

Maciej Janowski

# Birth of the Intelligentsia 1750-1831

A History of the Polish Intelligentsia – Part 1



PETER LANG  
EDITION

Maciej Janowski

## Birth of the Intelligentsia 1750-1831

The three-part work provides a first synthetic account of the history of the Polish intelligentsia from the days of its formation to World War I. Part one (1750-1831) traces the formation of the intelligentsia as a social class in the epoch of Enlightenment. It stresses the importance of the birth of bureaucratic institutions that created the demand for the educated stratum. It analyses the results of the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795 – the ominous event that transformed the political geography of East Central Europe. The work combines social and intellectual history, tracing both the formation of the intelligentsia as a social stratum and the forms of engagement of

the intelligentsia in the public discourse. Thus, it offers a broad view of the group's transformations which immensely influenced the course of the Polish history.

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Edited by Jerzy Jedlicki

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ROZWOJU HUMANISTYKI

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The Staszic Palace in Warsaw around 1825, with an imaginary design of Copernicus monument, by Zygmunt Vogel. (Aleksander Kraushar, Towarzystwo Warszawskie Przyjaciół Nauk, Kraków-Warszawa 1905, vol. 3, part 3, p. 309).

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# Foreword

The intelligentsia continues to be a heated topic in Poland. Whenever an article involving the intelligentsia appears in the press, you can be sure that a response will come. Since the publication in 1946 of a provocative essay by Józef Chałasiński, the sociology professor<sup>1</sup>, a discussion on the intelligentsia has been flaming in the press every few years – whether in the Poland called the ‘People’s Republic’ (1944-89) or in the Third Republic (since June 1989), with quite similar questions and beliefs colliding anew. Have the intelligentsia inherited the nobility’s attributes and vices? Have they deserved a collective respect, or rather, disapproval and derision? Have they still some social and ideological role to play, or maybe should they get off the stage and give way to the new classes – for instance, the middle class or ‘experts’, whatever such notions ought to mean?

The rules of singling out the intelligentsia, the class’s composition, stratification, economic situation, the prestige of education, their professional qualifications and attitude toward the other classes, particularly the working class and peasantry, were at times subject to sociological investigation and considerations, but the public discussions owed their emotional charge and vigour particularly to politics. The hottest dilemma has always been, whether in the periods when the nation was subject to a severe test – fighting for independence or during civil resistance against the communist power – whether to be inclined to offer more deference or fortitude; more opportunism or nonconformity, for it is known that these inclinations could be evidenced with the use of the testimony at hand. Today – and every such ‘today’ – the authorities’ attitude toward the educated elite, characterised by respect or contempt, gains a political meaning as it concerns a class that has always proved capable of expressing aloud their likes

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1 J. Chałasiński, *Spoleczna genealogia inteligencji polskiej* [‘The social genealogy of the Polish intelligentsia’], Warszawa 1946; idem, *Zagadnienie historyczno-socjologicznej samowiedzy inteligencji polskiej* [‘The historical-sociological self-knowledge of the Polish intelligentsia’], ‘Myśl Współczesna’, 1947; and other studies published collectively in: idem, *Przeszłość i przyszłość inteligencji polskiej* [‘The past and the future of the Polish intelligentsia’], Warszawa, 1958 (revised ed., with Afterword by A. Kłoskowska: Warszawa, 1997).

and grievances, even though they may not always have a realistic bearing on the state authorities' decisions.

When observing and sometimes commenting upon these short-lived recidivisms of the dispute, a historian cannot resist the impression that the topic in question is immortal. It was already in the late 1970s that Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis (1928-94), who initiated systematic research on the history of the Polish intelligentsia, remarked that "compared to the social character and national tasks of the Polish intelligentsia, there are very few issues brought up in our literature on an equally frequent basis, for a hundred years now". This inveteracy of the subject-matter was ascribed by her to its political topicality: on the other hand, journalists of various orientations have endeavoured, with their historical arguments, to support their opinions on the attitudes of the intelligentsia in their own time; on the other hand, popularisers of history and sociological science succumbed to the powerful suggestion of stereotypes. These dangerous liaisons between the cognitive attitude and politics or the moralistic have produced, according to this author, "a certain vagueness, not to say arbitrariness, of opinions. Based on fragmentary, if not intuitive, diagnosis, estimations and generalisations have always come ahead of tested and checked knowledge. Hence, the reference literature is thus abundant, against a scarcity of matter-of-fact findings."<sup>2</sup>

Ever since, enormous progress has been made in this area, helped by the decisive contribution by Professor Czepulis-Rastenis, with works of her own<sup>3</sup> as well as those that were written or matured for printing that owed to her inspiration and care.<sup>4</sup> Today, we have at our disposal dozens of conscientious source studies on Polish intelligentsia milieus for all the Partition areas and Polish ethnic provinces (1795-1918), and for many regions and towns, in the consecutive sections

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2 R. Czepulis-Rastenis, ed., *Inteligencja polska pod zaborami* ['The Polish intelligentsia under the Partitions'], Warszawa, 1978, p. 3.

3 R. Czepulis-Rastenis, „Klasa umysłowa”: *inteligencja Królestwa Polskiego 1832-1862* ['The intellectual class': The intelligentsia of the Kingdom of Poland in 1832-62'], Warszawa, 1973, s. 6; eadem, *Ludzie nauki i talentu: studia o świadomości społecznej inteligencji polskiej w zaborze rosyjskim* ['The people of science and talent. Studies on the social awareness of the Polish intelligentsia in the Russian Partition'], Warszawa, 1988.

4 R. Czepulis-Rastenis *Inteligencja polska pod zaborami...*; R. Czepulis-Rastenis, ed., *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku: studia* ['The Polish intelligentsia of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Studies'], vol. 2-6, Warszawa, 1981-91; W. Molik, *Kształtowanie się inteligencji polskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Poznańskim (1841-1870)* ['The shaping of the Polish intelligentsia in the Grand Duchy of Poznań, 1841-70'], Warszawa-Poznań, 1979; J. Borzyszkowski, *Inteligencja polska w Prusach Zachodnich 1848-1920* ['The Polish intelligentsia in West Prussia, 1848-1920'], Gdańsk, 1986; and more.

of historical time, across professions and institutions. However, when we started thinking about how to depict a synthetic history of the intelligentsia, we realised that the amassed wealth of studies did not make the task easier at all. All the definition-related doubts and the incoherencies appearing in the image of the intelligentsia that we contended with years ago have remained, or even grew exacerbated, as the tested knowledge incremented.

Would we be supposed, therefore, to take an interest in an intelligentsia seen as a conglomerate of the professions referred to, somewhat enigmatically, as ‘brainwork’ or ‘intellectual’ jobs, practices that require at least a secondary education, and calling together for their deserved recognition from the other classes? Or rather, should our field of interest have covered a narrower ideological ‘elite’ aspiring to lead the nation in its social, political and cultural development? Ryszarda Czepulis posed this question many a time, usually opting to conduct research into the social-and-professional stratum, the ‘artisans of mentality’, thus gaining a better cohesiveness of the subject.

For the notion of the elite is highly unambiguous. Authors of ideological programmes, influential publicists, and opinion leaders do not have to be among the outstanding men of science or literature, or creative artists: this is particularly true of a society that for long years was prevented from forming its own national institutions. And conversely: scientists, writers and artists do not always endeavour to influence public opinion. These functions call for entirely different predispositions. This non-convergence of criteria has been noted by the anonymous author of the article *O inteligencji w znaczeniu polskim* [‘On the intelligentsia, in the Polish meaning’], published in a Lvov periodical in 1861, remarking that those of ‘special education’, even though they would be greatly educated, are not of the intelligentsia if they take an indifferent approach toward the past of their nation and its struggle for rights<sup>5</sup>.

Out of dozens of the like conditions or postulates, we can drain an idealising pathos; however, the conviction will always remain that ‘the intelligentsia in the Polish sense’ is necessarily identifiable with the guards of national memory, the standard-bearers of patriotic and social ideas – revolutionary or conservative ones; authors and artists – not just the big-timers, but the ones whose works mobilised the national forces in the time of bondage.

The reason why the notion in question is unstable is not really because an ‘elite’ would have been secreted from the ‘intellectual class’ but because of the

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5 C. Ch., *O inteligencji w znaczeniu polskim* [‘On the intelligentsia, in the Polish sense’], ‘Dziennik Literacki’, (Lvov) 1861, no. 100.

permanent interference with its professional and ideological functions.<sup>6</sup> These functions cannot be completely demarcated; and, it proves impossible to finely polish the definitions of the relevant words that have been well-established in colloquial language, with the inseparable shimmering quality of their meanings and associations. The notions such as ‘nobility’ (the *szlachta*) – particularly after the Partition, which meant the loss of the native country, ‘bourgeoisie’, ‘Jews’ or ‘peasants’ are no more unambiguous than the notion of the intelligentsia, since their economic, legal, confessional, genealogical and mores/morals-related criteria tend to converge and diverge; although overlapping, each of these notions defines a different group of people. And, we have to come to terms with such ambiguity of collective names, if not to trace and identify some advantages because of it, as the vagueness of semantic delimitations reflects a chronic obscurity of the real divisions. A living society that has already quit its estate-founded, or class-based, period is subject to incessant transformation: after all, it is never composed of separate compartments labelled with species name plates.

A social historian’s lot is such that s/he is doomed to using leaky notions.<sup>7</sup> ‘Discourse’ methodologists do their best to console him or her, explaining that capacious wholes such as ‘intelligentsia’ or ‘nation’ have no existence in themselves, being in fact nothing more than collective concepts, conventions of language, or rhetorical postulates. This being the case, there is no point asking when and where the intelligentsia was formed and what it was composed of; it makes sense, instead, to ask who made use of this collective aggregate-notion, how, and what for: what kind of a service has it been harnessed for, now and then. With such a concept, the history of the intelligentsia would be reduced to tracing the *idea* of the intelligentsia, the history of the word and the history of the debate.

This approach is tempting indeed as it repeals the barren disputes rooted in the arbitrariness of a historian who endeavours to impose on a well-bygone epoch a network of notions and categories established by himself/herself, or definitionally sharpened. Yet, our concern was that by yielding too eagerly to what the narrativists suggest, we might devalue the already huge output of objectivising social history.

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6 For more, see: B. Świdorski, *Myth and Scholarship: University Students and Political Development in XIX-Century Poland*, Copenhagen 1988, Chapter 1.

7 I tackled this particular issue at more length in my article *Kłopoty pojęciowe historyka* [‘A historian’s problems with the notions’], in: E. Chmielecka, J. Jedlicki, A. Rychard, eds., *Idealy nauki i konflikty wartości* [‘The ideals of science and conflicts of values’], Warszawa 2005, pp. 265-271.

How would we then have to tackle the question of the origins of (the) intelligentsia *avant la lettre*? The Polish intelligentsia assumed this name only in the middle of the nineteenth century. The studies on its origins or precursors reached as far back as the time of King Stanislaus Augustus, with the recruitment of those aspiring to take jobs with the offices of a Governmental Commission (ministry), the laicisation of teachers – as a profession and social class, or the struggle of sharp-tongued quills for influence on public opinion in the Great *Sejm* (1788-92) foreground. These three basic processes, as a scholar specialised in the period has found, have led to the formation of a brainwork market, which breached the routines of the class society.<sup>8</sup>

In the dispute between social history and a history of ‘discourses’, we thus assumed a compromising or, as one might call it, eclectic attitude, spotting the advantages and, also, inconveniences of each stringently approached research strategy. The word ‘intelligentsia’ [*inteligencja*] – Latinate, drawn by Polish thought from the German philosophical notional resource – caught on across Polish soil as it was in demand: no other notion would have fitted when it came to naming that originally narrow group of people of varied class and profession, better or worse educated, earning a living with their own work and feeling obliged, in this way or another, with respect to a hundredfold broader conceptualised national community.<sup>9</sup> Once the name entered circulation and became a ‘home word’ within a couple of years, around 1848, it contributed to the continued consolidation of a class whose contour would never be sharply outlined but whose existence and essence, virtues and drawbacks, obligations and derelictions would become the subject for journalists, men-of-letters, politicians, mentors – in a word, intellectuals themselves – to incessantly reason and argue.

Why it was in the Polish language that the word in question became indispensable earlier than anywhere else; why it appeared in due time, with just a slight time-lag, forms one of the threads of this book. While not anticipating the

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8 K. Zienkowska, *O prekursorach inteligencji polskiej uwag kilka* [‘Some remarks on the precursors of the Polish intelligentsia’], in: *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku...*, vol. 5, p. 30.

9 See: O.W. Müller, *Intelligencija: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte eines politischen Schlagwortes*, 1971, esp. pp. 27, 70-73; Z. Wójcik, *Rozwój pojęcia inteligencji* [‘The development of the notion of intelligentsia’], Wrocław 1962; J. Jedlicki, *Inteligencja*, entry in: J. Bachórz, A. Kowalczykova, eds., *Słownik literatury polskiej XIX w.* [‘A dictionary of Polish nineteenth-century literature’], Wrocław 1991, pp. 373-7. See also: A. Walicki, *O inteligencji, liberalizmach i o Rosji* [‘Intelligentsia, liberalism, and Russia’], Kraków, 2007, pp. 43-50.

conclusions, let us just say that, along with the country's agricultural profile, the mediocrity of the third estate, and the rarity of any educational background, be it elementary, the political dismemberment and incapacitation of a community whose elites had already had their national awareness solidified, formed a tangle of conditions that encumbered the scarce urban enlightened class, taken as a whole, with a sense of group obligation that integrated a national society and initiated civilisational changes. This is obviously not to imply that every single member of this class felt such an obligation and was ready to refer its consequences to himself, or herself. However, the new social formation was eagerly baptised under its assumed name, most of its members being aware of the distinction this name implied, and of the expectations attached to it. Wherever else in the world similar conditions coincided, there would always appear a stratum – military, civil, clerical, or mixed – naming themselves the 'intelligentsia' and, with it, believing that education, regardless of the profile, furnished them with the obligation and privilege to act as the national avant-garde.

The studies on the shaping of the Polish intelligentsia in individual provinces and towns, which mushroomed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, usually assumed the orientation of social history, endeavouring to determine the origin, education, required professional qualifications, living conditions, promotional opportunities, stratification, the power and reach of the environmental solidarity, the situation of the intelligentsia versus the other social classes and, mostly as a last point, the intelligentsia's political and cultural activity in the period under research. A resource of abundant and useful knowledge has been amassed according to this pattern indeed, mostly on a local scale, but always opening an opportunity to compare.

Such is the path followed by the authors of this present work. This time, however, the issues under investigation are much broader and the emphases are distributed in a different fashion. We have namely traced the historical peripeteia of a social stratum/class (not attaching attention to this particular distinction) understood as a segment in the social structure, extending to individuals who perform on a professional basis works, or jobs, calling for an educational background and receiving income from such activity. This is obviously a highly imprecise definition, and unsatisfactory. If we however get involved in a discussion about what it means to 'work professionally' or what an 'intellectual/brain work' is, or what 'earned income' is, and what a school one had to graduate from in order to be classed (then, or by us today?) as a member of the intelligentsia, we will – as usual – definitely get entangled in never-ending casuistic disputes. For the reasons already propounded, we have avoided such futile considerations, knowing that any formalised demarcations would be arbitrary by nature.

The chronic ambiguity of notions such as intelligentsia – plus the words close in meaning – is an interesting historical phenomenon in itself: it reflects both the objective changes in the social stratification as well as how they have been perceived by their contemporaries, including collective assessments and self-assessments.<sup>10</sup> If we are willing to observe such changes, we must not pre-assume any idealising definitional conditions concerning the ethos of the intelligentsia, its moral format, or sense of social mission. We must stick to what we have conceived as our opinion: it is not an ethos that creates and defines the intelligentsia, but rather, it is the intelligentsia that contributes to the moral culture and the mental horizon of its age. An attempt at describing these realities ought to ensue from the research, rather than being a pre-assumption.

The need for a precise definition is normally imposed by social statistics: it has to be known whom to count and whom to exclude. The thing is, the previous efforts made in creating statistical images of professional and local intellectual milieus have occurred, in our opinion, to be relatively not-quite-fruit-bearing. The nineteenth-century official statistics, especially if generated by the tsarist bureaucracy, are not to be relied upon. But the results of calculations and statistical tables produced later on individually by scholars on the basis of preserved bodies of personal files of officials, teachers, physicians, judges, priests, or students, are mostly fragmentary and cannot in most cases justify the workload invested in them. When it comes, for instance, to examining the social background of workers of a dicastery, the conclusion is apparent that the laconic quality of the ‘in-service statistics’ forms and other similar personal sources, their nomenclature, which was archaic already then, and the identifiable information gaps do not entitle us to appearances of arithmetical exactness which a number of authors considered a token of the scholarly reliability of their methodology.

According to the incomplete data available, the share of the staff of some office or students in a school whose background was reportedly the nobility may have amounted to, say, 50% or 60%; what of it, though, if we would not be in a position to find out what nobility and as of what time, namely. The said ‘background’ was of no bearing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on professional career opportunities; nor did it necessarily imply that the grandson concerned inherited anything beyond a vague family reminiscence.

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10 Cf. S. Ossowski, *Struktura klasowa w społecznej świadomości* [‘The class structure through social awareness’], *Dziela* [‘Works’], vol. 5, Warszawa, 1968, pp. 83-253; also, P.L. Berger, T. Luckmann, *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge*, 1967.

The outcome of research on the development or stagnation of the labour market, which means state and private demand for services and qualifications of people of various professions, have proved more interesting. Such studies have confirmed the known proposition claiming a paradoxical overproduction by the intelligentsia and a surplus in the supply of their services in the early phase of capitalism. This situation was to remain under Russian and Austrian rule, linking the economic interests of the Polish intelligentsia with the accelerated modernisation of the country, and generating rebellious and radical attitudes in the pauperised strata, among the underfed aspiring students and graduates.<sup>11</sup>

Investigating the attitudes, ideas, morals and mores forms a particularly valuable capital in the output of historians of the Polish intelligentsia. The studies of Ryszarda Czepulis and those of her colleagues and followers, concerning the intellectual milieu's role models and universe of values, based on a subtle analysis of the enormous collections of letters, memoirs and posthumous recollections, already published or remaining in the manuscript form, have enabled us to find that, beyond any doubt, the intelligentsia of the circles of Warsaw, Vilna, Poznań, Lvov and Krakow, as well as the exponents dispersed in provincial areas, in exile or in emigration, had by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century become a class capable of recognising their shared, rather than merely corporative/professional interests, one that emancipated itself from the landowners' patronage and gained a sense of their own value, in opposition to the noble tradition and mentality, but also in discord with the bourgeois ethos of entrepreneurship and the cult of commercial success.<sup>12</sup>

The sources on the history of the Polish inter-uprising conspiracies (1832-63), volumes of investigative testimonies, police and judicial files and the clandestine press, as edited and published particularly by the team managed by Stefan Kieniewicz and Wiktoria Śliwowska, have over and over reconfirmed that it was the young intelligentsia who were the main proponents and propagators of 'democratic faith' and active patriotism in the era of the Spring of the Nations and of the 1863 Insurrection. One may naturally argue whether there was an ideological abyss between the cautious reformative tactics of 'organic work' and the choice of a conspiratorial and insurgent path, or just differences in age, temper

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11 See: J. Jedlicki, *Jakiej cywilizacji Polacy potrzebują: studia z dziejów idei i wyobraźni XIX wieku* ['The civilisation the Poles need. Studies in the history of ideas and imagination in the 19th century'], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Warszawa, 2002, pp. 261-304; also, H. Janaszek-Ivaničková, *Świat jako zadanie inteligencji: studium o Stefanie Żeromskim* ['The world as a task for the intelligentsia: a study on Stefan Żeromski'], Warszawa, 1971.

12 See: R. Czepulis-Rastenis, *Ludzie nauki i talentu...*

and estimation of opportunities. Whatever the case, the intelligentsia became in that period a self-reliant factor in Polish politics and independence-oriented ideology, in a variety of its forms. The price they paid for it, especially the young people, was dramatic in almost every generation: the blood they shed, the long years spent in prison or in exile, the broken careers and the bitter sense of a thorough disaster.

The scholars have on this occasion exposed the weak points of this intelligentsia: weak professional qualifications, in many cases; low individual aspirations; romantic epigonism and fragmentary or exiguous scholarly production. The sources make it apparent how secondary the culture of educated strata grew because of the tsarist, Prussian and Austrian repressive measures applied after 1831 – with the shutdown of the universities in Warsaw and Vilnius, the confinement and coerced Germanisation of their counterparts in Krakow and Lvov, the pillages of libraries, the ban on activities of scientific and scholarly societies, the censoring of printed matter and letters, the isolation from the West and from the political émigré community.

Since the 1860s, this new class, discrete from the common people as well as from the moneyed class – but still dependent, to an extent, on aristocratic patronage in the Prussian Partition, in Galicia and in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands – occupied a morally sovereign position in what was then the Kingdom of Poland. What it means is that, while still accounting for an exiguous percentage of the population, it became the source of almost all the political and educational ideas, be it legal or illegal. What it also means is that those who wish to trace the vicissitudes and works of the intelligentsia have now to study the history of education across the tiers, as well as of public administration, the judiciary, banking, railroads, medicine, the press, the theatre, literary and artistic life, the Church, political parties and revolutionary movements, exile and *katorga* penal servitude, emigration, and whatever else. With this multiplicity of searchable fields, there enters a multitude of specialised historical disciplines, together with their specified research instruments. How to combine their observations and findings, so that things are not seen as separate but interconnected, was the actual methodological and writing challenge we set for ourselves.

This early, formational and romantic period in the history of the intelligentsia is the time when the class's collective physiognomy appears the most conspicuous: the group was so scarce in number; a secondary education, not to say tertiary, was so rare an advantage; these people still felt quite lonesome in a society where respect for gained work, skills, talents, knowledge and noiseless civilisational merits had to be claimed in defiance of the still-strong counter-claims of the civic superiority of a coat-of-arms, lineage and wealthiness.

But how about the later years, following one more tragic national uprising – the one of 1863 – in which Polish officials and clerks, lawyers, students and graduates of (mainly Russian) universities, civil and military ones, played the leadership role? Of course, Warsaw Positivism and its liberal, thoroughly civil programme of the Europeanisation of the country was an openly intellectual ideology, and it tends to be conceptualised in such terms by historians of literature and of ideas. And this is quite right, as long as one does not neglect that in spite of the provisional successes of the Positivist charge, among the ingredients of Polish culture in that period were the no less powerful and lasting conservative/Catholic potential, albeit recessive for a short moment then, along with nationalist and, on the other side, socialist impulses that were gaining in strength.

These contradictory worldviews were tempting to the various factions of the intelligentsia; with broader and broader contacts with the European intellectual movement, the class in question began irrevocably splitting. The process was slower in provincial areas: only a handful of intelligentsia members could be seen in small towns, where the relations between these people were more long-lasting and personal, in spite of diverging views and, sometimes, really strong competition for patients, clients, students, readers, or viewers. But, how about big cities, Warsaw in particular?

The interests of individual professional corporations, with their specific problems, promotion paths, and codes of good (or bad) conduct, slowly started prevailing over what was common to the educated class as a whole. We could see a progressing financial stratification: from the lordly living standards of the most sought-after barristers, public notaries or doctors, up to the jobless ‘intelligent proletariat’, starving penmen or students. The differences in wealth only partly coincided with those in lifestyle: soundly bourgeois or snobbishly landowning at one end of the scale, and bohemian at the other.

The paradox is that the less one was capable of saying about the intelligentsia-on-the-whole in a reliable and verifiable manner, the more that was written and discoursed about it, with generalisations coming all too easily. Since the 1970s, journalistic texts on the intelligentsia and its tasks have been incrementing unboundedly.<sup>13</sup> The idea of the intelligentsia, like earlier on the idea of the

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13 M. Zahorska, *Spór o inteligencję w polskiej myśli społecznej do I wojny światowej* [‘The dispute on the intelligentsia in Polish social thought until World War 1’], in: *Inteligencja polska pod zaborami...*, pp. 179-216; J. Juryńska [B. Toruńczyk], *Inteligencja w poglądach endecji do roku 1905* [‘The Intelligentsia in the national-democrats’ views before 1905’], ‘Roczniki Nauk Społecznych’ [of the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) Scholarly Society], vol. 7, Lublin, 1979, pp. 187-208; T. Stegner, *Liberalowie*

nobility, has become an indispensable component of national culture, and a central concept of Polish social thought. “The role of the intelligentsia is decisive for the fortunes of the nation; since the intelligentsia has to have a self-knowledge, as the precondition of its existence, it therefore determines itself, as well as the tomorrow of the society...”, the organ of Warsaw Positivists remarked in 1880.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, the subjectivity of the intelligentsia and their collective self-knowledge seem to have been impugned. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the intelligentsia is seen decomposed into factions, political parties are getting organised – overt or secret, depending on the Partition – with their emigration agencies; the bonds of school friendship are getting torn; antagonisms between the progressives and the conservatives, nationalists and socialists are intensifying, turning into reciprocal contempt and enmity.

What is peculiar about the phenomenon of the Polish (and, to a much larger extent, Russian) intelligentsia, which for more than a century now has proved so intriguing to historians and sociologists, is not mainly the fact that in the east of Europe, it was formed into a separate stratum or class whereas in the West, it got purportedly diluted in the bourgeoisie or middle class. Intellectual, technological or artistic skills are in fact qualitatively dissimilar to capital; to reflect this differentiation, terms such as *Bildungsbürgertum* or ‘professions’ tend to be used. The crucial point is where attention and significance is attached to the separate existence and distinction of the ‘intellectual class.’ This seems to be proprietary with dependent countries, ones that are ruled heavy-handedly and have no efficient engines of enterprise or resourcefulness, and no lever for economic development.

Consequently, it was only in the eastern and southern part of the continent (likewise, in many non-European and postcolonial countries) that the idea of the intelligentsia as a social service could be conceived and exuberantly fructify: thereby, the intelligentsia was charged with at least some of the tasks that were elsewhere performed by the state administration, territorial and professional (self-)government, legal institutions, entrepreneur associations, scientific societies, and the like. Moreover, they often had to perform such tasks in defiance of an alien and authoritarian state, without civil rights, with no capital available, not infrequently with unsatisfactory expert skills.

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*Królestwa Polskiego 1904-1915* [‘The liberals of the Kingdom of Poland’], Gdańsk, 1990; etc.

14 *Zadania inteligencji naszej* [‘The tasks of our intelligentsia’], ‘Przegląd Tygodniowy’, 1880, p. 605.

It is a fact that the attitude typical of involved citizen or social activist has become second nature to a remarkable part of the intelligentsia, shaping their ethos and role models.<sup>15</sup> The awareness of the obligations with respect to their own country and its underprivileged classes was certainly stronger among the brainworkers than in any other milieu.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, the fruits of dispersed endeavours, when compared against the programmatic expectations, were certainly disappointing; in fact, the expectations were divergent at times. No surprise, then, that the sublime signposts were followed, as by a shadow, by virulent lampoons written by intellectuals embittered by their milieu.

Intersecting charges of any and all sorts could be found in them. As regards the lack of organisational skills and anarchistic inclinations, the blame was on an “old-noble temper which has prevailed over their education”, allegedly inherited by the intelligentsia.<sup>17</sup> Later on came grievances about the intelligentsia being completely separated from the masses, the commons, tending to clam up or only communing with upper and affluent strata, worded by all the ‘progressive’ press organs. A wealth of such accusations could be found in *Głos*, a nationalist-peasantist periodical, in the nationalistic press, and no less in the socialist papers.

The intelligentsia was also blamed (or, they inculpated themselves) for being a parasitic stratum, capable only of passively adopting foreign ideas and fashions, doing things the ‘European’ and cosmopolitan way out of sheer snobbery, whilst allegedly proving unable to create any native science, arts or industry, or to lead opinion. Only very few publicists tried to find excuse for this dramatic ‘impotence of the intelligentsia’ by referring to the objective conditions of their material and spiritual existence, the policies pursued by the partitioner governments, the educational standards of the time, and the country’s civilisational

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15 See: B. Cywiński, *Rodowody niepokornych* [‘Genealogies of the Indomitable’], 4th ed., Warszawa, 1996; J. Zurawicka, *Inteligencja warszawska w końcu XIX wieku* [‘The intelligentsia of Warsaw at the end of the 19th century’], Warszawa 1978; M. Zahorska, *Inteligencja a społeczeństwo w myśli społecznej okresu warszawskiego pozytywizmu*, [‘The intelligentsia and society in the social thought of the Warsaw Positivism period’], Warszawa, 1989 (published as ms.); A. Mencwel, *Etos lewicy: esej o narodzinach kulturalizmu polskiego* [‘The ethos of the Left: An essay on the birth of Polish culturalism’], Warszawa 1990.

16 A. Świętochowski, *Liberum Veto*, ed. by S. Sandler, M. Brykalska, vol. 2, Warszawa, 1976, p. 263 etc.

17 *Pamiętnik Mierosławskiego (1861-1863)* [L. Mierosławski’s memoirs], ed. by J. Frejlich, Warszawa, 1924, pp. 21, 57, 91-92, 98-100.

condition.<sup>18</sup> Remarks were made about the emigration of talents who could not find opportunities for themselves to develop or to be reasonably absorbed and utilised – a trend that emaciated the country.<sup>19</sup>

The recently numerous monographs of the provincial clusters of the intelligentsia<sup>20</sup> have all the same shown that local cultural and educational initiatives appeared in astonishing abundance in small hubs. The disputes held in Varsovian, Viennese, Berlin, or even Parisian magazines appear to have been traced there, in a specific manner, which enables us to crudely estimate the reach and depth of influence of the political and intellectual currents of the time.

Thus, what we deal with is, on the one hand, a great and recurring dispute about the virtues and vices of the intelligentsia and their hard-fought right to hold ideological leadership, for which the price of sacrifices has been paid; on the other hand, there is the often trivial ordinariness of the life of the professional intelligentsia of Poznań, Vilnius, Płock, or Łomża. This dramatic interstice between the ideal and everyday life makes apparent all the tensions of the age: spiritual, civilisation-related, political, and nationalistic. It has seemed to us, the authors of these volumes, that this particular confrontation might become the construction axis of a synthetic study on an underspecified class (all of them being underspecified, at a closer glance!) that has obstinately resisted to renounce the name and the myth contributing to the building up of their self-esteem.

An initiative to compile a monograph on the history of the Polish intelligentsia, which would have made use and crowned the output of the increasingly more numerous monographic studies, was conceived in the 1980s by Ryszarda Czepulis, with auxiliary contribution from the undersigned. Regrettably, it was not her lot to get round to the project; as for myself, I did not feel up to completing the

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18 *Niemoc inteligencji* [‘The impotence of the intelligentsia’], *Niwa*, vol. IV, 1873, pp. 1-5, 24-27, 105-108.

19 E.g.: A. Świętochowski, *Wywóz naszej inteligencji* [‘The exportation of our intelligentsia’], *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 1874, pp. 261-262, 281-283.

20 For the Kingdom, e.g.: A. Szwarc, *Inteligencja czy „warstwy oświecone”? Działalność społeczno-kulturalna pracowników umysłowych i ziemiaństwa w Kaliskiem po powstaniu styczniowym* [‘Intelligentsia, or, ‘the enlightened strata? The social-cultural activities of intellectual workers and of the landowning community in Kalisz Province after the January Insurrection’], in: *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku...*, vol. 5, pp. 215-242; L. Sadowski, *Polska inteligencja prowincjonalna i jej ideowe dylematy na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* [‘Polish provincial intelligentsia and their ideological dilemmas in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century’], Warszawa, 1988; B. Konarska-Pabiniak, *Życie kulturalno-literackie Płocka w 2. połowie XIX w.* [‘The cultural and literary life of Płock in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 19<sup>th</sup> c.’], Płock 1994; etc.

task on my own. The division, or faculty, specialised in the history of the Polish intelligentsia she had founded, and managed for sixteen years (1975-91), as part of the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, has remained there, run by me, in turn. With greater freedom of research and publishing, the unit could take in and educate a new shift of researchers. Thus, in 1998, I could take up the patiently waiting task, together with two younger contributors.

Firstly, however, we decided to take a look at how the others are doing it. For more than twelve months, we reviewed the most recent historical literature published, over about the past twenty-five years, in several European countries (France, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Czech Republic; also enjoying help from our foreign colleagues in Russia and the Ukraine), in order to compare how, in the various national contexts, the community of educated brainworkers and men of authority in sciences, arts and public opinion were identified and what names were attached to them in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Also, we were interested in how the scholars of today tend to tackle the subject. A report on this review has been included, together with selective bibliographies, in a monographic volume of *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* quarterly<sup>21</sup>. A review like this one, I wrote at that point, arouses admiration, and dizziness: “The topic is, clearly, fancy and fertile: the reasons are probably various, as we can observe a veritable explosion of conferences, discussions, biographical dictionaries and monographs focused on it in, for instance, Russia and France. The dizziness [appears] because of a terminological and typological anarchy we have come across.”<sup>22</sup>

As we delved into the reading, we got inclined to the view that the differences in naming (*les intellectuels* in France; *Bildungsbürgertum* in Germany; *intelligentsiya* in Russia; etc.) do reflect, to some extent, the distinct character of the social structures in question, but they also are, to quite a considerable degree, conventionalised categorisation differences, fixed in the language as set phrases. Quite interestingly, the Englishised term ‘intelligentsia’ (with a Russian metric obstinately, and erroneously, attached to it) is sometimes encountered in studies by Western historians on the histories of their respective societies: apparently, the notion is of use.

This being the case, consequently, instead of asking when and where an intelligentsia first occurred, if ever, it is more prudent to ask when and where it started, or ceased, to be perceived as an outstanding segment of the society; in

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21 *Historycy europejscy o inteligencji i intelektualistach* [‘The European historians on the intelligentsia and intellectuals’], *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, vol. XLIV (2000), no. 2.

22 J. Jedlicki, *Historia inteligencji polskiej w kontekście europejskim* [‘A history of the Polish intelligentsia in a European context’], *ibidem*, p. 141.

particular, when and where the intelligentsia started bringing itself/themselves into existence.<sup>23</sup>

The subject-matter we have tackled imposes the necessity to combine the various perspectives: a social, or sociologising, history with a political and psychological history; a history of mores with a history of knowledge; a sociology of literature with biography writing. Otherwise, the story cannot be told in a decent fashion, simply put. Hence, as the authors of this work, but also in terms of our inner conviction, we are eclectics, and we own up to it shamelessly. The chapters we have produced contain portions of all the relevant ingredients.

There is one thing we have stuck to with interestedness: we believe that a **milieu** is the appropriate social form that an intelligentsia assumes, just as the way of being for the nobility was the neighbourhood and the 'friendly footing of the knightly estate'. Whatever the intelligentsia produces, wherever it appears, it is a sociable environment; and where direct contact prove unsatisfactory, a correspondence environment emerges. It is these environments and milieus that form the focus of our observation.

We have tried to show what it was that such milieus lived and breathed. Thus, while writing of their ideological life, we did not ask which philosopher had just excogitated a new system of the philosophy of history, but rather, what views and beliefs were shared by the milieus of our interest – if only this could be dug up. Writing about poetry, for instance, we wanted to establish and tell the reader what was read here or there, what was declaimed in the salons, what poems were written down by gentlemen in the ladies' or damsels' albums, and what were the poems one could be put before a court for and sent to Siberia, or to the Kufstein stronghold in Austria.

And hence, the brief biographical excursions, individual portraits that at times appear as intermissions in the course of our story, are not, in the main, profiles of the most eminent individuals of the period, or creative artists of genius, according to our contemporary measure; instead, presented are those who enjoyed special popularity or esteem in their period, or just impersonate some important trend or convention of their time.

Yet, let us quit the delusion that any high measure of objectivism is attainable in a social history of ideas and mentality. Indeed, worldview-related, political or moral convictions and attitudes tend to be ascribed, as a general rule, to some broader milieus, although the source attestations we have at our disposal ordinarily

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23 Idem, *Autocréation de l'intelligentsia*, in: *Mythes et symboles politiques en Europe centrale*, ed. By C. Delsol, M. Masłowski, J. Nowicki, Paris, 2002, pp. 384-399.

come from confessions of individual people and, in a rigorous approach, they could only be referred to such individuals. In extending the reference, a historian is naturally aided by his general knowledge of the epoch. Such reckonings and propositions have the quality of more or less convincing interpretations and suppositions, but quitting them would have annihilated intellectual history.

Consequently, our intent was not to compete with the compendia on the histories of individual professions; neither did we skim the cream from the biographical dictionaries of Polish doctors, technologists and engineers, book experts, scientists and scholars, and the like, although we obviously have looked things up in them, with a great respect for the arduous and fruitful work of their authors. Professional milieus appear in these volumes, in their specialist functions, to the extent that they influenced, as we believe, the general culture of the educated strata of their time.

Probably the biggest trouble in our laborious effort of writing these volumes was the necessity to resolve what is indispensable and what is negligible. The decisions became particularly difficult when it came to the chapters dealing with the months of accelerated and hectic actions – which particularly means the national uprisings and other moments of lively political activity. The later the period, the more troublesome it became to make the decision. Since the intelligentsia took part in everything that occurred, their participation being more and more frequently instrumental and managing how should we then cut their history out of the dense history of everything? We have not designed any universal recipe for this: each of the authors coped with the issue to the best of their abilities. Finally, however, the once-intended concise volume has expanded to three – just because we found it so hard to agree to the rejection of problems or places whose importance was apparently minor.

We believe that regardless of the Partitions and the dispersal across the world, the Polish intelligentsia has remained a unity – its members caring, as a rule, for it to remain so, similarly to Polish culture, one and indivisible. Obviously, the differences between regions, especially those which formed part of the various state organisms, cannot possibly be blurred: there is probably nothing wrong with referring to the Poznań intelligentsia, or the Vilnius intelligentsia, since each of these groups necessarily gained its peculiar and provincial traits. We have nevertheless endeavoured, to the extent practicable, to approach these dissimilarities as secondary, while emphasising the links between the provinces, the national-scope currents and phenomena and, wherever due, the participation of the Polish intelligentsia – in spite of all the obstacles – in pan-European processes, such as the emancipation of women or increasing nationalisms. My concern is that we have not been fully successful at this: there still remains much to be done

as far as a comparative history of Europe, where its social and intellectual aspects are concerned.<sup>24</sup>

In the beginning of the last decade of the past century, the German historian Jürgen Kocka pondered on what might happen with social history. “In what (a) way(s)”, considered he, “one may convincingly combine social history and cultural history, so as to avoid having a social history depleted of culture and an ethereal ‘culturalism’, is one of the great questions that is still worth the labour of the strongest brains.”<sup>25</sup> Albeit the authors of the present volumes do not pretend to be classed thus commendably, they have in practice had to face a similar task as their intent was to describe the composition, social situation and intellectual/mental resources of the intelligentsia, as well as their national aspirations across 150-or-so years. Over this whole period, the superior driver determining their situation was, at first, the threat of loss and afterwards, the definitive loss of a country and state which agreed with the sense of their civic identity. For historically self-knowledgeable people, this fact had different meanings and generated a variety of life choices – from national apostasy and ardent adaptation up to open protest and armed struggle; regardless of the case, it posed a challenge not to be overruled.

The conflict between the norms of tradition and the requirements of modernity, which was common in the nineteenth century, had to be tackled by Polish society (apart from the constitutional interludes) without participation by the oppressive authorities which defended the political and social status quo, as a general rule. These boundary conditions, basically common to the nations living aside from the mainstream of European progress, have caused that the attitudes and achievements of the Polish educated strata are so hard to compare with the experiences of the intellectuals who did not have to feel politically alienated in

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24 We should like to mention a valuable study of our Moscow colleague Denis Sdvižkov, published in German as: *Das Zeitalter der Intelligenz: zur vergleichenden Geschichte der Gebildeten in Europa bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen, 2006 – a unique attempt at comparing the French, German, Polish and Russian intelligentsias. The French comparative ambitions, e.g; C. Charle, *Les intellectuels en Europe au XIXe siècle: essais d'histoire comparée*, Paris, 1996; or, M. Leymarie, J.-F. Sirinelli, eds., *L'histoire des intellectuels aujourd'hui*, Paris 2003, only incidentally reach beyond the historical boundaries of the Western Europe.

25 J. Kocka, *Perspektywy historii społecznej w latach dziewięćdziesiątych* [‘Perspectives of social history in the nineties’], in: W. Schulze et al., *Historia społeczna, historia codzienności, mikrohistoria* [‘Social history, history of everyday life, microhistory’], transl. by A. Kopacki, Warszawa, 1996, p. 53.

their own countries, even as revolutionaries.<sup>26</sup> These conditions set a specific gradation of the Polish problems, with the incessantly superior national question, but nowise annulled the multiplicity of social attitudes or alleviated their antagonism. Since the intelligentsia was born, its members represented a variety of worldview and ethical orientations; with time, these differences, as has been mentioned, became unbridgeable.

As a result, we learned in the course of our work how to shun expressing premature opinions on the intelligentsia 'as such'. Any spectacular characteristics of this class, whether positive or negative, form part of its history and self-knowledge, but it would not befit us to multiply them, even though some critics would be expecting us to do so. We instead endeavoured to trace the discrepant paths of professional careers, the economic and intellectual stratification, the differences in mentality and phraseology, and to delineate the field of tensions and the repertoire of individual choices for life.

We intended to stay as close as possible to the language of the age – not in terms of imitating it, which would savour the mannerisms: we have refrained from introducing categories alien to the period's way of thinking and naming things, wherever unnecessary. Our intent can be shown by the example of geographical names. Using the names such as Eastern Galicia, Lithuania and Ruthenia (rather than Ukraine), or 'the Stolen Lands' does not mean that we should like to reclaim these lands, be it wishfully: the thing is that these names were common in the Polish discourse of the time, which now forms our source material.

Our story ends with the year Poland regained her independence, 1918, since our team has not made source-based research on the two decades between the World Wars. This period calls for a different method of study, at least owing to the country's revived parliamentarianism, freedom of the press, and the already-reliable statistics. There are colleagues among us who have specialised in these matters and are thoroughly competent to take this synthetic study further up, if they should find it purposeful.<sup>27</sup>

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26 For more on this, see: J. Chałasiński, *Przeszłość i przyszłość...*, ed. 1997, p. 138.

27 See: J. Żarnowski, *Struktura społeczna inteligencji w Polsce w latach 1918-1939* ['The social structure of the intelligentsia in Poland between 1918 and 1939'], Warszawa, 1964; idem, *O inteligencji polskiej lat międzywojennych* ['The Polish intelligentsia in the interwar years'], Warszawa, 1965; idem, *Inteligencja 1918-1945: apogeum i klęska elity społecznej* [The intelligentsia of 1918-45: The climax and the disaster of a social elite], in: *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku: materiały...*, pp. 159-168; W. Mędrzecki, *Inteligencja polska na Wołyniu w okresie międzywojennym* ['The Polish intelligentsia

Working as a team on the project, we reciprocally read our chapters as they were written, and subjected them to the judgment of the whole intelligentsia history faculty. We extend our thanks to: Anna Brus, Magdalena Gawin, Maciej Górny, Agnieszka Grzybowska, Adam Kożuchowski, Grzegorz Krzywiec, Barbara Petrozolin-Skowrońska, and Professor Wiktoria Śliwowska, for their benign but attentive and critical support of our effort.

The general methodological and formal rules have been agreed upon by the three authors; nevertheless, each of us has retained their sovereign rights: the material was selected and interpreted individually, each section was composed by its author, who moreover used his/her own, easily recognisable writing style, which the general editor did not intend to standardise. Yet, we all intended to write not an academic textbook but a vivid story, fit for reading and discussion, rather than just for learning. We have figured out, naively perhaps, that the book could be used not only by expert historians, our professional colleagues, or aspiring history students, but also intellectuals from some other congregations, if interested in our shared social genealogy.

Our work lasted for a long time and was enabled by the sheltered conditions offered to us by our home, the ‘Tadeusz Manteuffel’ Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences.

We humbly and gratefully bow to the reviewers of our manuscript (or rather, printout): Professors Grażyna Borkowska, Tomasz Kizwalter and Jerzy Zdrada, who took no fright at its size and pointed out to us at least some faults or deficiencies.

*Jerzy Jedlicki*

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in Volhynia in the interwar period’], Warszawa, 2005. For an interesting discussion of the historical background, mainly the twentieth-century one, together with the related methodological dilemmas, see: H. Domański, ed., *Inteligencja w Polsce: specjaliści, twórcy, klerkowie, klasa średnia?* [‘The intelligentsia in Poland: Specialists, creative artists, intellectuals, or middle class?’], Warszawa, 2008.



# Chapter 1: At the sources

## 1. Prehistory

Our account of the history of Polish intelligentsia starts some two and a half centuries ago, in the Age of Enlightenment. Why then? Is it not the case that there have always lived educated people in our land, at least ever since Poland assumed Christianity? Did anything of unique importance occur in the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century that implied a real breakthrough in the history of the enlightened class?

There can be no reply to this question without an attempt to look closer at the situation of educated people in periods prior to this. Staying well aware of the risk of error and simplification, let us peek into the past so as to be reassured that the proposed periodisation is legitimate. Such a glance, whilst not pretending to be fully accurate or complete, sheds light primarily on the angle-of-view that seeks the germs and first fruits of the intellectual milieu. There is hopefully no doubt that intellectuals are formed by their milieu or environment – the one that normally surrounds them even if they are conflicted against each other. This environment provides topics for conversation and opportunities to meet and grapple with ideas, thus producing the criteria for evaluation of one's own achievements and of those of others. An environment of this sort develops only and almost necessarily in an urban space. There, adequate density of contacts is ensured so that stimuli for creative mental and intellectual activity can emerge, and exchange of thoughts is enabled: a rivalry and collaboration at the same time, so that the protagonist may sense that he or she remains inside a living mental/intellectual current without which an original labour of thought would not in fact be enabled. For these reasons, educated people living outside of this circle are basically outside of the scope of our present story.

“In the beginning, there were towns” – to start with the quote from the great French historian Jacques Le Goff, opening his now-classical work on *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages*. But a doubt arises in an instant: would it not be more appropriate to commence this story by saying, “There was the Church in the beginning”, given the specific Polish circumstances? It was the Church that as early as 10<sup>th</sup> century AD brought clergymen, books, documents, and chancelleries into the realm of Duke Mieszko I. Yet, on second thought, let us come to agreement with Le Goff: the Church in itself would not suffice to identify a

separate educated class. The clergy are part of a great corporation encompassing the entirety of Western Christianity; they would identify themselves as priests rather than scholars; in our land, a millennium ago, they would be affiliated to the Church in its entirety rather than to a Polish culture which did not then as of yet exist. The diocesan curia and the ducal court were their fields of operation: being the elite of the elites, they did not form a separate enlightened faction.

In keeping with the sense we have just developed, a milieu evolved in the European West from the moment universities emerged, from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries onwards. Poland saw its only mediaeval university set up at a later date; starting with the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in turn, the Le Goffian precondition is fulfilled for the first time ever in our history: towns emerge. Mediaevalists have been disputing for more than a hundred years now in their attempts to identify the moment towns first appeared in the Polish territory; drilling deep down into this particular matter is not our central purpose here. Based on a broad interpretation of notions, it can be assumed that the town as a trading centre or political power hub has been in existence in our lands since the time of Mieszko I. However, a town that is capable of creating an environment for an educated class or section (this being the actual point of the present story's interest) only emerged in our territory in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the result of so-called colonisation under German law.

This was, let us remember, an enormous and long-lasting process which impressed a durable trait on the vast tract of our continent – from the littorals of the Black Sea and the northern limits of the Balkan Peninsula up to the Baltic Sea. West-European (mainly German) settlers brought to Poland, Bohemia and Hungary by monarchs and magnates brought along system-wide institutions, legal norms and technologies which East-Central Europe would probably not have generated on their own over a series of generations. The German (in most cases, Magdeburg) law-based town, with its square-shaped marketplace and a network of perpendicular streets, has since become a natural part of the Polish landscape. For a comparably strong wave of modernisation and urbanisation, our lands would have to wait until the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the advent of capitalism.

The town incorporated under the German law was a complex organism to the extent that it needed a certain number of educated people to enable it to function. Let us see: there is a parish church – sometimes a cathedral – with a cathedral school affiliated with it as well as a diocesan curia and its chancellery. If there was a cathedral, there was a chapter, and with a chapter, there were canons. There might have been a municipal school too, and there certainly was a chancellery and an archive affiliated with the municipal council institutions. Another potential centre, or hub, might have been – in the local conditions of

the 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> century – the court of a local prince, as Poland was divided into small principalities. Once Poland was reunited as a single kingdom by King Ladislaus I the Elbow-high (Władysław I Łokietek), the former principality institutions did not fade but instead turned into local-government ('landed' or county) institutions. Affiliated with the bishoprics, chapters, municipal authorities and ducal courts were the chancelleries, whose role was incomparably greater in those times than that played by their homonymous, but never peer, institutions known to us today. The chancellery's role was to issue the privileges or charters which formed the main source of law at the time. For a charter to be valid, it had to be issued in an appropriate manner (and, obviously, in Latin). Thus, chancelleries, especially large ones, formed the major clusters of educated people. Perhaps referring to the late-mediaeval town as an intellectual environment is thus a legitimate thing to do.

Everything has its proper measure, though. In the Late Middle Ages, not more than just a few towns in the Polish lands would correspond with such a picture. How many educated people might have lived in each of them? Krzysztof Ożóg has estimated the number of Krakow-based clergy with a university-level background as 'in excess of 120' during the entire 14<sup>th</sup> century; this relatively big number was possibly owed to the fact that the then-reunited Piast monarchy slowly started building its administrative apparatus, to use advisedly a phrase not quite well fitted to mediaeval realities. This same author supposes that in the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (by the time the University of Krakow was set up) there were possibly some 500 university graduates spread out around the Polish lands. How many educated people could consequently be seen in each of the big cities at a time: ten to fifteen, perhaps? Not many, even though the cities themselves reached a maximum population of 2,000 to 3,000 inhabitants each.

And still those few hundred do not deserve negligence at all (inclusive of the surrounding group of lower-tier graduate which was few-fold more numerous). Even though the Polish cities did not grow to become scientific and cultural centres, the bloom of the Krakow University in the fifteenth century is hardly apprehensible without them. A university must have some sort of a background behind it – the people frequenting it have to have some initial education, combined with some incentive for learning beyond the utilitarian. A university without municipal or parish schools would be hardly conceivable. The setting up of the Krakow University (established 1364, renewed 1400) is an epoch-making event for our story. Fifteenth-century Krakow already had a sort of environment or milieu, with its network of institutions and human relations, and some *en-vogue* polemic topics involving the educated community. The University did not act on its own, though: together with the royal chancellery, it formed a peculiar

ideological community, providing the chancellery with arguments for resisting the claims of the Teutonic Order. A stratum was being formed that reached beyond a single enclosed community.

The fifteenth-century monarchical chancellery offered, albeit to a limited extent, opportunities for social promotion (a total of sixty-eight employees of this institution from the time of King Ladislaus (Władysław) II Jagiełło [reigned 1386-1434] are known to us by their names, of whom at least twelve were burghers). Some of the chancellery staff had a university education. Lay people worked for the institution along with clergymen – mostly, nobility sons who, having their chancellery ‘traineeship’ done, would return to their family courts (no professional clerical class had taken shape by then). Thus, a breach in the ecclesial monopoly in science and teaching was apparent.

Yet, university professors were clergymen only. Bartłomiej of Jasło, one of the most outstanding Krakow professors in the late 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, offered an apology of the learned man, emphasising in his writings the importance of learning and science for its own sake. Stanisław of Skarbimierz, his younger, expressed a more sceptical attitude toward science, highlighting the dominant status of the Christian faith. This dispute is of importance to us as these two varying attitudes on the role of science, teaching and learning herald certain ideas covered in the following sections.

Whoever was willing to praise the sciences and learn them could do so either by emphasising that science or learning is a value in its own right, or by showing the role of science (learning) as a way to achieve certain other goals. It has been known since Antiquity (since it could be read in Aristotle) that any virtue comprising a good in itself is ranked higher than those which were only a means for another good. It was also remembered that the Philosopher attached the highest value to disinterested cognition, seeing the truest happiness in it. This Aristotelian ideal was, however, causing certain difficulty in the mediaeval period: for a Christian, care for his or her eternal salvation must take preference to gaining knowledge for its own sake. Attempts were made at solving this dilemma by pointing out that there is no contradiction and whoever strives for knowledge strives for God, and vice versa. These two aspects were alternately stressed by various authors, and the result is that in mediaeval thinkers we come across both ways of justifying the necessity of the pursuance of knowledge; both of them can be seen in the Krakow professors of the time. The two positions in question, although in a secularised form, can be found *mutatis mutandis* over the entire period of this book’s interest: the ideals of a learned aristocrat-of-the-spirit and a scholar at the service of his society would still well into 19<sup>th</sup> century form the two poles of dispute on the role and social obligations of the man-of-science.

Fifteenth-century Krakow housed institutions of intellectual life, and a plane existed for the exchange of ideas (be it through university debates or in written form); performance of mental work was based, in an increasing number of cases, on the worker's holding a relevant diploma. Without a course of studies completed, one could not be a professor; without a papal or imperial approval, there was no chance to turn into a notary. Although the chancellery did not formally require university-education qualifications, graduates were welcome as employees. In other words, the criteria of suitability for doing mental jobs were becoming formalised. Bartłomiej of Jasło mentions in one of his treatises a group of people described as *litterati et intelligentes*<sup>28</sup>. Clearly, intellectual abilities were considered sufficiently important to act as a distinguishing mark for the group.

It could seem that a great transformation was waiting right behind the door: a few more universities, in several towns other than Krakow; a few chancelleries and other offices employing educated people; and the dissemination of printing, enabling academies to exert a broader impact on the outside world. To this add another important invention, scientific magazines, and we have an intelligentsia readily appearing lifelike in front of us. Things took a different course, though.

It has probably been for one and a half centuries now that generations of historians examining various aspects of the history of our country have shared an irresistible impression that there is something seemingly 'brewing' in Polish history in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. There were institutions, ideas and social groups emerging which were, it might seem, but a step's distance to modern institutions: parliamentarianism emerged, towns developed, utterances abounded in which a national awareness (as we would call it today) could easily be traced. And then, all of a sudden, around the year 1500, it is as if all that gets dispersed in fog; in lieu of a seemingly occurring modern community something completely different arises: the Nobility's Commonwealth (or, Republic of the Nobles). In the vast expanse of this country, agriculture was the basic form of economy and rural life was a natural way of living. The effect of 'calamitous space', as the historian Józef Szujski described it almost one and a half century ago, was at work. It was the union with Lithuania of 1387 which, associating the vicissitudes of

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28 The phrase appears in Bartłomiej of Jasło's treaty *O gestykulacji celebransa* ['The gesticulation of the celebrant'], as quoted by J. Drewnowski in his book *Uczony w świadomości polskiego środowiska naukowego pierwszej połowy XV wieku* ['The learned and scholar in the awareness of Polish scholarly milieu in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 15<sup>th</sup> century'], Wrocław 1987, p. 97 (and is interpreted by J. Drewnowski as 'educated and knowledgeable people').

Poland with the immense non-urbanised areas in the east, must have contributed to a debilitated role of urban culture in the merged Jagiellonian countries.

Pauperised and marginalised, the town came to be perceived as an alien and, in fact, redundant. It was only in the early nineteenth century that many a Polish town again became as populous as it had been in the twilight of the Middle Ages. The university persisted and probably had some output to its credit; it did offer a limited social-advancement opportunity to a group of plebeian youth, but in the nobility-based society, its role was minimal. The environment and milieu, in the sense discussed above, disappeared.

It can indeed be observed that similar transitions were occurring throughout Europe, although on a smaller scale and with less effect. The West saw intellectual life hubs move beyond universities, which remained set-aside till their great renaissance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Italy – where, as is known, municipal republics were blossoming in the 15<sup>th</sup> century – the following century and especially the seventeenth saw the cities slowly decreasing in importance. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was the absolute monarch's court, rather than a university college courtyard, that focused debates and gave rise to ideas. If there was any resistance against this court, it would concentrate not in towns but in magnate courts (as was the case with Germany where the Reich dukes and princes have secured for themselves an almost sovereign position vis-à-vis the emperor).

In Poland, however, the decline of the town as a culture-genic factor was deeper and more fateful than in the West. The variety of educated man characteristic of the sixteenth century was no more an urban intellectual, as typical of the previous century, more often than not associated with a university: it was namely the humanist, a new creation, afar from urban life, blooming in the courts as his natural subsoil. Universities were often generously dowered and moreover gave their members a certain independence from secular or ecclesial institutions. A Renaissance humanist, enjoying no institutional support, would resort to the care of the mighty, eulogise his patron by means of panegyrics, not infrequently embarking on acting in defence of his policies when commissioned to do so.

It initially seemed that the humanistic ideal would be absorbed by Poland. Łukasz Górnicki's recast of *Il Corteggiano* by Baldassare Castiglione, the work famed at the time across Europe, offered a model of the courtier-humanist. Adapted to Polish conditions, *Dworzanin Polski* was imbued with relevant local realities and was subject to a stylistic simplification, with certain language subtleties, which the Polish of the time could probably not cope with, removed. The greatest poet of the Polish Renaissance, Jan Kochanowski was active at a court for a part of his life, and disseminated his works in print. The chancellery of the last

Jagiellon monarchs formed a hearth of humanistic thought. The seventeenth-century generations following saw cultural centres languish, though. While monarchical courts had their essential culture-generating role in the West, the Polish royal court was not capable of generating a real attractive force. The transformation of cultural style implied a transformation in the hierarchy of prestige. Education had never taken primacy in Poland, and then its significance was weakened still. A nobleman of the Sarmatian culture was capable of knowing a lot and reading a lot, but only when it was a matter of adventitious amateur activity for him – the ‘non-idling idleness’ of an enlightened dilettante. Dispersed to nobility manors across the entirety of the enormous Commonwealth, Polish culture did not disappear but instead became almost perfectly polycentric; the local centres communicated with one another in manuscript form on an increasing scale: much was written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century though little appeared in print. Waław Potocki, the great poet, spent his entire life in his village at the foot of the Carpathians and could exert a broader impact to the extent that his poems were manually copied by others; it was only in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that a vast majority of these pieces eventually came out in print.

There were still educated people around: magnates who sent their sons on foreign journeys were in need of well-read private tutors who would set a direction for their studies, and so willingly educated Poles or foreigners were employed by such magnates. Military engineers appeared in Poland in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, since new forms of military architecture called for their professional designers. Not all of them were aliens – for an example, we need only take Kazimierz Siemienowicz, an artillerist from the former half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, whose work on artillery and pyrotechnics, published in Latin in Amsterdam in 1650, is considered to be a work of pan-European significance.

The seventeenth century makes us face yet another group, one that tends to be regarded by historians as precursory to the Polish intelligentsia. The group namely included impecunious, detached intellectuals and wandering students; teachers employed with rural or urban lowest-grade schools; wandering adventurers and brawlers, standing out for their reading and writing skills. Those ‘distant relatives’ of Western European vagrants or goliards, disparagers deriding any social hierarchies and behavioural norms, have left to posterity a certain number of satirical pieces, usually intended for the stage, described nowadays by scholars as the picaresque [Polish, *sowidzdrzalski*] literature. Well-read people, ‘litterati’ [*literaki*], are indeed often to be met in those pieces, complaining as they do about their poverty and the disregard they suffer from the outside world – particularly when repeatedly put on the same footing with peasants by the nobility and the clergy.

Complaining about the hardships of the present (as compared to ‘good old times’) is obviously part of the set literary inventory and cannot be trusted ‘as it stands’. However, it is plausible that a deteriorating situation of the community of our present interest has been thus rendered, as the picaresque artistic production eventually disappeared in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The goliard group in question might be somehow, though rather vaguely, correlated with the libertine teasers of King Stanislaus II Augustus’ (Stanisław August) time, of whom more will be said further on. Yet there is no identifiable continuity between these two communities, separated as they are by the distance of more than a century and a half. Hence, authors of picaresque literary pieces are of only marginal significance to the subject matter we are tackling. Wandering along the highways, moving from one place to the other, living in a village this moment and in a town the next, they no doubt created a specific subculture but were incapable of making up an intellectual milieu. The seventeenth-century Commonwealth could in fact offer no conditions for the emergence of a community of learned people.

If there was any collective of educated people in existence then in the Polish lands, the Jesuit Order was undoubtedly it. The black legend shrouding this monastic order has somewhat veiled its enormous achievements, particularly in the domain of the school system and education generally. Their Jesuit *Ratio educationis* of 1598, a detailed syllabus for the Order’s colleges and a methodological guide for teachers (to use our contemporary descriptions), proved a thoroughly humanistic document. The mediaeval categorisation of the seven Liberal Arts (comprised of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*) was quit, and the essential recommendations of Renaissance pedagogues were taken into account. Over the following several dozen years, Jesuit colleges rose to be the most modern and most popular schools across Catholic Europe, attracting dissenters as well. All the same, the Jesuits were mentally attached to their own order in the first place: their brethren living somewhere at the end of the world, in Japan or Latin America, would always be described as ‘our’ people (*nostris*). There were some outstanding personages among Polish Jesuits, one being Adam Kochański, mathematician and philosopher, librarian to King John III Sobieski, who corresponded with Gottfried Leibniz on the differential calculus. But Kochański was a member of the exclusive correspondence club of European learned men, described in its time as the Literary Republic – *Respublica Litteraria*. For Kochański, like for the military engineer Siemienowicz, Polish culture was not the point of reference, as opposed to the international Latin-language culture of the European intellectual elite. Without the preparatory effort of such people, Enlightenment-era rationalism and criticism would not have become feasible.

In our attempt to understand the conditions in which the Polish intelligentsia was emerging, we are bound to remember that erudition virtually did not exist as a cultural phenomenon in the seventeenth-century Commonwealth. A handful of intellectuals from Ducal Prussia could be referred to in this context (just to recall the well-known astronomer Jan Heweliusz/Johannes Hevelius); still, being German-speaking and deeply bound with the German cultural circle, he did not essentially influence the culture of the Nobility's Commonwealth. It is only in the first half of 18<sup>th</sup> century that we can first spot retarded attempts at transplanting the erudition cherishing fashion into the Polish soil. The most important among those attempts was the foundation in 1747 of a public library named after its founders, the Załuski bishop brothers: Józef-Andrzej and Andrzej-Stanisław.

Let us pause now for a while: we have arrived at the time which was to mark the actual starting point for our deliberations. The time has come for us to try and answer the opening question: is this identification legitimate? If the history of Western-European educated classes were the focus of our present interest, then doubts might well occur about whether the Enlightenment has indeed brought about a thorough change. In Poland, the beginning of the Enlightenment was marked by a growth of periodical press, a development of the printing industry, the appearance of new institutions grouping educated and cultured people, and the development of cities (this being particularly true for the capital town of Warsaw). While following all these developments, the impression that the thread which had been lost sometime in the sixteen century was taken up anew is irresistible. Given Polish conditions, the breakthrough was of a revolutionary nature indeed.

## **2. The breakthrough: the printing press and the town**

How did the class we describe today as the Polish intelligentsia, or Polish intellectuals, emerge? What has a society to do or be put through in order to form and constitute a separate class of educated and cultured people?

It might have been thus, for instance: Around the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century, a mental revival started in the Polish lands in connection with the increasing onrush of Enlightenment ideas (for the time being, this movement clearly involved small elites). By virtue of its nature, a revival of this sort brought about an added measure of self-esteem and self-respect in those performing intellectual work. Their prestige increased, or at least the disrespect manifested toward them before then slackened somewhat; consequently, those remaining thus far on the margins of the 'regular' estate-based system (a portion of these people existed under adverse circumstances, even when feudalism was in bloom) more willingly than

before embarked on a 'literary-hack' career. Advocates of a reform of the Commonwealth's political system were in need of intellectuals who would justify the new ideas. The process went on automatically: once a milieu is formed – be it a small and marginal one – it becomes easier for more 'unaffiliated folks' [Polish, *ludzie luźni*] to join. The importance of education in the life-oriented plans of well-off nobles and magnates had also grown, and so their demand for educational institutions increased; pressure was thus exerted upon monastic schools in anticipation of their reform. A group of educated nobles thus appeared: it would from then on form an important (though not the only) source for the recruitment of intellectuals. This resource would be used by the state bureaucracy, then still in its infancy.

Men-of-letters and officials or clerks dwelled in towns (mainly in the capital city) and contributed to their growth; in itself, the development of towns and cities, albeit caused by non-economic drivers, implied quite substantial economic and social consequences. In terms of cultural change, to start with let us just remark on the increasing awareness of backwardness: by mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, following an era of Sarmatian self-complacency, Polish elites had eventually realised that the only opportunity for the weakening Commonwealth to stay alive rested on the adoption of novel Western forms of state organisation (and, on a broader basis, new ideas, role models, and attitudes toward the world).

For the history of the educated classes, another transformation – on a European scale, this time – is of equal importance. Writing of the eighteenth century, cultural historians are inclined to emphasise a turning point noticeable in Europeans' attitudes toward the book and written word. As they observe, very few texts had circulated around by then – mainly prayer-books, some of them rewritten by hand, and very few people, beside scholars and the erudite, would own more than a few, perhaps up to a dozen, books. No wonder the same texts were read and reread many a time, learned by heart as a result, and reread again all the same. The most popular method was reading such texts aloud to a group of listeners.

