independent from the alien sovereign state and governed by its own rules. There was a political (the Government Representation), a military (the National Army), and a judicial power (special civil and military courts). The underground state exerted its executive functions, but also took care of citizens and organized scientific, educative, and cultural life and prepared plans for post war restoration. Support for the Government Representative and its structure constituted a permanent alliance of the greatest political parties (the Political Communicative Committee, later the Council of National Unity).

This great work was possible only thanks to the constant determined attitude of the majority of Polish citizens, who not only submitted to clandestine authorities of this state, but also engaged in its construction, undertaking an unusually difficult service that required great sacrifices. The most amazing fact about the conspiratorial work, astonishing Gestapo functionaries, was that the seemingly totally dispersed clandestine organizations continually revived. They involved people from milieus that -- as it would seem -- were already purged of all active elements. This was so for instance in a small town in the Kielce area, Skarżysko-Kamienna and its vicinity, where, after the great denunciation that took place in the period from February to January 1940 when over 1000 people were arrested and shot dead, there was a revived conspiracy which persisted till the end of the war. It was so also in neighboring villages of the Kielce region which were burnt in spring 1940 in revenge for the activity of guerilla troops led by Henryk Dobrzański ("Hubal"). These villages offered themselves again in 1943 and remained at the disposal of another commander, lieutenant Jan Piwnik ("Ponury"), and suffered great losses again, serving nevertheless to the end as guerrillas. No oppression managed to interrupt the development of the underground action on the whole territory of the General Government. No persecutions were able to destroy underground structures in lands directly included in the Reich, even where inhabited by many Germans collaborating with the Nazi authorities, where complicated ethnic and social relations made conspiracy more difficult. The situation was even more difficult -- not only in regard to conspiracy, but to the very possibility of remaining faithful to the Polish state -- in territories occupied since September 1939 by the Soviet Union. Here also the phenomenon of conspiracy as early as 1939 was massive in character, and after the German invasion on these territories in June 1941 the local conspiratorial structures created great tactical units of the National Army: regiments, brigades, divisions. Sacrifices sustained by Poles inhabiting these lands were no less than those suffered under German occupation in the General Government and in lands incorporated to the Reich. In only the years 1939-1941 over 1.5 million people were imprisoned and exiled to distant Soviet lands, thousands were killed or shot dead. In spite of that, the inhabitants of these lands executed the orders of the National Army command undertaking in 1944, just before the entry of the Red Army, open struggle with the Germans (the "Tempest" action) and taking control of large territories, especially in the lands of Vilnius and Nowogród. They also attempted to fight for the regional capitals of these lands: Vilnius and Lvov. They paid for this by deportation to the concentration camps in the Soviet territory of several tens of thousands of the National Army soldiers and of many tens of thousands of the civilian population. These people in great part died in exile or returned home only in 1947-1956. In executing orders of legal -- even if clandestine and without means -- Polish authorities were motivated by more than personal safety and that of their families.

Devoted service to the nation was fulfilled not only by private soldiers in underground associations, but also by their more numerous "social environment": families, acquaintances,

neighbors, sometimes entire strangers without whose loyalty, disinterested help and discretion the underground struggle on such a scale would not be at all possible. This service was rendered also by leaders of the Polish Underground State who, even more than common soldiers were exposed to death and torture for necessarily disclosing themselves in greater number and drawing attention to their activities. The Soviet secret intelligence service (NKWD) arrested and imprisoned General Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, founder of one of the first military formations, Service to the Victory of Poland (*Służba Zwycięstwu Polski*), when at the command of his superiors in Paris in March 1940 he passed through the Soviet-German demarcation zone on his way to Lvov. In June 1943 the Germans arrested his successor, General Stefan Rowecki, murdered in August 1944 in a concentration camp in Sachsenhausen. Also the fourth commander in chief of ZWZ/AK (the National Army) general Leopold Okulicki ("Niedźwiadek") was arrested by NKVD and died in the Moscow prison, in Lubianka, in December 1946. In March 1945 he went to the Soviet authorities when they proposed to him -- together with other leaders of the Polish Underground State -- talks about the peaceful regulation of relations between the legal Polish authorities residing in the country and the new Soviet military administration. His predecessor, the third commander of ZWZ/AK, general Tadeusz Komorowski ("Bór") after the end of the Warsaw uprising, was imprisoned for several months in a prisoner-of-war camp. The first On-Site Deputy of the Government, Cyryl Ratajski, died a natural death in 1942. The second, Jan Piekałkiewicz, arrested in Warsaw by the Gestapo in January 1943, was murdered in the notorious site of Nazi tortures, the Gestapo quarters on Szucha street, in April of the same year. The third and the last of longer active Government Deputies, Jan Stanisław Jankowski, was arrested together with general Okulicki in March 1945 during an attempt at talks was murdered or died in the Moscow prison in the fifties (probably in 1953). The last Deputy, Stefan Korboński, went through a "Polish" prison and managed to escape abroad. All conceived their work as a service that they accomplished to the end.

In prisons and from executions there perished the entire leading teams of political parties, social organizations, and military associations. They were replaced by other people who, like their predecessors, were aware of the terrible risk, and yet ready to take it in the spirit of responsibility for the cause they served.

The ethos of service and readiness to bear the highest sacrifice directed leaders of the Polish Underground State when they decided, at the end of July 1944, to begin an anti-German uprising in Warsaw. They made this decision aware of their personal risk: failure of the uprising threatened death at the hands of Germans, or at least enslavement and exile. In the case of success there was a prospect of being imprisoned by Soviet authorities who, as in eastern Polish lands, might eliminate by force their contenders to political power in the resurgent country. Prepared for both defeat and victory, soldiers took the risk of death from bombs, artillery shells, or execution of the inhabitants of houses taken by German soldiers. In deciding to begin the uprising, they did so without the possibility of informing even the closest family members who also were exposed to all the consequences of impending fight. Not only lieutenants and generals from the General Command of the National Army, but also civilians from the Government Representation and other civil units of the underground country management were subject to death for consenting to the insurrection. Older gentlemen, burdened with families and duties, were at the top of the state governance and performed for six years the same service as soldiers on the front lines, risking death and torture everyday. No one of these several dozen people protested against the decision or tried to avoid its consequences. The Warsaw uprising, planned for several days, lasted 63 days.

The "Tempest" action lasted on the Polish territories from the end of January to August 1944, when guerilla troops approaching the fighting in Warsaw from the east were systematically disarmed by the Soviet army, and their soldiers carried off to the east. In spite of such an attitude of the "ally of our allies", Polish forces continued to fight with Germans in western lands until the Soviet front approached in January and February 1945. In his last order, issued from the post of the commander of the National Army, the order that dismissed the Army, General L. Okulicki wrote on January 19, 1945: "Soldiers of the National Army! I am giving you my last order. Perform your further work and activities in the spirit of regaining full independence of the State and protection of the Polish population against extermination. Try to be leaders of the Nation and to realize the independent Polish state. In this action, everybody has to be a commander to himself. . . ." And indeed, the fight for liberty was not terminated. In its form of armed struggle it lasted -- due to circumstances for which not only the "soldiers of liberty" must be held responsible -- till 1949, and in the form of political struggle – for forty some years.

It is probably true that service to the country in the form of its armed defense evokes, due to threats lasting over centuries as well as due to more than a hundred years of enslavement, the broadest echo in Polish hearts. Social readiness for sacrifices is the greatest when it is supposed to serve this task. An example of such great devotedness and liberality were voluntary contributions offered by Poles before the second World War on behalf of the Polish Army, preparing itself for the imminent fight. In a short time almost 170 million Polish złoty (5 złoty = 1 dollar) and 350 kg of gold was collected for the Fund of National Defense. People offered their rings, golden bracelets, vessels, golden coins. For the Anti-Aircraft Defense Loan its organizers collected 404 million złoty -- four times more than it had been expected.

Great generosity was shown by the population of the General Government in 1939 and in 1940. They received in their homes hundreds of thousands of their compatriots displaced from Great Poland and other lands annexed by the German Reich, and later over half a million habitants of Warsaw expelled from the city after the uprising. The population rescued with dedication Polish soldiers trying to avoid captivity after the September defeat. Threatened conspirators were protected. Jews, condemned to death and escaping from ghettos, were hidden in homes, though for hiding a Jew the penalty was immediate death by execution of the whole family, including children (for which reason, over 600 Polish families were killed). Poles also took care of Soviet soldiers who escaped from camps supposed to be prisoner-of-war camps, but which in reality were death camps. These were not common attitudes, but it is difficult to expect universal heroism or that it be common to put the life of strangers over that of one's closest family threatened by death by the very fact of the stranger's presence. At the time of the Warsaw uprising the civil population, bearing the heaviest burden of the fight, actively supported the insurrectionists and stood by their side.

Writing about dedication and sacrifices, we must stress the great role of Polish women who not only consented without protest to their sons' exposure, but were constantly present in conspiratorial work. They took part in the underground struggles as liaison soldiers, nurses, distributors of the underground press, military staff workers. Many a time they assumed very important functions, as Janina Karasiówna, director of the conspiratorial communication department of the General Command of ZWZ/AK and other women directors of international communication. Women could be found in guerilla and in insurrectional squads, in the forests and on the barricades of Warsaw. It is above all they who created the climate of fidelity to ideals and of devotedness without which such a universal fight with the enemy, which at the same time was a fight for basic human values, could not have encompassed the whole country. It was they who

made out of their homes "military barracks" of the conspiratorial army, bringing support and asylum for hundreds of thousands of conspirators; it was they who looked after those wanted by the enemy, who sent parcels to prisons and camps, and in exile fought for survival of their families, especially when they were deprived of their fathers and sons. It is women who could afford organizing the religious and cultural life in camps; it was also they who created in a horrible concentration camp in Ravensbrück a clandestine scouting group "MURY" ("The Walls"). It is they who were most form and courageous during cruel investigations and the most persevering in patiently enduring sufferings.

The traditional dedication of Polish women, well known from the January uprising of 1863 and from the war of 1920, now reached its apogee, and became a mass phenomenon, embracing millions of people. Not without reason a great hospital in Łódź was dedicated as a monument of the Polish Mother. It is to a great extent thanks to Polish women that we managed to survive the war and the occupation of our country, even if in bad physical and biological shape, yet in good social and moral condition.

When we think of the "Polish" second World War, we associate with the word "service" soldiers fighting on all front lines: in Africa, in the Middle East, in France and Italy, in Norway, in the Soviet Union, and above all in our own land. When we think of the word "devotion", we see with the eyes of our soul Polish women: mothers, wives, sisters, fiancees -- liaison soldiers, press distributors, doctors, and above all those who nourished and took care of the others. It is to them that we owe the most.

<center>

Chapter IX
The Heritage of Romanticism and Tradition

Alina Kowalczykowa

</center>

The romantic stream in Polish literature appeared relatively late -- later than in England and Germany -- about the same time as in France and Russia. The date opening this period is usually assumed to be 1822, when the collection of poems "Ballads and Romances" (*Ballady i romanse*) was published by Adam Mickiewicz, the future most eminent poet of Polish Romanticism.

New ideas, received from foreign, mainly German, philosophy were developed initially according to general European tendencies. The limits of knowledge which had been assumed by rationalists were rejected. Authors, on the look out for ways of truth and infinity, appealed to intuition (Mickiewicz) or to creative imagination (a critic Maurycy Mochnacki, an eminent poet Juliusz Słowacki). The focus of interest were existential doubts (IVth part of the poem "All Saints Eve" [*Dziady*] by Mickiewicz), Byronic rebellion against the world (the poetic novels of Słowacki), and even earlier in *Chatterton* by Alfred de Vigny, "The Confession of the Child of the Age" by Alfred de Musset, or the bitterness of existence leading to suicide (*Edmund* by Witwicki). The turn towards history led to extreme pessimism and agnosticism (the poetic novel, *Maria*, by Antoni Malczewski), but more often served to support the spirit of patriotism.

The Historical Context

Thus, in the 20s of the XIXth century Polish Romanticism was close to European patterns. But because it developed in an enslaved country, in literary activity a stronger accent fell on problems of consolidating the sense of national identity, for instance on the folk and on folklore. And there appeared moral dilemmas related to the fight with the enemies of the Fatherland.

In November 1830 a national uprising against Russia burst out. After its bloody suppression in September 1831 thousand of Poles, including almost the entire intellectual elite, had to emigrate. Those who remained suffered exterminating repression, compulsory incorporation into the Russian army, confiscation of wealth and/or exile to Siberia.

The defeat of this uprising turned out to be a decisive factor in shaping Polish spirituality and patriotic morality. It meant the end of the illusion that Poles were able to regain their independence themselves, and at the same time the beginning of utopian hopes for armed support of such struggle by the nations of Europe. Poles had to make a choice: either to put up with loss of their state or, if not, then to subordinate their life to the ideal of ardent love of their fatherland.

The poetic shape of patriotic stereotypes expressing this "no", entrenched in the collective consciousness, was formed by those who found themselves beyond the borders of their country. In the Polish lands this stream of ideas was obviously much weaker. The invaders stifled passionately all expressions of intellectual life; moreover, there was nobody to kindle it, for people of letters were abroad, as emigrants or exiles.

Paris formed the main center of political life -- and in this peculiar situation the strongest influence on the minds of Poles was literature. Seven factors contributed to its dominant role: the great moral authority that literature gained in Poland even before, the conscious assumption by poets of the role of spiritual leaders of the nation, and the general need for the word, giving hope and showing the way to the future in a free fatherland. This thirst for the poetic word strongly

supported the popularization of literary works. In spite of the prohibitions of censors there were smuggled into the country and welcomed the more ardently due to the most severe punishments threatened for their possession. In political lawsuits against Polish conspirators, accusations for reading "prohibited" literature had honorable place.

Such external conditions, mingling poetry with politics, imposed on romantic literature constant contact with present reality, but it also facilitated poets assuming an elevated position as leaders and national bards. This conviction regarding the unusual status of poets harmonized with earlier conceptions of Friedrich Schlegel and other German theoreticians of Romanticism. Conceiving poetry as a synthesis of the arts, as a metascience, they saw it as a way towards a deeper understanding of the world. Poles added here an accent upon its prophetic functions.

After the 1830 uprising and its fall, there was a common sense of despair often leading to madness or suicide. But the uprising left also a memory of a marvelous strain of Poles, a memory of heroism and of liberty achieved for a while. This opened the way to an unusually vivid pride and faith in the power of the nation. All that remained was to wait for a favorable international opportunity.

The general emotional reaction of Poles after the disaster of defeat was, however, analogous to the reaction of Europe after the French revolution: a turn towards history that was supposed to explain things and a tragic sense of events. At the same time it was a manifestation of faith and a turn towards God; history was seen as the realization of His will, of the plans of Providence. Representatives of Polish Romanticism even used biblical motives; they revived the myth of the Messiah as a personal figure, but also as a collective figure of a nation-Messiah who, following Christ's example, shapes the pattern of sanctity, martyrdom, and resurrection. Thanks to a clear analogy to the situation of Poland, messianic motives in literature became foundational to the historically oriented vision of the romantic poets.

Characteristics

Messianism

Messianic conceptions already appeared at the time of the November uprising. The poet Kazimierz Brodziński, announced that the Polish nation, "misunderstood and persecuted, yet sticks to its rights and will gain believers; its thorny crown will change into a laurel of victory".

Conceptions of this type transformed themselves into an ideology able to protect Poles living in exile against a destructive despair. They endowed with eschatological meaning the spiritual sufferings and real misery of the wanderers. Adam Mickiewicz understood these needs and in a work issued as early as in 1832, under the remarkable title *Books of the Polish Nation and of the Polish Pilgrimage* (*Księgi narodu i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*), inculcated in Poles a conviction about the holy mission that awaits them.

Stylized according to biblical patterns and written with a high, archaic language recalling ecclesiastical texts, *The Books* sounded a prophecy concerning the future destiny of the world. They announced something of the highest importance for the Polish emigrés: Poland, in reward for its merits and sufferings, would be resurrected. The historical merit of the nation was seen in its continuous readiness for defense of the Christian faith (Poland as the forefront of Christianity -- the crucial argument here was the famous victory of king Jan III Sobieski over the Turks near Vienna in 1683). Mickiewicz saw world history as the site of the struggle of God with Satan, interpreted as the wrestling of liberty with tyranny. This implied also a divine sanction for the

strivings for the liberation of his own nation, and for the oppression of liberty which turned out to be contrary to God's will. Mickiewicz wrote that "the Polish Nation did not die, its body lies in the tomb, and its soul went away from the earth, that is from public life, descending to the abyss, that is to the home life of peoples suffering enslavement in this country and abroad, in order to behold their suffering. And on the third day the soul will return into the body, and the nation will rise, and liberate all nations of Europe from their enslavement".

The life of Christ became in a metaphorical transformation, a figure of the history of the Polish nation. Poland, in turn, was attributed the traits of a chosen nation, a new Messiah of peoples. This idealized image of his own nation set Mickiewicz against a demonized picture of contemporary Europe that -- both in *The Books* and in his later writings -- constituted a domain of evil, of a fall of faith and liberty, and of a cult of money, ousting ideals of the liberty of nations.

Therefore, the new course of history according to the announcements of *The Book*, will be traced by the Polish pilgrims, people embodying the tradition of the fight for liberty and then, after defeat, deprived of their fatherland, tested by God to the greatest extent and, by the same token, the closest to persection. "You are among foreigners as apostles among idolaters", claimed Mickiewicz, and, in the "Pilgrim Litany" (verses 18-22) composed for pilgrims in the closing *Book*, he begged God:

> For universal war for Liberty of Nations
> We ask you, O Lord!
> For arms and national eagles,
> We ask you, O Lord!
> For a happy death on the battlefield,
> We ask you, O Lord!
> For tombs for our bones in our land,
> We ask you, O Lord!
> For independence, integrity, and liberty of our Fatherland
> We ask you, O Lord!

This fragment shows an intention, characteristic of *The Books*, of welding the idea of the liberty of nations with hope for the resurrection of the Fatherland, and draws an image of a Pole that embodies faith and romantic heroism. Mickiewicz's work was particularly important for the formation of the Polish consciousness. For, from the very beginning of their existence in exile, it endowed their destiny as wanderers with a higher meaning; their spiritual exaltation as apostles of a new faith was, moreover, to be rewarded with rebirth of the fatherland.

The Books reduced the historical thought of the poet and his prophecies to the shape of a simple parable and to a nearly catechistic admonition of his compatriots. In an almost simultaneously published drama by Mickiewicz, *The All Saints' Eve*, part III (*Dziady, część III*), the poet included philosophical reflections. They concern the problem of conflict between the spiritual aspirations of one who, in a romantic way, emotionally identified oneself with a part of infinity and God and the limitations imposed by existence and history. God and Satan; faith full of humility and the revolt of an individual struggling for power over the world and for responsibility for the future course of history. The hero of *All Saints' Eve* falls defeated by an invisible power, but his figure became a symbol of a romantic revolt against God and the world.

An irrational view of the world, a nation-Messiah and an individual usurping absolute power over the world -- such motives today evoke bad memories and associations. After the experience

of all kinds of Fascism, of extreme nationalisms, of totalitarian ideologies we tend to be particularly suspicious towards trends apotheosizing the idea of a chosen nation and of a genial individual.

Analogies with contemporary realities, however, are groundless insofar as in that situation -- a group of emigrees in Paris, and a nation without its own state -- such threats simply did not exist. Leadership concerned the sphere of spirit, and the political situation of the epoch meant that, if Poles thought about real action and an armed fight, such Polish Messianism was to be realized according to the ideal: "For your freedom and ours". That is to say, it would have to take the form of participation by Poles in struggles for freedom -- wherever they would be fought. So, in spite of appearances, there was no passage from Messianistic ideas to a nationalistic ideology.

Rational or Irrational

Another problem is much more interesting and has been disputed to this day: the suspicion that romantics were steered by irrational impulses even when they undertook concrete programs of political or armed action.

Ardent polemics concerning the role of common sense and irrational intuition in concrete political action burst out in relation to sending home from exile emissaries who were supposed to organize conspiratorial activities and prepare subsequent armed uprisings. They were caught by the authorities and sentenced to death or to long imprisonment. When people protested against sending to certain death the most noble representatives of the Polish youth Mickiewicz in his article "On the Reasonable and the Mad" (*O ludziach rozsądnych i ludziach szalonych*) presented from history a general vision. In this progress appears to be an effect of action of people inspired by God, led by intuition and a spirit of sacrifice, and held to be crazy by those directed by reasonable calculation. The apotheosis of the sacrifice of the emissaries, that is, of patriotic "madness", established in Polish historiosophy a conviction of the significance of the sacrifice of blood made on the altar of the fatherland, even when there is no real chance of quick victory. This was a conviction about the meaning of death of those who -- as Słowacki wrote -- "if need be, go for death one by one/as stones thrown by God on the fieldwork!"

The providential historical vision was from the beginning accompanied by a very rigid moral codex. Already in his early and very popular poem entitled "To the Polish Mother" (*Do matki Polki*) Mickiewicz proposed that the rearing of Polish children be shaped from the cradle by the thought of their future martyrdom. Attributes determinating the biography of a Polish patriot were here: perjurious judgment, confinement and forced labor, gallows and only an anonymous place in the memory of future generations.

From that moment, the consciousness of Poles was shaped by a conviction that the idea of national liberty is superior in rank to all artistic ideals, to all individual strivings, to personal life. Because the situation that emerged at that time was to last till 1918, and then after twenty years of independence Poland found itself again under governance of alien invaders, the stereotype of patriotism carved by the romantics has remained actual; it persisted, and was taken up by subsequent generations. The imperative of being faithful to it demanded from those who emigrated a programmatic isolation from the aliens, seclusion in the circle of Polish affairs and the constant application of Polish criteria to European events. Those who remained in the country drew moral imperatives not so much from Messianistic historiosophy, but rather from the situation of life under occupation. But the fundamental dilemma was the same: either compromise or seemingly irrational resistance of the defeated nation against tyranny. The unshakable romantic spirit, when translated

into the language of everyday reality, very often meant financial disaster. For conspiratorial activity the invading authorities confiscated manors; refusal to collaborate with the enemy made economic activity impossible. Hence, in the stereotype of a good Pole an indispensable attribute of heroism was contempt for material goods. With patriotism there merged an inclination to all sorts of resistance against state authorities, sabotaging its orders and outsmarting binding laws.

The above remarks, reducing an artistic view of the world to the realm of life, may be read as a suggestion that Polish Romanticism was a peculiar case of a flattening romantic philosophy, turning it into a kind of ideological utilitarianism. This would be a total misunderstanding. Intertwined indeed with patriotic ideology, Romanticism became an authentic inspiration for development of existential conceptions and of the religious thought of future generations. The cause of the Polish nation, the understanding of its spirit and history, became a concrete starting point from which it was possible to grasp the whole historical destiny.

The Interpretation of History

The interpretative inferences were mutual. In the forties of the XIXth century in his lectures at the College de France in Paris, Mickiewicz spoke about history and the culture of Slavs. He translated his general conception of the wrestling of good with evil in history into the language of contemporary politics and related it also to the duty of fulfilling moral obligations, including those assumed by the countries of Europe towards Poland. On the other hand, the general idea of historical progress implied in the schemas of historiosophy imperatives of action, and the apotheosis of great individuals (of the caliber of Napoleon), as well as of other eminent and inspired Poles.

The poetic view of the Polish experience of history generated various interpretations, expressed especially strongly in drama. In the vision of history of by Zygmunt Krasiński in his "Non-Divine Comedy" (*Nie-Boska Komedia*) God's plans appear in a somewhat distant perspective, and are revealed only at the end of drama, which as a whole is a catastrophic prophecy about the times. Krasiński, the aristocrat, identifies revolution, the destruction of values and the traditions proper to nobility with the end of the world. In his writings there is no trace of the hope found in the French historiosophy of that time, suggesting that the fall has a purifying power and that it will entail renaissance. In "Non-Divine Comedy" we find an image of revolution masterfully depicted, a marvelously vivid picture of crowds in revolt and a presentation of the moral reasons that direct them. But Krasiński considered revolution to be the final triumph of Satan -- the world "bustles ahead, plays with you, throws you and rejects you; the world rolls like a roller coaster, people emerge and vanish, for it is slippery -- a lot of blood -- blood everywhere -- I tell you, a lot of blood". From evil, from revolution, there cannot result any good; utopian visions of a happy humanity displayed by the leader of savage crowds will never be realized. Krasiński turned out to be an even a greater pessimist than the conservative French thinkers. In "Non-Divine Comedy" Satan not only directs the populace in revolt but also penetrates the mind of the only outstanding individual. The main hero of the drama, Comte Henry, will abandon the way of angels in response to the whispers of Mephistopheles. There is no one who could advocate the old, real values. Therefore the only unclear chance of salvation seems to be divine intervention, symbolized by Christ appearance at the end of the poem.

In quite a different way Juliusz Słowacki conceived evil in history in his late works, full of mystical visions. The evolution of history, whose final goal was to introduce man into divinity, leading him to God, he depicted as a common work of both angels and Satan. The evil appearing

in history was for him its unavoidable and necessary element, because it stimulates people to action and the world to progress. If there were no injustices and sufferings, people would freeze in a lazy tranquility. They would become lazy, as Słowacki put it, and there would be no progress. So in the last resort Satan's interventions: revolutions, wars, or even sometimes private crimes turn out to be salutary, for they accelerate the course of history and the perfecting of humanity. Satan appears like a punishing and bloody incarnation of an angel: Słowacki introduced into his text the peculiar figure of the Destroyer of the Angel.

In the historical vision of the Polish Romantics Poland had its particular role. Krasiński in his poem "Before Dawn" (*Przedświt*) interpreted this role in a spirit that was not contradictory to Christian orthodoxy, namely, as some kind of a pure spiritual leadership. In the cosmological visions of Słowacki who allegedly in a revelation saw the history of the world from the moment of its cosmic birth to the final unification of the spirit with God, Poland occupied a central position. It was Poles who were with the sabres to clear the way for other nations towards the sunny Jerusalem predicted in St. John's Book of Revelation.

The hero of Polish romantic literature emerged, as throughout Europe, from existential irresolution, but the configuration of this image was clearly influenced by the contemporary political situation of Poland. Hence personal patterns created at that time are still very attractive for Poles. They associate with them the most appreciated values such as revolt in the name of liberty and truth, enthusiasm, sincerity of feelings, utopian faith in ideals. The violent emotions or despair of romantic heroes may frighten, as well as their lofty egocentrism and folly, but there are some fascinating things: the full concentration of life around one passion, one idea, with the elimination of all stereotypic poses. The great characters of Romanticism are unique figures, impossible to follow; their moral inquietude has such a mighty creative or destructive force because it is lived as if for the first time, incomparable to anything that happened before.

The revolt of romantics -- and of their literary heroes -- was total; it was directed against the whole world and demanded God's intervention. They found support nowhere, everything seemed to be contaminated, everything bore traits of lies and evil. They saw the world as a dialectical intertwining of opposites: ugliness is inseparable from beauty, pain from delight, hatred or indifference from love, despotism from liberty. Through everything there was manifested the romantic striving towards the Absolute, i.e., towards fullness of cognition, love, liberty, and human limits. What if they conceived the world as an infinite being, and rejected all restraints imposed by rationalists in the domain of cognition; what if the human condition does not allow one to trespass certain towards, if it is so difficult to go beyond limits of reason, if our knowledge is so fragmentary and unclear when it is acquired by means of intuition and imagination. Death or folly put an end to such awakened human desires.

Polish Romantics took over, mostly with Byronic components as for instance Słowacki in his early poetical novels, the feeling of being suffocated in the cage of the human condition, which had been expressed in Goethe's *Faust*. The problem of death was not, of course, limited to the question of fear. It extended as well to awe that the human spirit is attached here on the earth to such a miserable way of being, that it is so restricted in the unlimited and infinite universe. When a romantic hero doubted the way of the spirit towards divinity, he could scornfully choose the way of Satan. Among Polish poets, such a way was shown by Roman Zmorski in his poem, *Lesław*, whose hero willingly descends into the infernal abyss, despising the world.

In the mystical historiosophy of Juliusz Słowacki death was associated with the idea of perfecting the spirit through suffering. A hero of his monumental poem "King-Spirit" (*Król-Duch*)

introduces even perversion and sadism as factors leading to perfection; pain elevates and sublimates, death liberates from bonds of flesh. King-Spirit says:

> I decided to frighten heavens
> To strike skies as a copper shield
> To penetrate the blue with crimes
> *Rhapsody I, Hymn II, verses 331-333.*

Death, -- and crime -- the tragedy of romantic heroes lies in the insoluble conflict between the vision of good and the reality of evil in that man is inescapably involved through his actions. Should we then consent to destiny and give up revolt? No, for revolt, life full of passion, pushes history ahead and, in spite of the dangers to which it exposes man (or maybe thanks to them?) it gives meaning to individual existence. Goals are unattainable, it is not possible to enter into fullness of freedom and truth, but in the passion of approaching them lies man's divinity. How characteristic is the fact that none of the romantic heroes longs for "normality" -- there is no desire to exchange irresolution and suffering for peace of heart.

Person and Society

Equally ardent as their existential revolt was the protest of romantics against their contemporary state, against the world in which they lived. They fought for survival of the ideals they professed. In their desperate resistance to change in the world we perceive there was fear that the new Europe that emerged before their eyes in the first half of the XIXth century would be a spiritual dwarf, that in insanely chasing after progress people would forget ideals, that they would not notice the disappearance of liberty, love and nobility of spirit. I mentioned Mickiewicz's critique of contemporary Europe; as a counterbalance to the materialistic world. He also shows human genius, able to rule and conduct peoples and to shape the future. The example of Napoleon gave this commitment concrete content. "One man, elevated by his own power, subjugating numerous peoples" -- so Mickiewicz saw his unaccomplished mission. The example of Napoleon was significant in two ways: it showed that an individual distinguished by great spirit can shake the world and that this internal power can manifest itself in everybody, also in someone who is not elevated above others by means of birth or fortune.