The Enlightenment epoch brought about a change in this respect. The increasing amounts of printed matter, along with growing circulations, transformed the method of contact with the printed word. A great deal was read, and at a fast pace; only vital texts were resumed. Reading aloud became more and more rare; reading gradually ceased to be an opportunity for socialising and turned into a personal, at times somewhat confidential activity. Some scholars believe that this switch to a new method of reading was one of the elements that facilitated the dissemination of romantic individualism in the early years of the nineteenth century. A personal contact with the book enabled fast and superficial reading, but on the other hand it facilitated afterthought on the text having been read.

This metamorphosis of the style in which the written word was made use of is often referred to as a 'reading revolution.' A related transformation was taking place in the area of the Commonwealth – one that had occurred earlier in the West of Europe: an increasingly massive switch from oral into written messaging, which shortly afterward assumed a printed form.

Given this context, authors were becoming increasingly aware of their original individuality; this in turn contributed, to an extent, to their enhanced social position. The increasing number and availability of publications bore fruit in the slow but sure emergence of a milieu embracing authors and their readers alike. A literary public was coming into being: an intermediated community mutually associating people who might have not ever met in person but had been through a shared reading list. This in turn implied a similar lifestyle, predilections and fancies, views and opinions. The development of the press – a medium that by nature seeks abridged, simplified, and otherwise ephemeral forms, strongly attached to the momentary moods and current events, had a special say in the process. These traits made the press fit for a perfunctory and fast reading – and thus paved the way for it to reach a broader reading public; moreover, its relatively wide scope enabled the press to exert an integrating impact, to a larger degree than book-formatted publications do.

Although the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the age of the Enlightenment saw an extreme growth in the number of printed publications, the circulation of manuscripts did not vanish. Magnates kept and supported their regular correspondents-informants in the capital town. Those enterprising individuals among them increased their incomes by copying the news they had prepared and distributing it to multiple recipients. Thus, handwritten newspapers of a sort were produced, which functioned in parallel with the printed press. Similarly, parliamentary (diet-session) diaries or journals in the Commonwealth, prior to the Partition, were modelled as private accounts rather than official State documents. Certain elements of oral circulation would continue into the 19<sup>th</sup> century: poems and prose fragments were read aloud at salons and coffeehouses; jubilee celebrators or patrons were presented with pieces of poetry rewritten by hand. It would thus be erroneous to believe that the continuity of attitudes toward culture was completely broken off.

Back for a while to the social life: perhaps the most spectacular of the social transformations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the last thirty years of its existence was the unexpectedly fast growth of the population of Warsaw. At the time the Third-of-May Constitution was adopted, Warsaw was reported to have had 120,000 inhabitants, a figure based however on the period's clearly overestimated data. A large portion of this number (a fourth or

perhaps more) was in fact contributed by strangers and visitors: the grand magnate courts, noblemen, and any and all species of new arrivals visiting the city in the course of a *sejm* (diet) session certainly formed quite a significant fraction of those dwelling in Warsaw (otherwise, the fast drop in the number of inhabitants by half within a mere few years after the Third Partition would be unexplainable).

Warsaw was an outrageously provincial town, as a matter of fact. Immersed in darkness in the night, it was drowning in mud in the spring and autumn (taking a closer look at the best-known townscapes by Bernardo Bellotto, nicknamed Canaletto, we see no cobblestone-paved routes in Krakowskie-Przedmieście or Miodowa Streets, or in Krasiński Square [*plac Krasińskich*] – let alone the smaller and less presentable streets). We might as well not mention safety in the streets, particularly after dark. The contrast of ostentation and glamour on the one hand, and penury and destitution on the other, was striking. “The middle orders of men [...] appears hardly to have any existence here. [...] The mansions of the great and the cottages of the poor, compose exclusively the larger portion of Warsaw. [...] Even Constantinople is in this respect far less barbarous”.<sup>29</sup>

Whatever it was like, the capital town was a unique spot all across the Commonwealth. Leaving aside Pomerania, the area whose towns were predominantly German, the overwhelming majority of inhabitants of that immense-sized country lived in wretched villages and small towns not so different from villages. Except for Warsaw and Krakow, which was much smaller than the capital, no Polish town had any more than 10,000 residents.

Nonetheless, the development of Warsaw was impressive at the time. It will soon become apparent how many initiatives, projects, endeavours and institutions of a clearly urban or municipal nature were evolving, blossoming, declining and mutually competing in that semi-rural metropolis. The town as an autonomous cultural development factor reappeared for the first time since the fifteenth century – and thus the precondition formulated by Le Goff is resumed.

In the period of King Stanislaus II Augustus, tenement houses appeared – a novel phenomenon at the time. Affluent noblemen built such houses in their urban property areas; magnates or high nobility turned their palace backhouses into tenements. Also the clergy built tenement houses, adapting for the purpose unoccupied sites beside their churches (e.g. the houses adjacent to the Holy Cross Church and to the Carmelite Church on Krakowskie-Przedmieście St.).

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29 William Wraxall, *Memoirs of the Courts of Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw and Vienna in the years 1777, 1778, and 1779*, London 1806, 3rd ed., vol. II, p. 3-4.

Apartment houses with dwellings for lease were not as typical a form of urban developments as they were to become in the following century, but the fact that they existed at all is evidence that an intermediate form between the hut and the palace started gradually emerging: the contrast between poverty and affluence, which was so astonishing to foreign observers, was blurring.

Inhabited by tenants of the most varied background and status, the tenement house rose to become a cross-section of the society, in a sense – and the belles-letters would frequently make use of this topic. Take for instance the house in Senatorska Street, owned by Tomasz Uruski, Chamberlain to King Stanislaus Augustus. Its dwellers in the year 1792 included a parliamentary member and a royal chamberlain, a few burghers (two merchants, two publicans, a chemist, an accoucheur [obstetrician] and one ‘billiard-keeper’), and five Jewish families.<sup>30</sup> Overcrowding like this obviously testifies to the small number of available dwellings and, viewed from the other side, to the meagreness of the residents. This crowding of various estates, classes and professions foreshadowed, as it were, the nineteenth-century capitalist town.

Wherever a big city appears, it becomes easier to find larger groups of people performing a single job; where there are more of those doing the same job, it is commonplace that they enter into contact with one another. Work performed on a shared footing gives rise to common interests and affinity groups (though competition is also implied); more importantly, though, a community of language, problems, and ways of perception takes shape. Thus, intellectuals were offered their natural environment: an intelligentsia was about to emerge.

### 3. Places and institutions: Warsaw

Let us glance at a map of eighteenth-century Warsaw to identify the places and institutions testifying to the formation of the new social stratum. Following this topographic identification, we will take a look at institutional transformations which contributed to the rise of the group of interest but which cannot be unambiguously situated spatially.

The Załuski Library was an institution laying on the borderline of the epochs – still permeated by a baroque spirit, a Western rather than a Sarmatian one: collecting activity and erudition in line with the *Respublica Litteraria* ideals.

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30 An inspection record, 1792, as quoted in: M. Kwiatkowski, *Architektura mieszkaniowa Warszawy od Potopu szwedzkiego do powstania listopadowego* [‘Warsaw’s residential architecture between the Swedish ‘Flood’ and the November Insurrection’] Warszawa 1989, p. 278.

The Library had its reading room where pieces from its collection were made available to readers and around which a circle of scholars soon gathered. Along with the two founding bishops, there was Lorenz Christoph Mizler (known in Poland as Wawrzyniec Mitzler de Kolof), editor of the first Polish scientific magazine, and Jan-Daniel Janocki, author of the first biographical dictionary of Polish men-of-science. The Reverend Onufry Kopczyński, an activist with the Commission of National Education, one of the leading personages of the Polish Enlightenment, author of a grammar of the Polish language, joined them afterwards. The library was enormous, containing in its late years approximately 400,000 volumes (in size terms it was countrywide; it would be followed by the Jagiellonian Library only in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Józef-Andrzej Załuski's ambition was that the library acted as a centre of intellectual life, rather than just as a book repository. The cultural activity he initiated often assumed baroque forms – as when he announced a contest for a Latin epigram praising the Library, or when he held (in December 1753) a poetic tournament in honour of Our Lady. Around mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, in the late Saxon era, actions of this sort played an essential part in integrating the learned milieu of Warsaw. Once the Library founder died, its cultural significance was lessened and the Library never became as important a crystallisation point for the new class as could have been expected.

The reading room was not used a great deal; in any case, it was not heated in the winter, whereas in the melt season, reaching the Library site (at the former Daniłowiczowski Square, not far from today's Nike Monument location) posed considerable difficulty to those who did not have a coach of their own. The building was more often frequented by sightseeing visitors – Baroque libraries, with their rich visual decor, have never ceased to be tourist attractions – than by those willing to work there. The narrator of a satire by Gracjan Piotrowski<sup>31</sup> is seated on his own in the reading room (reading Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski's *De Republica emendanda* ['On the improvement of Commonwealth']) till his peace of mind is disturbed by a "substantial moustached man with his two grooms" wearing a "horned cap" (which is probably not so much a realistic scene as it is a narrative trick enabling the juxtaposition of the attitude of a book lover to that of a Sarmatian who despises books).

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31 G. Piotrowski, *Na chwałę próżnego dawnego gustu nauk* ['To a vain praiser of an old taste for sciences'], quoted after: *Świat poprawiać – zuchwałę rzemiosło: Antologia poezji polskiego Oświecenia* ['Amending the World: An Audacious Craft. An anthology of the Polish Enlightenment poetry'], ed. by T. Kostkiewiczowa, Z. Goliński, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Kraków 2004, p. 86.

Trusted readers would borrow books for their private use, often taking home a few dozen volumes to keep for several months. Quite unbelievably, the Library had no catalogue, although such a facility was under development throughout the Library's existence. The arrangement of the books was thematic ("a twofold book-case [...] full of historians" was placed in the room where the plot of the aforesaid satire is set), but to make it consistent was a challenging task. The unavailability of any catalogue must have made the use of the Library's resources quite difficult.

But books are not only found in libraries: what about bookstores? Booksellers were traditionally merely bookbinders operating within the confines of the guild system, like any other artisans, since the mediaeval time: they would bind books and, incidentally, trade in them. Their outlets or workshops were concentrated within the Old Town area, in Świętojańska Street. Religious books and calendars predominated what was on offer, although – if Adam Naruszewicz is to be trusted – more significant items could be found there as well. The character portrayed in his satire *Chudy literat* ['A Meagre Writer'] "spotted a book-selling shop in Farska [today, Świętojańska] Street, an old man behind the counter". Along with calendars and medical guides, a history of Poland, a work on 'European Government', and one on husbandry were seen there.

But in Stanislaus Augustus' time, another type of bookstore emerged: a more ambitious venture, this variety would often be combined with a publishing house and a printing house. The bookshop and publishing house of Michał Groell, situated in the Marywil shopping-and-services complex (near today's Teatralny Square), came to the fore among them. Not only would Mr. Groell sell books published by himself and other publishers – he imported books from abroad, for instance the grand *Encyclopaedia*, a summary of the French Enlightenment (which he actually offered at a rather scare-off price). Wawrzyniec Mitzler de Kolof (died 1778) was almost as important a bookseller and publisher. As he boasted himself, he could have any book imported into his store from any part of Europe within six to eight weeks. He initially ran his business at the Old Town Marketplace and later moved to the Kazimierzowski Palace – the Corps-of-Cadets (Knights' School) building, which houses the Warsaw University Rector's Office today.

Booksellers ran reading rooms, referred to them as 'literature closets'. These closets, where coffee was also served, were not much different from coffeehouses offering newspapers to their customers. The bookselling publishers would often issue periodicals. Mitzler de Kolof indefatigably endeavoured to implant in Poland the German 'learned magazine' model, while Groell published *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* ['Diversions Pleasant and Profitable'] – a major Polish

magazine of the Enlightenment period. Journal editorial offices were not yet the real meeting venues they turned into in the following century.

Offices in general did not as of yet play a major role. The Krasieński Palace, also called Pałac Rzeczypospolitej (Palace of the Commonwealth), designed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Dutch-born Tylman van Gameren, one of the greatest architects of the Polish Baroque age, and adorned with sculptures by Andreas Schlüter, is reputed to be one of the most beautiful Warsaw palaces. Since the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, it served the Commonwealth as a seat of juridical and administrative institutions and was the workplace of civil servants, scarce in number as they were. A specific clerical or bureaucratic mentality had not developed by then: even in the Habsburg countries, with their incomparably plentiful bureaucracy, officials (particularly, higher-ranking ones) identified themselves in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century first and foremost as nobility; their lifestyle mainly displayed nobleman's or gentleman's traits. A clerical ethos as such was still being formed at the time (its origins should perhaps be first traced in Prussia), which was probably true also for Poland. In the 1820s, Antoni Magier thus expressed his astonishment at how laborious clerks and officials of his own time were: "Oh my God! nothing like that was ever seen before!"<sup>32</sup> It was probably in the time of the Duchy of Warsaw that a clerical intelligentsia became taking shape.

Opposite the Palace, the National Theatre edifice had been rising since 1779. Not overly splendid, a squat misshapen building with multiple annexes covered with a tall sloping roof, it posed a contrast to the harmonious elegance of the Commonwealth Palace. Still, it served the city as a theatre building for more than half a century until a new monumental edifice opened in Teatralny Sq. in the 1830s. The appearance and outfit of the former building are relatively well known to us, thanks to the excellent studies done by the outstanding theatre historian Zbigniew Raszeński. The auditorium consisted of two, and then three, storeys of boxes; there was a ground-floor level where, alongside two rows of benches, a standing-spectator area was provided; right beneath the ceiling were affixed inexpensive gallery seats (the gallery being nicely referred to in Polish as *paradyz*, now an obsolete term).

At the rear side of the Theatre building (viewed from the Krasieński Sq. side), the Ballrooms, called *Sale Redutowe*, were annexed: five enfiladed rooms designed for balls and carousals of a variety of sorts. These rooms were made use of for other purposes too: a School of Drama was harboured there beginning in 1811; a field hospital was arranged several times in these premises by the military.

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32 A. Magier, *Estetyka miasta stołecznego Warszawy* ['The aesthetics of the capital city of Warsaw'], ed. by H. Szwanowska, Wrocław 1963, p. 53.

There was nothing new about theatre as such, considering eighteenth-century realities. A court theatre – a lordly and royal one, one associated with ecclesial, chiefly monastic, institutions – had operated in Poland before then. Those theatres of yore were not necessarily closed to the outside public: anyone, if wearing the appropriate attire, could pay a visit to the Opernhaus, or *Operalnia*, erected by the Polish-Saxon kings at the Saxon Gardens (*Ogród Saski*) next to Królewska Street. Augustus III found it strange, it is reported, that the Polish audience did not care for the best Italian singers very much – and so the artists performed to a mostly empty auditorium, with Saxon courtiers and functionaries attending. School theatres, run in Warsaw by Jesuit and Piarist colleges, were broadly accessible as well, and their agendas were not limited to religious plays. On the contrary, theatre-goers were made acquainted with the new trends in Western dramaturgy. A special place in this landscape – both in terms of repertoire and of the recent technical solutions it applied – was taken by the Piarist theatre organised by the Rev. Stanisław Konarski at his elitist secondary boarding school for sons of magnates and wealthy gentry, the Collegium Nobilium.

Yet, it was the National Theatre (opened 1765 and housed since 1779 at its permanent site in Krasińskich Sq.), the first public theatre in Poland, that launched a series of features still in use today: posters on the walls announced the playbills and admission was available to holders of tickets bought at a ticket box. Still, the theatre of the time was not an intellectuals' entertainment of the sort it assumed in the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century, a church-like venue attended by those willing to absorb the Great Art, tacit and focused. There was no clear delineation between mass and elitist arts in the time we are considering: Mozart's operas staged in Vienna won popularity among folk thirsty for catchy melodies to the same degree as they did among aesthetes and music experts. Poland had no Mozart of its own but its theatre was willing to affect the elites as much as broader bourgeois spheres. Nobles and aristocrats occupied the auditorium boxes; a separate box was provided for the king. On the ground floor, no chairs or seats were available: a crowd would remain standing there, responding aloud to what was going on the stage.

In 1783-1784 and from 1790 onwards, the Theatre was managed by Wojciech Bogusławski, an artist who was sensitive to the public mood and had an ability to perfectly combine achieving artistic ambitions and satisfying spectators' expectations. It was during his term-of-office that the Warsaw Theatre successfully perfected the skill of alluding to political occurrences. Suppose there is something happening in the political sphere that triggers gossiping and guessing: an actor meaningfully expresses his or her stage-lines which appear readily associable with the current state-of-affairs; the audience applauds, yelling 'encore!' The performance is consequently banned by the authorities, or a warning of this sort

is given. 'The whole of Warsaw' thus gets a topic to discuss over the next few days. This pattern reappeared on many similar occasions, i.e. with the staging of *Taczka occiarza* (after *La brouette du vinaigrier* by Louis-Sébastien Mercier, translated by W. Bogusławski); *Henryk VI na łowach* ['Henry VI Hunting'] by Bogusławski, performed after the Second Partition during the Targowica rule; or, the opera *Cud mnienany, czyli Krakowiaci i Górale* ['Assumed Miracle, that is, Krakovians and Mountaineers'], another work by Bogusławski, set to music by Jan Stefani, which was staged on the eve of the Kościuszko Insurrection in 1794. Bogusławski was capable of stimulating the public's moods, preparing printed leaflets featuring the catchiest passages of the plays (usually, the songs) and throwing them into the audience during the performance. This is how a specific urban culture, thoroughly different from the traditional nobility-based rural culture, was arising.

A very important phenomenon to the origins of the Polish intelligentsia was the salon, a concept that was disseminated from France across Europe in the eighteenth century. Run, 'of necessity', by a female figure, the salon would put on the same footing the best-born frequenters of the Versailles court and the scientists, scholars, men-of-letters and artists – painters, musicians, actors. There was a variety of salons: some preferred serious talk, and those were closer in nature to scholarly or scientific societies; others, run by aristocrats at their palaces, were rather courtly in nature, training their guests in exquisite manners but also, in obloquy and machination. The eighteenth century did not set a clearly cut borderline between the court and the salon, or even an assembly of scholars. Before he became King of Poland (as Stanislaus Augustus), Stanisław Poniatowski frequented one of France's most famous salons, the Mme Geoffrin salon in Paris; on his special invitation, the hostess journeyed to Poland in 1766.

Salons became popular in Poland in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Locally, they not infrequently offered merely a new form of traditional courtly culture, which is particularly true of magnates' salons arranged at their rural residences. The French model was reflected to a more considerable extent in Warsaw; of special import to Polish culture were the learned men's encounters held by Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski at the Błękitny ['Blue'] Palace in Senatorska Street, as were the famous Thursday Dinners held at the Royal Castle (not in the Łazienki Park, as it is customarily misinterpreted) by King Stanislaus Augustus. The intellectual elite of this King's time threaded their way through both sites, with wandering foreigners paying visits from time to time as well. The talks revolved around projected literary and artistic works.

There was one important feature that made these two most famous salons of the 'enlightened' Warsaw different from their Paris prototypes: both were assemblies of males only, without a *salonnière* – the hosting lady, one of the major

constituents of the definition of ‘salon’. There were salons run by ladies too, but they were definitely not as important, e.g. the meetings at Princess Barbara Sanguszkó’s (attended by, for example, the poet Ignacy Krasicki, Prince-Bishop of Varmia) or Elżbieta Sapieha’s ‘theatrical’ salon. Artists affiliated to the house of Czartoryski were also guests at the sentimental village of Princess Izabella Czartoryska in Powązki near Warsaw (now incorporated in the city). As we go on, more will be said of Puławy, the other famous Czartoryski location, where the family developed a peculiar combination of a salon and a court. As can be seen, eighteenth-century Polish culture had no considerable bourgeois salons; educated people enjoyed the status of guests at the aristocrats’ places.

New ideas were arising in, and were diffused out of, all those places. But if a single institution should be indicated which excelled in the exchange of ideas and information, it is probably the coffeehouse. There, those having no, or hardly any, other plane of contact had an opportunity to meet; in this sense, the coffeehouse was a sort of lens focusing various individuals and groups. In parallel, the coffeehouse was an institution that simultaneously and naturally tends to be associated with the later period in which intelligentsia blossomed. The fact that the Warsaw of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was home to a few dozen coffeehouses may be somewhat astonishing. However, as is customary with numbers, this figure does not tell us anything by itself: it might as well refer to any inns or taverns which were merely described with the then-stylish word (“Cook-shops, that is, restaurateuries [*restauratornie*], according to prevalent fashion” reads a phrase in an 1820s learned description of Warsaw.<sup>33</sup>).

Some of these coffeehouses set the scene for new things going on, though: a few of them had journals or magazines available to their customers (as at Lessel’s in Królewska St., near the Saxon Gardens). This is more than just a curious detail: there must have been a group of people who spent their leisure time conversing and reading the press. Such talks could have their political consequences: in the last years of the Commonwealth, coffeehouses were often regarded as the cradles of radical and revolutionary ideas. One of the most popular coffeehouses, named ‘Wiejska Kawa’ [‘The Countryside Coffee’], was run from the year 1782 by a Mr. Naubert’s widow and located outside of the town, on the way to the Łazienki palace-park complex (in today’s Wiejska St., on the site of the Sejm Hotel). One of the now-forgotten poets, advising his friend in a poem on what was on in the capital city, made this particular coffeehouse his observation point: “I shall tell you

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33 Ł. Gołębiowski, *Opisanie historyczno-statystyczne miasta Warszawy* [A historical-statistical description of Warsaw], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Warszawa 1827, p. 186.

what I've seen at Ms. Nejbort's [*sic*], whilst having my coffee".<sup>34</sup> And what he mainly saw was some ladies flirting, and more: in the afternoon, when "the Warsaw school-boys are at liberty again", "pages twelve", "the Piarist boarding-school entire, and some of the cabinet" appear ('the cabinet' meaning the royal chancellery staff).

Established 1758, the Mayerhofer coffeehouse was located "at a scanty tiny house behind the Iron Gate [*Żelazna Brama*], of which there is no trace left today. One small room sufficed to contain this café, in which there was nothing apart from a few stools and small tables, a chest-like clock standing in the corner, a depiction of Our Lady with a lamp always lit in front, and [some copies of] *Gazeta Warszawska*".

A. Magier, *Estetyka ...*, op. cit. p. 58.

Taking a look now at the map on which we have plotted the institutions presented so far, we arrive at the following picture. Roughly speaking, the Old Town, traditionally the city's centre contained within the mediaeval ramparts, did not play a major role any more. There were a few bourgeoisie families who participated in the capital city's social, if not intellectual, life (the Jesuit poet Franciszek Bohomolec wrote of poetic soirées at Doctor Czemiński and his wife's house, and also, attended some less intellectually-inclined entertainment at Mayor Łyszkiewicz's house, which gave rise to the 'drinking song of songs' – *Kurdesz nad kurdeszami*). A Jesuit college was situated in the Old Town (at today's district office location) and remained in operation several years after the order was dissolved until 1777. As mentioned above, there were bookstores in Świętojańska St. In general, however, it is not this area where the class of our present interest should be traced down.

Clearly, a new intellectual and administrative hub was arising around what is Krasińskich Square today. The Załuski Library and the Groell bookshop were located not far from there; the baroque Palace of the Commonwealth was predominant in the area of the Square; the National Theatre stood opposite the Palace. Near by, in Długa Street, a popular coffeehouse was run by a Swiss named Baldi, and next to the Piarist Church (the Garrison Cathedral today), the building at the corner of Długa/Miodowa Sts. (presently, home to the Theatre Academy) housed the Piarist College – the famous Collegium Nobilium. Reformed by the Rev. Stanisław Konarski, this institution had considerable merits for the Polish culture of the time. At the backside of the Commonwealth Palace, the Krasiński Garden spread, as it still does. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was the most en-vogue venue for the Warsaw society to meet (the Saxon Gardens still lagged behind it

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34 J. Czyż, *Doniesienie przyjacielowi* ['A report to a friend'], in: *Świat poprawiać...*, op. cit., p. 354.

as regards this function, whereas Łazienki – situated far off the city and being private property – could not even be considered for the purpose). At a relatively close distance, in Senatorska St. (close to Bankowy Square of today), Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski entertained learned men at his Błękitny Palace. The Krakowskie-Przedmieście/Nowy-Świat route was still waiting to become a cultural centre of Warsaw. The Knights' School together with Mitzler's printing house at the Kazimierzowski Palace heralded, in a way, a magnificence-to-come.

Somewhat remote from those three central regions of Warsaw – the former, the contemporaneous and the future one – the Royal Castle stood; in Stanislaus Augustus' time it was a cultural institution in its own right. Some of the artists working for the King dwelled at the Castle; apart from Thursday Dinners, other cultural meetings were held on its premises ('architectural and painting' meetings on Wednesdays). A royal library, used by a number of intellectuals, was also housed at the Castle. And it was there that Stanisław Okraszewski, the chemist to the King, worked in an atelier equipped at the King's expense. The royal nature collection was also located in the Castle. Lastly, the Castle building itself, rebuilt and embellished by Stanislaus Augustus, provided a marketplace for the works of painters, sculptors and architects, as well as for men-of-letters, who contributed to the formation of an ideological programme of the renovated monarchical seat. The King imported a lot of works of art and pieces of equipment from abroad, and thus his activities were not completely focused on the development of domestic artistic and creative activity, but with all this in mind, the role the Castle played is not to be underestimated.

The institutions described in this chapter had at least one common feature to them: they did not fit the Sarmatian world. New people had appeared, not easily allocable to any of the compartments of the traditional estate-based society.

#### **4. Places and institutions: The province**

Warsaw was dominant in Polish Enlightenment culture. This did not result from a special cultural activity of the poor and peripheral region of Mazovia: it was mostly the city's metropolitan functions and their related institutional development that caused the country's largest intellectual centre to grow amidst its not quite culturally fertile soils, virtually without a background. Most of the men-of-the-quill active in the Polish capital town had arrived there from the remotest edges of the entire vast Commonwealth. There were more men-of-letters from Lithuania in the Warsaw of King Stanislaus Augustus' time than in Wilno itself.

Krakow and Wilno, the university towns, did not yet play the leading role they would take up in various periods of the nineteenth century. Although both were

important hubs locally, in the first place their universities called for a reform. Over the seventeenth century, Krakow University, wasting its energy on useless disputes with the Jesuit Order, was increasingly turning into a peripheral institution whose activity in the first half of the following century focused on soliciting Rome for the canonisation of one of its professors, John Cantius (Jan Kanty/Jan z Kęt). These endeavours ended in success, as we are reminded by the beautiful confession of the saint professor at St. Anne's University Church. It may be doubted if the University's intellectual standard was enhanced because of this. In 18<sup>th</sup> century, Krakow was in decline, with the loss of the lands forming the town's natural economic background, due to the First Partition of Poland (1772), heavily contributing to the process.

The Commission of National Education entrusted to both Universities the surveillance of schools in the Crown (i.e. Kingdom of Poland) and in Lithuania. 1777 saw the arrival in Krakow of Hugo Kołłątaj, then a twenty-seven-year-old enthusiastic man in the Commission's confidence, trusted also by the King's brother, Prince Bishop Michał Poniatowski. His mission was to redevelop the University and to put into practice a wealth of reformatory ideas. The Krakow Academy was renamed as the Main [*resp.* Central] Crown School and divided into two Colleges (a Physical and a Moral one) to which the faculties with their deans reported. This tertiary school employed some interesting individuals acquainted with the Enlightenment ideals. Among the professors who supported Kołłątaj were the Rev. Józef Bogucicki, a historian of the Church, and the Rev. Bonifacy Garycki, a natural law lecturer. However, as is usual with reforms, the idea has implied a split in the milieu. Not only was it regarded sceptically by a part of the conservative professorate but the reform advocates did not make up a uniform group. The Rev. Antoni Popławski, a Piarist, one of the most outstanding experts in economic thought, who had been brought to Krakow from the Warsaw Collegium Nobilium, soon fell out with Garycki over the issue; as Kołłątaj left and Feliks Oraczewski was made Rector, Popławski entered into dispute with Jan Śniadecki. Two factions aroused among the professors soon after – the Rector's and the Mathematics professors. Oraczewski's opinion was that science in Poland ought to be practical whereas the mathematics practiced by Śniadecki was too theoretical and unworldly. The dispute, personal as it mostly was, caused a rift in the small local milieu of the Enlightened.

In the late 1780s and early 1790s, a Philanthropists' Association (*Związek Filantropów*) was active. Established "toward the end of 1787"<sup>35</sup>, this organisation was

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35 J. Pawlikowski, *O poddanych polskich roku 1788* ['Polish subjects in the year 1788'], in: *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego* ['The history of the Four Years' Sejm:

structurally modelled after the masonry and was directed by Feliks Oraczewski. "All those who find it pleasant to do good enrol themselves in this Society: everyone gives [his contribution] to the common premium in accordance with his ability and will". Every year, on the anniversary of Stanislaus Augustus' visit to Krakow, the Association granted awards to those merited in various areas of practical life: farmers and craftsmen, and women who were "diligent and tender in guarding and dressing the sick". During the ceremony, opened by a service held at St. Anne's University Church, a speech was delivered by the Rev. Jacek Przybylski, "the prefect of the Jagiellonian schools' Library, a man most venerable for his knowledge of sciences, incessant labour, and exemplary life"<sup>36</sup>.

Przybylski (Oraczewski's follower in the aforementioned dispute) ranked among the animators of intellectual life in Krakow then. Since 1784, the date he assumed the directorship of the University Library, he endeavoured to set his collection in an order and to streamline the system of making the items available to readers. The Library had had no catalogue until then, most of its collection remaining stored in large crates, chests or heaps. Przybylski intensified the work on a catalogue, commenced by his predecessor. He arranged a reading room which was open for several hours a day, with heating provided in the winter months (this being very important: as we can remember, no heating had previously rendered the use of the Załuski Library unfeasible in winter). Przybylski would also hold social gatherings at the Library, thus forming an informal circle of intellectuals – mainly, University professors. He collaborated with Ignacy Groebel, the period's most merited Krakow bookseller. It was probably Przybylski who edited *Zbiór Tygodniowych Wiadomości* ['A Collection of Weekly News'], the first Krakow magazine, published by Groebel in 1784-5.

Bookselling in Krakow remained then, as was the case elsewhere, within the organisational framework of the guild system. A Krakow bookseller was however different from other craftsmen in that he remained dependent to an extent on the University: he would make a pledge to the Rector, undertaking, for example to import scientific or scholarly works from abroad, at moderate cost, on demand of the professors. Such a position could give the privileged bookseller a sense of dignity and of being a member of the educated elite. The same Ignacy Groebel, whose background was Silesian, was certainly one among them. He also owed a printing house, ran a publishing house, arranged literary discussions; his business had branches not only in Podgórze (opposite Krakow, on the other side of

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background materials'], vol. 1, ed. by J. Woliński, J. Michalski, E. Rostworowski, Wrocław 1955, p. 65.

36 *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*, no. 8, 26<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1791, p. 30.

the Vistula, which from 1772 on set the border with the Austrian Galicia) but also in Tarnów, Piotrków and Lublin. After his death in 1790, the bookstore was taken over by his son Antoni-Ignacy. Jan Maj, who was initially a member of the firm's staff, embarked on a business of his own in 1792. He founded a 'literature closet' in Kanonicza Street and opened a bookstore at the corner of Floriańska and Św. Tomasza Sts. His firm was soon to match the Groebel bookshop in importance. Maj took a risky step in that he quit the trading of any commodity other than books (as opposed to the other Krakow booksellers who would trade in anything: Groebel dealt with furniture, mirrors and perfumes, for example).

The University's task was to educate teachers for the reformed schools. A Seminar for Academia Candidates was established to offer thirty places for students – aspiring teachers for Commission-administered schools. The Seminar was installed at the post-Jesuit buildings on the rear side of St. Peter and Paul's church in Grodzka Street.

In the early years of the reign of King Stanislaus Augustus, the Krakow Bishop's court with its amateur theatre made its contribution to the picture (W. Bogusławski joined it for some time in his young years). Performances under the venture's aegis were held at the house of Filip Lichocki, later to become the city's mayor. In 1786, one play was staged three times (thus most probably reaching a broad public). The initiative was soon followed by a professional theatre, initiated by Feliks Oraczewski, who was later appointed the University Rector. Jacek Kluszewski, who was director of the theatre for many years, must have been somehow similar to Bogusławski, given his enterprise, temper, and skill at playing on public emotions. Since 1787, the theatre was located at the Spiski Palace in the Main Market. There was a military garrison too, whose orchestra played an incomparably more significant part in the city's cultural life than any military orchestra of our time.

Hugo Kołłątaj, Jan Śniadecki, Wojciech Bogusławski, Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski, Antoni Popławski all resided in Krakow on a longer or shorter basis – to name those better known. Yet, not too many individuals of real import for the Polish Enlightenment culture would have made Krakow their permanent abode. Among the 'locals', Bogucicki, Przybylski and Oraczewski definitely ranked as the most interesting figures.

The Wilno University was seemingly doing better in the Baroque period than its Krakow counterpart. This Jesuit tertiary school had amongst its professors, for instance, Maciej-Kazimierz Sarbiewski, the illustrious poet and literary theorist, or Konstanty Szyrwid, author of the first dictionary of the Lithuanian language. The Jesuits, competing in this respect with the Piarists, started a reform of their educational and schooling system around the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. New institutions

affiliated to the University were set up, such as a physics closet and astronomical observatory (built in 1755 at the expense of Duchess Elżbieta Puzynina (Puzyna), née Ogińska, the venture's generous patron; thoroughly rebuilt in 1770-1772 by astronomy professor Marcin Poczobutt-Odlanicki). Embarking on a reform of the Wilno school in 1781, the Commission of National Education based its action on the existing personnel to a larger extent than in Krakow: once the reform was carried out, the former Jesuit academy rector was appointed Rector again. The key role in the implementation of the Commission's policy applied to what was now the Main (Central) School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was played by Marcin Poczobutt, formerly (and later on) also a Jesuit. In the interval between the suppression of the Jesuit Order in 1773 and the School's reform (1781), the continuity was broken to an extent, with several institutions (e.g. the physics closet, among others) arranged almost from the scratch; all the same, this continuity was still more apparent there than in the case of Krakow.

The Wilno of the age of Enlightenment may seem to have been more provincial than Krakow. Strolling through Wilno's Old Town today, one can easily see that the University buildings tower over any secular edifice in this town. Clearly, the University and churches were the central points of the city's life. There was no permanent theatre; printing houses and modern bookshops were rather scarce. Krakow was located closer to Vienna, Italy, and other centres of European culture, than the Grand Duchy capital. One of the reasons was possibly that the local University had not been through as much in-depth reform as the Krakow school had. A Piarist and a Jesuit College existed in Wilno too; the Jesuit College, established in the 1730s, developed in close parallel with the Academy, with which it was initially organisationally related.

On the other hand, however, Wilno did not share the fate of Krakow being severely damaged during the Bar Confederation. Wilno's press was more prolific than Krakow's, with magazines and journals being mostly edited by Academy professors (it is interesting, by the way, why the Krakow professors, apart from the Rev. J. Przybylski, did not embark on activities of this sort). Among the most merited editors were the Jesuit professors Marcin Poczobutt and Franciszek Paprocki, a professor of philosophy and author of compilatory historical works. Poczobutt edited *Gazety Wileńskie* (issued during almost the whole of Stanislaus-Augustus period) while Paprocki was in charge of *Kurier Wileński* (released in the first half of 1760s).

Another interesting personality among the professors was the Piarist Hieronim Stroynowski, who, along with the aforementioned Antoni Popławski, ranked among Poland's most outstanding exponents of physiocratism. The chairs at the Wilno Academy were also taken by foreign lecturers, primarily physicians from

Italy (specifically, the university of Padua) and Germany. Their activities must have aroused interest outside of the Academy walls: in 1787, the “Main School of the G[rand] D[uchy of] L[ithuania], providing for arising public need, convenience and demands has established anatomic Lessons [i.e. lectures – M.J.’s note] in the Polish language.”<sup>37</sup> Jacques Briôtet, a surgery professor who had arrived from France, was to deliver these lectures. The influx of foreigners intensified in the early years of the following century, becoming one of the drivers for a renewal of the Wilno University.

Other urban hubs, emanating mostly on a local scale and gathering smaller milieus of educated people, can also be spoken of in this context. Lwów would doubtless open the list: from 1772 onward, the town was separated by the ‘sanitary cordon’ and nominated the capital city of the Austrian province of ‘Galicia and Lodomeria’. Like in Wilno and other towns, the Lwów nobility’s Jesuit college (the Collegium Nobilium; since 1749) ranked among the major cultural institutions. Beside it, there existed, or rather vegetated, a Jesuit academy which was theoretically devised for various social estates rather than for the nobility alone. The Lwów Academy, which was a semi-tertiary schooling institution run by Jesuits, was reorganised by Emperor Joseph II, following the model of other Austrian universities: it was tasked with releasing officials ready to serve in the imperial bureaucracy. It was only by the end of the period under discussion that Lwów gained a residing theatre; the town had its well-organised bookstores, the ones of Antoni Piller and Karol B. Pfaff (located since 1785 at the University building in Krakowska St. and, from 1792 on, in the town’s marketplace) importing books from Poland as well as from Habsburg countries. Similarly to the Krakow booksellers, Pfaff did not limit himself to selling books, one of the other commodities he dealt with being pianofortes.

Lviv was followed in the list of important cities by Poznań, with its well-known Jesuit College (ruined after 1773); then, there were some local centres. We have a rather good idea of what Enlightenment-age Kalisz was like<sup>38</sup>: the town was a considerable one, given the period (pop. 4,000), and had a Jesuit college and a printing house; still, its image is not edifying. The Jesuit College was rather ambitious: being one of the earliest-reformed schools under the auspices of the Order, it numbered 600 students, mostly consisting of the local nobility rather than the

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37 *Gazety Wileńskie*, no. XLII, 20<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1787; quoted after: R. Jakubėnas, *Prasa Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w II połowie XVIII wieku* [‘The press in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 18<sup>th</sup> century’], Kraków 2005, p. 168.

38 Credit is due to W. Rusiński’s *Życie codzienne w Kaliszu w dobie Oświecenia* [‘The everyday life in Kalisz in the age of the Enlightenment’], Poznań 1988.

town's dwellers. Once the school was taken over by the Commission of National Education, the attendance was reduced to 200, with a growing share of bourgeois schoolchildren. In spite of two operational parochial schools and a school affiliated to the collegiate church (as of 1787, a secular teacher in the last-mentioned school had sixteen female and thirty-five male students attending), illiteracy was prevalent, particularly among women; even city mayors' wives did not know how to sign their own names.

Monotonous complaints about the pitiful condition of buildings and streets reappear in probably any single description of Polish towns and cities, smaller or bigger, of the time.

An extremely resilient environment, given the conditions, the one composed of Pomeranian burghers, particularly of the cities of Gdansk/Dan(t)zig and Toruń/Thorn, deserve a mention here. With its population in excess of 100,000 in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Gdansk saw its economic standing deteriorated in the century's latter half, resulting from a declined trade in cereals floated on the Vistula, which otherwise formed the foundation of the city's prosperity, and was not a match for Warsaw in terms of population. All the same, Gdansk was the second largest urban centre of the Commonwealth, after Warsaw. The towns and cities of the Gdansk Pomerania (then named the Royal Prussia) formed part, in fact, of the urban, merchant, Protestant culture of the Baltic Sea region, rather than of the noble-rural Sarmatian culture. It would suffice to glance at the tombstones in any church of Gdansk or Toruń, featuring burghers with smart beards wearing wide-brimmed hats and laced collars, and then compare them with the moustached countenances seen in the Sarmatian coffin portraits, to understand that we have to do with two different worlds.

Most importantly, however, those cities, or their elites at least, were German-speaking, and this proved decisive in their later-date cultural affinity. German-speaking bourgeoisie was sincerely loyal to the Commonwealth, and the country guaranteed them freedoms broader than those they could count on under Prussian rule. Gdansk citizens even offered armed resistance to the Prussian troops attacking the city in 1793. This cannot alter the fact that as modern nationalist ideas were developing during the nineteenth century, residents of Gdansk and Toruń (as well as dwellers of Varmian towns, e.g. Olsztyn/Allenstein or Frombork/Frauenburg) had just one way to go: a gradual adoption of a German national awareness. Thus, instead of becoming Polish intellectuals, they would have joined the ranks of the *Bildungsbürgertum*, the educated burghers' class: roughly speaking, the German counterpart of the Polish intelligentsia.

This evolution is excellently demonstrated by the history of a representative cultural institution of Gdansk in the Enlightenment period: in 1743, a group of

learned burghers founded a society bearing the Latin name *Societas Physicae Experimentalis*. Just a few years after, the name was changed to *Die Naturforschende Gesellschaft in Dantzig*. Following the pattern of other similar societies, the publication of its *Versuche und Abhandlungen* was started in 1747. That the Society was part of the German cultural circle was obvious; the founder was a student of Christian Wolff's, one of the most outstanding German philosophers in the first half of 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, though, this German organisation perfectly fit into the multiethnic Commonwealth structures. Its members requested in 1756 that the royal court grant their organisation the status of a countrywide royal scientific association. If successful, we would have had a first all-Polish academy in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. However, the decision was put off, and the death of Augustus III Wettin eventually put an end to the Gdansk Society's endeavours. However, it did not break off its contacts with Warsaw: King Stanislaus Augustus offered the organisation a ring featuring his effigy as a token of the monarch's grace; some of the Polish Enlightenment activists were the society's members. The Gdansk Society outlived the Commonwealth by one and a half centuries. As its life was coming to an end in parallel with the demise of German Danzig in spring, 1945, there was probably no one to have seen any trace of a would-be Polish Academy of Sciences in that provincial German scientific institution.

This gradual Germanisation of Pomeranian culture explains why Pomerania has to remain marginal in the field of interests a historian of the Polish educated class has. And yet this region cannot be completely removed from our story, as in the Enlightenment age, the role of the Royal Prussia as a cultural intermediary was not to be overestimated from the Commonwealth's standpoint. Immersed over the whole 18<sup>th</sup> century in economic stagnation, Toruń maintained among its elites a 'learned' milieu (the *Gelehrte*, or *litterati*), among whom professors with a local academic secondary school were in the lead. Their family background was mostly merchants. Having completed their studies with German universities, they pursued their careers holding municipal authority posts in their native towns, once returned. The number of Toruń 'learned' was declining in the course of the century (which reflected "the town's shrinking economic potential"<sup>39</sup>); still, in the last decades of 18<sup>th</sup> century, there were twenty-plus residents with university education – probably more than any other town in the Commonwealth had, apart from Warsaw, Krakow and Wilno.

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39 K. Mikulski, *Pułapka niemożności. Społeczeństwo nowożytnego miasta wobec procesów modernizacyjnych (na przykładzie Torunia w XVII i XVIII w.)* [An impossibility trap: The society of modern-era town and modernisation processes (17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup>-century Toruń as an exemplary case-in-point)], Toruń 2004, p. 83.

A gathering of learned men of this sort within the limits of the Commonwealth obviously had an influence on the Polish elites, not only as transmitters of ideas but also as some of the people without whom the Polish Enlightenment would be hardly conceivable. Samuel-Bogumił Linde was the most important such personage, but he was not the only one.

The exemplary towns discussed so far, Krakow, Wilno, Kalisz and Toruń, make it apparent how weak the bourgeoisie milieus were in the Commonwealth, in spite of any symptoms of animation. The reforms in all those towns, if any at all, would have come from the outside – be it in the form of officials representing the Good Order Commission or reformers arriving from Warsaw, such as Hugo Kołłątaj. The towns were not capable of getting self-reformed; as the Commonwealth's central authority was weak, the chance for a municipal reform to succeed was small. It was only the Four Years' Sejm that mobilised the towns, offering them, for a short time, a hope of in-depth reform.

Compared to towns or cities, magnate courts and ecclesial institutions formed a completely different type of cultural centre. Even if small, a town exerts a cultural impact on its surroundings, unlike a magnate's or bishop's court, which attracts intellectuals from a long way off, its culture being an insular one. A court would not normally offer lifelong stabilisation opportunities. New people visited courts over and over, having their permanent abode elsewhere, in most cases. In contrast to the town, the court had, as a general rule, a single centre: the host in person. Hence, to much larger an extent than a town or city, it would be exposed to the whims of fortune: the death or impoverishment of the patron, or a break in his political career, might reduce the importance of any major centre of this sort within a short time down to null.

There was a court, however, whose role was quite remarkable: Puławy – the obvious case in point – constituted the fourth major Polish cultural centre of King Stanislaus Augustus' time, preceded by Warsaw, Krakow and Wilno. A conflict aroused in the 1770s between the King and his former supporters, the Czartoryski family or rather clan, who were reluctant to come to agreement with their former protégé's autonomous policy. Some personal animosities, and even mutual accusations of attempted poisoning, contributed to the picture. As a result, Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski entered into a closer relation with the old-nobility Opposition, the so-called Patriots, and eventually withdrew from Warsaw in 1782 to settle in his estate in Puławy, where he attracted a group of men-of-letters and artists.

King Stanislaus Augustus supported a classicism modelled after the French pattern: rather than being limited to an artistic doctrine, this classicism also provided an ideological justification for the reform programme advocated by

the King. The Czartoryskis, embroiled with the King for political and not aesthetics-related reasons, favoured the sentimentalism programme which could become a means for expressing patriotic anti-Russian – and also anti-royal – sentiments. An example of this patriotic-sentimental symbiosis was a 1786 ceremony held in Puławy, with the court theatre showing a production of *Matka Spartanka* [A Spartan Mother], a play by Franciszek-Dionizy Kniaźnin. Apart from Kniaźnin, several other artists and scholars were associated with Puławy for a longer or shorter period. Those included the poet Franciszek Karpiński, the author of the once-popular eclogue *Laura i Filon*, the religious song *Kiedy ranne wstają zorze* [‘When the Morning Lights Arise’] and the Christmas carol *Bóg się rodzi* [‘God is Born, Power Trembles’] (both these songs are sung a great deal to this day); architect Piotr Aigner (in addition to some of the Puławy garden buildings, the façade of St. Anne’s Church in Warsaw’s Krakowskie-Przedmieście St., among others, is credited to him); and classical philologist Ernest Groddeck, who was soon to become one of the mainstays of Wilno University.

The Prince and the Princess endeavoured to cross the limits of their ascribed roles of magnate patrons. Agitated by a creditable will to reinforce the national theatre stage, Adam-Kazimierz himself wrote comedy plays and took pains to appear before the intellectuals enjoying hospitality at his court as a peer member of their milieu. There was much posturing to it, for the social gap was too obvious to be neglected even for a moment: whatever the artlessness at work, it was Kniaźnin and Karpiński that wrote panegyrics in praise of the Prince, and not the other way around. Nevertheless, this newly practised convention proved to be a symptom of the gradually increasing position of the group of our interest.

All the other off-city hubs grew pale beside Puławy: for good order’s sake, let us mention Nieśwież, the Radziwiłłs’ estate, and Podhorce, owned by the Rzewuskis, both running court theatres of periodical importance. There was Siedlce, run by the Ogiński house, and Łowicz, the seat of the Primate of Poland, a site of importance where a lot of books, mainly religious, were issued. Siemiatycze in the Podlasie area set the stage for the enlightened Princess Anna Jabłonowska to establish a natural science closet that made a name for itself all over the country and was visited by curious travellers (to do so, they ‘just’ had to take a several-days’-longer way round between Petersburg and Warsaw). In the 1780s and 90s, several thousand people paid a visit to the place, which is a few to a dozen or two per month. Warsaw-based and foreign intellectuals were among them, including the architect Piotr Aigner and Mr. Bernouilly, a learned Swiss travelling across Poland. Grand Duke Paul, the Russian heir to the throne, was among those who saw the collection, as was Emperor Joseph II, who

stayed for a while at Siemiatycze in 1780, on his way back from Petersburg to Vienna. The visitors included a certain number of professors and students from various schools, but the clergy, nobility and servicemen prevailed. Regardless of the actual value of the collection, the Jabłonowska closet, situated afar in the hinterland, did not influence the country's or the region's life, remaining most of the time a testimony to a magnate's whim rather than a carrier of mental or intellectual change.

Grodno was probably the most interesting of all the small-sized centres: Antoni Tyzenhauz, Court Treasurer of Lithuania, arranged a theatre, a botanical garden, a medical school and other institutions there. This activity was in its entirety associated with Tyzenhauz's economic endeavours: his aim was to create an industrial region around Grodno, and he is known for having set up weaving and spinning (textile) manufactories. Had Mr. Tyzenhauz's plan turned out successful, Grodno would have received a powerful developmental impulse and its cultural institutions would have become independent from magnates' support. However, the course of events was different, and the decline of the Court Treasurer's undertakings marked the town's short-timed career as a cultural hub.

The development of Enlightenment-age intelligentsia was also fostered by certain institutions which would be hard to plot on a map. Although they had their seats (mostly in Warsaw), their importance was not based on location since they emanated across the Commonwealth. This was true for some monastic orders (the Piarists and the Jesuits, prior to their dissolution), but no less so for the masonry. Warsaw saw its first Masonic Lodge established in as early as 1729; this was eventually followed by recognition in 1770 of the capital-city-based Grand Lodge 'Virtuous Sarmatian' by the Grand Lodge of England. Ever since, Polish freemasonry has been a full-fledged participant of the European movement. A few dozen lodges were established by the year 1795, Warsaw being home to at least a third of them, plus a few each in Krakow, Lwów, Wilno and Poznań. A number of lodges were set up in small localities that were the seats of aristocratic families (Białystok, Dukła, Nieśwież, Tulczyn, Wiśniowiec, Zamość). The importance of freemasonry mostly consisted in creating a space of contact – not only between individuals but between social groups as well. While some of the lodges were exclusive, others admitted bankers or men-of-the-quill, along with aristocrats, as their members.

The freemasons' ideology was not uniform. It proved very deeply founded in Enlightenment ideology, on the one hand, as is clear through the phraseology in use: 'virtue', 'friendship', 'philanthropy', along with 'eradication of prejudice' and 'ignorance', all came from the repertoire of set-phrases loved by the period's

thinkers as well as by authors of Masonic songs or catechisms. On the other hand, however, key to the freemasonic ideology was the mystical element. It may be opined that in specifically Polish circumstances, the rationalist- or Enlightenment-related message offered by the masonry was more important socially than the organisation's Hermetic-mystical doctrine, only disclosed to those initiated.

## Chapter 2: Friars, men-of-letters and Jacobins (1764-1795)

### 1. Where did they come from?

The Polish intelligentsia is heir to the nobility's tradition, a number of authors have stated. On a basic level it seems natural: the traditional elite, that is, the nobility, could more easily than any other group take advantage of every opportunity to advance and transform themselves into a new type of elite.

This notion that the intelligentsia is of noble origin, if looked at carefully, becomes less obvious. What does it mean, in fact, that someone is of 'noble origin'? With the wave of political reforms of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, representatives of varied social circles were admitted to nobility, a number of burghers among them. Did the formal ennoblement act therefore mean that those new people took in the social life a place analogous to that owed by the once-nobility? Not really. To start off with a formal estate affiliation might be misleading. Moreover, the production of documents evidencing one's nobleness was rarely demanded from anyone in the pre-Partition Commonwealth. Consequently, the estate or class identification declared, for example, while enrolling in a school, did not always reflect the formal state-of-affairs.

We are basically interested for the present purpose in the 'social origin' not of individuals but of the entire group; then, the difficulties multiply. Whenever it comes to investigating the social origin of any group (e.g. Krakow Academy students, Warsaw-based physicians), we usually have biographical information on just a fraction of the people of our potential interest. We usually lack complete data which would otherwise help us refer the knowledge of such fraction to the group in its entirety: it is easy to guess that a nobleman would boast about his origin more willingly than a representative of another social class. It then appears that the proportion of nobility among those individuals whose biographies are known to us will be certainly overestimated compared to their factual share in the group under investigation. How far it is overestimated, we can make but guesses.

But even if we can somehow deal with all these problems, the major issue remains: 'being a nobleman' could mean in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century so many different things that a question mark can actually be placed over any usefulness of information about social origin. The differences between the *golota* (the 'naked nobility', i.e. the landless), the affluent 'single-village' noblemen, and the rich

nobility which was close in some respects to the magnates, were so huge that it is impossible for a historian researching the epoch's social structure to contain all those groups within a single category termed *szlachta* (nobility).

This is not to say that we cannot at all identify the strata – the classes or estates from which the new community of lettered people originated. It just has to be borne in mind that, to the best of our ability, we will only grasp the few most general tendencies. For instance, it is not easy to come across a nobility title holder among private tutors or instructors or among physicians (a large group among whom were foreigners). Writers form a different entity, though: as suggested by the research carried out by Elżbieta Aleksandrowska, some 75% of the Enlightenment-period authors came from noble families – and the later the generation, the larger the percentage of the highborn. The social hierarchy promoted men-of-letters to a higher rank than teachers; many could afford having their poetry published for pleasure rather than profit. No wonder, the nobility prevailed in this group. The gradually growing share of the nobility in the writers' community seems to oppose an intuitive expectation of advancing democratisation, but on the other hand it does reflect our concept of the late (post-Partition) Enlightenment as an increasingly conservative, self-contained current, responding with hostility to any novel ideas.

Lawyers formed an even more noble profession, fundamentally differing in this respect from doctors. The career path of lawyer was one of the traditional noble professions, along with military service.

Thus, the nobility's share in individual educated groups or communities was simply quite diverse. To make the picture even more complex, roughly estimating, every third of the Polish Enlightenment writers mentioned in a major bibliography of Polish literature (the so-called *Nowy Korbut*) was a clergyman. In the generations whose activity fell in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the proportion of clergy was even higher. Out of the fourteen attendants of Thursday Dinners hosted by King Stanislaus Augustus, as many as nine were ex-Jesuits. True, the priesthood is not an identifier of 'social origin': one is born a nobleman, peasant or burgher but is made a priest. The categories of 'clergy' and 'nobility' are found to overlap. On the other hand, the priesthood and, even more so, the monastic class impresses a strong stigma upon its members which, while not erasing the influence of one's background, renders it neutralised all the same. Hence, the clergy may be regarded as an entity in its own right, a separate group that co-formed the Polish intelligentsia.

An anticlericalism of the Enlightenment period should be familiar to anyone who learned their Krasicki and *Monachomachia* at school. Let us remember though that the heroicomic poem by the Prince-Bishop of Varmia was not aimed

against the priesthood or clergy as such, or against the institution of monastic life: its target was the so-called begging or mendicant friars. The mendicant orders (primarily, the Dominicans or Blackfriars and the Franciscans) and their descendant congregations, such as the Bernardines, so popular in the Commonwealth), were at one distant mediaeval time a reformatory avant-garde for the Church. In the time under consideration, however, enlightened people regarded them as nesting-sites of 'holy idlers'.

It was different with the congregations dealing with labours deemed 'useful' by the Age of Enlightenment, with the educational system coming to the fore. Enlightened minds in France could grieve about the tyranny exerted over the young souls by the Jesuit education and demand that the schools be subject to state control. In Poland, however, even radical anticlericals realised that the Jesuit school system, reformed since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century along the lines of new pedagogic trends, was one of the most important drivers of the dissemination of enlightened ideas. A testimony of the attitude of the Polish enlightened toward the Jesuit Order, which was suppressed in 1773, was a poem written just after this papal suppression, later described by a scholar as the most anticlerical piece of the Polish Enlightenment. Its leitmotif is a juxtaposition of papacy, together with the begging friars, a den of superstition, prejudice and fanaticism, and the enlightened Jesuits who were destroyed by Rome on account of this. This poem expresses the fear that "the sciences will perish terribly" but ends with the hope that Stanislaus Augustus will shelter the ex-Jesuits and make use of their educational formation for the well being of Polish culture.

Grzegorz Piramowicz, one of the most illustrious members of the Commission for National Education, also devoted a lyrical poem to the decline of his Mother-Order that had bid farewell and thus orphaned her sons. The conclusion is, again, a hope that these orphaned sons will have Stanislaus Augustus as their father.

The King's design was indeed to 'put together' the left-over Jesuit pieces into a modern Polish educational institution.

King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski to Adam Naruszewicz, September 1773:

"[The Jesuits] have everywhere appeared to be the wisest, the choicest; in Paraquaria [i.e. Paraguay – M.J.'s note], they even show off to be the best. [...] Kindness is their law; moderation and righteousness are their weaponry. [...] Even though they might have [...] taught badly for several dozen years in Poland, thereby proving detrimental to the nation, ever since they were stricken with a stimulus of emulation, [...] for twenty years now [...] they have outrun the others in their teaching, becoming overly useful. It should have thus sufficed to have them emended; destroying them was not necessary. [...] Let us be wiser at this point: should we be incapable of sustaining the Order, let us

conserve and conceal the Jesuits, encouraging them to continue their efforts. [...]"

A. Naruszewicz, *Korespondencja* ['Correspondence'], ed. by J. Platt, Wrocław 1959, pp. 10-11.

Marcin Poczubutt, the Wilno-based astronomy professor (soon after to be appointed Rector of the Wilno University), entertained a similar hope. He proposed to Stanislaus Augustus in 1773 the idea of establishing a 'corps of penmen', with former Jesuit Order members at its core. The corps was to be a kind of academy or society of the learned. Although the intent was never put into practice, the sense of community, manifested at several occasions by and among the former Order members, was a matter of fact. Adam Naruszewicz rushed about busily in his efforts to deploy former Jesuits, "indigent men-of-letters, colleagues of mine"<sup>40</sup>, across various posts and titles around the royal court – normally wherever special knowledge and mental abilities were of value. The royal chancellery, library or archive provided such opportunities. The cooperation of ex-Jesuits with the Commission of National Education differed from case to case: apart from activists such as Grzegorz Piramowicz, we come across sceptics and opponents who criticised various aspects of the schooling reforms; all the same, a thread of continuity was undeniably present in the new educational system. In any case, the collapse of the Jesuit Order had 'pushed out' a considerable group of educated people who were frustrated by the destruction of their theretofore-existing milieu. Those men were becoming the leaven of a new stratum – one made up of educated workers.

If we bear in mind the enormous role of Piarist Order members in Polish Enlightenment culture, we may suggest, only half-jokingly, that the origins of Polish intelligentsia are 'Jesuit-and-Piarist'. This proposition is certainly no less informed than the one advocating a nobility-related genesis.

Having said all this, is it untrue that, as the popular view holds, the Enlightenment was a period of secularisation in Polish culture and social life? As is usual with complex questions, the answer is both yes and no. Most plausibly, Polish elites of the period were more 'clerical' (in terms of percent-share of the clergy) than those of Polish Baroque or Renaissance culture. Paradoxically enough, this fact testifies to the secularisation, rather than clericalisation, of the Polish culture of the period in question. The mechanism was simple: the Sarmatian Commonwealth – rural, decentralised, and landed-gentry-based – could

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40 A. Naruszewicz, in a letter to King Stanislaus Augustus, dated ca. 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 1773, Warsaw; in: A. Naruszewicz, *Korespondencja* ['Correspondence'], ed. by J. Platt, Wrocław 1959, p. 15.

produce over the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries secular elites that perfectly fit in terms of managing that archaic structure. This same Commonwealth could not by any means generate any secular elite that would be capable of reconstructing the existing system into a modern European state. This was a task only manageable for the ecclesiastical elite – the only education-backed elite Polish culture actually had at its disposal in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There were many professors at Jesuit or Piarist colleges who had been completed foreign studies – mostly in Rome, quite often in France or elsewhere. There was for a long time no other group in the Polish territory that would represent a similar educational status and international contacts (particularly, between the convents). Or, perhaps there was an exception to this rule: magnates certainly travelled across Europe, absorbing new ideas and caring increasingly, in the eighteenth century, about providing a European-standard education to their children. This demand for a new type of education contributed to the takeover by new ideas of the convent schools, which wanted to keep from losing the students who were born to the highest-ranking families and gave them prestige. However, the magnates were not eager to perform headwork-based professions. Applying various forms of patronage, they could contribute to a changing spiritual climate in Poland. Teaching, office-holding, writing, translating, publishing, or developing detailed reform plans had to be the jobs of the others – not infrequently, of clergymen.

The modernisation exercise applied to the state mostly, albeit not exclusively, by the Church elites inherently implied an impaired significance for the clergy to a larger extent than the rationalist anticlerical ideology, feeble at the time in Poland, could do. This anticlerical ideology will be seen later, in the Duchy of Warsaw, 1807-1815, as well as in the Kingdom of Poland, 1815-1831: the period's already-bureaucratic state did not have to look for cultivated people among the clergy as it had become capable of producing them on its own.

There is yet another issue that renders extremely difficult any considerations of the social origin and numerical force of the new class. At least until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, there existed no lifelong intellectuals, but rather one-time intellectuals. Traits apparently peculiar to the 'intelligentsia' were capable of being renounced: a nobleman could make a fortune in a town and purchase a manor to spend the last years of his life there; not infrequently, he would have his father's village 'on a standby' – a place he could return to any time and take up husbandry. We can see many such cases happening after the decline of the Third-of-May Constitution and the seizure of power in 1792 by Targowica Confederation, with even more following the Third Partition, in 1795. The life of Józef Wybicki, author of the text of the Polish national anthem, is an example of such oscillation between the urban life of an intellectual and the rural life of a landholder. He would

be seen back home at Manieczki every time the wheel of Fortune turned – and, whenever a new window of opportunity opened for him, he would set off for Warsaw or, further afield, to France or Italy.

Church institutions were also ‘kept on standby’, though much less often. The astronomer Marcin Poczobutt, once retired, left Vilna and went to Dyneburg to resume his vow as a Jesuit. (The Jesuit Order continued to function in the part of the Commonwealth occupied by Russia since 1772, as Catherine II did not submit to the papal bull dissolving the congregation.) Poczobutt’s decision probably indicates that the monastic experience had more powerfully formed the former rector’s consciousness than had his university career.

These two spheres could be intertwined: individuals assumed diverse roles at a single moment in their life. As we read Adam Naruszewicz’s letters to Stanislaus Augustus in which the writer enthusiastically informs the king of some new sources he has found for his monumental *History of the Polish nation*, it may seem to us that any 19<sup>th</sup>- or 20<sup>th</sup>-century historian might have used similar means of expression. Whenever he solicited various prebends and other ecclesial offices for himself, his brothers and distant cousins, sending to this end one letter after the other, a completely different picture of this man appears in front of our eyes – that of a nobleman, a client dancing attendance upon lords, who acts as a patron for the whole throng of poorer nobility for whom he is simultaneously a sort of mediator of graces. As we read on and come across a description of a church celebration in a village where Naruszewicz held the office of parson, it seems to us that we are right in the midst of a Sarmatian world: the very style the author uses is losing its Enlightenment elegance and evokes associations with the 17<sup>th</sup>-century memoirs of Jan-Chryzostom Pasek. There are also fragments where Naruszewicz makes use of the whole inventory of baroque rhetoric to the praise of Stanislaus Augustus; at such moments, we come across a court sycophant of the sort which could have appeared, say, at the court of the Sun King. There is no point in asking which of these ‘Naruszewiczes’ is real, for all of them are. So, he was an intellectual, a courtier, a bishop, a Sarmatian, a lord’s client, and moreover – something he would never lose sight of – a former Jesuit, related through multiple bonds of loyalty and affinity with his former confratres.

The reversibility of intellectual status has never been complete. Whoever was back to his (or her) village from a sojourn in a city would supposedly differ from the surrounding *hreczkosieje* [‘buckwheat sowers’ – those who had to work their fields themselves]. He would have learned about Cincinnatus who would resume his life as a farmer after saving his homeland, and about Cicero who sought repose in his Tusculum. He would know his *Beatus ille qui*

*procul negotiis* – a poem by Horace then enjoying high popularity in Poland, setting the charms of rural life against the town. Once back at his countryside house, an educated man did not completely break off with his values and lifestyle; he would have mostly embedded his return in the world of literary and painting conceptions and allusions.

The reversibility of the nobleman/intellectual relation certainly conserved, to an extent, the nobleman's consciousness in high-born intellectuals. On the other hand, however, it may be guessed that it weakened a nobility-related separatism, thus acting in the interest of loosened estate barriers in the society. This close noble-intellectual relation could possibly attenuate the position of individuals of noble backgrounds within the newly-emerging stratum, with the result that they did not fully identify themselves with it. This is all just a presumption.

Again, the reversibility in question not only concerned the nobility but also held true for the other estates wherefrom future intellectuals were descended. A foreign court medic, for that matter, would often gradually emancipate himself from the influence of the magnate who had brought him to Poland; but even if he turned into a physician running his own practice, he would not alter his former obsequious attitude in contacts with his former protector. The bonds of patronage and clientele were strong and adaptable to new situations. The peasant class was seemingly an exception to the rule: whoever broke away from it would normally slam the door to his former environment. Still, intellectuals of peasant origin were a hardly visible phenomenon in eighteenth-century Poland.

Contrary to common opinion, the Polish intelligentsia was not merely a follower of the noble tradition. This is all the more true in that the class in its infancy was peopled also by representatives of other social groups. Burghers, particularly those from large cities (it was only there that part of the bourgeoisie displayed some cultural ambitions), should be borne in mind in this context; but arrivals from abroad come to the fore in this picture. They came from far and near, some from Pomerania (the area remaining within the Commonwealth limits till 1772 as a culturally different land), quite a number from German lands, and a lesser share from Italy or France.

Foreigners were attracted by the hope of making money, sometimes brought by magnates from their international voyages, as their personal doctors or tutors for their sons. Some would be called forth as specialists to work at newly-established manufactories or with other undertakings and projects. There were wranglers among them whose educational background was questionable – some searched fortune-making opportunities, others escaped their deserved justice – but there were people of deep knowledge too. They all added tenacity and vivacity to the Polish intelligentsia being born.

## 2. The Academic Order

In the beginning was the Reverend Stanisław Konarski: it was with him that the history of Polish educational reforms in the eighteenth century started. Born in the century's first year, three years after the death of King John (Jan) III Sobieski, Konarski is sometimes conventionally referred to as a representative of the Polish Enlightenment's 'Generation Zero'. Before he made a name for himself as a school reformer and political writer, he was immersed in baroque culture for almost half of his lifetime, writing orations, maccheronic panegyrics for his magnate patrons, and Latin poems in honour of Our Lady. Accordingly, he was up to his ears in politics, sympathising with the so-called republican party, which is deemed by most historians to have been traditionalistic. During the interregnum following Augustus II's death, when the war for the Polish throne broke out, Konarski backed up Stanisław Leszczyński and solicited assistance in France against the adherents of Augustus III, who was supported by Russia. Taking this man as an example, we can reflect upon an underlying problem: how did a man of all things Baroque turn into a leading Enlightenment-age reformer?

As far as Konarski is concerned, there was a combination of two factors: the Piarist Order and foreign travel seem to be of particular significance.

Monastic congregations normally see to it that their quality members have a brush with the world and complete their internship in foreign monastic institutions. This was the route that led Konarski to Rome; he subsequently visited France, England, and several Habsburg countries – and it was not only his Order but also politics that led him abroad. But why it was he and not any of his peers whom these travels imbued with a strong belief that a transformation was a must remains unknown. It may be inferred that Konarski's membership with a famous teaching order facilitated his embarking on a reform of schooling in an Enlightenment spirit. He did not consider such changes to antagonize the tradition or to necessitate departure from the existing environment or system: after all, the launch of these changes aimed at bringing about a reform of the Order he served, and at strengthening his religion.

The Piarist reforms did inspire and influence the Jesuits, the other major teaching congregation. In their rivalry with the Piarists, the Jesuits were soon to realise the need to reform their school system. The Jesuit Order embarked on the reform almost in parallel to (perhaps slightly later than) the Piarists but carried it out no less conscientiously, with the result that by the 1760s, the Jesuit colleges were no inferior to their Piarist counterparts. Latin, the dominant language in Jesuit schools by far, was now restricted in favour of correct Polish which these schools defended and propagated in the public life ever since.

Jesuit colleges were equipped with appliances and facilities devised for spectacular experiments in natural science or physics, such as electrostatic machines. Still, the core ideological programme advocated by the Jesuits and the Piarists was similar, boiling down to the propagation of moderated Enlightenment ideals. Among the teaching staff of the Warsaw Jesuit College, founded in 1752 and managed between 1762 and 1775 by the Rev. Karol Wyrwicz, were individuals of high importance to Polish Enlightenment culture, such as Adam Naruszewicz, Franciszek Bohomolec and Jan-Chrzyciel Albertrandi. A parallel role, albeit on a smaller scale, was played by colleges run by other monastic orders – primarily, the Theatines – which had also been through a reform. The *Monitor* magazine praised in 1765 the learned Theatines, Piarists and Jesuits for “having thrown off the yoke [...] of sluggish unawareness” and for overthrowing “the idols of Sarmatianism that have for two hundred years been holding our nation in ridicule amongst the erudite”. The Rev. Antonio Portalupi, manager of Warsaw’s Theatine College, the Rev. Stanisław Konarski, and the Rev. Stefan Łuski, a teacher at the Jesuit College, were lauded by name.<sup>41</sup> That the latter was mentioned in this context is an interesting fact since in his later years, as editor of *Gazeta Warszawska*, he won acclaim as a critic of Enlightenment ideals.

The transformations taking place in convent schools were a sort of prelude to a general reform of the educational system. The idea of striving for a ‘national education’ resounded repeatedly in the west of Europe in the eighteenth century. The adjective ‘national’ was not at the least meant to carry any nationalist sentiment whatsoever – the goal was to standardise the content and form of upbringing and instruction and to make it subject to state control, while rendering it independent on the Church and the clergy. As is known, Enlightenment-era thinkers were inclined to design a radical reconstruction of the society in line with *apriori* rational assumptions. Such reconstruction normally meant uniformity and the rejection of local traditions and structural, system-wide or cultural differences deemed non-rational by individual thinkers (according to their own rationality criteria). Similarly, the eighteenth century was the time when centralised absolutist states were being built to be managed by state bureaucracy. Viewed from this standpoint, the centralisation of the school system was part of the state system’s modernisation exercise – and an important one, since the schools were supposed to foster human resources capable of holding or contributing to further reforms. The strife over the secularisation of public life, as characteristic as

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41 *Monitor*, No. 30/1765, pp. 234-235; quoted after: K. Puchowski, *Jezuickie kolegia szlacheckie Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów* [‘Jesuit nobility colleges in the Commonwealth of the Two Nations’], Gdańsk 2007, p. 189.

it was to the period, should also be borne in mind in this context. Supervised by the Church, the education system seemed to resist the new ideals, but there was more to it than this: schools run and managed by Catholic clergy, especially the Jesuits, triggered suspicions of instilling loyalty toward Rome rather than toward the nation's own monarch, thus obstructing the construction of a modern state.

These are the sorts of arguments we come across in the discussions carried on in France and in German countries. The tendencies occurring in the Commonwealth lands were virtually the same, yet no-one would ever think of depriving the clergy of their influence on schools: in a situation where clergymen formed a vast majority of educated people this would merely imply a decaying of the education and school system. Attempts were made at reforming the education through a reform of monastic schools; the situation turned around in 1773 when the Jesuits were dissolved by Pope Clement XIV. For the absolutist monarchs of the time, the powerful congregation posed a threat as a 'state within the state', whilst enlightened sceptics saw in it an impersonation of 'prejudices'.

Still, this suppression posed a challenge for the Commonwealth, as the country's mightiest educational institution was thus liquidated. Dozens of former Jesuit colleges were left ownerless – the buildings, book collections, and quite a number of natural-science cabinet implements. A well-educated teaching staff remained, but not within the same setting. The stealing of the property and scattering of the people around the world had to be prevented. An institution tasked with taking over the former Jesuit property and preventing the Order's pedagogic heritage from going to waste was therefore established; such was the origin of the Commission of National Education.

Apart from the Thursday Dinners and the Third-of-May Constitution, the Commission is one of those iconic associations that come to mind for any educated Pole instantly on hearing the phrase 'the Polish Enlightenment'. One worries, though, whether the patriotic stereotype has concealed this institution's actual activities. The Commission was not, as it is often pompously referred to, 'Europe's first ministry of education.' In Vienna, a Court Educational Commission (*Studienhofkommission*) had functioned since the 1750s as just a phase in the educational transformations carried out in the Habsburg monarchy for a number of years. It is proper to state that the intent to extend protection to former Jesuit properties and estates was only partially successful; historians have calculated that a third of this property was embezzled.<sup>42</sup> Ten years after the Commission

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42 K. Mrozowska, *Funkcjonowanie systemu szkolnego Komisji Edukacji Narodowej na terenie Korony* ['The functioning of the Commission of National Education school system within the Crown'], Warszawa 1985, p. 108.

assumed its authority, the number of secondary schools in the Commonwealth lands was reduced by a third compared to that on the eve of the Jesuit Order suppression. The nobility opposed the restricted role of Latin and often would send their children beyond the cordon to be educated in one of the non-reformed schools in the Austrian Partition area.

However, the Commission's achievements were enormous. The Krakow University printing house put out over the body's entire period of activity a total of well over two hundred copies of school books; the number of colleges was slowly growing and soon exceeded the one from the time before the Jesuit Order suppression. Most importantly, perhaps, all the schools throughout the enormous state were gradually embedded in a single coherent educational system. Let us take a college run by the Basilians or some other congregation, somewhere far away in Ukraine. Monks are the teachers and the local noble families' sons are the students. One day the school is visited by an inspector – not someone delegated by the monastic authorities but instead a man from the Krakow Academy, i.e. the institution that supervised lower-tiered schools on behalf of the Commission. On his way, he has been through diverse adventures as he progressed. Such was the case with the Rev. Bonifacy Garycki, a Krakow Academy professor, who reported a journey thus: "In Kaniów I left my cart due to its broken wheel; having arrived in Humań, I caught horses on the run. [...] Owing to the pouring rain, I spent a couple of hours resting by a tree in the forest, having drenched everything and likewise myself to the skin. What [it] is like to be an inspector, no-one would believe but those who have experienced it themselves."<sup>43</sup> At last, the inspector has arrived in his destination. He talks to the pupils and teachers, reviews the school library, attends to the 'exhibit day' (students' year-end final exams), and reads some of the essays prepared by the students. He finally writes a report and leaves a few days after. There is nothing altered in the life of the school, but the very fact that an inspection like this took place heralds a completely new organisation of the state. The nineteenth century is knocking at the door.

Teacher recruitment was one element of the novel organisation of the school system. Laics started appearing along with clergymen in this capacity with increasing frequency: this marked the beginning of one of the most typical 'intellectual' professions. The Commission established a teachers' corporation, named the Academic Order (*Stan Akademicki*), with obligatory membership for secular teachers (which name extended to so-called secular, i.e. non-monastic, priests; monk teachers could belong to the corporation if they met the requisite

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43 From a letter by B. Garycki, as quoted by K. Mrozowska, *ibidem*, p. 100.

conditions, particularly in terms of educational background). This corporation was completely different from what is today a corporative self-governing body of barristers, notaries-public or medical doctors. It has its territorial units – ‘academic assemblies’, usually embracing all the teachers within a region. An adept, who after his graduation joined the ranks of the Academic Order and was delegated by the Commission to do his studies, had thereafter to work it off by teaching at schools for six years, and subsequently could leave the organisation upon a year’s notice.

The teachers were secular but the strict discipline within such congregations was utterly monastic. A shared house and table, shared cashbox, and ‘clerical’ attire were all compulsory, and a ban was imposed on undertaking any other activity than teaching with Commission-supervised schools. The Commission had the right to redeploy the teachers from one house to the other. Did secular teachers of such a sort really differ much from monastic teachers?

Indeed, the transformation was revolutionary for those who were accustomed to the Jesuit schools. A certain noble polemist, scandalised, complained in 1790 – almost twenty years after the Commission was set up – that “professors [...] variously gathered from the lay estate, including married ones, more engaged with their husbandries than with the sciences”<sup>44</sup>, taught at the schools. It is apparent that a secular teacher was a contradiction in itself to at least a part of the society.

This similarity of the academic ‘order’ or ‘class’ to a monastic community could testify to the almost successful outcome of the Commission’s reforms. But a monastic form ought not to be misleading: it was not an ecclesial institution. The Church was the major, if not the only, supplier of modernisation patterns and, to establish a teaching corps, secular education authorities resorted to the model proposed by this institution. The more they borrowed from the Church, the greater the chance they had of becoming independent from the Church and of building efficiently operating secular institutions. That the organisation of the Academic Order was similar to that of ecclesial or even monastic institutions was not a manifestation of clericalism or incompleteness on the part of the

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44 *Uwagi JW [Łukasz] Bnińskiego, sędziego ziemskiego i posła poznańskiego, na sejmik średzki poselski dn. 16 listopada r. 1790 przypadający do roztrząsania podane* [‘Remarks by Rt.Hon. {Łukasz} Bniński, district magistrate and deputy of Poznań, submitted for being debated at the Śr{z}oda *sejmik* {assembly} of deputies falling on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1790] [year/place of publication unspecified], as reprinted in: *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej. Pisma Komisji i o Komisji. Wybór źródeł* [‘The Commission of National Education: Its writings and writings of other authors about the Commission. A selection of sources’], ed. by S. Tync, Wrocław 1954, p. 439.

Commission. Whereas the clergy continued to predominate as teachers in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Crown lands saw in the school year 1787-8 an equal number of secular and clerical teachers, with a growing lead by the former in the following years. In the last years of the Commonwealth, secular teachers managed three Commission-supervised schools (one each in Sandomierz, Krzemieniec and Kamieniec).

In order to show the ways in which the education and school system reforms started transforming the society, let us take a look at the exemplary careers of two university professors.

The Rev. Józef Bogucicki, professor of History of the Church at the Krakow Academy, was originally born to a Jewish family based in the village of Bogucice in Krakow area; the circumstances in which his father decided to get baptised together with his whole family remain unknown. Józef chose a clergyman's career for himself. As a professor, he was an associate of Hugo Kołłątaj in the tertiary school reforming process. Not much is known of his work or activity as a scholar. His reading list can partly be reconstructed (based on university library lending records); what we also know is that he was writing a grand history of the Church, of which but a fragment is now extant – a small but extremely important one. It is namely a welcome address delivered by Bogucicki to King Stanislaus Augustus at his solemn visit to Krakow and its university. The speaker discussed the history of the Church in 15<sup>th</sup> century, with much focus on the Czech reformer Jan Hus, on whom he shed a positive light, condemning his execution by burning at the stake. But this was too much even for this enlightened and reformed university. Attacked on account of his godlessness, Bogucicki found it hard to keep his faculty; he died soon afterward.

The social advancement of Wawrzyniec Gucewicz was no less impressive. The son of a peasant, he managed to break away from his family village and enrol for service at the court of Vilna Bishop Ignacy Massalski. He was a builder there, though the Bishop envisioned a religious career for him. Gucewicz managed to elegantly excuse himself, not losing his patron's favourable attitude; indeed, Massalski soon recommended him for the Architecture faculty at the Vilna Academy. His most famous work is the redevelopment of the Vilna Cathedral, on commission by Bishop Massalski, into a severe classical temple form.

True, peasants who turn into professors can be seen over the entire history of universities – but the only road to a professor's career so far had been the clerical frock. In the period in question, we thus have to accommodate a novelty; but it is not to be neglected that well into the eighteenth century, the university chair was not-as-yet regarded as a token of real social advancement, while a faculty such as Architecture ranked among the least prestigious ones: the architect's profession

was commonly perceived as an artless trade and thus less worthy than some 'purely intellectual' professions. It is remarkable that Gucewicz's career still bore strong marks of the traditional pattern: a client at the court of a magnate in the rank of bishop, he for most part owed his elevation to this specific position.

Józef Bogucicki's career path illustrates that Jews had more barriers to overcome than peasants. Conversion was not sufficient – holy ordination was a must. At the time it was already different west and south of the Commonwealth. Joseph von Sonnenfels, a lawyer and convert from Judaism, a professor with the Vienna University, was one of the chief collaborators of Empress Maria Teresa and Emperor Joseph II in the exercise of Enlightenment-style reforms. In Berlin, salons run by Jewish ladies, who for the sake of a social career did not even have to alter their religion, ranked among the main cultural life centres.

While speaking of teachers, let us not leave aside the milieu of private tutors and instructors. Numerous foreigners advertised their services in newspapers or magazines, emphasising their broad knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Mister Bertho, the Mathematics Teacher, lives today in the New-Town area, at citizen Gidelski's tenement-house, on the 1st floor, under No. 292. What he teaches apart from the French, German, and Latin languages is Geometry, Algebra, Fortification, Universal & Particular History, etc., etc.

*Korespondent Krajowy i Zagraniczny*, no. 73, 13<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1794, p. 1678.

A pedagogue's skills, delineated thus broadly, would in most cases certainly have triggered suspicion about their actual professional qualifications. Journalistic and belles-lettres pieces of the time often ridiculed the figure of foreign private tutor who covers his complete ignorance with a handful of ready-to-use clichés and drains his favourite's parents' pockets. Still, wise and merited people could also be found among private instructors. Coryphaei of the Polish Enlightenment such as Stanisław Staszic, Franciszek Karpiński or Jakub Jasiński made their living practicing this profession for a longer or shorter period. Teachers normally employed with schools also did private tutorials. To give an example, the Rev. Teodor Waga, a Piarist, lecturer at the Collegium Nobilium for many years and author of a popular manual on Polish history, had been giving "for almost five years now", as he wrote in 1786, "history, geography, moral instruction, etc. lessons" "to Her Miss-s[hi]p Rzewuska, the [Crown Field] Clerk [Kazimierz Rzewuski]'s daughter".<sup>45</sup>

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45 T. Waga, in a letter to I. Potocki, 9<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1786; in: I. Potocki, *Korespondencja Ignacego Potockiego w sprawach edukacyjnych (1771-1809)* ['Education correspondence by Ignacy Potocki, 1771-1809'], ed. by B. Michalik, Wrocław 1978, p. 155.

As we talked about schools and teachers, the teachers' milieu was of primary interest to us. It is their education, ambitions, abilities, and intellectual agility that make a school, to a remarkable degree, part of an urban world of educated people. Students are less important from this viewpoint: they are in the process of learning and are not responsible for setting the tone of a school. It is nonetheless worthwhile to take a glance at them from a different angle: watch them walk away from their school benches, see where they have gone to, and judge to what extent the knowledge and attitudes instilled in them at school actually inform their adult lives. One thing is for certain: the education system of Stanislaus Augustus's time primarily served the nobility. A vast majority of graduates returned to their manors or palaces in the countryside, some participated in the nobility's political life on a local level, and a certain number of them proved themselves in social life nationwide. Tomasz-Kajetan Węgiński, later turned into an anticlerical libertine, was once a student at the Warsaw Jesuits' – as was Feliks Łubieński, later to be the Duchy of Warsaw's Minister of Justice, and Józef-Maksymilian Ossoliński, the founder of the meritorious National Ossoliński Institute, called *Ossolineum*. Tadeusz Morski, a known columnist from the 'Great Sejm' period, graduated from the Lvov Jesuit College. Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, one of the most outstanding representatives of the Polish late-Enlightenment generation, studied at the Piarist Collegium Nobilium founded by the Rev. Stanisław Konarski. A genuine list of graduates of Jesuit and Piarist colleges or of the School of Knights (Corps of Cadets) who have stood out in the history of Poland would indeed be very long.

Now, the question arises, what happened to all those alumni who left a city or town and disappeared in the history records? Surrounded by their rural daily life, did they forget the knowledge learned at the school? Was it not they who mostly populated the lists of book and magazine subscribers in the early decades of the nineteenth century? Was it not they who sent their sons to schools and universities in the post-Partition period? We are prompted to guess that a memory of schools and educational background made some of the nobility strive to provide education to the next generation. In this way, a background was being formed – not the only one but quite an essential one – fostering the development of urban educated citizenry.

### **3. The Polish officialdom at its outset**

A key to the Enlightenment reform programme was the establishment of an efficient state apparatus, modelled after the Prussian or Austrian patterns. Until then, an 'office-holding' nobleman (like Cześniak Raptusiewicz in Aleksander Fredro's famous comedy play *Zemsta* ['The Revenge'], or the Judge in Adam Mickiewicz's

*Pan Tadeusz* [‘Sir Thaddaeus, or the Last Foray in Lithuania’]), had had nothing to do with a modern public or civil servant. He did not get paid for his job, and was irremovable (nobility offices were lifelong); he was not part of a bureaucratic hierarchy, so there was no superior or master to give him official instructions. Those traditional offices were partly honorary titles; some of them can be approached as elements of the nobility’s self-government. It was only during the reign of Stanislaus Augustus that efforts were taken to change this state of affairs.

Observing the changes taking place in German countries, Polish thinkers understood that it was necessary to have a proficient bureaucracy in place. For instance, the Rev. Józef Puget de Puszet, Canon of Wiślicz, presented a relatively extensive scheme for a state administration reform in his treatise *O uszczęśliwieniu narodów* [‘The delight of nations’], published a few years before the Constitution of the Third of May was enacted.

The Canon of Wiślicz was nothing of a revolutionary, and he would always furnish his afterthoughts with mitigating reservations, opposing clerical nominations based on the criterion of birth status. He would not object, however, to having a nobleman appointed, rather than a plebeian, out of two equally qualified applicants, it being “a thing righteous and fair [...] to reward [...] in descendants the virtue and merits of their ancestors”.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless, the demand for functionaries to be competent and professional did herald a thorough transition, given the country’s conditions.

These changes did not, obviously, happen overnight: it is easier to find interesting thoughts on administration reform in Polish political authors of the latter half of 18<sup>th</sup> century than to search out the reform’s postulates actually put into practice. State offices started emerging all the same. They did not require many employees to be on duty: the Crown Metrica (Register of the Polish Crown) – the major state archive – was handled by a ‘metrykant’ (i.e. Metrica worker) with his few assistants. The *metrykant* was an example of the eighteenth-century new-type employee – usually a wealthy burgher, of a political significance in some cases. The Crown Treasury Commission had in the Stanislaus-Augustus time a few, perhaps dozen-or-so, clerks or scribes and an undefined number of lower-ranking functionaries – subalterns and apprentices (interns, probationers). Those officials whose number was still so scarce had certain novel characteristics to them: they received wages or salaries, were offered promotion opportunities, were eligible for holiday or leave, and swore an oath upon assuming their office.

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46 J. Puget de Puszet, *O uszczęśliwieniu narodów* [‘The delight of nations’], Part 1, Warszawa 1788, p. 137.

The 36-member Permanent Council acted between 1775 and 1789 as a sort of substitute for the central government. A police department, with its five-manned chancellery, operated as part of it: the notion was much broader than at present, denoting overall administration. An administrative theory in its own right, called *Polizeiwissenschaft* [i.e. police/public-political science] developed in the German countries. In Poland, the Great Sejm established in June 1791 a Commission for the Police of Both Nations, employing 158 people, eighty of them in Warsaw alone (probably just a part of them fulfilled bureaucratic functions). The Targowica Confederation and the Second Partition put an end to these attempts at building an adroit state administration.

Local administration was developing little by little. Good Order Commissions aimed at reforming the political system of cities but were nobility-dominated institutions introduced into the urban organism from the outside. Somewhat paradoxically, their reformatory activity contributed to the abatement of municipal governments. Better conditions for the development of cities were provided only by the Great Sejm's legislative output. During a 1791 election of Krakow municipality officials, Sebastian Girtler, a doctor and Academy professor (proudly describing himself as a "doctor of philosophy, academician and burgher of Krakow") praised the clerical class. Even though "the best [...] laws are written down, [...] violence will with ease [...] reinforce its governing power" where there are no "clerks such as would guard the law and see to its observance".<sup>47</sup> This was still a rather traditionally narrow picture of bureaucracy's tasks (city management, regarded today as its central function, is absent), but the emphasis was put on the essential role of offices in the society. The Warsaw of 1792 saw an altogether huge bureaucracy, given the period's relations: a city numbering almost one hundred thousand inhabitants was managed by a clerical staff of 292, most of whom were clerks and copyists.<sup>48</sup>

Certain tasks which were later taken over by the state administration were still performed by the clergy. This was primarily true for the keeping of marriage-and-death registers, a competence ceded to the state authority only in the twentieth century. Enlightened Princes of the Church, one of them being Michał Poniatowski – the King's brother, Bishop of Płock and later on, Primate – used

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47 *Głos Sebastyjana Girtlera doktora filozofii akademika i mieszczanina krakowskiego...* ['The opinion voiced by Sebastyan {Sebastian} Girtler, doctor of philosophy, academician and burgher of Krakow ...'], [1792], in: *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego* ['The history of the Four Years' Sejm: source materials'], vol. 5, ed. by J. Woliński, J. Michalski, E. Rostworowski, Wrocław 1964, p. 398.

48 A. Berdecka, I. Turnau, *Życie codzienne w Warszawie okresu Oświecenia* ['The daily life in Warsaw in the Enlightenment age'], Warszawa 1969, p. 229.

the clergy in their subordinate dioceses to perform tasks related to state management. Poniatowski collected statistical materials on the condition of his diocese and commanded that measurements be made in order to make a detailed map which was itself to become part of a new map of the entire Commonwealth. Many Polish enlightened individuals believed that priests could be of use in the reform exercise, owing to their administrative experience. Józef Pawlikowski, a man of radical views, was of the opinion that the clergy were more serviceable than the nobility – owing to the administrative and teaching functions they fulfilled: “A nobleman may hold no office; a priest is always an official to the public.”<sup>49</sup>

As we track down the birth of a clerical class, magnate estates are worth visiting for a time. They needed clerks too, for the stereotypical figure of a ‘steward’ (*ekonom*) holding a lash did not suffice for them to be run any more: these estates needed expanded personnel. Princess Anna Jabłonowska, who had instructions for her bailiffs published in print, enumerated the officials reporting to a ‘governor’ as the superior authority.

[Responsibilities of Princess Anna Jabłonowska’s estate administration:] “Manorial-farm Administrators, as to agriculture, barns and cow-sheds; the *Prowentowy* Clerk [bookkeeper/steward/farm manager], as to *percepta* [revenues] and expenses; the Brewery Clerk, as to the *propinacja* [taprooms/taverns serving low-grade liquors]; the *Ober*-warden, as to surveillance of the forests; Custodian for Treasury Factories; Town Officials, as to the government of same; Rural Officials, as to government of villages.”

A. Jabłonowska, *Ustawy powszechne dla dóbr moich rządców* [‘The common enactments for the bailiffs of my estates’], vol. 1, Warszawa 1786, p. 25.

The role of these officials was not limited to practical management: each of them was burdened with a considerable load of bureaucratic work (reporting, keeping books-of-account, keeping registers of feudal service delivered/receivable, etc.). In case these recommendations were indeed fulfilled, then some educational background was required and private clerks may have become personal resources for the new class. However, their role among the period’s educated groups was not distinctive, due to their being territorially distributed across a vast space.

It was becoming increasingly common in the course of the eighteenth century that officials and functionaries in enlightened-absolutist states west of Poland had an expert-level education behind them. This role was served by the universities – the educating centres for bureaucrats. There were no such schools in

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49 J. Pawlikowski, *Mysli polityczne dla Polski* [‘Political thoughts for Poland’], [1789]; quoted after: A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu czy o rząd dusz? Publicystyka polityczna Sejmu Czteroletniego* [‘For the form of government, or for a reign of the souls? Political journalism of the Four Years’ Sejm’], Warszawa 2000, p. 136.

Poland, although much was written about the need to have them. Princess Anna Jabłonowska wanted her factories very much to be supervised by individuals with expert qualifications, as the case was “in the alien countries”; she was aware that those officials who draw their knowledge “from practice alone” will never “do without people learned in Theory, who may succour them variously”. But she eventually had to abandon the idea, as “our country dispenses benefactions of such sort [expert education – M.J.’s note] nowhere and to no-one”.<sup>50</sup> This observation, and practice, was true for state offices too.

Professional functionaries in Western Europe usually had a legal education – which was not the case with the Commonwealth: “In Poland, the law cannot be and could not by this time have been a decent science, for judiciary people acquire their legal knowledge by coincidence and with the help of practice”<sup>51</sup>, like journeymen with their handicraft master. Like many other jobs, judicial and legal professions were often passed down among generations; juridical families were becoming established and reference libraries were bequeathed by last wills. Some representatives of these families later joined the ranks of the emerging intelligentsia, but the legal/juridical class was one of the central constituents of the former political system. Along with a courtly or military career path, the lawyer’s profession was one of the nobility’s most typical advancement opportunities, as knowledge of estate-based rights and privileges was for the nobility a prerequisite for maintaining their privileged position.

Those noble lawyers formed, in parallel, a specific group which made them different from the nobility as a whole. A nobleman’s attitude to noble ‘tribunal lords’ was sometimes depreciating and disdainful: while recognising their indispensability, they were accused of avarice, and of growing wealthy at the expense of their customers. The author of a journalistic brochure issued in the last years of the Commonwealth took the liberty of making an original comparison by saying that, similarly to the peasants being tormented by the bloodsucking Jews, the nobility were suffering from “jurists taught so thoroughly that they would take out all the moneys from the other’s pocket without even putting their hand in”.<sup>52</sup>

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50 A. Jabłonowska, *Ustawy powszechne dla dóbr moich rządców* [‘The common enactments for the bailiffs of my estates’], vol. 6, Warszawa 1786, p. 6-7 (*Ustawy dla pisarza hamernianego* [‘Enactments for the iron-mill clerk’]).

51 [H. Kołłątaj], *Municipium, municipalis, ius municipale*, in: *Materiały...*, vol. 3, Wrocław 1960, p. 204.

52 J. Jezierski, *Wszyscy błądzą. Rozmowa druga pana z rolnikiem* [‘Everyone’s erring. The second conversation of the lord and the farmer’], [1790], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 1, Wrocław 1955, p. 306.

Burgher lawyers also existed, though fewer in number and lesser in significance. People of this sphere also had to know their former municipal, third-estate privileges well, and gave birth to dynasties of lawyers; many a family passed from the father to the son a copy of *Zwód prawa magdeburskiego* (a 'list of the Magdeburg law items') by Bartłomiej Groicki, the Commonwealth's most popular municipal law handbook. "The nobleman jurist has got accustomed to the terms of the law benefiting the nobility. [...] The urban jurist likewise knows the Magdeburg law that proves pertinent to the towns, rather than knowing his nobility law", Kołłątaj lamented.<sup>53</sup> As hope for change in the situation of cities appeared during the Great Sejm assembly, these milieus propelled a propaganda campaign and a political action: they would send their plenipotentiaries to Warsaw, prepare memorials, and organise gatherings and demonstrations. During this political action, which lasted for at least three years (1789-1791), a group of municipal politicians got formed, with columnists and lawyers supporting their cause. A model example is Michał Świniarski, a clerk with the Old Warsaw's municipal council. A wealthy man, he had been ennobled in 1775, purchased an estate with 330 subjects, wore nobleman-style clothes, had his daughter marry a nobleman, and sent his son to the Bar. On commission of the magistrate, he formulated a political programme for the bourgeoisie in his work titled *Wiadomość o pierwiastkowej miast zasadzie w Polsce* ['Communication on the elemental principle with respect to the towns of Poland'], 1789.

Like the other authors of works of this kind, Świniarski proposed legal arguments, quoting or referring to numerous rights and privileges of Polish towns. He demanded that burghers be allowed to purchase landed estates and that a representation of towns be deputised for parliamentary assemblies. The arguments used by Świniarski and other burgher lawyers were primarily grounded in history. There are few lofty Enlightenment slogans: a body of concrete postulates is provided instead usually reinforced by a reference to some older right or privilege. It must have clearly been resolved that a traditional form should be more telling in this respect than 'liberation' rhetoric. Bourgeoisie journalism was very much part of the estate-based system. These authors claimed the need to reactivate the staples (or, storage) right which ordered foreign merchants to wholesale their commodities to their domestic counterparts, whilst banning retail sale directly to end clients; also, they held out for displacing the Jews from cities ("alien merchants and the Jews" being "the strongest obstruction hindering the growth

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53 [H. Kołłątaj], op. cit., p. 205.

to cities”).<sup>54</sup> As in a number of other cases, postulates for reform combined traditional and modernisation-oriented elements. The process of transforming former estate/class institutions into a modern legal system was only started in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century; together with it, a novel type of lawyer began emerging.

#### 4. Doctors and other foreigners

The emergence of a new educated social stratum is probably best illustrated by the transformation undergone by the social position of doctors. While a lawyer was indeed a grandee within the world of the nobility, a medical doctor, particularly if a surgeon, was for most of the eighteenth century a craftsman at best, or a rowdy at worst. This profession attracted a variety of luck-seekers whose formal qualifications as physicians were disputable, to put it mildly.

To give an example, in the provincial town of Kalisz, four such charlatans, naming themselves ‘doctors of medicine’, operated in Stanislaus Augustus’ time. By way of tradition, Jewish people dealt with medical practice too; Stanisław Trembecki had a Jewish physician of his own. This diversity of individuals attending to activities imprecisely described as ‘medical’ is the reason why the size of the group of our present interest cannot be precisely determined; individuals of the most varied sorts could be seen as ‘doctors’ or ‘physicians’, be they graduates of renowned West-European universities who practised in Warsaw, or small-town witch-doctors. The social position of the former and the latter was by no means comparable. Research done by Zofia Chyra, with a total collection of 139 short biographies of doctors active in the Crown in the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>55</sup>, indicates the number (since the period spanning a half of the century is concerned, the quoted number does not imply that there were 139 doctors and surgeons simultaneously active at any moment in the Commonwealth area).

A new type of doctor began gradually emerging. Magnates travelling abroad employed aliens as their adjutant medicals; thus, graduates of medicine faculties

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54 M. Świniarski, *Wiadomość o pierwiastkowej miast zasadzie w Polsce* [‘Information on the elemental principle with respect to the towns of Poland’], [1789], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 2, Wrocław 1959, pp. 32-57; the quote, p. 43.

55 Z. Chyra, *U źródeł polskiej inteligencji. Funkcjonowanie wykształcenia i zawodu w procesach przemian społecznych epoki Oświecenia* [‘The Polish intelligentsia at its sources. How educational background and profession functioned in the epoch’s social transformations’], a doctoral thesis tutored by Prof. J. Leskiewiczowa, PhD, Warszawa 1974 (ms., the Library of the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw), pp. 71-72.

of foreign universities were coming to Poland. A case in point is Michał Bergonzi, 1748-1819. Born in Bologna, after getting a degree in Medicine from the local university, he was engaged in Poland as a home doctor to Prince Józef Sanguszko. He then ran a private practice in Lublin, and lived in Warsaw from 1790, having been nominated a 'proto-medic' (i.e. head doctor) of the Crown military.

Magnates would sometimes dispatch someone of their estate to do studies abroad; an example is Fryderyk Spaeth from Rydzyna in Wielkopolska, resident at the Prince August Sułkowski estate. He accompanied the prince on his journey abroad, stayed on in Vienna to study there, travelled across Western Europe, and then returned to Rydzyna to marry. King Stanislaus Augustus 'outbid' the talented young man, offering him the post of surgeon with the Działyński regiment ('10<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot of the Land of Rydzyna'). Spaeth climbed his military-medical career ladder till the fall of the Commonwealth; during the Kościuszko Insurrection, on command of the Supreme Commander, he took up various assignments at Warsaw field hospitals. A combination of private and royal patronage of this kind was a career path to follow not only for medical doctors.

The medicals based in the capital city were becoming an increasingly important part of the Warsaw community. They gained fame owing to their philanthropy, like the French-born Jan-Chrzyciel Dupont, 1718-1801, whose figure was remembered by Antoni Magier from his youth years: "his old-time attire distinguished him to a ripe old age, with the long locks of shoulder-length wig-hair and a loose mantle with which he covered his substantial figure"<sup>56</sup> They took part in the public life, the most interesting figure among them being, perhaps, the aforementioned Wawrzyniec Mitzler de Kolof, 1711-1778: a physician by profession, he was first and foremost known as a writer, journalist, and publisher.

A native of Württemberg, Mitzler arrived in Poland in 1743, at the court of a magnate to whom he was to act as home doctor and teacher. He left for Erfurt in 1747 and got a medical doctor title there; then went on to practice as a physician in Warsaw. From the 1750s on, he indefatigably attempted to inculcate in the Warsaw public the forms of cultural life developed by the German educated bourgeoisie. These included reading closets, learned periodicals, and lending libraries. But he was not quite successful at it: Mitzler's exploration of the market was poor, while the nobility culture was still mostly based upon manuscript circulation. It was only later on, during Stanislaus Augustus' reign, that

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56 A. Magier, *Estetyka miasta stołecznego Warszawy* ['The aesthetics of the capital city of Warsaw'], ed. by H. Szwanowska, Wrocław 1963, p. 83. [*resp.*: A. Magier, *Estetyka ...*, op. cit., p. 83.]

Mitzler founded and developed one of the two major Warsaw bookstores. He also authored the first Polish Enlightenment-age treatise on theatre and acting. Mitzler de Kolof was a member of the first generation of authors who propagated a bourgeois worldview, with a clear awareness that they were proposing something very different from the nobility-based mentality then dominant in the Commonwealth.

The reign of King Stanislaus Augustus already saw Warsaw-based doctors of a local bourgeoisie background. Let us take Walenty Gagatkiewicz, 1750-1805. Son of a surgeon (that is, someone plainly lower-ranking than a doctor), he was handed over for a job with a Warsaw pharmacy after his father's death, which was followed by his stepfather having him sent to France to do his medical studies. We can recognise a man-of-the-world doctor who "was capable of turning jokes wittily, and of deft flattery; and whatever might be of liking to stylish people cost him nothing at all. It was with great ease that he delighted in the company of women through a magical use of those trifles that compose the most pleasant part of the fair sex's pastimes. [...] He excelled in particular at associating with higher-estate-ranked people, through his command of the various languages", i.e. French, German and Italian.<sup>57</sup> Together with Dupont and a few others, he ran a surgical school affiliated to a hospital; it was in fact one of Poland's first medical education institutions ever.

In Vilna, foreign doctors, imported to the Commonwealth on the initiative of local magnates, had one more window of career opportunity for themselves: the university chair. Warsaw offered this option only in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. One such chair was Mikołaj Regnier, a Frenchman, personal doctor to the Bishop of Vilna, who was promoted for professorship in Surgery and Obstetrics in 1781.

Local magnates would also import professionals in other domains. Worth mentioning among them are experts in technical or technological matters who were employed as administrators or other business ventures. Johann-Ehrenfried Dietrich from Dresden, 'councillor' (*konsyliarz*, archaic for 'physician') to His Royal Majesty (so perhaps a doctor too) and manager of a Warsaw *ludwisarnia* [i.e. foundry for canons and bells]. In recognition for bringing his canon foundry to bloom in the insurgent Warsaw of 1794, Dietrich was awarded a prize "in the

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57 L. de Lafontaine, *Mowa na pochwałę śp. Wielmożnego Jegomości Pana Walentego Gagatkiewicza, konsyliarza nadwornego śp. Stanisława Augusta króla polskiego, doktora medycyny tudzież członka Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk w Warszawie* [ '{Commemoration} address in praise of the late Honourable Gentleman Mister Walenty Gagatkiewicz, court councillor to the late Stanislaus Augustus, King of Poland; medical doctor, and member of the Society of the Friends of Sciences in Warsaw' ], Warszawa 1805, p. 8.

form of a gold watch presented to him by the S.[upreme] Commander” Tadeusz Kościuszko.<sup>58</sup>

Manufactories were built in the Commonwealth in the eighteenth century with the laudable purpose of modernising the country. Lacking an underlying in-depth economic analysis, these projects did not form compact industrial districts, respond to real economic needs, or ensue from a well thought-over state policy. They mostly ended up in failure as soon as any of their supporting magnates lost interest in them. The contribution of those projects to overall economic development was not significant. They were set up in small towns, far away from intellectual and economic centres, and their administrators or managers had little opportunity to get integrated with the Polish elites. Let us take as an example the manufacture of clothing in Skierniewice, founded in 1786 by Primate Michał Poniatowski. His personal ambition was to rule his estate almost in an enlightened monarch's manner, and his industrial activity was rooted in this intention. The Skierniewice manufactory was managed by a certain Nadal de Sobreville, a man brought from France who was acquainted with the economic thought of the time as well as with then-modern accounting methods, unknown to Poland in that period. Sobreville believed that a reasonable economic policy of the state or its magnates could drive a poor country to a flourish. He would read the Great French Encyclopaedia “all the day and night long”<sup>59</sup>, and exchange letters, in French, with Prince-Primate Poniatowski. As soon as he arrived in Skierniewice, he requested subscription of the *Gazette de Leide*, one of the period's major European journals.

Monsieur Soubreville seems to be a perfect example of excellently educated foreign expert whose sojourn in Poland did not at all contribute to the development of the Polish educated classes. The fledgling capitalism of the time was a typical ‘insular’ capitalism which did not inform or affect the life of the society living ‘around’ it.

The story might turn out differently, however, if a foreign specialist had settles in Poland for good, setting up a family there and gradually becoming part of the local environment. In 1771, two brothers arrived in Poland from West Pomerania, then part of Prussia. Jakub and Jan-Ludwik were their names, their (French) surname was Bécu, and they were descended from a Huguenot family. (Huguenots was the name used to denote French Calvinists.) As Louis XIV

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58 [Untitled article, in:] *Korespondent Krajowy i Zagraniczny*, No. 73, 13<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1794, pp. 1658-1659.

59 Of which he was accused by an opponent, in a 1790 letter quoted by W. Kula, *Szkice o manufakturach* [‘Essays on manufactories’], vol. 2, Warszawa 1956, p. 643.

abolished in 1685 the Edict of Nantes, which had warranted tolerance to Huguenots, many of them resolved to emigrate. A large number of them eventually settled in Prussia, and their subsequent contribution to the country's economic development was significant. In the years when the Polish Enlightenment was flourishing, representatives of this group could be encountered as those pioneering the development of technology in the Commonwealth area. The brothers Jakub and Jan-Ludwik Bécu were employed at the manufactories built by Antoni Tyzenhauz in Grodno. Jan-Ludwik married twice in Poland; his first-marriage son later became a professor of medicine with the Vilna University. This man will return as this story unfolds.

## 5. Men-of-letters, artists, blue-stockings

Let us open this chapter by recalling a frequently quoted opinion of Adam Mickiewicz: in one of his lectures at the Collège de France of Paris, the poet remarked that King Stanislaus Augustus had created a separate men-of-letters estate in Poland. This apt observation (regardless of the question whether the 'estate' was the work of the King or his epoch) best summarises the importance of the period discussed in this chapter for the history of Polish intelligentsia. The Vilna Academy was clearly of a similar opinion: during one of its academic celebrations, "a portrait of H.M. the King" was displayed, "bearing the inscription *Litterarum ac litteratorum patri* ['To the father of literature and men-of-letters']".<sup>60</sup> Adam Naruszewicz similarly addressed the King, as the "father of sciences and of those who learn."<sup>61</sup>

The word *litterat*, denoting in Polish a man-of-letters, author or writer (Latin *litteratus* – learned, educated), was appearing with increasing frequency among those who sympathised with the transformations and among conservative circles alike. *Gazeta Warszawska*, a periodical representing the latter, ironically mentioned "our men-of-letters" quitting their anticlerical views in the face of a nearing death. But this same newspaper used the phrase completely seriously as it advertised a new book, "a work as much salutary *publico* [for the public – M.J.] as it is scholarly", under the graceful title of *A piece of advice to men-of-letters, sedentaries and all those who, attached to their offices, exhaust their health by the labours of their minds, regarding their health* (*Rada dla literatów, sedentariuszów i*

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60 *Gazety Wileńskie*, 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1781; quoted after: R. Jakubėnas, *Prasa Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w II połowie XVIII wieku* ['The press in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 18<sup>th</sup> century'], Kraków 2005, p. 191.

61 K. Puchowski, op. cit., p. 437.



*Paznokciach nieobciętych, sukni wyszarzanej...  
Niechlujstwo ma być słyszę Literatów znamię.*<sup>64</sup>

Philo: Dost thou first know, my Missy: we're the Men-of-Letters?

Kate: Oh, judging thee at first sight, that's what I thought, of course.

Philo: How didst thou recognise this?

Kate: The shabby side of yours;

So often you're lost in thoughts, whilst hair uncombed you wear;

Your nails unpared: all apparent; and your gown threadbare...

Slovenliness: the Men-of-Letters' cachet, I've heard...

It would be very nice to believe that this comedy author has provided the generations to come with an accurate photograph of the 'bohemia' of the Stanislaus-Augustus era. However, there are no grounds upon which to base such a supposition, as 'slovenliness' of intellectuals is yet another honourable topos, traceable as such all the way to antiquity. Still, its resumption is quite telling; it testifies at least to the fact that a group of educated people started triggering a larger interest than before.

Let us take a look at the course of life of two such 'penniless writers', not known today to anyone but a handful of Enlightenment literature historians. Jan Drozdowski (1759-1810), the author of the above-quoted passage, came from a minor noble family based in the Krakow region. Stanisław Szymański's (1752-?) background was a Warsaw-based bourgeois family, for a change. The former pursued his clerical career first with the Permanent Council (*Rada Nieustająca*) chancellery, then with the Guard of the Laws – a body established by the Third-of-May Constitution – and subsequently, with the Kościuszko Insurrection authorities. A member of the masonry, he made friends in those circles with Cyprian Godebski, a poet and a future Legionnaire in General Dąbrowski's Legions during the Napoleonic wars (not to be confused with his namesake grandson, a sculptor). Drozdowski made a name for himself with his three comedy plays, of which the first bears a characteristic title, *Literat z biedy* (*Man-of-Letters, Poverty-Driven*; 1784); the last play, staged in Warsaw in 1801 and then again in 1807, was *Bigos hultajski, czyli szkoła trzpiotów* ['Sauerkraut-stew, or, a school for the scatter-brained'], portraying a General Dąbrowski Legion's veteran as a positive character. In his late days, in the time of the Duchy of Warsaw, Drozdowski was promoted to head of the department of religion in the Ministry of the Interior. He was an official by profession, and as such belonged to a group that was in his generation still small.

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64 Ibidem, pp. 11-12.

Having gone for an ecclesiastic career, Stanisław Szymański joined the Jesuit Order but very soon after, at age twenty, as the congregation was dissolving, he faced the necessity of making another choice about the course of his life. He taught at schools and served as a tutor at landowners' houses. 1778 saw him contribute to the compilation of a parliamentary diary, as an assistant to the *sejm's* secretary; in 1780s, he was a proof reader with *Gazeta Warszawska*, the Warsaw daily edited by Stefan Łuskina, also an ex-Jesuit. "It is nearly every day for several years now that the Reverend Szymański has had his dinners at the Reverend Łuskina's, and stayed there for the reason that he keeps himself busy with the proofreading of newspapers".<sup>65</sup> The dinners he did have but evidently would not share the editor's conservative views, as during the Kościuszko Insurrection he collaborated with *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*. He dealt with journalism also during the Duchy-of-Warsaw period, authoring columns, a new kind of journalist expression at the time. He was an example of a man-of-letters earning his living with his pen and one of the many ex-Jesuits who joined the ranks of Polish intelligentsia after their Order was suppressed.

Based upon both these biographies, it can be inferred how significant the occurrences of the last years of Commonwealth's existence were to the history of the group in question. Between the assembly of the *sejm* which was later to be called 'the Four Years' Sejm', or the 'Great' Sejm (1788-1792), and the Kościuszko Insurrection (1794), intellectual and political life went on at a faster pace: journalism was in flourish, new periodicals and magazines appeared, and the educated opinion was focused on disputes about a political reform of the state. An aura of excitement incited by newly arising opportunities could be sensed. Societies and associations of various sorts were set up; one such group was the Society of Friends of the Constitution of the Third of May, which held its meetings for several months in late 1791 and early 1792 at Radziejowski Palace in Krakowskie-Przedmieście St. in Warsaw (today, the seat of the President of the Republic of Poland). Some scholars recognise this Society as the first political party in Poland. The monopoly of *Gazeta Warszawska*, legally guaranteed so far, was broken up in early 1791 with the launch of *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*, a new press title edited by Tadeusz Mostowski, Józef Weysenhoff and Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. The latter of the three is definitely describable as an archetypical example of intellectual of noble origin.

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65 From a court testimony in the trial for a financial dispute between S. Szymański and Dalewski, his brother-in-law; quoted after: W. Smoleński, *Mieszczanństwo warszawskie w końcu wieku XVIII* ['The Warsaw bourgeoisie in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century'], ed. by M.H. Serejski, A. Wierzbicki, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Warszawa 1976 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.: 1917), p. 87.

When, in the summer of 1792, the victorious Russian armies transferred the exercise of authority over the country to the Targowica Confederation, established by the opponents of the Third-of-May Constitution, under the patronage of Russian Tsarina Catherine II, hard times followed for the ‘men-of-letters’. Jan Dembowski reported to Ignacy Potocki, from Warsaw, on the dilemmas involved in the requisite loyalty oath to the new authority and Targowica Confederation: he names in detail those having sworn in person, through their plenipotentiaries, and those who had withdrawn. *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca* ceased to be issued since mid-1792, closed down by the Confederation members. Józef Szymanowski, a poet – greatly admired in that time but later on completely forgotten, author of sentimentalist poems, regarded by his contemporaries as an oracle for good taste in literature – expressed in his letters to his great love (and sister-in-law in one), Aniela Szymanowska née Świdzińska, Forewoman of Wyszogród, feelings that were probably typical to the period’s well-read Poles. Influenced by the news that the king himself joined the Targowica Confederation, he wrote, from Krakow: “My God, what was the pleasing glow of the dawning bliss for? The glorious enthusiasm of this Nation, the zealous willingness of the virtuous *Sejm*, the prowess of the Army, and Kościuszko’s timeless fame – of what use was all that? All this is disappearing in a thick darkness and it seems that either there’s no Homeland, or it can be spotted, hardly perceptible, in some nightly abyss.”<sup>66</sup>

The year 1794 confronted writers with one more illusory triumph: half the year of the Kościuszko Insurrection – from the Commander’s oath, sworn in March at the Krakow Market, to the seizure of Warsaw by the Russian troops led by Generalissimo Suvorov in October – was yet another period, the last before the Third Partition, of the men-of-the-quill’s fervent activity. The press was revived again, clubs reappeared, and Polish ‘Jacobins’ came to fame again. Józef Szymanowski, of whom we have just heard, joined the Insurrection, assuming the duties of Secretary to the Supreme National Council. Once the Prussian and Russian armies were forced in late August/early September to wind up their siege of Warsaw and step back from the capital-town area, Szymanowski – expressing a public feeling again – wrote thus: “I am now reporting to you, My Lady, the most welcome news. It is with severest infamy that the Prussians and Moscow have withdrawn from Warsaw. Our men are chasing them. Good God has blessed the good cause. [...] Were you there in Warsaw today, what sprightliness, joy, and

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66 J. Szymanowski, *Listy do starościny wyszogrodzkiej* [‘Letters of the Forewoman of Wyszogród’], ed. by F. Korwin-Szymanowski, Warszawa 1973, p. 24 (a letter from Krakow, dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 1792).

happiness you would see on the faces of all! One tends to write briefly in such moments. All's living and all's moving. I kiss your hands.”<sup>67</sup>

Comparing these letter fragments, a two years' interval between them, we may sense the switch from despair to enthusiasm so typical for a time of rapid situational transformation.

Józef Szymanowski was a marginal personage. The most agile circle of insurrection activists gathered around Hugo Kołłątaj and gained the name of the 'Polish Jacobins'. But this description did not say much about their ideological facet, apart from their being characterised by radicalism, against the background of their society. Along with Kołłątaj, the Rev. Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski was distinct within the Warsaw radicals circle: an excellent columnist, commenting on current ideas and events in a vivid, acute, and ironical manner, with mockery and indignation, and sometimes even pathetically, not shunning historical or civilisation-related comparisons. Jezierski's output stands out against the enormous amount of political writings which otherwise always accompanied a variety of political crises and turning points in the Commonwealth.

One of the radicals surrounding Hugo Kołłątaj in his young years, Antoni Trębicki, changed his views at a later date thoroughly, turning into a merciless tamer of his once-comrades and of the ideas he used to profess himself. In his memoirs, which were written in his last years, are full of exasperation, display an enviable gift for observation, and make up an excellent work as a piece of literature, albeit an overtly unfair one in its assessments, Trębicki blistered the radicals all right. “All the wisecracks literate, all those hungry men-of-letters, the whole street rabble from behind the carriages, striving hard to move into these carriages, [...] all those hot-spurs hunting for a queer equality and freedom, those grand features of demagogues [...] – formed Kołłątaj's open and impudent party. ‘Murder and gallows’ were their slogan.” Here, we are encountering a certain group of people getting crystallised around “but a single need, a single ambition, and a single paucity” (plus a similar education standard, and a similar temper, one might add), “to whom the revolutionary upheaval was paving a field open for accommodating their intentions”<sup>68</sup> – in other words, those who saw the revolutionary situation as an opportunity for the country's redevelopment in a manner so as to make it compliant with their radical ideas while also providing options for a personal career. Edmund Burke could spot a similar group among the French revolutionaries of the same time.

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67 Ibidem, p. 67 (a letter from Warsaw, dated 6<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1794).

68 A. Trębicki, *Opisanie Sejmu 1793. O rewolucji 1794*, [A description of the 1793 Sejm. The revolution of 1794], ed. by J. Kowecki, Warszawa 1967, p. 227.

‘Wiseacres literate’ [*mędrki piśmienne*]: this first-rate phrase leads us further along the route of the formation of the ‘men-of-letters’ milieu. Such a ‘wiseacre’ was not a figure coined by Trębicki; it functioned in the time’s writings, governed by its own rights. The figure’s traits, likings and relishes, and lifestyle, although processed literarily, enable us to grasp certain associations related to the then-emerging group of intellectual workers, if not some of its realistic traits. ‘Wiseacre,’ the figure and character, was depicted by Ignacy Krasicki. “Willing to be a learned man while learning a little”; “Rebuke what has been praised, and what has been rebuked, praise”; “famous men degrade”; “make a joke evidence where the truth is pestering” – these are the traits of wiseacres, those who:

*Czytają, a nie myślą, sądzą ślepym zdaniem,  
A gmin czci dumne głupstwo owczym powtarzaniem.*<sup>69</sup>

Read, but never reckon; judge, through dead-end opinions;  
Praised be lofty absurdness, ’mongst retailing minions.

As is known, Ignacy Krasicki disliked thoughtless imitation – whilst enlightened traditionalism, *Pan Podstoli*-style (‘Lord High Steward,’ the title-character in a novel by Krasicki), was in his opinion the most recommendable recipe for Poland. His philosophy of ‘the golden mean’ and moderation prevented him from appraising an attitude he considered an inconsiderate and superfluous imitation of a French fashion, both in the area of attire and mental attitudes. Nonetheless, the picture of a ‘wiseacre’ he painted in his poem seemingly renders a certain real-life social phenomenon – that is, the occurrence of people educated otherwise than customarily. They would not be so fluent in their Latin, but instead familiar with the new ideas, phrases, en-vogue conversation topics, names of authors it befits one to know, without necessarily bothering to read their works. “I have visited a rather considerable portion of Europe [...], I stopped by every Academy I came across”, says the narrator of *Książdz Pleban*, a didactic novel by Józef Kossakowski, Bishop of Livonia. While back in Warsaw, “I found houses of exquisite Masters ready to receive me”, as “my knowledge of many a thing [...] opened the entrance for me to contracting friendships. [...] Having an opinion of my own about each of the Author’s works, I was able to avoid the understanding that I have not read the Author completely, cutting it short, in the manner as described in the lexicons [...]; but I never could find in myself

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69 I. Krasicki, *Mędretek* [‘The Wiseacre’], in: idem, *Satyry i listy* [‘Satires and letters’], ed. by J.T. Pokrzywniak, 2<sup>nd</sup> (rev.) ed., Wrocław 1988, pp. 126-131; quote from pp. 129-131.

the inner tranquillity [...] that fills a man from a possession of the thing he has laboriously been striving for.”<sup>70</sup>

As a literary figure, the wiseacre had a cousin that was reappeared over and over again in the Polish literature of Stanislaus Augustus’ time: the dandy, or gallant (*fircyk*). A *fircyk* would not display too much education, and was close to the wiseacre with his social refinement, polished manners and wit.

The political revival the Commonwealth saw in its last years was related to the increased activity of the urban third estate – the class that suddenly made its appearance in the country’s intellectual life. In Krakow, bookstore owners Jan Maj and Sebastian-Fabian Drelinkiewicz supported the Third-of-May Constitution and were active in the conspiracy before and during the Kościuszko Uprising. Both of them were strongly embedded in the traditional guild structures, but the causes they became involved in were part of a new epoch. In Warsaw, the radical bourgeois activists maintained contact with Hugo Kołłątaj and his associates.

The Great Sejm years were overall the golden period of political dispute. Lampoons, responses to those, and ‘responses to the responses’ proliferated. “Everyone’s erring”, as castellan Jacek Jezierski, who opposed the extension of political rights to towns, titled a memo he penned. “Not everyone’s erring”, responded the title of a brochure by an anonymous third estate political commentator. Stanisław Staszic had his famous *Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego* [‘Remarks on the life of Jan Zamoyski’] published on the eve of the Great Sejm, and this was soon after counterpointed by *Uwagi nad uwagami* [‘Remarks on the Remarks’] (by Jan-Ferdynand Nax), with another, anonymous author writing a *Poparcie dla uwag* [‘In support of the Remarks’]. These disputes, involving books, booklets, brochures and (a novelty!) press articles, clashing against, and shouting over, one another, involved some 120 authors within the four years of the Sejm. The resonance of these works was much broader, with circulations of up to 10,000 copies printed for the most popular treatises or articles, obtainable not only in towns but at fairs as well.<sup>71</sup>

Printed polemics, *sejm* debates, street demonstrations, political gatherings and meetings in the Krasiński Garden or in Foksal Street (whose name, incidentally, is said to be a Polish corruption of ‘Vauxhall’) made Warsaw of the late 1780s and early 1790s a vivid and politicised capital city. The king once reported

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70 [J. Kossakowski], *Ksiądz Pleban* [‘The Reverend Vicar’], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Warszawa 1788, pp. 10-12.

71 The figures are quoted after: A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, op. cit., pp. 43-45.

in a letter, with a tint of taunting but also somewhat disturbed, the story of “Mrs. Dekert, the Warsaw President’s [i.e. Lord Mayor’s] wife” who, responding to an aristocrat trying to make her give up her box in the theatre for himself, “said with impatience, ‘May Prince Sapieha bear in his mind what is happening these days in Paris!’”<sup>72</sup> A French traveller to Warsaw had the impression that “it is the energy which is generated by frequent reciprocal contacts that renders the peoples so resolute [*redoubtable*] in a time of revolution”.<sup>73</sup> An anonymous commentator addressed the Polish capital with the following apostrophe: “Thou hast issued people luminous who enlighten the nation. [...] Thou art the hot-bed of *Listy Anonima* [‘Anonymous Letters’ by Hugo Kołłątaj – note by M.J.]; of *Przestrogi dla Polski* [‘Warnings for Poland’ by Stanisław Staszic – do.]; of *Głos naprędce do ludu miejskiego* [‘A voice thrown-up for the townspeople’, prob. by Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski – do.]; and, of the other writers respectable.”<sup>74</sup>

The periodicals of the time looked different from those we have to do with today, to the extent that we might not guess that a magazine or journal was what it was: there is no vignette whose artwork is the most unambiguous hallmark of any periodical today. Consecutive issues were printed in anticipation of being bound together into a single quarterly or semi-annual volume. Thus, a volume would only be furnished with a single title page; texts were not infrequently interrupted at the issue’s end and their threads resumed in the following issue with no explanation. It may seem sometimes that we deal with a book rather than a periodical, with its subsequent sheets published at regular intervals. The format was much smaller than today, closer perhaps to pocket editions of our time. Still, those were periodicals in their own right, with a permanent editorial staff, a programme policy, and, most importantly, contact established and maintained with their readers: they published letters, controversies and polemics, and made themselves audible (though not as frequently as their counterparts do) in the current affairs.

Among the general-cultural periodicals, so to name them anachronically, three took the lead: *Monitor* (1765-1785); *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* [‘Diversions Pleasant & Profitable’] 1770-1777); and, *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczny*

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72 King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, to A. Deboli, Warsaw, 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1789; quoted after: *Materiały...*, vol. 2, p. 367.

73 J.P. Garran, *Recherches politiques sur l'état... de la Pologne*, Paris 1795, p. 204; quoted after: K. Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni. Ruch polityczny mieszczaństwa w dobie Sejmu Czteroletniego* [‘The glorious and the well-born. Political movement of the bourgeoisie in the time of the Four Years’ Sejm’], Warszawa 1976, p. 289.

74 *Powinszowania nowo nobilitowanym na rok 1791* [‘Felicitations for the year 1791 to the newly-ennobled’], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 3, p. 440.

['The Historical-Political Journal'] (1782-1793). Founded on the initiative of Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski as an organ of the reformers affiliated with King Stanislaus Augustus, *Monitor* ranked among the period's so-called moral magazines, their prototypes all across Europe being the English magazines *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Coryphaei of Polish Enlightenment such as I. Krasicki, S. Konarski, F. Bohomolec and A.K. Czartoryski contributed to *Monitor* in the first years of the magazine's existence.

*Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* was initially the organ of ex-Jesuits associated with the King (J.C. Albertrandi, A. Naruszewicz); similarly to *Monitor*, the magazine supported the monarch's reforming concepts. As time progressed, the magazine's relationship with the Jesuits on the one hand and with the King on the other became somewhat loosened.

Piotr Świtkowski, another ex-Jesuit, was the single personal force behind the *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczny* project. More 'specialised' than the two other, it primarily dealt with economic-social issues, claiming 'liberty' for peasants and burghers, and enthusiastically picturing the achievements of enlightened-absolutist countries, with Friedrich the Great's Prussia coming to the fore.

Newspapers were published alongside magazines – again, not shaped into some grave journals whose colossal sheets would almost cover up a copy-holding reader: it was only in around the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century that newspapers assumed such a form. Before then, they were small, and without clearly defined columns inside them, it was difficult to distinguish between advertisements and the editorial material. Individual pieces of information were mostly published without specific titles attached to them, separated one from the other just by paragraphs. Most importantly, there were no daily papers available then as yet, the usual issuing frequency being two or three times a week. Our handbooks would tell us of some of those papers, such as *Gazeta Warszawska*, that they were conservative and hostile to Enlightenment ideology, whilst others, for example *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*, ardently acted in support of the Enlightenment reforms. The difference is certainly important: *Gazeta Warszawska* would use literally any single opportunity to sting the 'writers' and 'philosophers' it had no warm feelings for, whereas *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca* made enthusiastic references to the French Enlightenment, claiming that "there are the rights of humans that preceded any human arrangements; [...] liberty is not a gift from humans, but instead, an innate obligation for every single man."<sup>75</sup>

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75 *Prospectus wiadomości politycznych i uczonych, krajowych i zagranicznych, pod tytułem „Gazeta Narodowa i Obca”* [‘A prospectus of political and scholarly news, domestic

Those interested not as much in the history of ideas and views as in the emergence of a new educated elite would however find the worldview differences between the editorial boards of the various periodicals not to be of great importance. The spirit of time has its own rights, after all: a journal as reluctant toward novelties as *Gazeta Warszawska* would provide its readers with quite a quantity of Enlightenment ideas, in a moderate version (the Rev. S. Łuskiński, its editor, attended King Stanislaus Augustus' Thursday Dinners for some time). The paper praised the Rev. Paweł Brzostowski (the man otherwise famous for his activity in favour of improving the peasantry's situation) who, "due to his patriotic zeal for the Polish youth's advancement in learning", had founded a medal for the author of the best dissertation on a proposed subject-matter.<sup>76</sup> It was with approbation that the paper reported from Munich about a new law that reduced, "as far as practicable", the number of instances with which torture could be applied while investigating a suspect; a report from Copenhagen concerned the development of a local 'Economic [or, Husbandry] Society'.<sup>77</sup> In this way, regardless of their own worldviews, the newspapers contributed to dissemination of the new notions, ideas and their depictions.

The other reason is even more essential. By the very fact that they existed, regardless of the contents they conveyed, the newspapers had a say in the transformation of the style of readership which has been mentioned earlier, and formed a sense of bond between the readers – still scarce in number as they were.

The numerical force of a potential group of readers was estimated by a contemporary author as around "several times a hundred thousand"; he however complained that the number of newspaper and book readers is in practice much lesser, so a book published in five hundred copies had no chance to sell as many and thus was kept on stock for several dozen years.<sup>78</sup> The quoted estimate is from

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- and foreign, entitled '*Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*', [text signed by:] Tadeusz Mostowski, Józef Weysenhoff, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, [no date/place of publication specified].
- 76 *Z Litwy. Z Wilna d. 26 marca* ['From Lithuania. From Vilna, 26<sup>th</sup> March'], *Gazeta Warszawska*, 6<sup>th</sup> Apr. 1774, p. 2 [unnumbered] (the dissertation's topic was: "What is more inciting for the youth to learn: is it prizes and praises they are given at their schools, or is it country [i.e. public] offices that are opened to individuals, through education and practising their Sciences, formed toward, and gifted for, public services?").
- 77 *Z Niemiec. Z Monachium 20 lutego* ['From Germany. From Munich, 20<sup>th</sup> February'] *Gazeta Warszawska*, 30<sup>th</sup> March 1774, p. 3 [unnumb.]; *Z Danii. Z Kopenhagi dnia 1 stycznia* ['From Denmark. From Copenhagen, 1<sup>st</sup> January'] *ibidem*, 9<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1774, p. 4 [unnumb.].
- 78 *Respons na list imci pana Literackiego* ['A response to the letter of Rt.Hon. Mr. Literary'] *Monitor*, no. 73, 12<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1767; in: *Monitor 1765-1785*, ed. by E. Aleksandrowska, Wrocław 1976, p. 180.

1767, and even through over the following two or three decades the reading circle expanded, complaints over unsatisfactory social response to the written word were to remain a fixed thread in the public debates of educated Poles.

Political controversies of the Great Sejm time have already been referred to; the presence of literary polemics, which came into fashion during Stanislaus Augustus' reign, can be taken as a reliable indicator of the intensity of the period's intellectual life: it was they that conceived a circulation of ideas.

Michał-Dymitr Krajewski, a Piarist friar, published in 1784 a novel bearing a graceful title: *Podolanka wychowana w stanie natury, życie i przypadki swe opisująca* ['The Podolian Girl: raised in the State of Nature, describing her life and events'], a remake of Henri Joseph Du Laurens' *Imirce, ou la fille de la nature*. This story of the life of a girl brought up in a complete seclusion from people and the world joined the ongoing European discussion on the superiority of the natural state over civilisation, or the converse. The publication triggered several polemical voices, followed by a response from the author; the discussion not only revolved around the central problem but also touched upon the issue of the novel as a means of expression, and the problems of the Polish literary language.