For Poles, their faith in the power of individuals for moving peoples and changing history was particularly important. The model of a romantic hero promoted in the Polish literature was enriched with traits necessary for national heroes who constantly keep in mind one superior value -- the Fatherland. Hence, existential dilemmas were subdued to patriotic motives. The heroes found the meaning of their lives in undertaking service to the nation. Outstanding individuals, even aware of their distinctness, identified their will with the good of the others; individualism was overcome in this unusual way. The destiny of these heroes was determined by the political situation of the country -- their biographies had to be tragic as long as Poland had not regained freedom. The dramatic character of their life had its source, not so much in personal problems, as in reasons external to the subjects.

It was through the figures of romantic literary heroes that Poles conceived their most recent history: not heroes of antiquity, but participants of the last uprising, popularized in romantic poems, became their models. In these poems there appeared, as if in spite of the principal idea of

Romanticism, elements of noble teaching, propagating patterns of life, or rather patterns of dying. These suggested how to offer one's life, and how to die for the fatherland.

A moral imperative of subjugating one's life to the Polish cause did not, however, mean liquidation of heroes' internal dilemmas. Some existential irresolution disappeared, for the sense of life seems to be obvious if someone sees a goal for which it is worth sacrificing life. But the question of how this patriotic way of life should be put into practice remains open. There emerges a conflict between the sense of honor, on the one hand, and treason (in Mickiewicz's *Konrad Wallenrod*) and treacherous assassination (in Słowacki's *Kordian* -- an attempt on the Tzar's life), on the other. Which way is to be chosen -- the way of perfection of spirit and of humbly awaiting the fulfillment of God's will, or the way of conspiracy and revolt? How to resolve the contradiction between the beauty of the goal one strives for and the evil and injustice inevitable on the way to its realization?

Hence the question of moral responsibility for decisions that concerned the life of more than those who made them. For instance, there is the motive of pride that has to be got rid of, as the hero of the third part of *The All Saints Eve* did in order to serve the fatherland in the light of God's truth. On the contrary, there is pride that should be preserved proudly in their heart by people who on their own responsibility -- as proposes Słowacki's late works -- force their way to the fatherland and to heaven through good and evil. For God "likes resonant flight of gigantic birds/ And does not bridle disobedient horses."

Lonely romantic heroes found the meaning of their lives. They suffer, but their suffering serves Poland. The common and noble goal allowed people of that epoch to identify with literary heroes, and provided poets with examples taken from life. In reality and in books heroes conspired, struggled and died, peaking and pining for the fatherland, and went crazy from despair after its loss.

A way of escaping from personal distress, of overcoming it, became the subordination of life to patriotic ideals. Consequently, the absolutization of patriotism required a faith, which was irrational at that time, in the resurrection of the fatherland. Only coupling these hopes with religion, with a patriotic functionalization of the Christian attitude, could sanction them. Only God (and a providential interpretation of his will) could enable Poland to enter the future map of the world as an independent state. No rational premises gave any basis or support for such hopes.

Orthodox and Heterodox

Hence, faith determined the patriotic way of thinking. This element of faith became ever more strongly dominant in the course of years of the literary activity of the romantics: not only of the conservative Krasiński, but also

- of Mickiewicz, who in his youth passed through a school of rationalism,
- of Słowacki, who, according to his own words "lost his faith" when he was young, and then returned to it abruptly, as well as
- of Seweryn Goszczyński, who to the greatest extent was infected with the idea of social revolution.

In their mature years in exile they all turned to God as a guarantee of liberty and historical justice.

It was an ardent faith, but at the same time very controversial in terms of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. It attributed to religion a very important place in the frame of national consciousness, but as if at the price of being assured that God became particularly fond of Poland, and at the price of a rather arbitrary interpretation of the model of Christ's life. This second element was particularly important because of the ethical patterns were spread in works of romantic poets. These presented Christ as a way of sacrifice, but above all as a way of action directed towards liberty and for the fatherland.

How far the ethical conceptions of the romantics, presented under the banner of the Christian faith, could depart from orthodoxy is testified in the so-called mystical writings of Juliusz Słowacki. Referring to the authority of God, to the example of Christ, to the unique rank of his own person as the one who by means of revelation knows truths of faith which are deeper than the official Church, Słowacki pushed towards the most extreme positions and changed the meaning of the basic truths of faith. In his vision of history and in the ethical codex, he introduced as of key significance the concept of evil as an inseparable attribute of all action. The progress of history is a result of revolt, of destroying that which already exists: unbending forms of matter, established laws, human death. Destruction reveals itself as liberation of the spirit from outdated forms, as a way towards new shapes of life, towards perfection. The Christian idea of the immortality of the spirit, Słowacki completed with faith in metempsychosis thanks to which the spirit works for its salvation not only in one incarnation, but in perpetual rebirths, throughout the whole extent of the existence of the earthly world, from its beginning until its end.

The ethical codex recorded by Słowacki is based on an apology of rebellious, liberating action and on a condemnation of all stagnation and quiet contemplation, as a sin of "laziness" of spirit.

As without evil, there is no progress, the truth of faith is made to sanction the beauty of evil. Imagine Baudelaire's "Flowers of Evil" irradiated with sanctity; something of this kind is to be found in King-Spirit and in other heroes of Słowacki's last works. Outstanding individuals lead the nation on a way where evil leads to the "angelization" of man, and becomes a necessary condition of perfection. We find here an apotheosis of a proud, inflexible spirit, condemned to the greatness of moral decisions and action. In this context man's greatness means ethical danger and a moral codex often inevitably contrary to the Decalogue, even if established in the name of faith and of rebirth in the spirit of a new Christianity.

Słowacki's mysticism was related to the apotheosis of the fatherland and of eminent individuals. Other Polish Romantic writers interpreted the concept of action a little differently, with less of the motivation of blood and the inescapability of evil. But the basic idea was the same in all of them: a free fatherland as a fragment of the divine plan of history, and complete subordination of the life of Poles to the service of the fatherland.

A precise realization of these moral imperatives became the next national uprising against Russia that burst out in January 1863. Since there was no Polish army, civilians took up arms and the struggles were fought exclusively in a guerilla manner. The uprising lasted for over a year, and it was an insurrection of desperados, condemned to defeat from the beginning. People fought, with a scanty hope for, and from, Europe, with a romantic faith that their death would perpetuate in Poles' hearts the thought of an independent fatherland. For in the future, as wrote Kornel Ujejski, the poet of this uprising:

When the time comes
Tomorrow as yesterday
We will turn our dust into powder

and clay into lead
And there will be fires rising from the ashes!
The last strophe

THE CONTINUITY OF A TRADITION

It was the period of Romanticism that the most eminent works of the Polish literature were written; and art and artists were of high rank. Therefore, poets of subsequent generations often reached for that epoch, looking for their own tradition and choosing various spiritual and aesthetic values from the treasure of the romantic culture. It was an unusually rich and diversified literary stream. A spectacular example of the particular preponderance of this tradition is, among others, the fact of calling the art of the fin de siecle (in Poland called Modernism) in the years 1890-1914 "Neoromanticism". How strong was the romantic vision of life and art in the Polish mind is testified also by the fact that when young artists generally revolted against the tradition and its domination over the contemporary mind, in principle Romanticism became a symbol of the cursed tradition. Polish futurists wanted to throw into the dust bin the "unfresh mummies of the mickiewiczs and the słowackis". Parodying a Polish language lesson in his famous novel *Fedrydurke*, Witold Gombrowicz tortured the image of Słowacki.

The influence of Romanticism on the artistic activity of the next generations is just one aspect of its existence in the tradition. Another much more controversial aspect, is the influence of a hierarchy of values shaped at that time in the consciousness and attitudes toward life of subsequent generations of Poles. The romantic tradition comes easily to the fore in situations when it is felt that there is a threat to the nation's existence, and its leaders want to call the nation to heroism and sacrifices for the fatherland. Hence the history and the political situation of the country determined the place of the romantic tradition in Poland. In periods of relative peace and short term stabilization this tradition was demonstratively neglected, as was the case after the defeat of the 1863/1864 uprising when people tried to focus on the economic development of the country and put aside the thought about an armed fight for its liberty. This was true later as well, when in 1918 Poland regained independence. Then Poles had to pass from the ethos of combat to one of work and reconstruction of the renewed state. The romantic tradition, which officially was highly appreciated, in reality lost its significance.

Because, however, liberation strivings never left Polish minds for long, as long as the country was enslaved its spiritual tradition was shaped above all according to romantic patterns. The most eminent example of its creative use gave is Józef Piłsudski, the most outstanding Polish commander and statesman, who is characterized as the one who revivered the Fatherland and defeated the Bolshevik army that invaded Poland in 1920.

Piłsudski came from a family which belonged to the lower class of nobility and cultivated patriotic traditions confirmed during the uprising of 1863. His own biography developed from the beginning according to the pattern of romantic literature: conspiracy at school, participation (marginal, to be sure) in an attempt on the Tzar's life and exile to Siberia, where he was heavily beaten by soldiers for taking part in a rebellion of prisoners. After his return to Poland he again engaged in conspiracy, playing a crucial role in the leadership of the clandestine Polish Socialist Party. In order to direct the labour movement into patriotic liberative action, he used references to the romantic tradition. He pointed to suitable fragments of romantic works saying that liberty of the fatherland is a necessary preliminary condition of all kinds of freedom, including the fight for workers' rights. He thus functionalized the message left by the romantics, interpreting it in the

spirit of universal justice, workers' honor, and faith in imminent victory. Romantic literature, full of slogans about struggle for justice and against violence, was easy to use in such a context.

When, however, Piłsudski acted in another milieu -- among the young intelligentsia and students -- when he saw the need of a new national uprising, and stood at the head of the Polish Legions, during World War I on the side of the Austrian army, he shaped this tradition in an entirely different way: according to models of romantic heroes, unhesitantly offering their lives for their fatherland and proudly accepting their desperate destiny. When the Legion consisted of only poorly armed volunteer Polish soldiers, dissolved in the sea of a regular alien army, when the fatherland's future destiny trembled in the balance, the strategy of shaping the soldiers' ethos according to the heroic patterns of Romanticism excellently passed the test. Piłsudski's army was an elitist heroic formation, and he himself was surrounded with a quickly growing legend of a beloved leader whose talents in matters of command may be compared to those of Napoleon and whose personality is of the calibre of the romantic King-Spirit. The figure of Piłsudski merged forever in the Polish consciousness with the romantic tradition. He became a sort of embodiment of a long sought hero who takes command of the nation and -- in spite of reasonable calculations, in spite of the world -- restores the fatherland's liberty. And so he remains in the national legend.

The years of the World War II brought once again a renaissance of the romantic tradition caused by the imposing analogies of the historical situation. After 1939 -- as a hundred years earlier -- many writers went into exile. They alluded to ancient stereotypes of poet-pilgrims, expelled from their fatherland and faithful to it till the end of their lives. In the invaded country a new generation of conspiratorial poet-soldiers naturally took over former heroic patterns.

There should be mentioned here the rather unsuccessful attempts at using the same tradition in the state propaganda imposed on Poland by the Soviet authorities after 1945. They tried to support with the romantic tradition, which was most highly esteemed in the Polish consciousness, new ideological and moral patterns, to couple romantic revolt with the Bolshevik revolution, and to present romantic ideals of universal justice as a tradition of moral principles for the new legislature. A spectacular symptom of such an usurped Romanticism was introducing a new language that was to express this tradition: concepts constituted by artificial word partnerships of the sort: "romantic realism" or "revolutionary aristocrats".

Spontaneously, on the other hand, this tradition revived after martial law was proclaimed in Poland in 1981 by general Wojciech Jaruzelski. Stylizations of martyrs for the national cause, of brave conspirators fighting against the imposed power were launched afresh; the patterns remained the same.

Recently, interest in the heroic stream of the Polish tradition, most frequently associated with Romanticism, has visibly decreased. When people think about constructing a normal state, about prosaic everyday work, there is little place for the cult of great heroes leading the nation in the name of a powerful spirit. This brings another spirit, that of looking into the art of that epoch for other values -- aesthetic values, poetic beauty and clear artistic novelty.

On the other hand, we can certainly find strange relics of the frequently revived romantic attitudes, the romantic way of thinking and the attitude towards reality which was held to be the specific features of the Polish character. They may be found in the scale of values in which patriotism and the ethos of sacrifice for the fatherland retain high positions, in conflictive attitude towards decisions of all kinds of state authorities (even if it is "our" government), and even in a tendency to unpredictable, seemingly irrational behavior during some elections.

<div align="center">

Chapter X
Between Recklessness and Hope

Stanisława Grabska

</div>

Hope and Optimism

Recklessness can be an effect of excessive care by parents or educators, and later by institutions. If a child or adult knows that someone always will rescue him or her from oppression, they do not have to care about the consequences of their actions or negligences. But recklessness also happens to be a form of despair, when all ways seem to be shut and it is not worth while taking care about anything. Such recklessness of despair manifests itself through drunkenness or drug abuse, through passivity or escape. Despair can also express itself through aggression. Recklessness is a reaction to desperate situations which is proper to people who are rather kind-hearted and serene by nature, inclined not to aggression, but rather to escape and to seek oblivion. These features depend on genes and on childhood rearing.

Irrespective, however, of whether recklessness is an effect of excessive care or of lack of prospective, it is always contrary to hope. For hope means expecting the good that we do not yet see, but is firmly expected at the end of a certain path. It is defined thus by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans. Hence, hope is a motor of action and makes what I do and how I do it in no way indifferent. Hope makes us strive at something with patience and persistence.

The attitude of hope does not always have a religious source. It can be, for instance, trust in humans and in the good that is in them; it can be also a sense of one's own strength.

From the attitude of hope there comes courage for life and for initiating new and difficult affairs. We may say that, on the one hand, it is accompanied by a spirit of adventure and of testing oneself in adventures. On the other hand, it is a source of patient perseverance in difficulties and in ordinary everyday reality, when one has to survive and save something -- in spite of everything.

The spirit of adventure which I would connect to the hope of the good in people used to calculating chances, may seem to be reckless, for it is a romantic spirit of measuring one's strength against objectives. But, as a matter of fact, there is no recklessness when someone looking for adventures prepares for them and undertakes them responsibly. Classical recklessness consists in lack of responsibility for what we do and its consequences. Even adventures, if lived recklessly, presume some thoughtlessness and laziness in the stage of preparations. Recklessness is an irresponsible and intrinsically passive optimism, looking for pleasant experiences and not for deeds. It can also be a result of pessimism seeking oblivion in such experiences. In attitudes of recklessness optimism prevails, whereas hope itself is a source of optimism.

We can say, therefore, that various forms of optimism in human attitudes situate themselves between recklessness and hope. They allow one to accept responsibility and to preserve optimism even in seemingly hopeless situations.

There exists, certainly, still another form of optimism, typical of stable and well organized societies in which the chances for success can be calculated. In such societies optimism may be based on adaptation to calculations and may thus combine passivity with industriousness and responsibility within the frame work determined by the stability of a given society. I think here in particular of the bourgeois consumer style of life characteristic of Western Europe. But many people there break away from this stabilization, for while calculation ensures the feeling of safety,

it gives no hope of any new good. Hence there emerge rebellious movements as well as escape under the impulse of despair, for instance in drug addiction. But there is also positive movement looking for sources of hope, be it in idealistic engagement on behalf of neighbors or in various religious commitments.

Poland lies in that part of Europe that did not taste stabilization. Every generation here lost its wealth and close relatives in wars, partitions, or invasions. The question here then concerns the various forms of optimism and how they include recklessness and hope?

Recklessness

Jokes, like proverbs, unveil the psyche of the society which creates them. Let us take a closer look at two Polish jokes. One of them is from the time of "Solidarity" when it was not sure if the "big brother" would not intervene. It goes like this: "God sent his angel ordering him to see what is going on earth. The angel returns and reports: "On the West, they fear and arm, on the East, they fear and arm, and in Poland, they neither fear nor arm". "Oh, dear", says God, "they count on me again!"

Another joke if from the middle of the economic crisis of the eighties. There are two ways out of the crisis: the normal and the miraculous. The normal solution would mean that Our Lady would descend from heaven and fix everything in Poland, and the miraculous would consist in the fact that we begin to work and cope with our problems ourselves.

Both jokes criticize recklessness and waiting for God's excessive care. At the same time, the second joke constitutes an appeal to get to work and to count on our own forces. The first shows Polish pride from the fact that we do not fear, for when it comes to armaments things did not depend on us, living in the framework of the Warsaw Treaty. Let us, however, go back to the second joke and to its critique of lack of work. This lack was an effect of both the bad system of insufficient pay and of the bad organization of labor as a result. Firstly, there was no profit from good work, and secondly, the effects of work, even if it was good, were wasted through bad organization. This is a phenomenon common to all countries with post-socialist economic systems. Let us add that Poland passed to this system from an economy based mainly on agriculture and that it did not have sufficient experience of capitalist industrial economy as had Czechoslovakia or Germany. The labor culture survived in Poland on private country farms. Unfortunately farmers, limited in their aspirations, are destroyed by alcoholism which was carelessly promoted by the state, and later also by private tradesmen. Alcohol is accessible when other wares are absent from the market or too expensive. Moreover, local bureaucratic cliques settle many affairs by means of "wetting the bargain". Restrictions on the growth of the existing economy made it unproductive to care about this growth and removed the economic grounds for human hope for a better life. Drunkenness and bad work are signs of despair and of lost hope for achieving something better.

On the other hand, reckless counting on God's intervention has old roots in the Polish mysticism, deprived, however, of its motor. We will return to this motive again.

The economic recklessness of socialist authorities (again, not only in Poland) should also be noted. Totalitarianism ensured in this domain almost complete irresponsibility on the part of those who shared power, who were politically "ours". We may say that in the system of the so-called real socialism whoever had power had money, given to him as a privilege and not based on work -- hence the prodigal lifestyle of the groups in power. Companies were not evaluated according to their profitability, but on the basis of fulfilling centrally designed plans -- hence a recklessness in the whole economic life. No manager lost his job because of bad management, if only he was

politically obedient. So this problem belonged not to features characteristic of Poles, but to traits distinctive of socialism. As a result the whole nation had to wrestle with the effects of the system in the form of an economic breakdown and horrible indebtedness. We almost needed a miracle here to be successful. It had, however, to be a miracle of hope and be translated into responsible and hopeful economic action. In this miracle were traditions that grew from struggles of a different type than that for economic success.

The Knight's Responsibility for the Nation

An essential element of the Polish educational tradition is that of knighthood. It lives still, for it is a tradition of a strictly defensive fight -- for your liberty and ours. Such a type of knighthood produced the history of our nation, similar in this regard to the history of our neighbors in that part of Europe, composed of little states incessantly tormented by great powers: Germany, Austria, Turkey, Russia. Defensive wars require a peculiar optimism and courage, especially when they were fought with poor resources against great superpowers. The hope of victory consists here in faith in the victory of the right cause that is expected to result both from determination and from the braveness of its defenders, as well as from God's help. The biblical scheme of wars fought by Israel, trusting in God's help, is almost exactly repeated in the history of Poland.

The first battle hymn of Polish knights was "The Mother of God" (*Bogurodzica*). At the time of the Swedish invasion the defense of our country was initiated by the defense of the Pauline cloister on Jasna Góra ("The Bright Hill") in Częstochowa. At the time of the partition of Poland between three political powers there was composed the hymn "O, God, who through so many centuries" (*Boże, coś Polskę*).

Knightly hope is not a passive waiting for Godot -- it is an invigorating hope, plunging right into the whirl of the struggle for the good that is awaited with hope. It combines counting on God with a conviction that God counts on our braveness.

Similarly as in the history of Israel, so in the history of Poland this counting on the victory of the good cause over the bad did not always prove efficient. After Poland's partitions we lost one uprising after another. After each uprising came the time of considering the defeat and of looking for its causes. It was also the time of persecutions, arrests, confiscation of manors, and the destruction of economic treasures and those of the national culture.

After the November uprising of 1831 Polish emigrants expressed their hope in great Romantic poetry that acquired in Poland the status of a fight for national liberty. Faith remained the source of hope in spite of defeat. Zygmunt Krasiński, catastrophic and profetically predicting socialist totalitarianism, proclaims in his "Non-Divine Comedy" (*Nieboska komedia*) the final victory of Christ. Adam Mickiewicz in his *Books of the Polish Nation and Pilgrimage* (*Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*) expressed his standpoint of the Polish messianism and claimed that through spiritual and moral victory we shall regain our free fatherland.

Polish messianism was born of the search for the meaning of the defeat. It saw in Poland the Christ of Nations and the New Israel, destined to awake the conscience of nations. In its extreme form it was heterodox in regard to the Church and naively exalted. But it had biblical sources. Certainly several hundred years of coexistence of the Polish and the Jewish nations, also profoundly messianic, on the same land was not without influence. In its less extreme and more orthodox form, the messianism of the Romantic poetry formed many generations that either accepted or disputed it, but could not pass it over. In this spirit of "hope against hope" and of

homage to those who lose were later written such works as Orzeszkowa's *Gloria victis* or *The Homeless* (*Ludzie bezdomni*) by Żeromski.

In Poland, after each uprising the burden of maintaining the economic and cultural status rested to a great extent on women, as their fathers and husbands either were killed or had to emigrate. These women generated a new type of optimism and hope in regard to their knightly and Romantic form -- an optimism to persist in spite of everything and to save by means of hard work what still could be saved. What remained to be saved was first of all economic existence itself seriously threatened by various confiscations and by the policies of the invaders. These conditions bred a type of women -- workers and managers -- with a type of hope connected with performing duties. This hope communicated to children and youth who had to be educated for the future difficult struggle for independence, for work and persistence. The educational work engaged the whole society. There emerged various forms of clandestine education, pursued by the invading authorities. Various official and clandestine religious orders were founded to care for education, some of them of social elites, others of the poorest. Orphanages were created, such as those founded by Edmund Bojanowski in Great Poland or open-air kindergartens, combining education with playing in the open.

An interesting form of action was the religious orders without special habits, including factory sisters, evangelizing milieus of industrial workers, whose work could be compared with the "worker Priests" in France. Activities of this type lasted through the whole period of enslavement, and became ever more intense.

After the January uprising of 1863 there emerged a movement of so-called "organic work" (*praca organiczna*). On one hand, it took economic affairs into our own Polish hands, be it in industry or in agriculture. Witness to this hope as related to economic activity is found in books as *The Doll* (*Lalka*) by Bolesław Prus. It has the marvelously romantic figure of old Rzecki, dreaming during his everyday work in a store about a war of liberation and the tragic character of the young merchant, Wokulski, perishing in the friction between the new intelligentsia and the prejudices of the old-style landowners. Such a direction of work is found also in the novel *On the Shores of Niemen* (*Nad Niemnem*) by Eliza Orzeszkowa. In this novel the organic work of the youth consists not only in maintaining manors in Polish hands, but in attempts to reach villages. There emerges a great movement of members of the intelligentsia going to simple folk for education and economic actions, making people aware of possibilities for improving the peasants' situation by means of cooperatives, and of various forms of mutual aid and self-organization. In this "fundamental work" (*praca u podstaw*) were engaged teachers (cf. a short-story *The Athlete* (*Siłaczka*) by Stefan Żeromski), priests, physicians and social and political activists. Descriptions of this work is found in the above mentioned literature of the period: novels and poems by Prus, Reymont, Orzeszkowa, Rodziewiczówna, Konopnicka and Żeromski.

A somewhat different type of literature is represented by Sienkiewicz's books, the most famous of which refers to the knightly ethos. Let us have a closer look at the heroes in this literature. In Orzeszkowa's *On the Shores of Niemen* the heroes were both the insurrectionists of 1863 and young "positivists" (promoter of "organic work"). They took up the hope of the former group and made conscious reference to their legend, in order to strive towards the same goal by other means. These means were fraternization of the landowner strata with the peasants, uniting these two social groups in work in the country and for the country. Here Polish positivism turns out to be a certain kind of Romanticism. Doctor Judym from Żeromski's novel *The Homeless* became a proverbial example of a social activist who sacrifices everything, even personal happiness, to the ideal of service to those socially most wronged. Żeromski's heroes are tragic, yet

they live from hope. More humor and merriment are found in Orzeszkowa. Characters created by Maria Rodziewiczówna are in turn people of hard work who defend through this work their property, above all their land that invasive authorities want to confiscate, and their faith. Such is Marek Czertwan from *Dewajtis*. More joyful are the heroes of *The Forester's Summer* (*Lato leśnych ludzi*) whose existence in the forest brings some foretaste of later scouting.

If the ethos of positive work -- as it was expressed in the literature -- was intrinsically Romantic in Sienkiewicz's novels, their return to the knightly ethos is not at odds with that of positivism, even if it suggested somehow a thought of armed action. We may say that from Sienkiewicz's novels, written "to strengthen hearts", grew the Polish armed action during World War I.

One of Sienkiewicz's heroes, who were favorites of the youth, is Andrzej Kmicic from *The Deluge* (*Potop*), a brawler and a bully, extremely reckless but wildly brave at the same time. In the course of action he changes into a patriot and a marvelous knight. He still risks, but is loving and brave; he is responsible, yet embodies a sense of adventure, be it in reckless quarrels or in romantic patriotic action. Popularity is decided not by virtues alone, but rather by a combination of values and vices, of heroism with carelessness, or even with wildness or cruelty in some situations, while in other circumstances the hero becomes sentimental and mild. Through this combination of vices and virtues Kmicic is an all too human hero, accessible as a model to be followed.

A similar change in the course of the action of a whole trilogy (*By Fire and Sword*; *Ogniem i mieczem*, *The Deluge*; *Potop*, and *Mr. Wołodyjowski*; *Pan Wołodyjowski*) is undergone by Mr. Zagłoba who is very much liked by adults. Initially a drunkard and a coward, clinging to everyone who offers him wine or mead, he transforms into an honest citizen without losing anything of his colorful comic character. He is a fox known for his subterfuges and happens to be a hero only out of necessity and for company. But it is this company of the soldiers of the Polish Republic that urges the old Zagłoba to be also a hero, and to become a patriot. He is a symbol of someone who can find a way out of every oppression, who never loses hope for a solution.

Another hero, a child hero, is Staś Tarkowski from *On the Desert and in Wilderness* (*W pustyni i w puszczy*). Staś, kidnapped in Egypt by Bedouins together with his little girl companion, turns out to be a brave defender of the little Nel and extricates himself victoriously from dozens of adventures. He embodies the type of a knight living in contemporary conditions. A kind of summary of the message of this book is the saying of a little African boy: "Kali fear, but Kali go". Similarly, Staś overcomes fear and saves himself and Nel. Sienkiewicz expresses in all his novels a conviction that for someone who believes in victory there are no infeasible tasks and no hopeless situations. This hope gains strictly Christian features in his novel *Quo vadis*, whose hero believes till the end that God can save his beloved girl even from a Roman arena, and his faith is not disappointed. This faith, besides, reaches further and deeper than life itself. It is a source of the conversion of people as mean as was Chilon Chilonides, a denouncer at the beginning of the roman era. He was a source of perseverance for thousands of martyrs whose victory brings fruits on the other side of their lives, and also of history -- through the conversion of Rome.

The Christian tradition met with the new positivist, and then socialist, ideals. This mutual penetration of attitudes -- extremely opposite on Western Europe -- seems characteristic of our country. Positivistic hopes in education and science were in many authors bound with the Christian tradition, as for instance in Bolesław Prus's *Suffragettes* (*Emancypantki*). Our Socialists happened to be more agnostics than enemies of God. Often they became Christians, as did many nuns from Laski who came from Socialist, often Jewish, milieus. After converting to Christianity they pursued the realization of the same ideals in a Franciscan order founded by the blind mother

Czacka to serve the sightless. The following is an illustration of this proximity of Christian and socialist ideals.

My father, Prof. Stanisław Grabski, was in his youth a Socialist and one of the founders of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). Even before its formal foundation he worked among Poles in Germany, where he edited a Socialist periodical. He then collaborated with a future famous writer, Stanisław Przybyszewski, who liked to quote the Bible. For this reason my father was summoned to Berlin for a meeting with leaders of the German Socialist Party who accused him of introducing religion to a socialist magazine. My father replied that even if he is himself an agnostic, he will not take God away from his compatriots, for together with their faith that could deprive them of their moral code. For Poles do not have two policemen each in their souls as Germans do -- they need faith, and not only paragraphs of law. An old German activist, Wilhelm Liebknecht, recalling his knowledge of Poles dating from the 1848 Springtide of Nations, admitted that my father was right.

At the end of the XIXth and at the beginning of the XXth century there was a revival in our country of the traditions of knighthood. National hopes bound themselves anew to the idea of armed action, linked with a dream of a great liberative war of nations which was prayed for and expected. Among the youth there emerged gymnastic associations (*Falcons*) preparing their members for military actions. Then riflemen's groups were found as an immediate germ of the Polish army. The Polish scouts' movement (*harcerstwo*) emerged as well as an educational youth movement. It drew directly upon such knightly traditions such as the story of the legendary knight Zawisza the Black from the XIVth century, who embodied bravery, honor and reliability. There was a saying that you can relay on a Scout as on Zawisza.

Scout optimism consisted in developing bravery, resourcefulness, love of nature and adventure in the middle of nature, as well as in developing group solidarity in conditions of camp life. It is an optimism of youth and friendship. The hope entertained by Scouts is that of spreading good by means of their own common efforts. We should point here to a certain difference between the genesis of the Polish and of the English scouting. We did not have colonial traditions of ruling others. Our scouting emerged before the first World War and its most important hope was that of regaining the country's independence. The knightly element was directed here towards defense and the fight "for your freedom and ours", for freedom of all enslaved nations. In the twenties between the wars in our scouting there prevailed the element of play and adventure in the perspective of preparation for normal work in a normal, independent state. But this did not mean a disappearance of the knightly ethos. All too fresh were the memories of older generations who participated in struggles for the country's independence, and who often were killed in these struggles. Too real -- and increasingly imminent -- was the prospect of war with the Nazi Germany. Optimism, typical and normal for young people living in a normal country, still was related to readiness for defense and to awareness of a real threat.

A particular chapter in the history of Polish scouting is the story of its struggle during the second World War, starting with heroic death of a group of scouts resisting the German invasion in Katowice. In the underground work scouting -- the so-called Grey Squads (*Szare Szeregi*) -- gathered elder children and youth who because of their age were not able to join the National Army, and formed Scouts' squads directly incorporated into the military structures of the Army. Young participants acted in the frame of the so-called little sabotage, while their elder colleagues formed squads for armed actions. Grey Squads became one more national legend.

Education

In the twenties between the wars still another symptom of hope can be identified; this was a movement of "peasants" emancipation. The issue at stake here was economic and political emancipation, political claims to grant to peasant organizations the role of co-governor of the country, as well as their promotion through acquiring education. A symbol of this first trend became a great peasant leader, Wincenty Witos, from the village Wierzchosławice. He was the first peasant minister in a democratic government. Arrested and imprisoned in the period of military governance, after leaving prison he emigrated and lived in Czechoslovakia. But he still directed the peasant movement in a spirit of responsibility for his country. At the same time, he was a landholder cultivating his farm when present in Poland, to which he returned just before the outbreak of the second World War.

The popular university in Gacie, led by the Solarz couple, was a symbol of the desire of knowledge This university did not provide academic knowledge, but taught wisdom in many matters essential for orientation in life; it taught how to learn and to think. A proof of this growth of the desire for knowledge and of the appreciation of the value of science was the large number at that time of scientists and students of peasant origin.

Generally speaking, the twenties between the wars brought a cooling of the heroic and patriotic temperature and a normalization of human attitudes and strivings. To a certain extent it also brought secularization of a large part of the intelligentsia. In religiosity there appeared some dangerous trends. On the one hand, in certain youth movements there occurred a national chauvinism, related to the influence of Fascist ideas. This colored the religiosity of youth with an aggressive nationalism. Among elder generations, often hesitant about this chauvinistic understanding of Catholicism, there appeared the tendency to treat religion as a purely individual and private matter, just as in Western of Europe.

At the same time, however, there were vital elite groups promoting a religious renaissance, a deepened spirituality and an ethics open to all neighbors. We should mention here the "Renaissance" movement (*Odrodzenie*) from which stemmed future founders of the *Universal Weekly*(*Tygodnik Powszechny*), students' organizations such as "Juventus Christiana", Catholic Action, circles related to the above mentioned Laski center. However, everyday human hopes were focused on such more practical matters, as, for instance, finding a job in the period of crisis and unemployment.

The educational ideals of that time were shaped, on the one hand, by the state, propagating the so-called state-creating education, and, on the other, by opposition movements. Among them, Fascist-oriented movements brought not so much hope as various phobias and fears, the unique remedy against which should be a rod of iron rule. Yet both Peasant and Socialist movements, also in opposition to the government, brought a culture of hope based on the idea of cooperation in striving towards democracy and social justice. The third educative power was the religious teaching orders, running schools (scarce for boys and numerous for girls).

In the frame work of leftist movements is doctor Janusz Korczak, a great educator of poor Jewish and Polish children. Doctor Korczak's educative optimism consisted in trust in children, in respecting them as persons and and treating them seriously as partners worthy of attention, and in equal respect for dignity of both every adult and every child. Korczak thought that children just like adults need not only respect, but love. He also appreciated the need of looking for God, and hence the need for a chapel in his orphanage. The essence of education was for this great doctor being together with children. He remained together with his pupils in the Warsaw ghetto and went

willingly together with them to a gas chamber, till the end supporting their hope with his presence. For hope is not always attached to something concrete that we await; more often it is based on somebody's presence -- be it the presence of God (religious hope) or of man.

Where Korczak came from the line of the Polish Jewish left, among religious educators mention should be made of Mother Urszula Ledóchowska, the founder of the Grey Ursuline sisters. Her order has in its constitutions a note about its duty to work for the expropriated. The Grey Ursulines organized orphanages in the proletarian city of Łódź, organized holiday camps, ran catechesis in Łódź, and also in the poorest Polish villages, and organized dormitories for poor girl students. The educational system of mother Urszula was based on Christian faith, understood in a cheerful way. It accentuated God's love of man, shown also in the love that the Lord Jesus had for children. Mother Ledóchowska propagated the so-called Eucharistic crusade whose goal was to bring children closer to the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist and education for the apostolate. The term "crusade" reveals the existence in this apostolic formation of a certain knightly element, transformed, however, into struggle with one's own sin and to conquering the world for God through love rather than by arms.

When we speak about the influence of religious orders on Polish optimism, we should definitely highlight the influence of the Franciscan Order, carrying the image of God who is good and merciful, and of Jesus Christ who is close to us all. The Franciscan image of God -- not severe and puritan but colorful and friendly -- lies at the source of the Polish optimism, counting always on God's forgiveness and help in every critical situation. It is no coincidence that in the Polish lands there emerged the cult of Divine Mercy, thanks to the spiritual experiences of a poor nun, sister Faustyna. This spread quickly during the second World War, when there was such need to put one's hope in God.

The period of the second World War, being a tragic time of confrontation with the two superpowers of that time, Nazi Germany and Stalinist Soviet Union, brought intensification of heroic attitudes. These included the cultivation of hope against hope, in spite of abandonment and weakness. This hope was based solely on the conviction that every evil has to fail, and that good and justice have to win. It was therefore worth even dying in battle to contribute to this victory. At that time, heroism required multiple actions: death from the invaders' hands was threatened for teaching Polish children, for hiding Jews, or even for slaughtering a pig without permission or for delivering products from the country to the town. Heroism was in order to survive German concentration camps, deportation to the East and Soviet labor camps. Everybody -- not only soldiers -- had to be a hero. This generated a peculiar optimism of bravery as well as a particular kind of humor. Religious hope gained a political dimension -- hope of liberation and hope for God's help in the struggle "for your liberty and ours".

The climax and symbol of this struggle became the Warsaw uprising. It was directed against Germans, but at the same time with the idea of taking Warsaw under control before the Russians would be able to do so. Leaders of the Warsaw uprising wanted to greet the Soviets as allies, but in a free Poland by free authorities. The Soviet army allowed the uprising to be crushed by Germans because it was, as a matter of fact, directed against both the departing and the incoming occupation. Hence its defeat was double, accompanied in addition by lack of any action of the allies from the West. It was a moment when all hopes of the nation might have collapsed as it was felt that the nation had been sold by its allies to a new invader. Yet hope and the will to persist did not fail. They had to operate in post-war Poland in conditions of enslavement by the mighty neighbor with its associates in the Polish Communist party that formed the Polish apparatus of

power. How did these conditions shape the education of the youth and what elements of hope did it carry, on one hand, of an optimism of recklessness, and on the other, of an optimism of hope?

The state Socialist education taught obedience to the ideology and to the government, execution of precisely defined tasks, and political passivity. Hence, it educated towards recklessness, especially as the only thing left for personal choice was private play on the margins of social life. At the same time, people were not responsible for any broader matters. They had only to watch out not to incur the displeasure of their leaders, but were not to worry about the effects of their action. Moreover, youth magazines encouraged sexual liberty, recklessness and irresponsibility in this domain of life. This system, implemented in schools and youth organizations directed by the party and state authorities, had also another feature: like all kinds of indoctrination and manipulation it was horribly boring. It could not, therefore, be taken seriously by young people, especially when they discovered that it was based on deceptive information. It urged some of them to escape into play, into youthful subcultures, into various escapist movements allowing one to go away from society, more often into alcoholism and, from a certain time, into drug addiction. Finally, groups that were rather elitist in terms of quality, and yet recruited their members from all social layers, discovered their hope of political and social engagement in political opposition or in the opportunity for religious engagement in various ecclesiastical groups and organizations.

Mass religious education, based on religion classes, had also its shortcomings. Above all these lessons, held in buildings belonging to the Church, sometimes in difficult conditions, gathered classes too numerous to allow individualized education. Nevertheless, they provided basic information, not only from theological and ethical domains, but also about the history of the church in Poland and about the Polish Christian tradition. Often this completed what was passed over in silence in official education or corrected false images and information presented by state schools.

Basic Christian education, however, was the domain of families and of various pastoral groups gathering students, young workers, workers and farmers in general, or various movements, such as the neo-catechumenate, the Movement of Rebirth in the Holy Spirit, and "oasis" groups, entirely of Polish origin, known also as the "Light-Life" movement. In the pedagogy of this movement we find a synthesis of the experiences of Catholic Action, the French JOC (Young Catholic Workers) and the JEC (Young Catholic Students) movements, combined with elements of the Movement of Rebirth in the Holy Spirit and of various liturgical and biblical movements. The biblical accent was particularly strong. The "Light-Life" movement prepares lay men and women to participate actively in the life of the Church. It also has its family branch, called "Family Oases". Family movements in the Church had remarkable significance for resistance against totalitarian education of all kinds. Apart from "Family Oases" there existed "Family of Families", "Covenant of Families", and the like. In all these little groups hope is based on the Gospel, and the young and families draw serenity and joy from friendship which they express in hymns and songs sung with accompaniment of guitars.

John Paul Ii and the Renewal of Hope

An immense role in awakening hope has been played in Poland by John Paul II, his journeys to his country and his teachings, expressed both in his homilies preached in Poland and in his encyclicals. The very fact of choosing a Pole as pope became a source of hope. Rome had not always supported the cause of Polish liberty and uprisings had even been condemned. Hence, the role of a symbol of hope was played rather by the Pauline cloister on Jasna Góra in

Częstochowa and Our Lady, than by the Vatican. This time, both symbols combined and the papacy became a real support for the liberation strivings not only of this nation, but also of this whole part of the world. The very experience of encounters with the Pope, of meetings organized by spontaneous ecclesiastic services formed by people (not by the Communist police which had to withdraw to the second tier), gave the society a sense of strength and self-organization, a breath of freedom. It gave a feeling of not being abandoned and powerless as a society. Papal teaching directed the nation towards Jesus Christ, enabled a deepening of faith, always with practical references to life and its values. The Pope taught to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit that has been given to us; not to wait passively for a miracle, but to believe in the miracle in us. This is the power of the Holy Spirit given to us for defense of ethical values and human rights, both social and political. The first journey of John Paul II to Poland was one of the impulses that stimulated the origin of the "Solidarity" movement.

The optimism of "Solidarity" was the difficult optimism of a fight with non-violent methods in escaping from the persisting totalitarian system. It expressed itself in the first strike in the Gdańsk shipyard through people's determination in spite of being threatened with a possible attack by police forces, that is, in spite of a threat to the strikers' life. We should draw our attention to how great a factor of optimism and hope was faith in God's protection and presence. Holy masses celebrated during the strike were not commonplace gestures, but experiences of God's presence in an extreme situation -- an expression of faith that God is among his people and joins them in the face of even the greatest threats. This hope was not just counting upon God to settle in a miraculous way all Polish affairs, but faith in the power that he gives and that is present in human hearts.

This hope was not extinguished during martial law; those who were confined and those who were just shocked by the events gathered around this hope that comes from faith. This allowed the society to organize immediately, in spite of prohibitions, to help the confined and to create various forms of social life. The Church provided in most cases support for these actions. There were at that time many conversions of non-believers -- in spite of external defeat.

It was this optimism of hope and persistence in people's strivings and chosen values that was strengthened by the subsequent papal journeys and by the Pope's teaching on moral victory and on standing firmly on the frontier of dialogue even if the adversary refuses to go. This persistence in remaining on the border of dialogue was based on a hope that there is a basic good in man that can open the possibility of dialogue in a certain moment.

Without understanding the political history of our country it is not possible to understand this mixture of recklessness and serious, the stubborn hope in our social life, as well as the basic patterns of hope shown in our literature and present in our education. We should, however, pay attention to some sociological data. As an example, let us mention that, in our family life, we left the model of a peasant family. The new cities and industrial quarters are inhabited by people who came from villages and live in cities for a maximum of the second or the third generation. The Polish peasant has a strong sense of his own dignity, strong family ties, a great dynamism, and also remains strongly bound with the Church.

These bonds with the Church were inherited by the newly emerging workers' groups, such as those in Nowa Huta near Cracow, the flag steel-works of the Stalinist times. Hence in such centers, planned as a mainstay of Communism, the struggle for the right to construct a Church became a ferment of self-consciousness and resistance. Consequently, parishes became centers of independent social life and a basic element of hope.

The peasants, however, lost a lot of their dynamism. The political peasant movement was extinguished and subjected to the dictate of the Communist party. Economically, peasants were

also subjugated to the command of the state and of its various agencies by means of a monopoly in the purchasing of products and services. Nevertheless, peasants retained their private economic activity, even if limited to little farms, and hence they were one of the sources of relative economic independence which supported the people's political independence as well. There was a continuing influx of people from the country to the town, entailing taking over ideals of independence and cooperation by the stratum of young workers. It is no coincidence that in the twenties between the wars a great public figure was a peasant, Wincenty Witos, and later a worker coming from a peasant family, Lech Wałęsa.

This sociological situation conditions also a peculiar religious conservatism associated with the political openness of our nation. Postconciliar renewal was accepted by the majority of the society in a shape proposed by the bishops. Only narrow circles of intelligentsia went further in their desires for change. Yet what has been done has great significance -- including the more ecumenical and biblical model of piety as well as a special accent on God's love and mercy, replacing the catechesical methods of frightening with God's justice.

It would certainly be worth while to analyze what kind of optimism was offered through all the years to the children of families bound to the political authorities. In contact with representatives of these circles we usually observe lack of any sense of humor and an attitude of fear when confronted with the society's independence. It would be interesting to study the effects of such an attitude in family education. It may evoke a prolongation of this attitude in the children, especially where children choose the same profession, as was often the case with members of the Communist police. In other cases, children, inspired by the idealistic phraseology of their parents, became pillars of dissident movements and discovered values entirely different from those they had imbibed at home.

Another, and yet tragic space was formed by the families of alcoholics. There, it is very difficult to evoke optimistic attitudes in children who live in fear and poverty, without a smile or a sense of safety. Sometimes they find refuge in good pastoral youth groups, in the Church. More often, however, they seek escape in accidental, sometimes criminal youth groups, sometimes offering also alcohol or drugs. This is one of the greatest social dangers in our society.

A great national success was the emergence of the "Solidarity" movement, in spite of the efforts of schools and the state to deprive people of freedom in thought and action. Not only did the Trade Union emerge, however, but a whole movement of defense of human rights, together with independent youth organizations, new scouting and other similar groupings. Their emergence supported hope for gaining the good by means of non-violent methods.

A testimony of despair (and thus of educational loss), on the other hand, is drunkenness, drug addiction, and to some extent also the fact that a large part of youth leaves for abroad. The latter phenomenon is, besides, not univocal. It is a proof of lack of hope for changes in our country, rather than of hope for the good in general, even if it is sought in other lands. It is rather a change in the space of hope. Young people who went abroad to improve their conditions of life or to live in a free world ceased to count on changes that would happen in our country in a predictable time. We can and should understand this for everyone has a right to such a decision. But the mass character of this phenomenon indicated a certain atmosphere of hopelessness that occurred especially in the martial law period. This atmosphere was changed, awakening hopes not so much for the reformability of the system as for its end. Education in Poland was hitherto an education for the heroism of struggle, be it armed or *non*-violent, but always involving a high price paid for the defense of basic values. It was an education forming a specific elite. This was not an intellectual elite, for it consisted of people of all levels of education and of all social strata. It was a moral and

socially engaged elite, aware of its goal, its sense of defense of values, and its readiness for action. This elite now influences a broader, sometimes a very broad circle of people.

On the other hand, difficult conditions breed individualistic egoism, the practice of closing oneself in the circle of family affairs, and yielding to attitudes of consumerist societies. In the case of the latter model, a great role has been played by the example of the West. Together with socialist education towards passivity, such patterns produce a special type of consumerism deprived of efficiency. The smartest go to the West to become prosperous and to gain wealth.

The most essential matter in our country -- also from the political point of view -- is creating a movement of families that would support one another in educating children in the spirit of national and Christian traditions, in forming their ability to love, to share with their neighbors, to defend their own dignity and the dignity of the others, the ability to hope coming from love.

Bibliography

Fąka, M., *Ziarno wrzucone w ziemię. Edmund Bojanowski (1814-1871)*, Wrocław 1988.
Glass H., *Młodzi walczą*, London 1974.
Glass H., *Życie radosne*, London 1973.
Grabski S., *Pamiętniki*, prepared for print and ed. by W. Stankiewicz, Warsaw 1989.
Kamiński A., *Kamienie na szaniec*, London 1945.
Kamiński A., *Narodziny dzielności*, Katowice 1958.
Kamiński A., *Stones for the Rampart*, London 1945.
Korczak J., *Pamiętnik*, afterword by A. Szlązakowa, Poznań 1984.
Korczak J., *Pisma wybrane*, vol. 1-4., introd. and selected by A. Lewin, Warsaw 1978.
Wałęsa L., *Droga nadziei*, Cracow 1989.
Witos W., *Moje wspomnienia*, foreword and ed. by A. Czubiński [and others], Warsaw 1981.

Chapter XI
Democracy, Civil Identity and a Critical Attitude towards Authorities

Adam Stanowski

Democracy as Independence

Between the summit of the crisis of December 1970 -- evoked by the protest of shipyard workers from the Polish Coast -- and the fall of the First Secretary of the Polish Communist Party (PZPR) Wadysław Gomułka, he said that old Poland perished through the anarchy of the nobility, and the People's Republic of Poland would perish through the anarchy of workers. Whether "worker anarchy" ruined or saved Poland is another question, but Gomułka's "diagnosis" points to certain elements inherent in the Polish culture, namely to a deep unity and affinity of attitudes characteristic of the former noblemen's Poland and of the Poland of our times. These are attitudes that Gomułka described as anarchistic, and whose significance for the Polish society and its culture is enormous. This question is related to the subject upon which this chapter will focus: In the system of values proper to the Polish political and social culture what is the place of authority understood as formed and legitimized by the subjects?

The great -- not only eminent -- speech before the U.S. Congress by Lech Wałęsa began with the words "We the people" -- in other words, "we, the nation". These are the first words of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. In that moment, he touched upon one of the deepest common denominators of the sociopolitical cultures of the United States and Poland. It is the conviction of the sovereignty of power of the nation in relation to the authorities and rulers of the state. This sovereignty was achieved gradually in the first phase of the history of the First Republic of Poland (from the middle of the XVth to the middle of the XVIIth century).

Representatives of the philosophy of law from the end of the XVIth and beginning of the XVIIth century considered Poland to be one of the European republics. That was quite accurate, irrespective of the fact that it was also a monarchy. The nature of its political system was determined among others by: free elections (election of the king by the whole nobility), factual sovereignty of the noblemen's republic, and its political structure around the sovereignty of the nation understood as nobility and assuming authority to be derived from this sovereignty. As a result Poland was placed among such nations as Venice, England, and the Netherlands.

In the development of the Polish parliamentary system the key elements were: the constitution *Neminem captivabimus*, the constitution *Nihil novi*, and King Henry's articles and in relation to them *Pacta conventa*. The constitution *Neminem captivabimus* (two acts: of 1430 and of 1433) protected landed noblemen against arrest without a court sentence (the English *Habeat corpus* stemed from 1679). The constitution *Nihil novi* (1505) constituted the legislature of the two-chamber Seym (parliament) consisting of the senate and the deputy chamber, as well as of the King. King Henry's articles from 1573 obliged the king to convoke the Seym every two years. At the same time, *Pacta conventa*, since 1773 on the occasion of every royal election, guaranteed the nation composed of *szlachta* (nobility) concrete promises made by the future king.

Jean Jacques Rousseau spoke with enthusiasm about these traits of the Polish political system. He was aware that they had realized in a way his idea of social contract even before the idea was formulated. It was -- factually and formally -- a social contract binding the state authority under

sanction of its cancellation. King Henry's articles contained a very important act named *De non praestanda oboedientia*, allowing the possibility of renouncing obedience to authorities in case it essentially violated binding laws. This act was related, on the one hand, to systemic state rules used in the Middle Ages (for instance the Hungarian "Golden Bull" from the XIIIth century). On the other hand, it is possible to find in this political doctrine an echo of the Thomistic thought, that tyrannic authority ceases to bind the conscience. From the same source stemmed the Old Polish custom entitling nobility to convoke mutinies (*rokosh*), that is camp or horsemen's seyms, known earlier in Hungary, as well as to establish confederations.

Later, in the XVIIIth century, these tendencies were expressed even more radically in the ideology of the Bar Confederacy (1768), established in opposition to the policy of King Stanisław August Poniatowski as too compromising towards Russia, and in order to strengthen the position of the Catholic Church in Poland in relation to the Orthodox and the Protestants. The popularity gained after 1980 by the hymn of the Bar confederates: "We shall never be allies to kings" (*Nigdy z królami nie będziem w aliansach*) proves how long-lasting is the base of the society, how far-reaching are the roots of contemporary striving towards liberty, and how deeply rooted is opposition to tyranny.

The matter of the nation's sovereignty combined with the cause of equality: to whom did the principle of equality pertain? The sovereignty and equality of the noblemen's nation was rather ideological than factual. This community comprised both magnates, owners of hundreds of villages and of several towns, and landowners owning several villages and a large manorial farm, as well as yeomen who in terms of their possessions did not differ from peasants. Moreover, it included even *szlachta* members deprived of any land, even if they were not always poor. It was a large mass of people. Historians and demographers dispute what percent of the Polish population constituted *szlachta* at that time. Most often they mention numbers oscillating around 10 percent. The number may have been smaller or greater; in any case, it was several times greater than in other European countries. Their number was comparable to the number of people entitled to vote in England on the eve of the first World War.

We have to realize that it was a democratic society not only with regard to the sovereign power of the society, but also with regard to the scope of its competences, clearly delimited by law, and because of the range of competences of the elected bodies. This process went on later to include other social layers. It was a process of widening rights through broadening the notion of citizenship.

At the beginning it was a postulate of more mature Polish liberation movements; later, since the restitution of the Polish state in 1918, it became a reality. It was a process of endowing with civil rights peasants and workers who were incorporated into the notion of the nation in the XIXth and XXth centuries. The process of including peasants in civil society is older; concerning workers the process was initiated in the second half of the XIXth century.

Related to the problem of the sovereignty of the nation there was a complex of fear of *abolutum dominium* (the absolutist state), as a threat to the Polish "golden liberties" that must be defended incessantly and with utmost vigilance. In the course of the history of the First Polish Republic (till its partition at the end of the XVIIIth century) the ideology of *absolutum dominium* had no considerable influence in Polish society. It had no influence later when the struggle for liberty became the object of the actions of Polish liberation and democratic movements.

One characteristic detail suggests analogies between the situation of Poland in that distant epoch and that in the United States of America, where possessing and wearing weapons was a sign

of liberty. In Poland it was a saber worn by the side that distinguished noblemen from the rest of the population. The Polish noblemen's democracy was supported by the conception of maintaining a balance between the society and its ruler also in the military domain. It was understood that this balance of power must be maintained lest liberty be lost.

Two Visions of Polish History

With this problem was connected a matter that dominated the whole XIXth century, namely the existence of two visions of the Polish history: one Romantic (more precisely -- messianic) and the other positivistic, propagated by the Cracovian school of history (the so called *stańczykowcy*). The first vision was most fully expressed in *The Books of the Polish Nation and Pilgrimage* (*Księgi narodu i pielgrzymstwa polskiego*) by Adam Mickiewicz. Here is found the idea proclaiming that Poland was destroyed by its mean neighbors (Russia, Prussia, and Austria) because it was too good. Only Poland was faithful to the cause of liberty -- that is why it was destroyed by enemies of freedom. Poland was an innocent victim and hence there will be no restitution of moral order of European inter-state relations until Poland regains its state.

The second vision, represented by the Cracovian historical school from the XIXth century, claimed that Poland fell because, due to an excess of anarchy and egoism, it could not support a strong state. This was its "original sin" that caused it to be removed from the map of Europe.

Order, discipline and a strong state to support these were never values particularly appreciated in Poland. In any case, they were sacrificed to the cause of liberty. There is a certain sympathy of historians and of the Polish historical tradition for Stefan Batory (1533-1586), prince of Transylvania, and from 1576 king of Poland, who was a partisan of strong power and an army reformer. Jan Zamoyski (1542-1605) too was a strong figure of Polish policy of the XVIth century who introduced Stefan Batory to the Polish throne. He aimed to strengthen the royal power, and at the same time attempted, with help of the middle *szlachta*, to break domination by the magnate families. Despite this, the idea of "golden liberties," as they were called in the time of the noblemen's Poland, prevailed.

There has been constant and absolute hostility of public opinion in modern Poland towards aristocratic institutions that introduced a division within the "noblemen's nation" that exerted sovereignty towards the authorities. In the XVIIIth and in the XIXth century this whole attitude and stable system of values was shaped by defense against the threat to Polish sovereignty from Poland's bad neighbors states under absolutistic (today we would say totalitarian) rule that was short on freedom. Later the struggle with the invasive absolutistic states that swallowed the Polish state and enslaved its citizens was also a decisive influence.

Regarding the category of "citizen" there is some analogy between the Polish notion of a citizen (*obywatel*) and the term *citoyen* as understood in France. Recently the difference has become clear between being a citizen of a state and a subject, that is, an instrument that performs its task in total dependence on the state which is its owner and authoritatively decides about its actions and destiny. In confrontation with absolutistic states the habitants felt sharply that they are only subjects, whereas until Poland's partition we were citizens, that is, full-fledged participants of a sovereign national community.

In 1976, when our country began discussions about changes in the constitution of the Polish People's Republic, one of the proposed changes, suggested by the central authorities of the Polish Communist Party (PZPR), would clearly state that fulfillment of duties is a condition of enjoying civil rights. The protest aroused by this proposal was so violent and common (among others also

the official authorities of the Catholic Church in Poland participated in this protest) that the mentioned amendment was withdrawn as one of a very few proposals cancelled.

Combining civil rights and duties is justified, but only when it is stated that the correlation between them is indispensable in the order of moral duties, and not when it is imposed as a legal norm. Especially when the interpretation of what belongs to civil duties remains in the hands of a totalitarian ideological state that demands from its citizens the realization of the goals of this state and puts them ahead of all duties as their fundamental obligation.

It is a moral ideal of a citizen that whoever takes part in power is also co-responsible. This conviction grew strong since the last decades of the XIXth century. Rights do not result from duties, but duties from rights. We have responsibility in proportion as we share decision making and influence. In 1976 we understood that if we do not have any influence, we also do not have any responsibility. Only since 1989 has this state of affairs begun to change: as our influence increases, there is an increase also in our civil responsibility.

Another characteristic situation took place in implanting English scouting in Poland and of formulating the Polish version of scouts' oath and law. We are not always aware that in the English text, whose author was Baden Powell, both in the oath and in the first article of the law there is a passage about a duty to "be loyal" towards the king. So first, the passage refers scouts to the king, and secondly, it urges them to "be loyal" (a word that is not easily translatable into Polish). In the Polish version of the scout oath nothing is said about the king (for what monarch would it mean?), but there is also nothing about loyalty or fidelity. Instead, the text speaks about service. Scouts are to "serve the Fatherland and to fulfill conscientiously their duties".

Responsible Service of the Country

To "serve the Fatherland" means certainly more than to "be loyal", and Fatherland is something more than state and state authorities. Service is something more than loyalty; and at the same time something less. For as a citizen serving voluntarily my Fatherland, I have the right not only to have my own views, but even to show overt objection if authorities of my state order me to act against my conscience. It is my civil right and my civil duty.

Such a conception of service to the country is very close to the ideology of the American constitution with its right to objection against authorities, to civil disobedience. This right is deeply rooted in the Polish culture and has been observed at least since the XVIth century.

After regaining independence in Poland there was an attempt to propagate a state-creating ideology, especially after 1926 when power was seized by Józef Piłsudski's group of people who actively participated in struggle for the Polish state during the first World War and in the years 1918-1921. This ideology then became an official educative doctrine and the whole system of official propaganda was oriented in this direction. The success of this ideology was very limited due to its ideal in which the state was to dominate other structures functioning in the frame of the Second Polish Republic. As with the formation of the Polish People's Republic after 1945, it contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the society as a totality of citizens, so essential for Poles. This infringement of the nation's sovereignty was especially great, for it entailed two things. First, the new authorities, like the invasive authorities functioning in former partitions and still well remembered by older generations, were perceived as alien, and therefore as a continuation of a series of external breaches of the nation's sovereignty by alien invaders. Second, it violated this sovereignty towards state authorities as a non-democratic power.

This fact of confrontation with a state that was *de facto* alien, with state authorities imposed violently by means of the armed forces of neighboring state, once again put in motion the well known Polish defensive ideology that is, to a certain extent, anti-state. The Polish People's Republic (PRL) began to be treated in the same way as formerly Poland's partitioners, that is, as an author and means of oppression. The only Marxist theorem accepted by the Polish society was that the state is a means of oppression. In this situation, society's task was to defend itself against the state, to struggle with it, first, in the name of the defense of individual rights; second, in defense of the rights of groups that were especially oppressed by that state, and third, in defense of the rights of the nation or of society as a whole.