The second mentioned area of polemic was probably more important in view of the present subject matter. Franciszek-Ksawery Dmochowski mocked some of the Krakow Academy professors, blaming them (in his funny-titled *Zakus nad Zaciekami Akademii Krakowskiej, czyli Uwagi nad niektórymi tej Akademii dysertacjami* ['Disquisition on In-Depth-Penetrations of the Krakow Academy; or, Remarks on certain dissertations of the said Academy'], 1789) for an ignorance masked with a pompous prolixity. The author was sharpest with physicist Andrzej Trzciniński and literature lecturer Marcin Fijałkowski, while expressing a more accommodating attitude toward classical philologist and University librarian Jacek-Idzi Przybylski. It came as a surprise that the said Mr. Przybylski acted as a polemicist on the Krakow party side, launching an attack on Dmochowski with a long heroicomic poem, literarily not such a successful piece, in the consistent opinion of literary historians, for a change. The gift of wit was not among the numerous talents of Przybylski, a savant and outstanding expert in classical literature. Dmochowski found it easy to lampoon the abortive and diffuse work. The controversy in question touched upon the interesting problem of transformations in the language, among other aspects: while Dmochowski stormed at certain neologisms coined by Krakow professors, Trzciniński and Przybylski defended the rationale behind those words or phrases created in order to denote some thitherto-unknown phenomena.

Artists came in succour of the 'men-of-letters' involved in politics and social activities. Wojciech Bogusławski, the founding father of modern Polish theatre,

is an ineffably interesting specimen of novel career patterns. His background was a Wielkopolska-region family which was gnawed by incessant financial constraints but had its pretences: his father's ambition was to become a *starost*, the post he eventually obtained but had to quit soon after resulting from financial troubles and lost trials. Wojciech embarked on his career in a rather clichéd manner. First, there was the Piarist school in Warsaw, then 'St. Anne'/Nowodworskie Schools in Krakow (the best school locally), and finally, a most noble and European move, the decision to pursue a military officer's career with a Lithuanian foot-guard regiment.

And there suddenly came a breakthrough moment: the *starost's* son leaves the army and chooses neither more nor less than a career path as an actor. A decision of this sort would have meant, to a nobleman, a complete and irreversible declassing a few dozen years before; now, however, it would even stand for social advancement, in certain respects. It was during Bogusławski's life that the social function of actor was undergoing a change in Poland. Not with respect to any single actor, perhaps – but the one who was to be Director of the Warsaw National Theatre for several dozens of years could toward the end of his days, in the 1820s, enjoy the reputation of "the father of the national stage". In the Enlightenment period, the cultural role of the theatre was growing immensely: the theatre was becoming a sanctuary and refuge of the national word, and powerful reforming weaponry. The development of theatrical critique (especially in the early years of 19<sup>th</sup> c.) made the theatre an object of interest for the press, journalists, and conversation participants. 'Comedians' were thus turning into intellectuals.

Bogusławski's social standing was contributed to by another important driver: the masonry. He was a freemason, as were so many Enlightenment-age people; some ditties or arias from his plays were made part of an 1816 songbook of Polish freemasons (just to recall his translation of the famous Sarastro's aria from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, which in Bogusławski's version opens with the line "*W tym to przybytku świętym* ['In this shrine sacrosanct']"). Contacts within the freemasonry enabled Bogusławski to remain influential in Warsaw society.

Bogusławski expertly influenced the audiences' emotions. Of his numerous plays, often featuring monologues, dialogues or couplets that the spectators found thrilling, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz's *Powrót posła* ['The Return of the Deputy', 1791] was the best known. The play came out as the crowning of the many years of development of the Polish Enlightenment comedy play, which since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century strove to root out old imperfections and bad habits, and shape minds and characters. *Powrót posła* retains several treats from the comedy-of-manners while remaining a political satire, a *sui generis*, didactic, rhymed programme of reforms. The rules claimed a "civic virtue [...]"

portrayed in the guise of entertainment”, as a contemporaneous reviewer put it. The Niemcewicz play was staged a few months before the Third-of-May Constitution was enacted. During its Warsaw premiere performance on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1791, attended by King Stanislaus Augustus, the “gathered audience filled [the theatre] to its limits”, welcoming the work with “universal and almost uninterrupted applause”. Soon afterward, the play met with a “general approbation and applause at the Krakow theatre as well”.<sup>79</sup> These accounts should probably not be fully trusted since the author of the thus-appraised comedy may have had a say in them himself (being an editor of the journal where they were printed); still, they testify, at least, to how great the hopes Polish reformers were, more than two hundred years ago, with respect to the theatre as a means of shaping the public opinion.

Visual arts faced a somewhat different situation in comparison to Warsaw or Krakow theatre. The theatres subsisted on the sale of tickets, and so had to solicit audience participation, whereas painters and sculptors needed patrons; this made the art they practised more elitist, and met the relish of the aristocracy rather than a broader public. In Warsaw, the main patronage hub was the royal court. Marcello Bacciarelli ran a school of painting at the Castle, and exerted growing influence on the king’s artistic policy. Bernardo Bellotto, called ‘Canaletto’, painted cityscapes of the capital town for the king; Andrzej (born André) Le Brun made his sculptures; a whole galaxy of minor artists worked on the redevelopment of the monarch’s residence. The king had artists sent on scholarships, set wages for his painters, like Bacciarelli, and poets, like Stanisław Trembecki; he also founded prizes for artists. State patronage is not quite discernible from royal private patronage, as with the case of cultural patronage versus the king’s policy aimed at building a political faction around the monarch.

The Czartoryski family successfully rivalled Stanislaus Augustus in patronage of literature and the arts. The royal and magnate patronage was also one of the major stimulants of the growing numbers of learned people (who were offered opportunities to reside at the Warsaw Castle, or at the Puławy residence). There was indeed a profusion of those lettered foreigners drawn by Polish magnates to their local courts and, some time afterwards, becoming independent and pursuing their careers as physicians, writers, teachers, or university professors.

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79 T. Matuszewic, *List przysłany do kantoru „Gazety Narodowej” dn. 18 stycznia* [‘A letter sent to the *Gazeta Narodowa* office on 18<sup>th</sup> January’], *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca*, no. 6, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1791, p. 22; J. Wielowieyski, *Kopia listu z Krakowa d. 9 lutego do Redaktora „Gazety Narodowej”* [‘A copy of the letter from Krakow, of 9<sup>th</sup> February, to the Editor of *Gazeta Narodowa*’], *ibidem*, 16<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1791, p. 56.

Interestingly, while the patronage under discussion was in King Stanislaus Augustus' time one of the most important factors of the proliferation of 'men-of-letters' and artist groups, this institution was firmly embedded in traditional social structures. The time of 'intellectuals' scorning 'philistines' or 'bourgeois' was yet to come. On the contrary: the great-and-mighty were still a natural object of veneration – this perhaps being the most striking feature of the educated strata of the Enlightenment era, if compared to the intelligentsia of a hundred years later. So, poets and artists praised their protectors measurelessly, and the addressees accepted this homage as something natural, feeling obliged to pay it back with generosity. Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski, himself an author of theatre plays and journalistic works, was keen on appearing among men-of-letters as their peer. He wrote on multiple occasions about the role of authors in society and national culture. Although the Czartoryski family was an old princely one, they did not play a significant role till the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and actually owed their rapid advancement to Prince Adam-Kazimierz himself. Perhaps the awareness of being a relatively late-comer in the aristocratic universe was a stimulus to perform public activity. Prince Czartoryski was fond of the press (his was the initiative to set up *Monitor*), theatre (apart from authoring comedies, he outlined a programme for development of the Polish drama), literary criticism (as author of *Mysli o pismach polskich* ['Some thoughts on the Polish writings']), along with the sciences (contributed to the ephemeral Society for Physical Sciences, 1777-1779). All these activities were imbued with a baronial dilettantism, but there was a serious underlying foundation to it: an awareness that Polish culture was behind the times driving hectic attempts at modernising it across any area or domain possible.

Of course, the distance between the Prince and the men-of-letters was maintained. Puławy was a court, after all, with all the ambience of courtly gossips, schemas and rivalry; the artists staying there had, to some extent at least, to get aligned with the overwhelming style. Certain forms of patronage were undistinguishable from a political clientele – a phenomenon that was dominant in the political system of the Sarmatian Poland (as we know from Antoni Mączak's research). Jan Dembowski, secretary to Ignacy Potocki, was a man of very radical views and if anyone at all in his time was associated with an 'intelligentsia-related' mentality, he seems to have been the closest, not only due to his political remarks but also owing to his specific sense of humour – ironic, subtle, and extremely different from Sarmatian humour. At the same time, whenever he was eager to gain some financial benefit for himself or for his brother, he would completely change his personal style, inclining himself to a poetics of panegyric, similar to (but perhaps more moderate than) the one Naruszewicz applied with respect to King Stanislaus Augustus.

Did the learned social strata in this king's time consist of males only? One may at times think so: there is clearly no bluestocking among the types of educated people of the time. Professions such as doctors or lawyers did not offer opportunities for women, either then or for a long time afterwards. The bourgeois spheres maintained the traditionally subordinated position of the woman: it often happened there that mothers, wives, or sisters of highly-educated men, even those residing in Warsaw, were merely illiterate (albeit some burgheresses would at times hand over to the others larger or smaller private libraries!). A space for women to develop their activities could be provided amongst writers and artists, if anywhere at all. These professions did not call for a regular educational background and indeed developed beside the traditional estate- or class-based structures, and thus were more freely open to representatives of marginal groups. Elżbieta Drużbacka and Konstancja Benisławska, the outstanding Polish eighteenth-century poetesses, took no active part in the capital city's life, though. Benisławska was only rediscovered in the twentieth century as an important figure in Polish literary history. Speaking of artists, the profession of actress stood open to females but was not then as yet 'ennobled' as much as the profession of actor. Actresses, admired and applauded, remained, in principle, demireps.

It therefore seems that in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the aristocracy was the social class whose members found it relatively easiest to come closer to the educated elite. A few ladies are known to us by their names: Franciszka-Urszula Radziwiłłowa [Radziwiłł] (1705-1753), with her output as the first Polish woman playwright, writing for the court theatre of her family (Radziwiłł) estate of Nieśwież; Elżbieta Puzynina [Puzyna], the benefactress of the Vilna University; and Princess Anna Jabłonowska, spouse of the Voivod of Braclaw, admired by travellers for her nature exhibits' closet in Siemiatycze – all of which fit perfectly within the sphere of magnate cultural interests, however.

The personal model of educated woman appeared alongside this. Princess Izabela Czartoryska was perhaps closest to the French model of mondaine, educated woman-of-fashion who animated the intellectual life. Princess Jabłonowska found a handful of panegyrists for herself who praised her virtues in a form that was still rather traditional but made use of certain plainly Enlightenment accents.

*Co ukryła Natura w dziełach swych potężna,  
Tego mądrze dociekła Filozofka Księżna! [...]  
Cóż mówić o wybornej Twojej Bibliotece,  
Kto czytać lubi, z łatwej i łaskawej ręki  
Wiadomość bierze: rozum ludzki masz w opiece!  
Pozwól, niech ci ma wdzięczność wieczne odda dzięki,*

O Księżno dobroczynna! Wyznam całym wiekiem:  
Mądraś! Chcesz mieć każdego uczonym człowiekiem.<sup>80</sup>

Whatever Nature mighty hath in her works concealed,  
Princess the Philosophess hath wittily revealed! [...]  
Ponder, now, the exquisite, fine Library of yours:  
Whoever's fond of reading, he knowledge draws and news  
From thy easy, gracious hand; human minds thou restor'st!  
Out of my graciousness my eternal thank accrues,  
O Princess benevolent! I own, through all that's earned,  
That thou art wise; so willing to have everyone learned!

The form 'Philosophess' (*Filozofka*) is worth our attention, as it shows that feminine affixes used to denote female performers of traditionally male occupations are not an invention of our own time. The clergyman author of the book *Portret damy... prawdziwie chrześcijańskiej* ['Portrait of a truly ... Christian lady'], critical as he was toward newfangled ladies-of-the-world, remarked that "Ladies [...] whenever resorting to the sciences, would surpass many a man. We have had quite a few books published by them, in history, geography, and philosophy, that are thoroughly written."<sup>81</sup> Although this author did not recommend this mode of life to his female readers, he still did not consider it reprehensible.

In one of his comedy plays, Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski portrayed a young educated woman keen on public life and juxtaposed her with an empty-minded and unwise older-generation lady. One fears, though, that it was a didactic picture rather than a 'life study'.

Schools for girls started appearing, ones that took into account the evolution of the educational system, at least to an extent. For instance, 1792 saw a private

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80 Anonymous poem published in *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne*, vol. 16, 1777, no. 2, pp. 395-398, as reprinted in: Z. Wójcik, *Siemiatycki gabinet historii naturalnej Anny Jabłonowskiej* ['Anna Jabłonowska's natural-history closet in Siemiatycze'], in: *Księżna Anna z Sapiehów Jabłonowska (1728-1800). W 200. rocznicę zgonu* ['Princess Anna Jabłonowska, née Sapieha (1728-1800): on 20th anniversary of her death'], Siemiatycze 2001, pp. 89-135.

81 *Portret damy poczciwej, rozsądnej i prawdziwie chrześcijańskiej, przez X. Gossaulta, konsyliarza parlamentu francuskiego wydany, dla dam polskich przez X.P.P. K.K.K. przetłumaczony, R.P. 1779 w Krakowie, w drukarni Seminarium Biskupiego Akademii, nakładem Sebastiana Fabiana Drelinkiewicza, Bibliopoli JKMcI* ['Portrait of a decent, reasonable and truly Christian lady; published by the Rev. Gossault, Councillor to the French Parliament; translated for Polish ladies by the Rev. P.P.K.K.K., AD 1779; Krakow, at the printing house of the Bishop's Seminary of the Academy, impressed by Sebastian-Fabian Drelinkiewicz, *Bibliopole* to His M-sty'], p. 191.

boarding school advertising itself in Vilna, whose syllabus, along with “the rules of the Holy Faith and the Christian morality”, as well as “sewing and various handicrafts seemly for Ladies”, comprised subjects such as French, Arithmetic, “Geography, with Universal History”, and “the excellent principia of the Polish language”.<sup>82</sup> There were boarding schools for girls in Warsaw, at which Polish and history were taught, inter alia. An instruction for bourgeois plenipotentiaries delegated to a *sejm* assembly puts forward a postulate that “the overall custody of the Government” extend to “the education [...] of the feminine sex”, following which, “the country will be imbued with great usefulnesses”. The custody was figured out very simply: it would suffice for the *sejm* to allow that “convents of conventual nuns [...] engage themselves in educating the said gender.”<sup>83</sup>

All this could not however make a difference as to the role of women in the Polish Enlightenment, which remained minor. Why such a deficiency? There is an obvious inescapable answer: the traditional patriarchal culture left no room for females to pursue independent cultural activities. Indeed, as we read the London *Spectator*, we can clearly see that its authors counted on ladies as an important group of readers of their magazine: “I have often thought there has not been sufficient Pains taken in finding out proper Employments and Diversions for the Fair ones. Their Amusements seem contrived for them, rather as they are Women, than as they are reasonable Creatures; and are more adapted to the Sex than to the Species”, Joseph Addison complained in 1711.<sup>84</sup>

A programme of this type was unconceivable in Poland – not only around 1711 but even in the late years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Still, not every single thing is explainable in terms of a paternalistic culture. It is often believed that a culture of this kind was expressed most powerfully not in the east of the continent, but rather in Western European countries where enlightened absolutism was reflected in the hierarchies of families, reinforcing the position of husband/father with respect to his wife and children. This theory has it that backward countries, Poland included, would stand out for the relatively better position of women, compared to the West. Aristocratic ladies were offered rather broad opportunities to act; some of them excelled in education. Why was their participation in the

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82 *Suplement do Gazet Wileńskich nr IV* [‘A Supplement to Vilna Newspapers no. 4’], 28<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1792; quoted after: R. Jakubėnas, op. cit., p. 235.

83 [A. Balewicz], *Dyjariusz zgromadzeń miejscowego m. Warszawy i wydziałowego miast Rzeczypospolitej wolnych Księżstwa Mazowieckiego...* [‘Journall of gatherings: local, of city-of-Warsaw, and departmental, of the free towns of the Commonwealth, Duchy of Mazovia ...’] [1791], in: *Materiały...*, op. cit., vol. 4, Wrocław 1961, p. 477.

84 *Spectator*, no. 10, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1711, in: *The Commerce...*, p. 90.

social life so insignificant? Was it perhaps that the Commonwealth's anarchical system offered aristocrat ladies so many options and opportunities to influence the ongoing politics behind the scenes that their zeal for cultural activity remained too scarce?

## 6. Educated man as an ideal

It is not only the education standard and social positioning that enable group or class identification; shared ideals have a say in it too. A 'physical' genealogy is not as important, many have said, as a 'cultural' genealogy is: the question of what patterns of thinking and acting an emerging group is taking over is more important than the question of what social milieus its representatives come from. Let us try and present how, and in what ways, educated people perceived themselves, and their own place in the society, in Stanislaus Augustus' Poland. It would be fine if our attempted reconstruction of the educated classes' worldview enabled us to resolve the dispute on the nobility-based origins of the Polish intelligentsia, as outlined above. It should be worthwhile to compare the outcome of this reconstruction with a 'typical' noble, bourgeois or 'intelligentsia-related' worldview, in order to finally realise which of the ways of thinking was closest to the characters of this story. What characteristics in specific form a 'noble' personal model is a controversial issue, though: Is it, in the most general terms, identical with the aristocratic model (as numerous theoreticians seem to believe – those who contrast a 'nobleman's' ethos, as a broadest concept, with a 'bourgeois' ethos)? Or, does it perhaps form a separate pattern (as it is accepted by most scholars dealing with the history of the 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century Commonwealth and emphasising the nobility's traditionally hostile attitude toward the magnates)?

While remaining aware of the complexities of the task, let us try and take a closer look at a few role models of the Polish Enlightenment period, and decompose them into constituents to show the root of each individual thread. While not aspiring to claim its completeness, such an attempt may make a valuable contribution to a discussion on the cultural genesis of the Polish intelligentsia.

Stanisław Konarski's Collegium Nobilium, the most important educational initiative in the age of Enlightenment before the Commission of National Education, had a precisely formulated pedagogical programme, elitist though it surely was, for the Collegium was an elite school for affluent young-masters. It was summarised in the formulas '*vir honestus*' and '*civis bonus*', the first of which standing for an ideal of private life and the other of public life. 'Honest (virtuous, righteous) man' and 'good citizen' were probably partly rooted in the Renaissance-era ideal of nobleman-citizen, but it seemingly was for the most part a variety of the

Western *honnête homme* ideal, a “moderately religious [man], moderately loyal to his monarch, and moderately an egoist and humanitarian”<sup>85</sup> A comprehensively educated man, let us add, but nothing of a boring pedant. This latter ideal was in turn very close to the old nobleman/gentleman model. A reference to the humanistic educational pattern is apparent here (to recall Łukasz Górnicki’s *Dworzanin polski*, the Polish variety of *Il Cortegiano*). In a popular form, this ideal was best depicted in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century by Lord Chesterfield, the English aristocrat. Yet, the nobleman/gentleman ideal was subject to a much deeper analysis in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1690) by John Locke, one of the coryphaei of the European Enlightenment.

Similarly to Chesterfield, Locke called for an ideal gentleman, a decent upbringing and a good education as some of the basic premises for noble or gentry-specific education, incomparably more important than a bookish knowledge. Like Chesterfield, Locke emphasised the role of self-control, putting an emphasis on physical fitness and austere upbringing; this ‘Spartan-style’ vision laid the foundation for the nineteenth-century education of the English upper classes.

Since the sixteenth century, the new ideal had been instilled, in Jesuit and subsequently also Piarist schools, with support from a manual by Giovanni della Casa, titled *Il Galateo*. It combined morality and ‘decency’ with the Christian ideal, recognising that courtesy, polish and good manners directly followed up the love-your-neighbour fundamental. “Decency is some sort of honest and pleasing gracefulness, which is rooted in a submission founded upon the Christian love.”<sup>86</sup> This *New Galateus* quite adroitly combined higher-tier religious-moral incentives with utilitarian arguments; Christian love as well as one’s own interest were found to speak on equal terms in favour of being kind toward the others, avoiding fuming and winning the goodwill and benevolence of others through the rendering of petty services. This skill is particularly important for “whoever goes out in order to gain the liberated sciences [...], for it is them [...] to whom high-ranking offices and primary distinctions in the Commonwealth are due to be entrusted one day.” It is they, in particular, who were obliged to refine in themselves the virtues of “love and lowliness, which bear the fruit of Decency

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85 W. Konopczyński, *Stanisław Konarski*, Warszawa 1929, pp. 154-155.

86 Quoted after a period translation into Polish: [G. della Casa], *Nowy Galateusz, czyli ustawy obyczajności i przystojności, jaka się zachowywać zwykła między ludźmi zacnie urodzonymi. Z francuskiego języka na polski przełożone, po raz trzeci przedrukowane* [‘The New Galateus, or, The rules of decency and decorum as is usually maintained amongst the uprightly-born. Translated from the French into Polish language, reprinted for the third time’], Warszawa 1793, p. 6.

and Decorum. They would gain the heart and affection in everyone else in a way no other than practising these very virtues.” Those “who entertain themselves with learning” ought to bear in their minds that “it is quite usual that people would make their judgements about the inner position of the mind and the heart based upon superficial affairs and habits. Decency in mores is the greatest embellishment of learning.”<sup>87</sup> Reading these phrases, one may indeed find it difficult to decide, here or there, whether they actually have to do with a morality manual or a guide to a worldly-life success!

The Polish-version of a ‘decent man’ was more ‘socialised’ than his Western prototype. “It would be strange to suppose an *English* gentleman should be ignorant of the *law* of his country”<sup>88</sup> – this briefly stated rule virtually exhausts Locke’s depiction of the concept of preparation for participation in social life. This is obviously not to say that Locke, a father of modern liberalism, author of *Two Treatises of Government*, underestimated the idea of civic participation in politics, but he clearly placed it outside of the circle of pedagogic issues. In the Commonwealth, be it with Konarski or more traditional educational systems, the motif of the nobility’s contribution to the country’s local- or central-tier life was quite fundamental.

More powerfully than in Konarski, the *honnête homme* ideal is evident in the rules and patterns prescribed by Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski for the pupils of the School of Knights he managed in Warsaw. Poland was different from the West not merely because of the stronger emphasis the country placed on preparation for public life: certain elements clearly taken over from the Western ‘polished man’ model functioned somewhat differently on Polish soil. When Chesterfield brought up his son as a genuine gentleman, his wish was to facilitate the son’s career by teaching him how to deal with people properly in a world that was an arena of incessant rivalry; also, how to avoid or prevent blundering, making the disciple sensitive to the types of behaviour that would disparage his social position. But when Prince A.K. Czartoryski instructed his Corps-of-Cadets students what ‘delicacy of the soul’ was about, and what the limits were for admissible jokes, his goals were clearly very different. “Q[ue]ry: What is delicacy of the soul? R[e]ply: This is the most difficult a thing to find, and to describe. [...] It is the most subtle touch in affections, one that warns us with respect to ourselves and the others.”<sup>89</sup>

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87 Ibidem, pp. 9-11.

88 J. Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, §187 [various editions].

89 A.K. Czartoryski, *Definicje różne przez pytania i odpowiedzi* [‘Various definitions through queries and replies’], in: idem, *Prawidła moralne dla Szkoły Rycerskiej* [‘The moral rules for the School of Knights’], Warszawa 1824, p. 49.

What was at stake there was probably not a facilitation of the youth's career opportunities, as in the Sarmatian world a 'polished' person risked being ridiculed, if anything. The thing was, as customary with the Polish Enlightenment, to reform an old-fashioned society. By means of being well-mannered and well-educated, one changes his environment, shows a different world and prospects to others. Therefore, a cadet cannot afford to make certain practical jokes, "such as throwing bread-balls at Ladies while at the table; having a hedgehog slipped underneath someone else's bed-sheet; or, placing nettle underneath someone's horse's tail"<sup>90</sup>. An attempt at combating a barrack-style sense-of-humour is apparent in these instructions along with what may be identified as strife for creating a new type of sensing.

The ideal of gentleman practically concerns a nobleman, rather than an intellectual. It may also refer to someone working as a scientist or doing research work, the precondition however being that he approaches his work in terms of pleasure. Having sought refuge in his rural retreat, a nobleman could get immersed in his literary work – such 'unidle idleness' never disparaging his social position whatsoever. In the Czartoryski/Konarski version, adapted for the country's best schools, the *honnête homme* ideal could reach broader audiences, becoming one of the models shaping the Polish intellectual elite.

Thus, ideals of noble origin were not necessarily transferred to the world of Polish intelligentsia from the native nobility-related tradition; they might well have been imported from the West. It is worth noting, by the way, that "the *honnête homme* that's en vogue today"<sup>91</sup> was soon after made an object of mockery, which indirectly testifies to the popularity of the notion, or even the ideal behind it.

The model spoken of a moment ago was certainly not the only one, so let us drill deeper down. Behold one of the most famous books of the Polish Enlightenment (a total of eighteen editions within 170 years – one per decade, on average): *Powinności nauczyciela* ['The obligations and duties of a teacher'] by Grzegorz Piramowicz. It might be doubted whether a parochial school teacher whom the Rev. Piramowicz, Secretary with the Commission of National Education, targeted with his remarks, ought to be within the limits of our interest. Probably not, for his education and social position was too low; yet, the rural teacher dreamed of

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90 Ibidem, p. 69.

91 J. Ancuta, *Spacer nocny po Warszawie* ['A night stroll across Warsaw'], in: *Świat poprawiać – zuchwałę rzemiosło: Antologia poezji polskiego Oświecenia* ['Amending the World: An Audacious Craft. An anthology of the Polish Enlightenment poetry'], ed. by T. Kostkiewiczowa, Z. Goliński, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p. 346.

by this author was positioned much higher than those really existing, and would certainly be part of the group of our interest (if he ever existed). Then, what sort of a man was this ideal teacher to be? The answer is: judicious; loving his school-children; caring about their intellectual as much as moral and physical progress; a friend to peasants, inculcating hygiene and husbandry know-how among them, acting as a sort-of-intermediary between them and the nobility manor.

A teacher has to “win round love, trust, and deference amongst his students”, for “children as well as adult people willingly obey, and with a better result, those whom they love and respect”.<sup>92</sup> Based on fragments of this sort, humanitarianism of the Commission’s pedagogical principles has often been highlighted, as opposed to the authoritarian methods practised by old-time schools. But what is striking, this particular aspect seems, relatively, the least original in Piramowicz’s work. Let us take a look at one of the books he recommended to his readers, the work of a Jesuit pedagogue from France. Joseph de Jouvancy, known in Poland as ‘Juwencjusz’ (a Polonised version of his Latin surname, Josephus Juvencius), was author of a textbook discussing methods of learning and teaching for Jesuit-Order lower-grade school teachers, titled *Magistris scholarum inferiorum Societatis Jesu de ratione discendi et docendi* [Florence, 1703].<sup>93</sup> Piramowicz had started his own career as a Jesuit, and his mother congregation must have influenced his concepts (albeit the French pedagogue’s impact was broader, with the Piarist friar Konarski recommending his work as a reading assignment to pedagogues of his own congregation). Juvencius/Juwencjusz was indeed closer, in many aspects, to Piramowicz. The teacher’s role is to win the love of his pupils, awaken their interest in the subject-matter in question, and never overtire them with a mechanical learning technique. He should do his best not only to be loved but also feared by his students (Piramowicz does not in fact use this word, instead speaking quite emphatically of the need to keep discipline). At the same time, his recommendation is that punishments be applied in the very last resort. Juvencius discusses the importance of religion as the foundation of education much in the way Piramowicz does, emphasising that a teacher has to arouse piety in his students by way of examples to follow, rather than words to listen to.

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92 G. Piramowicz, *Powinności nauczyciela oraz wybór mów i listów* [‘The obligations and duties of a teacher, and a selection of orations and letters’], ed. by K. Mrozowska, Wrocław 1959, pp. 14, 17.

93 The Polish (reprinted) edition was: *Magistris scholarum inferiorum Societatis Jesu de Ratione Discendi et docendi ex decreto Congregat. Generalis XIV Auctore Josepho Juvencio Soc. Jesu, reimpressum Lublini, Typis S.R.M. Collegii Societatis Jesu, Anno Domini 1746.*

It could be assumed that the Rev. Piramowicz drew heavily on the output of his fellow Jesuit brethren; yet, the issue is broader than this. Avoidance of compulsion, endeavouring to render the children interested in the subject taught and, moreover the role of religion as the foundation of upbringing and education – all this is to be found in Locke, in a form that is very close to Juvencius's. Similar ideals were advocated in the former half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Protestant pedagogical thought in the German countries, in a form that was in fact deeper-penetrating and better-developed than the one employed by the Jesuit pedagogue, with an emphasis on the importance of influencing the pupils by way of persuasion and favour. For use by the Catholic public, these ideas were adopted by Johann-Ignaz Felbiger, an Augustinian abbot from Żagań in Silesia (then Sagan in Prussia). Felbiger's concepts provided the basis for Enlightenment-period reforms to the primary education system in Prussia and Habsburg countries. Piramowicz's ideas were close to those concepts in a number of respects. The Polish author has followed up certain ideas being crucial to Locke, such as the focus on physical exercise, health and hygiene. Apparently, the English thinker's influence extended also to those unfamiliar with the 'polished man' model.

Some elements of the role model close to the one advocated by Piramowicz can pretty unexpectedly be found in an above-mentioned source, Princess Anna Jabłonowska's instructions for "for the bailiffs of my estates". The Voivod of Braclaw's wife portrayed an ideal official perhaps in the most detailed manner to be found in the writings of Stanislaus Augustus' time. Although a private rather than state or public functionary was pictured, still, the ethos of both is basically similar.

The princess wanted to deal with loyal officials gaining subsistence solely from her and collecting no fees from their clients or reports. As we can remember from the preceding chapter, she wanted her officials professionally educated. A functionary would also be charged with certain religious and moral obligations toward his subordinates.

On the whole, the structure of this clerical ideal proves to be essentially identical with the recommendations of Locke, Juvencius, and Piramowicz: religion is the foundation; placidity and circumspection make up the conduct; benevolence rather than fear ought to be roused in the subordinates. All this seems to be poorly explainable in terms of direct borrowings. The present essay would not research a detailed genealogy of relevant ideas, in terms of who has read and/or rewritten what, specifically; I am doubtful whether this would be possible at all, and it would certainly be pointless. We are embarking on a reconstruction of a certain role model; then, let us risk a hypothesis: the models of teacher and official (clerk, functionary) are similar to each other, as they are traceable to a

common source. Both have resulted from secularisation of one of the most influential patterns in the history of Europe ever, the one of priest.

Let us now have a look inside another book Piramowicz refers to: *The Book of Pastoral Rule*, the work of Pope Gregory I the Great (6<sup>th</sup> century AD). The sagacity with which the traps waiting for anyone having to do with subordinates are described remains impressive to this day. These traps are psychological, first and foremost: they incite the superior to develop a conviction of his own infallibility; to hear flatteries rather than warnings; or, to select noble-minded ex-post justifications for his own forbearances or errors. With regard to these aspects, this classical work is superior to Piramowicz's disquisition; when it comes to matters practical, however, the resemblance of the *Pastoral Rule* to the recommendations worded by Piramowicz, or Jabłonowska, for that matter, becomes striking. The religion as basis, the recommendations of suavity, the avoidance of chastisements, all combined with sturdiness – all this is present again.

Having observed thus, let us take a glance at another book, the novel *Ksiądz Pleban* by Bishop Józef Kossakowski (already mentioned), whose objective was to present the perfect model of a priest. What we meet there is a priest who is as distant from a worldly careerist who only sees in his priesthood a source of advantages and benefits as he is from a fanatic adorer of cruel penalties. The novel's title character, a vicar, is a combination of thorough enlightenment and profound religiousness; he says, "I am a father-confessor, and [...] if the salvation of my lambs is to be of interest to me, I feel no less obligated with respect to their life and health."<sup>94</sup> He builds a school; instructs others how to construct clean, decent and healthful houses; and founds a 'parish house' where dry wedding parties are to be held, "so that the ferocious custom of wedding-parties and revelries be driven out beyond our parish."<sup>95</sup> He imports craftsmen from abroad in order to enliven the economic life in his parish and takes care of the sick, rendering them acquainted with the progress of medical practice; using an anachronic phrase, the Reverend Vicar simply puts into practice, within the area of his parish, a comprehensive organic-labour programme, thus performing all the actions recognised by the Polish intelligentsia over the following hundred years to be of primary importance for the Polish countryside.

To sum up our present deliberations, the model of pastor-priest (the teacher as well as the official being his descendants) ranked, beside the gentleman/nobleman, among the important constituents of the role model of educated man in the Stanislaus-Augustus epoch.

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94 [J. Kossakowski], op. cit., p. 134.

95 Ibidem, p. 141.

But there is more to it than this. Moving backwards, one encounters yet another current which not only had decisively influenced both models discussed above but till the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century exerted a direct powerful influence on educated people: the model of the stoic sage, derived from Antiquity. It is fitting to remember that until World War I, rather than being just one among the several historical periods, Antiquity was perceived by educated Europeans as a Point-of-Reference against which their contemporaneous devolved time was compared. As such, the function of Antiquity was not conservative at all; on the contrary, it served revolutionaries and instigators and, to no lesser extent, kings and emperors. The Antique costume of the French Revolution is what comes to mind; in Poland, the significance of the Antique tradition was most strongly emphasised by, among others, Franciszek-Ksawery Dmochowski, a radical democrat, author of a Polish translation of Homer's *Iliad*. Stoicism had a special role in the Antique tradition. Popularised by widely read authors such as Cicero, Seneca, or Marcus Aurelius the emperor-philosopher, the ideal of a sage devoted to Virtue and resistant to attempts of whimsical Fortune informed the imagination and the senses in the course of the centuries. Seneca, reappearing in a plethora of translations and quotations, ranked among the most popular authors in Stanislaus Augustus' Poland.

Once the Fathers of the Church predicated confirmation of virtue on persistence in faith, the stoic sage ideal was drawn nearer the ideal of Christian; and, when stoical steadiness in the face of perils was identified with self-control of one's drives, the stoic was transformed into the gentleman/nobleman. Following the pattern of Marcus Aurelius, European monarchs assumed stoical ideals as their goal. In turn, the sage philosopher, for whom virtue is an award in its own right, was always on the horizon for European intellectuals who attempted to wrap themselves up in its robes, even for those incapable of imitating the model.

Therefore, both directly and through the derivative models, the stoic ideal penetrated the souls of the Polish Enlightened. Again, however, it seems that, as with the ideals themselves, the emphases have subtly been shifted. In spite of the disasters affecting the Homeland, which he had not managed to prevent, King Stanislaus Augustus confessed to Adam Naruszewicz, "I shall not stop my activities or labours till there is a breath of life in me, so that I engraft and implant a good dowry in our Homeland, but it was long ago that I dissuaded myself that it is to me to harvest the fruit of it. This is foreordained for someone else coming after me. It is for him to have his temples garlanded; he, or some antiquities-ferreter of his time will, will perhaps recollect some day that there was a king living there who, although he experienced no bliss while on the throne, loved all the same his subjects who lived together with him, though ungrateful at times they were; he

even loved the future citizens of Poland, those who were due to come over.”<sup>96</sup> It is less important whether the King’s declaration was sincere, or was, perhaps, an image building device. The important thing is that we can see the stoic tradition echoing there (the virtue as a reward in itself), and transformed. Working for the country without any prospect for success, but with the idea that the generations to follow will harvest the crop: does this not sound familiar? Is this not the line of thinking of the nineteenth-century organic labour propagators? Stoicism got nationalised, in a way: virtue ceased being an individual ideal, as it was with the ancient philosophers; it was not a faith any more like the Christian stoicism, nor was it self-control as in the gentleman/nobleman ideal. It turned into a labour for, and to the benefit of, the home country.

The ideal of pure science was subject to a similar transformation. Feliks Oraczewski, one of the main representatives of Krakow’s enlightened elite, was astonished at seeing the cult of pure science he encountered in France. He was surprised that the local scholars, “who have their brains limited to the four walls of their houses”, had no ability to apply their experiences to the benefit of the society, even though only such application “could render them any salutary”. It is an attitude like this, of “people laborious in the sciences, that I find a severe detriment to the community”, Oraczewski remarked.”<sup>97</sup>

## 7. Reason enlightened

Thus far, we have been tracing traditions which had their share in the eighteenth-century image of educated man. However, new intellectual currents exerted their impacts on this image too. It is obvious that classicism and rationalism, the epoch’s key categories of aesthetics and philosophy, were among the basic ingredients of the *Weltanschauung* of our present interest (without them, there would be no ‘man of the Enlightenment’ at all). If partiality for classicism in the arts made way for other aesthetic courses in the following generations, rationalism remained at the heart of the world view, giving a sense of pride from membership in a group of those who had risen above superstitions, and possibly replacing a religious faith for those who had lost it. It is the rationalism of the Enlightened that causes their views to seem familiar to us, if not ‘modern’. Enlightenment-age rationalism was associated with the idea of progress, as is known. It is not our task here to resolve the inveterate dispute over whether the idea was conceived

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96 King Stanislaus Augustus to A. Naruszewicz, Warsaw, 21<sup>st</sup> Aug. 1775; in: A. Naruszewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

97 F. Oraczewski to I. Potocki, Paris, 29<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1783; in: I. Potocki, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

in the Enlightenment period or has always been present in European culture, in varying forms. Let it suffice to note that its range in the period under discussion expanded amazingly, as if the idea suddenly became part of the natural mental environment of people active in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The word 'progress' did not always have to be used (Polish journalists or columnists popularised it only in the next century): an identical type of thinking was revealed by rather frequent mentions of the eighteenth century as an epoch that superimposed certain thitherto-absent standards. "It does not befit us to reason so in the eyghteenth century"; so was Jacek Jezierski instructed by Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, a defender of towns. "The rule of autho-crazy is now over, the people have everywhere recognised its dignity, and sensed its potency," he added.<sup>98</sup>

Alongside rationalist trends in philosophy and classicist trends in the arts, there were some other strands, not so visible at first glance but actually equally important. Three of them deserve our attention here: sentimentalism, scepticism, and Christian Enlightenment.

In France, sentimentalism came over in response to the cool tone of Classicism; in Poland, where a baroque aesthetics persisted unshakeably till the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Classicism entered the stage belatedly, more-or-less in parallel with sentimentalism. While it is roughly understood what we mean by classicism, the notion of sentimentalism is more ambiguous. The heart opposing the mind, simplicity contrasted with artificiality and affectation, and fondness and tenderness as the main features of the soul were among the current's key notions. Sentimentalism was greatly informed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, with his criticism of civilisation and apology of the natural state. Teresa Kostkiewiczowa has portrayed the Polish sentimentalism of Stanislaus Augustus' period as an Enlightenment-culture strand equal to classicism. While classicism constituted an official ideological programme of the circles surrounding King Stanislaus Augustus, sentimentalism was dominant in Puławy, the princely court of Czartoryski family. To a larger extent than Stanislaus-Augustus-period classicism, sentimentalism was associated with a penchant for the national past and collection of its 'relics'. Franciszek-Salez Jezierski, distant as he basically was from sentimental emotions, pondered by the grave of King Ladislaus I the Elbow-high (Władysław Łokietek) at the Wawel Cathderal: "The unshapely manner of the tombstone as it is developed remains fine for the very same reason that it

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98 J. Baudouin de Courtenay, *Bezstronne uwagi nad mową JW. Jezierskiego* ['Unprejudiced remarks on the oration of Rt.Hon. Jezierski'], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 2, pp. 428-432; this quote, pp. 434-435.

is ugly, for its is a genuine indication of the age's simplicity"<sup>99</sup> An aestheticism of ugliness, with epoch-conditioned variable criteria of beauty, is the antipodes of the classical aesthetics, and an overt portent of the nearing Romanticism.

As Kostkiewiczowa highlights, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, it was certainly sentimentalism that played a vital part in the shaping of the way of thinking of the developing Polish intelligentsia. Through favouring 'sensitiveness'/fondness and reflexivity, sentimentalism reinforced introspective attitudes; this, in turn, had a democratic aspect to it, as all the people, regardless of their estate-determined position, were capable of perceiving and sensing things equally. The laws of nature were derived from the fact that man is an 'affectionate creature' and thus, 'searching the good and avoiding the evil', Jan Baudouin de Courtenay wrote.<sup>100</sup> In the opinion of Józef Pawlikowski, who criticised the 'slavery' of peasants in Poland, "enlightenment and humaneness spread their rule in our century all over"; enlightenment appeals to the mind, and humaneness to the heart. With the minds of the Poles undergoing a change during Stanislaus Augustus' rule, "the heart, burdened with the old savagery, shrinks from surrendering. It is humaneness, however, that we have the utmost want of, for it is humaneness that we mostly trespass [...] against", particularly as regards our attitude toward peasants.<sup>101</sup>

Artists as respectable as Franciszek Karpiński, Jan-Paweł Woronicz or Wojciech Bogusławski were affiliated with sentimentalism. As it emphasised the role of love and affections, sentimentalism could have somewhat indirect connections with libertine attitudes.

Sceptical and libertine attitudes have not been covered so far. Poland had had its mischievous or picaresque, popular-bourgeois literary tradition since the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, but this tradition rather faintly influenced the world outlook of Polish Enlightenment intellectual elites. If we are to look for sceptics and teasers, some would be found among the adherents of the France-made libertine movement (Stanisław Trembecki, Tomasz-Kajetan Węgiński, Jakub Jasiński), as well as within the current of ironical critiques of social relations, just to name, once again, Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski, in whom Voltairean repercussions are easily audible. It has to be borne in mind, though, that mocking social criticism

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99 F.S. Jezierski, *Niektóre wyrazy porządkiem abecadła zebrane* ['Some words collected in order of the alphabet'], in: idem, *Wybór pism* ['Selected writings'], ed. by Z. Skwarczyński, Warszawa 1952, p. 167.

100 J. Baudouin de Courtenay, op. cit., p. 438.

101 [J. Pawlikowski], *O poddanych polskich roku 1788* ['Polish subjects of the year 1788'], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 1, p. 11.

did not entail a consistently sceptical attitude at that time. As a type of culture, Enlightenment was, to risk a generalisation, an awfully serious epoch, too excited and affected with its mission to transform the world to propagate any relativism or despondency. Even if religion or social institutions were mocked (as in Voltaire's tales or Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*), these derisions had nothing to do with nihilism: Montesquieu and, especially, Voltaire knew very well that a perfect society was a realistic concept, and they knew what it should look like. In contrast to a baroque man, tormented by dejections, or a romantic rebel, a rationalist of the Enlightenment era was overwhelmingly certain that the objective truth was relatively easy to attain, not only in natural sciences or in the sphere of philosophical ultimate questions, but also as far as organisation of society was concerned. It merely sufficed to get rid of superstitions preventing cognition of reality. Despite appearances, the Enlightenment offered much less room for sceptical mockers than the Baroque or Romanticism did (not to mention our own time). Enlightenment humour was in almost each case a moralising and moral, or political, satire, rather than a disinterested joke. Even a libertine sceptic emphasised his personal principles: "The honest and virtuous alone are allowed to be godless", Tomasz-Kajetan Węgiński wrote.<sup>102</sup> Whoever in Poland was enlightened and educated could see how necessary it was to undertake reforms, an awareness that prevented them from a consistent sceptical-clownish attitude.

There is no doubt, however, that eighteenth-century Europe saw the increased intensity of anticlerical attitudes, which were more and more frequently combined with antichristian ones. It is obvious that from this moment onwards, the rejection of the existence of God became possible intellectually and socially for the first time since Antiquity (albeit this radical development remained sparse). Deists appeared in Poland too, along with atheists; the latter were scarcer in number, or better masked, in any case. Both groups were attacked in much the same way by representatives of Catholic orthodoxy, and it is now difficult to discern between them. In any case, sympathy for Voltaire, that "Ferneyan philosopher" who "routed the fierce fanaticism"<sup>103</sup>, served as a substantial determinant of an anticlerical attitude. A good illustration of a libertine Voltairian of this sort was Teodor-Tomasz Weichardt, a physician from Lvov, "councillor to His Royal Highness", home doctor to one of the Potocki family, author of medical

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102 Quoted after: J. Snopek, *Objawienie i oświecenie. Z dziejów libertynizmu w Polsce* ["Revelation and enlightenment. Aspects of the history of libertinism in Poland"], Wrocław 1986, p. 116.

103 W. Turski, *Do JW. Hrabi Stanisława Potockiego* ["To Rt.Hon. Count Stanisław Potocki"]; quoted after: J. Snopek, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

works and of the treatise *Dlaczego się nie żenię* ['Why I am not getting married'] propagating divorces and polygamy, and an apology of Voltaire, published under the pseudonym 'Pan a Trachciew' (read backward as 'Weichcart').

During the Kościuszko Insurrection (the moment the revolutionary situation facilitated the expression of radical opinions), *Korespondent Krajowy i Zagraniczny* wrote, with clear favour on deistic ceremonies in France. Readers in Warsaw were informed that Robespierre, "holding the torch of truth in his hand", set fire to the "idol of fanaticism", and once the statue burst into flames, "a statue of Wisdom, pointing with its right hand to Heaven, was made visible"<sup>104</sup>

Even though deists, those who recognised the existence of (a) God but rejected organised forms of religious practice, could have been encountered among the educated Warsaw residents of the time, their views manifesting themselves in a less solemn fashion. They mostly tended to observe the requirements of their own confession, whatever it was, only sometimes making utterances inviting the guess that they were somewhat distanced from religious dogmas. Taking as an instance a respected Warsaw doctor, we can learn that "his religious ideas founded upon a sound philosophy never allowed a slavish awe ever to disturb the tranquillity of his soul"<sup>105</sup>

A 'passive' deism of this sort, or perhaps certain scepticism against the requirements of Catholic orthodoxy, could spread among intellectual elites but did not pose a serious threat to the dominance of Christianity. An emotional, passionate hostility towards religion remained in fact the realm of a small minority.

Any idea getting assimilated within a previously alien environment is subject to mutations. Sometimes it becomes more acute, when intellectualist theoreticians bring it to extreme consequences without drawing attention to the surrounding realities. It is more frequent, though, that new learners of an imported idea endeavour to reconcile it somehow with the convictions or beliefs professed already: then, the new idea enters into a variety of relations with other systems of thinking, its accents shift and its edge grows blunted; eclectic world outlooks get formed, often deeper and more interesting than 'pure' archetypal ideas. It comes as no surprise that in the Polish territory Enlightenment thought entered into symbiosis with Christianity, especially if one takes into account the crucial role the clergy had in the culture of Stanislaus Augustus' time. Elements of this symbiosis were apparent all across Europe, in fact. The Catholicism of the Enlightenment time

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104 *Wiadomości zagraniczne. Francja* ['News from abroad. France'], *Korespondent Krajowy i Zagraniczny*, no. 53, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1794, p. 1225.

105 L. de Lafontaine, *Mowa na pochwałę...*, op. cit., p. 8.

drew support from currents striving to weaken the role of the papacy, the ones that in France were associated with Jansenist or Gallican doctrines (whatever the gap occurring between them was). In the German lands, these strands were referred to as Febronianism (after the reform's propagator, Bishop Hontheim, using the pseudonym Febronius). In the Habsburg countries, Emperor Joseph II endeavoured to subject the Catholic Church to the state, a policy that was then called Josephinism. There were a number of Catholics among the architects of Josephinism whose aim was to bring about internal reform in the Church.

The enlightened reformers of Catholicism as well as enlightened absolutist monarchs were of the opinion that the Church ought to a larger extent than ever before deal with works of mercy and, to a lesser extent, with abstract speculation and solicitude for its orthodoxy. Both these trends were expressed in the works of the Italian erudite Lodovico-Antonio Muratori. The ideas according to which the Church needed to reform also benefited from the input of Christian Wolff, author of an eclectic system that merged the modern achievements of natural science with the Christian philosophical and ideological foundations; similar eclectic systems, described collectively as the *philosophia recentiorum* (a 'philosophy of the most-recent', i.e. contemporaneous [thinkers] – as opposed to a classical, Aristotelian-scholastic philosophy), were most welcome by the Polish enlightened minds. In 1749, a relatively early date, considering the Polish framework, the Rev. Franciszek Bohomolec requested, in a letter, an opinion on the new philosophy from his confrater in Prague, Joseph Stepling (1716-1778), one of the coryphaei of the Catholic Enlightenment in Bohemia. The reply read: "Not all the newer philosophers are dangerous. Among them, Wolff must be mentioned, whom I admire unlike so many others, and of whom I always tend to think with fascination."<sup>106</sup>

Bohomolec might have had an opportunity to meet his Prague colleague since he stayed in Bohemia for six months in 1749 on his way back from his studies in Rome. The travels made by Polish clergymen to Rome led, due to the geographical necessity, through countries under the Habsburg rule. Consequently, apart from an opportunity to meet Muratori's adherents in Italy, the situation of the Church in Austria or Bohemia could be personally encountered.

Examples of a conglomerate of Christian and Enlightenment ideas could be found in almost any Polish author of the period. Aside from a handful of sceptics and libertines, everyone would refer, more or less sincerely, to the Christian

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106 J. Steplingii *literarium commercium*, Breslau 1782, p. 107ff.; quoted after: E. Winter, *Der Josephinismus und seine Geschichte. Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Oesterreichs 1740-1848*, Brünn 1943, pp. 72-73.

morality, and almost everybody would pin their hopes on a reformatory attitude from the clergy. This obviously does not mean that we deal here with a well considered idea of Christian Enlightenment, but rather with spontaneous eclectic attitudes.

The adaptation of certain imported ideas to Polish conditions was not limited to the possible coexistence of various threads, as shown above. In this country, it also manifested itself in attempts to adapt the common ideals to the local reality of backwardness. The eighteenth century was the time in which the Polish elites first ascertained, regrettably, that “Poland would within a hundred years not reach the perfection wherein other countries remain”.<sup>107</sup> An educated man, well read in Enlightenment thought, suddenly spots a civilisation gap and starts feeling embarrassed at the realization that “ages were passing by, kingdoms and states fortunate emerging all around, whereas there was nothing in this country to be seen changing for the better”.<sup>108</sup> “All improvable countries have already undergone improvement. [...] There’s no other country than our Poland that [...] has been faithfully preserving its feudal system.”<sup>109</sup> The external adverse opinion on Poland began to be restrictive: “Being sensitive to the continual reproach of the Polish nation resulting from the injustice of our laws [...], I demand that I see this stain on our name wiped out”; in this way a journalist justified his call for the improvement of the situation of peasants in the Commonwealth.<sup>110</sup> There was no way out: “the time has come to follow the better-governed nations’ example”, and to “imitate the alien countries” patterns.<sup>111</sup> Which countries, specifically? Interestingly, German countries were first. The most “polished” and refined countries, “nations that have been faster in aligning their government more closely to human rights” – the France of Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau, and the “happy England”<sup>112</sup> of Locke and Hume – could provide ideas, signposts and, all in all, form a sort of horizon for daydreams about a restructuring of Poland. A conservative author accused “penny liners [...] inebriated with the French hazard” of propagation of French influences amongst the tranquil

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107 J. Baudouin de Courtenay, op. cit., p. 441.

108 [P. Świtkowski?], *Uwagi względem reformy Żydów projektowanej przez jw. Butrymowicza* [‘Remarks concerning a reform of the Jewry, designed by Rt.Hon. Butrymowicz’], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 6, Wrocław 1969, p. 135 (first printed in: *Pamiętnik historyczno-polityczno-ekonomiczny*, December 1789).

109 P. Świtkowski, *Jak wiele od pomyślności miast...*, in: *ibidem*, p. 263.

110 T. Morski, *Uwagi o chłopach* [‘Remarks on peasants’], [1789?], *ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 96.

111 J. Baudouin de Courtenay, op. cit., p. 441; T. Morski, op. cit., p. 107.

112 T. Morski, op. cit., p. 104.

local people; their intent was apparently to persuade the Polish burghers about “the equality of man and a belief in liberty”. “How do those lunatic writers cope at all with the idea that any single man equals any other?”<sup>113</sup>

Nonetheless, practical solutions potentially applicable to Polish realities were to be sought for not so much in France as in those countries that had started down the path of overcoming their own backwardness, namely, the Habsburg and Hohenzollern-ruled states. Thus, Świtkowski puts forth the model of the hundred-year-long endeavours of Prussian monarchs to improve the lot of their peasants and burghers. As a result of those endeavours, “the Prussian nation of today only consists of active, laborious, and parsimonious people”.<sup>114</sup> An anonymous “Friend of humankind” has furnished his work in defence of burgers with a motto, quoting the Prussian king Frederick II, whereby the monarch ought to sympathise with the situations of peasants and burghers in order to understand their strivings.<sup>115</sup> Various journalists or columnists set up Emperor Joseph II and his successor Leopold II as patterns to be followed. Enlightened men-of-letters believed that social and political reform, if reasonably planned and carried out from higher up, would transform the country the fastest and most efficiently. This is not to say that all or even most of the Polish enlightened supported absolutism; they definitely did not. But all wanted to see a strong and efficient central authority. This authority did not have to be royal; it could instead be entrusted to a body subordinated to the parliament, but had to be given liberty of action and an efficient instrument in the form of an administration. The reform should be brought about from above, as it would certainly meet with resistance.

The specific content of these saving reforms could vary. Polish enlightened milieus included supporters of physiocratism, who were convinced that agriculture was the only source of the country’s wealth. There were mercantilists, who believed that manufactories exerted a benign influence on the country’s national riches. Both groups had a shared belief that the central authority needed to be reinforced.

The Enlightenment vision of history was taking shape along the lines of those convictions. In *The Age of Louis XIV*, Voltaire portrayed France on the verge of the Sun King’s rule: a country “under a gothic rule, amidst splits and civil wars”; “the nobility without a discipline, [...] the clergy living in disorder and ignorance,

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113 J. Jezierski, *Wszyscy błądzą...*, in: *Materiały...*, vol. 1, p. 297.

114 P. Świtkowski, *Jak wiele...*, p. 264.

115 *Nie wszyscy błądzą. Rozmowa Bartka z panem rzecz całą objaśni* [‘Not everyone’s erring. A conversation between Bartek and his lord shall explain the whole thing’], [1790], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 1, pp. 335-336.

the people with no ingeniousness, growing slothful in their poverty”<sup>116</sup> Such was the picture of a country that was soon after to blossom under the sceptre of a great and wise monarch, a patron of arts and sciences. Would this image (whose truthfulness with regard to the history of France may remain beyond the scope of our present interest) have triggered no response among Polish enlightened circles? Naruszewicz presented the earliest history of Poland in a similar way: “The history of the Piasts [...] is a history of warlike robberies, without any sciences, legislation, governance, or economics”.<sup>117</sup> Polish dukes of that time “were beating one another [...] or [...] fought with [...] the Bohemians, Hungarians, Ruthenians, or German margraves, [...] with semi-barbarians of the kind they themselves were”.<sup>118</sup> Civilisation came later, in the “polished” ages, most beautifully flourishing – so that the reader of Naruszewicz’s letters to the King has no doubt about this – under Stanislaus Augustus’ sceptre. A variety of journalists multiplied this image, while poets, praising the king, evoked a mythologised image of Rome during the Octavian Augustus period, the epoch that was promoted to the Golden Age model in the imagination of European Classicism. The monarch himself became similar to Emperor Augustus as well as to the Sun King (which again somehow evokes Voltaire’s historical views). In his 1785 poem *Wiersz na pokoje nowe...*, Jan-Paweł Woronicz finds that “a work of God needs a divine doer”, so when God “is willing to create another world out of night eternal” (the context unambiguously points to the recovery of the declining Poland), there is no surprise that He “has sent you down, AUGUSTUS, our age for to rule”.<sup>119</sup> Here, in a clear reference made to Virgil’s famous Eclogue IV, the comparison of the Polish King to Octavian Augustus gains a messianic tint.

The personage of authority definitely cannot make decisions lawlessly: the law of nature supersedes any human rights, the ultimate instance being decisions as to the shape of desired reforms and future societal development. After all, “nature is the common monarchess in the world, endowed with laws so

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116 Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*, Paris 1849, p. 4.

117 A. Naruszewicz to King Stanislaus Augustus, Powieć, 20<sup>th</sup> Apr. 1777; in: A. Naruszewicz, op. cit., p. 74.

118 A. Naruszewicz to J.C. Albertrandi, Warsaw, 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. 1782; in: *ibidem*, p. 218.

119 J.P. Woronicz, *Wiersz na pokoje nowe w Zamku Królewskim, obrazami sławniejszych czynów, portretami i biustami znakomitszych Polaków ozdobione* [‘On the new rooms at the Royal Castle, embellished with images of the famous Polish deeds, portraits and busts of the remarkable Poles’], in: *idem*, *Dzieła poetyczne wierszem i prozą* [‘Poetic works, in verse and prose form’] vol. 1, Leipzig 1853, pp. 103-139; quote from p. 133.

judicious” that whoever does not follow them must “either live an unfortunate life or cease living”.<sup>120</sup> “A government that is [...] not founded upon the law of human nature cannot possibly be abiding.”<sup>121</sup> And since nature tells us that people are equal, there is no option other than to establish equality within the society. Consequently, there is no nobility-based nation any more: “every nation is comprised of all the inhabitants of the country, not of a single class within it”<sup>122</sup>, one commentator wrote; Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski set it in even more precise terms: “A nation is an assemblage of people sharing a single language and one set of customs and mores, comprised by a single and general legislation for all its citizens.”<sup>123</sup> As can be clearly seen, the concept of political nation, depicted in democratic terms, intersects with one of ethnic nation (‘a single language’). Eighteenth-century authors were not yet aware that these two criteria could turn out to be discordant; the dialects used by Ruthenian or Lithuanian peasants were not recognised by anyone as languages equal to Polish. This question was to be revisited only by the generations that followed.

Similarly to its French counterpart, Polish Enlightenment thought was generally reluctant to recognise local differences and their distinct features. This recognition would spoil a rational image of the state and society and attenuate the resilience of a reformative authority’s action; differences have a lurking feudal privilege, often hidden under phrases in praise of liberty. Uniformity of thinking, administration, and educational system was the slogan. “Equality of the citizens’ opinions is a must, principally with the Commonwealth. [...] There shall be concord betwixt the people once all begin to think uniformly, whilst they may not think uniformly other than through a uniform education.”<sup>124</sup> The Commission of National Education was of a similar opinion; as its ‘Laws’ (*Ustawy*) claimed, “In our will to retain and determine the noble youth in its entirety, without observing a difference according to the individual boarding-school, offensive as it frequently is in education, we contract [i.e. counteract] the effects proving contrary to a civic equality.”<sup>125</sup>

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120 [J. Pawlikowski], *O poddanych...*, p. 61.

121 J. Baudouin de Courtenay, op. cit., p. 438.

122 [J. Baudouin de Courtenay?], *Ciąg dalszy uwag ogólnych nad stanem rolniczym i miejskim* [‘Remarks on the agricultural and urban estates, continued’], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 1, p. 121.

123 F.S. Jezierski, *Niektóre wyrazy...*, p. 217.

124 [J. Pawlikowski], *O poddanych...*, p. 60.

125 *Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej* [‘The Laws of the Commission of National Education’]. [1783], in: *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej...*, p. 573.

The Jewish question was probably the hardest test to pass in this striving for uniformity as well as in the other constituent elements of the Enlightenment-age world-image. It did pose a challenge to Polish modernisers and Occidentalists. For one thing, the Jews (who were considered then to be a denominational group and faith community, rather than an ethnic group, and were thus often mentioned beside ‘neophytes’ and vice versa) were obviously humans, and human rights applied to them to the same degree as the country’s other population groups. “To the extent that they are humans, they have the right to a human community. Religion ought not to make a difference. [...]. A gypsy, a Jew, a neophyte, etc., if good natured and useful to the country, will always be worth greater consideration than a his-grace, t.[he] honourable, an esquire, etc., if a bankrupt or traitor, bartering away his country and fellow brothers to the aliens.”<sup>126</sup> On the other hand, however, those lofty general principles were getting broken when clashed against the social reality (and, with the authors’ biased mindset); the image of the Jewish world offered by Enlightenment columnists is actually dreadful. “This nation, indolent and untidy”<sup>127</sup>, takes peasants to drink at tap-rooms, grabbing their hard-earned money and thus condemning them to death from starvation. A Jewish publican could slaughter a nobleman to avoid paying the rent. Neophytes, those “wolves dressed in goat’s skin”, took on Polish surnames, purporting to be representatives of noble families and, consequently, claiming “succession after us.”<sup>128</sup>

So, what could be done about this? The right of *wyszynk*, i.e. the licensed retail of liquor, had to be abolished and the Jews trained (by force, if necessary) in production activities: sent to factories, planted on farms, used for colonisation of swamps and other wastelands. Their distinctiveness was to be annihilated by orders to use the Polish language in local government and religious administration. “Lay down suitable attire as the national apparel for them; the beards and the side locks are to be cancelled.” They would be required to attend public schools “with the provision of severe punishment for whoever would venture to hold them in derision on account of their being Jewish.”<sup>129</sup>

The ready-made model to follow, there as well as with other reform designs, was anything ordained by “Joseph II, the Roman Emperor, [who was] willing to render them active within the country.”<sup>130</sup> Once this is done, “The Most Serene

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126 *Katechizm o żydach i neofitach* [‘A catechism on Jews and neophytes’], [1792], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 6, pp. 467-468.

127 *Ibidem*, p. 474.

128 *Ibidem*, p. 472.

129 *Ibidem*, p. 477.

130 *Ibidem*, p. 475.

Estates' deliberating at parliamentary sessions will in a remote future live to the moment that, "added to those laurels immortal which are laid for you by the nobleman, burgher, and peasant, imparadised with the once-useless soil he now is cultivating, the Jew, the man, brings a wreath for you, plaited with corn-ears."<sup>131</sup> These pathetic phrases commenced a project to reform the Jewry's situation (basically staying within the aforesaid indications), authored by the poet Franciszek Karpiński. It would indeed be hard to find in Polish Enlightenment thought any better example of belief in the omnipotence of administrative reform than the one related to the Jewish question.

Let us risk a generalised concept whereby the Polish enlightened, however often they would have referred to freedom or liberty, did not place political freedom at the peak of their hierarchy of values. As a feature of the political system, liberty was one of the foremost slogans of the nobility camp which opposed the reforms; hence, it did not quite fit as a banner for the reformers. The word 'liberty' gained an independence-related connotation instead: "free from the disgraceful shackles of foreign influence", we read in the preamble to the Government Act of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1791. The word 'independence' first appeared, initially in its Latin form *independentia*, in the Polish political vocabulary in the 1730s, during the Polish succession war fought between the followers of Stanisław Leszczyński and the Russia-supported advocates of Augustus III the Saxon. The latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a sense of endangered independence on an increasingly broad scale; it seems though that it was only in the early nineties, with the Great Sejm and Kościuszko's insurrection, that the word was imbued with the emotional power it has retained till this day.

The notion of freedom/liberty was very often (or perhaps, most frequently) used in a social sense, in the context of 'freeing (liberating) the peasants'; similarly, an 'orderly freedom' was set in opposition to the existing anarchy. It even happened that 'freedom', comprehended as the nobility's privilege, had an adverse tint to it: "The serfdom [of the peasantry – M.J.'s note] was increasing as the nobility's freedom expanded"<sup>132</sup>, Pawlikowski wrote. We would seemingly not err in stating that education, abolishment of privilege, and reinforcement of authority structures ranked higher in importance than the issues of political freedom in the minds of the Polish enlightened.

But the question arises, the enlightened in their entirety, or just town-based intellectuals? Can any threads very typical to the 'men-of-letters' be discerned

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131 F. Karpiński, *Projekt o Żydach* ['A project concerning the Jews'], [1792], in: *Materiały...*, vol. 6, p. 486.

132 [J. Pawlikowski], *O poddanych...*, p. 14.

at all within the abundant intellectual life of the Polish Enlightenment? This attempt would be quite risky: first, the epoch's thinking currents interpenetrated one another, which makes it difficult to clearly discern them as separate entities. Second, the writers did not form an unambiguous coherent category themselves, as we have already seen. It could even be argued that anyone who had a book published to his credit, or had taken part in a great political or social debate in the Great Sejm time, was thereby automatically made a 'writer' or 'man-of-letters'. But let us assume that these notions function on a narrower base, not referring to anyone who had authored a written work but just to a specific urban group that we attempted to characterise in the preceding sections. The resulting picture is, roughly speaking, one in which the nobility's reformers attached greater hope to a reform of the parliamentary system and political liberty, whilst 'intellectual' reformers opted for a reinforced central government and a sociocultural transformation. In very general terms, noble reformers preferred Montesquieu, who perceived the nobility as a barrage against the royal absolutism; those identifiable as the intelligentsia would have rather followed Voltaire and his belief in the success of a top-down reform. The 'nobility option' manifested itself in the concept of enlightened Sarmatianism, the intent behind which was to combine at least a part of the traditional noble culture with moderately enlightened ideas. The concept's most illustrative example is *Pan Podstoli*, the well-known novel by Ignacy Krasicki portraying the ideal of enlightened squire. A typical example of an 'intellectual' version of the Polish Enlightenment was, in turn, the historical concept developed by Adam Naruszewicz whereby the country's prosperity and welfare was dependant upon a strong royal authority, along with Franciszek-Salezy Jezierski's deliberations on the mutual relation of freedom and monarchy.

England is under the government of a monarchy, and still England is the clearest instance of a free nation; the king has a succession to the throne and the law's execution [i.e. the executive powers – M.J.'s note] while on the throne; his authority encumbers anarchy within the country whilst not preventing a national freedom. [...] In anarchy, I saw parts of my homeland perish; under the monarchic rule, the country's frontiers were expanding.