The history of the People's Republic of Poland in its initial phase (1944-1950) may be characterized as one of the most long-lasting struggles in that part of Europe dominated by the Soviet Union in defense of such values as individual and social liberty. This resistance was broken, but, after several years of almost complete terrorization, in 1956 it emerged anew. Since June 1956 and with the great protest of Poznań workers and its support by the population of the city there were a whole series of such protests. The one in March 1968 was a protest not only of workers, but of students and supporting them the intelligentsia especially in Warsaw. These "riots", as they were named then (and they had various forms, including also "armed actions", as was the case in June 1956 and in December 1970), expressed the struggle with authorities for individual rights, for the nation's sovereignty, and for emancipation of both individuals and society. In spite of all the policy maneuvers of the Communist authorities who loosened pressure in periods of social protests (especially when workers of huge plants were involved), only to "tighten the screw" after a certain time, this struggle finally proved effective. After each of these outbursts it was no longer possible to return to the same point; something cracked, something had to change.

All this took a very dramatic shape on December 13, 1981 with the proclamation of martial law in Poland. This was directed against the majority of the society and was perceived as launching a war between state authorities and the nation. To this attack, committed in spite of the former "social agreements" between authorities and workers (that is, the society), the nation answered by declaring war on these authorities and the state that once again manifested itself as invasive and occupational.

This response is signalled by the underground publishing, in the martial law period, of a book by Edward Abramowski *Universal Conspiracy against the Government* (*Zmowa powszechna przeciw rządowi*). The title meant conspiracy against the government, and not against the state, even if Abramowski reflected a peaceful, non-violent anarchism. As a matter of fact, it was a program of liquidation of the state by ceasing to use any state institutions, including tramways, schools, courts of law, etc. The program of an alternative society, proclaimed by Zbigniew Bujak (a leading activist of the underground "Solidarity" movement) around the year 1984, was an exact repetition of Abramowski's program.

In 1983 on a visit Rome (one of the first from our group, for all the others were denied passports) the Holy Father said: "Do not forget that the state is a value for us, that state is a national value". At first I was shocked and replied that on December 13, 1981 I ceased to feel like being in my own state and felt that I am again clearly under occupation. The pope repeated once again: "But the nation needs its state. Think about it: one day you will have to take responsibility for it, for the nation needs its state."

It seems to me that we indeed reach the moment when we have to switch, that is, to stop fighting with the state and to start fighting for the state. We have to start to look for methods of regaining it for the nation, as if turning upside down the formula that authorities of the People's

Republic of Poland attempted to insert into the constitution in 1976. We should bear as much responsibility as we have liberty and influence. If so, then the more we gain such liberty and influence, the greater our responsibility. Such an understanding is, in my opinion, poorly rooted in the Polish sociopolitical culture. This suggests again a comparison of three national and cultural traditions: the Polish, the English, and the German, with their different attitudes towards liberty and social order. The greatest shift towards highlighting social order happened in the frame of the Prussian state, the greatest shift towards liberty took place in the Polish tradition. It is interesting that in Poland many look to the English political culture thinking that there the principle of "liberty and order secured by authorities" was realized in the healthiest way. This balance was present in the Polish sociopolitical thought, but was often lacking in the consciousness of the broader masses.

Chapter XII
"Humanness" in Olden Days and Today

Jadwiga Komorowska

History

Sociability, hospitality, kindness, merriment and benevolence, honest openness was called "humanness"[1] by the ancient Poles. It was expressed in socially accepted ways, forming the whole codex of social manners. Conforming to this codex was identical with manifesting good manners and humanity. It bound nobility (szlachta), which was more numerous in Poland than in other European countries, but through imitation it penetrated also other social layers. Manorial manners were held to be better and were the objct of the ambition of young generations of peasants.[2] Also in the twon a leading pattern of behavior was the noblemen's mode, and then the post-noblemen's style of life and the forms of social life associated therewith.[3] Hence, humane behavior may be recognized as a universal model of the old Polish culture functioning in the collective consciousness. It was, besides, very attractive for many visitors coming from all over the world.

Misanthropoe were not liked, nor were people who were closed and gloomy. Every opportunity was used toorganize social reunions. People banqueted, debated and prayed together; together they worked and feasted alike. Every great feast was at the same time a social reunion, and there were many feasts, both ecclesiastical and familial. Elder family members were always charged with the duty of seeing that everything happened according to binding custom.

Guests in old Polish houses were welcomed with joy. They brought news from the world, even if it was the closest neighborhood, new tales, new ideas, fresh ardor of play. Zygmunt Gloger writes that "there was among the Polish nation an old and common custom that in gentlemen's parlors as well as iin peasants' chambers on a table—in manors with a white table-cloth, in peasants' houses with a towel—there always lay bread and salt with which guests were welcomed according to ancient manners. When in noblemen's houses they ceased to keep bread on tables in the living rooms, there remained, however, special haste in bringing food just after the guest's arrival. In many villages in Mazovia and Podlasie, however, according to the old ways preserved by the fold, bread remains on the table, covered with a white or a prey home made table-cloth."[4]

Also common in Polish manors was the custom of leaving several empty places at the table for those who could arrive.

Whenever you came to a nobleman's home—writes the same author—you were always treated, something sawited you, be it a part of dinner or a nen already prepared. Fast service offered to guests reflected the order of the home, the aptness of servants, the goodness of the master of the house. If you invited someone to your house, they had the right to bring a couple of acqaintances or friends. Often in this way not a dozen, but several dozen people arrived, without any trouble or anger on the part of the host…If the hosts were short of something as for instance bedding, people slept on the straw and nobody paid any attention to the lack of comfort where there was abundance

---

[1] W. Lozinski, *Zycie polskie w dawnych wiekach* (Warsaw, 1958), 176-177.

[2] J.S. Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow w dawnej Polsce,* vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1976), 248.

[3] Ibid., 194.

[4] Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska ilustrowana*, intr J. Krzyzanowski, vol. 2 (Warsaw, 1972), 208.

of cordiality. The gates of village manors were always open according to the maxim: "A widely open gate announces to passerbyes/that it is hospitable and its guests invites".[5]

"Almmost never in Poland is a travelers refused help when in need,"[6] wrote J.J. Kausch, a German travelliing through Poland in the second half of the 18th century.

There were also cases of importunate and excessive hospitality: anecdotical gestures of taking wheels off the guests' coaches, hiding luggage, besotting coach drivers, etc., as well as compelling quite accidental voyagers to visit one's home iin spite of their reluctance and vilent ogjections. Ignacy Krasicki in *Pan Podstoli*, directed his critique against such customs. In the middle of the 17th century Golski who "stops honest gentlemen on their way, draws them back, catches them, holds, and makes them prisoners." But this sort of excessive behavior was exceptional. The majority preserved moderation in practicing the virtue of hospitality. Ludwik Krzywicki explains its commonness in the times when, instead of being sold on the marked, fruits of the soil were stocked in granaries and pantries by the fact that "thrift happened then to be prodigality, for its reandered gifts of nature to insects instead of people."[7] This factor may also have played a role, but certainly together with such other reasons as the needs of entertainment, common play, and hearing news from the world.

The old Polish hospitality was largely supported by religion. This fact is testified for instance by a popular Polish proverb: "When a guest comes, God comes." This proverb that probably emerged fro the pre-Christian Slavic culture, founded on ancient beliefs and legends about wandering gods and their mysterious messengers. The whole world of Polish customs was strictly related to relgion, and even—as was the case of festive ceremonies—with the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Guests in ancient Polish houses were a blessing and were to be welcomed with respect and generosity even if they were personal enemies of the host. Aleksander Fredro in his play "Revenge" (Zemsta) presents this feature excellently in a scene depicting the meeting of two quarreling neighbors in the house of one of them:

> Don't lead me into temptation
> My ancestors' great God and Lord
> If he came to my thresholds
> He is all under your shielf.[8]

Old Polish hospitality is nothing usually in our cultural region. As an example I will mention here only a certain Moldavian farmhouse from a Skansen museum in Bucharest. Just before its entrance, nere the gate, there is a little roofed cabin set on a post as a shelter for bread, cheese and a pot with water or milk (meindar). Peasants, going out to work in the fields, provided in this way food for persons passing through their village, tired wanderers coming from afar. Passing by a temporarily empty cabin, they were yet able to satisfy their hunger and thirst.

The Guest

---

[5] Ibid.

[6] J.J. Kausch, "Wizerunek narodu polskiego," in *Polska stanislawowska w oczach cudzoziemcow*, vol. 2, ed. W. Zawadzki (Warsaw, 1963), 307-308.

[7] Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska ilustrowana*, 208.

[8] Act IV, scene 11, verses 429-432.

In our country the most frequent guests, both in cabins and in manors, were neighbors. In the old szlachta houses there were people from the close neighborhood, but also from the far neighborhood. The noblemen's Polish Republic was a federation of neighborhoods; informal neighborly bonds were strong and of great importance from the sociological point of view.[9] In villages far away from the cities the fact of having neighbors was one of the essetnail conditions for a good frame of mind.[10] "Don't buy estates, buy neighbors"; "A good neighbor is better than a distant brother"; "A bad neighbor stands for an enemy," "Have a bad neighbor? Either win him over or escape!"—these proverbs, like many other, expressively illustrate this thesis.

A kind, friendly neighbor was always cordially welcomed and generously received. Any brother in the nobility, if he had problems staying in an inn, (which in those times were relatively few), came to the nearest manor and was cordially welcomed. It sometimes happened that such an accidental guest attached himself to the home where he felt as if he were a member of the host's family; he stayed then longer, and sometimes even for long. Lonely people, without their own families, willingly prolonged their stay, and sometimes even stayed for good as so called residents. They enjoyed the status of permanent guests, without definte duties, but usually served as master of ceremonies during larger celebrations. They also taught the youth riding, fencing, and foreign langugages.[11]

If the arrival of some guests had an official character, the welcome, the whole visit, and the farewells all were defined by numerous social converntions. Failing to conform to them might badly insult vistors. So guest should be awaited, watched for from afar, and welcomed on the threshold by the hosts in their Sunday best. Then, amidst compliments and fussy ceremonies, guests should be solemnly led into the living room. Often official guests were welcomed with speeches, to which they were obliged to answer in the same way; it was similar during the farewells.

Guests were bound not to abuse their hosts' hospitality and the privilages they were guaranteed by custom, but which might be very embarrassing for housemates. The toubles and problems of very hospitable hosts are reflected in popular proverbs: "You will be quickly fed up with frequent and long-staying guests"; "Guests and fish stink on the third day"; "Guests, do not interfere with your bosts' business, stick to yours." Yet generally these troubles and problems were patiently supported under pressure of the custom, even if sometimes it happened that "guests…unpunished ransacked the house."[12]

Social life demanded observing a certain order in paying proper reverence to everybody.

…and courtesy, I deem,
Is neither easy nor of small esteem.
Not easy, for there's more in it that's done
By clever bows and smiles for everyone.
Such manners suit a merchant better than
Old Poland or a true-born gentleman.
To all men courtsy, but to each his own.

---

[9] A. Zajaczkowski, *Glowne element kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce. Ideologia a struktury spoleczne* (Wroclaw-Warsaw-Cracow, 1961), 71.

[10] Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow*, vo. 2, 160.

[11] Ibid., 161.

[12] Ibid., 164.

To parents in their children's love this shown,
To wives by husbands in society,
To servants too—in due variety
But one must study long not to neglect
To pay to everyone his due respect…

…courtesy is nothing small
For while we learn to pay respect to all
According to their virtues, birth and age,
We also learn our own desert to gauge,
Just as, if we desire to know our weight,
We must put someone in the other place.
But most important is thatyou should know
The courtesy young men to women owe.[13]

But also the fair sex, to deserve kindness, had to watch out and to beware of staining—according to the words of Elzbieta Druzbacka, Anee Kowalska—their state, modesty, and manners with vulgar words. She complains:

I feel my colic reach my troubled heard
When Polish women keep bad words in mouth.[14]

Offending somebody by forgetful or deliberate failure to pay due reverence, too familiar and informal greeting, unpolitical or unpolite expressions, occupying at the table a more distinguished place than somebody else, inviting a woman to dance without regard to social hierarchy—all this was an offense, sometimes a reason for a squabble or even for a challenge to a duel.

Opportunities for social meetings, addresses and speeches were plentiful. They were provided by common hunting, but also by political life (local systems, civl gatherings), social promotion, departures, and returns from distant journeys. Many occasions for social gatherings were created also by familiar solemnities, such as weddings, births of descendants, burials, various anniversaries, jubilees, and hosts' name-days. Among annual feasts, above all Christmas and Easter brought numerous relatives together.

Elements of Hospitality

Gifts

A special custom practiced on the occasion of social meetings was the exchange of gifts. "As a proof of sentiment, friendship, and devotion people brought gifts that were to be requited in the

---

[13] A. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz, czyli ostatni zajazd na Litwie. Historia szlachecka z r. 1811-1812*, chap. I, verses 361-371, 396-403; English translation: A Mickiewicz, Pan Tadeusz, trans. Kenneth R. Mckenzie, Polish Cultural Foundation (New York: Hippocrene Books Inc., 1992), 20-23.

[14] Quoted after Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow*, vol. 2, 172.

same way. Depending on the occasion, wealth, and generosity, gifts ranged from details received as souvenns to considerable fortunes falling by a magnates' grace upon lucky recipients."[15]

People presented gift to one another even without occasion, for instance, as a result of a sudden burst of joy and generosity by wealthy hosts, breaching the limits of moderation. Krasicki writes in one of his satires:

> Long life the host!...
> Drunk mob shrieks and quarrels, and plunders the house
> The house master is pleased; he lets all his guests in
> One took a horse with saddle; another, for service,
> Takes the host's grandfather's sword won in glorioius wars
> Still other drags a golden carpet…[16]

Ladies or young girls offered to their adorers minor gifts, such as handkerchiefs, self-made pillows, etc., and bachelors brought flowers to maids.

Nice guests were given gifts on their departure gifts which sometimes were expensive; sometimes it was enough to praise an object to be presented with it. People coming back from afar often distributed presents; but they had to be characteristic of countries they came from. "The boundary between social gifts and business in which the other side was gained by means of presents was not very clear—writes J.S. Bystron—so it is no wonder that these gifts became, especially in the 18th century, when there was a lot of money and not so much morality, more and more precious and interest-bound."[17] How distant it was from former symbolical binding, when bonds of friendship were confirmed only symbolically by binding the celbrator with a cord, a belt, a ribbon, or a kerchief.

Social life imposed various duties on participants of meetings. They had to behave in accord with principles of etiquette binding in the frame of noblemen's social culture, to render to everybody due respect, and besides to be nice, interesting, cheerful, full of initiative, and to animate others with their sense of humor. People chatted for long hours on autumn and winter evenings, diced, played cards or—less frequently—chess or draughts. They amused themselves with auguring, lottery, playing blindman's buff or other such games, sometimes organizing masquerades, theaters and ballets. In a mixed society the most favorite play was dance. "People danced a lot and in various ways, starting from slow and ending with most furious dances. In manors dignified dances were danced; in taverns, vigorous and brisk."[18] The most beautiful and representative dance was "the Polish dance," or, as we say today, the polonaise.

For major feasts musicians were hired from villages, and sometimes from towns. At minor feasts, their musical frame ensured some manor habitant playing lute, cymbals, violin or viola d'amore, rural pipe, or piano. Sometimes to villages came wandering artists, blind lyrists, and singers.

The Repast

---

[15] Ibid., 175.
[16] I. Krasicki, *Marnotrawstwo*, verses 51, 53-57.
[17] Bystron, *Czieje obyczajow*, vol. 2, 175.
[18] Ibid., 214.

A lot of time was spent at the table. People did not like overcrowded repasts, sticking to the old Polish principle: "You should fight in large heaps, and eat in small." As writes Wladyslaw Lozinski, people believed the proverb that "seven [people] is a repast, nine is a hindrance."

The word repast (biesiada) comes form sitting together (zasiadac), gathering, but originally it meant a talk, a conversaion.[19] Zygmunt Gloger writes that it meant "a merry gathering with drinks and food, a feast, a banquet, a festival, a play. Village people can repast (biesiada) all familial gatherings such as weddings and baptisms, where all villagers participate according to the old custom, as well as the whole neighborhood in former szlachta manors; for the old tradition was common to the whole nation…"[20]

Temperance and abstinence, these dominant apollonian features of the old Polish culture, supported by formerly commonly respected mores, keeping under restraint jolly banqueters, were threatened or ousted by elemental, dionysian[21] dissolution of times of the Saxonic dynasty (17th-18th centuries), not universal, however, and not greater than in many other countries of Europe at that time.

In a later period, during enslavement, in the times of uprisings and oppression the Polish way of banqueting approached again apollonian pattersn. The old Polish repast depicted in Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* excellently shows this ideal pattern (model). Real behavior in various millieus followed this model to a greater or lesser extent. But even in this period happened deriations and outrages.

Temperance and abstinence bound especially the feminine part of banqueters. It was not customary for women to drink or to listen to undecent jokes and vulgar tales. "Women should demonstrate their abstinence, so when they seated at the table, usually on wedding banquets, they only touched full goblets with their lips as a sign that they partook of toasts."[22] We speak here, of course, about an ideal model, from that real behavior often deviated. And yet this ideal model did not escape notice of foreigners travelling through Poland, who in their diaries paid attention to a peculiar moderation of women, as well as to a particular gallentry of Poles toward women, strictly related to the former features.[23] "…against the backdrop of universal discrimination of women at that time—writes Zbigniew Kuchowicz—Polish mores turned out to be progressive. The independent and influential role of women in the society was even highlighted. It was, indeed, in Poland of the 18th century that occurred a saying: 'we rule the world, but we are ruled by women.' Foreigners generally perceived this distinct features, holding it for something specific for Polish social relations."[24] Characterizing Polish mores, they put it next to embracing sumptuousness (pawn yourself, but show yourself; *zastaw sie a postaw sie*), and to Polish hospitality and sociability, as well as to such features as ability to enjoy life, to find joy in its everday charm.

Mores and customs common for the Polish *szlachta* spread on other social layers, and the awareness of distinctness in the domain of mores became a new element—apart from community

---

[19] A. Bruckner, *Slownik etymologiczny jezyka polskiego* (Warsaw, 1974), 23-27.

[20] Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska ilustrowana*, vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1972), 172.

[21] Cf. two types of culture distinguished by R. Benedict in *Wzory kultury*, intro. A. Kloskowska, trans. J. Prokopiuk (Warsaw, 1965). The apollonian type is characterized by temperance, self-control, striving at eliminating conflicts; the Dionysian type by violence and passion.

[22] Cf. Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow*, vol. 2, 186.

[23] Cf. Z. Kuchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie XIVV-XVIII wieku* (Locz, 1975), 465.

[24] Ibid. Cf. also M. Baranski, "Rodzina od czasow najdawniejszych do konca XVIII wieku," in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej*, ed. J. Komorowska (Warsaw, 1975), 23-51; Z. Jablonowska, "Rodzina w XIX I na poczatku XX wieku," Ibid., 52-73.

of language and religion—serving to define national identity. It constituted a factor of patriotic consciousness, it became an essential element shaping the modern Polish nation, a bond uniting different social strata of the ancient Poland.[25] Old Polish mores constitute, besides, not only a heritage after the noblemen's culture, but also stem from the ancient folk elements and are derived from various, often precious, assimilated alien patterns.

This legacy prominently appeased and humanized human relations in Poland at the time of enslavement. Thanks to this inheritance, in spite of the political catastrophe, our country was inhabited in the 19th century by a "merry and polite people."[26] "Poland, crossed out from the political map of Europe, could boast of progress in mores, of democratization of cultural life and customs of its brave striving toward further achievements and transformations."[27]

Present Changes in Hospitality

And what about today's Poles? Are they still humane? Are we sociable, hospitable, kind, merry, honest, open and benevolent? Today, that is, in the period of previously unheard of technical achievements in the world, and at the same time, in the period of an increasing distance between technical development and development of mores and morals. Today, that is, in the time of dehumanizing totalitarianisms and of various forms of practical materialism that destruct culture. In the Polish context, it also means: in the period of hope for a better future after the time of "mistakes and distortions." Our hope did not perish, Poland did not become a Dantean hell (*lasciate ogni Speranza*) to a great extent thanks to its culture, Christian par excellence, and thanks to our humanness transferred from one generation to another.

The degree of cohesion of intergenerational family bonds is greater today than before, even if durability of relations between generations is less.[28] It is this cohesion that guaranteed and still guarantees continuity of intergenerational transmission of couture,[29] including also patterns of social life, of which family was always a center.

Also today foreigners coming to our country highlight the same features as those that they noticed in the 18th or in the 19th century: our sociability, hospitality, cordiality, kindness, and honest openness. They do not speak often about merriness. And, in fact, people are today more tired, more nervors, they laugh, sing, and dnace less, they happen to be depressed, sad, but yet, in general, they do not break down and do not grow grim. They are even, in spite of everything, more cheerful than elsewhere—and this feature strikes foreigners also today. An ideal model of a humen person is still vivid, even if reality maybe more often and further deviates from this ideal.

We are still socialbe, keen on sitting at the table together with our relatives, friends, acquaintances, we willingly discuss and pray together, and in school and at work we highly appreciate good, solid companionship. There are not many common balls and banquets today, but

[25] Cf. Kuchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie*, 466-467.

[26] J. Kitowicz, *Pamietniki czyli Historia Polski*, ed. P. Matuszewska (Warsaw, 1971), 580.

[27] uchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie*, 473.

[28] Cf. L. Dyczewski, *Wiez pokolen w rodzinie* (Warsaw, 1976), 161; L. Dyczewski, *Rodzina polska I kierunki jej przemian* (Warsaw, 1981), 177-193; L. Dyczewski, "Zmiany w spojnosci wiezi miedzypokoleniowej w rodzinie," in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej*, 337.

[29] Cf. A. Klosowska, "The Family as a Factor of Cultural Transmission and Creation," in *Les functions educatives de la famille dans le monde d'aujourd'hui*, ed. A. Kloskowska, et. al. (Warsaw, 1972), 145-153; D. Dobrowolska, "Wartosci zwiazane z zyciem rodzinnym," in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej*, 260-278; Dyczewski, *Rodzina polska*, 207-228.

the pattern of common play revives quickly wherever conditions allow it. Every major feast is celebrated in our society as a social event. And, as it was before, also today elder people stand on guard of ancient mores and customs.[30]

The traditional haste in serving meals to guests just after teir arrival persists to this day, even if our whole life passes in a faster rhythm than it did before, and if haste, unfortunately often neurotic, became something normal and common.

Yet we can observe certain changes and reductions: we leave only one place at the table for strangers, and only once a year—on the Christmas Eve. Guests in cities announce their arrival by phone or in other way, and they are received modestly, only with cakes or even only with tea, but always they are served something. It is different, however, when hosts organize some special reception on the occasion of a name-day, a birthday, or other family celebrations. Then, in spite of the dangerous and long lasting economic crisis, very often our old tendency toward showiness comes to the fore. Especially guests from abroad are received abundantly and pompously in our country, often at the cost of debts, negligence of everyday duties, and of an enormous burden put on the shoulders of the mistress of the house, usually deprived of sufficient household aid.

If we are invited as guests today, it does not become us to bring others with us, especially if we do not make our hosts agree. Yet there happen to be open houses, in which old rules of hospitality are valid in this regard.

The worst trouble is with staying overnight: guests' needs increased here, while possibilitites of keeping them overnight decreased largely. Habitation crisis in our country is responsible for this state of affairs.

Our gates and doors are no longer widely open, especially in cities, and they invite only those whom we have chosen. Today's neighborhoods are different from ancient "quiet villages," where thefts and robberies were a great rarity.

We do not hear also today about cases of intemperate hospitality that happened sometimes in the past—nobody compels his neighbors to stay in his hospitable house against his will. Mainly television provides entertainment and news about the world, and thanks to telephonic communication and moder means of transport we can more often contact and see family and friends then previous generations were able to do it.

Close neighbors are rather not most frequent guests in towns. It is different in the country, where spatial proximity plays a much larger role in social relations. The town gives a chance of choice of friends and acquaintances and town habitants gladly profit from this opportunity. And yet also today a good neighbor, that is, a neighbor who is congenial and ready to provide mutual service, is a precious value and raises the rank of a place of habitation, also in big cities.

Ceremonialism of hospitality is considerably reduced; people do not stick to many rules observed before. Yet at very solemn banquets, for instance at weddings, the proper ordre of honoring guests according to their social rank is still binding. About guests' dignity decides rather their being part of the older generation than their higher social position or legal status. Weddings at home or in a restaurant (organized, besides, most frequently at home) face their organizers with the problem of seating guests at the tablke in its whol sharpness.[31] The problem is confirmed among others by letters directed by readers (mostly young, who arrived to the city from the country) to editors of various magazines with social life sections. Similar question and interests

---

[30] Cf. J. Komorowska, *Swiateczne zwyczaje domowe w wielkim miescie* (Warsaw, 1984), 92, 96.

[31] Ibid., 131.

concern not only customs and wedding ceremonies, but rules of savoir-vivre in general, that is, rules bringing in the so called elegant society.

Proverbs quoted above, concerning excessively prolonged stays of guests in houses of hospitable hosts, are still in use. On the one hand, they prove pains taken by gentle host (and at the same time the overwhelming force of eternal customs), and on the other hand, they constitute a warning and a lesson for guests who tend to stay too long with their hosts.

Relatively graet changes are observed in behavior of then fair sex. Elzbieta Kowalska-Druzbicka would often "feel the colic reach here troubled heart" if crude words of some contemporary women reached her ears, especially when they are socially masculinized and do not content themselves with symbolic touching of the goblet's edge with their lips.

As it was before, so today Poles do not lack occasions for social meetings and greetings, and among these occasions an important place have familial celebrations and annual feasts. The circle of participants changes: sometimes it is wider, sometimes narrower, depending on the ank of feast or solemnity and on current possibilities of the house. Yet this circle includes both closer and further relatives and friends and acquaintances of the host.[32]

As formerly in wealthier circles of the society, so today it is an almost universally accepted custom to present participants of social meetings with some various souvenirs. Especially in the city, where access to objects produced by souvenir industry is easy, this custom spread in all milleus and all categories of age. Expression of love, friendship, respect, gratitude, attachment are the most frequent cotnents of this symbolic behavior. Today the increasingly utilitarian character of presents happens to be, however, completed with poetical symbolism of a bunch of flowers or even of a single flower.

Garlands of flowers were once offered only to women, and their seepch was one of essential elements of courtship. Today we give flowers also to men, and they are handed irrespective of sex and age of the presented person, on most various occasions. Flowers made besides an incredible career as indispensable, universal used requisites handed from one hand to another in the form of a bunch. Yet the process of uniformization, going on in various areas of contemporary culture, inflicted also the language of flowers in that both color and kind of flowers played formerly an important role in various milieus. Now it is not any more sophisticated, socially determined code of meanings, but fashioin and rhythm of market deliveries that decide about people's concrete choices in this domain.[33]

As it was before, so and today the most desired guests are persons who are nice, interesting, cheerful, full of initiative, animating the society with their good humor. Yet the art of narration, highly appreciated before, today, in the time of television, is not so much cherished as it was before. The culture of active play is generally in regress. People dance little, and common singing, so common still in the former generation, today very rarely unites participants of social meetings and solemnities. Already only in some hourses people sing together Christmas carols for Christmas, even if they commonly listen to them played from some electronic device. There is very little left from ancient numerous banquet songs, carillons, and couplets, most frequently only our standard name-day song "Long Life" (*Sto lat*). The music background of solemnities constitutes usually music played from electronic devices. Only on suburb and country weddings people sometimes stil sing old and new songs, accompanied by a life band composed of amateur musicans.

---

[32] Ibid., 86-94.
[33] Ibid., 51-55.

"Poles are great banqueters"—also today. Yet ii some circles deficiency of active, but morally decent forms of play during banquets, celebrated formerly with reasonable quantities of alcohol, happens to be one of the factors contributing to their abuse. This in turn entails intensification of Dionysian trends in social festive meetings, and unfortunately in numerous cases even degeneration of banquet customs. Humane customs, supporting temperance and sociocultural order, turn in such situation into dissolute excesses, as in some milieus in the time of the Saxon dynasty.[34] And yet in the last quarter of the 18th century historians observe the decline of fashion of alcohol abuse. It was to a larger extent a merit of king Stanislaw August, who simply abhorred drunkenness.[35]

In consequence, temperance and abstinence began anew to be in fashion. Unfortunately, today, in our industrialized and urbanized country overwhelmed by deep crisis, alcohol absuse can be met in all social strata, also among women and adolescents. So maintaining the pattern of humanness, preserved throughout ages, and including also the culture of banqueting, constitutes a great problem also in our country.

Also today—just as centuries ago—Poles sit at the table in large groups. As a matter of fact, this happens only on the occasion of weddings, and in the country also of baptisms. Usual banquets are held in relatively small groups. Already in all social layers hosts care a lot about esthetics of the table. So absolutely it must be laid with a tablecloth, decorated with nicely looking table requisites, often with a vase full of flowers, and on the occasion of great solemnities with flowers standing by every cover.

The custom of *prynuka*—importunate invitations to excessive consumpotion—are already out of fashion. Also driving shields many guests against forced treating to alcoholic beverages. Unfortunately not all people are responsible—hence cases of alcohol detected in drivers' blood, causing care accidents, are not rare.

Social life—in comparison to ancient times, but also to the recent past of the twenty years of independent Poland between the wars—underwent a considerable domestication. At home people celebrate all feasts, familial solemnities; we also invite there our friends and acquaintances. There is much less cafes and restaurants than before the second World War, and prices of plates are too high for average citizens. Balls and plays, once numerous, boisterous, and merry, now belong to quite exceptional events, and high ticket prices make it impossible for common people to participate in such enterprises. So the majority organizes parties in their friends' homes.

Play—as wrote a Dutch culture researcher Johan Huizinga—is not just a usual or a proper life. It is rather transgressing the circle of utilities toward the world of disinterested occupations, making possible artistic expression and at the same time societal and social life. "It is only atrophy of humor that kills us"—wrote the above mentioned author in his famours book *Homo ludens*.[36]

Domesticated sociability of Poles is also today not without cheerfulness, or even humor, even if it is black humor (our passion of telling and listening to jokes is commonly known). Foreigners visting our country are sometimes astonished when amidst everyday greyness, neglect, and fatigue they perceive our relatively often serenity and social refinement, even if the social margin of people hwo violate good mores, unfortunate degenerates and deviants, unfortunately considerable widened.

---

[34] Ibid., 141-142.

[35] Cf. Kuchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie*, 45.

[36] Cf. J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens. Zabawa jako zrodlo kultury*, trans. M. Kurecka and W. Wirpsza (Warsaw, 1967), 290.

Domesticated humanness of Poles—entailing hospitability, kindness, cheerfulness, benevolence, honesty, and openness—in favorable circumstances easily goes beyond the threshold of privateness and vivifies our social world. There is no doubt that its great vitality is founded on the social need of continuity, as well as on the striving toward maintaining unity of our national community. The apollonian character of our culture, always dominating over Dionysian excesses, hence, temperance and abstinence, is deeply rooted in Christianity.

Chapter XIII
Respect for Women and the Elderly and Love of Children

Teresa Kukołowicz

Education is achieved by conscious effort, but its result depends essentially on the cultural values with which a child grows up. These determine the child's attitude towards the basic elements of reality, which happens through transmitting patterns of behavior, through history, literature, educational programs, and suitable organizations and institutions.

Respect for Women

The high position of women in Polish society can be seen visibly. Women are surrounded with respect, esteem, aided in carrying heavy objects, offered seats even if another needs to stand, kissed on the hand, and allowed to pass first. Such behavior is usual in Poland. At the turn of the XIVth century there appeared a "Poem about Behaving at the Table" (*Wiersz o zachowaniu się przy stole*), which was "a first literary piece the Slavic region praising women".

In the history of the Polish nation, in its culture and social life women played -- and still play -- an important role. In consequence, certain types of women were defined. We shall enumerate the following types as example:

The Missionary. At the beginning of Polish history there appears Dobrava who might be described as a missionary, bringing the Christian faith to the nation. The great civilizational and cultural act of Poland's Christianization is thanks to her. Among such women we can also count Queen Jadwiga, due to whose contribution Lithuania entered the circle of Christian countries. During Jagiełło's baptism, she knew that for Lithuania she played the same role as the Czech, Dobrava, for Poland. This knowledge is part of elementary education of Poliash children.

The Patriot and Heroine. The national history has examples of heroic women who became symbols of love of the fatherland and of courage. Especially on the eastern frontiers of the Polish Republic women often had to put on armor and to fight with arms. Among them were: Hanna Borzobohata-Krasieńska, Anna Dorota Chrzanowska defending Trembowla and Teofila Chmielecka, called "the wolf of the frontier". The heroism of these women was expressed in literature and art. Józef Wybicki devoted a drama to Anna Chrzanowska, Franciszek Smuglewicz painted a picture entitled "The Defense of Trembowla".

A special place in literature is held by Emilia Plater in Adam Mickiewicz's poem "Death of a Colonel" (*Śmierć pułkownika*) learned by children in school. Her memory continues and schools and military units take her name. After the fall of the January uprising women wore clothing expressing national mourning. They showed their patriotic attitude by avoiding places of recreation and public walks, wearing black robes and iron jewelry recalling Poland's martyrdom. In one of his lectures in Paris Mickiewicz said that the particular place women won is owed to their devotedness, work and sacrifices. The list of heroic women includes figures of our times: during the second World War women fought in the underground army, participated in the Vilnius and Warsaw uprisings, and were active in the underground. Many historical works witness to this contribution, as well as such songs of that time "Margaret the Nurse" (*Sanitariuszka Małgorzatka*).

The Woman Engaged in Public Affairs. Women often accompanied their husbands in matters concerning the national good. Not endowed with full rights in public life, women "gave confidential signs to deputies and senators by a nice grimace of their lips or by knitting their brows to let them know what they liked and disliked". Women's influence on public affairs was so great that bishop Ignacy Krasicki said facetiously: "We rule the world, but we are ruled by women". Women also provided the conditions for secret political discussions as the club of Mrs. Chłędowska, where members of the Patriotic Society gathered, and the parlors of Mrs. Dębińska, wife of a colonel.

The Social Activist. Since time immemorial women looked after the battle wounded, formed committees to support the wounded and their families. A marvelous example of activity on behalf of the poor was given by the first Polish blessed: Bronisława, Salomea, Kinga and Jolanta. Piotr Skarga in his "Lives of Saints" wrote of the Saint Kinga: "she diverted many people from sin, looked after many orphans, organized burials of the poor and was mother to all". Karol Szajnocha, a renowned historian and publicist, stated that the Saint Kinga was one of the first social activists in Poland and a pioneer in the domain of culture.

Women undertook action on behalf of orphaned and poor children, as well as educational work among peasants. Tytus Adam Działłyński, founder of the library in Kórnik, in homage of Polish women, wrote: "[they] reign with their hearts, rule with their reason, conquer with their charm, and unite with their hospitality. They channel the rapid stream of social life into a great, quiet, and powerful river called culture".

Patrons of Science and Art. One of the first women patrons of science and culture was queen Jadwiga, who contributed to the restoration of the Cracow Academy, opened a theological faculty and sought eminent professors and funds. Together with Jagiełło, Jadwiga created a Slavic foundation in Kleparz (a quarter of Cracow), whence well educated priests of the Slavic rite went on mission to Russia.

Women contributed to the rise of well known monuments of culture: Zofiówka in Tulczyn (Zofia Potocka), Arkadia -- a romantic, sentimental park located between Nieborów and Łowicz (Helena Radziwiłłowa), Puławy (a cultural center created with aid of Izabela Czartoryska, the author of a first book destined for simple folk "A Pilgrim in Dobromil" (*Pielgrzym w Dobromilu*).

The Wife and Mother. Respect for women resulted from their multiple modes of presence in the nation's life, but its main source was the position of the woman in the family. Jan Kochanowski writes

A honest wife is a jewel of her husband
And a most certain support of her household
On her rests all the reign; in her husband's house
Crown of his head is a noble spouse

In Polish history the family played a particular role in the time of partitions. It was then that the model of a fortress-family in which the husband was absent for a long time was consolidated. The whole burden of responsibility fell upon women. They were the first transmitters of religious

and moral truths, as well as of the nation's history. It was in families, at mothers' feet, that patriotic education went on. Mickiewicz expressed this state of affairs in his poem "To the Polish Mother" (*Do matki Polki*) that for long years to come became a moral catechism and a primer of duties towards the fatherland. It is therefore no wonder that archbishop Zygmunt Szczęsny Feliński wrote in his "Diary":

We can openly say that if our society victoriously survived this spiritual crisis without losing the possibility of moral rebirth, we owe it only to women who stood much higher than men in this regard. . . . Thanks to women, family connections did not loosen, children obtained Christian education at least since their school age; in homes there were order and harmony, and even industriousness and thrift, . . . so women of those times deserve reverence and homage till the farthest generations.

A little later Cecylia Plater-Zyberkówna, who among other things educated young girls, wrote that women are "priestesses of home and family life".

A particular recognition of mothers is found in poetry. Jan Nagrabiecki, the author of an anthology of the Polish poetry concerning mothers, writes: The idea of selecting the most beautiful poems about mothers does not demand any justification or explanation. The reason is obvious. . . . The homage we owe to our mothers is not only our personal need. This is testified by the innumerable lyrical compositions, written in various historical periods". Some of these poems took the form of hymns and songs. This poetry is complemented by painting and sculpture. Literature and art show above all the model of a mother visible in the Mother of God, and embodies this into the different life situations of Polish mothers. Well-known are such works as the picture by Stanisław Wyspiański "Maternity" (*Macierzyństwo*), the sculpture by Xawery Dunikowski "A Pregnant Woman" (*Kobieta brzemienna*) or the monument of Nike in Warsaw. Respect for women in Polish culture has its roots in the Slavic culture ennobled by Christianity, especially in the cult of Our Lady. The personal intelligence and sensitivity to higher values shown by Polish women is important. The development of their personal virtues was "supported" by the situation and destiny of the Polish nation: they demanded specific values in the struggle for their very existence, the existence of their families, nation, and national culture. Because of these circumstances Polish culture has been enriched with images of women accompanying their husbands in their enterprises, of heroic women devotedly defending Polish homes. The above mentioned types of women do not succeed one another. We cannot point out any chronology of their appearance. We only have to state that sensibility of Polish women for national and social affairs determined their undertaking suitable tasks and thus generated various types of engagement.

Love of Children

From the same source as respect for women comes love of children as a particular value. In Polish culture we can distinguish several trends testifying to the exceptional position of this love. One focuses on the child as an autonomous value, another sees the child as a legitimization of such values as women and family, still another perceives it as a factor that sustains the nation's existence.

To begin with, we shall state that the time when a woman expects her child is referred to in the Polish culture as a "blessed state", hence, as a distinguished state endowed with special rights and favors. Pregnant women themselves were treated with particular respect. Acknowledgement

of the exceptional value of children goes as far as the common belief that intercessions by children are the most powerful before God. Mickiewicz expressed it in his ballad "Daddy's Return" (*Powrót taty*) where, thanks to prayers of children addressed to God before a cross, the long awaited daddy comes home. The sight of praying children had melted the heart of a brigand, as he states:

> Don't thank me; frankly I confess to you
> I would be the first to crush you with my club
> Had not your children's prayers stopped me.

Moreover the robber addresses the children with a request:

> You, children, go up the hill
> Run and say for my soul
> Sometimes a prayer or two

The unusual character of children was stressed by many educators. Children's problems were a focus of interest of the Commission of National Education, a major institution of the Polish Enlightenment, pointing not only to the need for education, but also to the care of children. An advocate of respect for children and their rights was Janusz Korczak. "The Old Doctor" not only fought for their rights, but also stayed with them till the end, willingly braving death in a gas chamber.

In the name of the child Polish women throughout centuries made superhuman efforts to protect them against hunger and misery. They wandered with children even from Kazakhstan to Poland. Great love of children contains the hope that it is they who are the future of the nation. With such a conviction mothers addressed their children when these children set out on a far journey "on the look-out for bread". Maria Rodziewiczówna in her novel "The Barcikowskis" (*Barcikowscy*) put it this way: "Remember that you are a Pole and a Catholic -- says a mother to her child. Remember that you should be upright before God and before your compatriots. . . . I taught you prayers, history, songs. I address you as if you were an adult: I trust you and I put my good hope in you". Focusing on children, on transmitting to them the most precious values, and expecting that they will be preserved brought splendid fruits, thanks to which youth became models of heroism. They created circles of self-education and patriotic groups; they fought for the preservation of Polish culture and for independence. Aleksander Kamiński, author of works concerning Polish youth organizations, in summarizing their history points to the following functions: ideological and political, shaping the revolutionary and the conspiratorial attitude, aiming at abolishing enslavement; reviving, striving for the renaissance and respect of Polish culture; correcting the system of education. It was youth that undertook in 1905 a school strike; it was the children of Września that came forward in defense of the Polish language. During the Warsaw uprising children performed many tasks; among others, they delivered mail and distributed press. And so, from one generation to another, "stones were thrown on the rampart".

The beauty of children, their charm, delight, and vivacity were reflected in the paintings, among others, of Stanisław Wyspiański.

The ill fortune of children who lacked prospects for development evoked an appeal on their behalf. Works of poets sensitive to children's misfortune are commonly known; some acquired the rank of symbols reflecting the situation in this regard -- examples are "Little Johnny the Musician" (*Janko Muzykant*) by Henryk Sienkiewicz and "A Room in a Cave" by Maria Konopnicka, as well

as some short stories by Bolesław Prus. In response to the poverty of children there emerged various institutions. One example is the above-mentioned societies for the care of widows and their children, the Charitable Society, orphans' nests organized by Kazimierz Jeżowski. Jordan's gardens, and orphanages for peasant children founded by Edmund Bojanowski. The XIXth century was a special period for the development of many institutions caring for children.

Children in our culture played and still play a role in verifying the value of women and families in the society. The full value of women in Slavic families depended on the birth she gave to her children, above all to sons. Only then was she acknowledged as a family member. Only a short time ago, the value of women in marriage was also measured by the fact of giving birth to children. Feminine infertility was considered shamefull. This fact is illustrated among others by popular proverbs: "A wife without children is like a net without fish", "Where children are, there happiness shines".

Such an attitude towards the value of women explains to a certain extent an attitude of reluctance towards adoption for a long time in our society, a need to hide this fact, a fear of making it known to the public. Generalizing our reflection on children as a value in Polish culture we should say that, while it is a value in itself, it is strictly related to affairs of the nation. Children are the hope of the nation and the bearers of its values. This value is affirmed above by the care given to its personal exercise.

Respect for the Elderly

Polish families -- whether among the nobility or peasants -- were large. They consisted of three generations: children, parents and grandparents. Recently the Polish family transformed itself into a broadened family which still cherishes close and stable contacts with its grandparents. These facts point to an important position for the elderly. The oldest generation in the family is above all a witness to the past. "Very characteristic in Polish literature is the figure of a whitehaired old man, present in novels, and occurring in various forms in diaries. It is somebody from the family or from the vicinity who 'still fought under command of . . .', `who remembers X himself', 'who was led by knight Y himself', etc". Such a role is played by Dobrzyński in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* and Anzelm in *Nad Niemnem*. Mickiewicz characterizes Dobrzyński in the following way:

In Dobrzyn not a few
Were wise old men, well versed in Latin too,
Who at the bar had practised from their youth;
And some were rich; but of them all in truth
Poor, good Matthias was the most revered,
Not only since his swordsmanship was feared
But as a man of wise and sober plans,
Who knew his country's history and his clan's
Well versed alike in law and husbandry
(Book VI: *Zaścianek*, verses 539-547 English transl. by K. R.Mackenzie, p. 290-291)

Irena Jundziłł's analyses of patriotic education indicated that if a child is reared without grandparents, its knowledge about the second World War and about the war conspiracy is minimal. It is grandparents who constitute a bridge between old and recent times, who provide spiritual communication with ancestors, with values hallowed by generations. This means also transferring

mores, traditions of one's own fatherland, faith, culture and culinary recipes. The older generation, even if "old-fashioned", is a treasury of experience, wisdom and admonitions. It is no wonder then that – as Gloger writes -- "no old Polish beggar went away hungry expelled from a peasant's house. Old beggars, even if not always moral themselves, when they found themselves in society after a church fair . . . were always moralists." Proverbs too speak about this, for instance "You cannot deceive old sparrows with chaff". Maria Rodziewiczówna in her book "Distaff" (*Kądziel*) says: "respect the elderly, for they are our only authority and power".

Older men and women are perceived in Polish culture as the embodiment of wisdom and virtues, as models to follow. The greatness and wisdom of the elderly predestined them for the role of "seers", persons able to foretell the future, and advisors. For this reason the nickname "Grandpa" (*Dziadek*) appears next to the names of prominent persons, such as Kazimierz Lisiecki, a pedagogue, creator of educational centers, and marshal Józef Piłsudski. It is also no wonder that mutual relations between generations are ruled by special forms of courtesy. Even our contemporary women greet elder gentlemen first, even if according to custom it is women that should be greeted first. In the case of grandfathers a special etiquette applied -- kissing hands, even genuflection. These are seated first at the table on prominent seats. These forms of gallantry were binding both in family and in public life.

During family reunions, meetings with elder family members are especially valued. The young are interested in family history, in their roots, they try to obtain data concerning genealogy. They look for souvenirs and for family photographs. They often visit the places of birth of their grandparents and parents.

Social life was also ruled by certain principles of action, in which the attitude towards the elderly held a special place. Antoni Gołubiew describes how the Vikings had the principle of giving permission to speak according to the order of age, and in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* seats during banquets were distributed according to the age.

> The guests went in and stood around the hall.
> The Chamberlain took the highest place of all,
> By right of age and office; as he passed
> He bowed to ladies, old men, young men last.

Between the wars, if the president of the Polish Seym or Senate did not come to the session, his place was taken by the eldest of the given chamber. The same custom is binding today when the president of a meeting is absent.

Ceremonies of an historical character are usually honored by the presence of still living witnesses to ancient events. Recently Poles celebrate a special Grandmother's Day.

From what is said above we can conclude that respect for the elderly takes the most varied forms. Its source and reason are both the need of witnessing the past and the wisdom one gains with age.

Universality and Permanence of Respect for Women, the Elderly, and the "Cult" of Children

The above attitude towards women may appear too idealized. Critical experts on the matter enumerate examples of village women maltreated by their husbands, and deprived of their right to speak. Such facts really took place, but do not mean that the basic attitude towards women as persons surrounded with reverence did not exist. The dominant culture, shaping common concepts

and attitudes, was one of nobility and this culture determined mutual relations. Even if in peasants' families there were some abusive attitudes, the special role of women was commonly appreciated. An example is independent women fighting to preserve lands inherited from their fathers, present in Rodziewiczówna's novels, or peasant women's participation in aid committees during the November uprising.

Respect for women persists to this day, even if now it certainly is weaker. On the one hand, it results from the bravery revealed in their ability to join home duties with professional activity, on the other, however, attempts to equal men deprive women of their specific value. Their concern, readiness for sacrifices, and devotedness to family is diminished. There is not enough time to foster feelings and tradition. Equality conceived as identity with male behavior imposed on women new mores that they are not always able to follow.

There are feminine peasant and worker circles in which the attitude towards women has begun to be characterized by greater respect. They note women's work, their participation in home maintenance, their fatigue and their need for help.

Recently also the attitude towards children has changed to a certain extent. Acknowledgment of children's value was justified differently in different milieus. Especially in peasant families children were treated as one more pair of hands able to work. Now we witness a promotion of children in this social layer. The hitherto "family worker" became an embodiment of dreams about social advancement. From this comes the practice of attributing a special place to children in houses and apartments, of investing in their education. Also in families in town there is a cult of intellect and of the children's abilities, especially in upwardly moble families.

The attitude towards the elderly also changes. First, there is no longer place for them in the ordinary household. Yet when both parents work, grandparents are irreplaceable in taking care of the grandchildren, household work, preparing dinners that bring together family members and create bonds. They are the only ones to give the warmth of family feelings to children. So they are useful. They live longer, but often are disabled, not self-reliant, and require the help and patience of other household members. As a result there arise conflicts, mutual rancor, and inability to provide proper aid to aging parents. This situation breeds not only lack of respect, but also enmity and escape from the old people.

A certain supplement to the above remarks is an analysis of roles of persons forming contemporary families found in elementary school textbooks. Women appear there above all in their role of mothers, guardians and mistresses of their households; their extrafamilial roles are hardly noted. "The basic status of contemporary women is in their role as mothers. It is they who create homes. Homes without them are bare walls and ceilings".

Yet grandparents are still liaisons between earlier and present times. They recall the past, they tell stories about historical events (mainly about the second World War), about ancient customs (like auguring on St. Andrew's eve); they ridicule prejudice, and make the young generation aware of how good the times are in which they live.

<div align="center">

Chapter XIV
The Power of Clemency and Forgiveness

Jacek Salij

</div>

In the middle of June, 1982 during the period of martial law I obtained permission to lead a spiritual retreat, between the 21st and the 23rd of June, for opposition activists confined in Darłówek. The reason of this unusual concession was undoubtedly the fact that in Darłówek were imprisoned at that time the majority of the intellectual elite of the Solidarity Movement (Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the future first prime minister of Poland after the elections of 1989, Bronisław Gieremek, Władysław Bartoszewski, and many others). This camp was therefore the object of particular interest to public opinion and state authorities had to cope somehow with this state of affairs.

I was faced with a difficult question: what am I to speak about during this retreat? Among those confined were many non-believers. I had already met them once on a retreat basis -- in April, in another confinement camp in Jaworze. At that time, I tackled strictly religious subjects and had the feeling of being listened to mainly out of courtesy. I knew, therefore, that the problems should be rather moral than religious. On the other hand, I did not intend to wade into questions that would be controversial from the point of view of the state authorities. Pastoral workers in prisons were something new at that time and I could not afford to give the authorities reasons for considering them *persona non grata*.

Hence, I chose the themes: reconciliation, forgiveness, and love of enemies. The first day of the retreat turned out, in my opinion, unusually well. I felt that I was listened to not only with interest but with approval. I rejoiced inwardly that there were still subjects of great importance for this public to which state authorities could not, in my convictions, any objections.

How great was then my astonishment when on the next day the commandant of the camp informed me that permission for the retreat had been withdrawn and that I would no longer be let into the campus area, even for confession of the imprisoned. The interventions of the local Bishop and the secretary of the Episcopate were of no assistance, even though they contacted high officials. When as a sign of protest against cancellation of the retreat the whole community of the confined went on a hunger strike, the authorities promised to withdraw it, but did not keep their promise. The spirit of reconciliation and love of enemies turned out to be too dangerous for a political system based on violence.

The fear of peace in those who organize violence knows no limits. Another fact from my own life: in 1983 I edited in Paris, for it was not possible in Poland, a book devoted to the love of enemies in the Polish liberation tradition. The books edited in this publishing house (*Editions du Dialogue*) generally received the consent of the Communist authorities for their distribution in Poland. This book had to wait for such a permission until 1989. Only in the atmosphere of "round table" did forgiveness and love of neighbor cease to be considered anti-state.

Hatred and Forgiveness

Evil Invites Hatred

In the time of martial law (and hence as a mature person who had worked for years on the question of reconciliation and love of enemies) I began to notice facts that were even more unexpected and difficult to believe. Namely those who organize violence are often actively interested in awakening hatred towards themselves. Of course, their ideal is the slavish submission of those who are "organized" by means of violence, their spiritual surrender, their resignation from justified claims and even from their own identity. When, however, they do not obtain such a submission, they want at all costs to provoke their victims to hatred. Sometimes they even try to provoke them to commit harmless (that is, not dangerous for the oppressors' position) terrorist acts. On the other hand, the oppressors are deathly afraid lest their victims react to the harm they suffer in a way that would build their own spiritual sovereignty.

Why, I often asked, did the Communists like so much to do harm and to show contempt for their fellow citizens who do not threaten them at all, or even to their potential adherents? Why do they manifest publicly that in their publications they have to count neither with common sense nor with social interests? Why were the lies propagated in the mass media sometimes so insolent that it is difficult to presume that they could deceive anybody? What other purpose could these lies have if their goal is not to deceive the society?

Let us try to consider the latter question: it is sufficient to answer one of them in order to find answers to them all. If the oppressor really wants to deceive, usually he is clever enough to make his lies maximally similar to truth and thus to endow them with the power to delude. Hence, the purpose of one who uses overt lies is not to mislead at all. Overt and insolent lies are just another method of showing contempt and awakening fury in the powerless people to whom one lies. The purpose of insolent lies is to emit the following message: "Look how cynical I am and how much I despise you! I deserve your hate!"

Why does the oppressor want to be hated? Why for instance were the enemies of "Solidarity" so disturbed by the fact that it did not stain itself with any terroristic acts; why did they want to provoke the movement to such acts in every possible way? The answer to these questions seems to be simple: doing harm to someone who is entirely innocent causes psychic discomfort. It is much more easy to injure somebody who gives proofs that he would do the same to me if only he had the opportunity. "Obviously, if only he could, he would do the same to me, or even something worse!" -- this argument releases one doing the harm from the burden that is difficult to carry, even for him and even if he be without any moral scruples.

Therefore, awakening in his victims hatred towards himself, the oppressor wants to destroy the witness to the justice he violated. Making his victim even potentially capable of revenge, he gains moral warrant for his violence. His action is no longer a brutal assault on human rights, but acquires the features of ordinary inter play in which both parties stand against each other under the law of the jungle; it becomes only a matter of chance which is stronger than the other.

The Good Calls for Forgiveness

The above remarks contain an indirect explanation of why the Polish spiritual atmosphere is so loaded with warnings against hatred, with declarations of rejection of any revenge, with appeals to forgive the oppressors and to love enemies. These ideas occur literally everywhere: in literary works and in political writings, in pedagogical thought and in sermons, in patriotic songs and in letters from death rows.

These subjects were so much the focus of attention simply because over the last two centuries Poles survived in the shadow of the crime committed against the Polish nation by Russia, Prussia,

and Austria in the years 1772, 1793, and 1795 which partitioned our state. The consequence of the partitions were the subsequent actions of the invaders aimed at depriving Poles of their national identity. In the situation in which the masterpieces of Polish culture were prohibited for Poles on their own territory, when it was a crime to remember the history of the fatherland, when it was forbidden to use the Polish language not only in offices, but even in schools, it was an all too obvious temptation to react with powerless hatred. The danger increased as some of the invaders' actions aimed directly at awakening hatred towards themselves.

Hence, it is not that the spirit of forgiveness and a disinclination to revenge constitute quasi-inborn features of the Polish national character (if something like a national character exists at all). It is rather that the subjective consciousness of some Poles willingly perceives this problem in this way, spreading stereotyped images of "Slavic passivity" or of the alleged inability of Poles to repay evil with evil. In reality, the defense against the temptation of hatred towards enemies required quite a bit of moral reflection and a great work of the spirit; it also happened to be marked with imperfection and inconsistencies. Because over and over new Poles undertook the effort to protect their society against hatred towards their oppressors, these efforts shaped the above mentioned social atmosphere.

Preaching

Reconciliation

The basic point of reference in these innumerable enunciations and actions aimed at defense and construction of spiritual sovereignty in the face of the injuries suffered was, of course, the teachings of the Gospel concerning forgiving faults and love of enemies. In the community of Christians practicing their faith these teachings are incessantly repeated. An average Catholic say the Lord's prayer several times a day, so he or she repeats several times a day the words: "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us". Vivid remembrance of this teaching (which, of course, is not identical with putting it in to practice) is favored by the circumstance that Christ put it in the simple and unforgettable images of exposing one's other cheek and forgiving seventy times seven.

Further, from the XVIIth century till the Second Vatican Council an average Catholic listened every year during Lent to several sermons about the Lord's passion and it was practically impossible for him or her not to hear some commentary on Christ's prayer from Lk 23:34: "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do". Moreover, every year on the twenty first Sunday after Pentecost he or she listened to a sermon concerning the parable about the merciless debtor; on the second day of Christmas Catholic preachers throughout the world praised the martyrdom of St. Stephen and certainly many a time the faithful's attention was drawn by the martyr's request on behalf of his murderers from Act 7:60 "O Lord, do not count against them this sin!". Finally, in the elementary catechism course there was a subject entitled "Seven spiritual virtues," including, under the fifth and the sixth paragraphs, the following recommendation: "You should willingly forgive injuries, and patiently endure grudges".

That this teaching of the Gospel, recalled so many times, lives in human hearts is testified by its multiple presence in social mores. Perhaps other Christian nations managed to shape their mores in an even more enriching way, more efficiently educating attitudes of forgiving attacks and of reconciliation, yet this article is an attempt to sketch how such an education shaped attitudes in the Polish society. This should help us to understand the great spiritual work done by Poles during the

last two centuries, aimed at joining the struggle for national independence with an attitude of love towards one's enemies. This work would certainly end up in defeat, or may even not have been undertaken if the gospel teaching about forgiveness and love of enemies had not penetrated this society for a long time and had not marked its mores with its stigma.

Let us turn our attention first to the surprisingly large number of situations in which an average Pole was confronted (and, in a sense, is confronted to this day) with social challenge of warding off friction between neighbors, of reconciliation with enemies, and of renouncing revenge. The day for soothing all quarrels and coming to common accord in Poland is above all Christmas eve. For millions of Poles it is unthinkable to approach the Christmas eve table and break *opłatek* leaves with their dear ones if they hide resentment against somebody in their hearts or desire revenge for suffered injuries, or have not stretched out their hand for agreement in case of conflict. In memoirs of Poles exiled to Siberia, as well as of victims of both twentieth century totalitarianisms we find many accounts of Christmas eves spent in enslavement, often in unhuman conditions. We can conclude from these diaries that these unfortunate people usually tried to encompass their persecutors with the good light of Christmas eve that burned in their own hearts.

In a different way there was a universal reconciliation before Easter. This was related to the pre-Easter confession that until the beginning of the XXth century, and in a way until its middle, was for the majority of Catholics the only confession in the whole year. It was commonly experienced as a thorough expurgation and renewal of the soul, crowned with reception of Holy Communion. This event was deeply rooted in social mores and people remembered, even if the priest did not remind them, to make up for injuries, to put an end to disagreements and first to stretch out their hand as first to those they resented before they went to confess their sins. The direction to reconcile with others before reconciling with God were meticulously fulfilled. The circumstance that people went to confession only once a year was very favorable in this regard. Now, when many Catholics practice confession much more often, they obviously still remember to reconcile with neighbors, but this imperative has undergone a certain trivialization.

The reconciliation before the Easter confession took place through unforgettable private encounters between those in conflict. The history of Polish pastoral care includes also -- as an extraordinary initiative -- liturgies of universal reconciliation. They appeared during the so-called popular missions in the XVIIIth century, and their goal was to reconcile also those whose resentment was stronger than the social constraint of reconciliation. Popular missions were aimed at a religious revival of Christians overwhelmed by spiritual routine or even by ignorance. In the XVIIIth century they began with arrival of several monks in a town. The monks preached for about a month to the local people calling them to convert and to live according to faith. This happened within the frame of rich Baroque ceremonies, proper to the spirituality of that time. Everything was arranged so that each of the participants confirmed and strengthened his or her conversion with a particularly deep reception of the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist.