F.S. Jezierski, *Niektóre wyrazy porządkiem abecadła zebrane* ['Some words collected in order of the alphabet'], in: idem, *Wybór pism* ['Selected writings'], ed. by Z. Skwarczyński, Warszawa 1952, p. 215.

The model outlined above has many exceptions and should not be taken literally. Authors adhering to the sentimentalist convention, for instance, would not completely fit into it. However, the model may be used for the purpose of a very general discernment of the varieties of the Polish political thought of the time.

Historians of ideas have at many occasions, exaggeratingly at times, focused on an authoritarian, if not totalitarian, potential that could have been hidden within the idea of enlightened reformative monarch as well as in the Enlightenment's democratic ideals, though not actually in the ideals themselves but in the inexorable strife for their constant realisation. If anything at all, it is these strivings for uniformity, by hook or by crook, that unveiled the ominous facet of the Enlightenment. Whilst that facet should not be reduced to naught, no excessive significance should be attached to it, at least considering the Polish framework. Commentators would often use a quite acute phraseology; radical Western ideas were resorted to, so that the Polish situation and the need to change it could be emphatically characterised with their use. Józef Pawlikowski and Tadeusz Morski, to give an example, wrote of the social contract having been torn up by the nobility: the class that did not defend the country against the partitioners bereaved the peasants from any rights vested therein, thereby annulling its own privileges, which were to be dependant on the duties. Such formulations might seem to have almost called for a social revolution. In parallel, they are connected with rather moderate practical postulates: the 'freedom' that both authors wanted to grant to peasantry had nothing to do with the abolishment of serfdom, and even less so with granting full civil, not to say political, rights to peasants. The point was to restrict the master's judiciary and policing powers (or, at least, to submit them to control by state institutions) and to grant any property, even if it was movable (and thus, not necessarily a landed property), to the peasant, whilst also supporting folk education. The daydream horizon was the reforms made by Joseph II in Galicia, which were a far cry from putting peasants on equal footing with the other classes. It is no surprise, then, that both the moderation and the radicalism of the Polish Enlightenment have been many a time highlighted, both traits being alternately rebuked and praised. The truth is that, given the specific Polish circumstances, the Enlightenment's *Weltanschauung* was no abstract philosophy but first and foremost an ideology advocating a modernisation of the state, the economy, and styles of thinking, so that these could be drawn closer to the Western standards. Extreme ideas, be it in the moral, religious, or political sphere, formed a perfect goal for critics of the Enlightenment – but those were in fact not dominant. At the same time, the aforesaid moderate postulates were radical enough, to the extent that their proclamation called for courage and for a backbone. The Polish Enlightenment, pushing overly daring moral or philosophical ideas to the margins of public debate, and establishing hybrid relations with legacy intellectual systems, was a moderate current, propagating no revolution or social utopia. It was radical too, in that it set an ambitious and far-reaching objective for itself: Poland turned into a modern European state.

## 8. Conclusion

We have thus seen the intelligentsia in its original form. Throughout these two chapters, the story's protagonist was a small community which probably did not exceed a few thousand members at any moment. This community would identify itself with various sources of origin: Poland and beyond, in terms of geographies; in terms of class, nobility and non-nobility, secular and monastic clergy. Representatives of this group were by definition better educated than the general public, but usually had no formal titles to perform intellectual professions. There was no need to produce certificates of graduation or examinations passed: the process of formalisation of the criteria of fitness for headwork (so-called professionalization), extremely important as the group's cohesion factor, was just at its start. A variety of group ties and bonds were emerging between those 'proto-intellectuals', but none expanded beyond a small fraction of the individuals of our interest. I have come across no period testimony that would approach as a single group all the professions that have been described as 'intellectual' or 'intelligentsia-related' until the 1840s.

The community's world-outlook was as heterogeneous as the group itself. It was being gradually formed out of various elements, models and patterns, from antique (stoicism), through mediaeval (priest), early modern (nobleman/gentleman), up to contemporaneous (rationalism, sentimentalism, libertinism, deism, Catholic Enlightenment). The majority of these inherited or imported ideas, visions and notions was subject in the Polish lands to a symptomatic evolution through which social aspects were reinforced at the expense of individualist ones.



## Chapter 3: “Some new Trojans...” (1795-1807)

### 1. “... in their new homeland ...”

How did Poles, educated Poles, to be sure, respond to the third partition and the resulting disappearance of the Commonwealth?

The reactions were varied, as is usual in such cases. The situation was novel and there was no one to be absolutely sure what it could actually mean that the name of Poland had been erased. It was often said that Poland “has ceased to be among the nations”<sup>133</sup>, but did it mean what we should understand by this phrase today? Did those people indeed believe that a political decline of the state would entail a fading of the language and culture, or was the notion of nation comprehended in a political sense only? With regard to the nation’s decline, was there basically the same thing meant by it as the fall of the state? In each of the three partitioned areas, the nobility paid liege homage to the new rulers with no enthusiasm, but without attempting to resist, either. Did they do so just out of fear? Or perhaps, as is usual in such situations, the hectic activity and subsequent collapse of great expectations had to entail a few years of torpor? Or – one more option – was it not so that the feudal system and the nobility’s mentality offered no room for anyone outside of the hierarchy, so the place left empty by the Polish king had to be taken over by another suzerain?

The resulting decentralised structure of what had been the Commonwealth caused public life to be run to the rhythm of local assemblies, *sejmiks*; consequently, a large group of the nobility found the estate-related local government institutions and privileges (the famous ‘golden freedom’!) more important than their state’s name, national emblem, or ruling dynasty. Contrary to dynastic

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133 T. Czacki, *O stanie jeneralnym oświecenia guberni wołyńskiej i o środkach urzędzenia i upowszechnienia nauki* [‘A jeneral state of enlightenment [= education] in the Volhynia Guberniya and the measures to arrange and promulgate the learning’] [1804], in: X. Hugona Kołłątaja *korespondencja listowna z Tadeuszem Czackim, wizytatorem nadzwyczajnym szkół w guberni wołyńskiej, podolskiej i kijowskiej* [‘Mailing correspondence between the Rev. Hugo Kołłątaj and Tadeusz Czacki, extraordinary inspector of schools in the Volhynian, Podolian and Kiev Guberniya’], vol. 1, ed. by F. Kojśiewicz, vol. 2, Kraków 1844, p. 241.

absolute monarchies, the Polish monarch was not regarded as a symbol of the state and its sovereignty. The nobility's loyalty toward the king had never been absolute; instead, it was conditioned upon the observance of noble privileges by the king. This 'contractual' attitude of the nobility toward the monarch could foster insurrectionary attitudes (within the tradition of confederations known from the past), but it could also facilitate an acceptance of the new order, as far as there remained a glimpse of hope that the new ruler would respect the nobility freedoms. The cultural-and-linguistic foreignness of such a ruler was not an obstacle in itself: there had been the Saxon kings, and the Vasa kings earlier on; Stephen Báthory (Stefan Batory) was also an alien without a command of Polish, but all the same rose to become one of the favourite heroes of the local patriotic tradition. It thus seems that in the opinion of a large part of the former Commonwealth's elites, certain symbolical concessions would suffice, along with the preservation of at least some of the nobility's institutions, to make the situation bearable – acceptable if not perfect.

After all, the notions of nation, national treason, and independence had, in the period under discussion, different meanings than those assigned to them thereafter by the Romanticism and, later on still, by the national movement: there was apparently no deep abyss between the various forms of compromise and independence. Consequently, there seemingly was nothing morally ambiguous in the Warsaw elites entertaining the hope that the Polish cause be resumed by the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, on his visit to Warsaw in 1802. Tadeusz Czacki, who soon after established the Volhynian High School in Krzemieniec, expressed his hope that the Poles would be able to explain to the Prussian king that as a result of the partition, he "is the lord of a great state, having ceased to be a Brandenburg margrave", and the "Prussian monarchy is a monarchy of Polish countries where officials are merely of German nationality".<sup>134</sup>

Similarly, there was nothing blatant in the Galician nobility's attempts at forming Polish volunteer troops for fighting with the Napoleonic army (among those who declared their readiness to take part in the venture was Berek Joselewicz, famous for his organisation of a Jewish voluntary legion during the Kościuszko Insurrection). Another such example was the concept of the young Prince Adam-Jerzy Czartoryski (whose father Adam-Kazimierz has so frequently been referred to in this narrative), who saw the tomorrow of the Polish cause

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134 T. Czacki, in a letter to S.B. Linde, 1802, as quoted in: W. Bobkowska, *Pruska polityka szkolna na ziemiach polskich w latach 1793-1806* ['The Prussian schooling policy in the Polish lands, 1793-1806'] Warszawa 1948, p. 183.

in correlation with the generosity of his friend, the Russian emperor Alexander I. Franciszek Karpiński, whom we have mentioned several times before, is an excellent example of the ambiguity of attitudes. This author of a number of patriotic poems dedicated one of his pieces to Prince Repnin, the Russian Governor of Lithuania. Prior to the time Romanticism came onto the stage, there was no generalised image of the invasive partitioning state as a thorough enemy, and individuals featuring noble-minded characteristics could count on being evaluated in positive terms.

Kazimierz Brodziński, a poet who was to become well known thereafter, has provided us with a similarly ambiguous testimony. He remembered a scene from his childhood years at his father's manor: his father, shocked to learn of the ultimate partition of Poland, tore away the cloth from the table set for the supper, shouting, "You're not eating tonight!" This is an example of the nobility's 'instinctive' patriotism – the sort of patriotism that was enormously important for the survival of Polishness, but was not necessarily combined with any form of political resistance against the new scheme. Brodziński himself, once pushed off into the world by the death of his father and his ruined property, then a poor student at the Tarnów high school, became enthusiastic on the eve of the 1809 French-Austrian war about the patriotic poems of an Austrian eulogist of the Habsburgs. Clearly, for the Polish poet, patriotism was, as it were, a sentiment in its own right, one of those Enlightenment 'virtues', regardless of its actual object. This delight (in recognition of which his Austrian teachers wanted to send Brodziński to the Theresian Academy in Vienna) did not to the least extent collide with his self-identification as being Polish; soon after, Brodziński fled from the school to sneak through the frontier and finally join the Duchy-of-Warsaw army. Attitudes perceived as inconsistent from the perspective of the generations that followed seemed still natural at that time: rather than being a manifestation of opportunism, they testified to a dissimilar hierarchy of values.

Obviously, numerous voices of despair were audible, but those seem to be somehow colourless, overly aestheticized, and perhaps even posed, more engrossed in their own sound than expressing a deep emotion. Such is, in any case, the impression the twenty-first-century reader is getting, brought up on more expressive forms of patriotic rhetoric generated by the Romantic tradition: taken from this perspective, the voices of despair from around 1800 seem somewhat theatrical, as if they were a manifestation of a literary fashion. There indeed occurred some powerful phrases and expressions, which must have shocked the adherents of a classical aesthetics, such as "the homeland's gore-splashed corpse" in J.P. Woronicz. But notice what words this author uses: his *Świątynia Sybilli* ['A Sybil's Temple'] provides a description of Poland's disasters leading to the

country's decline. There is Jealousy, Beelzebub's daughter, complaining to his father about Poles thwarting Hell's designs. Beelzebub sends her then to incite Khmelnytsky who unleashes the war, etc. This whole ancient-baroque epic machinery, mocked at a generation earlier by I. Krasicki in the heroicomic poem *Monachomachia* (wherein "the shrew of dissension" triggers a war of the monks), is invoked there once again in a deadpan manner. The old conventions still fared quite well, one of them being meditation over the passing of this world's splendour.

Was it not so that the Enlightenment, with all its rationalism, fancied musing on ruins? Edward Gibbon and Montesquieu reflected upon the fall of Rome, while François Volney, watching the ruins of Palmyra, tried his best to investigate the rules governing the growth and decline of empires. Chateaubriand, Polonised phonetically as 'Pan [Mr.] de Szatobrian', described to a friend of his (Polish readers could read this letter in *Dziennik Wileński* of 1806) a scene featuring him pondering the Colosseum "one beautiful evening", watching a palm in the former Caesar's palace garden. Let us recall here the artificial ruins in the Warsaw Łazienki Park theatre, or the pseudo-Roman ruined aqueduct at the Arkadia site near Łowicz. Also, let us recall Jacques Delille's descriptive poem *Les Jardins, ou L'Art d'embellir les paysages*, translated one into Polish by Franciszek Karpiński, with its substantial considerations on the vanishing of trees and flowers. All this provided ready-to-use patterns of responding to the disaster: despair is alleviated in those utterances by a melancholic afterthought on passing and vanishing, as exemplified by Karpiński's *Żale Sarmaty nad grobem Zygnumta Augusta* ['A Sarmatian's Lament at the Tomb of Sigismund Augustus'] with its proverbial conclusion, "All I'm left with is but tears".

More or less strictly censored, the press remained tacit about politics whilst instructing readers in how to wash one's underclothing cheaply and more efficiently than before, along with publishing edifying and doubtless valuable clues such as "good-hearted Bartholomew's advice" reminding the readers that "going to bed on time and getting up in the morning is the best way to preserve the health and the property"; he exhorted, "do not postpone anything to a later moment, but instead, get down to work at once" (the author was himself not quite convinced about the efficiency of his advice, as he concluded: "they all were [...] praising this, but then did all the same way as before").<sup>135</sup> In its leading article, the same journal issue composedly advised the readers that, once

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135 J.K., *Rady poczciwego Bartłomieja* ['Good-hearted Bartholomew advising'], *Dziennik Wileński*, April 1806, pp. 81-91.

everyone learned in detail the condition of a country “which the Providence has assigned to everyone as their own”, the editors will publish texts informing readers on the condition of the “vast Russian state”, and this “to indulge [...] the Polish readers who, now that they are in their new homeland, may be in demand of such information”<sup>136</sup>

Yet, the enlightenment-sentimental tradition did open some ways out. Doleful reveries could lead to a willingness to become better acquainted with the object of musing, and to begin collecting national memorials, be they solicitously collected patriotic/museum relics, or meticulously sought-for and published monuments of the national literary output. The Sybil’s Temple in Puławy, which Polish art historians somewhat exaggeratedly call ‘the first Polish museum’, the work of Princess Izabela Czartoryska from the first years of 19<sup>th</sup> century, serves as the best symbol of the climate being described. Carefulness concerning language, characteristic of the Enlightenment and so evident in the reformers of King Stanislaus Augustus’ epoch, gained a new significance and dimension in the situation in which language could not be supported by state institutions any more. Tadeusz Czacki praised the fatherly magnanimity of the Russian tsar who allowed the Poles to protect the memorabilia of their fallen country. Another author observed, more daringly, that the fate of the native language had always been directly shared with the homeland’s vicissitudes, and he advocated concern about the ancestral language, for it to survive till a more fortunate time.

The threads of the fallen Troy or Greece, so deeply rooted in the sphere of classical-sentimental imagination, did leave a door ajar for hope. “Troy had fallen so that Rome would be born”, Bishop Jan-Pawel Woronicz reminded his fellow-countrymen, while Stanisław Staszic opened a prospect for Polish cultural influence in Russia. As it had been years before, the Horace quote “Captive Greece conquered her savage victor” (i.e. Rome) was recalled on the occasion; now, the conquered Poland should superimpose her cultural patterns upon her new ruler. Virgil, the poet beloved by the Enlightenment and esteemed even higher than Homer, provided patterns for sensing and experiencing the calamity. Literature historians trace repercussions of the *Aeneid*’s description of the fire of Troy in a variety of verse pieces speaking of the decline of Poland. Comparisons of the Polish nation’s lot to the wandering of the expelled Aeneas, especially with respect to Polish soldiers in exile, became almost commonplace. The Virgilian epic excelled at subtle representations of the moods and states of mind of émigré wanderers, so the fact that Poles either at home or dispersed abroad could

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136 Ibidem, p. 1 [untitled].

identify themselves within the framework of this epic is not surprising. When Aeneas, being Dido's guest, sees sculptures showing the fall of Troy, he suddenly realises that the entire world is aware of his country's sufferings, and this picture was evoked by Polish exiles when they earned fondness and interest among foreigners. This made them hopeful that their exile would come to a fortunate end, as the case was with Aeneas. In a poem by Woronicz, the legendary protoplast of the Slavs heralds their future triumphs, claiming that he cannot possibly determine their state's size: "To these labours, no frontier, no boundary shall I set"<sup>137</sup> – a literal quote from Jupiter's speech to Venus in *Aeneid's* Book 1, where the father of gods and humans foretells the future glory of Rome.

What tomorrow would be like no one could know precisely: a *nostris ex ossibus ultor* – an 'avenger from our bones' – would arise for sure, and the story would continue either in this way or another, they believed. The Virgilian quotation simultaneously offered a convenient passage to one of the most imagination-stimulating Old-Testament visions, a fragment of the Ezekiel prophecy: influenced by the Prophet's words, the withered bones of knights are embodied with flesh and resurrect as a detachment of God's warriors. This combination of the visions of Virgil and Ezekiel – not infrequently harmonious, to the extent that the switch is hardly noticeable – is frequent in Woronicz's pieces, but other authors make use of this trope too.

This much-longed-for continuation did not have to be identical with a reconstruction of the former Commonwealth. It was not a political programme, but rather a vague mood, an unspecified hope. It could have taken shape in an armed fight programme as well as, for example, in Slavonic ideas or attempts at adapting to, and drawing national (and not individual) benefits from, the new state of affairs.

True, this is a one-sided picture. A political conspiracy developed after 1795, with the Association of Polish Republicans, established in 1798 and active until 1807, as its most important manifestation. It deserves our attention as a form of survival of the radical ('Jacobinic', as they were called) milieu and ideals from the Great Sejm and Kościuszko Insurrection time. Among the Association members, we can see the names of Rajmund Rembieniński, Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski, Antoni Gliszczyński and other individuals who started their careers in the last years of the Commonwealth, reappearing afterward in the political life

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137 J.P. Woronicz, *Assarmot*, in: idem, *Dzieła poetyczne wierszem i prozą* [Poetic works, in verse and prose form] vol. 2, Leipzig 1853, p. 172; the respective quote from *Aeneis* reads, in John Dryden's rendering: "To them no bounds of empire I assign".

of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and, later on, after the fall of Napoleon, in that of the constitutional Kingdom of Poland. Setting as their goal a revival of independence of Poland as a republic modelled after France, the Association would impose ad-hoc objectives on its members, pragmatic, restricted in scope, and in the spirit of (to use the as of yet non-existent term) 'organic labour': enlighten the peasants, collect information on the country's 'statistics' (i.e. its economic-social situation), and read and discuss books. It is no surprise, then, that a number of conspirers joined in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the efforts of the Warsaw-based Society of Friends of Learning and other legal initiatives.

On the reading list of the 'Republicans', the prominent position of Johann-Gottfried Herder, the German philosopher and theoretician of the national question, is meaningful – along with, not surprisingly, the coryphaei of the French Enlightenment. "And when there's sorrow piercing your heart through, // Read Herder anew", Cyprian Godebski wrote to his friend Andrzej Horodyski, one of the main activists with the Republicans' Association.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, Herder could have taught Horodyski and other ex-Jacobins the ideas of nation as a community of spirit and language, as a community that lives and persists regardless of any political transformation it might be subject to, capable at any moment to deliver the task set for it by Providence. These ideas were perfectly in concert with the situation of the Polish nation after the year 1795 but, for the time being, remained the property of the few. It was only a quarter of a century later that they would be taken over and popularised by the Romantic authors.

There were the Legions in exile too. A group of politicians of moderate views residing in France (passionately combated, as a matter of fact, by the radical members of the Republicans' Association) made contact with a certain general Bonaparte, famous for his Italian victories at the time. The outcome was Polish military troops set up under the command of Jan-Henryk Dąbrowski, a man merited in the Kościuszko Insurrection, as was a certain 'little song' [*pioseneczka*] (as Dąbrowski called it) which was to 'make it big' in later years. For those staying in Italy, and for the better-educated legion officers in general, these Virgilian associations must have sounded extremely powerful. We have to bear in mind that the Legions' impact on their 'native' country was marginal, the Napoleonic wars were fought far away, and the resolution of the Polish issue with support from France became a realistic option only after Napoleon defeated Prussia in the

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138 C. Godebski, *Wiersz do Jędrzeja Horodyskiego*, w: *Świat poprawiać – zuchwałę rzemiosło: Antologia poezji polskiego Oświecenia* ['Amending the World: An Audacious Craft. An anthology of the Polish Enlightenment poetry'], ed. by T. Kostkiewiczowa, Z. Goliński, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Kraków 2004, p. 548.

autumn of 1806 (the Legions had been dissolved in 1803). This course of affairs was unpredictable before then. Dąbrowski's Legions have influenced Poland by means of their later-date legend, rather than any direct effect while they existed.

There was one more reason why the Legions were important. Among those who organised this military unit was a group of intellectuals, former conspirators and insurgents, who through their decision to partake in armed fighting knowingly positioned themselves beyond the limits of the former estate or class structures. Cyprian Godebski, 1765-1809, a soldier and writer, a freemason, plotter and legionnaire, was perhaps the most complete embodiment of their lot. When in Italy, he edited the Legions' periodical *Dekada Polska*; once the formation was dissolved, he returned to then-Prussian Warsaw and joined the recently-established Society of the Friends of Learning. Godebski's most popular piece, *Wiersz do Legiów Polskich* ['A Poem to the Polish Legions'] (1805), is a masterly testimony to state of minds of Polish 'proto-intellectuals' in a time when there was nothing as yet to indicate that the political system established in the Polish lands resulting from the Third Partition could soon thereafter break down. The poem is striking for its combination of a classical, sometimes almost baroque-style, imagery ("Phoebus' golden cart" denoting 'the sun', for instance) with the motif of the fight for freedom so frequent in the Polish poetry of a later period. The Italia encountered by the Polish legionnaires was naturally the Italy of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but it is, at the same time, the ancient Rome in which Polish exiles – "some new Trojans" – were arriving. The poem's predominant independence idea ("their country to redeem, or be killed for it") is not at odds with the dignified apostrophe to the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm III:

*Ty pod którego bertem znalazłem schronienie,  
I te wolne od trwogi niosę braciom pienie,  
Co łącząc godność czleka z blaskiem majestatu  
W monarsze, cnót domowych dajesz przykład światu,  
Gdy cię radość twych dzieci otacza dokoła,  
Nie sądz o moim czuciu z posępnego czoła,  
I daruj, że się stawię przed Tobą w żalobie!  
Polak jestem! Chcę płakać na mej matki grobie.  
Królu! Naszych przeznaczeń ty nie jesteś winą!  
Ten tylko broni płakać, kto jest też przyczyną.*

Thou, under whose sceptre refuge I have found,  
Brothers can now hear my fright-free descant sound;  
Dignity of man, fused with majesty's blaze:  
Monarch, thy domestic virtues so amaze!  
When the joy of thy kids gathers 'round thee, read  
My affection not from my so bleak forehead,

Forgive my appearing in mourning 'fore thee -  
I'm a Pole! Weeping at Mother's tomb, achy;  
O King! Thou art not blamed for those lots of ours!  
He who has caused the tears, our crying now bars.

If such words would be encountered among the writings of an avowed conservative, like Kajetan Koźmian, for that matter, then it could seem to us that they were dictated by a reluctance toward any radical movements, if not by an opportunistic mindset. But no-one could possibly suspect Godebski of opportunism, cowardice, or avoidance of struggle. The quoted fragment blatantly shows that the Romantic canon of intransigent attitude toward the partitioners was still inexistent in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whereas one's indisputable patriotism could coincide – as was the case with F. Karpiński – with recognition of the virtues of certain representatives of the partitioning authorities.

## 2. “Sciences augmented”

It is quite obvious that the Polish elites' choice of attitude was significantly informed by the policies pursued by each of the partitioning powers individually. Russia had seized the largest portion out of the former Commonwealth lands. Russia namely occupied the entire territory of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania as well as Ruthenian lands (today's Ukraine), except for Lwów and its environs, which was Austria's share. (Interestingly, none of the areas forming the Poland of today were originally part of the Russian Partition.) The Prussians took away the Gdansk Pomerania (in 1772), Wielkopolska (the 'Greater Poland'; 1793), and most of Mazovia, including Warsaw (1795); Austria seized Małopolska ('Lesser Poland') and the Podlasie area as far as the Pilica River, the Bug River and the middle section of the Vistula, and a part of the Ruthenian lands, together with Lwów. Thus, the central Polish lands were almost evenly divided between Prussia and Austria.

The situation became different for each of the areas under partition. The Habsburg monarchy had encountered in the former half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a rival power, namely Prussia. Once a German country of secondary rank, Prussia had been gradually reinforcing its position, as was expressly manifested by the assumption of the royal title by Prussian rulers in 1701. Resulting from the two Silesian wars, fought 1742-1749, Prussia conquered Silesia, thus growing to become the Reich's second largest power. Both these mutually competing courts embarked in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century on thorough political system reforms. Formerly, two conglomerates of feudal provinces, each governed by different rules, were to turn into two modern centralised states whose main

instrument of monarchical might was no longer an undisciplined and overambitious nobility and magnates but, instead, bureaucracy, subsidised by the monarch and solely dependent upon him. The Habsburgs in Vienna faced a tougher task than the Hohenzollerns in Berlin: their estate was more heterogeneous, not only linguistically but also religiously, and their rule extended to regions of a long and still current tradition of distinctness such as Bohemia and especially Hungary. Moreover, the Habsburgs had gone furthest of all the partitioning powers in their building of a uniform bureaucracy, but Prussia was fast to follow their lead. Within the lands they had seized, both partitioning states introduced their own administrative systems, abolishing the former Commonwealths' constitutional institutions. These changes struck at the nobility and the clergy, formerly the privileged social strata. For the peasantry, the new government meant that their situation might improve through restricted authority of the squires: a state official would from now on 'mediate' between the peasant and his lord. The new rule meant a significant increase in taxation, affecting all the social layers as funds had to be raised to maintain the army and the clerks. Taking advantage, to an extent, of the local forces, the bureaucracy could open social advancement opportunities by way of education and civic, government, or public service.

Both the royal Prussian and imperial Austrian bureaucracies officiated in the German language, though applicants could use Polish, at least on a local level, and Polish was used to inform the new subjects of what an authority had resolved. The 'rule' of German in the administration was by no means a sign of a nationalism – enlightened monarchies simply wanted to standardise the administrative system, under the principles of reason, for which a common language of management was considered indispensable.

The situation in the lands annexed by Russia took a different turn. The Russian elites had a rather vague sense of their connection with the Ruthenian lands of the former Commonwealth, populated by Eastern-rite Slavic people: Tsarina Catherine the Great ordered the minting of a medal with the inscription "I have restored what was disconnected." In practical politics, however, this sense of community was to play no significant role whatsoever for many years to follow. The Russian Empire entered the path of building an administration according to Western patterns only in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, much later than the Habsburg and Hohenzollern states. From the time of Peter the Great onwards, the very top of the local authority system was built after the European fashion and resembled the analogous institutions of the enlightened-absolutist states. Still, the system whereby that enormous empire was governed was still, as it were, part of the previous epoch. Although an extension of the bureaucratic system according to the Prussian/Habsburg model remained a distant goal, it

remained out of reach for the vast but poor country. In administering the provinces, Petersburg had to resort to collaboration with local nobility elites. Under the condition of political loyalty, the Russian Empire gave the nobility of the annexed lands a *carte blanche* in their oversight of the local government and also paved the way for its representatives to pursue careers with the central authorities without requiring them to assimilate culturally or convert to another religion.

This pattern is identifiable, in the first place, with the Baltic provinces: the German nobility, which governed those areas since the late Middle Ages, almost did not recognise that the political affinity had been altered; what is more, this nobility proved perfectly capable of making use of the newly-provided career paths at the Petersburg court. The position of the 'lesser Ruthenian' nobility was similar, to an extent, in the so-called Hetmanate lands (that is, Ukraine east of the Dnieper, subordinated to Russia since Bohdan Khmelnytsky's time, i.e. the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century). In exchange for the Hetmanate's lost autonomy, the local nobility was offered an opportunity to pursue their careers in Petersburg, which it eagerly used while not abjuring their peculiar regional identity. The autonomy of Finland, which became real at a later date, is yet another example of this same trend.

It has now become easy to understand why in the eighteenth century Russia could not even think of any denationalising policy. Nobility institutions have remained virtually unchanged. In the nobility's self-government, Polish was still in use just like before; the promotion opportunities offered to the Polish nobility are best testified to by the career of Prince Adam-Jerzy Czartoryski, who ran the Russian foreign policy between 1804 and 1806. Let us add that the schooling system built some time before by the Commission of National Education was not only maintained but also extended, about which more will be said below.

It can be thus concluded that, in the first post-Partition years, Poles found the freest conditions for themselves in the Russian Partition, and that this tolerance resulted from the backwardness of Russia, a state that was then yet unable to redevelop its administration.

The Austrian partition no doubt opened the least opportunity. Most of this territory was occupied as early as 1772, and so did not take part in the 'reform era' of Stanislaus Augustus' time; the activities of the Commission of National Education did not extend to it, either. Proportionately to the Habsburg-ruled land area, the new acquisition was not too big, so the local administrative as well as educational institutions could be cast with imperial clerks, for better or for worse.

The Krakow University was reshaped into an Austrian tertiary school. Within a few years following 3<sup>rd</sup> Partition, Józef Bogucicki, Jacek Przybylski and some other professors involved in the Enlightenment-style redevelopment of their

academy resigned or retired. Lecturing in Polish was banned in 1802 (save for lectures for midwives); theology and medicine were given in Latin, and beside this the school was German in character. The Austrian university in Krakow was a provincial school, exposed moreover to competition from the newly-established Lwów University, whose task was to prepare the staff for bureaucratic roles. If there was any discipline of knowledge that developed at the Krakow school past 1795, it was medicine. The Vienna University's powerful tradition had its influence on the Krakow hub, and during Austrian rule several doctors from Krakow who in later years offered a high standard of service got their titles in medicine in Vienna. If there were however any hubs of Polish culture surviving under the Austrian Partition, those remained contained within certain magnate estates, such as at Stanisław-Kostka Zamoyski's estate in Zamość and, in the first place, in Puławy, another site then under the imperial sceptre.

Prussia's wish was to operate in the Austrian style, but the potential of Prussia was less than Austria's. The former lands of Poland certainly covered over a third of the Prussian monarchy's territory; a Slavonic language or dialect was the mother tongue of almost every second subject of the Hohenzollerns. Having all of them Germanised, and the whole country covered by German-language schools and cultural institutions, would have been a completely unrealistic concept. Once the higher ranking bureaucracy became really German, the educational system remained founded upon the output of the Commission of National Education, in spite of long debates and Germanisation attempts. A number of changes were designed: attempts were made at taking schools away from the monks, creating secular mainstream schools meant for the use of Catholic and Protestant children along with Jewish pupils. Endeavours were made to ensure broader room for the German language in teaching, with the hope that, in the longer run, the civilisational superiority of the German culture (in which the Prussian officials strongly believed) should suffice to remove the Polish language from public life. In the Austrian as well as Prussian partitioned area, Polish theatres operated continually on a legal basis – those run by Jacek Kluszewski and Wojciech Bogusławski, in Krakow and Warsaw, respectively, and, since 1809, Jan-Nepomucen Kamiński's theatre in Lwów.

Since the Prussian authorities refrained from inflaming the situation in the newly-annexed provinces, they allowed for Polish cultural institutions to be established. The Society of the Friends of Learning (*Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk*), set up in 1800, was the most important among them. Brought into being by veterans of the Enlightenment movement of Stanislaus Augustus' age, the Society embodied an idea that was 'alive' among the enlightened elites of the time but was not actualised before the Partitions, namely the idea of establishing an

Academy of Sciences in Poland. The setting up of the Society ensued to an extent from post-Partition mindsets: as mentioned above, the melancholy and contemplation of ruins of the glory-of-yore incited a closer examination of the contemplation's object whilst nurturing the hope that this nation without a political being would be capable of re-identifying its mission as "to augment the sciences"<sup>139</sup>. Even though the notion of 'organic labour' was conceived only forty years later, voices were heard then already calling for reinforcement of a nation undergoing adverse circumstances through economic and cultural labour. "It is not through war that states grow into fame and freedoms", Jan-Paweł Woronicz admonished, adding that armed triumphs would come later: "now, heal your inner maladies and plagues", following the example of the neighbouring countries that "are blossoming in governance".<sup>140</sup>

The systems under the Prussian and Austrian Partition gave the Polish elites the possibility of looking closely at the operation of a centralised bureaucratic state. The situation of the Poles was not quite comfortable as they were only observers with no real impact on the state's operation. The peripheral Polish lands (from the invaders' standpoint) were supplied by the lowest sort of bureaucrats who could not find an opportunity for themselves in any of the central regions of Prussia and Austria. Still, the lesson was learned, and soon after taken advantage of, in the Duchy-of-Warsaw period.

Before this happened, however, in the Polish lands educational institutions emerged whose significance for the Polish culture cannot possibly be underestimated. This is primarily true for the Lithuanian-Ruthenian territories.

Alexander I, tsar since 1799, was spinning designs of political system reforms and allowed the organisation of relatively liberal institutions in the former Commonwealth lands, so as to meticulously watch their operation before they would possibly spread across the Empire. 1803 saw the Tsar sign a document reforming the University of Wilno, together with the entire schooling system in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian terrain. The University was to thenceforth become a self-governing corporation, with the right to elect its rector and exercise authority

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139 J.C. Albertrandi, *Mowa na pierwszym posiedzeniu Towarzystwa Warszawskiego Przyjaciół Nauk [...] dn. 23 listopada 1800* [Address delivered at the first meeting of the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning [...] on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1800], in: *Droga do niepodległości czy program defensywny. Praca organiczna – programy i motywy* [A road to independence, or a defensive scheme? Organic labour: programmes and motives], ed. by T. Kizwalter, J. Skowronek, Warszawa 1989, pp. 61-65; this quote: p. 62.

140 J.P. Woronicz, *Sejm wiślicki* [The sejm of Wiślica], in: idem, *Dzieła poetyczne...*, p. 17.

over the whole enormous territory of what had been Lithuania and Ruthenia, from the Baltic Sea to the Dnieper River. The University's role was to look after secondary schools (*gimnazjums*) and elementary schools, delegate inspectors, educate teachers, and approve textbooks. This is how the educational model designed by the Commission of National Education was revived in more than half of the territory of the inexistent state. The project in question was led by Prince Adam Czartoryski in his capacity as curator of the Wilno Academic District. How widely spread the Polish influence upon the Russian education was is testified to by the fact that out of the five academic districts contained within the Empire, two remained under Polish custody: the Wilno district and the Kharkov district. The curator for the latter was Seweryn Potocki, an aristocrat from the former Polish eastern borderland area.

Still, the Wilno University was facing a serious problem which it could not solve till the moment it ceased to exist in 1831 and which is summarised in this question: "What purpose should a Polish university serve in a country without a Polish bureaucracy?" It was all clear with Warsaw: the Duchy and subsequently, the Kingdom, as created at the Vienna Congress in 1815, was in need of Polish officials. But how about Lithuania – the land where nobility self-government preserved its extensive rights, while higher-tier offices were normally populated with Russian nationals? What could university graduates actually expect? They would turn into provincial teachers or doctors with the tsarist army, an opportunity that would enable them to serve back the scholarship collected; many of them would return to their demesnes, to gradually forget, in the silence of their hinterland nook, what they had been taught in Wilno.

Prussia as a partitioning power was after 1795 less generous to Polish education. In its striving for unification, this bureaucratic state was eager to have a uniform educational system established. A sense of superiority with respect to the Poles was also evident, as was the conviction of a 'mission' for the Prussian authorities in the newly-annexed lands. Aspects of national aversion can be spotted in this attitude, but it was primarily conditioned culturally and religiously: Protestant followers of the Enlightenment perceived the Commonwealth as an oasis of religious intolerance and Catholic fanaticism. For instance, Polish schools were accused of excessive amounts of memorisation by repetition being imposed on the students, which shortcoming was explained by the 'Catholic' nature of the education, Catholicism apparently fearing autonomous thinking. In any case, whereas the Russian elites could see a pattern to follow in the output of the Commission of National Education, there was nothing of the sort happening in Prussia. To make matters worse, certain solutions of the Polish educational system were identified as overly radical.

There is another major consideration: the Prussian educational system had developed under the influence of pedagogical theories completely different from those professed by the Polish enlightened milieu. The German secondary education of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries was undergoing a metamorphosis which consequently affected, in one way or another, the Polish lands as well as the rest of Central and Eastern Europe. The University of Göttingen, founded in 1737, developed around the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century a new approach to ancient culture. Renaissance humanism had taught how to imitate the classic models of the Latin writing and rhetoric style, educating those who were capable of competing with the ancient authors with regard to the form (if not the content) of their works. The new humanism, in turn, did not intend to produce imitators of the Ancients; knowledge of Antiquity's legacy was meant to refine one's taste, acuity and self-reliant thinking. Reading the classic authors was no more to consist in the torment of construing sentence after sentence, but instead an exercise in reading comprehension with a focus on the content rather than grammatical formulas. Antiquity was meant to be a means for educating a modern independently-thinking man.

This programme was combined in Germany with a revival of classical Greek studies. The proposed neo-humanistic education model was to extend to both classical languages: the view whereby there existed some special spiritual affinity between Germans and Greeks was gaining in popularity. This idea manifested Protestant northern Germany's will to oppose Latin Catholicism: in the time of the Napoleonic wars, averseness for 'Latin peoples' became primarily anti-French, and it was in this form that it revealed itself most broadly in Johann-Gottlieb Fichte's *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (*Addresses to the German nation*; 1808), one of the foremost manifestations of the German national idea. In any case, the Greek language marched into the schools on equal terms with Latin.

Among the main propagators of this idea on the Berlin soil was Friedrich Gedike, a well-known classical philologist and education theorist, who, incidentally, served the Prussian authorities as an inspector of schools in the lands of former Poland. The absence of Greek among the subjects taught at Piarist schools in Poland was one of the observations that triggered his major objections. The Commission of National Education's view of the matter was diametrically different: Greek, Grzegorz Piramowicz claimed, is indispensable for professional scholars and the university is its proper place, not the secondary school. These two ideas would remain in conflict but the eventually victorious concept was the classical grammar school as the basic secondary-school model, and so it remained until the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A stronger reference to Antiquity did not necessarily have to be revolutionary in nature; still, it was commonly regarded in the eighteenth century as a cachet

of liberation ideas. The Polish educated public was made acquainted with neo-humanistic ideas by Jan-Samuel Kaulfuss, professor and, later on, director of the 'St. Mary Magdalene' Grammar School in Poznań. This Polonised German was too loyal toward the Government to gain acceptance from Polish elites but sufficiently independent to be penally dismissed (in 1824) by Prussian educational authorities from the post of grammar school director and sent to purely German grammar schools in Neustettin (today, Szczecinek) and Köslin (Koszalin). Kaulfuss published in an 1810 issue of *Pamiętnik Warszawski* the first part of a discursive essay on the benefits yielded by classical philology (the entire work was published in booklet form in 1814, in Breslau/Wrocław). He very strongly emphasised the basic ideas of neo-humanism: the central objective of classical studies was to learn how to think self-reliantly. This was fostered by the study of languages which were dissimilar to any of the living ones, as reading in any such language requires, by virtue of the difficulty it entails and the slow pace at which it is done, a deeper consideration of the texts being read. Contact with a culture different than our own (Kaulfuss was one of those who first used the word 'culture' in Polish in its current meaning, rather than in the narrow agricultural sense of 'cultivation') demonstrates to us that the institutions and ideas we have been accustomed to from our childhood years are not eternal or obvious. Among the values instilled by Antiquity, Kaulfuss put a special emphasis on religious tolerance (he spent several pages in an effort to disprove the view that the Christians in the Roman Empire were persecuted for their religion), patriotism, and love of freedom.

It would seem that the radical purport of the new current is obvious, especially if we realise that Antiquity was for many a neo-humanist a sort of secular religion, successfully replacing Christianity. It was more complex than that, however, and many conservatives, in contrast to the Poznań professor, believed that the classical languages should be the best mainstay of social order. Kaulfuss' essay offers quite clear evidence that the ideas might have evolved in this way. With all the emphasis put on civic and patriotic virtues, which a young man could only be imbued with through a study of Antiquity, it is rather apparent that neo-humanism strove for the individual self-perfection of its adherents, at something of a distance from social issues. Studies in Antiquity offer a sense of distance from the world, Kaulfuss wrote, as they enable the passionless assessment of human affairs. Such studies enable one to escape the reality we do not quite approve of, and live with our thoughts immersed in a different, certainly better, world. This escapism could serve as a signpost pointing to the tendency toward conservative evolution of neo-humanism. This point also made a difference between the German doctrine and the ideals claimed by the Commission of National Education – as Kaulfuss himself noticed, for that matter, in one of his writings.

The education policy the Prussian authorities pursued in the Polish lands was not consistent, as it otherwise tended to be: it fluctuated between the will to reshape the school system into the Prussian image and likeness, and the fear that such reshaping might destroy the existing educational institutions, not quite yielding anything in return. Though truncated, the output of the Commission of National Education therefore persisted. Natural Law was systematically deleted as a school subject from the syllabus, and the room thus emptied filled with Greek; the role of Sciences, such as Physics and Natural History, so important from the Commission's standpoint, was reduced, again to the benefit of the classical languages. In parallel, the schools and their teaching staff were retained, while the Commission's Laws (*Ustawy*) remained the basis for the organisation of the schooling system. Education continued to be funded with the former School Fund, whose resources were based on incomes from former Jesuit schools. In spite of the uncertain situation, elements of the former educational system continued to function: a renowned Piarist college operated in Warsaw (situated at the corner of Długa and Miodowa Sts.; Joachim Lelewel, then a teenage boy, was among its students in the Prussian era).

Whilst not quitting a far-reaching Germanisation perspective, the Prussian authorities deemed it the most reasonable policy to attract Poles to the German culture and language. This purpose was to be served by the reorganisation of certain schools. Thus, the Poznań grammar school (*gimnazjum*) was made in 1803 into a bilingual supra-confessional school, with Polish and German teachers forming its staff. As of autumn 1804, the school had 220 students, of Polish and German nationality in equal proportion, with a slightly higher number of Catholics than Protestants. The Poznań case was just an introductory move: there was the intent to create a school of a similar type in Warsaw.

The school was set up in 1804, on the grounds of the former Jesuit National Education Commission grammar school, now renamed as *Liceum Warszawskie* (the Warsaw Lyceum; German, *Königlich-Preußisches Lyzäum zu Warschau*). The project's purpose was to make Poles better acquainted with German culture. The first two grades were conducted in Polish and the upper ones in German, save for Polish and French literature, which were given in Polish and French, respectively. The Professors were Polish and German and the vast majority of students Polish.

Samuel-Bogumił Linde was appointed Rector of the newly founded school. In so doing the Prussian authorities placed a bet on a man who, while staying loyal to the state, would be capable of earning trust among the Poles and tactfully managing the faculty, which consisted of representatives of the two nationalities. It might have seemed that Linde, descended from a bourgeois family from Toruń/Thorn, born into the German linguistic and cultural circle but keenly

interested in Polish culture, and a long-standing and trusted associate of Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński in his great library project (later turned into the Lwów-based Ossolineum), was perfectly suited for the purpose. While he did not let their expectations down, the Prussian authorities could not have anticipated that their chosen one would turn out to be one of the most merited figures in Polish culture: Linde authored the excellent Dictionary of the Polish Language (*Słownik języka polskiego*), which till now has not ceased to be an inexhaustible source of knowledge for any lover of this language.

Apart from the Lyceum, a supervisory institution named Eforat was established, a sort of programme board whose cast was to make the new school reliable in the eyes of the mistrustfully disposed Polish public. The setting up of this Lyceum-supervising committee can also be seen in terms of influences exerted by the ideas proposed by the Commission of National Education. Eforat was expected to fulfil a function with respect to the Lyceum analogous to that exercised once by the Krakow Main School (then already beyond the Prussian Partition limits) as regards the Commission-run schools. Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, one of the leading exponents of the Polish Enlightenment, was made chairman of the nine-member Eforat board; the members included S.B. Linde and Stanisław Staszic, along with the Piarist Order Provincial Superior, on an ex-officio basis. The latter membership was a visible measure of the congregation's role in the Polish Enlightenment. Half of the Eforat's membership cast were clergymen.

The scholarship system was one more important element of the education policy that, initiated prior to the Partitions, was followed up in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the eighteenth century, a less than affluent young man who was eager to learn and gain knowledge was offered an opportunity to travel into the West by joining a religious congregation (the Piarist or, before 1773, Jesuit Order being the best choice), or establishing himself as a private tutor with a magnate family's scion. A scholarship policy was pursued by King Stanislaus Augustus, who as it were 'relieved' the state of this duty; scholarships or grants were also funded by the Commission of National Education. Jan Śniadecki, later a famous mathematician, was one of the Commission's grant-holders in Germany and France.

Perhaps somewhat astonishingly, this tradition was followed up by the Prussian authorities. Scholarships were meant to be a means of moving the Poles closer to German culture, and to educate a new generation of teachers who would be fit for delivering the German syllabus and would prove politically loyal toward the Prussian state. Special attention was paid to the Piarist Order as an organisation that maintained a number of high or grammar schools (*gimnazjums*) while not enjoying good reputation with the authorities.

Wojciech Szweykowski was among the Piarists taking advantage of the Prussian scholarship offer: this man spent two years in Berlin at the Prussian Government's expense, supervised by Friedrich Gedike, the above-mentioned propagator of neo-humanism. The Prussian educational system did not enjoy Szweykowski's esteem (which could perhaps have had to do with the fact that he published a book summarising his Berlin experiences under an altered political situation, in the Duchy of Warsaw time). Yet, this author must have noticed at least two important things: the neo-humanist trend and the creation of a university in Berlin, a work of Wilhelm von Humboldt. Prussian scholarship holders who later won an important position in the Warsaw milieu included Feliks Bentkowski, aged more than twenty at the time. His studies, done at the Government's expense at a pedagogical seminary in Sulechów (German, Zilichau/Züllichau; hence the name's then frequently encountered Polish version, 'Cylichów') in 1800-1802, and then, with the Halle university (1802-1804), were followed by his promotion to a professorship with the Warsaw Lyceum and, once the Napoleonic wars were over, to the Chair of History at the University of Warsaw.

The Austrian policy did not include any support opportunities for Galician residents being educated in Vienna; there was an exception to the rule, though: the Greek-Catholic clergy. Support for the Union had for one and a half centuries been an element of the traditional policy of the Vienna-based authorities which strove for politically neutralising the Orthodox Church with regard to politics; the methods well-tested in the Subcarpathian Ruthenia and Transylvania were applied in Galicia as well. This was of importance for the emerging modern national sentiment of the Galician Ukrainians, but had its impact on the Poles too: Paweł Szymański, a Greek-Catholic Basilian friar, studied in Vienna at governmental expense and returned strongly convinced about the necessity of the state's authority over the Church and the clergy, in a Josephinian spirit. About a dozen years later, he was appointed Dean of the Warsaw University's Faculty of Theology; at that time, his views had an influence on the dispute over what the Faculty ought to be like.

It should be added that the Josephinian model of church-state relations (the former to be subordinated to the latter, against strivings to take advantage of the clergy in the administration, education, etc.) was, apart from the medical science, probably the only manifestation of Austrian influence upon the Polish thought of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Josephinism exerted an impact on numerous representatives of Polish Roman Catholic clergy, not merely Galician priests or friars whose roads were set through Vienna for one reason or another. It would have its repercussions in the Wilno University, for instance.

From the standpoint of the generations that came later, the period between 1795 and 1807 was overshadowed by the earlier dramatic period as well as by the variegated time of the Duchy of Warsaw. Still, this period is not insignificant at all for the history of Polish intelligentsia: it was then that forms of a bureaucratic state were emerging in the Polish lands, so important as they were from the standpoint of the enlightened strata; it was then that institutions that grew in importance afterwards were built, e.g. the Society of the Friends of Learning, the Warsaw Lyceum, and the (reformed) University of Wilno; and, it was then that the education-related output of the Commission of National Education was preserved, if not developed (as in the Russian Partition territory).

Most importantly, however, this was the period when educated Poles started to be reassured, for themselves and for the generations to come, about a question that still was not clear to anyone in the year 1795: Can a (the) nation persist without a state? The ‘flickering’ and non-instantiated meaning of words such as ‘nation’, ‘state’, or ‘Poles’ did not make the orientation any easier. Thus, the Sybil’s Temple in Puławy was to “commemorate the quenched nation”; an émigré, if settled abroad, “shall not be a Pole”.<sup>141</sup> On prescribing his remedies to the Poles for the time of calamity, Woronicz makes an appeal to stoic ideals.

However, the ideal of virtue amidst suffering was thoroughly individual, and so could not serve as a recipe for a national community. The switch from this ideal of individual virtue to the ideal of social service is most clearly visible in Cyprian Godebski, the author quoted above. The suicide of Cato in the face of the downfall of republican ideals in Rome, admired so many times as a manifestation of stoic heroism, is shown there as an inopportune act of capitulation, if not egoism: “What have you done for your homeland through despair? // Its freedoms not guarded but instead, impaired”; so the poet addresses Cato, and subsequently tells the Polish legionnaires: “As I compare the deed of Cato with yours, // “Seen against a Roman, the Pole praiseworthy soars.”<sup>142</sup> For the homeland, fighting is superior to individual despair.

In this way, a new pattern of thinking and behaving in a new, previously unknown situation was taking shape: the years between the Third Partition and the coming of Napoleon were a breakthrough period in this respect. Virgil was read

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141 J.P. Woronicz, *Świątynia Sybilli* [‘A Temple of Sybil’], in: idem, *Dzieła poetyczne...*, pp. 52; 152.

142 C. Godebski, *Wiersz do legiów polskich*, in: ibidem, p. 558 (quote from the original: *Cóżeś twoją rozpaczą dla ojczyzny zrobił? // Zamiast bronić jej swobód, tyś je jeszcze dobił. [...] Gdy czyn Katona z waszym porównywywam czynem, // Chlubniej być mi Polakiem, niżli Rzymianinem*

at that time, and not without benefit: as Aeneas rescued domestic deities from the conflagration, thereby ensuring, in a way, a continued existence of Troy, Poland “has not lost her life yet, // Inasmuch as we live”<sup>143</sup>, although the Commonwealth had fallen. The Poles started then to understand that a nation could exist without a state, that not everything was lost, and there was no need to escape into the world of the individual heroism of the stoics, since the roads of acting for the common good remained open, although incomparably harder to progress than before. This achievement of the language of Polish politics testifies to a transformed awareness, and this transformation was carried out by the emerging Polish intelligentsia; moreover, it heralded, as it were, the role this intelligentsia would play in the shaping of Poles’ awareness in the generations to come.

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143 The opening lines of *The Song of the Polish Legions in Italy* by Józef Wybicki, in its original version, established in a later period as the Polish national anthem (quoted after: *Polish Literature from the Middle Ages to the End of the Eighteenth Century. A bilingual anthology*, selected and translated by Michael M. Mikoś, Constans, Warszawa 1999).



## Chapter 4: In the service of the State (1807-1830)

### 1. How intellectuals turned into bureaucrats

The creation by Napoleon of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1807, territorially based on the central Polish lands, was indeed an event that made history (this hackneyed phrase is certainly a good match here). The new, small state was composed of the areas occupied by Prussia in the course of the first and second partitions; in 1809, the territory annexed by Austria in 1795 was re-conquered from this country (including Krakow and Lublin). The Duchy's symbols referred to the former Commonwealth (while the state's name was novel, owing to its international station). Frederick August, King of Saxony, was made the Duchy's head, which could be interpreted as a nod towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution, which provided that once King Stanislaus Augustus died childless, the Saxon Wettin monarchs would come to the Polish throne. Because of this, many Poles perceived the Duchy as a step on the way to complete independence.

The Romantics' generation is responsible for the fact that the Napoleonic epoch is colloquially associated for Poles primarily with wars. The period, however, is worth looking at from a completely different angle: instead of an epoch of romantic wartime adventures, a follow-up to the Polish Enlightenment calls for our attention there. Let us then take a closer look at how that small state was being built, in which labour the tone was set by the Stanislaus-Augustus-generation veterans. One would not be grossly mistaken to assume that their generational experience was the conviction that the nobility's anarchy was disastrous by nature, and that the building of a strong and efficient state was a must. 'The enlightened' could figure out such a state in a variety of ways, emphasising the bureaucratic or rather local governmental factor; they could fight the severest of fights against each other for power in the Duchy, but had virtually no doubt that the new state was supposed to become thoroughly different with regard to its political and constitutional system, compared to the Poland of yore.

Consequently, the Duchy of Warsaw was to be a state governed by professional bureaucrats. It is in the Duchy that we deal, for the first time ever, with central offices which were built on the principle of one-person, rather than collegial, management.

The 21<sup>st</sup>-century reader, accustomed as she is to a flood of provisions and regulations, certainly would not find the legislative output of the Duchy commanding: the four small volumes of the *Journal of the Laws of the Duchy of Warsaw* comprise less than a thousand and a half pocket-format pages. For contemporaries, their country seemed to have been covered with new laws that regulated, with a meticulousness unheard of ever before, increasingly broad spheres of public life. The authors of decrees remained under the clear influence of the German administration science, the so-called cameralism, or *Kameralwissenschaft*, which very broadly delineated the limits of the state's actions, believing with an Enlightenment-imbued enthusiasm that the world may be changed by decrees. This overlapped with a Napoleonic, post-Revolution belief in the efficiency of a centralised and rationally organised bureaucracy.

Paging through those small volumes, one can notice a few issues of importance. First, the legislators had found that intellect-based professions existed as a separate category. Contrary to what we might think, there is nothing obvious in this. The collective imagination still operated within estate-related categories. It was essential whether one was a nobleman, a burgher or a clergyman, and it was much less important whether someone wrote books, ran a farm or held an office.

Still, the Duchy's Constitution extended electoral rights to the non-noble strata; among those entitled to vote was "every artist and citizen illustrious in his talents, knowledge, or favours made to the trade or to the arts and craftsman-ships" (Article 58). A royal decree of 7<sup>th</sup> September 1808 specified that a list of such 'citizens illustrious in their talents' was to be compiled for each department by its prefect.

Taxes were just as important as elections. Modern fiscal or taxation systems render the amount payable conditional upon the actual income, rather than one's being a peasant or nobleman. As the obligation to submit an annual income statement was nonexistent then, the authorities managed the task differently: the whole population was divided into tax categories by living standard. For instance, the royal decree of 25<sup>th</sup> March 1809, imposing an extraordinary tax for support fortifications, had the whole Duchy population categorised into ten classes. "Doctors" and "apothecaries in larger cities" were classed ninth, whilst "solicitors, notaries-public in grand cities" formed the tenth class. Since this was the top class, these professions were put on equal footing with "the wealthiest [land] owners", "significant merchants" and – let us notice the affluence criterion applied – with "those who travel within the town by a coach of their own or rented for months". Scribes (lower-rank clerks), clerks and officials were distributed across class fifth to tenth, according to a completely modern criterion of the amount of wage or salary received.

The tax law published in the *Journal of the Laws* No. 38 (*An Introduction to the Wages and Levies Law*) enumerated intellectual professions with admirable meticulousness. The ten classes of personal-tax payers were defined in a much more detailed manner there. In class four, “economic scribes of single granges” (i.e. administrators of the lowest level private estates) and “artists in the third-, fourth-, and fifth-ranked cities” catch our attention. Can those groups, categorised by the legislator on equal terms with “millers, shepherd-farmers, organists, sacristans”, be considered as representatives of ‘intellectual’ professions?

There is no such doubt as we move one class up: “Private instructors, maitres, and teachers at private homes” are mentioned there along with two-grange economic officials” (i.e. private administration of a slightly higher rank) and also with “sequestrators and administrators appointed by the Government for the second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-tier towns”. The next class, the sixth, contains other categories for the administration of private properties, officers ranked above lieutenant, and lower-ranked state and municipal-level officials. This same category included “county notaries, defenders in the courts of peace, court executive officers, Government-privileged translators of languages [a category which seems to correspond with today’s sworn translators – note by M.J.], geometres” as well as individuals running private boarding schools for male or female youth, booking clerks and bookkeepers working “with bankers or merchants”, “artists in first- or second-tier towns” as well as “sequestrators and administrators appointed by the Government for the first-tier towns”, and “surgeons”.

Class seven has only the highest-ranked group of private estate administrators (managing complete demesnes or estates of above six granges), affluent lawyers (patrons, i.e. barristers and “notaries affiliated to tribunals”), medical doctors from small towns and villages, medium-ranked officers and state or municipal officials, as well as “apothecaries, without deference as to the towns they are residents in”. All those groups were put on equal footing with fabricants employing six or more workers each, and “proprietors of palaces in towns”. Class eight comprised higher-ranked officers and clerks, doctors in larger towns and (be sure to take note) newspaper editors. Physicians of the largest cities (Warsaw, Krakow, Poznań) formed group nine.

Let us notice that a majority of the intellectual professions are grouped under the sixth and (to a lesser extent) seventh groups; thus, what we deal here with is a ‘middle class’, albeit one constituted by the fiscal authorities’ perceptions. Even if the same (seventh) class extended to ‘apothecaries’ along with ‘palace proprietors’, or (eighth) ‘newspaper editors’ alongside ‘owners and lease-holders’ of seven to twelve granges, this did not at all imply that those groups were equivalent in terms of living standards or, even less so, social prestige. It rather seems

that the binding fiscal tariff held land-owning gentry in a privileged position, by categorising this group's representatives lower than their actual social position would suggest. This was probably due to the strong influence the nobility had in the Duchy, along with the simple fact that it was easier to collect taxes from people who were associated with towns and received their incomes in money, than from landed gentry whose wealth was landed estates, which did not have to stand for excessive amounts of cash.

For the purpose of our story, the most important point is that intellect-based professions had grown in the Duchy to become an officially recognised part of social reality.

It is not to be neglected that these laws, spelled out in novel detail and implemented widely at the time, called for increasing numbers of educated people to enable their coming into force. A royal decree of February 7, 1809 reorganised the local administration system. Each department (following the French-Revolutionary model, the central administrative units were so nicknamed, as 'voivodeship' would be overly associated with feudalism) was to be headed by a prefect nominated by the monarch from among the candidates proposed by the State Council – a newly established central opinion-pronouncing institution. A prefect would administer his department through a prefecture, an office that employed his subject officials. The competences of prefect were rather broad: "He keeps attendance of the Departmental Treasury Board, Educational Supervisory Council, and of the Departmental Administration of Postal Service. He has the authority [...] over the Stewardship of National Estates and Forests, over the Departmental Police Commissioner". Hence, several state institutions were to function on a department level; some had their counterparts in counties as well. If all these tasks were to be taken seriously, the number of clerical workplaces must have exceeded the decrees' specifications.

Counties (*powiats*) were headed by top-down nominated subprefects. Elements of local government were introduced in line with the tradition dating to the period before the Partitions; yet, this local government's position was much weaker than before. Departmental councils as well as county councils were just supposed to cooperate for the distribution of taxes amongst individual taxpayers. They could also present their petitions to the throne. This privilege was often made use of by the nobility; dissatisfied with the reforms, the noblemen would have welcomed a resumption of the previous system where local administration was responsibility of the local nobility, rather than a central bureaucracy, as was the case at this new stage.

Apart from a general administration, various branches of specialised administration service were being formed. "The Supreme Police Supervision [...],

likewise the monitor of the public safety and order”, royal decree dated 17<sup>th</sup> March 1809 reads, “requires that each prefect be accompanied by an auxiliary function of a “departmental police commissioner, with an adjunct” as well as a “police superintendent” who would be tasked with “touring the department” and reporting to the “Minister of Police on everything” that ought to “fall within the scope of the Government’s interest within a Department’s confines”.

Foundations of the first-ever state sanitary service were being formed. “Having turned our attention to the protection of the health of the citizens and inhabitants of the Duchy of Warsaw, in the will that this inestimable gift be provided, within reason, to everyone” (almost an idea of common health care, that!), the King instituted, by means of the decree of 19<sup>th</sup> September 1809, a “Medical Department” within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It was intended to appoint “departmental physicists [i.e. physicians]” within departments and county ‘physicists’ and surgeons with counties, respectively. A ‘departmental physicist’ was tasked with gathering information on the state of health of his region’s population, and forwarding the relevant data to the central authorities; he besides headed a three-member departmental medical committee set up in order to carry out expert medical evidences for the purposes of the judiciary.

The new central institutions included a Central Accounting Chamber (cf. the decree of 14<sup>th</sup> December 1808), prototypical to our contemporary Supreme Chamber of Control. It was formed of a chairman and four accounting councillors, aided to this end by four ‘payless’ assessors (i.e. receiving no salary) and a rather sizeable chancellery which consisted of two secretaries, five “reckoners, that is, calculators” and four clerks.

Extensive period quotations available help us realise how deeply the state’s functioning had changed in comparison with the Commonwealth period. It is quite noticeable that ambitious tasks set for the new offices to tackle (as in the aforementioned preamble to the sanitary administration decree) had no bearing on the actual number of the staff delegated to deliver these tasks. A clerical corps of such small size was by no means capable of performing the great labour of building a centralised state. Was it so important, though? Normally the toughest task is to initiate a tendency. Of importance for our present scope of interest is that the state started creating demand for an intelligentsia.

Another conclusion stemming from the *Journal of the Laws* is that professional knowledge became an important criterion for becoming a clerk or official. “Not merely a decent way of thinking, fervency in fulfilment of the duties entrusted, but apart from this, a truly thorough learning [culture] [...] and experience [...] are prerequisite for a serviceable holding of the offices”, the royal decree of 29<sup>th</sup> April 1808 proclaimed. This sentence, apparently obvious as to content for

us today, must have been shocking as it opposed the nobility's concept of honorary office, with honesty and zeal predictably being the most valued qualifications. The decree imposed compulsory examinations to be applied to candidate officials, since 1<sup>st</sup> September 1810. An examination committee was established for each department, consisting, "under the authority of the prefect, of one of the prefecture council-men, a treasury and a police Superintendent, departmental chief-forester and constructor". Candidates to higher-tier offices, once their department-based examination was completed, were supposed to take an exam before the Supreme Examination Committee in Warsaw. Those turning up for the examination had to present their baptism certificate (which served as a birth certificate), a school report, a "certificate of upstanding [...] life", and a certificate of a traineeship completed with the office.

The Duchy of Warsaw ceased to exist after the fall of Napoleon. As resolved by the European powers gathered at the Vienna Congress of 1815, the Duchy's western area (including Poznań, Toruń/Thorn and Bydgoszcz/Bromberg) was given away to Prussia, Krakow was made a Free City, and the remainder of the former Duchy transformed into the Kingdom of Poland. The Kingdom was to form a personal union with Russia (the Russian Emperor being simultaneously King of Poland) and was barred from pursuing a foreign policy of its own, but as for the rest, the country was to stay completely separate. It had its constitution and a national emblem (a small crowned eagle placed on the breast of a great black two-headed Russian eagle), a parliament (*sejm*) and an army; the country was separated from Russia by a passport and customs frontier. The former Duchy-of-Warsaw army, released by Napoleon and by the Saxon king from its oath, returned home decimated and was turned into an army of the Kingdom, preserving its entire organisational structure. Similarly, the clerical corps was retained to a large extent. Formally, a Russian national assumed just one function in the Kingdom's authorities: Prince Constantine, the tsar's brother, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army. In practice, his influence reached far beyond military matters; his residence, the Belweder palace in Warsaw, shortly afterwards became an unofficial and unconstitutional centre of authority, exerting a significant impact on the state's affairs. Only the upper-level administration was reorganised, using to this end a number of formerly active people. The modest size of the volumes of the collection of the Kingdom of Poland's laws might suggest that the legislative passion had somewhat abated; actually, the bureaucratic system remained unchanged. The Kingdom's elites still had among its ranks, at least in the country's first years, some illustrious exponents of the Enlightenment tradition, known to us already from previous years: Stanisław Kostka Potocki, Stanisław Staszic, Kajetan Koźmian, and Rajmund Rembieleński.

The name 'voivodeship' (*województwo*), restored to determine the administrative units, was admittedly a tribute to the nobility-related tradition, whereas the voivodeship or provincial commission coming in place of prefecture might even have suggested that there was a will to resume a collective management system; in fact, the essence remained unaltered. It was stipulated, by means of a decision of the Viceroy (*Namiestnik*) of the Kingdom of Poland dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1816, that each voivodeship commission consist of a chairman and five commissioners, plus a group of seconded commissioners whose number would reflect the number of a voivodeship's districts (former counties). The body was to be divided into five departments: religious confessions and enlightenment (i.e. education); administrative; military; treasury (or, fiscal); and, police. The commission had its own chancellery, and its competencies seem to have reached broader than those of the Duchy's prefect office. This reach was determined based on the conviction of a state office's 'almightiness', as typical of the Enlightenment, and known to us from the previous years' developments. The professionalism of officials was not quit; indeed, the requirements were broadened: not only specified examinations but graduation from the relevant schools became requisite. For instance, the founding of a forestry school was heralded, whose completion was to be the prerequisite for one to obtain the office of forester and other functions in the state forests' administration.