The liturgy of universal reconciliation was a part of the preparation for confession held at the end of missions. Some reports from such services state unusual things: many people made up for injuries they had committed, couples in broken marriage reunited, people withdrew law suits from the courts, families that hated each other reconciled. From missions in which he took part as a little child Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz in 1764 remembered only the liturgy of reconciliation. "Teachings of Father Owłoczymski -- he wrote in his "Memoirs From My Times" (*Pamiętniki czasów moich*) -- caused a lot of good. With his pathetic voice he urged accord and forgiveness of resentment. Sometimes when he shouted: "Reconcile!", enemies fixed for years in mutual scorn went out from

their benches, approached each other and embraced each other with tears among expressions of regret. What a beautiful triumph of religion!".

My generation was witness to similar unusual events during the pilgrimage of the copy of the image of Our Lady of Częstochowa through all Polish parishes that took place in the years 1958-1966, before the millennium of Poland's baptism. The idea of a pilgrimage seemed for many enlightened Poles simply ridiculous, and was approached with great reserve even by priests. But it turned out soon that something inconceivable was happening, something that might be called a conversion of the whole society. The most striking were -- I quote here a report from the pilgrimage of the image in the archdiocese of Wrocław -- "thousands and hundreds of cases of reconciliation and forgiveness in the spirit of evangelical love. During missions and spiritual retreats in almost every parish there were special services combined with mass reconciliations".

It is surprising that an event that lasted ten years and that gradually and systematically ploughed the whole country and caused the spiritual renewal of the society was hardly noticed by the intellectual elites. This is partially explainable by the obstinacy of censorship at that time, caring that the pilgrimage left no traces in the radio, TV, or press. In any case, it is a fact that while this powerful event was happening and objectively passing almost unnoticed it was experienced every single day by several or ten thousand people in still other towns and villages. It is time now to attempt a more detailed description and deeper understanding of that phenomenon, while several million witnesses still live.

Services of universal reconciliation are held in Poland to this day, yet in a very modest form. Their most frequent occasion is the so-called parish missions that each parish has the duty to organize every ten years. Also, not more often than every ten years, a service of renewal of marital vows is celebrated, and all couples living in the parish are invited to take part. Because the service is dedicated also to strife or even broken marriages, many a time its fruit is withdrawal of divorce claims or reconciliation of spouses even after a legal divorce.

Forgiveness

Traditions of reconciliation in the face of death are almost over, even if they were very rich in the past. People were afraid to leave this world in the state of hostility towards any of their neighbors. A similar fear arose over the possibility that my enemy could die without an opportunity to reconcile with me. The majesty of impending death and the fact that both sides were vitally interested in reconciliation facilitated it even if the disagreements were long-lived and the resentment was difficult to overcome. The average Pole spontaneously recalls in this context the confession of Jacek Soplica from the tenth book of *Pan Tadeusz*: the scene of forgiveness granted to the dying by the old Steward moves the more strongly that the reader has been previously introduced into the state of Gerwazy's mind which seemed to exclude any possibility of reconciliation.

Forgiving one's wrongdoers and requesting forgiveness once belonged to the scenario of an ideal death preserved in many testimonies. Let us recall here an unusual testimony, namely, a fragment of a letter by Jan Jeziorański written on the eve of his completely unexpected and lawless (even in the light of law of the invader) execution. Jeziorański had been joined to the four members of the insurrectional National Government sentenced to death only because according to the public opinion this government was composed of five persons, and Russian authorities wanted to turn the execution into a symbolic act of stifling the January uprising (1863-1864). Lawlessly sentenced to death, Jeziorański writes: "I know that tomorrow I am going to die. I do not know what law those

who ordained me this destiny take into account. No one presented me any faults of mine; only one person testified, and was unable to repeat his testimony face to face. They slapped my face, spat on me, and kicked me. I pleaded guilty before the commission, but I revoked everything in court on the fourth of July, and have not been interrogated until now. Today I learn that tomorrow my life on earth will come to an end. I forgive them -- and may the merciful God forgive me".

There are two other customs related to death that deserve mention. There was a custom of imposing on the harmed the duty to pray for his wrongdoer when the latter was dying. The dynamics of this custom is very well reflected in memories of a peasant from the Śrem neighborhood, contained in the once famous anthology of folk texts, edited by Karol Ludwik Koniński. He recalls how deeply his childish sense of justice was wounded when his mother told him to pray for a wrongdoer of their family who was dying at that time. His mother argued: "we have to forgive everything, for it depends on us if his soul goes to heaven; if we do not forgive him, he will not be saved". This conviction that the salvation of great wrongdoers is impossible without the prayers of their victims is referred to by Władysław Tarnowski in his poem "On Nikolai's Death" (*Na śmierć Mikołaja*) appealing for prayers for the recently dead Tzar Nikolai I, the greatest enemy of Poles among Russian rulers.

In many regions of Poland there was a custom of reconciling the dead with the living during burial ceremonies. According to a record by Oskar Kolberg from the eighteen eighties, the reconciliation was held in the following way: "when a funeral procession passed by a religious statue or by a cross, it stopped and the coffin lid was opened. Then somebody from elder relatives excused all the attendants in the name of the dead more or less in the following words: "This soul asks you to forgive her everything she did wrong unto you, all her faults that she has towards you, all harms she has done, whatever you might have suffered. Do you forgive, do you forget?' -- The present said, answered one after another: `We do not remember what did this soul do wrong unto us, we do not bear any grudge'. Some people said: `Let her sleep in God! Let her have eternal rest! Let her behold eternal brightness!' Then they closed the lid and carried the deceased to a cemetery".

Today this custom has practically vanished. Only sometimes is its spirit is recalled during burial sermons.

Proverbs

An even more efficient -- and at the same time more discrete -- educator than social mores is everyday speech. Janusz Korczak, a pedagogue in the most proper sense of the word, a marvelous theoretician and author of very popular books for children, an orphanage director who willingly went to a gas chamber to accompany his pupils, wrote about it very wisely:

Native speech is not rules and mores especially selected and designed for children, but the air that their souls breathe together with the collective soul of the whole nation. It contains truth and doubts, faith and mores, love and reluctance, license and seriousness, the whole dignity and plain meanness, wealth and poverty, everything that was created by bards and poets and everything that goons vomited in their drunken visions, centuries of collective work and dark years of enslavement.

Let us have a closer look at just the proverbs. Among them are appeals for accord: "Accord edifies, discord destroys", and admonishments reminding that the other feels the same way we do:

"Do not do unto the other what you yourself dislike". Often proverbs remind us of the fact that our sense of having suffered injuries results often from our egocentrism: "The one who is more guilty runs to court", "We pardon ourselves, but we examine others", "We inscribe rancor on marble, and beneficence on sand". In proverbs there is much conviction that it is not worth while reclaiming injuries: "It is better to forgive wrongdoings than to go to court", "Yield to the stupid in the middle of the road", and, what is more important, you will not achieve anything good by harming others: "Nobody can enrich himself with injuries done to others", "Even those who do wrong abhor what they do".

Another group of proverbs draws our attention, pointing to the impossibility of radical hostility between people: "I would not wish it upon my worst enemy", "Even my enemy would say I am right", "Virtue is worth praising even in enemies". Still other proverbs recall that victims happen to be co-responsible for harms suffered: "There are no enemies that you have not grown," or that the mechanism of revenge is propelled with stable acceleration and that for this reason it should be stopped at the very beginning: "Think about revenge, and the devil will slip arms into our hands".

The latter proverb passed into everyday language from the literature (yet it is not excluded that Mickiewicz, writing the mentioned Soplica's confession, used an already existing saying). More known and more often repeated is the saying of blessed Queen Jadwiga (died 1399), who, having obtained from her husband the reparation of harm done to peasants, was to say: "but who will give them back their tears?"

Education

Self-propagated linguistic forms of this kind educate the society probably more efficiently than planned educational actions aimed at forming in people the attitude of reconciliation and the ability to overcome resentments. In truth, in Polish pedagogical thought there was a lot of such effort, but we should not overestimate their significance. Fr. Stanisław Konarski (died 1773), a classic of Polish pedagogue, founder of the Collegium Nobilium -- a school that educated the last generation of the best citizens of pre-partitional Poland -- recalled in the school regulations: "Do not keep in hearts rancor for any harms that must be always magnanimously forgiven".This remark may be quite banal, which of course does not at all mean that recalling it was senseless.

Much more in this matter would be offered by Fr. Grzegorz Piramowicz, for many years' a coworker of the Commission of National Education, who in his book, edited in 1787, entitled "Teachers' Duties" (*Powinności nauczyciela*) encouraged introducing students to the art of a just settlement of disagreement.

When there is a dissent among some children and a complaint comes to the teacher's ears, let him appoint one or three among the students and order them to think the whole matter over, listening to the disputants. Let these arbiters first try to bring the dissenters into accord and reconciliation; if they fail, let them judge who is guilty and sentence the guilty to some kind of retribution, depending on whether he offended his colleague with words or in another way, or if he took something of his belongings. The teacher should tell those whom he appointed to judge as convincingly as he can that they should consider the matter without any anger or favor for one or the sides involved, irrespective of friendship, neighborhood, bonds of blood, former services or grudges. The arbiters should expose all injuries and injustice when they decide who owes what to whom. If they are wrong, the teacher should show them how and why they erred. If they did so on

purpose, he should show them what a sin it is, make them feel ashamed, admonish them and sometimes, due to circumstances, punish them for their injustice.

Historians dealing with the Polish education system probably would be able to tell us if this project was put into practice, or may be able to point to similar initiatives. But -- I repeat -- we should not overestimate the significance of strictly pedagogical thought in the domain of shaping the spirit of reconciliation and of social contempt for revenge.

History and Recent Realizations

We presented briefly the spiritual situation of Poles in regard to forgiveness, the situation that made it possible to transfer the ideals we speak about into the domain of political thought and action. As we know, in recent years Polish political interest has focused mainly around the question of regaining an independent state or its sovereignty. The attitude towards partitioners and invaders was -- and it could not be otherwise -- a very important component of this interest. It is this deeply rooted ideal of forgiveness and of love of enemies which determined that these ideas began to be present in reflection and in real attitudes towards the wrongdoers of the nation and the enemies of its liberty and independence.

The above outline forces us to refrain from presenting, even very briefly, the history of the problem. I will restrain myself to indicating a couple of facts that passed into the collective memory of Poles, and of which it is difficult to overestimate the influence in shaping today's views and attitudes. I shall begin with an event that was perhaps without precedence or analogy in the whole history of wars, and about which all young Poles learn during the lessons on their country's history: the great manifestation of the Polish-Russian friendship held in Warsaw on January 25, 1831, in the second month of the November uprising. The goal of that manifestation, enthusiastically supported by the Polish society, was to stress that the war with Russia was not a war with Russians, but with the tzarist despotism. It was then that there appeared on Polish banners the slogan "For our liberty and yours", which from then on has been a permanent presence on Polish liberation symbols. Even if somebody attempted to interpret these events in a drastically reductionist manner, as aimed at weakening the fighting spirit in the army of the enemy, it would be difficult not to notice that an intense propaganda of friendship with the nation with whose state we are at war deviates from stereotyped patterns of war propaganda, which tries rather to denigrate the nation of the enemy. We should notice, moreover, that addressees of this propaganda were, for obvious reasons, above all Poles.

Contemporary European thought concerning relations between the nations is to a great extent dechristianized by pagan ideas of struggle for survival, for living space, for various priorities, etc. The events that took place in Warsaw on January 25, 1831 are easier to understand against the backdrop of Christian convictions that harm cannot enrich those who harm (for it rather weakens him), and that the recovery of our rights cannot essentially threaten anyone. These convictions were formulated in hundreds of ways in Polish liberation thought -- which is why we find there so many declarations renouncing revenge and so many dreams of creating just relations with our invaders.

Among the facts that deeply move Poles we should definitely mention the testimony of love of enemies made by Walerian Łukasiński. the great power of this testimony comes from the fact that it was made at the end of a horrible martyrdom, lasting 46 years. Major Łukasiński was sentenced in 1822 for his patriotic activity to seven years of imprisonment in a fortress. On the Tzar's personal order he was imprisoned for several dozen years in conditions of absolute isolation

-- in a single cell, deprived of possibility of any contact with his family, without the right to write and to receive letters, without access to newspapers and books. Prison authorities so meticulously fulfilled the Tzar's orders that, in order to make it impossible for the prisoner to hear any voices, they put him in a cell located on the second underground level of the fortress; food was brought by three soldiers, controlling one another so that the prohibition of speaking to the prisoner would be observed. At the end of Łukaszewski's life this unhuman regime was alleviated, which allowed him to begin to write his memoirs. He wrote his memoirs from the perspective of someone who -- as he stressed himself -- achieved the state of absolute independence: he feared nothing and did not expect anything from people anymore. Now, this man, so horribly harmed, appealed to all his compatriots for reconciliation with Russians, at the same time ardently protesting against the injuries suffered from them by the Polish nation.

Another fact, of a quite different character, is to be found in pages of Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel "The Teutonic Knights" (*Krzyżacy*). It is obvious, and nothing unusual, that some writers take up the subject of forgiveness and love of neighbors. In Polish literature, however, it is simply difficult to find a writer that would not attempt to deal with this topic. Yet the novel in question became a social event: the unusual popularity that it gained proved that Poles saw in it their collective answer to the intensified germanization policy applied at the end of the XIXth century by the German state. One of the most moving stories of this novel is a description of forgiveness granted by the blinded Jurand to one of the German knights, the cause of Jurand's own blindness and murderer of his daughter, who was passed into his hands to allow Jurand an act of justice.

Sienkiewicz popularized also in "The Teutonic Knights" a moving reflection -- described in the "Chronicles" of Jan Długosz who himself participated in the battle of Grunwald (1410) -- of king Władysław Jagiełło on the Grunwald battle field: the King wept over the corpses of German knights who only several hours ago were his deadly enemies, and ordered that the deceased be granted a Christian funeral irrespective of the camp to which they belonged.

An event especially remembered by the present generation of Poles is the proclamation made in December 1965 by the Polish to the German Bishops, which could be summarized in the sentence: "We forgive and we ask for forgiveness". Even if during the war the Polish underground press had published many prayers for Germans and many appeals to forgive the invaders and murderers of our relatives, nevertheless the Bishops' acceptance of this attitude had to arouse considerable resistance in a society that lost during the war -- leaving aside Jews who also were our fellow citizens -- three million people (more than 10 percent of the nation), not to mention the radical devastation of the economy, a loss of state sovereignty, and privation of the ability to decide Poland's post-war political system. Based on these circumstances, the official propaganda undertook on the Bishops' proclamation an hysterical attack unimaginable in a normal state, since only in a totalitarian state is it possible to tune the tone of enunciations of all mass media to one and the same melody of intense hatred and to eliminate from the public forum people who think otherwise.

As a result of this attack on even the very idea of forgiveness and reconciliation, its understanding revived and deepened. A part of the society yielded to the atmosphere created by the mass media. This is the easier to understand as it was only twenty years after the war and the wounds left by this disaster were still deeply felt. Yet that was a momentary disorientation which people quickly overcame. The mass participation and enthusiasm with which the Bishops were received by the population -- beginning from April 1966 until the end of that year -- in cities during the celebrations of the millennium of Poland's baptism was an evident proof that in the dispute

concerning the Bishops' proclamation addressed to Bishops of Germany the society stood on the side of its Bishops.

The last proof that the idea of forgiveness and love of enemies still lives in this society are numerous prayers and poems written in this spirit during the martial law (1981-1982), as well as after the murder by officers of the Communist security services on the person of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko (1984). It is remarkable that directly after Fr. Popiełuszko's burial a crowd of many thousands of people marched spontaneously to the headquarters of the secret services and passed before it chanting: "We forgive, we forgive!"

<div align="center">

Chapter XV
Polish Traditions on Work

Jerzy W. Gałkowski

</div>

Here I assume that work traditions are everything preserved and handed down from one generation to another concerning labor: its descriptions, evaluation, and significance in reference both to individuals and to the whole society. Most of these testimonies, even the earliest, are still actual in spite of considerable historical and social changes. It is also understandable that, depending on the time that has passed and on the regions of Poland, there have been considerable changes not only in terms of quality or content of the views concerning labor, but also in reference to the number of people committed to these views. Nevertheless, even if contemporary sociological analyses -- although far from perfect -- are made in this domain, research concerning the history of this problem is very scarce in Poland. Certain factors remain to be clarified both in the history of Polish culture and today.

Materials for analyzing the Polish tradition on work, as in the case of other cultures, can be found in very numerous and diverse sources. All have not been suitably analyzed nor has attention always been paid to the problems in which we are interested. These sources -- stemming from various historical epochs -- were initially chronicles and other monuments of Polish historiography, sermons and lives of the Saints. Later on, they were joined by theological and philosophical treatises, as well as by various social programs. Also in literature -- in poetry, drama, and prose -- there are many remarks, sometimes very meaningful, concerning labor. Huge resources of thought about labor are to be found in journalistic writings of the last two centuries. Even if these writings were strongly conditioned by the place and time of their creation, often they afford more general reflections. The activity of the Polish Church, documented by numerous enunciations, especially during the last one hundred years, is also a rich source of thought about labor. Finally, since the middle of the XIXth century in Poland there has been an unusual abundance of scientific works concerning such domains as economy, sociology, ergonomics, and praxeology.

Changes in the intensity of the occurrence of the problem of labor in written documents depend on changes in Poland's internal and external situation. Thus in striving at social and economic reforms and at the amelioration of the situation of lower social layers of peasants and townsmen -- whether in terms of the country's internal situation, or of striving at state and national revival in response of external threats -- there has always been attention to labor, stressing its significance and value.

Nevertheless, the question of labor, even if present throughout history in all expressions of Polish culture, does not yet play a leading role, except for some short periods, especially during the last two centuries. This state of affairs converges with a general trend in the European culture, where work acquires extremely great importance only in some periods and only in some Protestant societies.

Early History: The Christian and Aristocratic Traditions

In Poland work obviously was related to the course of history and to geopolitical location of the country. Placed at the crossroads of the expansion of European and extraeuropean powers --

German, Mongolian, and later also Russian, Turkish, Swedish, and Austrian -- Poland manifests above all its military work, being proud since a certain period of its position of the bulwark of Christianity? Also although we do not know what is cause and what effect, an exceptionally high proportion of the population belonged to the *szlachta*, that is, nobility or knightly stratum. This group is several times (even as much as ten times, in comparison to France) more numerous than the nobility of other European states.

Medieval Polish chronicles, in accord with the general traditions of Mediterranean culture, recorded the legendary beginning of the Polish state and the origin of the first historical royal dynasty -- the Piasts. In the course of time the name Piasts became a common name for rulers of native descent, in contrast to those who came from abroad. After the unjust king Popiel was dismissed by a revolt of his subjects (VIIth-VIIIth century), as the founder of a new dynasty which reigned until the middle of the XIVth century, there was chosen a poor craftsman, Piast the Wheelwright. More recently historians tend to assume that his name *Piast* comes from the function that he had in the court of the former ruler: *piastun*, a caretaker or guardian of the princely sons. The universality of this legend proves, on the one hand, the sense of democracy, even an anti-aristocratic attitude. On the other hand, and of the utmost importance here, is that it testifies to a very high evaluation of human labor, especially of physical labor. It is to be noted that the last ruler of Poland from this dynasty, Casimir the Great, was also called the king of peasants, for in the face of the expansion of privileges of the nobility and the loss of rights by the peasants he defended the latter.

The main interest of the chroniclers was in actions that led to defense of the state against alien powers and to its expansion; hence these concern the intensification of military power. However, both chronicles and other historical sources stressed also other activities directed at expanding the wealth of the state, the society, and particular citizens. Kings such as Bolesław the Valiant, Casimir the Renewer, Casimir the Great, and also numerous magnates, bishops, and abbots, and in the cities patricians and the many "workers" deserve the gratitude of their descendants due to their application to work.

Deepening and consolidating the social inequality expressed in the political, legal, and financial status of particular social strata, as well as the division of labor associated therewith, evoked a certain kind of ideology. To justify this division writers reached for alleged religious justifications, derived from the Old Testament. For instance Maciej Stryjkowski (second half of the XVIth century) in his chronicle claims that such a division has a very noble tradition, going as far as to the times of Noah who thus assigned tasks to his sons, laying foundations of social stratification: *Tu Sem ora, Cham labora*, *Japhet rege et protege* ("You, Sem, pray; you Cham, work; and you, Japhet, reign and defend"). That social divisions and the division of tasks results from both divine and natural law remained in the social consciousness for centuries.

The postulated and factually implemented division of work resulting in the lower social strata, peasants and townsmen being assigned worse, that is, manual, work, whereas upper layers were supposed to undertake more noble occupations. This did not mean that *szlachta* and aristocracy were to sink into stagnation and laziness. Models of life propagated in the Middle Ages and later, especially in historical moments decisive for the nation, were far from apotheoses of idleness. Of course, there was an gap between the postulated and the factual way of life. Yet this state of affairs contributed to the currency of rather abundant literature blaming laziness and advising application to work.

Industriousness was advised for many reasons. One of them saw laziness as a source of moral vices, as a source of sin against God and people. Industriousness was also referred to love of the

fatherland, and to care of the common good. Looking after the common, not only the individual, welfare, after the country's safety, and after growth of the native culture was considered nobility of the spirit. Hence came praise of those who raised cities, castles, and churches, who by their efforts, wealth, and wise command contributed to the growth of the country's civilization and culture.

This praise was also reflected by dominant tendencies in the theology and philosophy of that time. According to historians of science, the main motives for founding Krakw University were practical, that is, educating people needed to administer the country which was one of the most dynamic and increasingly powerful states of that time. That is why Krakow University stressed above all law and medicine, as well as the other liberal arts. To a lesser extent the theoretical and speculative domains were developed, in other words, those related to contemplation; human *praxis* was considered more important. In the domain of philosophy and theology we see the greatest development in ethics, and most of all in analyzing social and moral phenomena. This set of questions dominates Polish philosophy and theology to this day. In that history of Polish moral and social thought stand out Paweł Włodkowic (XVth century), on the one hand, and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the former Primate of Poland, and Karol Wojtyła-John Paul II, on the other. The space between them contains the whole pleiad of illustrious persons stemming from all social layers, from peasants and townsmen to aristocrats or even rulers of Poland (king Stanisław Leszczyński), of artists and savants, of representatives of the clergy, of social reformers and politicians. They contributed to enriching the spirit and to multiplying the common good. These questions of human action and creativity, of moral and social values seem characteristic for Polish culture and the Polish tradition of philosophical and theological thought.

The views on labor found in the various sources intermingle distinct traditions, which also is in accord with the more general situation of European societies. Their cultural differentiation consists not only in carrying on different contents, but also in the intensity of the opinions maintained, in the radicalism and durability of their particular elements. The earliest Polish sources reflect above all, if not exclusively, Christian ideas. This is understandable if we take into account the fact that medieval and later school systems were created by the Church: educated people were above all priests and monks. Because, however, efforts were made to provide a school for each parish, the number of educated people increased. At the same time, there developed a broader and deeper knowledge of commonly accessible cultural facts. The Middle Ages had provided access to a large part of Greek and Roman literature, and the Renaissance popularized and introduced a broader cultural exchange with ancient poetry and drama. These two traditions carried with them a completely different vision of the sense and value of work.

The Judeo-Christian tradition considered labor as a usual and normal mode of human life. It stressed the common duty of work, irrespective of social status; it was simply God's commandment. In this context, personal models of the Old Testament were recalled. Prophets and rulers of the chosen people stemmed mainly from the working class -- shepherds, farmers, craftsmen. The Old Testament tradition is characterized by respect for work and disdain of idleness.

The Old Testament is saturated with respectful descriptions of work and professions. The chronicles of those times may have wanted to transmit such models in pointing to the plebeian descent of the first, mythical rulers of Poland. This tendency is even more strengthened by the New Testament. The Gospel shows us that both Christ, the highest model of Christianity, and the apostles come from peasants, craftsmen and fishermen. The closest continuation of this tradition and its visible example were the emerging monesteries with their mission of both evangelizing and

civilizing. Raising churches and cloisters, founding schools and hospitals, creating art, the physical work of monks -- all this was performed along with pastoral activities. These efforts were an everyday reality and example.

Nevertheless, Christianity found the Polish state already formed and a society organized and endowed with its own traditions. There existed distinct and hierarchically organized social layers -- the highest class: the king, dukes and magnates; the middle classes, the poor, finally the slaves. The boundaries between them were changing because of their inner dynamism, of influences from outside, and of the territorial expansion of the state. Federation with Lithuania (including the Ruthenian lands that it comprised) in the second half of the XIVth century, initiated a process of significant social changes. These changes were also supported by a massive migration. To Poland came and settled -- mainly in the cities -- people from Western Europe and from the East, for instance Armenians. A part of the Polish population, both nobility and peasants, settled in the thinly populated territories of today's Ukraine included in the new Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In the course of time, social relations and relations of ownership in Poland increasingly polarized. The nobility acquired more and more rights; peasants became more and more dependant and were charged with increasing economic obligations. The situation was similar in the cities.

The second tradition, corresponding to the above mentioned process, is the aristocratic tradition. Its sources were two-fold. One, which is difficult to draw from historical sources, is the indigenous own social and cultural tradition. The second is the Greco-Roman tradition, received together with development of the system of education and with increasing knowledge of culture. This tradition is built on the philosophical views of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and the literary legacy of Homer. Apart from Hesiod, who was rather an exception in this regard, these works included praise of an aristocratic style of luxury and comfort. Only such a life is worthy of a free citizen. Its proper occupations are managing his manor, war and politics. At the same time, this tradition expressed its contempt for all other kinds of work, especially physical work, and it despised those social strata that had to acquire the means necessary for life by the work of their hands.

It is understandable that these two great traditions intermingled. Medieval literature, consisting mainly of theological and philosophical treatises and sermons, includes above all moral teachings. There are also theoretical considerations concerning morality, society, politics, and economy -- all in connection with the problem of work. Several intertwined motives in this can be taken as recommended models of life. They partially complement one another, but partially they are disparate. Generally speaking, the commonly recommended attitude was active, irrespective of social descent. According to the Christian tradition, everyone is obliged to be active, but good acts are distinct from bad ones. We often meet the opinion that inasmuch an occupation is not reprehensible in itself, such as the profession of hangmen or usurers, it does not harm anyone's dignity, even in the case of those who rank high in the social hierarchy. Yet it does not mean that everybody is entrusted with the same kind of work. The most often recommended division of work was accommodated to the tripartite social division, symbolized by the person of the priest, the nobleman, and the ploughman. In this division is reflected the Platonic idea of social organization and the Aristotelian division of human activities into contemplation, action, and production.

Nevertheless, we must stress that the situation in Poland was somehow specific. The weight of divine service or of priestly occupation was never put in question, apart from sporadic cases of extremely dissident religious groups. The contemplative life, in which we should also count purely theoretical scientific disciplines, never enjoyed much respect in Poland. Generally, though not as an unbroken rule, contemplation was suspected of the sin of laziness and sterility. This also may

be the reason for relatively less interest, in comparison to Western Europe, in theological literature, speculative philosophy and mysticism. Priests were rather expected to be diligent in matters of service of the altar and in their pastoral work. The active were more appreciated than the contemplative religious orders. Generally, however, monks tended to combine harmoniously practical activities and theory.

In contrast to priests, the layer of people who worked physically, be it incultivating the soil or in crafts or trade, were for this reason considered to be the lowest. The low esteem they enjoyed resulted not only from their physical effort, but more importantly from the fact that their activity was not free, but dependant upon and submitted to others.

According to the Christian vision of man and his ultimate destiny, labor was not treated as a goal or an autonomous value in itself. This, however, did not negate its value. On the contrary, work was seen as a means necessary for the life of individuals, their families and their fatherland. It expressed the basic commandment of love of neighbors. Finally it responded to the recommended prosocial attitude. Hence, work as social service became a moral and religious duty.

Regarding the nobility there are the contrary view that if someone has wealth sufficient for himself and to help others, he is not obliged to work. This does not mean that the nobility was released from the active life and could remain idle. The tasks assigned to this stratum by natural law and God's will were rather of a different kind. The nobleman's duty was to care about the whole sphere of public and political life, to participate in steering the course of the state, and above all to defend the fatherland. Hence the nobility was burdened with a special kind of requirement. Called to hold the highest and the most perfect social functions, the nobility was obliged to look after their own perfection, after their virtue and military effectiveness. This in turn excluded certain occupations. Noblemen were supposed to run their manors, they even were expected to lend a hand with the more burdensome work, encouraging their subjects with their own example and maintaining the good physical form necessary for knightly actions. They could not, however, engage in crafts or trade under the threat of loss of nobility of spirit, even if also that restriction was not meticulously followed and if such activities were not absolutely forbidden. The stratum of nobility (*szlachta*) was in Poland relatively numerous in comparison with other European countries. Apart from great and medium landowners, there existed a considerable mass of gentry and yeomen.

Many representatives of the latter group were forced by economic circumstances to personal physical work or to seek service in magnates' courts. Yet even then they tried to preserve their personal dignity, or at least its appearance. A nobleman in service of another nobleman could not perform works held ancillary. For these works were destined for people of lower state. Also for this reason noblemen who worked as court attorneys were not always respected, for -- in contrast to the noble service of judges -- they gave their abilities and tongues for money at the others' disposal. Also it was not suitable for noblemen to engage in artistic activities professionally rather than as amateurs, treating their work as a basis for their existence. But in this domain too there were certain differentiations. Among writers there prevailed people of noble and magnate descent, who received quite good profit from their work. Yet this income was treated not as remuneration for work, but as an expression of recognition of the artist's talents. On the other hand, up to a certain time it was impossible to meet noblemen among painters, and especially among Polish sculpturers. The same was true of people in theatre and music. This was due to the fact that the performance of these arts was combined with physical effort. From abroad we have a remarkable example of Leonardo da Vinci who showed his contempt for another great artist, the sculpturer Michelangelo, only because of the great physical effort of sculpting.

The Xviiith Century: The Emergence of the Dignity of Work

In the course of time also this began to change. In the XVIIIth century we meet a nobleman-dramaturge, an actor and a director, Wojciech Bogusławski, creator of the Polish national theater. Another nobleman, a shoemaker, Jan Kiliński, was a political leader from the turn of the XVIIIth century. In the XIXth century there emerged a new social layer, the intelligentsia, that is, a group of people of science, arts, and other free occupations that won, although not without resistance, acknowledgement of intellectual work as the basis of their existence and as a social value.

Trade was also not an occupation suitable for noblemen. *Szlachta* could sell crops from their manors on the wholesale market, even personally floating corn to Gdańsk or driving oxen to distant cities. But retail trade was excluded, as well as buying crops from the others in order to resell them at a profit. This was an affair of merchants, Jews or townsmen who besides earned quite large fortunes on this business. At the same time, the law forbad Jews and townspeople from possessing land, a restriction that often was passed over. Of course, usury was firmly condemned by the church. It was not suitable for any Christian to engage in such operations, for they were held sinful. That is why the role of bankers was played by rich townsmen and Jews (to whom usury was not forbidden). In the course of time also this state of affairs was subject to change. In the XVIIIth century there emerged various enterprises, manufacturers, and later warehouses and banks owned by noblemen and magnates. Among their employees we can meet some from the nobility, rather minor and impoverished as a result of various fates or of the oppression by the invaders, for after each national uprising a considerable group of *szlachta* was materially ruined. These people joined the rows of intelligentsia or engaged in trade or crafts, even if this was held by public opinion to be a loss of caste. Yet the wealth obtained, especially if it was great, ennobled also these occupations.

The social and economic stratification of Polish society caused a deterioration in the destiny of the lower classes, especially peasants. In the worst situation were peasants who were subjects of nobility; better fortune was had by those who lived in royal and church manors. Literary evidence, sermons, and sociopolitical treatises between the XVth and the XXth century reflected the tragic destiny of peasants almost entirely deprived of civil rights, and mercilessly exploited by their lords. Peasants, while paying excessive taxes, were forced to maintain passing officials and soldiers almost without limit (which later were gradually introduced, although not always efficiently). They were ascribed to the soil, forced to consent to increasing amounts of statute labor, as well as to various services, and treated simply as living instruments. They lived often in tragic conditions, without any hope for an amelioration of their destiny. That is why many people of that time, more enlightened and with a sensitive Christian conscience, wanted to move the hearts of the people responsible for this state of affairs, even by the very fact of showing the peasant's misery.

Marcin Bielski, a nobleman poet from the XVIth century, writes:

We call peasants [*chłopi*] so often our servants and slaves
Even if from their labor we advantage take
Even if God knows only how long they can so
Live if they without rest only work and bow
Before us, as slaves treated and abused by all

(The word *chłop*, from the Russian *chołop*, comes from the Mongolian language, where it means a slave.)

Writers and activists did not limit themselves to showing the misery of the peasant; they also appealed openly for a radical amelioration of the peasants' life. The motives for these pleas were diverse. Above all they were religious: people were created equal by God and all were equally redeemed by Christ. Besides, Jesus Christ, His Mother and the apostles worked manually to earn their living. So people who work in a similar manner cannot live in humiliation and contempt. Amelioration of the peasants' destiny was urged also by the natural sense of justice that those who devoted their life to work could live in dignity. Finally, economic arguments were presented: it is evident that the work of peasants undergirds the national income and its social welfare, so even the very care of national welfare implies care of those who contribute to it. Yet there were other voices, saying that attributing more rights can demoralize peasants, for, being less "noble" of their very nature, they are not able properly to use their freedom. This argument, known also from other times and areas, probably was simply a rationalization of group egoism.

The situation of townsmen was a little better than that of peasants, but also more diversified. We cannot compare the situation of the patriciate -- the bourgeoisie very rich layer that factually and legally enjoyed more opportunities -- with minor craftsmen, and above all with the paid workers or lumpenproletariat that filled the cities of that time.

In writings from the Middle Ages and from modern times we find an image of a more diversified social layer, as well as an appreciation of their life and the postulates for reform which result therefrom. This literature defends peasants as well as townsmen who, working with their hands, fulfill God's commandment, and so cannot be disdained. It is different with those who do not work. If this is a result of unfortunate destiny -- the ill or cripple, the orphans of, war or epidemic -- they should find help and care, which is why various charitable institutions were created, mainly by the Church. If, however, people do not work because of laziness, then not only do they not deserve help, but they should be sentenced to compulsory work, to a kind of slavish service. These people are contrasted with peasants with their factual compulsory labor, which is why the misery of the latter requires immediate relief. Documents praise and set as example those Lords whose peasants enjoy wealth and fatherly care.

A little different attitude in theory and practice towards labor occurred within ecclesiastical institutions, such as monasteries or parishes. In religious communities -- apart from those that begged, which often were reprimanded as idle -- work was a duty. We learn from various critiques, sometimes malicious, that this duty was not always fulfilled ardently enough and that monks lived above their means. Yet the words of St. Augustine were recalled that a monk who does not work fails to do his duty, as well as those of St. Benedict: *ora et labora* (pray and work). The civilizing efforts of the Church, both of monasteries and of the people who surrounded them, were enormous and are visible to this day. They were expressed in raising sacred and temporal edifices, in new methods of work and in technical means, in works of science and art, in pastoral and charitable activity. These attainments were achieved by means of work for the greater glory of God and for the sake of neighbors. Many saints, proposed by the Church as models of Christian life acquired their merits through work. It is therefore no wonder that some Christian thinkers in Poland in all periods of its history placed work on the same level as military accomplishments, or even higher.

A nearly pathological striving for liberty, increasing among noblemen and tending towards anarchy, threatened the good of the whole nation. On the other hand, the activity of powerful and aggressive neighboring countries, mainly Russia, intentionally demoralized the Polish society and evoked wars that destroyed the Polish economy and state. The middle of the XVIIth century was

marked by an internal war between the Ruthenian nation, awakening to its civil and national maturity, and the noblemen's Poland, unwilling to recognize these aspirations. Not without significance were also the religious differences and dissent fomented by the neighboring Russia. Soon through Polish lands there passed the Swedish war machine called the "deluge", leaving behind ruins of many splendid monuments of architecture, mainly castles, which are frightening to this day. In spite of that Poland managed to defend itself, and shortly thereafter, in 1683, in coalition with the German and Austrian armies, gained a glorious victory over the powerful Turkish army in the famous battle of Vienna. The author of this victory and commander of joint armies was King Jan III Sobieski. Nevertheless, all these events seriously weakened the forces of the Polish kingdom. Hence, in the XVIIIth century, the century of the Enlightenment, there was an enormous intellectual effort and practical reform aimed at modernization of the state structures and economy. Among these attempts work had its important place through a fresh approach to its significance and value and through a reformation of the social structures of labor.

Polish social thought, including the question of work, was not isolated from its European context. The influence was mutual. The hypothesis is unwarranted that Polish thought about labor expressed only the class consciousness of their authors as is claimed by Marxist scholars, or that it was formed under the pressure of social events though, of course, such influences did exist. At the same time, however, we can speak about a major influence of religious and philosophical doctrines on the form of social views, and directly also on formal and informal social structures.

Since the second half of the XVIIth century there has been an obvious evolution in views on the sense and purpose of human work. Until that time opinions about the need of activity broadly understood and about the moral and eschatological meaning of work prevailed. So for instance Stanisław from Skarbmierz (1360-1431) writes that "physical work is useful for attaining eternal life". But what was most stressed was conformity of the division labor with social stratification. Sebastian Fabian Klonowic, a poet, townsman, and mayor of Lublin (1546-1602), while writing that manual work is useful for all, distinguishe occupations suitable for noblemen. Similarly Maciej Stryjkowski (1547-1593) in his poem "The Messenger of Virtue" (*Goniec cnothy*) says:

> For God hath given office to us all
> And watch'd that everybody hath his role
> Noblemen, priests, plougers, all of them
> For that let us praise Him.

But other earlier trends also strengthened, appreciating the social and economic value of labor. The well-known European thinker and reformer, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (the first half of the XVIth century), and later Abndrzej Maksymilian Fredro (1620-1676), and others agreed that not ownership, but labor is the foundation of social welfare.

Since the XVIIth century this motive became dominant in Polish thought about work. To illustrate this thesis we could quote dozens of more or less well known names and anonymous writings. It is true that moral and eschatological evaluation of labor still subsisted (for instance in Stanisław Poniatowski, the father of the last king of Poland in the first half of the XVIIIth century), but the economic approach becomes common: labor is a source of wealth. From there, it is only one step to recognizing working people, including those who work physically as peasants and craftsmen, as full-fledged citizens. The recognized efficiency of labor raises the claim to full liberty for its creators.

Hugo Kołłątaj (1750-1812), in accord with the physiocratism that was fashionable at that time, writes that "soil is the only treasure of wealth", but adds immediately that "the human hand is a key without which it is not possible to reach the wealth mentioned above", and that "human labor not only has its genuine value, but is also a measure of the price and value of other things". Franciszek Salezy Jezierski (1740-1791) considers peasants and townsmen to be the "first estate of the nation", "the nation as a whole". A poet, Adam Stanisław Naruszewicz (1733-1796) writes:

Man is born to work; who loses his time
Lives as those overwhelmed by an eternal dream

In Pozer's "The New Calendar" -- such calendars were among the most popular literary forms of that time -- we read: "all is acquired by work; work is, so to speak, the soul of the whole good of every man"; "thanks to work, everybody can go beyond his actual condition".

The Xixth and Xxth Centuries: Romantic and Positivist Views of Work

In the XIXth century, we observe an enormous development of Polish thought about work. The earlier tradition was strengthened by two significant impulses. On the one hand, the loss of the state, entailing incessant striving at its restoration by means of armed efforts, drew even more attention to the need of Poland for economic strength. On the other, the great emigration movement caused thousands of people from all social strata to face the need to earn their life abroad. These people did not always find the work they were prepared for. New experiences drew their attention to the sense and meaning of life and evoked sometimes very radical theoretical attitudes. They referred to the experiences of the first Christians, to Christian communism, as well as to utopian socialism as conceived by Owen and Fourier. These ideas found their way back to Poland, where Poles on their own made theoretical and practical efforts to strengthen their economic situation. Even if these efforts were often understood as competitive in relation to liberation efforts, yet they resulted in important practical and intellectual achievements. The greatest economic and social accomplishments were had in Great Poland, located in the Prussian partition. At that time there emerged, more there than in other parts of Poland although not without hard struggle with the German partitioner, many economic institutions. Continuously perfected, they persisted till the first years after the second World War, when they were completely abolished by Communist authorities. Solid patterns of efficient and upright work in agriculture, craft and industry were also created at that time.

The literature of the XIXth century pictured work in two ways. Romanticism stressed its sentimental and nostalgic side. An exception here is Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821-1883). In a period of transition to another literary epoch, he was the most "philosophizing" poet of that period. His poetical and philosophical thought about human destiny, about man's relation to God, to the world and to culture was deciphered only in our century. He showed temporal and eschatological vision in his work; hence many contemporary thinkers refer to his thoughts. The conclusion of his meditation from *Promethidion* (*Bogumił*, verses 185-186) is often recalled today: "for beauty is to rapture us to work, and work/work is so that we resurrect".

The following literary period, Polish positivism (the second half of the XIXth century), with its slogans of "organic work" and "work at the foundations", pointed to the need to reshape Polish society, to create new cultural foundations, and to place work among the highest human values and objectives. In this context, an eminent figure in the domain of literature is Bolesław Prus

(especially with his excellent novel "The Doll" -- *Lalka*), and among publicists Aleksander Świętochowski (1849-1938). Many writers at that time and later, such as Henryk Sienkiewicz, Stanisław Brzozowski (a writer and philosopher), Stefan Żeromski, Władysaw Stanisław Reymont, Maria Dąbrowska, developed these motives. Not mentioned here is the so-called socialist realism after the second World War, for the subject of labor was artificially imposed in it and served Communist indoctrination.

In a similar way the problem of work is represented on the level of science. It is not possible to enumerate all the motives or persons tackling this subject. It is possible, however, to point out the more significant figures. In the XIXth century there was Wojciech Jastrzębowski (1799-1882), a professor of agricultural sciences, who in his monumental work composed of many volumes laid the foundations for modern ergonomics. In the same domain there was also Józef Supiński (1804-1893). In philosophy one of the main figures was Stanisław Brzozowski who was simply thrilled by labor and considered it to be the foundation and source of all other values. The point of departure of his philosophical analysis was Marxism at the end of his short life (he died in 1911) he was working on a synthesis of Marxist and Christian thought. Jan Szewczyk (deceased in the 1970s) claimed Marxism to be a philosophy of labor. In the XXth century an eminent logician and philosopher, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, founder of praxeology, the science of efficient action, propagated the idea of the "good job" (*dobra robota*).

In the last half of our century the problem of work was analyzed in Poland by Marxists, but above all by Catholic philosophers and theologians. Among Marxists the main figures, apart from the above mentioned J. Szewczyk, were Tadeusz Jaroszyński and Tadeusz Kuczyński. Among Christian thinkers an eminent place was held by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the author of numerous basic publications, as well as Czesław Strzeszewski, Józef Majka, Czesław Bartnik, and Józef Tischner.

The picture of Polish thought about labor would not be complete if we did not mention "the paramount work" of the Catholic Church in the course of the last century. Many Polish bishops, as well as common pastors and theologians were very efficient in shaping the people's consciousness and creating various social institutions, awakening sensitivity to the value of labor.

A work that crowns in a way Polish thought about labor is the encyclical *Laborem exercens* by John Paul II. Though belonging to the whole Catholic Church, it is rooted in the Polish tradition.

The last half of the century was a period when new patterns and new traditions of work were forged in Poland. During the last war and occupation, in conditions resembling slavery, the patriotic duty of Poles was to work as badly as possible, for all benefits from their labor strengthened the enemy. After the war, new authorities -- the owners of the People's Republic of Poland, as they were called -- wanting to subjugate the society entirely to their command atomized it and destroyed earlier social structures. The Communist political system declared itself based on work. Paradoxically, however, no other political system depreciated labor to such an extent as did this. First of all, private property was destroyed. Not only industry, but trade, and even minor retailers and craftsmen were nationalized. Numerous so-called cooperatives were as a matter of fact state enterprises. All means of production became as if nobody's property. Even agriculture was partially nationalized in spite of peasant resistance. In such a situation, as writes John Paul II in *Laborem exercens*, the new Socialist managers played factually the role of owners, without, however, bearing any of the consequences of their bad management.

Also the relationship between the work done and the salaries received by workers was broken. Due to obsolete and incompetent industrial management, low labor efficiency, and the lack of consumer goods resulting therefrom, salaries were very low. A part of the goods produced was

distributed as a special reward for submissiveness and obedience towards Communist authorities. Apartments, cars, fridges, and washing machines became unavailable luxuries. Social and economic policy -- among others -- was the exclusive domain of the so-called *nomenklatura*, that is, of that part of the society that was bound up with the new authorities. All managerial positions, even the lowest, were assigned not according to competencies, but according to the so called "key", that is, according to the plans and interests of the *nomenklatura*. Also many workplaces were created not due to the needs of economy or administration, but because of the needs of the new ruling class. Totalitarian tendencies to manage and control every domain of life led to an overgrowth of police and bureaucratic apparatus, burdening the economy that was already weak enough. Moreover, this whole group of bureaucrats and guards of order, corrupt but well remunerated, purchased rare and particularly valuable goods for low prices, out of relation to their real value. This whole process, deepened by political and economical crises, led to a new and hitherto unknown mentality, expressed by the maxim: "I pretend that I work, and they pretend that they pay me".

Over the last half century Polish society did not consent to the imposed situation. The subsequent dates of 1956, 1968, 1976, 1980-1981, 1989 point out attempts, sometimes paid with blood, to return to liberty and normal life, to attempts to work in the Polish "system of work". The emergence of "Solidarity" and its further consequences meant not only looking for remedies for a sick state and social organism, but also striving to remove the poison that caused the disease. Poland -- its social organism, its "system of work" -- found itself beginning once again. Yet it has enough energy and good patterns, including those from its own traditions, to move along the way towards democracy, liberty and wealth. May it follow this path.

Chapter XVI
Universal Values in Polish Culture

Zygmunt Komorowski

The Meaning of Universal

Universalism as we understand it here means extending our thoughts, imagination, and actions on universal matters, reaching beyond the particularism of our own individual existence. Applying this concept to matters of culture may raise questions. For culture -- every culture -- develops on the ground of needs, values, images, knowledge, beliefs, and patterns of behavior that are universal inasmuch as they are proper to some extent to all people. These elements of culture based on the treasure gathered by "the others", even if the roots and sources of this gathered treasure sink somewhere into the dawn of history. Differences then are something secondary and transient, often imposed by recent conditions. Yet horizons of "proposals" offered by particular cultures, the stuff that human groups query and from which they choose may be and are in fact different -- wider or narrower.

Such an "horizon" in every culture -- to use here the expression of Józef Chałasiński -- is the "ideal element", that is, a culturally determined primordial goal of collective efforts and strivings. What is essential here is not the so called openness of particular cultures in themselves -- their inclination towards absorption and exchange in diffusion processes -- but above all the already formed and accepted imperative of engaging in "external" matters and of assuming responsibility for the destiny of "the others". In the case of national cultures this is the extent to which they can incite engagement in matters lying beyond a group's proper, national area of interest, or irrespective of the momentary interests of the nation. We may call it a culture-conditioned engagement in the realization of ideas for the sake of the common good.

To my understanding, "portability" or the ability to transplant elements of a culture is not a measure of universalism, for narrow egoism, conceitedness, chauvinism also happen to be fashionable, and hence "portable". What is essential are patterns and imperatives in the service of universal values and ideas.

In principle, engagement in this service is taught by all religions and ideologies claiming to be universally humane. Moreover, every national culture should be enlightened with universalism, just as every Christian should be a devoted altruist. Unfortunately, as we know, it is not always so in practice. Glorious chapters in the history of "Cain's tribe" seem to be so rare that it is right to remember them, without falling into euphoria, in order to stimulate and to educate present generations.

Speaking about universalism in the Polish culture, we should begin with the reproach of a "yeomen's complex" or provinciality (*zaściankowość*), that is, a lack of universalism. Many of our eminent artists and writers were accused of this vice, and we so accused them ourselves. Especially writers were charged with focusing only on our own affairs, unknown to "others" and allegedly not interesting to them. When we read Balzac, Tolstoy, Dostoevski, or even London -- say the accusers -- we meet there universal, global patterns and problems of the human condition. Yet Mickiewicz, Norwid, Wyspiański, or Żeromski still expatiate upon harms, struggles, and dreams of their nation.

Such accusations are raised as if there was no universal circle of nations harmed and reclaiming their rights, as if our "Polish pains" had no broader analogies. We meet here probably the same thought mechanism as in the movie public, in people who prefer to watch life in palaces rather than slums and ruins. Various serials and popular productions such as *Dallas*, *Dynasty*, *Gone with the Wind*, or sagas of Brasilian senators and barons seem to many film fans much more "worldly" and universal than such brilliant syntheses of recent Polish history as "Mother of Kings" (*Matka Królów*) or the sultry rooms of Wyspiański's "Wedding" (*Wesele*). Poor devils and loosers -- like poor relatives -- usually seem to be provincial. God beware if they want to talk about themselves. It is true that there is a lot of "laying claims" in the Polish cultural tradition; what is worse, this trend happens to be contagious. What irritates worldly "universalists", is that various Greeks, Romanians, Armenians, Kurds, Basques and God knows who begin to present particular claims.

At the same time, it is impossible to deny that Polish culture has already many fruits that are widely known in the world and are discovered from time to time with enthusiasm by representatives of even very remote cultural circles. Alien admirers of our culture noticed, for instance, that the Polish "to be or not to be" is a question concerning the destiny of many countries. A French historian Ambroise Jobert, from 1953, the middle of the gloomy Stalinist epoch, noted that on the eve of celebration of the millennium of Poland's baptism the Catholic Church in Poland was involved in "an experience of universal scope" (*dans une expérience d'une portée universelle*), that is, of coexistence and collaboration with other ideologies, yet fully preserving its identity. Such an experience is nothing new in Poland.

Since the second half of the Xth century the unknown and isolated duchy of Polans became Poland -- a member of the Christian community of nations. Poles, accepting baptism -- which was also a political act -- persisted from the beginning in putting the idea and spirit of Christianity in the first place. Moreover, what was not typical of that epoch, they subordinated politics to this primordial idea. The consequence of this persistence was confident service to the spiritual protection of Popes and radical opposition to the temporal centralism of emperors. They were courageous in reaching for the crown as symbol of full sovereignty, but rejected a king stained with priestly blood and lacking the respect of law required of monarchs. Its consequence was also tolerance, so characteristic of the Polish state and society beginning from the XIVth century -- the conviction that nobody has the right to convert anybody by means of physical violence.

Tolerance was a natural need of a multiethnic and multireligious state. As we know, however, these questions were solved in various ways in other states. The Polish Counterreformation cannot be compared to counterreformational actions of ruling groups for instance in France, Spain, or Germany, nor with deeds of Protestants in the north of Europe. As early as in the XIVth century Poles created a state that -- with all its imperfections -- for four centuries, until the moment of its partition, formed the first political organism in the middle of Europe. On the basis of their personal agreement it unified people of various denominations and languages, as well as of various descent. It was a state in which one's fellow citizens were of various ethnic groups, and this state of affairs became a tradition.

Voluntary unification -- in the name of the ideal of Christian love of neighbor and of liberty of conscience -- attracted to the Polish culture not only Lithuanians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, and Armenians, but also Germans (former enemies who sought the protection of the Polish crown and retained their autonomy) and Tatars. Asylum was sought in our country also by old-believers and Czech brethren, the Irish and Swedes. Jews enjoyed liberties which for a long time they had been granted neither in the West nor in the East.

It is of course possible, if someone is obstinate enough, to bemoan this tolerance because of the attractiveness of our culture resulting therefrom, entailing processes of assimilation and cultural expansion. Willingly polonized were Germans in Livonia, Pomerania, and elsewhere, voluntarily; Lithuanian and Bielorussian noblemen; Ruthenians, Karaites, Tatars, Wallachians, Italians, Frenchmen, and even a part of the Jewish elite -- all this, in a sense, was a loss for these nations. So, for example, now there are Lithuanians who criticize their ancestors for creating the Jagiellonian Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Some Poles also, as they say, try to "understand" them. This loss, they claim, harmed Mickiewicz, Moniuszko, Karłowicz, and many others.

It will always remain an open question whether the great founders of these polonized families would have been who they were had they not been polonized, that is, had not the culture of their ancestors confronted Polish culture, thereby enlarging their "horizons" of choice. Their polonization was incontestably voluntary, and they deserve "understanding" who yielded to polonization by their own choice. They succeeded in realizing a pluralistic state, based on the co-responsibility of a fraternized population and on respect for fellow citizens. In this system, some were allowed to offer their coats of arms and to work out liberties, others to praise their land and history in the Polish language and to join native musical motives with foreign ones.

It should be noted also that Polish culture not only polonized, but also contributed to a considerable extent to the national rebirth of Poland's numerous neighbors. On its elements drew such eminent and unquestionably Lithuanian artists as, for instance, M. Valanèius, J. Basanavièius, M. Èiurlionis, and V. Kudirka, such Belorussians as Janko Kupała and such Ukrainians as Łesia Ukrainka, Ivan Franko, metropolitan Andrzej Szeptycki, and thousands of others. In this circle there were many artists and usual people who were bilingual and bicultural, but at the same time there were ardent patriots. It also happened that three brothers declared to be activists of three different nations, serving as well as they could cultures of all three fatherlands. Sometimes descendants of polonized Germans became Lithuanians, as was the case of Michał Romer (Romeris); sometimes native Poles settled in Lithuania, as for instance Jan and Konstanty Jabłoński (Jablonskis) or the Nowodworskis (Novodvorskis), whose origin is manifest in their names.

Polish Christian culture, with its tolerance of a federative state, matured for a long time. Experiencing rises and falls, it flourished fully only in the period of the Four Years' Seym and of the oldest peacefully achieved Constitution in Europe, that of May 3rd, directly before the catastrophe of the partitions. It is remarkable at the same time that further development of its universalistic engagement was achieved after Poland's partition -- in misfortune -- as a fruit born of painful experience.

A great role was played also by the inclusion of Poland in the interplay of world powers, as well as in Napoleon's great plans. All this brought Poland closer to the West, together with a vision of Europe united on a much greater scale than in the time of the monarchy of Charlemagne. That is why Napoleon, even if he did not resurrect Poland, but only a small part in the form of the Warsaw Duchy, was long remembered in this country. Even in the XXth century he still inspired poets and was a popular figure in home sanctuaries.

The Intelligentsia

The factor, however, that most contributed to Poland's emancipation from its local limits and to its durable engagement in world affairs of universal importance was not a leader, nor any single person, but a group -- a layer called the intelligentsia. It was born of catastrophe, and imbued with

unreal, as it seemed, ideals, in contrast to the steady bourgeoisie of more fortunate countries. Above all, however -- let us stress -- it was more Christian, in its majority religious and progressive, and often even revolutionary in terms of looking for greater social justice. Over the course of changing generations, the intelligentsia greatly influenced, the entire nation's way of thinking and feeling, as well that of neighboring nations. It was a specific influence, but not particularist or ephemeral.

Many texts were written about the Polish intelligentsia of the XIXth and XXth centuries, also abroad. Among others J. Chałasiński presented in detail, although in a controversial way, its genealogy, vocation, ethos, and influence on the present national culture. Emerging from nobility that lost its manors and offices which were confiscated by the invaders, this stratum soon became an "elite" of the nation, popularizing among its members elements of the former noblemen's culture. Having lost its brutally abolished state, without avoiding sacrifices it strove for generations to regain independence. This was done not only for itself, but for the whole Polish society, as well as for the world, effectively replacing the lack of political power and economic importance with the "reign of souls". In conditions of material oppression, it created culture capable not only of resistance, but also of taking the offensive. It was incessantly reformational. In moments of defeats and humiliation it popularized the proud maxim *gloria victis* -- "glory to the defeated" (not *vae victis* -- "woe to the defeated" -- as the ancient pagans used to say), placing sacrifices for the right cause above the value of momentary success. This rejection of the cult of success, so characteristic of the bourgeois culture of the West, was combined with a particular philosophy of life and a particular civil ethos.

The priority of cultural matters resulted in an intelligentsia born of traditions, education, and relative poverty, as well as from particular habits of homelessness due to their condition as wanderers and emigrants. Culture became the most handy luggage of wanderers. It was culture that opened various milieus and granted prestige everywhere -- even if one arrived empty-handed.

It is important to stress this aspect. In the XIXth century, which was tragic for Poles, there spread in this nation patterns of free pilgrims and exiles, such as Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Chopin, earlier Niemcewicz or Kościuszko, later Żeromski. In fact, almost all eminent Polish artists and writers wandered through the world longing for their home. It appeared as a kind of ennobling duty to go and learn of the world, and at the same time to strive for Poland through other lands and cultures. This moment constituted an important turn in the mentality of the nation which in former centuries was been relatively fixed and immobile. It was also in exile that understanding was gained of international solidarity (not only with Poland's neighbors as before), and for binding one's own destiny with that of other, even distant, societies.

The Polish concern about world affairs may be called Polish "claims" to the world. It often happened to be somehow exaggerated. The sense, however, is deeply human, based on a conviction that the whole world is a system of means for communicating, and that it is the duty of every nation to be sensitive to everything what is human, whatever is going on on our planet.

Developed by the intelligentsia, the civil ethos certainly has its roots in the much earlier system of noblemen's democracy of the Polish Republic, prior to the partitions. For it was then that the notion of a "citizen" was formed designating a free person, sharing responsibility for the destiny of the state and of the whole of civilization. Inherent to this notion -- as claims Bogdan Cywiński -- was an early engagement in a particular European or Latin universalism, and assimilation of patterns inherited after ancient Romans. The broadening of the notion of nation beyond that of a "chosen tribe" of noblemen and its endowment with its modern meaning took place, however, only in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries. The breakthrough on native ground was

accomplished by Stanisław Konarski and Stanisław Staszic, the latter writing his famous "Remarks On the Life of Jan Zamoyski" (*Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego* -- 1787). Their thoughts -- the conception of the moral unification and solidarity of all social states -- was later developed and popularized on a European scale by Fryderyk Skarbek, writer, activist, and educator, who today is too little remembered. In his book *On the Misery and the Poor* (*O ubóstwie i ubogich*), edited in 1827, speaking about duties of the privileged he applied a theory of social models which he later developed in his essay in French entitled *Essai de Morale Civique*(1860), touching upon the so-called "active people".

The civil ethos of the intelligentsia made of Poles at that time a society with widely recognized moral values, and in many countries even famous for its honesty. People did not stretch out their hands to the dishonest and to the asocial (e.g., renegades). Honesty was understood in its active sense, as not only an imperative to keep agreements, but also to help and to bear common civic responsibility.

As a result of the negation of the state and the laws under partitions Poles generally inclined towards anarchism and at the same time became masters in using informal structures. They astonished their invaders with this ability. This, of course, had its negative sides and we should not idealize the ethos created by the intelligentsia. Yet, its positive element lay in objecting to the apotheosis of conforming to the existing situation dominant in many other cultures, and to be the conception of a social order based exclusively on negotiated material and private interests. The Polish ethos proclaimed something quite opposite: the primacy of ethics and of the common good over private profits.

> You should not focus on yourself, still on yourself,
> For, even against your will, you may become a monster

These are the words of the great poet and philosopher Cyprian Norwid, who was a rigid judge of his own nation and social stratum in the name of universal principles which surpassed all particularisms.