All those extremely detailed provisions cannot veil the reality that the quality of expertness and clerical spirit varied by case. The decrees stipulating educational background requirements admitted manifold exceptions and only concerned new candidates, rather than applying to those already holding the offices. A mere third of the officials forming part of the Mazovian Voivodeship Commission between 1816 and 1830 had passed a clerical-qualification examination. The least number of those having passed the exam appeared among clerks, that is, at the very bottom of the ladder (which seems fair enough, as they were not expected to display great skills at work) and, characteristically enough, among the top officials. With the latter group, their background, connexions and social position superseded formal qualification.<sup>144</sup>

It seems that some of the top-ranked officials were deeply affected by the bureaucratic spirit and endeavoured to follow the new ideas in a better or worse

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144 W. Rostocki, *Pochodzenie społeczne, kwalifikacje i przebieg kariery urzędników Komisji Województwa Mazowieckiego w czasach Królestwa Polskiego (1816-1830)* ['The social origin, qualifications and course of careers of the Mazovian Voivodeship Commission officials in the Kingdom-of-Poland time, 1816-1830'], Warszawa 2002, p. 24.

fashion, which often triggered reluctance among the landed gentry. These 'new' officials included Bydgoszcz prefect Antoni Gliszczyński and Rajmund Rembieliński, prefect of Łomża. Kajetan Koźmian, who was an official himself but looked at the 'new people' in bureaucracy with disinclination, conveyed a very ironical portrait of Mr. Rembieliński – a conceited man, eager for power and snubbing the local nobility.

The new people were not necessarily better officials or clerks compared to the representatives of the former elites. The change of the system paved the way open to social advancement, which opportunity was taken advantage of, as was usual, by the most enterprising people, which is not to say the most conscientious and diligent ones. Kajetan Koźmian's *Memoirs* provide us with several examples of representatives of families 'of yore', holding their offices with the State Council or other high institutions but living a landed gentry's lifestyle apart from that. This author is himself an interesting example of a worldview that is best described as Enlightenment-age conservatism: he hates the former noble anarchy that, according to his conviction, had been Poland's undoing. He was an educated man, one of the most ardent proponents of classicism in Polish literature; hence, he had no perspicacity for the Sarmatian cultural tradition. He basically supported the idea to get the administration reorganised in the spirit of reinforced state authority. He was convinced, though, that this reorganised administration ought to be founded upon the landed gentry. He could not conceive of the idea that the country would be ruled by anyone not owning a landed property. Koźmian fulfilled his clerical duties as a secretary with the State Council, and simultaneously wrote his sizeable poem *Ziemiaństwo*, an apology of the role of the landed gentry/nobility modelled after Virgil's *The Georgics*.

Koźmian was a typical representative of his epoch: the period's testimonies show to us, time after time, individuals from such a clerical nobility, an 'intermediate' group situated somewhere 'in between' the landed gentry and the intelligentsia. A tension and a compromise between tradition and innovation is clearly seen in the justice and administration of law, where the novel institution of courts of peace, drawn from the French legal system, was cast with individuals who were doubtlessly closer to the Sarmatian tradition rather than to modern legalistic thought. Judges of peace, elected at noble assemblies (*sejmiks*), were not merely noblemen – they belonged to families enjoying respect in their local environments, considered their function to be prestigious and held it on an honorary basis; to require from them any legal educational background would be to miss the point, actually. So, did this arrive (as it might have seemed) as a defeat of the reformers? Not quite, for aside from the justice of the peace, there appeared his nominal report, the *podśędek* [i.e. district judge deputy; Latin,

*subiudex*], striving, in essence, for autonomy. This old name concealed a novel function: a *podśędek* was a professional, paid official with an expert education behind him.

The barrister milieu probably appeared more resistant to the changes than the judges reporting to the Commission of Justice. The Bar had long cherished the old nobility's tradition of their profession. A lawyer named Ziemięcki, seen after 1815 in Warsaw by young Kazimierz Wóycicki, dressed in "a *kontusz* and a *żupan*", i.e. a robe and an undergarment being elements of the Polish national dress, appeared to him as an epitome of the old-line Pole<sup>145</sup>. Marcelli Motty could remember from his childhood years a certain Waclaw Przepałkowski, one of the seven attorneys then practising in Poznań: "a hunched old fellow, always in a long navy-blue *czamara* [a kind of coat], burnt boots, a tall four-angular cap furnished with a *rydelek* [i.e. a point – M.J.], and a white scarf on his neck, his head grey-haired, his [hair] cut short. [...] He was born under the second Saxon king [i.e. during the reign of Augustus III the Saxon, 1733-1764 – M.J.], was a law apprentice and a *palestrant* [i.e. barrister] under King Stanislaus [Augustus], [...] and during the Duchy of Warsaw a *mecenas* [i.e. lawyer] with the Poznań Tribunal [...]. He had become acquainted sufficiently enough with the Prussian laws, albeit through their practice", and frequently "was used by our citizenship [i.e. citizens at large], particularly for matters where the Polish laws of yore had still to be consulted. As he was not capable of expressing himself in German [...], he obtained a permit for attending to the businesses and defending before the court in the Latin language, and he stuck to this till the end."<sup>146</sup> This extensive quote from a vivid description of a forgotten figure is quite purposeful: my wish here is for the reader to understand what actually is hidden under the unmeaning notion of *adwokat* (barrister/lawyer), and how close the Sarmatian tradition continued to be well into the 1820s.

How did such a 'mixed' system function in reality? Connexions and patronages did play an important role, but as we know, they are not characteristic just of the feudal system. One diarist tells us a story of his father who, upon bringing the son along to attend a school in Warsaw in 1809, made his first move in the city by visiting the deputy Minister of War and then toured some other officers' places, paying a visit to one of the examiners, a professor with the Warsaw Lyceum.

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145 K.W. Wóycicki, *Pamiętniki dziecka Warszawy i inne wspomnienia warszawskie* ['Memoirs of a child, and other Warsaw recollections'], ed. by J.W. Gomulicki, Z. Lewinówna, M. Grabowska, vol. 1, Warszawa 1974, p. 98.

146 M. Motty, *Przechadzki po mieście* ['Strolling through the city'], ed. by Z. Grot, vol. 1, Warszawa 1957, p. 177.

“My father [...] adhered to the principle that I, the young man, could not comprehend, whereby influence bears high importance in this miserable vale.”<sup>147</sup>

The powerfulness of connections might have been due not only to the enduring elements of a nobility-based political system, in combination with the universally prevalent characteristics of human nature, but also to the plain fact that the number of enlightened people was scarce, and they mostly knew one another and had shared acquaintances. This being the case, it would have proved very difficult to build an impersonal system that would resolve any and all questions based upon formal criteria, where the face of a cousin, godchild, neighbour, relative or in-law shone through every single matter or case being officially dealt with.

Anyone not belonging to the ‘society’, a non-nobleman, especially if a peasant, endeavouring to find justice with an office or court-of-law in the Duchy and subsequently, the Kingdom, could justifiably come to the impression that he was coming across some tight-knit clique, impregnable to any outside influence and setting up for itself the goal of acting in defence of the nobility’s holding. This is testified to, for instance, by the experience of Kazimierz Deczyński, a first-generation intellectual of peasant origin, the son of a serf. Owing to his self-will, with help from his father and a parson, Kazimierz was patented by the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment as a folk teacher in his native village. Dunning for peasants’ rights brutally breached by the village’s leaseholder, he was eventually, and contrary to the law, taken into the army; the renown of a rebel followed him until the November Insurrection.

Let us add that the border between the official and the private sphere, while obvious in theory, was practically not always so clear. Various officials, of higher and lower rank alike, often performed their duties in their own dwellings or palaces or, in converse cases, had their residences located beside their offices.

Still, the direction for a transformation had been set all the same. Influence always works bilaterally: accordingly, not only were the nobility subverting the bureaucratic system for their own insights and needs, but the system itself started gradually transforming the nobility’s consciousness and lifestyle. In the time of the Duchy of Warsaw, Warsaw saw its entire intellectual elite hold offices locally. Many a member of the Society of Friends of Learning worked as clerks or officials (let us quote, by way of example, the names of Stanisław Staszic, Józef Wybicki, Kajetan Koźmian, or the economist Wawrzyniec Surowiecki). This small group,

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147 K. Kołaczkowski, *Wspomnienia jenerała* [‘Memoirs of a general’], vol. 1, Kraków 1897, p. 23.

regardless of its members, was gradually becoming a new phenomenon within the structure of Polish society.

When speaking of offices, the army also merits mention: similarly to the administration, the Polish army radically altered its face during that time. First, the Duchy's army was very large. The Commonwealth had never delivered the Four Years' Sejm's resolution on an army of one hundred thousand and by the time the war with Russia broke out in 1792, the country was not capable of putting half of that figure in the field. The tiny Duchy, encompassing not even a fifth of the former state territory, put almost 100,000 soldiers in front of the Russian lines in 1812, the greatest military effort Poland had ever worked up. Second, the period's army was entirely different from that from before the Partition. In the Duchy of Warsaw, amidst continuous warfare, it still retained its somewhat 'civic' nature, comprising some number of people otherwise set far apart from professional military business, namely the poets Cyprian Godebski, Kazimierz Brodziński, and Antoni Malczewski. Professional officers, for a change, would stay within the army's ranks for long years, and an education standard might have been expected of them. Still, descent and money did not cease to be important for an officer's career, a reality which was particularly true for the prestigious formation of cavalry, where officers were to pay for the uniform and the horse by themselves. The importance of 'learned' weaponry such as artillery, sappers, or engineering troops grew. French officers – Mallet, Bontemps, and others – were delegated to help organise the Duchy's army. An Artillery Trainee School was set up in 1809; although it ceased to function with the fall of the Duchy, Prince Constantine established its successor institution, under the same name, in as early as 1820. The new school's commander was General Józef Sowiński, a graduate of the School of Knights. "Arranged after the French model, the school was excellent [...]; it was a school of jenerals-to-be, had not the revolution [i.e. the November Insurrection of 1830-1831 – M.J.] changed the state of affairs", concluded one of the lecturers in a clearly regretful tone at a later date.<sup>148</sup>

## 2. In the wake of the Commission of National Education

Until 1831, schooling systems in a large part of the Polish territory remained under the overwhelming influence of the Commission of National Education.

As the Duchy of Warsaw was established in 1807, the management of the education system was solved as follows: "Eforat, which has thus far only exercised

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148 J. Jaszowski, *Pamiętnik dowódcy rakietników konnych* ['Memoirs of a mounted racketeers' commander'], ed. by J. Łojek, Warszawa 1968, p. 156.

suzerainty over the [Warsaw] Lyceum”, was ranked as an “Educational Chamber”, entrusted with the “overall custody of national education and public enlightenment”.<sup>149</sup> This body continued to operate with unaltered cast of members, continually chaired by Stanisław-Kostka Potocki. 1811 saw the Chamber turned into an Educational Board, whose members were paid salaries of 4,000 to 8,000 zloty each (which, according to the aforementioned fiscal tariff, ranked them as class six and eight, which was quite high). A ten-member chancellery (a considerable size) was attached to the Board.

In the Kingdom of Poland, Stanisław-Kostka Potocki headed the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, holding the office until his forced resignation in 1820. His dismissal is commonly regarded by historians as the moment liberal ideas were quit in the Kingdom’s political life. Consequently, the period of 1805 to 1820 may be referred to as the ‘S.K. Potocki era’ in the Polish education and school systems. Together with his associates, Potocki laid organisational and personal foundations for the perseverance of the ideas of the Commission of National Education, so sound that in spite of a conservative turn that followed, these ideas did not cease to exert a fundamental influence on education throughout the constitutional Kingdom’s existence. Of the persons of merits for the Polish Enlightenment, those collaborating with Potocki, in various periods, included Onufry Kopczyński (then, the Provincial of the Piarist Order), Stanisław Staszic, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, Samuel-Bogumił Linde, and Wojciech Szwejkowski, Rector of the University of Warsaw, to name the major few.

It was clear already for the Commission of National Education that school was an important part of state authorities’ influence on the society. King Stanislaus Augustus’ time did not offer any real opportunities in this respect, though. It was only in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that Polish enlightened milieus became enthusiastic about the prospects of having their society transformed by way of appropriate education, once the experiences of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic system and, on the other hand, closer acquaintance with the Prussian and Habsburg absolutism pointed to the seemingly limitless potential of state authorities.

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149 *Zasady do urzędzenia Komisji Rządzącej i innych władz jej podległych, 26 I 1807* [‘The principles for the arrangement of the Governing Commission and other authorities subordinate thereto, 26<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1807’], in: *Organizacja administracyjna Komisji Rządzącej r. 1807. Wybór dokumentów* [‘Administrative organisation of the Governing Commission, of the year 1807’], ed. by M. Handelsman, Warszawa 1917, pp. 5-14; quote on p. 12, par. 66.

There is no one here who would consider education to be a separate branch, autonomous from the government; they consider it only to be a means of dispensing knowledge. Governments have understood how mighty is the influence education exerts by modifying, according to its will, young people's minds, this being one of the mightiest reasons for establishing magistracies whereto oversight over public education is entrusted. [A magistracy of this kind] governs the public spirit in line with the impulses which the government is willing to set therefor.

S. Potocki, *Le tableau de l'éducation publique*, quoted after: R. Dutkowa, *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w czasach Księstwa Warszawskiego. Szkoła Główna Krakowska w latach 1809-1814* ['The Jagiellonian University in the time of the Duchy of Warsaw. The Krakow Main School in 1809-1814'], Wrocław 1965, pp. 46-47.

Apart from the hope that its power would mould the society, educational policy was dictated by the need to educate workers for emerging institutions. It may be summarised that, using its institutions, the bureaucratic state was creating a demand for intelligentsia, and thus had to find ways to satisfy this demand.

For the first two years of its existence, the Duchy had no university; the Krakow Academy, taken over in 1809 (and officially called the Main School since the time of the Commission of National Education), was too remote from the Duchy's administrative centre; in fact, it was beset by decay after attempts made by the Austrians to Germanise it. Once Krakow was made part of the Duchy, Hugo Kołłątaj, who had reformed the School in the Commission's period, considered it obvious that the Krakow Academy would reassume its former function as the Main Crown School, controlling the Duchy's school system (a function analogous to that performed by the Wilno University in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian territory). This idea came across opposition from Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, chairman of the Educational Chamber, as well as from Stanisław Staszic, who always supported possibly centralistic solutions. Staszic believed that instead of preserving the solutions proposed by the Commission, the school system ought to be reorganised after the French models. It is hard to avoid the impression that personal animosities and Kołłątaj's efforts to introduce former Jacobins into the Duchy's authorities, along with the Warsaw politicians' reluctance toward these designs and, lastly, the age-old rivalry between Warsaw and Krakow had more of a say there than any substantive differences between those people, who were after all very close to one another in all issues of primary importance. Kołłątaj finally lost the struggle and the Main School was subordinated, together with all the other schools, to the School Supervision. The main loser in this conflict was the School itself, which was deprived of any form of autonomy, and a group of talented lecturers, such as Feliks Radwański, the physician Sebastian Girtler, and Feliks Słowiński, a recent graduate; all of them, regarded as members of the Kołłątaj faction, stepped away from the Academy more or less willingly. They could return only after 1815.

The dispute surrounding the Krakow school clearly shows, apart from anything else, that the desires of an enlightened bureaucratic state outgrew its actual potential. The Educational Chamber took the supervision of schools away from the Krakow Academy, but the central authority possessed an insufficient number of school-system administrators; hence, the School Supervision, which in theory was a state administration institution, was made up of Krakow notables. One of them was a Krakow bishop; another, a certain Franciszek Borgiasz Piekarski, a judge, wanted to augment the state authorities' savings and proposed that the Academy's budget be reduced to a minimum. Professors, he argued, are working for the public good, and so can be satisfied with a lower salary; besides, doctors and lawyers as well as professors of the sciences we would describe today as humanities can earn their money outside a university: doctors and lawyers through the private practice, professors of humanities – as private teachers. This traditional nobility-grounded predilection for the idea of a 'cheap state', a country where a possibly large number of functions would be fulfilled on an honorary basis, was directly opposite to the ideals advocated by the Polish enlightened generation whose utmost wish would be that the entire administration be performed by paid officials obedient to the central government. Unfortunately, the money was always scarce, there were not enough people and, in effect, the new system-wide structural ideas assumed a thoroughly traditional shape, as in the case in question. The Educational Chamber was reducing the Krakow Academy's budget not for any ideological reason but because the situation had forced it to. Yet, by doing so, it was quitting its own intention to have the education system reformed. Situations of this sort tended to happen often, as new trends tended to be modified, affected as they were by the prevailing conditions.

Even under such unfavourable conditions, the Krakow Academy realised, at least to an extent, what was actually expected from it. This school launched lectures on the Code of Napoleon and on the Duchy's Constitution; Sebastian Girtler made attempts to make 'sanitary police' lectures part of the medical studies' syllabus; in a word, the spirit of the time was generally being followed. This was not sufficient for the Warsaw-based officials, but it would not have been realistic all the same to expect a quickly produced advantage from the Academy as a supplier of personnel for the Duchy's bureaucracy. It is often easier to set up a new institution than reform an old one; it is no surprise, then, that endeavours were made to establish a university in Warsaw. The Law and Medicine departments were crucial: the former for educating lawyers and the latter for educating medical doctors, who were made indispensable by the enlightened authorities' efforts to enhance standards of hygiene among the people and, even more, by the redeveloped armed forces. As a first step, a School of Law was organised in 1808,

along with a School of Administration (1811) and a School of Medicine (1809), all based partly upon the Warsaw Lyceum cadre and students. Before any new blood could be produced, the Duchy of Warsaw was seized by the Russian army, following Napoleon's defeat in Russia in 1812. Efforts to extend of the School of Law and School of Medicine into a full-fledged tertiary school were however not discontinued. Actually, in 1816 Tsar Alexander I would sign a diploma inaugurating a university; the school was made operational two years later.

It was in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that enlightened-absolutist states endeavoured to transform their universities into 'factories' producing civil or public servants. Enlightened despots needed a 'useful' instruction and were transforming university-level schools along these lines, reducing their number and limiting their autonomy at the same time. The University of Lviv was a tertiary school of this sort, established by Emperor Joseph II, who believed that "university studies are meant but to educate public servants, rather than to create scholars. [...] I am not certain whether there is a single example of a [university] department that has educated a scholar."<sup>150</sup> But there were new ideas occurring in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – first, in Prussia, wherefrom they reverberated across Europe: Wilhelm von Humboldt, one of the founders of the new university in Berlin, advocated the completely opposite idea according to which a university was to cultivate knowledge, offer an educational-cultural formation (*Bildung*), and help the individual fulfil his potential.

Although set up ten years after the Berlin university, the University of Warsaw still belonged to the preceding period: its main task was to educate officials. It would be rather pointless to resent those who created it: the scarcity of bureaucratic personnel was a basic problem for the new state. The Rev. Wojciech Szweykowski, an ex-Piarist, was made the University's Rector; in a beautiful inaugural address, he briefed listeners on the late-Enlightenment ideas of the role of science and reason in the society. The Statutes of 1821 emphasised the utilitarian purpose of that University.

The Warsaw University was regarded as inferior to its Wilno counterpart; compared to Wilno, it was more oriented toward a practical knowledge indispensable for future officials. It is perhaps this practicality that explains why the Wilno students were so enthusiastic about the lectures given by Joachim Lelewel, who in Warsaw would have an audience of three at a time. These lectures were

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150 A memo of Joseph II of 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1781, quoted by Ludwik Finkiel in: L. Finkiel, S. Starzyński, *Historia uniwersytetu lwowskiego* ['A history of the University of Lwów'], Lwów 1894, p. 46.

not compulsory and proved unattractive to students oriented to making a career quickly. Within the thirteen years of the University's activity, 1818-1831, its collections of books and research instruments were growing, its ateliers, laboratories and 'closets' devoted to specific domains of knowledge were being extended. Detailed inventory lists from that period enable us to feel very closely the material sphere of the period's science. So, the mineralogical closet appearing in our minds' eyes features forty-five (as many as that!) "alder-tree, mahogany-lacquered, glazed and ferruled cabinets, containing minerals"; as well as twenty-one "alder-tree, mahogany-lacquered, ferruled tables, glazed across the top, featuring minerals"; there are nine "mahogany-lacquered cuspidors", adding to the closet's equipment.<sup>151</sup> The Astronomical Observatory (in Ujazdowskie Avenue, next to Łazienki Park), arranged and equipped with a great care by Mr. Armiński, an astronomy professor, had in its stock a mysterious appliance called a "grand parallactic machine", along with a "hand-operated mahogany lunette, for searching for comets".<sup>152</sup>

Space for the growing number of incoming collections at times grew scarce. A stuffed elephant, donated for the zoological closet by the emperor, as a token of his grace, caused an unprecedented problem. Delighted with the new acquisition, Professor Jarocki, a zoologist, requested the rector to provide for the elephant-specimen display purpose the room where architecture was lectured on (on the ground-floor of today's Historical Institute). Rector Szweykowski replied rather coldly that "there will be another place allocated for the elephant", whereas the two hundred students cannot be deprived of a "decent room for drawings".<sup>153</sup>

At the same time, the Krakow Academy all of a sudden saw itself, in 1815, as part of a tiny Republic of Krakow. The Academy was regarded to be of a lower standard than its Warsaw or Wilno counterparts, and its financial standing was certainly worse than theirs. It was less populous too: whereas in the early 1820s, the number of students easily exceeded three hundred, the academic year 1823/1824 saw the figure reduced to around two hundred, which was due to the dismissal from Krakow by the Warsaw authorities of all the students being subjects of the Kingdom of Poland. The number hit three hundred and a few dozen in the late 1820s/early 1830s, but it remained a fact that the Jagiellonian University was the least populous tertiary school in the Polish lands of the

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151 Quoted after the Statutes of the University of Warsaw, 1821, Title III, Paragraph 57. The Statutes are published in: J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet Warszawski (1816-1831)* ["The Royal University of Warsaw, 1816-1831"] vol. 1, Warszawa 1907, pp. 554-555.

152 Ibidem, p. 496.

153 Ibidem, p. 536.

time. Contrary to its Warsaw peer, however, the Krakow school proved capable of combining pedagogical and research/scientific activities. 1815 saw the establishment of the Krakow University Scientific Society, whose ex-officio members were all the professors (active as well as retired) and which could be joined by other citizens active in the field of sciences and scientific research. The Society published its *Annals*, but was not held in much esteem by its contemporaries as a scientific or research institution. One of the reasons might have been that most of the professors – clearly, doctors and lawyers most of all – spent a lot of their time earning their living outside of the University.

The University of Lwów is worth at least mentioning. Founded by the Austrian authorities in 1784 in place of a former Jesuit academy, established in 1661 by King John II Casimir (Jan II Kazimierz), it was made practice-oriented to an extent even more obvious than its Warsaw counterpart. A provincial school, this university was meant to provide staff for a poor hinterland area, located remotely from the state's centre. Professors from the whole monarchy area, usually second-rank ones, delivered their lectures there in Latin. Still, Balthasar Hacquet, author of one of the earliest scientific descriptions of the Carpathians, is worth mentioning in this context. The Lwów University educated a number of lawyers, of whom a few took later on the chairs of Law at the Krakow Academy; one of the local teachers, who expected to get such a post himself, inveighed that “once-Galician barristers, having come from Lviv”<sup>154</sup>, took employment opportunities away from the locals. The university was tied up in 1805, following the Commonwealth's Third Partition of 1795. The Krakow Academy was made part of Austria and it was decided that one university would suffice for the entire province. When Krakow was incorporated into the Duchy of Warsaw in 1809, Galicia, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Partition area, consequently remained without a university-level school; the Lviv University was restored only in 1817. German was made the lecturing language in 1824. Although the University of Lwów was doubtless the weakest scientifically of all its peers in the Polish territory, its connection with the Polish cultural life cannot be called into question. This school is certainly not to be neglected, given the number of its students; in a survey of the period's educational institutions as of 1823, the 1,400 students attending almost equalled the Warsaw, Krakow and Wilno attendance in aggregate.

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154 These words were uttered by Józef Kozłowski, a teacher in Pińczów and later, anatomy professor in Krakow; quoted after: R. Dutkowa, *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w czasach Księstwa Warszawskiego. Szkoła Główna Krakowska w latach 1809-1814* [‘The Jagiellonian University in the Duchy-of-Warsaw time. The Krakow Main School in 1809 to 1814’], Wrocław 1965, p. 108.

Folk schools stood at the other end of the educational ladder. Their development took place in Potocki's time and by 1814, there were almost 1,500 such schools in the Duchy, with 44,000 students; six years later, in the Kingdom (a territory smaller by a fourth), there were more than 1,200 folk schools, attended by almost 38,000 pupils. After Potocki resigned, the number of folk schools decreased. For the purpose of our present topic, those institutions are not of primary importance. The rudiments of knowledge they provided were by no means sufficient for a student to be regarded as an educated person; on the other hand, completion of a folk school course was not a prerequisite for enrolment with a grammar school at all. Most of the educated people were taught their elementary knowledge at home, the grammar school being the first school they came across. Although most folk-school students did not continue their education, one ought to bear in mind a small but essential group of people to whom these schools paved the way for further education and social advancement.

Secondary schools, however, are of keen interest for us. Referred to as departmental schools in the Duchy of Warsaw and voivodeship [*resp.* provincial] schools in the Kingdom of Poland, they essentially were former *gimnazjums* ('gymnasiums', i.e. grammar/high schools) dating back to the period of the Commission of National Education, not infrequently tracing their origins back to congregation-run colleges. The Duchy had a total of eleven schools of this type in 1814; two years later, the Kingdom appeared to have as many voivodeship schools (the gymnasiums of Poznań, Toruń and Krakow being put aside, since these towns remained outside of the borders then; instead, the schools in Radom, Łuków and Kielce had been ranked with peer status). Four voivodeship schools were managed by the Piarist Order, a meaningful testimony of the significance this congregation continually enjoyed in the domain of education. Apart from departmental or voivodeship schools, offering a complete secondary-education (six-grade) syllabus, there were so-called 'faculty' and 'sub-faculty' schools (four- and two-grade ones, respectively), in theory following the same curriculum as the corresponding grades of voivodeship schools but at a lower teaching standard, in practice. Thus, their graduates would often lose a grade within their course of learning (e.g. four grades of a faculty school equalled three with a voivodeship school). A lot of the noble youth who did not aspire for university-level studies concluded their education at the faculty-school level. In principle, each county (*powiat*) town was to host a faculty school, and each small town, a sub-faculty school. In reality, the number of faculty schools did not ever exceed a dozen, either in the Duchy or subsequently in the Kingdom; the 1820s saw a trend of liquidating sub-faculty schools (which was usually done by their promotion to the faculty-school rank): on the eve of the November Uprising, there were but three such schools remaining.

The curriculum binding in the Duchy was closer in concept and content to the general education standard patronised by the Commission of National Education, than to the German philological gymnasiums, which followed the principles of neo-humanism. According to a timetable of 1812, grade six of a departmental school taught Polish for two hours per week, French for five hours, German for one hour, and Latin for nine hours; Greek was optional. Two hours per week each were focused on Arithmetic and Geometry; the same number of hours was devoted to General History and the History of Poland, Physics, and Chemistry; Natural History (biology) took one hour a week. Art was taught for two hours in a week; Law (the Duchy's Constitution) and Religious Education were lectured on for one hour a week each. In sum, the teaching load for each class amounted to thirty-two hours a week<sup>155</sup>, and so was not much different from what Polish secondary schools offer today. In the 1820s, the number of Religious Education teaching hours increased, the Constitution stopped being read, the natural sciences were limited and Greek was made obligatory, along with a new subject called 'Moral and Manners Instruction'. As we can see, the neo-humanistic ideas (the Greek!) were gradually acquiring their 'citizenship' rights, along with the new conservative line increasingly reflected in the curricula after Potocki's dismissal. Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski, an ideologist of the official conservatism, had a much further-fetched concept: he was willing to extend dormitories annexed to voivodeship schools so that the young dwellers could be better controlled; he also had the idea to bring into the Kingdom the Jesuit Order, recently reactivated by the Pope, and to entrust thereto the management of schools. These ideas were not realistic: there was no money available for student boarding houses, and the Jesuit Order had just been abolished in the Russian Empire by Alexander I. The inertia of the existing system worked in this case to the benefit of the heritage of the Commission of National Education: out of the great ideas of conservative reform, a broadened scope of religious instruction and a moral or social instruction were made part of the syllabus.

The situation of the educational system in the other two partitioned areas was less advantageous. Galicia had retained a mere handful of gymnasiums out of twenty-one congregational schools that existed in this territory before 1772. In the Prussian Partition, the Grand Duchy of Poznań (German: *Großherzogtum Posen*) was established in 1815, spanning across the area of the Duchy of Warsaw

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155 A. Winiarz, *Szkolnictwo Księstwa Warszawskiego i Królestwa Polskiego (1807-1831)* ['The school and education system in the Duchy of Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland, 1807-1831'], Lublin 2002, p. 206.

that had been attached to Prussia under the Vienna Treaty (except for Toruń/Thorn and thereabouts, which were incorporated into the province of West Prussia). The Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm III promised in his appeal to the local people of 15<sup>th</sup> May 1815 that the Duchy's institutional autonomy would be observed and the rights of the Polish language in public life respected, the same being true for Poles' equal right to access offices with the other subjects. The king moreover promised that the office of governor would be established and filled with a Pole; Prince Antoni Radziwiłł, a relative of the royal Prussian family, was eventually appointed a Duke-Governor (*ksiązę-namiestnik*; German, *Statthalter*). Although the Prussian authorities never treated Polish culture as equivalent, deeming its gradual assimilation into German culture as the most plausible course of events, a Germanisation policy was generally not applied on any larger scale before 1831. Among the schools formerly in operation in the area of the Duchy of Warsaw, two secondary-level institutions, the departmental school in Toruń and the faculty school in Bydgoszcz, now saw themselves located outside of the territory of the Grand Duchy of Poznań. Both were turned into German gymnasiums. Within the Duchy itself, as a result of a series of transformations, two gymnasiums remained (in Poznań and Leszno) as well as several so-called pro-gymnasiums, in Wschowa/Fraustadt and Trzemeszno/Tremessen. The educational institutions reported to the competent ministry in Berlin.

The Poznań gymnasium was run since 1815 by Jan-Samuel Kaulfuss, the man we have already met in this story. Following the guidelines of the Prussian education authorities (and probably, his own convictions too), he transformed the school in a classical spirit. The gymnasium was purely Polish in 1815 as far as the language was concerned; however, German was becoming increasingly important. In the context of the earlier pro-Polish opinions Kaulfuss had come out with earlier, his new policy is astonishing, as he proved himself to be a resolute adherent of the school's Germanisation. As for the language, the opinions were not unanimous among the Prussian educational authorities, and the rules concerning the domain of both languages were consequently amended several times. The result was that by 1829, a system had been developed whereby three lower grades were divided into two faculties, a Polish and a German one, whereas the contents of the three upper grades were to be taught in both languages, German prevailing. The Poznań gymnasium's attendance was quite large; the 1820s saw above 500 schoolboys attending at a time (over twice the total number of Jagiellonian University students in the period!).

The gymnasium in Leszno had German as the official language of instruction. The town was prevalently German and Protestant, but owing to a considerable number of Polish students from the local noble families, lessons in Polish were

launched as well. Religious education was also taught in Polish, the language of the majority. There were a few Polish teachers working for the school; the principal, Johann-Christoph Stoephasius, a German classical philologist and former professor with the Warsaw Lyceum, was benignant to the Poles (Marceli Motty gave a laudatory account of him), and tolerated the use of Polish while teaching other subjects as well. A final secondary-school examination, opening the way to university-level studies, could be taken after completion of the gymnasium course in the partitioned area; this had been possible in Prussia since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and was subsequently extended to the Partition area. However, only a small number of students, those who really intended to continue their education, resolved to take this exam.

In order to make the picture of secondary education in the capital town of Greater Poland (Wielkopolska) fairly complete, a teachers' 'seminary' (training school) in Poznań ought to be mentioned (with its lectures in Polish till 1824 and then on, mostly in German), offering a two-year course of studies, along a few private secondary schools for girls (of which none had a curriculum any closer to that of a gymnasium).

A teachers' stratum was not reconstructed in the Kingdom of Poland as a separate corporation which would follow the patterns laid down by the Commission of National Education. The regulations determined the status of, separately, folk-school teachers, gymnasium professors and university staff, which in turn was divisible into a few categories. Representatives of the lowest-ranking one, the *magister* (master's) degree (an equivalent of what is assistant/associate lecturer today), did not receive any money but could, like mediaeval university lecturers, collect a fee from students. In theory, teacher training (which applied at least to teachers from voivodeship schools) was to be provided by the university; in practice, however, there functioned a group of so-called collaborators, or auxiliary teachers, consisting of graduates who had stayed with the school to be trained and educated as aspiring teachers. Some were sent by the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, at the Government's expense, to Warsaw to take up their studies there.

Efforts were made to continue a scholarship policy, to the extent feasible. The Duchy of Warsaw's education authorities dispatched a total of fourteen people to complete their studies abroad. Some of them encountered severe financial trouble in the years 1813 to 1815, the time the Duchy was controlled by the Russian army, its institutions operating in quite an irregular manner; sending money to those studying abroad was certainly not a matter of priority then. One such Duchy scholarship holder was the physicist Józef Skrodzki (1784-1832), later on a professor with the University of Warsaw and its interim rector in 1831;

another one was Adam Kitajewski, a chemistry professor in his later years. In his official autobiography, written on the demand of the University authorities, the latter boasted about his having “made his way from Berlin to Paris on foot, stopping and taking a roundabout way wherever possible so that he would have an opportunity to look closer at the factories and the metallurgical industry. During a holiday, he made a journey on foot from Paris to the south of France.”<sup>156</sup>

Wilno, and Krzemieniec too, albeit to a lesser extent, sent its students on scholarships; but the situation changed for the better once the Napoleonic wars were over. Although the number of scholarly trips, measured to the standards of our time, was not impressive, a few dozen people trained by Western universities had within fifteen years already formed an intellectual capital. All had written a journey report, and some of the trips resulted in books written after their authors’ return. A common destination was Germany, (which name extended to the German-speaking part of Austria); Italy and Great Britain were the less frequent targets.

It is worth mentioning the planned action of sending abroad a group of young people displaying technological interests, first to Petersburg and subsequently to the famous *École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées* of Paris. Once back home, they formed the cadre of the first Polish technology university, becoming professors with the Polytechnic [i.e. technological] Institute’s Preparatory School. By that time, technological sciences, if ever taught in Poland, had been entrusted, domestic specialists excepted, to foreign experts, and they were consequently lectured in foreign languages, usually German. Such was the case with the Academic and Mining School, opened 1816 in Kielce under the care of Stanisław Staszic and operating until 1828. The Warsaw University of Technology, whose organisation had not been completed before the November Insurrection outbreak, was founded almost entirely upon Polish specialist personnel educated abroad and lecturing in Polish; thus, the core of the Polish technological vocabulary is credited to these people.

Another school whose foundation had to do with foreign travel is Warsaw’s Institute of the Deaf and the Dumb, founded 1816 and continually housed from 1827 until the present day in a building at Trzech-Krzyży Square. The Institute’s founder, the Rev. Jakub Falkowski, a Piarist (1775-1848), held in his young years a scholarship granted by the Prussian Government and during his studies abroad came across Prussian pedagogical methods for the deaf and dumb. In 1815-1816, Falkowski was on a National Education Board scholarship in Vienna and Bavaria,

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156 Quoted after: J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet...*, vol. 3, Warszawa 1912, p. 237.

enjoying financial support from Princess Izabela Czartoryska. He founded the Institute after he returned. Stanisław Staszic, the man who supported so many other education-related projects, was among those who contributed financially to the construction of this Institute's edifice.

Young artists were also among those who made the trip. Many artistic professions had progressed by then, their representatives being increasingly frequently considered part of the educated elite.

Scholarship holders were furnished with extensive sets of instructions to follow on the journey and were bound to send detailed accounts or reports. Perhaps these documents would not tell us completely sincerely what those young people were doing during their foreign trips; writing official reports has always been a special sort of skill. These instructions and reports excellently prove, though, what was expected from a young man on his journey. Hugo Kołłątaj wrote in 1805 a pedantic set of instructions for a teacher of the Volhynian Gymnasium in Krzemieniec, who expected to obtain a governmental scholarship for his travel abroad. The journey could not be made as devised by Kołłątaj, since the days he was writing his instructions were exactly the time Russia was preparing for a war with France, and no research travel across the continent whatsoever could have taken place for more than twelve months. What Kołłątaj wrote on the occasion is enormously interesting all the same, showing that the trip was not only meant to serve a specialised educational purpose: the voyaging young man was to become acquainted with the institutions, economy, and ideas of the Western world, the expectation being that, once back home, he should join the modest group of Polish modernisation pioneers.

A scholarship holder from Wilno sent to Italy was supposed to pay attention to different phenomena: in line with neo-humanistic ideas (whose foothold was Professor Ernest Groddeck's classical seminary in Wilno), he was primarily to become acquainted with the rules of scholarly textual criticism. These scholarship holders were expected to become 'worthy of the position of ancient literature professor' one day. Again, the purpose was not pure science but the influence of learning and knowledge on society.

As ever, aristocrats sent their offspring abroad and sought private instructors for them. A magnate would at times offer such a tutor an opportunity to pursue his own research and scientific activity. Two wards of the Czartoryski family: Karol Sienkiewicz, a librarian from Puławy, and Krystyn Lach-Szyrma, later a professor, could thus visit Great Britain. Samuel-Bogumił Linde, before appointed director of the Warsaw Lyceum, was a librarian to the learned magnate Józef-Maksymilian Ossoliński (known as the founder of the Ossolineum) and travelled in his company to Vienna.

Occasionally, students initiated their trips too: since the Prussian authorities refused to consent to open a Polish university in Poznań, many Polish young people studied at German higher education institutions, mainly in Wrocław/Breslau and Berlin. Endeavours to obtain a scholarship sometimes proved intricate. Not everyone willing to leave could do so. Franciszek Malewski's road to a scholarship was clear – he was born the son of a university rector. He stayed in Germany for a few years, first at the expense of his father and then as a university scholarship holder. This patronage came as help to a man who deserved it, in this case: intelligent and very studious, Malewski was perfectly predisposed for making his foreign studies advantageous and fruitful. He attended Hegel's lectures in Berlin and visited the liberal hub of Göttingen, against his father's better judgment; during his holiday, he visited Jelenia-Góra (Hirschberg-im-Riesengebirge), the romantic castle of Chojnik/Kynast, and went on a hike in the Karkonosze Mountains. He descended on the Bohemian side, walked on foot up to Prague, became enchanted with the town, and met the luminaries of the Bohemian or Czech National Revival. He enthusiastically described the excursion to his friends in a long letter.

### 3. The new people

Where were the people who populated all the new and old elementary, secondary and tertiary schools, offices and permanent posts coming from?

The issue of the social genealogy of the Polish intelligentsia has prompted researchers to fill stacks of sheets of paper; it is perhaps worth remembering what the primary difficulty is all about, avoiding any repetition of what was said in the preceding chapters. Statistical sources are quite incomplete. For instance, knowing that out of the 966 teachers in Warsaw secondary schools in the years between 1795 and 1862, of whom any biographical data is preserved, almost every fourth (specifically, 22.5%) was of noble descent, we are aware that there is no data available for the parentage of more than a half of those teachers.<sup>157</sup> Consequently, what should the quoted figure actually stand for? There is no reason to believe that an equal percentage of those whose origin is unknown to us did not have noble roots as well.

Moreover, the criteria used in the available sources to describe one's ancestry prove extremely hazy. The partitioning states had verified the noble status, so as

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157 J. Schiller, *Portret zbiorowy nauczycieli warszawskich publicznych szkół średnich 1795-1866* [A group portrait of Warsaw public secondary-school teachers, 1795-1866], Warszawa 1998, p. 134.

to render the Polish ideas of nobility suitable within the new political framework. This process took the most ruthless form in the Russian Partition, where it was aimed at debilitating the Polish nobility as a dangerous group. It was requisite that documents proving one's nobility status be produced, a demand unheard of in the Commonwealth. A considerable group of nobility, mostly its indigent representatives, had no papers to support their status with, and thus in the end it was not confirmed. On the other hand, the Commonwealth of King Stanislaus Augustus performed its own ennoblement policy, accepting a number of burghers to the crest of nobility during the Great Sejm period. Also the partitioner states ennobled people they deemed merited it. As a result, even though objections to the incompleteness of the sources could be neglected, we would never know what in particular a university student would mean by remarking in the submitted documents that he was of a noble family. Did he mean the nobility that was positively verified by the partition authorities, or the former nobility which, although officially declassified, continued to preserve all signs of its former status? Or, perhaps the new nobility was created by the partitioning monarchs but not accepted in every case by Polish society?

Similar problems are encountered with certain other terms the available sources use. The result is that we cannot presently determine the extent to which the formerly existing social groups had made up the newer, and much more blurrily defined, group of intellectual workers. We may guess that the share of individuals of noble origin must have been relatively large. How large, we do not know. What is more, we are not completely certain whether the influence of the noble element in the bosom of Polish intelligentsia was growing or decreasing over time. On the one hand, we know that nineteenth-century socioeconomic transformations meant the gradual twilight of the significance of the nobility in the long run. This should mean that the social composition of the intelligentsia would be democratised. On the other hand, this twilight entailed an exodus of nobility to the towns and, consequently, the role of the noble element among the intelligentsia increased.

Sometimes it does seem that the stigma of nobility was impressed on the group of our present interest during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century even more strongly than a generation earlier. Among the Wilno University professors of Polish nationality, all but one were noblemen in 1805; there were simultaneously non-noble foreigners employed, seven professorship holders among them.<sup>158</sup>

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158 D. Beauvois, *Szkolnictwo polskie na ziemiach litewsko-ruskich 1803-1831* [‘The Polish school and educational system in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian territory, 1803-1831’], transl. into Polish by I. Kania, vol. 1, Lublin 1991, p. 100.

In Stanislaus Augustus' time, a group of intellectual workers coming from abroad or advancing commoners, even if very small, could quite add character to the community in question. Now that new career opportunities had been opened up, the number of aliens increased, but those new opportunities were obviously easier to access for those who had better access to education. Another advantage would have been connexions with representatives of then-existing elites, which opened access to newly created posts. It is quite clear that the nobility was a privileged group of this sort, and even more clear that the potential advancement of peasants, as well as of the Jewry, was still prevented by the law.

Let us now take a closer look at the exemplary vicissitudes of an individual. Klemens Kołaczkowski was born (in 1793) to a noble family of moderate means in the Poznań region. His father tried to modernise their husbandry practices, mending the farm buildings and planting poplar trees along the roads, and made the estate increasingly indebted. One of his villages was bought in 1827 by a 'wine merchant of Poznań'; two other villages were sold to German hands. In 1804, the father had his son sent to schools in Wroclaw/Breslau (this being the simplest option for a Prussian-Partition dweller willing to ensure his son higher education with a Catholic school within the limits of Prussia). The education young Klemens thus obtained was very careful: along with a regular study at the Catholic college – a school that had replaced a former Jesuit university – private *maîtres* (instructors) taught him draughtsmanship, swordsmanship, horse-riding, pianoforte playing, the French language, Polish literature, mathematics, geography, history, and modern and classical languages. "To complement all this, so that my mind could be better opened, an old Jew visited me for six months to teach me how to play chess".<sup>159</sup> This lasted till autumn 1806: the Prussian monarchy unexpectedly fell under the blows of Napoleon, within the matter of a few weeks. The Poznań district, the Kołaczkowski family hub, became part of the newly-emerged Duchy of Warsaw. Klemens's parents moved to Poznań where his mother "opened her house and started receiving guests in the evenings", whereas the father "offered his civic services to the emerging administration and zealously started working for it as a prefecture consiliary"<sup>160</sup> (note: the picture reappears of a nobleman who cannot manage his husbandry tasks well enough and so tries his luck with a governmental service). The young Kołaczkowski was still studying in Wroclaw and together with his father finally arrived in Warsaw, in the spring of 1809, where he joined the army (accepted to its ranks owing to either

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159 K. Kołaczkowski, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 16.

160 Ibidem, p. 21.

his good knowledge of languages or the patronage of his father's acquaintances, as he pondered in his memoirs). Until the November Insurrection (1830/1831), he lived the life of professional army officer, but he was not a typical specimen as he stood out with his educational background amidst the military personnel. In the 1820s, he was a lecturer with the Artillery Trainee School established by Grand Prince Constantine.

In his memoirs, Kołaczkowski expressed gratitude to his father for the “blessing of the careful nurture that has become the foundation for my future profession”<sup>161</sup> – a blessing which eventually proved more important than the landed estate he was never to inherit. This significant declaration of a hierarchy of values (there being no reason to question its frankness) generated no ‘social’ consequences, though: our learned soldier was rubbing shoulders with landed proprietors and even with aristocrats. His memoirs meticulously named the houses he was paying visits to, in Warsaw and Krakow alike. (Klemens stayed in Krakow for some time in 1823, managing the demarcation of the border between the Kingdom of Poland and the tiny Krakow Republic.) He frequently emphasises the intellectual values of the various lords and ladies, while making it clear between the lines that the key to the contacts he was establishing was his hosts’ social, rather than intellectual, standing. The minutely described characteristics he provides of the Krakow and Warsaw milieus are followed by a single-sentence mention that he also met certain university professors. He paid visits to what he considered secondary salons in Warsaw, run by the Gliszczyński and Rembieliński family, or by Prince Drucki-Lubecki. On writing his memoirs, Kołaczkowski did not deem it appropriate to focus but for a little while on those salons themselves, and yet Antoni Gliszczyński and Rajmund Rembieliński, not to mention the Treasury Minister Prince Franciszek-Ksawery Drucki-Lubecki, ranked among the most interesting public-life personages in the Duchy and the Kingdom! Those must clearly have been abodes too humble for Mr. Kołaczkowski, though.

But there came a surprise one day. The man became desirous to marry; his wife-to-be was Miss Antonina Michałowska, daughter of a Krakow Republic senator, member of a cultured and enlightened family. (Her brother Piotr, a talented and educated man, “was later made director of the Suchedniów and Samsonów ironworks and factories”; moreover, as Kołaczkowski mentions completely in passing, he could paint, it was said, quite nicely.<sup>162</sup>) The maiden’s father, who appeared favourable to the proposal, turned a very kind-hearted eye on

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161 Ibidem, p. 16.

162 Ibidem, vol. 2, Kraków 1899, p. 163.

the suitor, and himself presented precise terms to him: Klemens was supposed to prove that he possessed the sum of 200,000 zloty, so he could purchase a landed estate “in the Krakow region or elsewhere in Poland”.<sup>163</sup> The young man, for whom an army captain’s wage was the only source of income, addressed his father for help, but there was no way to squeeze the money out of a property that was about to go bankrupt; even if the indebted villages had been sold out, the sum would not have been reached. This being the case, Kołaczkowski eventually quit his designs, deciding that it would be irresponsible to enter a marriage without an opportunity to ensure his wife an appropriate standard of living. This nice story quite tellingly shows its main character’s social position: by means of his descent, behaviour, manners, tastes and inclinations, he was naturally bound to the landed-gentry milieu where he was treated as a full-rights member. When it came however to matters of higher importance than social affairs, it turned out that he had already been detached from the class he originally came from, and so could not be included in the landed proprietors’ family on an equal-rights basis.

A course of similar events was the case of Józef Jaszowski, a comrade of Kołaczkowski’s in the Artillery Trainee School. The course of life of this army officer, one of the “best-educated [in] his weapon”,<sup>164</sup> with his landed-gentry roots, a good education, certain intellectual interests, and lack of landed property, is indicative of a status ‘in between’ the landed gentry and the intelligentsia. As he was getting married, he was a colonel, approaching forty; the parents of his bride, who was younger than him by almost twenty years, proposed the same condition as Kołaczkowski’s fiancée’s parents. In contrast to his colleague, Jaszowski could afford to buy a village, having served with the army for more than twenty years. As for Kołaczkowski, he had to put aside the idea of getting married for nearly fifteen years. Jaszowski, if we could say so, had come full circle: a descendant of a noble family, he owed much of his professional career, as a trainee-school mathematics lecturer, to his education. Once he had made a fortune, he bought a village; when the Kingdom-of-Poland army was liquidated after the November Insurrection fell, which meant a ruined opportunity to pursue a professional career with the military, he resumed the life of a landed proprietor, if the word ‘resumed’ fits here, as the village was his new acquisition rather than a heirloom from his ancestors. Mr. Jaszowski serves as a perfect example of the reversibility of the intelligentsia status, the issue that was discussed in the previous chapter.

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163 Ibidem, p. 171.

164 Ibidem, vol. 3, Kraków 1900, p. 11.

Now, to strike a balance, let us take a look at a completely different pattern of the formation of an intellectual family. Among the University professors he had met in Krakow, Kołaczkowski mentioned “[Mr.] Radwański, a former artillery officer and professor of architecture”.<sup>165</sup> The thing is that there once lived a man named Andrzej Radwański, a son of poor burghers from Jędrzejów, a small town not far from Krakow. As his mother was not capable of funding her son’s education once his father died, she offered him as a servant to a Piarist cloister in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The friars paid attention to the boy’s drawing and painting talents and sent him to serve a fellow brother in Brno, Moravia, who was an expert religious painter. Radwański spent a few years there, learning the complex secrets and tricks of late-Baroque illusionistic painting. After he returned, he became locally famous, in a way, as the one who painted frescoes in the churches of Krakow and its vicinity. As the Rev. Łopacki redeveloped the interior of St. Mary’s Basilica in a baroque spirit (almost throwing the famous Veit Stoss’s gothic altarpiece away), Radwański made a polichromy there (covered in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by another polychromy layer, designed by Jan Matejko). Having come to the position in which he could do so, he decided to marry, a decision the Piarist friars opposed at first, treating the painter like their order’s subordinate. Having overcome this obstacle, he moved with his family to Krakow where he bought a house on the Main Market Square.

Andrzej’s son Feliks graduated from the Krakow Academy, where he encountered Kołłątaj’s ongoing reform, a trend he then joined as the Academy’s professor. He was fond of architecture and agricultural reforms; in 1808-1809, he edited a farming periodical in Krakow titled *Dziennik Gospodarski Krakowski*, which he filled up with his own adaptations of texts from German agricultural periodicals. After 1815, he was a senator of the Krakow Republic. His was the design of two public edifices of which a small number was being built at the time, the Kołłątaj College (as it is called today) and the University’s Observatory. He was interested in the art of gardening, redesigning the University’s botanical garden and contributing to the design of the Planty public gardens. His son, also named Feliks (the one Kołaczkowski made acquaintance with in Krakow), served in the army of the Duchy of Warsaw and later lectured on architecture at the Krakow University. This was how, within three generations, starting from a Jędrzejów burgher, a professor family became established in Krakow. Two generations earlier, a get-together between, say, Kołaczkowski the father and the painter Andrzej Radwański would have been impossible. Now, although Kołaczkowski probably

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165 Ibidem, vol. 2, p. 161.

did not see Radwański as completely equal to him, the descendant of nobility had more in common than not with the scion of the bourgeoisie.

Some professions bore clear marks of the nobility's dominance. This is particularly evident when comparing lawyers and physicians. In the first three decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the distance between these professions was still very clearly marked; as was remarked earlier, the profession of lawyer preserved a number of associations with the tradition of the nobility, and was often chosen by young people of noble origin. (This becomes evident when comparing the social status of Krakow law and medicine students in the Duchy of Warsaw: regardless of any inaccuracies, there is no doubt that noble youth usually became lawyers, whilst doctors were made of those from the third estate.)

Meanwhile, in the former half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, medicine was gradually divesting itself of the odium of a menial profession. Surgeons (seen as a separate category from doctors) were treated as barber-surgeons, doing manual rather than mental work. Doctors were gradually building their social position, which was favoured by the recognition of medicine as a university discipline and professorship titles held by its illustrious representatives. Yet, there were almost no nobility-based physicians in the Duchy of Warsaw or in the Kingdom of Poland. Many were foreigners, and quite a number of doctors started their careers as private practitioners with magnate houses.

There was, for instance, Marcin Roliński (1778-1839), a not very well known medicine professor with the University of Warsaw. Born in 1800 in Lwów, the son of a 'painter' (which probably denoted a craftsman's family), he got his doctor's degree after completing his surgery studies from the Vienna university and thereafter, in 1801 to 1803, was court doctor to count Franciszek Stadnicki in the Galician town of Dukla. Next, "incited to do so by the Austrian Government", he dealt with inoculations (a broadly conceived vaccination action mainly meant to eradicate smallpox and one of the few positively perceived creations attributed to the Austrian government in the Polish territory after the Third Partition). In 1803-1805, Roliński was a precinct physician within various Galician precincts, and then, in the Duchy of Warsaw, a 'departmental physicist [i.e. physician]' of Siedlce; later on, in the Kingdom of Poland, he was appointed Provincial Doctor for Podlasie. The Warsaw University's Faculty of Anatomy crowned his career in 1820, and Roliński was ennobled soon after. As can thus be seen, the way to a professorship started with a private doctor's position and led through various official and administrative posts.

The overlapping of the former and novel forms of patronage was visible also in the teacher's profession. Forces from outside of the former elites were joining this professional group; in the first place, a considerable group of Evangelical

Protestants from the Prussian parts of what had been the Commonwealth (or even from beyond this realm) draws one's attention. Apart from S.B. Linde, who has already been mentioned several times, the two Bandtkie brothers, Wincenty and Jerzy-Samuel, deserve a mention. Born in Lublin, where their father, who had arrived from Silesia, acted as a private instructor, the brothers were sent to Wroclaw (Breslau) to study there. Afterwards, Wincenty was made professor of law in Warsaw, whilst Jerzy-Samuel ran a course of Polish as a foreign language at the University of Wroclaw.

Representatives of the lowest social groups, the peasants and the Jews, were very slowly penetrating the educated and elite circles. Among the intellectuals of peasant origin we can already see Krystyn Lach-Szyrma; there were also Józef Muczkowski and Jan-Nepomucen Janowski. They did not form a separate group, nor did they add to the intelligentsia environment any specific 'folk' traits; they did not feel proud of their own descent, but would not efface it, either. They did their best to try to become integrated into their new milieu and did not display any specific radical tendencies, at least until the November Insurrection.

Jews only managed to enter the intellectual circles in certain cases. They had a harder time of it as they often had their backgrounds expostulated. Dominik Krysiński, professor of political economy at the University of Warsaw, who came from a family of baptised Jews and was bestowed with Polish knighthood, is the best-known example of successful assimilation in the generation before the 1830 Insurrection. A group of intelligentsia of Jewish origin, educated completely after the European fashion, was concentrated around the Warsaw School of Rabbis, founded in 1827. This school was tasked with solving the Jewish question in line with the classical Enlightenment recipe: educate the Jewish religious elite who are acquainted with the Western cultural tradition and capable of exerting an impact on their fellow believers so as to civilise and enlighten them. The project eventually failed because the influences of the 'Polonised' Jews on their fellow believers appeared to be overly marginal, and even within the school staff, opinions as to the desired degree of fusion with the Christian people proved divergent. However, there appeared a milieu of Jewish assimilators, forming the inception of an ideological movement that gained much in strength in the latter half of the century.

Looking for a source that, in spite of any objections, could provide us with some suggestive data regarding the social origin of the Polish educated classes, we should turn our attention to lists of subscribers to periodicals and newspapers. A list of the subscribers to a given book was often published at the end or beginning of the book as a way of honouring those who made the publication possible through their payments. Various researchers have endeavoured to determine

a detailed percentage share of the varied social groups among the book subscribers. Although such calculations cannot be fully reliable, the prevalent trend seems indisputable: the land-owning gentry (with full awareness of how vague this category is) still remained the most numerous group, up until the 1830-1 Insurrection. The clergy came second, and then came teachers, doctors, clerks/officials, lawyers, and others. Of course, these categories are not disjunctive and research of this sort cannot offer us a basis for unambiguous conclusions. The subscribers certainly cannot be perceived as identical with the Polish reading public: the nobility would often subscribe to books feeling 'obliged to do so' (the need to support the Polish printed word!), or out of snobbery; on the other hand, many an educated urban dweller simply could not afford to buy any work that interested him. There were certainly more representatives of the intellectual professions among the readers than any such list would tell us about. Having said all this, we can nonetheless repeat that although the nobility element played an important part in the emergence of the Polish intelligentsia, it was by no means the only one; nor can the manifold factors and drivers making up the specificity of the group of our present interest be reduced merely to it.

#### **4. The urban life**

Among the various phenomena informing the changes taking place within Polish society after 1815, the development of urban areas was a major one. True, the urbanisation wave of 1815-1830 was outshone by a much stronger such wave in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the time grand tenement houses replaced Classicistic buildings from the post-Napoleonic years. Still, vestiges of urbanisation from the period of our present interest are easily traceable in Classicistic edifices, primarily in the former area of the Kingdom of Poland. Warsaw was in fact the only town worth its name in King Stanislaus Augustus' time; now, medium-sized and even very small towns were rising from stagnation. The new developments were bursting the mediaeval layout of the towns that had once been incorporated under German law. New centres were emerging, pushing aside (topographically and metaphorically) the square-shaped marketplaces and narrow streets. New professions and institutions called for new buildings. The army tended to inhabit military barracks rather than quarters; offices could not be contained any more within palaces or former cloister buildings; professors and teachers wanted increasingly to have their own apartments, instead of sharing premises with their colleagues in a quasi-monastic community. The growth of the intelligentsia as a group was happening in parallel with the emergence of a new urban space.

The beginning was set by the Prussians in Poznań. Already in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, architects from Berlin drew the layouts setting the direction for the town's development for the following few dozen years. West of the historical centre, they paved a square that was later on called *Wilhelmowski* ('[Emperor] Wilhelm Square'; today, *Wolności Sq.*) and the other one, later named *Królewski* ('Royal'; today, *Ratajskiego Sq.*); they attached the village of *Święty-Marcin* ('St. Martin') to the town, paving a street of the same name. These new quarters, spanning the area situated, roughly speaking between the incorporation-period old town and the future route of a railroad, existed for the time being on paper but over the following dozens of years started to be filled with Classicistic edifices built in the circles of Karl-Friedrich Schinkel, the great Prussian architect.

We can observe a similar process in Warsaw: in King Stanislaus Augustus' time, the town centre was already gradually moving from the Old Town market toward the west and south, covering *Kraasiński Square*, *Miodowa* and *Krakowskie-Przedmieście Streets*. The Prussian period (1795-1806) marked the fall of the old town, a slump from which it did not emerge in the Napoleonic epoch, the time Warsaw resumed capital-city status and Polish state institutions were revived, as recounted earlier. It is hardly conceivable that the Duchy of Warsaw's army, so colourfully and picturesquely uniformed, had on its parades to stamp their feet on sand or mud (depending on the weather), as *Kraasiński Square* was not as yet paved. *Miodowa* was renamed into *Napoleon Street* (was this not the first time a Warsaw street was named after the mighty one of the time?) but was not made any less muddy thereby. *Łazienki Park* was still located far away from the town: a springtime excursion to the *Łazienki countryside* must have failed once in a while, as the road was completely impassable owing to thawing snow.<sup>166</sup>

It was only after 1815, during peacetime, that the Kingdom of Poland's authorities undertook a sweeping action to modernise their towns. Not only were public edifices built: the newly introduced lending rules facilitated development projects run by private investors. Warsaw assumed a Classical appearance: elegant tenements were growing up all along *Nowy Świat Street*; a complex of buildings for the Government Revenue and Treasury Commission, the Stock Exchange and the Polish Bank appeared in *Bankowy Square*; the university area on *Krakowskie Przedmieście St.*, around *Kazimierzowski Palace*, assumed its present appearance in as early as the 1820s, with the exception of the University Library edifice (nowadays, the 'old' Library building), built only in the century's latter

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166 K.W. Wójcicki, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 117.

half. Not far from the University complex, Staszic Palace, the seat of the Warsaw Society of the Friends of Sciences ([Warszawskie] Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk; '[W]TPN'), took the place of a demolished late-Baroque Dominican Observant Friars' church.

The town was creeping southwards: the building of the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb was erected at Trzech Krzyży Square; the former Ujazdowski Castle was redeveloped into a hospital for veterans; Łazienki became home to the Officer Cadet Infantry School, which became famous in later years. The territorial aspirations of the expanding city are testified to by the tollhouses marking its borderline; they have survived till this day, by the Brzeska Roadway in Praga district and at what today is Unii Lubelskiej Square; this area would only densely built up more than seventy years later, on the eve of World War 1.

A cultural and social life was happening across various planes: on the one hand, we can see the aristocratic salons visited by Klemens Kołaczkowski or Kajetan Koźmian; on the other, there were bourgeois interiors, as portrayed in Kazimierz-Władysław Wóycicki's memoirs. His acquaintances had apartments consisting of a couple of bedrooms and a drawing room, rather than palaces. To name an example, Andrzej Kucharski (1795-1862), a Slavonic researcher and secondary school teacher "lived in the third or fourth house behind the Warsaw University in Krakowskie-Przedmieście St., on the first floor; he had one room facing the street and the other on the back side, which served him as a library and a bedroom in one."<sup>167</sup> Flats as small as this were also tolerated by those apparently ranking higher than these two men. Ludwik Dmuszewski, a theatrical entrepreneur, resided in not much more affluent conditions. Wóycicki once had an opportunity to visit the dwelling of Professor Joachim Lelewel. His apartment "was a grand room on the first floor, with two windows facing Długa Street; by the second window from the door, there stood a table stacked with paper sheets and prints; there were pieces of copper sheet metal and styli. There was a couch placed against the middle wall, a table in front of it, and a few chairs. All the walls were covered up with cabinets made of open shelves only, with plenty of books inside them, though not quite bound. The walls, wherever free of such cabinets, were of a yellow colour, and the furnishings on the whole appeared pretty modest."<sup>168</sup>

An old bachelor, Lelewel was clearly inclined to self-deprivation. With more sociable people, a restrained space did not have to hinder social life. Tomasz Święcki (1774-1839), a TPN member and the once-sought-for author of the

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167 Ibidem, vol. 2, Warszawa 1974, p. 489.

168 Ibidem, vol. 1, pp. 223-224.

*Starożytna Polska* [‘The Ancient Poland’] monograph and other historical works, was descended from Podlasie-area nobility and, having completed his education with schools in Węgrów, joined the Bar in Drohiczyn, in what still was the Commonwealth; he proceeded to complete his law studies in Lviv, which was already under Austrian domination, and subsequently took various posts within the judiciary of the Duchy of Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland. After his wife’s death, he lived with his daughter in Kapitulna Street (the Old Town area), “keeping a small, but still main, residential space, with a porch, facing the street. You would enter, straight from the hallway, a big room which simultaneously was a dining room where guests were received, a library and a bedroom, as inside its open niche there stood his narrow, rugged bed; and above it, below an icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa, there hung a shagreen-cased scimitar. The main wall and the side ones were clad with tall cabinets full of books.”<sup>169</sup>

Such was the apartment which set the scene for Shovertide soirees at which “academic youth and officers of the Polish military [...] gladly danced till dawn”.<sup>170</sup> Walenty Skorochód-Majewski was a permanent guest at Święcki’s home. Living himself on Świętojańska St. (adjacent to Kapitulna), with nubile daughters and constant dancing soirees, this former clerk with the Registers of the Crown (*Metryka Koronna*) and member of TPN was titled by his acquaintances ‘Mister Record-Keeper’ (*Pan Metrykant*).

There were obviously many such figures who were positioned within the social hierarchy between the friends of Wóycicki’s and the aristocracy. These can be found among the popular doctors and lawyers as well as university professors. Alongside Lelewel, Feliks Bentkowski was a Warsaw University history professor. If his name still rings a bell for anyone, it is owing to his attempt, the first ever such attempt, at compiling a bibliography of Polish literature. Bentkowski’s life was more pleasant than that of his famous colleague: he had a beautiful tenement built for himself in Nowy-Świat Street. It was customary with Warsaw University professors to give a dinner jointly for themselves once in a year, at a restaurant in Długa St.

The various social circles did not function in isolation from one another. There were institutions and individuals acting as ‘liaisons’ between individual groups. Thus, General Wincenty Krasiński’s salon at the Krasiński Palace in Krakowskie-Przedmieście St. (opposite the University; home to the Academy of Fine Arts today) was a ‘liaison’ salon. Krasiński was not an overly nice person himself, but

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169 Ibidem, p. 241.

170 Ibidem, vol. 2, p. 175.

wished so terribly to run an artistic salon, and his snobbery appeared fruitful: literary discussions held at his salon formed an important element in the shaping of Romantic tastes in Poland.

A social integration function was also fulfilled by *Towarzystwo Iksów* (the 'Society of Xs'). Acting unofficially since 1815 and never formally constituted, the Society was a circle of enlightened people, usually of aristocratic descent, who set the goal for themselves of reviving Polish literary and theatrical criticism, and to care about its good taste. The latter category naturally meant observing the classical norms; the 'Xs' included Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, Prince Adam Czartoryski, the well-known editor Franciszek-Salezy Dmochowski, and Tadeusz Mostowski, whose palace was the venue of the Society's meetings.

University lectures open to a broad public did not enjoy much popularity in Warsaw. Only the world literature professor Ludwik Osiński, a belligerent classicist famous for his oratorical brilliance, managed to attract a larger audience with his lectures.

On a broader scale, educated people established mutual contacts on the grounds of the Society of the Friends of Sciences. Initially gathering at a private palace of Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, it held its public meetings at the auditorium of the Piarist College (former Collegium Nobilium) in Miodowa St. A few years later, TPN got its new seat in Kanonia Street (at the back of St. John's Cathedral), but it was not until it moved to Staszic Palace in the 1820s that the Society could exert a broader influence by means of its public meetings. TPN consisted of educated people of whom some did not actually deal with scientific or scholarly work as such, and their social descent was diverse. Even in a society as deeply ploughed with estate-related divisions as the Polish society of the period was, everybody remained equal with respect to knowledge, at least theoretically. For example, Joachim Lelewel could in an address use the phrase "[our/my] colleague Prince Voivode Czartoryski"<sup>171</sup>. And Czartoryski himself could meet there and talk to Mr. Record-keeper Skorochód-Majewski, for instance, or even to Abraham Stern, a Jew. The fact that Stanisław Staszic, long the chairman of the Society, was a burgher is not to be neglected. On the other hand, the social hierarchy was visible even there. Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, the body's last chairman, classed its members as those he would call 'colleagues' and others, younger

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171 A. Kraushar, *Towarzystwo Warszawskie Przyjaciół Nauk 1800-1832. Monografia historyczna osnuta na źródłach archiwalnych* ['The Warsaw Society of the Friends of Sciences, 1800-1832. A historical monograph based upon archival sources'], vol. 3, *Czasy Królestwa Kongresowego* ['The Congress Kingdom period'], Part 2, *Czterolecie drugie 1820-1824* ['The second quadriannual period: 1820-1824'], Kraków 1904, p. 214.

or out of favour with him, whom he “regarded somewhat condescendingly, addressing them with a ‘mości’ [~ ‘honourable’]; he neglected Abraham Stern, and never talked to him at all.”<sup>172</sup>

Niemcewicz, who enjoyed a great popularity, was himself a pivotal presence for the Warsaw educated milieu. With his fame as a “friend of Kościuszko and Washington”, as a Kościuszko Insurrection veteran, close relations with the Czartoryskis, and an oppositional attitude displayed in the 1820s, he had won an important place for himself among the Warsaw elites. Niemcewicz was a rare instance of an intellectual for whom public activity, combined with literary and scholarly output, had opened a door that remained closed for so many others.

Many educated people remained at that time financially dependent on the nobility or the aristocracy; they formed, to hazard a coinage, a ‘service intelligentsia’, as home teachers, doctors, or sometimes builders or estate administrators. People of this type would often gather around the urban residences of affluent noblemen or aristocrats. As aristocratic palaces in Warsaw were mostly situated in the vicinity of Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, it was precisely there that clusters of a ‘proto-intelligentsia’ started appearing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Krakowskie Przedmieście was turning in the course of the nineteenth century into, perhaps, the ‘most intellectual’ street in Warsaw; one of the possible reasons for this was that noble families and houses had been concentrated in this area two centuries before. And when the Warsaw Lyceum roosted therein, subsequently followed by the University and the Society of the Friends of Sciences, the avenue’s intellectual character became even clearer. Many a Warsaw University professor and lector resided in the outbuildings annexed to the Kazimierzowski Palace, while many officials used modest apartments within their office buildings. The TPN headquarters was home not only to commoners, such as Jan-Nepomucen Janowski, a librarian, or Łukasz Gołębiowski, the Society’s Secretary: Count Fryderyk Skarbek himself resided there due to his function with the body. Once a ‘noble’ street, Krakowskie Przedmieście turned ‘intellectual’.

Café, or coffeehouse, culture was developing in Warsaw, as we can remember, during the last few decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, in the Duchy time and even more so during the constitutional Kingdom period, after 1815, this culture was in full bloom. Coffeehouses were attended by university students and at times by gymnasium students too, along with younger and sometimes older men-of-letters. The ‘Suchy Las’ café in Długa St., opposite the Piarists’ church,

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172 J.N. Janowski, *Notatki autobiograficzne 1803-1853* [‘Autobiographical notes, 1803-1853’], ed. by M. Tyrowicz, Wrocław 1950, p. 150.

had among its customers actors, theatre-goers (let us remember that the National Theatre was located at today's Supreme Court site); Ludwik Dmuszewski, the Theatre director and editor of the popular journal *Kurier Warszawski*, was one of them. The café was a peculiar kind of editorial office for him: there he learned a lot of what he subsequently published in his newspaper.

A description of all, or even all the most important, Warsaw coffeehouses is not the point here; instead, let us just mention the famous 'Honoratka' (Miodowa St., corner of Kapitulna St.), the meeting venue of the young opposition intelligentsia before the November Insurrection, and a café with an adjacent small garden in the Saxon Gardens area (on the Królewska St. side), which later belonged to Mr. Semadeni and grew to become one of the town's most important spots of its kind. The beginnings of another well known Warsaw café date back to the time of our present interest: Lourse's, whose owner ran his premises first in Miodowa St. and was locally the first to acquire a gas lighting facility for the purpose, in 1827. We came across traces of female attendants: "The ladies appear to be particularly beautiful with the light so arranged. As an eye witness, it is my pleasant privilege to report on this to the public."<sup>173</sup>

The urban lifestyle was of course not restricted to cafes or salons, offices or schools. To risk restating what has been stated many times, a town superimposes on its dwellers a specific rhythm. Working hours as separate from leisure time; artificial lighting; access to entertainment and cultural goods; ease of social life thanks to a large dense population – all these phenomena first occur within the nineteenth-century urban space, rendering the rhythm of day and night independent from natural time. Gerard Witowski, a Warsaw columnist popular at the time and contributor to the conservative journal *Gazeta Warszawska* (under the graceful pseudonym of 'Pustelnik z Krakowskiego Przedmieścia' – 'Recluse of Krakowskie Przedmieście St. '), presented the 'Warsaw hours' in one of his columns. This transposition of a French idea was embedded in local realities. So, we can observe a day in the city's life, in June (the season when the day is long, so there's more to be put in the column), starting from three in the morning (the army troops march out from their barracks to do exercise), till midnight (music from a ball is fading). As in a Christmas *chrêche*, the figures replace one another: at seven in the morning, "the studying youth are going to their classrooms, a breakfast-packet in their hands and a book under their arm". At nine, "officials of any cut, embroidery and colour [i.e. wearing uniforms!] are walking lazily toward their offices, pondering which way will get them there as soon

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173 *Gazeta Polska*, No. 137, 18<sup>th</sup> May 1827, p. 535.

as possible. One is too kindly greeted – a supplicant, he. They go to have their breakfast at Szymański's. Ten o'clock: the authorities are all arriving. Meeting time: one group is deliberating the ways to upkeep the public credit; another, on what measures are to be taken to hoist the industry and to cleanse the navigable lands; enlightenment is what they're working on here, whilst justice is being administered there." The next hour belongs to elegant society: the shops and cafés start to fill at eleven. Two past noon, and the "courts of law disperse, authorities' meetings are over"; the lucky clients whose endeavours have met with success invite their protectors to a restaurant (should the meaning of the word *mecenas* [= 'sponsor/patron/lawyer'] be so, and the context suggests that business sorted out in offices, rather than successfully concluded trials, is meant).

At seven in the evening, all are going on walks, "some to Łazienki Park to watch an opera, others to Marymont to have their chicken meal there". At eight, "the beautiful society is gathering at the Saxon and Krasiński Gardens. [...] Those who love to socialise will find a group of their acquaintances by every tree there. Some talk of literature, and others about fashion [...]. Conversation comes to life as they are walking; it is a salon in motion." It is only at ten in the evening that the social life is enclosed in houses; "a round of whist here, a concert there, a merry talk over a cup of tea elsewhere."<sup>174</sup>

Just how accurate this evocative picture is is less important: it is clear at first sight that the day is 'compressed', and given the Warsaw climatic conditions, June (perhaps also July) is the only season when park life blossoming at eight in the evening is imaginable. This amusing picture testifies not just to the rhythm of urban life, though. It shows the educated strata as the rightful ingredient of the town's landscape, as one of the groups which adds character to the town.

There was a rhythm to the year in addition to the rhythm of the day: winter was spent in the town and summer in the countryside. School and university students would leave Warsaw for their family homes; the town was left in the summer by the more affluent representatives of the educated classes. They would in most cases go to see their families in the countryside, whenever possible. The little Kazimierz-Władysław Wóycicki spent his summertime near Biała-Podlaska, where his father, a doctor by profession, held a small estate on lease. In a contemporary short story for children (imitating the French but aligned with Warsaw realities), a little girl, a daughter of a "wealthy official from Warsaw", spends her holiday, together with her mother, in the country, specifically "close

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174 G. Witowski, *Pustelnik z Krakowskiego Przedmieścia czyli charaktery ludzi i obyczajów*, t. 3, Warszawa 1828, s. 164-171.

to Mokotów”, behind Łazienki, in a hut hired for the summer. Her father visits them only incidentally.<sup>175</sup> Providing the child with an opportunity to spend his or her holiday in the countryside, be it at the expense of savings being made all year round, became ever since an obligatory element of the intelligentsia lifestyle.

Was the life in the other towns similar to the life in Warsaw?

The population of Poznań was nearing the enormous figure of 30,000; still, “almost everyone there knew about everyone else and who or what he, or she, was”<sup>176</sup>. Its Prussian urbanisation was just a framework, for the time being: the new streets marked out on the city map were gradually filling with small houses. The town’s splendid tenements would wait until they emerged in the century’s second half. Marceli Motty (1818-1898), who recorded for us the life of nineteenth-century Poznań, could remember from his childhood years a tranquil marketplace which became somewhat busier only toward evening, the moment maids came up to the fountain to get water. Poznań became really crowded just a few times in a year: the time local villagers arrived to take part in the Corpus Christi processions, and even more so when St. John’s market (24<sup>th</sup> June) saw “the nobility from almost the entire province arriving, still very numerous then”<sup>177</sup>. In the late 1820s, Motty was sure to see in the streets several times “young people [...] wearing the national dress”, that is, “a *żupan* and a *kontusz*, with a curved Turkish scimitar hanging at their side”<sup>178</sup>.

This small, traditionalist town of Poznań did have its germs of intelligentsia. The famous St. Mary Magdalene gymnasium was housed at that time in the post-Jesuit buildings near the Parish Church. Motty remembered “the patriarchal-shaped, dark-brown benches and lecterns, ink-stained, terribly furrowed and covered”<sup>179</sup>. The aforementioned Jan-Samuel Kaulfuss was the school’s rector till 1824, and among the professors there several individuals of merit to the local (and not only local) cultural life could be found. Józef Muczkowski, later on the superior of the Jagiellonian Library and professor with the Jagiellonian University, had beside his school labours a few books published to his credit

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175 *Dzbanek z poziomkami* [‘A Jug of Wild-Strawberries’], in: *Gazeta Polska*, No. 147, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1827, p. 580 (reprinted from: *Powieści dla mojej córki, naśladowane z francuskiego p. Bouilly przez autorkę Henryka i Floretty* [‘Novels for My Daughter; imitated from the French of Mr. Bouilly, by the author of Henry and Floretta’], vols. 1-2, Warszawa 1827).

176 M. Motty, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 174.

177 Ibidem, p. 11.

178 Ibidem, p. 122.

179 Ibidem, vol. 2, p. 172.

during his sojourn in Poznań, including a grammar of Polish (*Gramatyka języka polskiego*). His durable merit has been the restoration of Mikołaj Sęp-Szarzyński, the leading representative of early-Baroque metaphysical poetry, then a completely forgotten poet, to Polish culture; Muczkowski published Szarzyński's verse in Poznań. Another teacher, Tomasz Szumski, had a bookstore in the town and, in the time of Napoleon, unsuccessfully solicited consent for a periodical to be published.

The Raczyński Library was set up in the late 1820s and was soon to become one of the city's major cultural institutions. Its location was outside of the mediæval ramparts, at a grand yard later on called Wilhelmski, which in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century served as a military exercise area. It was the will of Count Edward Raczyński, its founder, to create an institution of importance to Polish culture as a whole. He founded an edifice whose façade was to imitate that of the Louvre, although the columns, pretending to be stony, were in fact cast iron (when a child, Marcelli Motty played with them as "they lay for a long time on the ground before being pulled up onto the edifice"<sup>180</sup>). From the year 1829, for twenty years, the Library's director was Józef Łukaszewicz. A man of indigent-nobility descent, a historian and source editor, he learned the secrets of the librarian's profession from J.S. Bandtkie in Krakow.

Not far from the Library, in the same yard, the municipal theatre building was erected, a simple building with a hipped roof and a small columned portico. The theatre met the needs of Poles and Germans; artists from Warsaw and Berlin made appearances on its stage (Poznań had no permanent troupe of its own).

It was a pleasant circumstance to the spectators that from the first box as well as from the ground floor seats [...] all those [...] attending could be seen, which is sometimes more attention-arresting than the play itself; whilst [...] in the winter, the frost prevailed there, at times mercilessly; the viewers all seated in their overcoats and pelts, their legs numbed, and on the stage, due to a strong wind that was blowing through from there onto the ground floor, a veritable Siberia was unfolding, exposing the costumed actors and the cleaved actresses to real torment.

M. Motty, *Przechadzki po mieście* ['Strolling through the city'], vol. 1, ed. by Z. Grot, Warszawa 1957, pp. 247-248.

Lwów, the Galician capital town, was to wait fifty years until the time of its splendour came; still, something started changing there in the first decades of the nineteenth century. With a population in excess of 40,000, Lwów was the second largest town described as 'Polish', after Warsaw; however, its importance

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180 Ibidem, t. 1, s. 202.

for Polish culture between 1815 and 1830 was marginal, beneath any comparison not only with that of Warsaw or Wilno, but even of Krakow. The Piller family's bookstore and printing house were still in operation, producing Ukrainian books, in addition to Polish ones, since 1817, and lithographs since 1822. The publishing activity of the Stauropigial Institute was of importance to Ukrainian culture.

The Pillers had a competing business emerging beside them starting in 1822, the bookstore of Jan Milikowski and Ignacy Kuhn. Their business was going so well that they opened a branch in Tarnów in 1824 and another one in Stanisławów in 1828. The Milikowski bookstore was situated at the Market Square: "It was a focus around which all the local literary and publishing partnerships grouped for a long time. It was, as it were, a literary casino where University professors and men-of-letters gathered on a daily basis."<sup>181</sup>

The demolition of the old city ramparts was initiated in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and soon afterwards, in the first decades of the following century, the town reached beyond its historical centre in Pańska Street (today, Vynnychenka St.; until 1945, Czarneckiego St.). Governmental edifices, e.g. the Galician Governors Palace (replaced in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a Governorship building), began appearing. On the other side of the city's central area, urban developments crawled out into what is today Svobody Avenue (before 1939, Legionów St.; before 1918, Arcyksięcia-Karola-Ludwika [Archduke-Carl-Ludwig] St.). A Polish memoirist recollecting the decade of the twenties wrote of a "dirty, unremarkable, and paltry one-horse town, surrounded by a rubble of embankments, at whose feet litter was deposited into pits from all around the town". Soon after, however, the former embankment site was tidied up and made a venue of trendy strolls; it was there that edifices rose inhabited by the "top-tier authorities, high-ranking [military] officers, and most of the notables"<sup>182</sup>. The two top-tier hotels: Hotel d'Europe and Hotel de Russie, later known as Hotel George, were also located there.

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181 W. Zawadzki, *Pamiętniki życia literackiego w Galicji* ['Memoirs of the literary life in Galicia'], ed. by A. Knot, Kraków 1961, p. 41.

182 A. von Behr, *Meine Reisen durch Schlesien, Galizien, Podolien nach Odessa, der Krim und Kostantinopel... im Sommer 1832*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1834, pp. 47-48; quoted after: I. Röskau-Rydel, *Kultur an der Perypherie des habsburgischen Reiches. Die Geschichte des Bildungswesens und der kulturellen Einrichtungen in Lemberg von 1772 bis 1848*, Wiesbaden 1993, Harrassowitz Verlag, p. 344; L.G. Jabłonowski, *Złote czasy i wywczasy. Pamiętnik szlachcica z pierwszej połowy XIX stulecia* ['The golden times and vacationing. A diary of a nobleman from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century'], Lwów 1920; quoted after: *ibidem*, p. 343.

Along with Warsaw and Krakow, Lwów could boast the longest-lasting Polish theatrical tradition. For a few years after the Kościuszko Insurrection, Wojciech Bogusławski's team performed on the Lwów stage before returning to Warsaw. Lwów's own permanent theatre ensemble owed its existence to Jan-Nepomucen Kamiński, who from 1810 to 1833 managed the city's Polish theatre. The Lwów theatre did not have its own building as yet.

As in the other towns around Warsaw and Wilno, the local press developed gradually. Following a series of ephemeral publications, the year 1811 saw the appearance of *Gazeta Lwowska*, a newspaper that did not initially enjoy much success (seventy subscribers as of 1814) but was growing increasingly popular all the same, eventually becoming one of the most popular news journals in the latter half of the century. This periodical survived until 1939. From 1817, a literary supplement called *Rozmaitości* was issued together with the paper's Saturday edition. Stuffed initially with translations from German, it won popularity in 1826 when Mikołaj Michalewicz, a Lwów University professor of Polish literature, came to the editorship. In 1830, *Gazeta Lwowska* initiated a column headed 'Spectacles in Lwów', devoted to the Polish and German theatrical life.

The Ossolineum library was Lwów's most important new cultural institution. It was established in 1817 in Vienna by Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński, a philanthropist magnate; it was only in 1827 that he obtained the authorities' consent for the construction of an edifice for the purpose in Lwów (or, in fact, for the redevelopment of a former convent building). A classicist edifice erected in a street which was later named Ossolińskich (today, Stefanyka St.) it was located rather far from downtown, at the foot of the mountain that was later called Cytadela. The (re) construction project was managed by a military engineer from the Kingdom of Poland, named captain Józef Bem, an individual not then known to many. The collection's curator was initially the same professor Michalewicz, yet the person most merited for the library became the Rev. Franciszek Siarczyński (1758-1829). The broad scope of interests and the laboriousness of this ex-Piarist monk, a former associate of Hugo Kołłątaj and a soldier in the Kościuszko Insurrection, were really impressive. As a professor with the Collegium Nobilium under King Stanislaus Augustus and in later years a parson in Kozienice and, later still, in Jarosław near Przemyśl, he gathered material for a geographical dictionary of the Polish lands, compiled regional monographs of the vicinities of Kozienice and Jarosław, translated geographical works from French, and finally wrote a four-volume work on the epoch of King Sigismund III Vasa (Zygmunt III Waza). He was invited in 1823 by Józef-Maksymilian Ossoliński to make a contribution to the establishment of a scientific periodical. After Ossoliński's death in 1827, Prince Henryk Lubomirski, the curator of the institute being set up, offered to him the post of

Director of a new library. His “will to pay services to my country”<sup>183</sup> (and perhaps the will to break away with Jarosław) propelled Siarczyński to arrive in Lwów and become utterly absorbed in organisational work. He engaged labourers, ordered construction materials, prodded contractors and communicated with the relevant offices for innumerable consents, permits and approvals.

It is simply hard to believe that he still could find time to do his editorial work with a quarterly whose longish title read *Czasopism naukowy księgozbioru publicznego imienia Ossolińskich* [‘A Scholarly Periodical Review of ‘The Ossoliński’ Public Book Collection’], in whose first annual issues almost half of the contents was written by Siarczyński himself. He died, active till his very last days, on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1829; his decease did not obstruct work on the arrangement of the collection, though. Siarczyński was followed (in 1831) by the landed proprietor and former official Konstanty Słotwiński (1793-1846), his junior by a generation. A Law graduate from Jagiellonian University, then a district commissioner of Jasło and Wadowice, he was released from service at his own request in 1829. His legal and conspiratorial activity with the Ossolineum fell into the later period.

In the Napoleonic era, Krakow was still a very provincial town. In the time that people in Warsaw were commonly wearing French-style clothes, in Krakow, “Polish dress was at that time usually [...] still used by both the nobility and the bourgeoisie”; “those gentlemen that were dressed French-style were stared back at and were called ‘the wig-wearers’.”<sup>184</sup> The condition of the paved roads was similar to that encountered in Warsaw, and the buildings were probably even worse – in the Market Square itself, many tenements stood empty or were populated up to the first-floor level only, with “the remaining windows planked or walled up with bricks”.<sup>185</sup>

Instead, Krakow could boast a permanent theatre which dated back to the pre-Partition time. The theatre was run for dozens of long years by Jacek Kluszecki, the descendant of a noble family of modest means, himself an eccentric, carouser, and entrepreneur. He was a smaller-scale counterpart of Wojciech Bogusławski, and beside organisational and advertising talents, their similarity consisted in a sense of style typical to the Enlightenment, which, with certain exceptions, determined the face of theatre in Warsaw as well as in Krakow.

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183 So stated the Rev. F. Siarczyński in a declaration of his acceptance of the directorship: F. Siarczyński, *Dziennik czynności urzędowych Księgozbioru Narodowego imienia Ossolińskich we Lwowie* [‘A journal of official actions of ‘The Ossoliński’s National Book Collection in Lwów’], ed. by Z. Rzepa, Wrocław 1968, p. 47.

184 K. Girtler, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 69.

185 Ibidem.

After the year 1815, Krakow, the capital of the tiny Republic of Krakow, started gradually changing its face. A system of gardens was designed, surrounding the city's former central area, in the place of the old city ramparts that had just been demolished. Soon after, the Planty (also called 'Plantacje') public gardens became the beloved strolling area, replacing for this function the once-famous Krzyżanowski Garden in Wesoła district (at the intersection of today's Kopernika St. and Westerplatte St., set along the Planty park). Since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a Botanical Garden existed, belonging to the University, but owing to its location (some 1.5 kilometres off the Planty) it could not offer a venue for strolling: the cobblestone surface on the streets only reached as near as the Planty.

For the 'men-of-letters', the important meeting spots were two local bookstores: that of Józef Czech, which followed the respectable tradition of the Groeb(e)l bookshop, and that of Ambroży Grabowski, open since 1818 at the Main Market. Grabowski authored the first modern guide to Krakow, published 1822 and reissued in revised and updated versions until its sixth edition of 1900. Clearly, the city was already starting, at first not quite daringly, to represent itself as a 'treasure-house of the national relics of the past', a function whose climax would occur in the century's second half. Some mediaeval buildings were still being razed and new Classicistic edifices erected, whilst projects and designs for the rehabilitation of historic buildings were already being created.

At the other edge of the former Commonwealth, Wilno was pulling down its city ramparts in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, much as Krakow was. (On this occasion, the ruins of the former Grand-Ducal castle next to the Cathedral were demolished.) The town was expanding spatially but did not assume a metropolitan character; most of its buildings remained wooden.

In this provincial town, the university fulfilled a function that reached far beyond its being a scientific and research-oriented institution: it was a hub around which the intellectual and social life centred. The Botanical Garden, the harvest of botany professor Stanisław-Bonifacy Jundziłł's care, was the city's curiosity and strolling venue; Jundziłł was glad that the garden avoided destruction during the Napoleonic wars; apparently, "even the enemy respected that shrine devoted to Flora".<sup>186</sup> The University's public meetings held twice a year made headlines in the city. Owing to their rich ceremonial splendour, doctoral-degree promotions,

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186 Cf. S.B. Jundziłł's account of the development of the Botanical Garden, published in *Dziennik Wileński*, 1815; as quoted by J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet Wileński...*, vol. 1, p. 178.

which were announced by posters on street corners, also attracted those having nothing to do with science. The 'A-list', ladies included, willingly attended the chemistry lectures of Jędrzej Śniadecki; a dozen or so years later, audiences became enthusiastic about Joachim Lelewel's history lectures. Such lectures were mostly held in Polish (though Latin still held sway in medicine and theology). It was the University that certain initiatives, formally not bound with it, were dependent upon: societies, associations, newspaper editorial boards, and bookshops could not have existed if not funded, and often simply created, by the Academy professors. The University bookstore was a meeting venue: the bookseller Józef Zawadzki "was content with the authors, poets, scholars, and artists gathering at his place at the specified time. At ten, till half past eleven in the morning, you could be certain to find many an interesting person there".<sup>187</sup>

Although the Wilno of Adam Mickiewicz's youth played a key part in Polish literary culture, it was the medical sciences that laid the most important grounds for the University's fame. It was the reformers' idea, in 1803, to bring to Wilno the most outstanding specialists from the whole of Europe, at whatever expense. Negotiations were carried out with many; there was the idea to entrust the faculty of Political Economy to Jean Simonde de Sismondi, an internationally leading economist. But the real success was the case of the medical sciences. Johann-Peter Frank of Baden, formerly a teacher of Jan Śniadecki at a university in Italy and later a professor with the Vienna University and Director of the Vienna General Hospital, one of the most modern-equipped hospitals in Europe at the time, enjoyed the reputation of a leading luminary in the medicine of his time. His merits extended to obstetrics and smallpox vaccination. For the development of a new medical science centre from scratch, what were more important than his achievements as a physician were perhaps his interests in the organisation of medicine, health service and sanitary administration (all that being then referred to as 'medical police' – and such was the title of a multi-volume handbook J.P. Frank has authored). There is no doubt that Frank's arrival in Wilno in 1804 meant ennoblement for its University. Although Mr. Frank stayed in the city on the Wilia (Neris) River just for one academic year and subsequently left for Petersburg, the Russian capital, he managed before then to build organisational foundations for the development of medicine in Wilno, creating, among others, a modern university clinic modelled after the Vienna institution. This effort was continued by his son Józef Frank, who was clinic manager and professor of

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187 S. Morawski, *Kilka lat młodości mojej w Wilnie* [A few of my youth years in Wilno], Warszawa 1924, p. 189.

medicine from 1804-1823. This man excelled not only in his knowledge but also in the conscientiousness with which he performed his duties as a professor, as well as his care for his students.

A medical environment was developing around him, institutionalised into a Medical Society, founded in 1805. Its chairman, starting in 1811, was doctor August Bécu, a scion from a family of Huguenot immigrants already mentioned elsewhere, who pioneered smallpox vaccination in Lithuania. In 1818 he married Salomea Słowacka, the widow of literature professor Euzebiusz Słowacki and mother of Juliusz, the poet and playwright.

Although the educated milieu of Wilno was small in number, various groups and attitudes are certainly identifiable in the town's intellectual life.

There was a clear line of conflict drawn between domestic and foreign professors. In order to attract Western European professors to the Lithuanian capital, they had to be offered higher salaries than the natives, which naturally triggered resistance from the latter. Added thereto were problems of a deeper nature: was the attraction of European scientific stars not done just for show, instigated by a need for glitz rather than a reliable love of science and learning? Would it not result in a weakening, rather than deepening, of the country's enlightenment and education? With time, a new aspect was brought to the conflict: first- or second-generation foreigners, usually commoners, alien to the local environment – the urban-and-university and, all the more, the noble one – quite naturally gravitated toward the state authority with which they sought care and protection. Some of them simply did not comprehend the political aspirations of Poles; things became worse, however, when in case of a conflict they became involved on the authorities' side. On such occasions, their feud with a majority of the local society was exacerbated, possibly leading to the complete alienation of a newcomer from the Polish community.

There was another line of conflict too, the one dividing the followers and opponents of Romanticism. The second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the activity in Wilno of a *Towarzystwo Szubrawców* (Scumbags [*resp.* Wastrel] Society). It was an informal professorial 'club' whose prime mover was Kazimierz Kontrym, a university librarian holding the title of '*adiunkt*' ('lecturer'), a freemason and a tireless activist with a number of Wilno-based editorial boards and organisations in the first quarter of the century. Among the participants, Jędrzej Śniadecki, a naturalist and brother of Jan, doubtlessly excelled as a major figure. The Society's members had their satirical texts published in *Wiadomości Brukowe*, attacking, on the one hand, traditionalist attitudes and, on the other, the new Romanticist trend. As is well known, Wilno, with the young Mickiewicz and his colleagues, became on top of all that one of the foci of the emerging Polish Romanticism.

And, there was the third line of dispute: professional scholars versus enlightened amateurish aristocrats, as evident, for that matter, in the rivalry between Wilno and Krzemieniec. The Krzemieniec Lyceum or High School (also called the Volhynian Athens) was the second cultural centre in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian territory, beside Wilno. Tadeusz Czacki must have been a poet, as one diarist remarked, since he had chosen a small town so charmingly situated to be the seat of his school. The beautiful baroque edifices of a county school, formerly home to a Jesuit college, now provided shelter to a new academy that was supposed to complement the Wilno University while at the same time competing with it. Formally nothing more than a standard secondary school whose objective was to prepare its students for a tertiary education course, the Lyceum was meant, in Czacki's dreams and ambitions, to turn with time into the second Polish university within the limits of the Russian Empire. Quite obviously, this attitude consistently caused conflicts with the University in Wilno, as its rectors would not admit their Academy to be depleted of authority. The development of the assumptions of the Lyceum's educational programme owed the most to Hugo Kołłątaj, who had recently been released from an Austrian gaol. Czacki eventually stood him off at a later date, as he quite probably wanted to prevent the new scholarly institution from being associated with a controversial Jacobin and revolutionary figure.

The Wilno vs. Krzemieniec conflict was not limited to administrative dependence. The style of instruction was different between these two schools. Czacki's desire was to align his school to the requirements of enlightened landed gentry; after all, he was one of them himself. The Lyceum's task was to teach a general knowledge and polish, rather than a specialist scientific knowledge. The Wilno alumni accused those from Krzemieniec of snobbery, ignorance, and superficiality. The Krzemieniec peers defended themselves against such charges, imputing to the Wilno students and graduates a biased reluctance toward the Volhynians. Many years afterwards, around the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, when both scholarly institutions had long since fallen victim to tsarist repressive measures following the November Insurrection, Stanisław Morawski, with all his causticity and irony, recollected the dissimilarity between both institutions and their graduates, identifiable as it was at first glance. As he wrote, "Wilno gave off ridiculous pedants, Krzemieniec – ridiculous wrigglers. [...] If only you encountered, many years afterward, a man dumpy as to the take, twisting on his heels, I bet he comes from Krzemieniec! If you saw some unhandy thinker, or boring precisian – I bet he came out of Wilno."<sup>188</sup>

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188 S. Morawski, *Kilka lat ...* p. 172.

The Krzemieniec Lyceum was an important phenomenon in Polish culture. The landed gentry of the Commonwealth's Ruthenian area owed to this school the educational opportunities it had opened for their children; a certain number of Wilno University graduates could work there as teachers, performing their acquired profession. There were salons in Krzemieniec, and music-making opportunities; there were youth societies too, both overt and secret, and periodicals were even edited and published. With all that, Krzemieniec remained too small to become an important cultural hub. It owed its splendour to the Lyceum, and finally lost its cultural position once the Lyceum went into decline.

Similar processes were observable in smaller towns of the Kingdom of Poland: Płock, Lublin, Kalisz, and Radom were expanding and undergoing redevelopment, their centres of gravity moving beyond their historical centres. Offices and schools would often be housed in redeveloped convent or monastic-college buildings. A square next to the new cathedral (formerly, a Jesuit church) was made the central spot of the town of Lublin; on the other side of the square, opposite the old gate, a columnar edifice of the Voivodeship Commission was built using the former church's fragmented walls. In Kalisz, the local Voivodeship Commission residence, being a redeveloped former Jesuit college building, formed the architectural highlight of the town's new central area; a new tribunal building and provincial school building were built as well. The central urban function in Płock was taken by a newly demarcated yard outside of the former ramparts, called Kanoniczny Market Square (Narutowicza Square today). Much as in Lwów, Warsaw and Krakow, an old gothic-renaissance town hall was demolished to give way to a new, classicist one. About a dozen major streets were cobbled after 1815. In the first years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Płock had less than 4,000 inhabitants, and the figure had more than doubled, to 9,000, by 1830. A theatre auditorium was opened in 1811 within a redeveloped Holy Trinity convent, but no permanent ensemble was subsequently established (except for Warsaw, no other Kingdom town had one). The Kingdom's provincial towns hosted capital-city actors and at times the Krakow theatre staged its performances there. The local press sometimes echoed with impressions from those spectacles: in a letter to a Warsaw newspaper a Radom theatregoer criticised the Krakow actors who in Radom once performed excerpts from Carl M. von Weber's opera *Der Freischütz* and Aleksander Fredro's comedy play *Mąż i żona*: "The commendations they were bestowed with in Kalisz were somewhat exaggerated", wrote the letter's author, commenting on an earlier letter by a Kalisz theatregoer who spoke of those same pieces.<sup>189</sup>

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189 *Z Radomia, dn. 3 czerwca* ['From Radom, 3<sup>rd</sup> June'], *Gazeta Polska*, No. 159, 11<sup>th</sup> June 1827, p. 622.

The ongoing transformations extended to small towns as well: the classicist town hall buildings in localities such as Piaseczno or Góra-Kalwaria (both near Warsaw), or Węgrów, and in dozens of other small towns of the former Congress Kingdom, testify to the impetus characteristic to the urbanisation programme pursued by the authorities of the constitutional Kingdom of Poland in the years 1815-1830.

Specific patterns of behaviour were spreading in parallel with the trend of urbanisation. Here is an example: a mounted artillery brigade was detached in 1815 to Łęczycza. The officers, former Napoleonic soldiers (with second-lieutenant Józef Bem among them), much disliked by Grand Prince Constantine, accepted this with joy. Once in Łęczycza, they stuck together, subscribed to *Gazeta Warszawska* and spent their time “playing chess, whist, or making little concerts” (one of them could play the violin and three others, Spanish guitar). Józef Jaszowski, whose diary tells us this story, “at seeing the non-commissioned officers of both troops, almost all of them noblemen – of whom there were more than thirty – wasting their time scattered around the town’s nooks, smoking pipes and enjoying revelries”, resolved at last to “give them, every evening, two hours of mathematics applied to the military science”. Using the French and German textbooks he had brought for himself from Paris, he prepared the scripts, the brigade commander afforded him a room he needed for the purpose, and so he started lectures which, as he wrote, enjoyed great popularity among his audiences and won Jaszowski recognition from the military authorities who promoted him to a professorship with the Artillery Trainee School.<sup>190</sup>

To what extent this interesting example of educational initiative in a small town can be generalised and, perhaps even more importantly, to what extent – if at all – the initiative in question was visible in the town outside of the military milieu (isolated, perforce, as it was), obviously remains an open question. Military officers lived in their quarters rather than barracks, which was of advantage to contacts with the locals. Jaszowski dwelled at a doctor’s house. How broad the diffusion of patterns was is difficult to assess unambiguously.

There are numerous other examples testifying to the fact that educated newcomers ‘from the outside’, such as secondary school teachers or (not as frequently) officials, endeavoured to liven up their local communities. After completing his studies in Krakow and Lwów, Kajetan Morykoni (1774-1830), a man of noble descent, worked for a few years as a secondary school teacher in Lublin, where he contributed to the establishment of the Bibliopolical Institute, the town’s first

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190 J. Jaszowski, op. cit., pp. 151-152.

public library. As an official in Siedlce, in 1816-1819, he was active with the local Charity Association, and was among the contributors to the public library. He was active with the masonry as well. From 1819 he was rector of the provincial school in Płock, where he was one of those who initiated the establishment of the Płock Scientific Society. The organisation had its counterpart in Lublin, and both provided the field of action to secondary school teachers.

A Society of the Friends of Music was set up in 1816 in Lublin and, two years later, in Kalisz. Charity societies were a different type of society, associating the Kingdom's urban elites. Until 1820, masonry had an essential role in the creation of a common space for the interaction of the enlightened strata, and perhaps this role was more important in provincial areas than in the capital city, offering more diverse opportunities for a social life. As long as it operated legally, masonry merely constituted an association. The masonry's social function declined after it was made illegal in 1820.

How strong were regional differences? What was characteristic to the lifestyle of Krakow was, as far as it can be guessed, a certain delay with which certain novelties or news were accepted; moreover, educated milieus were less numerous there. The Krakow environment was thus more homogenous compared to Warsaw and, consequently, more hierarchical, as there were no competitive circles or milieus which otherwise could have been joined by dissenters (if there were any). The local professors, more settled than those of the new university environment in Warsaw, were more strongly attached to their academy. The local well-read clergy, often associated with the Academy, played a cultural part greater than elsewhere. The nobility in Wilno, Lwów and Poznań, although they did not stay in the town throughout the year, characterised the local urban culture stronger than in Warsaw or Krakow, the latter being as small as a town but forming a separate tiny state. What was characteristic to milieus other than Warsaw and Wilno was their weakly developing press and concomitantly a rather poor literary and publishing activity.

There is no doubt, though, that the transformations in the individual centres assumed an analogical course, with only the chronology and intensity making a difference. The changing social position of the old professional groups, such as lawyers, teachers or doctors, has already been identified. This phenomenon obviously implied a transformed lifestyle, with teachers offering the best example. The almost automatically 'combined' position of teacher and clergyman characteristic to the old times was not yet a thing of the past; as a diarist noted, the older generation still assumed that "learning and books only befitted a Jesuit priest"<sup>191</sup>.

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191 K.W. Wóycicki, *Pamiętniki...*, vol. 2, p. 8.

But a conviction that the two functions could be separate was gaining strength: even if a common ground for them was identified, it consisted perhaps in the sense that being a teacher was regarded as a vocation, much in the way priesthood was. A secular teacher was already accepted along with a clerical teacher as an obvious thing; if secular, he did not have to be living a semi-clerical lifestyle, at a 'shared table', a bachelor in a common house, as the case still was in the time of the Commission of National Education.

The press ranked among the major elements rendering uniform the culture of the educated. On the eve of the November Insurrection, there were some nine daily newspapers issued in Warsaw alone; Krakow, Lwów and Poznań each had one such paper issued (respectively titled *Gazeta Krakowska*, *Gazeta Lwowska* and *Gazeta Poznańska*). Wilno was richer in this respect, with two or three dailies published periodically. Newspapers could be found "in provincial towns, here or there at postal stations, coffeehouses, and some billiard stations"; in effect, "something is read, and it happens in venues where nothing has ever been read".<sup>192</sup> Handwritten papers did not disappear completely. In Lublin, Ignacy Baranowski, a court clerk, 'published' a daily paper every five days, one which was very close to a 'real' paper in its regular layout, with no personal content offered and publication at regular intervals. Its author would give the paper to his acquaintances to read, but its circulation seemingly remained one copy. A manuscript satirical paper, issued at that same time by the popular actor Alojzy Żółkowski, is better known to us today.

One columnist of the period took note of how diverse the reading style of the press was: "Mr. Judge, Mr. Plenipotentiary, Mr. Commissioner, Mr. Conveyancer [i.e. those representing the new bureaucracy – M.J.] all read their *Kurier* [...] starting from the end", "the political [...] turnovers being not what they would care much for; but the declarations, citations, final dates, fees, and ex-divisions form a very serious matter. Hence, they read it with great attention", thinking of "how to take advantage of every single circumstance. [...] The way Mr. Chamberlain [*Podkomorzy*], Mr. Subprefect [*Starosta*], Butler [*Cześnik*], Treasurer, Cup-Bearer [*Podczaszy*], and the like [i.e. noble holders of old titles, only of honorary importance then – M.J.] read the paper is different. Those are utterly preoccupied with political views. They organise the world, penetrate the impenetrable cabinet secrets". The former readers probably read tacitly, each

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192 *O Autorach i Autorstwie. Z Wileńskich Brukowych Wiadomości* [‘Authors and authorship. Based on *Wiadomości Brukowe* of Wilno’], *Gazeta Krakowska*, No. 84, 21<sup>st</sup> Oct. 1818, pp. 997-1000; quote on p. 999.

on his own, not willing to share the information upon which a profit was dependent; the latter readers probably read aloud and made comments, whilst “the Chamberlain’s or the Subprefect’s Wife, the Subprefect’s maiden daughters, are curious to listen and be astonished at the Right-Honourable’s or their Dad’s great sights.”<sup>193</sup>

A welcome interpretation of the above quotation would be to see it as testifying to a transformed style of reading: a common reading of a newspaper gives way to a new-style hasty reading for a practical purpose. But a conclusion like this would probably be premature: in the end, some read their papers, or books, for pleasure whilst others seek for fast information or data today as well; who would decide which of these attitudes is more traditional or modern? Of importance, though, is that reading aloud is permanently present: in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, newspapers could be “listened to”<sup>194</sup>, somewhat in the way we can “listen to” the radio today.

In the 1820s, Jerzy-Samuel Bandtkie estimated the number of those who could read and write in Polish, across the partitioned areas, at around 300,000, and asked sadly, “Are there many Polish readers left out of that number of 300,000? I am not certain whether 3,000 would not be [too] much.”<sup>195</sup> Today, a press historian can be more optimistic to think about some 8,000 to 10,000 readers of Polish press within the Duchy of Warsaw as an expanded territory after 1809<sup>196</sup> (it might be guessed that perhaps twice that number appeared in the lands of the whole former Commonwealth). And since not everyone who ever read (or listened to) a newspaper is readily part of the subject of our present interest, it can be assumed that what we still deal with is a potentially a group of several (perhaps even more than ten) thousand members, which makes up a few per million, or less than half a percent, of speakers of Polish taken as a whole. A majority of the group’s members were concentrated within the few major cities. Not all of them were, though: schools, offices and courts-of-law also operated in small towns, remaining a reason for the geographic dissemination of

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193 Ibidem, p. 999.

194 This phrase is used in Ewa Felińska’s memoirs, as quoted by K. Ossowski, *Prasa Księstwa Warszawskiego* [“The press in the Duchy of Warsaw”], Warszawa 2004, p. 358.

195 J.S. Bandtkie, *Historia drukarni w Królestwie Polskiem i Wielkiem Xięstwie Litewskiem jako i w krajach zagranicznych, w których polskie dzieła wychodziły* [“A history of printing-houses in the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as well as in those foreign countries wherein Polish works were issued”], vol. 1, Kraków 1826, pp. 30-31; quoted after: K. Ossowski, op. cit., p. 350.

196 Ibidem.

the educated classes. Wherever such enlightened people appeared, they brought in a lifestyle and way of thinking that made them different from the population's remainder.

## 5. Ideals: old and new

In order to see how, and in what ways, educated people in Poland began forming a separate group or community, it would not suffice to look merely at their social background, professional career patterns, and lifestyle. The picture we are trying to draw would remain incomplete without considering what they thought about, what they were actually interested in and, perhaps most importantly, how they assessed their own role in the society. Thus, the question is about educated people's perception of the social task they were to fulfil.

An educated man's worldview drew much from the past period. Guidebooks such as G. Piramowicz's *Powinności nauczyciela* ['The obligations and duties of a teacher'] or *Katechizm rycerski* ['The catechism of a knight'] by Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski were republished, often in a revised form, whilst individuals such as Stanisław Staszic or Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, along with a whole galaxy of the lesser fry, constituted a living link with the Enlightenment period under King Stanislaus Augustus. In parallel, threads were being crystallised whose traces were hardly evident in the preceding epoch. In the first place, the role model of public servant was becoming concretised. It was originally defined and interpreted by Józef Kalasanty Szaniawski's *O naturze i przeznaczeniu urzędowań w społeczności* ['On the nature and purpose of officialdom in a society'], published in 1814. This treatise did not limit itself to depicting a good official according to the patterns of enlightened bureaucracy from the generation before: added to this depiction was a complex philosophical argumentation referring to Kantianism and German Romantic philosophy. It is most probably legitimate to suppose that Szaniawski was isolated with his philosophical speculations, as the period's enlightened elites scorned Kantianism, which was regarded as a sort of recurrent 'mediaeval' ignorance. The less sophisticated considerations of other adherents of the development of bureaucracy, such as Jan Węgleński or Antoni Gliszczyński, referring to the eighteenth-century ideal of 'enlightened bureaucrat' publicising 'the light' and eradicating superstitions, were perhaps more appealing to the educated reader.

When the School of Law was opened in the Duchy of Warsaw, the first Polish higher school tasked with 'production' of clerks and officials, the Rev. Professor Franciszek-Ksawery Szaniawski (not to be mistaken for Józef-Kalasanty) specified the 'product's' characteristics in a lecture inaugurating the School. So, an ideal civil

servant ought to be unbiased and driven by the rule of law (albeit the emphasis put on these aspects was weaker than we could expect). The listeners were reminded that “a special study is necessary for any office to be held”; a paternalism of the clerical authority was stressed quite strongly: officials “ought to be, as it were, fathers to those individuals who are entrusted to their superiority”.<sup>197</sup> This is reminiscent of Józef Kossakowski’s *Ksiądz Pleban* [‘The Reverend Rector’], an ideal clergyman of Stanislaus Augustus’ time. The remembrance of Enlightenment top-down reforms is intertwined there with the traditional image of a preceptor priest: the impact it exerted upon the clerical ideal has already been discussed.

The profession of journalist, which also gained colour in the epoch of our interest, was positioned much lower in the social hierarchy. It started being perceived differently from before: no more a fictitious ‘Honourable Mr. Monitor’, similarly to its English ‘Mr. Spectator’ counterpart, but the real Ludwik Dmuszewski, Count Bruno Kiciński, or Konstanty Majeranowski (active in Krakow) became known through their ventures as journalists. In one of his feuilletons, ‘Pustelnik z Krakowskiego Przedmieścia’ (Gerard Witowski) described himself as he once sat in the *Gazeta Warszawska* editorial office, proofreading his feuilleton about to be published and disturbed every moment by somebody popping in with some problem to share. This obvious literary trick, probably taken over from a French columnist – and thus not quite rendering the Warsaw realities truly, enabled this author to portrait diverse human types and is doubtless a manifestation of the idea of a growing role of the press in an urban community.

However, journalists did not always enjoy respect, since they were approached initially as newsmongers or servants whose role was to entertain readers with facetiae, never to enjoy an equal status. However, the twenties’ already saw a gradual change in the way the job was perceived. The ‘new (liberal) press’, whose short-lived bloom fell between the years 1818 and 1820 (before the project was undercut by the Viceroy’s press censorship decree), elevated the notion of ‘public opinion’ to a new dignity, that of watchful controller of the arbitrary exercise of government and defender of peoples’ rights against the attempts of despots. The free press, and thereby journalists as its workers, were to act as an exponent of public opinion and the main instrument of the honourable fight against superstitions, darkness, and despotism. Ten years later, a new ‘young press’ generation, resolutely Romantic this time, embarked on a new campaign, now in

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197 F.K. Szaniawski, *O urzędnikach. Rzecz czytana na pierwszym posiedzeniu biegu nauk w szkole prawa...* [‘On the officials. As it was read at the first session of the course of studying at the school of law ...’], Warszawa 1810, pp. 10, 5.

a literary-cultural, rather than political, sphere. The young Romantics, with their major periodical *Kurier Polski*, attacked adherents of the Enlightenment, and their dispute became one of the most important phenomena in the intellectual history of Poland of the former half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of the press as such grew too: young poets often made their debuts in periodicals, involved themselves in polemics, debated in cafés with students and young journalists.

The application requesting membership of the Society of Friends of Learning in Warsaw for Antoni Lesznowski, a long-time editor of *Gazeta Warszawska*, which was submitted in 1818 (and then rejected), is a symbol of this transformation. The applicants, Piotr Aigner, architect, and Ludwik Osiński, man-of-letters, recommended him as the one who “under the various governments in our country has always endeavoured, to the best of his capacities, to maintain the pureness of the Polish language and to conserve it at a time when we had no homeland. By means of selection of things and reasonable criticism in his *Gazeta* [...], he undertook to be of usefulness to the Nation.”<sup>198</sup>

The model of a learned man, the oldest ‘intelligentsia-related’ role model, was undergoing various adventures in the period under discussion. The old dispute went on about the nature of an educated man’s vocation: is he only supposed to give full vent to science and learning, or should he serve the society? This dispute was a novel variety of the *vita activa* versus *vita contemplativa* dispute, everlasting in European culture, with the difference that religious contemplation was now replaced by devotion to science/learning. Both attitudes were very clearly presented in an 1805 exchange of opinions between Hugo Kołłątaj and Jan Śniadecki. While the latter prescribed for himself to refrain from public affairs and to devote himself completely to science, Kołłątaj dissuaded him from this intent by explaining, in a quite stoical spirit, that peace of mind does not stem from turning one’s back on the world, for a sage that “knows his own self” would never lose it, regardless of the circumstances<sup>199</sup>. The ideal of a ‘pure’ scholar was gradually shifting into the periphery.

Between 1818 and 1831, as many as three Polish universities were in operation (there would be as many, again, in as late as 1916); it may consequently seem that the learned man model had advantageous developmental conditions provided – all the more so that Enlightenment rationalism, which formed the basis of the

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198 A. Kraushar, *Towarzystwo...*, vol. 3, Part 1, *Czterolecie pierwsze 1816-1820* [“The first quadriannual period: 1816-1820v’], Kraków-Warszawa 1902, p. 171.

199 Hugo Kołłątaj to Jan Śniadecki, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1805, [in:] H. Kołłątaj, *X. Hugona Kołłątaja korespondencja listowna* [“The Rev. Hugo Kołłątaj’s written correspondence’], ed. by F. Kojasiewicz, vol. 3, Kraków 1844, p. 117.

educated elites' Weltanschauung almost until the November Insurrection, heavily emphasised the social role of knowledge. The beautiful speech delivered by Rector Wojciech Szweykowski at the Warsaw University opening ceremony delineated the new academy's action programme: the University president, heir to the Piarist education-system tradition, very optimistically presented the advantageous influence of knowledge on the society and stressed the importance of freedom in scientific research. This freedom was described as advantageously informing the maintenance of social order, for liberty limited by laws, like a channelled river, is the best measure against floods and other cataclysms.

Examples of the ideology of the comprehensively educated man, a polymath that avoids detaching himself from social problems or being enclosed within a tight corset of a narrow specialisation, are given in two known programmatic works. Prince Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski wrote his *Myśli o pismach polskich* ['Thoughts on Polish writings'] in 1801 (and had the book published only ten years later); twenty-five years later, Kazimierz Brodziński, professor of Polish literature at the Warsaw University, delivered to his students an oration titled *O powołaniu akademików* ['On the vocation of academics']. Czartoryski resumed the topics already known from his *Katechizm rycerski* and other works written in Stanislaus Augustus' epoch. His study does not actually deal with creation of a role model but a number of traits of such model are implicitly identifiable there. This author strives to present a peculiar 'work schedule' for the Polish enlightened to tackle within the coming years, if not decades: this would include translation as well as editorial/publishing and criticism work, combined with the building of institutions that would give the educated elites an anchor whilst imbuing them with a sense of strength, since they would enable individuals to get together and act as a group.

The Polish enlightened to whom Prince Czartoryski appealed were expected to develop in themselves industriousness and perseverance, characteristics which were proving rare in Polish society (Polish nobility-based society, to be exact). Polish authors tended to write anything only when "someone is unexpectedly raped by a paroxysm of the desire not to stay idle (which harasses our land's inhabitants only rarely and almost always in short spurts)". The fact was that, usually, "our native inclination for idleness" caused one to work by fits and starts, unsystematically and carelessly, often leaving ventures and undertakings discontinued.<sup>200</sup> This type of criticism of national shortcomings reappears in

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200 A.K. Czartoryski, *Myśli o pismach polskich z uwagami nad sposobem pisania w rozmaitych materiach*, ['Thoughts of Polish writings, with remarks on the method of writing on various matters'], Kraków 1860 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp. 5, 120.

Polish journalism throughout the Partition period. “Lover of my own nation as I am [...], I would hold it a shame [...] if I were to become its flatterer”<sup>201</sup>; this conclusive formula in Czartoryski’s considerations perfectly defines the type of patriotism owned up to by a majority of the nineteenth-century Polish intelligentsia.

Brodziński set a different goal for himself in 1826, with an individual model coming to the fore: an action programme for the intelligentsia as a group was inserted only indirectly into his oration to the academics. Studying at the university, Brodziński remarked to his audience, a space where all the sciences are practised, you ought to take advantage of every opportunity, never confining yourselves in a narrow speciality. Reading is surely recommended, and so is actually thinking of what you are reading: there are some, Brodziński noted, who read just because “they are not capable of thinking on their own”. Also, you would rather talk “to colleagues of the other departments”, as conversation is important to one’s intellectual and mental development equally to reading and listening to lectures.<sup>202</sup> A thread reappears in the Polish elite’s utterances: associate, form groups and join them, talk to one another, establish contacts and stay in touch. This is the only way for new ideas to appear, and the only way for the Polish intelligentsia, as scarce as it is, to gain a sense of community.

Reading, thinking, listening and conversing are recommendable but not sufficient: writing is a must. “Talking is reasoning in practice; writing, in theory. While writing, we argue thoroughly; whilst speaking, we render [the others] more deeply convinced; when writing, we learn how to converse logically, and when conversing, we learn how to explain our reasons with a deeper sense and poetry.”<sup>203</sup> Still, versatility remains Brodziński’s major message: not to be limited to a thorough comprehensive knowledge but instead to promote wide-ranging formation of the mind as well as feelings.

A youngster that has nothing poetical in his ‘feeling’ would argue rather badly, be it only because of his character. [...] He will only be a cold witness to the community’s endeavours, a tough egoist [...]. He will most of the time be a doctor indifferent to the suffering person [...] or a philologist comprehending the words but not the spirit of the classicists. [...] Let us not therefore hold it a waste of leisure moments to be penetrated at times with the feeling of great poets, moral philosophers, or even pensive artists. Even though

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201 Ibidem, p. 123.

202 K. Brodziński, *O powołaniu i obowiązkach młodzieży akademickiej* [‘On the vocation and duties of academic youth’], [1826], in: idem, *Mowy i pisma patriotyczne* [‘Patriotic addresses, orations and writings’], ed. by I. Chrzanowski, Kraków 1926, pp. 39, 41.

203 Ibidem, p. 44.

nothing would remain out of those impressions in the memory, they shall never remain traceless for the sentiment.

K. Brodziński, *Mowy i pisma patriotyczne* ['Patriotic addresses, orations and writings'], ed. by I. Chrzanowski, Kraków 1926, pp. 53, 54.

This appreciation of 'feeling' or sentiment does not necessarily have to reflect any influence of Romanticist ideals (although such a supposition is admissible): it seems more plausible that Brodziński remained under the influence of neo-humanistic ideals. The model of a scholar undertaking social duties, staying in touch with others and burdening himself with the country's lot was apparently dominant but not exclusive. Krakow had preserved an ideal of a scholar wedded to his esoteric problems and consciously receding from daily-life issues. Krakow scholars felt attached to their Alma Mater to a larger extent than their Wilno, not to say Warsaw, counterparts. "All my hope, all my willingness is centred on the good and fame of this university, so that I only remain capable of nurturing them", said medicine professor Sebastian Girtler, upon his installation as Rector in 1826. "I have received my life from my parents", whilst to the university "I am beholden for my moral and political being, for the most part thereof"<sup>204</sup>; it seems that such words would have been uttered by neither of the two other universities' rectors.

However, other professors could have been met in Krakow too. Feliks Radwański, married with children, keen on social entertainment, interested in social life and often vocal about his opinions on various problems faced by the Republic of Krakow, was perhaps closer to the Warsaw professors than to his own elder colleagues at the Jagiellonian Academy. Established, as we can remember, in order to educate officials, and with the belief that learning must primarily be useful, the new university in Warsaw generated a new type of professor. Light will be best shed on the meanders of a professor's self-consciousness if we evoke the debate triggered by an 1819 memo of the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment. The Commission namely

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204 *Głos w dniu 18 października 1826 przez J.W. Sebastiana Girtlera, Fil. i Med. Dra przy instalacji swej na urząd rektora uniwersytetu miany* ['A voice by Rt.Hon. Sebastian Girtler, Phil. & Med. Dr., as delivered at his installation on the university's rector office'], [printed together with:] *Głos J.W. Józefa Hr Załuskiego, Kuratora jeneralnego Instytutów Naukowych Wolnego Miasta Krakowa i jego Okręgu, przy instalowaniu J.W. Sebastiana Girtlera na urząd rektora Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego miany* ['A voice by Rt.Hon. Count Józef Załuski, Supervisor-Jeneral of Scientific Institutions of the Free-City-of-Krakow and its District, as delivered at the installation of Rt.Hon. Sebastian Girtler on the office of Rector of the Jagiellonian University'], [Kraków, prob. 1826], p. 13.

suggested that the patterns of professor's gowns be officially determined, and decided to seek the professors' opinion on the matter before making a final decision. Attached to the memo were specimen designs of the togas for the individual departments, prepared by Julian-Ursyn Niemcewicz. An almost unanimous hostility triggered by the Commission's and Niemcewicz's idea is striking. Gowns?, the astonished professors exclaimed; a monument of gothic darkness, feudalism, and fanaticism? Moreover, it would implicate the academy's clerical character! An attire of this sort would only make the common people laugh; they would think professors are some kind of monks (such an incident indeed took place during the funeral service of Tsar Alexander I in 1825) or, worse even, Jews.

But there (fortunately!) existed a modern garment, a rational and practical one, corresponding with the epoch's spirit and enhancing its owner's prestige. The professors demanded it unanimously for themselves: a uniform! And it must of course feature the orders, an epee, and epaulets to reveal the rank and the academy's department. The most eloquent enemies of the toga and defenders of the uniform were general history professor Feliks Bentkowski, law professor Jan-Wincenty Bandtkie and theology professor Paweł Szymański.<sup>205</sup> Modernity, liberty, rationalism, and bureaucracy seemed to be a cluster of ideas so obvious that there was no one to even try and defend the university's freedoms associable with feudalism. It can be somewhat astonishing that a backlash like this eventually produced compromise: the professors received uniforms to be displayed on official ceremonies, but had to agree to the togas for daily university use.

The Wilno professors' views were situated somewhere halfway through those of their Warsaw and Krakow peers. The reform of 1803 transformed this academy more deeply than had been the case with the Kołłątaj reform applied to the Krakow university; thus, the ideal of a learned man exerting an impact on social life took stronger hold there than in the city at the foot of Wawel hill. Wilno had no Polish high-tier bureaucracy, and hence the distance between the clerical class and the professors' milieu was larger there than in Warsaw or Krakow. On the other hand, the Russian table of ranks was obligatory and it imposed an analogical hierarchy of official titles across the branches of public service, thus giving the professors the right to consider themselves civil servants. The Wilno academy also faced the toga issue and, since the professors adhered to academic uniforms, a compromised solution was found similar to that of Warsaw but without a similarly vehement debate.

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205 The above excerpt is a free summary of the arguments given by the three professors, as quoted in J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet...*, vol. 1, pp. 408-412.

The disputes about the identity of professor were different, to an extent, than those in Warsaw. The aristocracy exerted pressure through their desire to make the university dependent on them. Their most outstanding exponents were Prince Adam Czartoryski, the supervisor, and Tadeusz Czacki, founder of the Krzemieniec Lyceum, who was severely conflicted with the Wilno milieu. There was a group of professors on the other side who had arrived from abroad on the invitation of the university authorities, and thus were independent from local bargains and deals. At the same time, some of the Polish professors did not want to make the university dependent on the aristocracy, and had a strong self-identification as intellectuals. Jan Śniadecki was the major personage among the latter group. He much disliked foreign lecturers occupying the local chairs, and hence there was no chance for a common front of aliens and Poles in defence of the academy's independence; however, both groups, albeit at loggerheads with each other, formed an important factor in reinforcing the university's identity. Czartoryski, the supervisor, obviously did not strive to weaken Polish education in Lithuania; on the contrary, he was one of its major protectors. He wanted the university to flourish, but only to do so according to his own, rather than its own, conditions. The Prince endeavoured several times to conduct the election of a rector he supported; he called for the academy's senate to follow his own guidelines, instead of inviting entries for the chairs.

When speaking of the Polish territory under Austrian partition, I mentioned that Josephine ecclesial policy ideas, aiming at subjecting the Church to the state, acquired a certain influential power among educated people in Poland. This was seen particularly in the university environments of Wilno, Krakow and Warsaw, where, at least until the twenties, theologians or experts in the canonical law lecturing in a Josephine spirit and emphasising the necessity to subject the Church to the state could be encountered. This stands out as yet another example of Enlightenment state control, the aspect that has been mentioned so many times in this narrative.

The mental environment in which the minds of the education-bred elites lived in the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is certainly definable as the Enlightenment. In the context of a scholarly dispute about the final date of this epoch in Polish territory's cultural history, I will allow myself to assume a definite position, claiming that the Polish Enlightenment lasted until 1830. It was strong to the extent that it victoriously tackled, for some time, attacks coming from two opposite directions. On the one hand, the powerfulness of the Enlightenment categories is testified to by the fact that even a defiance of the status quo, youth conspiracies, national freemasonry and other forms of contestation ascribed to Enlightenment ideals. On the other hand, the increasingly explicit conservatism

of the Kingdom of Poland's authorities (especially after 1820) did not deny that their propaganda drew from Enlightenment ideas, though more and more diluted and 'neutralised' ones. These ideas boiled down, to an increasing extent, to the acclaims of a 'fatherly government', yet the Enlightenment pedigree of the official phraseology proves recognisable at first glance.

For instance, on the 1825 anniversary of the foundation of a provincial school in Szczebrzeszyn, a literature professor said, "Long-standing superstitions have not completely lost their power as yet, the light of the truth having not yet penetrated the lowest classes; the spirit of adhesion [...] has not ceased existing yet." Fortunately, "the country's supreme authority extends its guardianship and care to all scientific institutions on an equal basis", which incites one to entertain the hope that "public judiciousness" will ultimately prevail.<sup>206</sup> Despite appearances, Szczebrzeszyn was not a whistle-stop periphery of sorts: it belonged to the Zamoyski Entailed Estate (*ordynacja zamojska*); the local school, founded by the entail owners, was related to the Zamość Academy tradition. Teodozy Sierociński, the one who uttered the words quoted above, once a student in Wilno and a then professor with the Krzemieniec Lyceum, as well as an ex-member of the Filaret Association, certainly belonged to the Polish pedagogic elite. Still, we could perhaps approach his statement as confirming the supposition that a 'diluted' Enlightenment of this sort remained the foundation of an average Pole's worldview until the November Insurrection.

But this attitude had its rivals all the same. In the first years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century we can still see, somewhat to our astonishment, people from the older generation, whose attachment to the Enlightenment ideas is beyond any question, utter phrases of unmistakably baroque provenance. Take Bishop Jan-Chrzyciel Albertrandi, who, on his election in November 1800 as Chairman of the newly-established Society of Friends of Learning in Warsaw, responded with a pre-prepared speech thus: "Never could Cineas, that famous King Pyrrhus's envoy to the Romans, have possibly proved so embarrassed in his mind, so frightened at heart as he arrived amidst the splendid body of Roman senators, as I myself am, right now that I, for the first time ever, today amidst this assembly so respectable of these Rt.Hon. G&B [Gracious and Benevolent] Sirs, as no more a simple witness to, and spectator of, their eminency but a participant unworthy of their worthiness, herein am

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206 T. Sierociński, *O szkodliwych skutkach czynienia różnicy między naukami* ['On the harmful effects of making a difference between the sciences'], in: *Popis Publiczny Uczniów Szkoły Wojewódzkiej im. Zamoyskich w Szczebrzeszynie...* [A public skills-display featuring students of the 'Zamoyskis' Voivodeship School in Szczebrzeszyn ...], Warszawa 1826, p. 16.

assuming the position graciously bestowed upon me.”<sup>207</sup> This is how a seventeenth-century nobleman would at a *sejmik* council express his thankfulness to his peers for having elected him an envoy or deputy. Similar phrases were used by Marcin Poczubut, the heir not only of the tradition of the Commission of National Education but to a baroque rhetoric too, as he greeted Emperor Alexander at the Wilno University “as the second Marcus Aurelius, the Salomon of the North”.

When about a dozen years later, at the Piarist College building in Długa St. in Warsaw, Stanisław-Kostka Potocki, as the Minister of the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, decorated Onufry Kopczyński with an order, the grey-headed priest responded with an oration phrased in a similarly baroque style. These examples obviously do not mean that the Baroque would form a vital intellectual current in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century: the older generation were brought up in the tradition of baroque eloquence and as it were resumed in their old age the sources of their own spiritual formation. The examples have namely been quoted in order to illustrate how persistent certain manifestations of seemingly long bygone epochs were: their lives were so long that they could soon encounter, ‘above the heads’ of the enlightened, as it were, Romanticism, which already stood at the gates.

Some detect the earliest manifestations of Romanticism in the wave of the collapse of Enlightenment rationalism, which followed the Third Partition of the Commonwealth. This is perhaps an overstatement, but something definitely began to occur in the following decade. “A poet, man-of-letters, romantic, goes musing to the Saxon Gardens” at twelve o’clock, wrote Gerard-Maurycy Witowski in his earlier-quoted feuilleton.<sup>208</sup> The year is 1818. Before the change in the sphere of sensing was ever articulated in ideological manifestos, it was identifiable in a gradual evolution of aesthetic taste. In Krakow, as earlier in Wilno and in so many other European towns, the ramparts and the old town hall were demolished. But the Floriańska Gate and the Barbican were saved – a sign of the time! Konstanty Majeranowski, a liberal journalist, expressed, in *Pszczółka Krakowska* magazine, his outrage at this inconsistency: why, instead of embellishing the town with new classicist edifices, keep those monuments of Gothic barbarism [= characteristic to the Goths]? But this voice sounded somewhat archaic in the early twenties. Soon after, an undelivered project appeared to construct a new neo-Gothic town hall for Krakow. In Warsaw, the press of the

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207 Quoted after: A. Kraushar, *Towarzystwo...*, vol. 1, *Czasy pruskie 1800-1807* [“The Prussian period, 1800-1807”], Kraków-Warszawa 1900, p. 139.

208 G.M. Witowski, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 165.

late twenties witnessed a discussion on a Prince Józef Poniatowski monument: should the figure be styled after a Roman, in line with a classical fashion, or should the Prince be presented in a general's uniform? The new tastes and inclinations manifested themselves in the redevelopment of the Lublin castle into a prison, with use of numerous neo-Gothic style elements, which was probably the first public redevelopment undertaken in this style ever in the Polish territory.