The Primacy of Spiritual Values and Service to Others

The primacy granted to ethics, to spiritual values, and to service to others was expressed by the intelligentsia in various ways. This primacy was combined with the phenomenon of messianism. "Polish messianism", wrote J. Chałasiński,

is deeply rooted in the ideological structure of the Polish intelligentsia. It often lies at the base of things that seemingly have nothing in common with it. With messianism is associate a lasting illusion . . . that Poland is the conscience of the whole of Europe, that Poland's destiny is a criterion of the spiritual value of the civilized world and that . . . this destiny is settled in the spiritual domain.

Chałasiński disliked these views, for he suspected in them an escape from the real tasks of the epoch -- from the material reality. There were many other critics of messianism. It was accused of exaltation, of megalomaniac pretending to the role of the chosen people in the course of history, of boasting of suffering and of abusing God's name. All these reproaches are somehow partially true, yet they ignore the fact that the essence of messianism lies elsewhere. It lies in what the world

lacked and still lacks, namely, attention to the historical sense of suffering, both individual and social, as well as to the duties of nations.

Nations in this frame of reference cease to be accidental products of history or interest groups; they gain their subjective essence and meaning, assuming responsibility for the whole of mankind. Their service, efforts and sacrifices, focusing the conscious actions of engaged individuals, are subject to the same eschatological settlement of accounts as their members. "Our nation is called to predict to the peoples the gospel of nationality, morality, and religion, and of contempt for budgets that constitute the only principle of politics in today's world," wrote Mickiewicz to Joachim Lelewel. These words are the more substantial as we remember another postulate of the poet, namely, in the slogan "for your freedom and ours" to accent the word "your", even if this were -- as he wrote -- "in spite of all diplomatic logic".

How close this is to the contemporary position of Fr. Józef st -- several generations later -- who, meditating upon the hopes awakened by Pope John Paul II, perceives "the Poles' dignity as inheritors of the heroic history of their nation, the dignity of human work that the Socialists had in mind, the significance of liberty, of traditional tolerance, of faithfulness to truth and of courage in devotion".

Messianism thus conceived, perceiving human dignity in the dignity of national efforts and sacrifices, has nothing to do with chauvinism. Its is humanistic and universalistic par excellence, serving the common good. If the notion of "Christ of nations" appeared once among messianists, should we not see in it rather a poeticized echo of the Christian teaching of Thomas ä Kempis on following Christ in general?

This stream of thought and the attitudes resulting therefrom bred the Polish ability to forgive. As Jesus forgave the "thief", so also the converted Russian myrmidon from Mickiewicz's vision in "The All Saints' Eve" (*Dziady*) will be granted forgiveness. In Henryk Sienkiewicz scenes that are unforgettable for any reader are: Jurand in "Teutonic Knights", releasing a captured Teutonic knight who caused his most horrible sufferings, and Chilonides forgiven by one being burn alive, a betrayed martyr in *Quo vadis*. From this prophetic literature there is only one step to the memorable words "We forgive and we ask for forgiveness" addressed by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński to Germans, the words that initiated a whole series of similar acts in international relations after the second World War. Of course, also in Poland not everybody understood and approved them, and the response was not always magnanimous. Yet the formula persisted and became one of the primordial "proposals" of Polish culture, which today offers a wide spectrum of patterns.

I do not intend to idealize the intelligentsia or its historical role, even if an undoubted merit of this group was the survival of the partitions and national rebirth in the XXth century. Representatives of the intelligentsia often unpardonably criticized themselves, reproaching their milieu with various forms of social isolation (closing in a ghetto), snobbism, exaggerated individualism, tendency to adore offices, etc. It is, however, a fact that the culture of this group spread over the Polish culture of the whole nation, implanting in the masses language, forms of social life, and many ways of thinking proper to the intelligentsia. When a Polish peasant kisses a woman's hand and lets her through the door first, he belongs in a way to "the intelligentsia". When workers try to use the language of school teachers, and dress on holidays like television speakers, they aspire to be members of the intelligentsia. All Poles try to "enter" this group in one way or another, above all in the Church, with respect not only to language, but also to particular forms of religiosity. For in our religious practices there reigns -- irrespective of opinions on this phenomenon -- a principle, elaborated by former generations of the intelligentsia, of common

prayer of all "states". Hitherto in Poland there is almost no division, so characteristic and onerous in some Christian communities in the West, into "popular" and "elitist" religious practices, no separate religious services for "intellectuals", no distinctly different rites for various social layers. Peasants, plant workers, clerks, and intellectualists march together in the Corpus Christi processions, stand near each other in crowded Churches, listen to the same sermons and break the Christmas Eve bread (*opłatek*) in the same way, light the same kind of candles on the tombs of their relatives on All Saints' Day and send children to a common catechesis.

The cultural patterns of contemporary Polish religiosity arouse the curiosity of various observers. That Poles pass for a society that is particularly attached to Christian faith and culture does not always increase the number of their friends in the world. Some observers suspect them of lacking universal attitudes and they themselves do not fully appreciate the universal advantages of this trait -- the chance on this religious platform of being everywhere close to all those whose ardor of faith is not yet extinguished. The possibilities are much greater than has been realized so far, both on distant and in nearer arenas. For instance in striving to approach neighboring peoples Poles should to a greater extent profit from the mediation of the Catholic and more religious Slovakia; in cooperating with the Third World, we should more often approach Christians who live there and tighten bonds with them. We should also know better the multiple religions; this could bring us closer to others in the frame of a broadly understood ecumenism. That, however, is a separate subject.

In culture the majority of existing models are only proposals, accompanied by a temptation to reject them. Engagement in common affairs and destiny is necessarily challenged by the alternative of a narrow-minded care of one's own bailiwick. For the same reason sinners go to the same schools as saints, in houses of revolutionaries conservatives are born, and ascetics have sybarites for brothers. However, as was said more than two hundred years ago by F. Skarbek, even if people devoured by an altruistic current and consciously devoting their forces to the common cause are everywhere in the minority, yet history is shaped first of all by their activity. When the wisdom, bravery and goodness of this group prevail, nations experience periods of prosperity; when these qualities are absent, days of defeats and falls follow.

The Polish culture -- just as every national culture -- incessantly oscillates between the two poles of its traditional possibilities and proposals. As those who share it or profit from its treasure we constantly have to search and to choose. We also know that in the course of history no choice is or can be ultimate. As long as a culture is alive, we can only take steps. It is, however, good when we aim at noble goals. It is also good when through "the proposals" that give us our ability to choose there is revealed the horizon of a truly broad care of universal human values.

In this chapter, I have tried to signal certain phenomena that testify to the existence of this "horizon" in Polish culture. It is a patrimony that is worth attention, and not only for our private use. The Polish seed, thrown on other ground, has grown even more beautifully and exuberantly than on the shores of the Vistul. Here also lies the specific universalism of this seed.

. . . The desire of something not always defined, but newer and better -- wrote at the turn of the XIXth century, researcher of European literatures and philosopher, Marian Zdziechowski --, and in contrast the vivid, painful sense of the impossibility of realizing these desires and dreams, so easily incited in the souls of people endowed with ardent hearts and bright imagination . . . were nowhere . . . as vivid and painful as in our country.

This feature is often considered romantic idealism of which Poles are supposed to be the epigones or, according to the others, the greatest champions. The estimate will always be subjective, but it will remain a fact that Polish desires often were oriented towards common and universal affairs in the name of universal humanity. It is no exaggeration to state that contents of Christian love of neighbors and justice deeply penetrated Polish culture, inciting brilliant ideals that served the common good, and not only our own interests. In any case, in Poland many creative, socially active people chose this direction.

Biographical Notes on the Authors

Czesław Stanisław Bartnik, born in 1929, Dr. Hab. Theol., professor of the Catholic University of Lublin, chair of the Department of History of Dogmas, member of the Central Commission for Scientific Titles and Grades. Areas of research: personalism, historiosophy, theology of history, social theology. Author of numerous papers and books, among others: *Rzym a stosunki czesko-polskie za Władysława Jagiełły* (Lublin 1951); *Franciszek Sawicki jako historiozof* (Lublin 1954); *Romano Guardini. Metoda witalistyczno-fenomenologiczna* (Lublin 1954); *Formacjaświatopoglądowa Niemieckiego Ruchu Młodzieżowego w publikacjach Romano Guardiniego* (Lublin 1956); *L'interprétation théologique de la crise de l'Empire Romain par Léon le Grand* (Lublin 1968); *Kościół Boży* (Lublin 1970); *Teologia historii według Leona Wielkiego* (Lublin 1972); *Problem historii uniwersalnej w teilhardyzmie* (Lublin 1972); *L'Universalisme de l'histoire du salut dans le "De vocatione omnium gentium"* (Louvain 1973); *Teilhardowska wizja dziejów* (Lublin 1975); *Spotkać kogoś* (Kraków 1976); *Teologia pracy ludzkiej* (Warszawa 1977); *Łaska drogi* (Warszawa 1978); *Teologiczne rozumienie zbawienia* (Lublin 1979); *Nadzieje upadającego Rzymu* (Warszawa 1982); *Kościół Jezusa Chrystusa* (Wrocław 1982); *Chrześcijańska nauka o narodzie według Prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego* (London 1982); *Ręka i myśl. Teologia pracy, odpoczynku i świętowania* (Katowice 1982); *Żyć w słowie* (Warszawa 1983); *Formen der politischen Theologie in Polen* (Regensburg 1986); *Polska teologia narodu* (Lublin 1986, 19882); *Chleb życia. Rozważania dogmatyczne o Eucharystii* (Lublin 1987); *Historia ludzka i Chrystus* (Katowice 1987); *Chrystus jako sens historii* (Wrocław 1987); *Mistyka wsi* (Warszawa 1988); *Praca jako wartość humanistyczna* (Lublin 1989); *Pokój w świetle teilhardyzmu* (Lublin 1990); *Idea polskości* (Lublin 1990); *Naród i społeczeństwo* (Częstochowa 1990); *O polską tożsamość* (Gdańsk 1990); *Kościół polski po erze totalitarnej* (Lublin 1991); *Najnowsze dzieje Kościoła w Polsce w refleksji teologicznej* (Lublin 1991); *Światło świata* (Lublin 1991).

Stanisław Cieślak, born in 1934, Ph. D. (Doctoral thesis on the theory of literature). For many years a teacher in high schools of the Łódź area, during the martial law period in Poland and after its abolition (1982-1986) an editor-in-chief and co-publisher of an underground socio-political monthly *Przedświt* ("The Dawn"), issued in Łódź; co-organizer of the milieu and the periodical *Obecność* ("The Presence"). Interested in contemporary literature. He works in the Franciscan Institute in Łódź (Łagiewniki). He published the following poetry collections: *Prowincjonalne introspekcje* (1960), *Honor dnia* (1964), *Homofanie* (1968); *Padając idą* (1971), as well as a collection of short stories *Prawa i lewa* (1971). He is author of many essays, among others: *Sacrum bez Boga?* ("Życie i Myśl", 1978, no 4); *Hierofanie sacrum w poezji współczesnej* (ibid., 1978, no 5); *Amare omnia in Deo. O poezji Jana Kochanowskiego* (ibid., 1980, no 19); *Sacrum we współczesnej poezji polskiej* (ibid., 1981, no 9); *Niektóre aspekty wychowania chrześcijańskiego* ("Obecność", 1986, no 6). Under a pseudonym Jan Wawrzyniec he published among others: *Tętnienie czasu* ("Przedświt", 1987, no 46 -- an essay on J. J. Szczepański's novel *Kadencja*); *Wszystko tak samo* ("Przedświt", 1988, no 47 -- a reflection on Stefan Kisielewski's novel *Wszystko inaczej*).

Leon Dyczewski, born in 1936, a Franciscan, Dr. Hab., professor of the Catholic University of Lublin, chair of the Department of Sociology of Culture, vice chair of the Faculty of Social

Sciences of the Catholic University of Lublin (1984 and since 1990), member of many learned societies, among others: Collegium Philosophicum des Forschungsinstitutes für Philosophie Hannover, Europäische Föderation für Katholische Erwachsenenbildung (member of the presidential board), Commission of the Polish Episcopate for Mass Media, the Scientific Council of the John Paul II Institute, Board of Advisors of the Minister of Work and Social Policy (1992). Areas of research: family; activity of the Catholic Church in the between the wars period; theory of culture; culture and religion; alternative, regional, and national cultures and the European culture; cultural identity and cultural pluralism; small groups as culture-creating factors and as carriers of culture; values, symbols, personal patterns, heroes in the Polish culture. Author of some 200 papers and the following books: *Pisma św. Maksymiliana Marii Kolbe* (8 volumes, Niepokalanów-Rzym 1970, co-ed.); *Więź pokoleń* (Warszawa 1976); *Rodzina polska i kierunki jej przemian* (Warszawa 1981); *Ten, który rozdał życie* (Niepokalanów 1983, 1989); *Św. Maksymilian Maria Kolbe* (Warszawa 1984); *Dokumenty nauki społecznej Kościoła* (2 volumes, Rome-Lublin 1987, co-ed.); *Człowiek w społeczności. Refleksje nad społecznym nauczaniem Jana Pawła II* (Niepokalanów 1988, ed.); *Integrationsprozesse in der modernen Gesellschaft* (Lublin 1988, ed.); *Prywatność i życie publiczne w nowoczesnym społeczeństwie: USA -- Polska* (Lublin 1992, co-ed.); *Wspólnota miejscem tworzenia* (Niepokalanów 1992, ed.); *Kultura polska w procesie przemian* (Lublin 1993, ed.).

Piotr Paweł Gach, born in 1943, doctor of historical sciences. He studied history at the Catholic University of Lublin in the years 1964-1969, where he also obtained his doctoral degree at the Faculty of Humanities. Since 1985 adjunct professor in the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland at the Catholic University of Lublin. Interests: history of monastic communities in the Central and Eastern Europe from the XVIIIth to the XXth century; monastic iconography; history of value systems in the Polish lands in the XIXth century. He did research in many local ecclesiastical and state archives, but also abroad, among others in Rome, Brussels, Paris, Louvain-La-Neuve, Leuven, Namur. He presented the results of his queries in Poland and abroad, among others in Lille (1981), Strasbourg (1983), Grenoble (1984), Saint-Etienne (1985), Ittingen (1986), Prague (1991). Author of some 180 publications, including three books:: *Kasaty zakonów na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i Śląska 1773-1914* (Lublin 1984); *Mienie polskich zakonów i jego losy w XIX wieku* (Rome 1979); *Geografia strat zakonów polskich w końcu XVIII i w XIX wieku* (Rzym 1980). More important articles: *Ruchy franciszkańskie na ziemiach polskich w latach 1864-1914*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", 87(1980), no 3-4, p. 816-819; *Paulini na ziemiach polskich w latach 1773-1914. Zarys przemian¸* "Studia Claromontana", 7(1987), p. 290-313; *Cystersi i cysterki na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej oraz na Śląsku w latach 1772-1914*, in: *Historia i kultura cystersów w dawnej Polsce i ich europejskie związki*, Poznań 1987, p. 515-543; *Materiały źródłowe dotyczące zakonów polskich XVII-XIX wieku w archiwach krajowych i zagranicznych*, "Przegląd Tomistyczny", 3(1987), p. 251-280. In the illustrated encyclopedia for the youth *Bóg -- Człowiek -- Świat* (Katowice 1991) he elaborated among others the articles: *Karmelici, Pijarzy, Uczelnie katolickie, Zakony i zgromadzenia w Polsce, Zmartwychwstańcy*.

Jerzy W. Gałkowski, born in 1937, Dr. Hab., professor of the Catholic University of Lublin, chair of the Particular Ethics Department at the Faculty of Philosophy of this university, since 1991 chair of the Institute of Social and Political Thought at the Pedagogical Academy in Częstochowa, a member of the Polish Philosophical Society (since 1988 vice-president of the Lublin section of the Society), as well as of Societé Internationale Thomas d'Aquin; Scientific Society of the

Catholic University of Lublin (since 1989 president of the Philosophical Section of the Society), Bureau Internationale Catholique de l'Enfance (1968-1971 member of Commitée Générale BICE), John Paul II Institute at the Catholic University of Lublin (since 1990 vice-director of the Institute), editorial board of the quarterly "Ethos". Main areas of interest: ethics, history of ethics, social philosophy and philosophy of politics. He published about 170 items, including books: *Praca i człowiek* (Warszawa 1980); *Podstawowy wymiar bytowania* (Warszawa 1992, ed.); John Paul II, *Laborem exercens. Tekst i komentarze* (Lublin 1986, ed.); *W imieniu dziecka poczętego* (Rome-Lublin 1988, 19902).

Stanisława Halina Grabska, born in 1922, obtained a master degree from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw (1956); a doctoral degree in theology at the Catholic University in Louvain (1974). Since 1940 member of the Marian Sodality, in the years 1942-1945 liaison of the clandestine National Army under the German and the Russian occupation; since 1956 member of the Catholic Intelligentsia Club in Warsaw, through many years vice-president of the Club, and its president since 1980; in 1980 member of the Civil Committee by the "Solidarity" President Lech Wałęsa, participant of the "Round Table" talks, co-organizer and speaker of many social and religious initiatives. Author of many articles concerning biblical subjects and social ethics, published in such periodicals as "Tygodnik Powszechny", "Więź", "Znak", as well as of books: *Liberté chrétienne chez quelques théologiens catholiques et chez St. Paul* (Louvain 1974); *Nadzieja, która jest wezwaniem* (Warszawa 1980); *Pacierz w Biblii zakorzeniony* (Warszawa 1983); *Człowiek wobec Trójcy Świętej* (Warszawa 1990).

Maria Ewa Jabłońska-Deptuła, Dr. Hab., professor of the Catholic University of Lublin. She made her studies in history at the University of Warsaw, obtained her doctoral degree at the University of Wrocław, and her habilitation at the Catholic University of Lublin. In 1981 president of the "Solidarity" trade union at this university and member of the regional council of the union. A lecturer at clandestine courses, laureate of the "Polish Culture" prize, participant of international colloquia, historical expert in several beatification trials, co-initiator of the Movement of Solidarity of Families. Interests: Polish religious culture of the XIXth and the XXth century (in particular, history of monastic communities) and the process of shaping of national consciousness in the period of partitions. Author of over 170 articles and outlines and of the following books: *Przystosowanie i opór* (Warszawa 1983); *Współczesne zagrożenia rodziny* (Lublin 1984); *Kościół -- religia -- patriotyzm* (Warszawa 1985); *Trwanie i budowa* (Warszawa 1986); *Rodzino, dokąd zmierzasz?* (Poznań 1987); *"Czyż może historia popłynąć przeciw prądowi sumień?"* (Paryż 1987); *Świadectwo trwania* (Niepokalanów 1990).

Barbara Jedynak, doctor of humanities, adjunct professor at the Institute of Polish Philology, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin; editor-in-chief of "Wisełka", a quarterly for the Polish diaspora teachers (1982-1986) and "Rota" -- a quarterly for teachers, parents, and youth outside the boarders of the Polish Republic (since 1990). Publications: S. Buczyński, *Dzień walki* (Lublin 1968 -- introduction and selection); *Antologia literatury polskiej 1939-1976* (Lublin 1977); *Obyczaje polskie do końca XVI wieku. Antologia*, part 1 (Lublin 1978 -- introduction and commentary); *Obyczaje polskie XVII i pierwszej połowy XVIII wieku. Antologia*, part 2 (Lublin 1979 -- introduction and commentary); *Obyczaje polskie drugiej połowy XVIII i pierwszej połowy XIX wieku, Antologia*, part 3 (Lublin 1981 -- introduction); *Obyczaje polskie drugiej połowy XIX wieku. Antologia*, part 4, (Lublin 1984 -- introduction); *Kobieta w kulturze i społeczeństwie*

(Lublin 1990 -- ed., introduction, and outlines), vol. 1: Jadwiga Dörr, *Via nova* (introduction and selection); Cz. Paszkowski, *Anioł Widzenia* (Lublin 1993 -- introduction and selection).

Jadwiga Komorowska, doctor of sociology. In the Stalinist period she worked in various cultural and social aid institutions; since 1959 research worker (adjunct professor) of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Lectures on sociology of family, culture, and religion at the University of Warsaw, as well as at universities in Ottawa and Oran. She actively participated in many scientific conferences in Poland and abroad. Author and editor of several scientific books as well as of numerous scientific and popularizing articles. In the years 1990-1991, accompanying her husband during his stay in Romania, she organized concerts of Polish music in Bucharest. Main areas of interest: sociology of family and sociology of culture. Publications: scientific works -- *Telewizja w życiu dzieci i młodzieży* (Łódź-Warszawa, vol. 1 -- 1963, vol. 2 -- 1964; the book also published in France in the French translation); *Świąteczne zwyczaje domowe w wielkim mieście* (Warszawa 1984); popularizing books: *Czy telewizja wychowuje?* (co-author with J. Kubin, Warszawa 1069); *Listy do córki* (Warszawa 1980); edited books -- *Przemiany rodziny polskiej*(Warszawa 1975); *Dziecko we współczesnej Polsce* (Warszawa 1991); the most significant article -- *Konflikty małżeństw miejskich w świetle ankiety czytelniczej*, "Przegląd Socjologiczny", 24(1971).

Zygmunt Komorowski, Dr. Hab. in social sciences, since 1975 at the University of Warsaw, head of the Section of Social Development at the Institute of Developing Countries, in the years 1980-1984 active abroad in the frame of an exchange program as a professor in Oran (Algeria) and Nice (France), in the years 1990-1992 ambassador of the Polish Republic in Romania. His main research interests include comparative studies on cultures, national cultures, and systems of education. Publications: *Wieś, miasto i oświata w procesie formowania się nowego społeczeństwa na Wybrzeżu Kości Słoniowej* (1966); *Kultura i oświata w Senegalu* (1968); *Szkolnictwo i kultura Afryki* (1973); *Tradycje i współczesność Afryki Zachodniej* (1973); *Wśród legend i prawd Afryki* (1974); *Wprowadzenie do socjologii Afryki* (1979); *Senegal -- kształtowanie się jedności i niepodległości* (1977); *Kultury Maghrebu* (1989); *Kultura Czarnej Afryki* (in print). In addition, coauthor of several books and scientific coeditor of several collective works, as well as author of over 200 scientific papers.

Alina Kowalczykowa, Dr. Hab., professor at the Institute of Research on Literature of the Polish Academy of Sciences and at the University of Łódź. He is interested first of all in the literature of Romanticism and in the contemporary literature, as well as in border questions from the domains of literature, history, and fine arts. Separate publications: *Liryki Słonimskiego 1918-1935* (Warszawa 1967); *Romantyczni szaleńcy* (Warszawa 1977); *Ciemne drogi szaleństwa* (Kraków 1978); *Programy i spory literackie w dwudziestoleciu* (Warszawa 1978); *Siedmiu bohaterów romantycznych* (Warszawa 1978); *Pejzaż romantyczny* (Kraków 1982); *Stefan Żeromski w zamku* (Warszawa 1985); *Warszawa romantyczna* (1987); *Piłsudski i tradycja* (Chotomów 1991). She published an anthology *Manifesty romantyzmu 1790-1830* (Warszawa 1975) and coedited (together with J. Bachórz) *Słownik literatury polskiej XIX wieku* (Wrocław 1992). She also prepared critical editions of Polish literature (including the series of the National Library): J. Słowacki, *W kręgu pism mistycznych* (1982); J. Słowacki, *Sen srebrny Salomei* (1992), as well as an antology *Idee programowe romantyków polskich* (1991).

Teresa Kukułowicz, Dr. Hab. of Christian philosophy in the domain of sociology of education, state-appointed professor of the Catholic University of Lublin, since 1981 head of the Pedagogical Section, in the years 1984-1989 vice-chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences, since 1969 head of the Pedagogical Commission of the Scientific Society of the Catholic University of Lublin, editor-in-chief for matters of psychic health of the periodical "Zagadnienia Wychowawcze" (1977-1978), editor of a bulletin "Biuletyn Spraw Rodzinnych" (since 1985). Author of numerous articles and of the following books: *Rodzina w procesie uspołeczniania dziecka* (Lublin 1973; 1978); *Pomagamy w samowychowaniu* (Warszawa 1978); *Podstawy psychologii, pedagogiki i socjologii. Podręcznik dla średnich szkół medycznych* (together with Z. Putkiewicz, for editions in the years 1977-1987); *Wybrane zagadnienia z pedagogiki* (Przemyśl 1985); *Pomoc rodzinie niepełnej* (Sandomierz 1988); *Troska Kościoła o rodzinę w Polsce* (Warszawa 1992).

Jacek Salij, a Dominican, Dr. Hab. Theol., professor of the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw, cooperating with a monthly "W drodze", member of editorial board of "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia", radio preacher, author of numerous articles and of the following books:*Modlitwa za świętych w liturgii rzymskiej* (Warszawa 1974); *Królestwo Boże w was jest* (Poznań 1980); *Szukającym drogi* (Poznań 1982); *Główne kontrowersje wokół komunii niemowląt* (Warszawa 1982); *Rozpacz pokonana* (Poznań 1983); *Rozmowy ze świętym Augustynem* (Poznań 1985); *Pytania nieobojętne* (Poznań 1986); *Tajemnica Emmanuela dzisiaj* (Poznań 1989); *Dekalog* (Poznań 1989); *Poszukiwania w wierze* (Poznań 1991); *Wiara na codzień* (Poznań 1991). He translated and prepared for print three volumes of texts of St. Thomas Aquinas: *Ewangelia Ojców Kościoła* (Kraków 1983), *Dzieła wybrane* (Poznań 1984), *Wykład listu do Rzymian* (Poznań 1987), and *Legendy dominikańskie* (Poznań 1982).

Adam Stanowski (1927-1990), in the years 1946-1948 studied philosophy and pedagogy at the Catholic University of Lublin, in the years 1948-1950 studied social pedagogy, sociology, and philosophy at the University of Łódź. In 1956 he obtained a master degree in history from the Catholic University of Lublin; in 1969, a doctoral degree in humanities in the domain of sociology at the University of Warsaw. Since 1942, member of the Marian Sodality, in the years 1948-1949 its general secretary. During the second World War, member of "Grey Squads" (*Szare szeregi*) of the Polish underground army, soldier of the battalion "Baszta" of the clandestine National Army, wounded during the Warsaw uprising. In 1949 arrested for his religious and social activity; in 1951 sentenced to 7 years of prison, released in 1955. Since 1957 scientific worker of the Catholic University of Lublin. Co-creator of the net of Clubs of Catholic Intelligentsia; co-founder of the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia in Lublin. Member of the Interinstitutional Founding Committee of the Independent Trade Unions "Solidarność of the middle-eastern region; after December 13, 1981 member of clandestine regional authorities of the "Solidarity" union, organizer and lecturer of the underground Union Popular University, member of the Civil Committee by Lech Wałęsa; since June 1989 senator of the Land of Lublin. Publicist, researcher, educator, author of over 100 articles on methodology of social sciences, history of the Catholic Church, religiosity, cultural changes, social pedagogics, youth organizations, religious movements, family, local communities, and local self-governance.

Tomasz Strzembosz, Dr. Hab., professor of history at the Faculty of Humanities of the Catholic University of Lublin, head of the Independent Institute of Research on the History of Eastern Lands of the II Polish Republic at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Since 1989 president

of the Union of Scouts of the Republic of Poland. Author of numerous publications, above all on the history of Poland in the years of the II World War, including such books as: *Tumult warszawski 1525* (Warszawa 1959); *Odbijanie i uwalnianie więźniów w Warszawie 1939-1944* (Warszawa 1972); *Oddziały szturmowe konspiracyjnej Warszawy 1939-1944* (Warszawa 1979, enlarged edition -- Warszawa 1983); *Akcje zbrojne podziemnej Warszawy 1939-1944* (Warszawa 1978, second enlarged edition -- Warszawa 1983); *Szare Szeregi jako organizacja wychowawcza* (Warszawa 1981, second enlarged edition -- Warszawa 1984); *Refleksje o Polsce i podziemiu 1939-1945* (Warszawa-Lublin 1987, Warszawa 1992); *Bohaterowie "Kamieni na szaniec" w świetle dokumentów* (Warszawa 1992).

Jan Turowski, Dr. Hab., state-appointed professor, chair of the Faculty of General Sociology of the Catholic University of Lublin; vice-chair of the Faculty of Christian Philosophy of the same university; president of the Summer School of the Polish Language and Culture (1974-1978); head of the Institute of Research on the Polish Diaspora (1972-1977); chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Catholic University of Lublin in the years 1981-1983. Main areas of research: sociology of family, sociology of the country and agriculture, sociology of the town, processes of industrialization and urbanization, methods of sociological research, theory of social development. Author of about 150 scientific papers and treatises, including the following books: *Zmiany społeczne wsi a miasto* (Lublin 1948); *Utopia społeczna Ludwika Królikowskiego*(Warszawa 1958); *Wybrane zagadnienia socjologii miasta* (Warszawa 1968); *Przemiany wsi pod wpływem zakładu przemysłowego. Studium rejonu Milejowa* (Warszawa 1964); *Spółdzielcze osiedle mieszkaniowe. Monografia socjologiczna osiedla A. Mickiewicza LSM* (Warszawa 1969);*Drogi modernizacji wsi. Przenikanie innowacji do rolnictwa i wsi województwa lubelskiego* (Warszawa 1970, coauthor -- A. Bornus); *Nowe osiedla mieszkaniowe. Ludność -- środowisko mieszkalne – życie społeczne* (Warszawa 1976); *Studia socjologiczne i urbanistyczne miast Lubelszczyzny* (Lublin 1979); *Środowisko mieszkalne w świadomości ludności miejskiej* (Wrocław 1979); *Socjologia wsi i rolnictwa: metody i wyniki badań* (Lublin 1992).