The most interesting manifestation of altered tastes in the fine arts was a long years' discussion surrounding the building in the Poznań Cathedral of a grave chapel for the two first rulers of Poland, Duke Mieszko I and King Boleslaus I the Brave (Bolesław Chrobry). The old Gothic tombstone fell to pieces in 1790 under the debris of the collapsing Cathedral tower; the idea to have it rebuilt soon gave way to the possibility of creating a mausoleum of the first Piast rulers. Initially, a classical design was considered, and was to be delivered by Karl-Friedrich Schinkel himself. The adaptation of Our Lady's church into a mausoleum located not far from the Cathedral was also taken into consideration (the church was left undemolished owing to this idea); another possibility was to construct a special amphitheatre in front of the Cathedral. The more modest option eventually prevailed, owing to constrained funds: one of the chapels was thoroughly redeveloped. The project's initiator was Teofil Wolicki, a canon who later became Archbishop of Poznań. After his death in 1829, the business was carried further by Count Edward Raczyński, Poznań's well-known art patron. His idea was that the chapel stylistically refer to the era of Mieszko I, a task that classicism or neo-Gothicism obviously could not tackle. The style chosen was a Byzantine one, then a total novelty. Conceived of in the 1820s and built after the November Insurrection, the chapel was perhaps the earliest work of historical architecture with an extensive ideological programme to appear in the Polish lands.

There is one more thing that deserves attention in relation to the creation of the First Piasts chapel: a public fundraising campaign was held for the purpose. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, such fundraising actions were an important instrument for mobilising the society in the service of most various, usually national, ideals. Activities of this type began to be launched after the Vienna Congress. Between 1815 and 1830, funds were collected (within schools too) for Prince Józef Poniatowski and Nicolaus Copernicus monuments to be erected in Warsaw, and for the Kościuszko Mound in Krakow. These activities were not oppositional in nature; the partitioning countries' monarchs still thought it right to assume the role of heirs of at least certain traditions of what had been the Commonwealth, and did join the collections themselves. At that same time, the quest for 'domestic antiquities' was given a new impetus, for which the Warsaw-based Society of Friends of Learning appealed incessantly to its members. Proclamations

were issued and reports published. This activity bolstered the confidence and self-esteem of all those who by way of their petty contributions partook in the successful outcome of a great venture. It enabled them to see themselves as patrons of culture, not inferior to the aristocrats (as testified to by the Poznań opinion's aversion toward Edward Raczyński, owing, paradoxically, to his overly large financial contribution to the construction of the Piast chapel). For the organisers, conducting money collections was a school of cooperation and public activity.

The increased interest in the national past was also expressed in arts other than architecture: painting, theatre (Alojzy Feliński's *Barbara Radziwiłłówna*), and poetry, but primarily, perhaps, in historical novels. Countess Anna Mostowska was the first author in this genre; she authored several novels in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which were called 'Gothic' at the time. While following the German models (and, indirectly, Ann Radcliffe's masterworks), they were embedded, albeit rather superficially, in the history of the Commonwealth. Mostowska was the first to have introduced in the Polish novel the whole Romantic machinery (brigands, "ruins of old castles, inhabited by nobody but ghosts"). Her literary taste also provides an interesting testimony to a transformation of the literary taste commencing at the time: in 1806, she explained her selection of her subject matter, stating that "Our feelings so exhausted now need thrills more precipitous..."<sup>209</sup>

However, it was only Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz's *Jan z Tęczyna* that triggered common curiosity ("we have got two copies here in Wilno, but I could have come across none thus far", a former Filaret Association member dwelling in Wilno informed his mate at a compulsory sojourn in Moscow<sup>210</sup>). Niemcewicz had a splendid dinner prepared on his seventieth birthday, which was simultaneously a staging of the feast at Sigismund Augustus' (Zygmunt August) court, following the novel's description. Probably the most popular work by Niemcewicz, one that created a stereotype of the Polish history which became prevalent for generations, was his *Śpiewy historyczne* ['Historic Songs']. Written at a slow pace, in

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209 Both quotations after: K. Wojciechowski, *Historia powieści w Polsce. Rozwój typów i form romansu polskiego na tle porównawczym* ['A history of the novel in Poland. The development of types and forms of Polish romance against a comparative background'], ed. by Z. Szwejkowski, Lwów 1925, p. 102.]

210 S. Kozakiewicz to O. Pietraszkiewicz, Wilno, 19<sup>th</sup> April (1<sup>st</sup> May) 1825, in: *Archiwum filomatów. Listy z zesłania* ['The Philomath Society Archive: Letters from the exile'], Part 1, *Krąg Onufrego Pietraszkiewicza i Cypriana Daszkiewicza* ['The circle of Onufry Pietraszkiewicz and Cyprian Daszkiewicz'], ed. by Z. Sudolski, Warszawa 1997, p. 185.

the course of over twenty years, eventually published in 1819 and approved as required reading for schools (but withdrawn a few years later), this cycle of historical patriotic songs constituted a sort of ABCs of national history.

*Elegia na śmierć księcia Józefa Poniatowskiego* [‘An elegy of the death of Prince Józef Poniatowski’], an ‘extra’ piece concluding the *Śpiewy* cycle, was perhaps the most poignant item. Stylised after a classical ode on the death of a hero and reaching the status of genuine poetry at several moments, this elegy formed, like the entire cycle, regardless of the actual intention of its author who was far from favourable towards the Romantics, excellent fodder for the new generation’s minds and hearts. A straight line is set from Niemcewicz’s *Śpiewy* to the Romantic ballads.

The sentimental current had, some time earlier, already unveiled the Polish history’s old glory before readers; the name of Jan-Paweł Woronicz has been mentioned several times. It was however only in the late twenties that the new generation, jaded with classical aesthetics, took over certain sentimental threads, imbuing them with a new power in the context of an altered type of sensing. Maurycy Mochnecki, radical and uncompromising as he was, and in fact inexorably convinced about his own justness, devoted a favourable reminiscence to Woronicz. What did Mochnecki find in him? First, some harbingers of the Romantic aesthetics. For Mochnecki, “magnificent constructions and edifices are tacit whilst ruins do speak”; “they regain a mystical life. Destruction revives their relations with the natural”.<sup>211</sup> So, he must have liked poetic descriptions of desolation in Woronicz, even if only for purely aesthetical reasons.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, Mochnecki found in the poem titled *Hymn do Boga* [‘An anthem to God’] a short, almost catechismal, presentation of a philosophy of the history of Poland as a nation to which special Divine care is extended – a nation whose history had not as yet come to a conclusion, in spite of the enormous disaster affecting it. Mochnecki read Woronicz in a spirit that was already close to messianism. Quoting this author’s phrase: “The Lord God of Hosts hath elected a single tiny tribe, unsightly with the world”, and commented, “[Woronicz] relates this thought on the Creator’s covenant with a people of his liking to our history”.<sup>212</sup> This is how a bridge was being built between Woronicz, whose belief in the Providence’s guardianship led toward messianism, and the coming messianism of the Romantics.

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211 M. Mochnecki, *O duchu i źródłach poezji w Polsce* [‘The spirit and sources of poetry in Poland’], in: idem, *Pisma krytyczne i polityczne* [‘Critical and political writings’], vol. 1, Kraków 1996, p. 58.

212 M. Mochnecki, *Woronicz*, in: idem, *Pisma...*, vol. 1, p. 201.

Sentimentalism was not limited to poetry; perhaps it is even the sentimental novel that comes to the fore. *Julia i Adolf, czyli nadzwyczajna miłość dwojga kochanków nad brzegami Dniestru* [‘Julia and Adolph, or, an extraordinary love of two lovers at the banks of the Dniester’] by Ludwik Kropiński (written 1810, published 1824) and other such works, probably did not rank amongst the great literary achievements, but they acquainted Polish readers (of either sex!) with a new way of sensing, rendered them accustomed to introspection, and exercised the Polish language in the art of expressing complex psychological states (further development of literature would be impossible without this). When Kropiński read fragments of *Julia i Adolf* aloud, “some of the ladies would contract a convulsive sobbing, others came to feel nauseous, and woe unto anyone who has not at least submitted her hot tears in homage: such a one would be regarded a heartless woman, unworthy of the company of affectionate ladies.”<sup>213</sup>

A gradual, at first imperceptible, transformation of the mental orientation is testified to by the increased importance of Germany as a cultural pattern. Not only the young generation (which we will talk about in a moment) but also numerous representatives of the middle generation (Brodziński) looked with interest at Germany – the source of a new current of Romantic aesthetics. The theatres in Warsaw and Krakow staged the plays of German playwrights in fashion at the time along with Shakespeare’s, who was not quite loved, for a change, among the enlightened due to compositional defects, bad taste and failure to observe the unity of the time, place and action rules.

Was the slow-paced change in aesthetic tastes accompanied by deeper attitudinal transformations? The enlightened complained about the influence of Kantianism, a system that they could not comprehend, treating it as an attack on nationalism. Maurycy Mochnacki and his young colleagues knew quite well, around 1830, the trends of German Romantic philosophy; to the scandal and dismay of the enlightened generation, Mochnacki rejected empiricism as a means of cognising the world, ascribing the leading role to reasoning and introspection. Numerous formulations in his journalism, aphoristically reinforced, render the ideals of the young generation formulated as if deliberately to chafe the readers formed in a climate typical to the Enlightenment. “Science, thou grand nought!” or, “What is *us*, compared to the genius of the Middle Ages?”<sup>214</sup> Such exclamations must have been not so much seditious as merely entirely incomprehensible for the people of the formation of Jan Śniadecki, Kajetan Koźmian or Stanisław Staszic.

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213 Ewa Felińska’s memoirs, as quoted by K. Wojciechowski, op. cit., p. 128.

214 M. Mochnacki, *Pisma krytyczne ...*, vol. 1, Kraków 1996, pp. 166, 70.

More interesting was the confrontation between Mochnacki and the young Romantics, on the one hand, and Kazimierz Brodziński, only slightly their elder, on the other. Brodziński's works, through their sentimentalism, were somewhat close to several manifestations of Romanticism. Mochnacki endeavoured to transplant the Germanic mythology, as a rather stereotypical concept, into the Polish soil; in the remains of this mythology, living as it were amongst the Polish people, he saw the chance for Polish poetry to be revived. Brodziński opposed this view: to his mind, the Romanticist fashion had nothing in common with true folk poetry, and he was afraid that the radicalism of the young generation would lead to a political catastrophe.

Can anything novel be spotted in the sphere of religious life? Kazimierz Wóycicki noted in his memoirs an increased religiosity in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not among the folk classes, "for these have remained [...] pious [...], but in the entire intelligentsia of the town".<sup>215</sup> A similar conviction was formulated, from some chronological distance, by Marceli Motty with regard to Poznań. Such a process could indeed be occurring in certain milieus, as is testified by, for instance, the religious output of J.P. Woronicz. In any case religious sentiments were growing across Europe after 1815, and so Poland must have been affected.

We can simultaneously observe a shift of emphasis in the Kingdom's policy. In 1820, Stanisław-Kostka Potocki resigned as Minister of Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, in the aura of scandal; his book *Podróż do Ciemno-grodu* ['A Journey to the Citadel of Ignorance'] had been accused of hostility toward religion. The education authorities attached increasing attention in the twenties to the role of the religious factor in upbringing and education; pupils and students were required, more insistently than before, to participate in pious practices. Thus, whenever we come across a manifestation of public religiosity after the year 1820, we can never be sure whether it was an opportunistic behaviour or a real change of attitudes. If we come across very strong religious accents in the texts or addresses of people who were very anticlerical before (e.g. Feliks Bentkowski), the suspicion of opportunism readily occurs to us.

Even if increased religiosity really took place, it is not clear at all in what ways it was combined with accumulating romantic sentiments. Idealising the mediæval epoch, Romanticism was closer to Catholicism than the Enlightenment, but the thought of the great Romanticists was indeed far from a Catholic orthodoxy. On the other hand, the Polish Enlightenment was not overtly anticlerical (in spite of its libertine thread), and was becoming increasingly moderate in the

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215 K. Wóycicki, op. cit., p. 235.

first decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The enlightened were compromised in their old age, and strengthened religious attitudes did not have to lead straight away to a worldview-related conflict. Whatever the case, religious issues did not pose a serious issue in Polish intellectual life of the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It was against this ideological background that the struggle between the Classicists and the Romanticists, well known from any school textbook, was occurring. On the one side stood enthusiasts of the young Adam Mickiewicz, who in 1822 published his first volume of poetry, *Ballady i romanse* ['Ballads and romances']. His fame was growing ever since; the strongest resonance was aroused by the publication in 1828 of the poetic novel *Konrad Wallenrod*, during its author's stay in Russia, and this was because of its content (at last, a national history poem!) as well as its form (no one in our country could write like Byron before then). Just before the November Insurrection, a generation younger than Mickiewicz by ten to twelve years entered the literary stage, producing its own stars: Juliusz Słowacki (born 1809) and Zygmunt Krasiński (born 1812). Those authors mastered the Romanticist form to perfection, applying any possible methods of dazzling the reader with awe, exoticism, and passions, which were not so welcome by Mickiewicz's comrades, having themselves been brought up in the classical tradition.

On the other side was primarily (though not exclusively) the elder generation, for whom the romanticist appreciation of passions and folk nature meant the treachery of Enlightenment ideals. Jan Śniadecki, the man recalled so many times here, represented the universe of Enlightenment science, while the poet Kajetan Koźmian defended the aesthetics of French classicism. Although with a diverse distribution of accents, the two men shared a common set of ideas; the aesthetics and the logic were blended; the defence of either meant to defend the civilisation and the world of humans against dark forces of instinct, wildness, barbarism and ignorance, which, impersonated by Adam Mickiewicz and his followers, threatened the Polish science and literature with destruction. It is easy today to be wiser and laugh at groundless fears: the opponents of Romanticism used genuine arguments, their fears forming part of a certain thread in European culture that was certainly not naïve or unserious. Their overly pessimistic evaluation of what was going on is nonetheless doubtless: reason did not surrender, and the next generations of the Polish intelligentsia were able to combine Romantic ideals with those of the Enlightenment, thus softening the conflict.

There are two conclusions implied by this story. First, the strength of the ideal of serving the society is astonishing, as best expressed by Hugo Kołłątaj in the letter to Jan Śniadecki quoted above. In this aspect, the Polish situation seemingly differed from the one in Germany, where the educated bourgeoisie tended

increasingly to forcefully reinterpret the ideals of neo-humanism toward individual self-improvement, quitting the focus on social and political issues.

Secondly, the ideology of educated classes in Poland still had no clear anti-nobility, or anti-aristocratic, undertone. In the period we are focusing on presently, the intelligentsia and the aristocracy constituted, in principle, two dissimilar groups, clearly differing in their lifestyles, wealth, access to executive positions in the state, etc. Thus, when it comes to discussing career patterns, the education system and development of bureaucracy, the focus is primarily on the 'non-aristocratic' group. However, when looking for texts discussing the vocation of an educated person, this person's (real or merely dreamed-of) hierarchy of values, the place he or she ought to occupy in the society – in brief, when searching for testimonies of collective self-definition of the emerging intelligentsia – the matter looks different. It is namely evident that texts authored by learned aristocrats do not principally differ from those written by 'professional' intellectuals, earning their living with the pen. A cut-off approach is impossible: there are no thorough differences between Adam-Kazimierz Czartoryski and Kazimierz Brodziński (to stick to the authors quoted above) in their views of the role of the educated man, however remarkable the potential differences between them in any other respect. Aristocrats who ran salons in the capital city, wrote theatrical play reviews, and expressed their opinions on arts and literature performed, so to speak, the functions of intelligentsia; having said this, these aristocrats' statements and remarks concerning the significance of educated people are approachable as an element of 'intelligentsian' self-awareness.

This overlapping of views claimed by intelligentsia, as a strict concept, and by the enlightened aristocracy is an interesting phenomenon, one that is seemingly at variance with a colloquial image of intelligentsia as a democratic group, and thus hostile toward aristocratic prevalence. But such an image was only formed some time later. A symbiosis of enlightened aristocracy and intelligentsia lasted until 1830.

A comparison with the situation in Germany should be interesting (similarly to Poland, Germany was not a political but historical-geographical notion then). The similarities are obvious: salons, tea as a social phenomenon (the samovar as a socialisation machine, in the words of a contemporary German columnist), people singing and talking together, sentimental and late-Enlightenment predilections – all this was almost completely 'transferable' from either country to the other. However, when we read about the salon which was run in Weimar by Johanna Schopenhauer, an educated Gdansk woman, essential differences appear along with the analogies. First of all, Weimar had seven thousand inhabitants while Warsaw's population was 120,000. How dissimilar was the structure of

intellectual life in Germany at that time, a structure resulting from the country's political decentralisation, if a town similar in population to Płock could enjoy a cultural life at a level not to be encountered anywhere in the Kingdom but in its capital town? Second, Mrs. Schopenhauer's Weimar salon, like its Warsaw counterparts, was frequented by nobles and burghers, while the lady of the house was not a noblewoman but a townswoman. The salon's greatest celebrity was not an aristocrat but Herr von Goethe, an alderman with the princely court: he owed this position to his governmental function and literary excellence, probably to an equal degree. His disaffection for a given guest sufficed to have that guest deleted from the guest list. There were no significant bourgeoisie-dominated salons in the Polish lands. In Germany, the anti-nobility current was stronger and often the sincerity of a simple and honest bourgeois family, industrious and pious, would be set against the hypocrisy and moral decay of a lordly court. The usual situation in Poland was reverse: the countryside (be it a manor or a cottage), rather than an artisan's tiny room in a town, was seen as a depository of virtue and simplicity.



# Chapter 5: Toward a revolution

## 1. The youth, and what they were after

The youth posed a serious political problem in the nineteenth century. It was a dangerous group, by its very nature and essence. All adults would share this view at that time, regardless of their worldview. University-level students, they would say, ought to live in apartments, their landlords being model citizens; “it is better for a young man to watch the exemplary life of a married couple from his early youth years than to stay confined within a monastery school with numerous youth inclined for fickleness and disorderly passions”, Hugo Kołłątaj warned. Exact sciences “protect the youth against erroneous daydreams and illusions” whereas “moral sciences”, such as philosophy, literature or history, lead “inexperienced young people and imaginations” astray to “atheism, [...] materialism, [...] liberal sedition and theories that tumble the social order down”, conservative Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski<sup>216</sup> alerted from the other extreme of the political spectrum. “The greatest resoluteness should be used [...] in order to estrange for ever those young bedlamites from such conducts”, Prince Adam-Jerzy Czartoryski added in an 1823 letter to Józef Twardowski,

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216 The subsequent quotations come from: H. Kołłątaj to T. Czacki, Krzemieniec, 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1803, in: X. *Hugona Kołłątaja korespondencja listowna z Tadeuszem Czackim, wizytatorem nadzwyczajnym szkół w guberni wołyńskiej, podolskiej i kijowskiej* [‘Mailing correspondence between the Rev. Hugo Kołłątaj and Tadeusz Czacki, extraordinary inspector of schools in the Volhynian, Podolian and Kiev Guberniya’], vol. 1, ed. by F. Kojśiewicz, Kraków 1844, p. 253; J.K. Szaniawski, *Uwagi względem wychowania i nauki* [‘Some remarks regarding upbringing and teaching’], [1821], in: *Płockie rękopisy Józefa Kalasantego Szaniawskiego* [‘Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski’s Płock manuscripts’], ed. by T. Kozanecki, *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* [‘Archive of the History of Philosophy and Social Thought’], vol. 7, *Historia i wolność. Studia z dziejów ideologii XIX wieku* [‘History and freedom. Studies in the history of 19<sup>th</sup>-century ideologies’], Warszawa 1961, pp. 249-297 (quote in pp. 286-287); D. Beauvois, *Szkolnictwo polskie na ziemiach litewsko-ruskich 1803-1832* [‘The Polish school and educational system in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian territory, 1803-1832’], vol. 1, Rome-Lublin 1901, p. 45.

Youth should, simply put, be kept on a short leash, so that their innate inclination for outbursts and rebelling do not shake, some day, the very foundation of the social order.

When we read university rules and regulations, our impression of deterrence reaches a fever pitch. It is hard to imagine anything a young man could have done without breaching or infringing some of those hugely detailed provisions. Not only was he expected to attend church services but specifically to attend them at the academic church (this requirement was applicable with the students as well as with their professors). He had to reside at lodgings approved by the school authorities and controlled by special inspectors and, moreover, be back there direct from the university, never wandering around the town, never paying a visit to a theatre, ballroom or café. (Only indigent students who gave private lessons to restaurateurs' kids in exchange for free board could receive special certificates enabling them to enter the otherwise banned premises.) Student and gymnasium-pupil uniforms (with penalties imposed for wearing an inappropriate uniform, e.g. a university uniform worn by a gymnasium student) facilitated control in public situations.

Whipping, still applied at schools (not in universities any more, in most cases), a programmed ceremony, as remembered by Kazimierz Girtler from his childhood years, was something of a dismal execution ritual. But even university students were not always free from corporal punishments. In 1826, a few years after the Philomath Society case, a secret student association was detected in Wilno; its participants were punished with a lash at the university yard, in presence of professors and students. Only after this disgraceful penalty was applied were they expelled from the university and dispatched, to use the popular Russian phrase, '*v soldaty*' – to the army, into as far as Caucasus.

This form of establishing discipline in the university fortunately remained exceptional. Despite such drastic occurrences, it is hard to resist the impression that the enormously repressive regulations often turned into a dead letter. On reading Kazimierz Wóycicki's memoirs of the social and intellectual life going on at Warsaw cafés on the eve of the November Insurrection, it is difficult to guess whether or not their habitués were this same youth who were subject to the ingenious rigours of school and university severities. When the Rev. Franciszek-Ksawery Szaniawski, the professor of civil law whose 'ideal clerk' vision is already known to us, "was on his way to the University and then on his way back home, he would normally be accompanied by a few students at a time, with whom he gladly talked, laughing and patiently listening to their stories. He would even often pay a visit to one café well known at the time, Ms. Byczyńska's, where excellent coffee was served and where around a dozen students would be encountered

at any time.”<sup>217</sup> One of the Krzemieniec Lyceum graduates recollected that, in spite of stringent regulations, it was relatively easy to buy wine during the school excursions.<sup>218</sup>

It seems that the period's youth were more irascible than the youth of today: the Warsaw and Wilno university regulations forbade the carrying of rods and sabres into lecture halls. (Incidentally, this regulation resembles a contemporaneous one barring Krakow theatre spectators from bringing their dogs along to performances.) Young people's behaviour was often marked with laxity, and not only in trifle matters but also in political issues of essence. The tradition of stamping out unpopular lecturers or disliked classmates was vibrant. This vexatious adventure was once the lot, in spring 1830, of Zygmunt Krasiński, then a student (and the young Zygmunt suffered it not for his own behaviour but for his father's faults). Four years before, the university youth successfully prevented with pattering and whistling the University supervisor Dawid Oeschelwitz from taking the floor, as he was about to reprimand them for unbecoming behaviour during the mourning ceremony for Tsar Alexander I. No one was made responsible in either case. Supervisor Oeschelwitz complained in vain to the rector that the students did not observe the uniform requirement and visited confectioneries.<sup>219</sup>

In Krakow, where the university was one of the dominant institutions, the contrast between the regulations and actual conduct was even more pronounced. In 1820, there occurred an uproar involving students and pupils of St Anne's Gymnasium, with another wave of unrest just before the November Insurrection. Young people demonstrated in the streets, several times forcing an entrance into governmental and police buildings, releasing their detained colleagues and calling the officials to return the documents and books confiscated on arrest. Virtually no blood was shed during all these occurrences.

The explanation for this contrast is twofold. On the one hand, extremely severe regulations might have been convenient for the authorities: with unobservable rules, anyone and everyone might be held guilty and anyone could be penalised, in a discriminating way. But there were deeper reasons for this state of affairs. The society was not yet held within bounds by the painfully emerging

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217 A fragment of the memoirs of Romuald Hube, as quoted by J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet Warszawski (1816-1831)* [‘The Royal University of Warsaw, 1816-1831’], vol. 2, Warszawa 1911, p. 383.

218 A. Kozieradzki, *Wspomnienia z lat szkolnych 1820-1831* [‘Recollections from my school years, 1820-31’], Wrocław 1962, p. 194.

219 J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet...*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1907, p. 165.

modern centralised bureaucratic state. The process described by sociologists as increase in social discipline was in its relatively early stage, while group behaviour (as could be seen with the Krakow occurrences) were often rather anarchic. This being the case, the authorities, realising how frail they were, introduced draconian regulations to deaden such attitudes. The real state of affairs was gaining shape somewhere at the crossroads of both tendencies. Later on, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the time when societies (at least in Western Europe) adapted themselves to the requirements of a centralised state, the legal norms were gradually relaxed.

The first decades of the nineteenth century saw the appearance of youth with an intelligentsia-family background behind them. For those young people, the town and the book formed a natural environment. Kazimierz Wóycicki was a son of a doctor, Kazimierz Girtler's father was a university professor; a grammar-school (gymnasium) professor was the father of Marcelli Motty. All of them could remember from their childhood their parents talking about 'enlightened topics'. (When Kazimierz Girtler was a few years of age, the time before Krakow was incorporated in the Duchy of Warsaw, his father was visited by his colleague, professor Feliks Radwański, who would bring along some banned newspapers – and all that was a great secret since an Austrian clerk lived in the same house.) Gymnasium and university subsequently became their natural career path, and their childhood experiences gave them a natural prevalence over young people coming from other social classes. In Wilno, where most students were from landed-gentry families, this reproduction of the intelligentsia was not so clear-cut. Some urban youth from outside the intelligentsia milieu could be met too: youth conspiracies were sometimes joined by boys from artisan families; in fact, each gymnasium (or departmental-school) grade usually had a few such students. Among Marcelli Motty's numerous schoolmates in the Poznań St. Mary Magdalene's Gymnasium were, for example, three sons of Stanisław Kolanowski, a brewer. All those young men met a grim end: two were killed in the November Insurrection and the third died of tuberculosis at age twenty-nine.

Still, most of the intelligentsia youth had a countryside background. They travelled to their schools in the town on their own or were transported by their parents; some walked while others, Jan-Nepomucen Janowski among them, arrived on a Vistula scow. They would often keep in their pocket a letter to some clerk or clergyman, a distant relative or old acquaintance of their parents. Juliusz Słowacki got a letter of recommendation from Jan Śniadecki himself; as a result, "Prince Czartoryjski [*sic*] was so benevolent to recommend me at once to Prince Lubecki, the Minister, and I was placed at the secretarial-jeneral of the

*ministerium* [Ministry] of Treasury.”<sup>220</sup> Ambroży Grabowski arrived in Krakow in the company of his grandmother and made it to the prior of the Bernardine convent at Stradom, his distant relative. “If you want to, said he [the monk], I shall recommend you for the grocery [trading in spice], or for a bookstore.”<sup>221</sup> We know today what the young man’s choice was.

The newcomers found lodging to live in, alone or in groups of a few individuals; such a room-and-board facility would often be run by a widow; sometimes, gymnasium teachers (to recall Nicolas [Polonised as Mikołaj] Chopin, Frédéric’s father and professor with the Warsaw Lyceum), or even university professors, moonlighted as landlords. Young newcomers would at times find room and board with a clergyman; such was the case of Józef Jaszowski, who was sent in the first years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to a gymnasium in Przemyśl. Jaszowski lived in apartments “at the Rev. Canon Drążewski’s, a learned ex-Jesuit, a friend of my father’s in their young years”<sup>222</sup> and we can be sure that not too many young people could enjoy a like golden life in their high-school years at the time: Jaszowski the schoolboy could cherish jars of preserves supplied by the friendly Benedictine nunnery (“with the preserves we had to deal very thriftily, so that sixty jars would be used over fifty-two weeks”); or he could luxuriate in feasts at which “the Canon’s wheatmeal made a name for itself across the area, to which Mrs. Potocka would at times invite herself over.”<sup>223</sup> Canon Drążewski was himself a clever and literate man; he owned a sizeable library, the keys to which he entrusted to his ward; he subscribed to newspapers whose contents – the time was one of Napoleon’s first victories – was debated within a group of friends, in the presence of the young observer.

Those who had completed their school education and undertaken a clerical job often resided at their office’s edifice or places like the Staszic Palace, as was the case with Jan-Nepomucen Janowski, the librarian of the Society of Friends of Learning; some would rent an apartment, like Juliusz Słowacki, who in his Warsaw dwelling had “windows long down to the ground, with tiny arcades, and

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220 J. Słowacki to A. Bécu, Warsaw, 15<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> April 1829; in: J. Słowacki, *Dzieła* [‘The Works’], vol. 12, *Listy do krewnych, przyjaciół i znajomych (1820-1849)* [‘Letters to his relatives, friends and acquaintances, 1820-1849’], ed. by J. Pelc, Wrocław 1949, p. 22.

221 A. Grabowski, *Wspomnienia* [‘Memoirs’], ed. by S. Streicher, vol. 1, Kraków 1909, p. 30.

222 J. Jaszowski, *Pamiętnik dowódcy raketników konnych*, [‘Memoirs of a mounted racketeers’ commander’], ed. by J. Łojek, Warszawa 1968, p. 24.

223 *Ibidem*, s. 27.

oft when the moon is shining, I lean upon them and it then seems to me that I am in Wilno, chattering with you.”<sup>224</sup>

The young people usually arrived from their noble manors in countryside areas, but not in every case. The first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the time when students from peasant families could already be found. Apart from Jan-Nepomucen Janowski or Ambroży Grabowski, whom we have already come across (the latter actually came from a bourgeois family in Kęty – only his mother’s father was a serf), there was Józef Muczkowski, from a peasant family near Lublin. Having completed his studies in Krakow, he became professor with the Poznań Gymnasium and, some time later, director of the Krakow Academy library. Among high-school or university students, young people of Jewish origin could at times be found such as Jakub Etyngier, a graduate of the Krzemieniec Lyceum and the leader of the local ephemeral clandestine youth association.<sup>225</sup>

Once in the town, what did they do for living? Younger boys were supported by their parents but higher-grade gymnasium pupils (so called seconds and primes – the top-to-bottom school grade sequence was the reverse of today’s system) and, even more so, university students looked for ways to make a living. Those of noble background would go back for holidays to their parents’ (or their friends’ parents’) residences. Others endeavoured to find a way to make some money in the summer, and often nominated themselves as ‘directors’, i.e. private tutors, of their less talented but more affluent comrades, and spent the summertime with them in the countryside, hammering Latin words and phrases into their heads. Tutoring, the most popular way of earning money, could however take much time and hinder the learning progress even of hardworking students. During his sojourn in Warsaw in 1820, Onufry Pietraszkiewicz from Wilno attended a total of thirty-six lecturing sessions at the university and in parallel gave twenty-four hours as a private tutor, which made “sixty hours per week. So, when is it that I could do anything or go out for a saunter, when [...] is the time for me to sightsee Warsaw [...]? There’s nobody I would have with me, there’s nowhere I go to, performing my serfdom eight to seven [daily], six days [in the week].”<sup>226</sup>

Sometimes, but quite seldom, students were lucky enough to win some casual clerical work, such as for example with the so-called *Masa Radziwiłłowska* in Wilno – an institution established to help unravel the complex property-related

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224 J. Słowacki to A. Bécu, Warsaw, 15<sup>th</sup>/3 Sept. 1829, in: J. Słowacki, op. cit., vol. 12, p. 32.

225 A. Kozieradzki, op. cit., p. 245.

226 O. Pietraszkiewicz to A. Mickiewicz, Warsaw, 13<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1820; in: *Archiwum filomatów* [‘The Philomath Society Archive’], Part 1, *Korespondencja 1815-1823* [‘Correspondence, 1815-1823’], ed. by J. Czubek, vol. 2, 1820, Kraków 1913, p. 344.

cases of the Radziwiłł family. The living conditions often proved to be quite lousy: “healthy I am, and things go prosperously with me, the wintertime is increasingly harrowing, spiting me, the overcoatless man”, Aleksander Mickiewicz of Wilno reported to his brother Adam (then working as a teacher in Kovno).<sup>227</sup> The need to acquire a school or university uniform was a considerable expense – for some, an impassable barrier. The young men took board at their lodgings; sometimes a restaurateur would reward the tutelage provided to his son with dinners. Those who were a little older, already holding a post but still without a family of their own, such as Jan-Nepomucen Janowski, could have their lunches or dinners at a private eatery.

These young people, detached for most part from their homes and introduced into an alien lifestyle that was odd to them, naturally tended to stick together. Perhaps it is there that one possible answer lies to a query that bothers historians: Why was it Wilno, and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, that became the theatre for so luxuriant a flourish of youth movements? In Wilno, contrary to Warsaw or Krakow, the youth was, on the whole, alien, ‘pulled out’ from their family homes, and so must have felt the need, stronger than elsewhere, to establish new bonds. Meanwhile, friendship coincidentally played an increasingly important role in the European culture of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was no novel invention, of course: the model of ideal friends, Orestes and Pylades, and the readiness to offer one’s life for a friend, as recalled shortly before then by Friedrich Schiller’s ballad *Die Bürgschaft*, has ‘always’ been present in culture; however, the late Enlightenment and Romanticism added a novel, unprecedented significance to the notion of friendship.

Around the year 1799, a few young boys born in about 1780 started meeting in Krakow to discuss literary matters. Though they did not form an organisation, they were held together by the charisma of Józef Sygiert, the company’s most active member. Son of a doctor in the service of Józef Jan-Kanty Ossoliński, Volhynian Voivode, and brought up after his father’s death by his stepfather Wincenty Podolecki, a landholder, Józef as it were impersonated a double genealogy of the Polish intelligentsia, both noble and plebeian. He studied law, philosophy and classical philology, in Lwów and subsequently, in Krakow. A few years later, he went to Vienna to continue his studies and made acquaintance there with Józef-Maksymilian Ossoliński, who put him in contact with other

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227 Annotation, in Aleksander Mickiewicz’s hand, to a letter by Franciszek Mickiewicz to Adam Mickiewicz, Wilno, 25<sup>th</sup> Nov./7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1819; in: *Archiwum filomatów*, op. cit., Part 1, vol. 1, p. 309.

representatives of the enlightened elite, including Samuel-Bogumił Linde. Józef Sygiert's great expectations and daydreams were cut short by his sudden death of pneumonia in 1804.

Sygiert and his comrades celebrated their friendship, considering carefully what it ought to be like. For a friendship to be true, trust, respect and affection would not suffice; what was still needed was a "similar way of thinking and equality, or at least a minor level of difference, as to age and the man's external position", along with a "most thorough knowledge of any and all needs and frailties, reciprocally."<sup>228</sup> A number of young people in the century's first decades desired to fulfil this programme; according to the cited quotation, they desperately endeavoured to vivisect themselves – so stubbornly that today's readers cannot approach those efforts otherwise than with respect, blended with regret. Young people were willing to unveil before their friend(s) all the subsequent strata of their psyche, at times harassing themselves about being sincere to a satisfactory extent. We can see examples of this attitude in the Philomathes' correspondence. The youthful friendship of those times often comprised more than an affected exhibitionism: there was a sense of responsibility for the friend, strife for granting support and, quite frequently, in extreme situations, heroism and self-sacrifice.

Had Sygiert and his friends formalised their meetings in any way – by electing a leader, taking an oath, or at least thinking of a name for their group – they would have made history as the first Polish youth association. But this was not the case, for a simple reason: the idea that young people could establish a union on their own was not obvious at all; someone had to hit on the idea and propagate it. Krakow in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries had not yet been reached by any patterns of youth self-organisation.

In contrast to Krakow, these patterns did extend to Wilno in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A reorganisation of the local university, carried out in 1803; the influx of new professors, including aliens; a reform of the syllabi and discussions accompanying it – all this caused an intellectual revival on a scale unheard of in Krakow for many years. Instead of enumerating the several dozen youth organisations that developed in Polish territory before 1830, we will only try (supported to this end by Aleksander Kamiński's valuable book) and discuss certain features typical to youth association as a social phenomenon.

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228 Fragments from handwritten *Myśli o przyjaźni* ['Thoughts on friendship'] by Józef Sygiert, quoted after: J. Snopek, *Prowincja oświecona. Kultura literacka Ziemi Krakowskiej w dobie Oświecenia 1750-1815* ['Hinterland enlightened. The literary culture of the Krakow Land in the age of Enlightenment'], Warszawa 1992, pp. 168-169.

Associations tend to be short-lived: many do not survive the ‘test’ of vacation, the time when young people scatter, going back home, whilst others persist for a few years until their most active activists leave the school. An association’s system changes incessantly: fascinated with the union-related ‘bureaucracy’ (the Wilno Philomathes kept about a dozen registers), the young people permanently plan some changes, write newer and newer rules and regulations, records, and design the ceremony. The ceremony and symbolism reveal, as a rule, their Enlightenment background, sometimes a Masonic one, wherefrom a straight road transitions to the more and more fashionable Romantic stylisation. The most popular forms included opening and concluding the meetings by forming a circle and intertwining the arms, symbolising unity and fraternity.

It was in that period [spring 1816] that the three of us, young people: Ignacy Prądzyński, Gustaw Małachowski, and myself, began communicating to one another our thoughts of the need of a knot to tie together all the righteous Poles with respect to defending the freedoms and nationalities [...]. Having bound ourselves, as once the allied Swiss did on the Rütli mount, with a reciprocal oath, we resolved to establish a clandestine association, our intents for to propagate. We have inserted [i.e. assumed], in brief, the statutes which consisted in that, upon introduction and guaranty from one member, the individual admitted for the association was only accepted by three masked members. The newly accepted pledged his word that he shall, using any means, defend and propagate the Polish nationality, the old Polish virtue and the language. [...] We gave the association the name of ‘Polish Friends’; as for ourselves, to symbolise the knot connecting us, we ordered that silver rings be produced, with an enamel amaranth border, furnished with the letters ‘PP’ [acronym of the association’s Polish name] under the enamelled layer.

K. Kołaczowski, *Wspomnienia jenerała* [‘Memoirs of a jeneral’], vol. 2, Kraków 1899, pp. 146-147.

The meetings were usually held on Saturday night or on Sunday, which plainly reflected the drive to place the union activity within a festive timeframe beyond the sphere of everyday earthy activity. Sometimes, the meetings took place early in the morning, before sunrise, around five or six in the morning. The secret nature of youth organisations, at least in the early years of their operation, was not grounded on their political radicalism; the need to create an appropriate climate, differentiating the union-related activity from everyday business, was even more important. As stressed by Aleksander Kamiński, this unionist activity is a play, in the meaning proposed by Johan Huizinga in his famous book *Homo ludens*: it is performed according to its own rules, separate as they are from those prevailing in ordinary life; and, it satisfies the elementary human need of being detached from daily routine, the need to celebrate.

Most youth unions or associations developed their activity in a similar form, by poetising, singing together, editing paltry periodicals, hiking, amusements

and entertainments. These common actions and activities all produced a sense of community within the youth group.

The associations in question were often multi-grade, following the Masonic pattern. Consequently, there appeared higher degrees of initiation and moreover, the organisation's actual objectives were often hidden to the lower-tier members. It often happened that a lower level had no idea that a higher one ever existed. A literary or self-study association appeared at a higher level to be a political organisation. The moral ambiguity of this pattern of action probably did not occur to any youth activist of the time. An association member could in some cases be joined by anyone who wished to join, but it was more usual that the members singled out a prospective member and offered membership to him, not disclosing all the goals and the structure of their organisation at once.

Organisations of this sort were sometimes inspired by people from the outside, be they older young people who were active with already-existing organisations or adults. Such inspirations were morally ambiguous in some cases: the Philomathes once decided to take over a Wilno youth association, which meant to staff its authorities with their trusted people, not to help their younger colleagues organise themselves but to bring about the body's collapse and thus get rid of potential rivals.

The older generation did not remain unfavourable in every case. There existed, for several years, a literary association at the Krzemieniec Lyceum under the patronage of Count Feliks Plater, the Lyceum's supervisor. Tadeusz Czacki planned to establish a student court and designed detailed regulations for its use. Hugo Kołłątaj, from whom Czacki sought advice, strongly opposed the idea as he saw in it (how could it be otherwise?) something he always abhorred: a treat of recurrent pettifogging specific to the nobility.

But even Kołłątaj had nothing against other forms of student activity. The Warsaw and Wilno university rectors initially granted their consent for setting up legal student associations, and only withdrew them as they started fearing the massive scale and radical character of the movement. This radicalism, characteristic as it is to any youth movement, did not have to carry any precisely defined content: it could manifest itself in an enthusiasm for Enlightenment ideals or in a backlash against them, using political or literary means. Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski's idea to make use of this vague romantic radicalism, displayed by the young people for developing a support for the Kingdom authorities' conservative policies in the twenties, was not as unrealistic as it might seem at first glance.

The young people themselves often had no intention to rebel, convinced that their activities remained within what was allowed: a group of pupils in the voivodeship school in Kalisz, graduates of a departmental school in a smaller

town, founded a purely literary organisation. They did not notify their rector as the association only followed up a corresponding organisation functioning in the school they had graduated from. Meanwhile, the authorities, having learned that the association existed, responded severely: not only were the students relegated but the Kalisz school itself was degraded to a departmental school. This occurrence well illustrates how blurred the border between legal and illegal was, but it also shows the ways in which overly severe counteraction of the authorities could add political content to actions whose initiators had no anti-governmental intentions whatsoever. Still, it is worth bearing in mind that repressive measures were not the only factor that contributed to radicalised attitudes among the youth. The epoch's ideological climate, the Romantic tendencies echoing across Europe, certainly reinforced the young generation's dislike of the existing political order. It was already in the twenties that some young people, one of them being Henryk Bogdański from Lwów, set out to join, like Lord Byron did, the Greeks in their fight for independence, with the conviction that "a Pole ought to go to Greece now, should he be useful to his own homeland".<sup>229</sup> There is however no doubt that the coercive policy accelerated and exacerbated the radicalisation process.

Young people tend to read: so, the elder generation prompted them the classics (study your Greek examples day and night, Stanisław-Kostka Potocki advised, following Horace, to whom he addressed "Thou, o Polish Youth!"<sup>230</sup>), and the advice was indeed followed: especially the students of Ernest Grodeck (Polonised as 'Grodek') in Wilno were enthused about the classics even more strongly than the generations of the enlightened. The Philomathes incessantly read the Greek and Roman authors and never quit their plan to accommodate to the Polish language the major literary masterpieces of Antiquity, along with the publication, following the German model, of auxiliary works such as dictionaries or encyclopaedias, to facilitate the comprehension of those masterworks. They read the classics in a neo-humanistic spirit, as already mentioned, grasping the spirit above the letter; it was neo-humanism (and their German professor himself) that was for them a connecting link with German culture, paving the way to other pieces of this culture's content. This is how the German Romanticism arrived in Wilno.

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229 H. Bogdański, *Dziennik z podróży z lat 1826 i 1827* ['A travel diary, 1826 and 1827'], ed. by J. Długosz, J.A. Kosiński, Kraków 1980, p. 30.

230 S.K. Potocki, *Pochwała Józefa Szymanowskiego, czytana w Zgromadzeniu Przyjaciół Nauk dn 9 maja r. 1801* ['A commendation of Józef Szymanowski, as it was read out at the Assembly of Friends of Learning, on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1801'], in: idem, *Pochwały, mowy i rozprawy...* ['Commendations, orations and treatises ...'], vol. 1, Warszawa 1816, p. 78.

Goethe's and Schiller's attitude to Romanticism was ambiguous, as is known. Considered Romantics from a later-date standpoint, they would rather be regarded as classicists by their own period. This classical-romanticist melange facilitated their presence in the Mickiewicz generation. But it was not the 'classical' pieces of those German poetry masters that won the greatest acclaim. With Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* – the model of tragic and devastating love – came to the fore; as for Schiller, not only his ballads but primarily his tragedies were the focus of interest, with *The Robbers* (*Die Räuber*) taking the primacy. This gloomy tragedy presented in a fascinating fashion the sphere of crime, as impersonated by the daemonic Franz Moor, whilst also relativising traditional morality rules by showing the noble robbers set against the evil, hypocritical world that cannot understand them. "Szyller [i.e. Schiller] has for long now been the only, and the most pleasing, piece of reading. The tragedy *Reiber* [i.e. *Die Räuber*] is what I am not able to write about. There is no other one that has ever, or will ever, be that impressive to me", Adam Mickiewicz reported to his friends when a teacher in Kovno; then he proceeded to beg, "Have mercy, [send me please] whatever [you might have] in German! for I now have nothing else to read."<sup>231</sup> The plays by 'Szyller' impressed Franciszek Malewski no less profoundly; to his mind, Schiller "is dangerous for the youth"; this phrase of a fascinated reader sounds more like words of praise than reprimand.<sup>232</sup> Fascination with the English literature, and Byron in particular, came next.

The Philomathes were obviously special. Their wide reading, knowledge and sensitivity to the new tones appearing in literary and intellectual life no doubt rendered them singular for the educated youth as a whole. It may nonetheless be supposed that what they read was trendsetting: a similar literary taste, somewhat simplified, became shared a few years later by wider circles of youth. Aleksander Kozieradzki, born 1813, did not know Romantic poetry in the former half of the 1820s, but read the adventures of the highwayman Rinaldo Rinaldini, Robinson Crusoe, and the Arabian Nights, rejecting *The Introduction to the Devout Life* by St. Francis de Sales, suggested to him by his teachers. "Baghdad and Damascus constituted the world entire for me [...], so I have forgotten that I am a Pole, that Europe is where I am; that I am a Christian; and, at last, a student at the Łuck county school."<sup>233</sup> These books, experienced in this way, prepared the young generation for enthusiastic acceptance of the output of Romanticists. A few years

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231 A. Mickiewicz to J. Jeżowski, Kovno, 11<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> June 1820; ditto, 30<sup>th</sup> Sept./12<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1820; in: *Archiwum filomatów*, op. cit., Part 1, vol. 2, pp. 149, 310.

232 F. Malewski to A. Mickiewicz, Wilno, 25<sup>th</sup> Oct./6<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1820; in: *ibidem*, p. 370.

233 A. Kozieradzki, op. cit., p. 84.

after, in the capital town, the literary criticism practised by Maurycy Mochnacki was indeed imposing with its acquaintance with the most recent German philosophy, but it assumed, at least to an extent, that a similar knowledge should be shared by the reader. English literature had a broadening circle of readers in the twenties, owing not so much to the proud and ironical Byron but to historical novels of Walter Scott, published in Polish translations. While evocatively rendering the colours of the epochs presented, they would really seem a revelation compared to the whole earlier (and not only Polish) production in the field of historical novel. Most importantly, though, these works popularised a romantic way of feeling, a model of the romantic hero, as well as an unclassical aesthetics: the Scottish mountains, known in Europe since the time of *The Songs of Ossian*, acquired a broader circle of admirers thanks to Walter Scott, which in turn propelled interest in other mountains. Which of the frontier areas of the Poland of the past could play in our literature a role similar to the one Scotland was given in Scott's oeuvre? Maurycy Mochnacki had no doubts: "verily, this is Poland's Scotland"<sup>234</sup>; these words on Ukraine welcomed the publication of Seweryn Goszczyński's poem *Zamek kaniowski* ['The Castle of Kaniów'].

The youth (young males, in any case) were irreligious, perhaps more so than ever before. Interestingly, no traces of the turn toward religion, mentioned in the preceding chapter, are observable in the youth of the century's second or third decade. Admittedly, if religious instruction lessons in the Poznań gymnasium were turning into a circus<sup>235</sup>, unruliness took primacy over freethinking convictions; if the Philaretes made at their meetings parodies of the major Christian prayers, there was perhaps more spite in them than a serious worldview turn. Still, there were probably too many signals appearing of a distanced attitude toward religious orthodoxy for us to disregard them.

Jan-Nepomucen Janowski arrived in Warsaw with the intent to enter the Piarists' convent (which he considered, in the 1820s still, to be a natural way to become a teacher by profession), but departed from Catholicism a mere few years after, and parted with religious practices. "What I think of God is that He must exist, but has now forgotten about us", Suzin, a Philarete, said on investigation.<sup>236</sup>

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234 M. Mochnacki, *Artykuł, do którego był powodem Zamek Kaniowski Goszczyńskiego* ['An article, the reason behind which is *Zamek kaniowski* by Goszczyński'], in: idem, *Pisma krytyczne i polityczne* ['Critical and political writings'], ed. by J. Kubiak, E. Nowicka, Z. Przychodniak, vol. 1, Kraków 1996, p. 176.

235 As described by Marceli Motty, *Przechadzki po mieście*, vol. 2, p. 182.

236 A. Kamiński, *Polskie związki młodzieży 1804-1831* ['Polish youth associations, 1804-1831'], Warszawa 1963, p. 471.

‘Dioniz’ [Dionizy] Chlewiński, a Philomate, was a priest but this fact could not be recognised through his association-related activity. When he taught religious education at a *pensja* (private boarding school) for girls, the school’s owner, disgusted, complained that “he does not lecture on the Christian doctrine like a priest, but like an enlightened priest”.<sup>237</sup> The Warsaw university authorities learned in 1827 that one medicine student had responded to a remark someone made due to his absence at a Sunday mass “that it would be more useful for his future if he spends the time assigned for praying...in the clinic.”<sup>238</sup>

One might ponder whether the national ideology was turning – diffidently, for the time being – into a peculiar ersatz of faith. The need for secular authority (evidently sought for by the period’s youth) was perhaps at least partly associated with the attenuation of religiosity. In Wilno, the men of authority included Kazimierz Kontrym, a university lecturer (*adiunkt*) and librarian, activist with the Wastrel Society, who was close friends with many students, and Joachim Lelewel, the man whose lectures attracted crowds of students, and to whom Mickiewicz devoted one of his most beautiful juvenile pieces of verse. Lelewel observed the nice custom of exchanging letters with his former students, thus staying in touch with them after they left the university; this is how we received a valuable source for tracing the history of the careers of many young men. On a broader scale, a man of authority was Stanisław Staszic, whose funeral ceremony brought together crowds of school pupils and academy students – as was Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. Those two personages influenced young people by their writings and the output of their lives rather than through personal contact. But there were such contacts too; characteristic of this was the respectful visit paid in 1830 by Juliusz Słowacki, then aged twenty-one, to Niemcewicz, a patriarch, as it were, “the old poet who connects the age of Stanislaus Augustus with our own age”.<sup>239</sup>

But why should the young females be missing? We can see educated misses from aristocratic families (to recall the characters in *Malwina*, the famous novel by Princess Maria Wirtemberska, née Czartoryska), but in the pre-Romantic time, girls from outside the aristocracy left scarce traces of themselves for posterity, yet they did exist! Thinking, enthusing, and reading (and singing) the *Śpiewy* by Niemcewicz (“The Czeczot girl is no longer here; pity, that; we should still be listening for a while to her sing *Jeszcze Bolesław*”, a Philomath wrote to

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237 *Archiwum Filomatów*, op. cit., Part 1, vol. 2, p. 416; quoted after: A. Kamiński, *Polskie związki...*, p. 420.

238 J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet...*, vol. 1, p. 296.

239 J. Słowacki to his mother, Warsaw 15<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1830; in: *idem*, *Dzieła*, vol. 11, *Listy do matki* [‘Letters to his mother’], ed. by Z. Krzyżanowska, Wrocław 1949, p. 8.

his friend.<sup>240</sup>) They daydreamed of an ideal love, marvelling at Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise* (*Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse*) – in the way Helena Szymanowska did, for instance. J.U. Niemcewicz's *Wiek Zygmunta III* ['The Age of Sigismund III'] was also on Helena's reading list, and she was even able to estimate, perhaps not quite a usual skill, no matter the gender, that this author "imitated Wolter [i.e. Voltaire] with an entirely fortunate outcome"<sup>241</sup> (she must have had in mind *The Age of Louis XIV*). Maids would go to the theatre (Klementyna Tańska was aged twelve on her first visit there). Although still not involved in conspiracy (the Philomathes envisioned an option for young females to join their organisation), they did demonstrate their support: they would rather avoid merry entertainment, as one of the girls once put it, "until the former company has gathered as a complete group"<sup>242</sup>, meaning until the exiled Philomathes were all back home.

Apart from what a narrow intellectual elite, the Philomathes and their female friends, valued, knowledge of music was seemingly the highest appreciated aspect in girls' education (Ambroży Grabowski was satisfied with his first wife displaying such skills). More affluent burghers, following the aristocrats' model, taught their daughters French. Jan-Nepomucen Janowski lent French romances to his landlord's and landlady's daughter.

And how did the characters in our story love each other and get married? The answer is banal, and obvious: their love was romantic, and their marriages practical, often made at an age that was not young any more, just as in so many other historical periods. The vicissitudes Klemens Kołaczkowski or Józef Jaszowski came across in their lives have already been mentioned.

Ambroży Grabowski, the Krakow bookseller, also married at a late age, though not quite typically for his environment. With about a dozen years of trading in books behind him, and several years of running a bookstore business of his own, he had grown surefooted enough to afford a departure from the sanctified and time-honoured pattern. When his former principal's widow, Ms. Tekla

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240 T. Łoziński to O. Pietraszkiewicz, Wilno, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct./10<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1820; in: *Archiwum Filomatów...*, Part 1, vol. 2, p. 397.

241 H. Szymanowska-Malewska, *Dziennik* ['Diary'] (1827-1857), ed. by Z. Sudolski, Warszawa 1999, p. 30 (record dated 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1827).

242 S. Kozakiewicz to O. Pietraszkiewicz, Wilno, 19<sup>th</sup> Apr./1<sup>st</sup> May 1825; in: *Archiwum filomatów. Listy z zesłania*, ['The Philomath Society Archive. Letters from the exile'], vol. 1, *Krąg Onufrego Pietraszkiewicza i Cypriana Daszkiewicza* ['The circle of Onufry Pietraszkiewicz and Cyprian Daszkiewicz'], ed. by Z. Sudolski, Warszawa 1997, p. 187.

Groebel, offered him her daughter as a wife (an age-old craftsmen's custom had it that the favourite apprentice would marry the master's daughter and inherit the business, in case the master had no son), Grabowski refused. He could afford making a choice of his life companion himself – and so he did, at age thirty-five. On this occasion, we get acquainted with the course of education of a maid from a bourgeois family, who in her “juvenile years [...] frequented one of the local private boarding schools for females [...] and studied at home”. Next, “she spent three years with an educational institute, at the Convent of the Visitation, here in Krakow” and lastly, “rendered capable as appropriate, in the seventeenth year of her life”, became a private instructor (*guwernantka*) with a land-owning family in Sandomierz area. After performing this job for a year, she spent two years in Vienna with a granddaughter of Princess Anna Sanguszko, where she “developed in herself a talent for music [...], as she namely took lessons of pianoforte- and guitar-playing from one quite sought-after teacher.”<sup>243</sup> After his first wife's tragic death, Ambroży indeed got married for a reason, his kids had to have a mother.

Where could one make acquaintance with a girl? Few had ideal conditions in this respect, like Tomasz Zan, who earned his living lecturing at a boarding school for damsels (together with T. Łoziński and Dionizy Chlewiński; as a priest, the latter was not interested in looking for a marriage candidate). Unfortunately, after a year of lectures, Mr. and Mrs. Deybell's '*pensjon*' quit (in autumn 1820) the Philomathes' services, because, as the institution's manager noticed, they had caused “the maidens to become thoroughly rebellious”, with the wards now “willing to reason [i.e. argue] about everything”. What is more, Zan and his mates excessively incited the maidens for patriotism, which means that my *pensjon* is threatened even with a fall.<sup>244</sup> Zan was keen on Felicja Micewiczówna, a schoolgirl immortalised by a Philomathes' song.

The mates' sisters were available, in any case (Jan Czeczot was in love with Zosia Malewska, Franciszek's sister), whilst those of a noble background had their families and acquaintances residing in their countryside manors. Franciszek Malewski, for instance, met on holiday in Szczorse [Szczorsy] a maid lovely like Venus: “despite all my rockiness, I could not possibly resist the dear black eyes”<sup>245</sup>. Yet, whoever of those arriving in town not of a noble family background was barred from marriage opportunities within the environment of his origin: for a peasant or small town dweller, joining the ranks of educated people meant detachment

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243 A. Grabowski, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 34-35.

244 D. Chlewiński to T. Zan, Wilno, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug./5<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1820; in: *Archiwum Filomatów*, op. cit., Part 1, vol. 2, pp. 259-260.

245 F. Malewski to J. Jeżowski, Szczorse, 15<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1818; in: *ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 47.

from their former milieu, to a much more radical degree than for a nobleman. There was no retreat for such people, and they had to look for a wife in the town.

With regards to the intimate life, diarists and authors of letters are normally discreet and whatever can be concluded based on single mentions would not exceed the frame of a stereotypical image, one that we could guess even without knowing any source. Young men tended to live freer than their female peers; some used the services of prostitutes or, at times, entered affairs with married women. Bathing in a public baths, a stagecoach journey together, or a church service provided good opportunities for making bowing acquaintances. Going away from the parental house to study in a distant city often provided opportunities to reject the moral norms instilled from childhood, and there is nothing astonishing in this picture. But the fact that the epoch's witnesses stay confined within such platitudes is interesting in itself. The period diaries, novels and correspondences are full of considerations of true deep love and genuine friendship; erotic experiences remain peripheral.

Love was talked about in the Romantic epoch probably a greater deal than in preceding periods, analysed in intimate diaries or letters to a friend. Helena Szymanowska's diary, already quoted, comprises moving attempts to analyse the authors' own feelings, her unfolding love to Franciszek Malewski. Some of the Philomates, for a change, tended to be slightly cynical out of sheer snobbery: Malewski and Mickiewicz notified each other of the number of degrees on an 'erometer', a fabulous appliance, once they met someone of the other sex.

Contrary to Szymanowska, Aleksandra Tańska (a lesser-known sister of Klementyna z Tańskich Hoffmanowa [Klementyna Hoffman, née Tańska]) shows her heart troubles more dispassionately and leisurely, describing with apparent amusement the various beaux who made compliments to her at balls. Married off soon after to barrister Marcei Tarczewski, quite a bit older than she, she did not experience the affectionate fever her more impassioned contemporary had been through; instead, she faced a kind of shock as she learned "of Marcein's thousands of gallantries". Thus, "I have understood through my experience what the difference is between the customs of young men and women."<sup>246</sup>

Marriage is a 'ritual of passage' that irreversibly puts an end to one's youth. Youth associations researched by Aleksander Kamiński sporadically featured 'adolescents' aged much above thirty, but no one is married. Hence, this story

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246 A. z Tańskich Tarczewska, *Historia mego życia. Wspomnienia warszawianki* ['The history of my life. Recollections of a female inhabitant of Warsaw'], ed. by I. Kaniowska-Lewańska, Wrocław 1967, p. 199.

of the youth in the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be deftly concluded with just the mention of marriages.

## 2. The intelligentsia and the authority

Between the final and conclusive partition of the Commonwealth (1795) and the Vienna Congress (1815), which sanctioned the new, post-Napoleonic order, the Polish territory passed from one lord to another several times. It is obvious that a vast majority of the society painfully experienced warfare, military marches, forced contributions, and transport inconveniences, not to mention financial problems triggered by the wars. It can be safely guessed that people shared an overall sense of uncertainty. The intelligentsia was also affected by all this, but this particular class was facing yet another issue: they had to be mindful of the changing authorities, probably to the largest extent of any of the period's society groups.

After all, intelligentsia is bureaucracy, in the first place. The period's intelligentsia, being an 'ancillary' layer of sorts, serviced the modern state, which – though at a relatively early stage – was striving to take control over increasingly broader spheres of life. This is basically good news from the standpoint of our protagonists: the State, as was already said, is in need of educated people, and so it offers them jobs with certainty of income and stabilisation in life. Moreover, the State offers opportunities for public activity: whoever has broader ideals, not confining themselves to peace of mind and stability but willing to improve the world, would basically see in the modern State an ally in fighting superstitions, backwardness, and whatever other names the educated people would use to describe the phenomena they disliked.

The State expects loyalty in exchange, though, and this might lead to situational conflict.

Depending upon how political constellations revolved, every official or clerk had to think thoroughly about how to behave in order not to garner the irritation of former authorities (which might still be back some day) or new authorities and, insofar as is possible, to avoid running too much afoul of their Polish environment. Let us take note of the dignified attitude of Jan Śniadecki, Rector of the Wilno University, who supported the French party in 1812, but when showing Napoleon around the academy, highlighted the role of Alexander I's benevolences in its renewal.<sup>247</sup> Officials at a lower tier of the social hierarchy could be

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247 J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet Wileński* ['The University of Wilno'], (1579-1831), vol. 3, Kraków 1900, p. 66.

disturbed on watching yet another replacement of emblems on public edifices – like the aforementioned Ignacy Baranowski, a court clerk in Lublin.

We have had so many alterations in emblems within recent few years: having lost the Polish Eagle with the *Pogoń* [i.e. coat of arms used in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (feat. galloping horse with rider holding sword ready to strike)] we had a two-headed Austrian Emperor's eagle. As the Germans were expelled from Warsaw, a Polish eagle, without the *Pogoń*, visited us; it was taken off soon after, and the French eagle hanged. After the Duchy of Warsaw was formed, our Polish eagle was reintroduced together with the Saxon King's emblem. Once the Russians seized the Duchy, it was ordered that the Saxon King's emblem be annulled, the Polish eagle itself to be hanged. As the Kingdom announced, our eagle [...] was thrust into the Russian eagles. [...] Those who have profited the most from these continual transformations are the painters, and those who carve the emblems.

I. Baranowski, *Dzienniki* ['Diary'], ed. by B. Szyndler, Lublin 1995, p. 137.

The altering authorities did not punish the officials working for the preceding regime, although they naturally endeavoured, in the longer run, to staff the posts and positions with their own people. Due to his close contacts with the French party, Śniadecki was dismissed as Rector in 1815 but retained his university chair. The Duchy of Warsaw army, released by Napoleon from its oath, eventually returned, as is known, to the Kingdom.

After the year 1815, with the peace that came over, the political situation was stabilised but other problems appeared instead. They did not seem to be very serious initially: although the Congress of Vienna did not satisfy the Poles, there was no reason to believe that there appeared any irremovable durable hostility between the Poles and the partitioning countries; the very fact that someone held a post was by no means regarded as disgraceful. There still existed an extensive space for the pursuance of actions beneficial to the society, and this was perceived to be the case by contemporaries. The authorities initially respected the patriotic sentiments of Polish people; for instance, after the death of General Jan-Henryk Dąbrowski, founder of the Legions, the Prussian authorities sent his widow words of sympathy and condolence, and the funeral celebrations were almost official. At the same time, raising the Kościuszko Mound became an almost inter-Partition ceremony. Ten years later, Tsar Nicholas I on his visit to Warsaw funded at the Capuchin Church in Miodowa St. a plaque to the honour of King John III Sobieski: the Russian monarch, bathed in the glory of his recent victory over the Turks, recognised in the Vienna battle victor a predecessor for himself.

It would also sometimes happen that an official or teacher received from the authorities a directive he would consider contrary to the good of his underlings, or of the country; such situations led to conflicts of conscience. This was

especially true in the period after 1820, when increasingly stronger conservative trends were evident in the partitioning countries' policy. In autumn 1821, the Viceroy (*Namiestnik*) of the Kingdom of Poland banned secret associations within the Kingdom area.

There was a wide area opening for conscience conflicts. Loyalty declarations were introduced: Józef Hube, a lawyer (born 1804), having received in 1830 the post of lecturer in the History of Law, had to sign a promise that he had never belonged, and never would belong, to any secret union or association, or maintain any contact therewith whatsoever. In case he ever concealed his affiliation, "I shall submit myself to the severest penalty, as a malfessor against the state."<sup>248</sup>

In 1827, similar disciplinary measures were introduced in the Republic of Krakow at the Jagiellonian University. A *Kuratoria* [Inspectorate-General] was established under the pressure of the partitioning countries, following the model applied in the Kingdom, and tasked with the supervision of the school and educational system. The university professors were supposed to swear that "within the course of teaching" their students, each of them "shall spare no most considerate endeavours toward instilling in them the rules of love and obedience to the Government."<sup>249</sup>

Efforts were made to manoeuvre in conflict situations. Such efforts were made by Szymon Malewski, Rector of the Wilno University, and later on by his successor Józef Twardowski, who were faced by the necessity to assume positions in the Philomath Society affair as well as with regard to other youth organisations. Prince Adam Czartoryski, the inspector, took a similar course when he demanded that the wayward young people be severely punished. They were all aware that they had to backlash so as not to offer the Russian authorities a pretext for imposing severer repressive measures, possibly going as far as closing down the university. On the other hand, they wanted to avoid exposing themselves to criticism of the Polish patriotic opinion; their personal convictions generally told them to protect the students, although they did object to any conspiratorial tendencies. The best example of incessant politicising was the attitude of the Rev. Wojciech Szweykowski, Rector of the University of Warsaw, who made efforts to calm the authorities down, assuring them that there was peace in the university and disregarding various reports of rebellious sentiments amongst the young people.

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248 Hube's declaration, after: J. Bieliński, *Królewski Uniwersytet...*, vol. 2, p. 151.

249 Quoted after: S. Stetkiewicz, *Rzeczpospolita Krakowska w dobie powstania listopadowego* ['The Republic of Krakow in the November Insurrection period'], Kraków 1912, p. 23.

On the other hand, Szweykowski did not hesitate to cut up rough by expelling the youth conspiracy leaders from the university, once he was afraid that taking no action could even upset the university's existence. These fears were not completely groundless, since the ideas to break up (if not completely wind up) the university reappeared on several occasions: for instance, in 1829, the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment considered transferring the department of law to a provincial location, singling out the arts department into a separate academy, and replacing elective deans and the rector with Government-nominated officials, all in order to tame the 'buckles' among the students. It is apparent that the awareness of threats of this type impressed on them the need to apply self-censorship and act in a diplomatic way.

Rector Szweykowski did not cross the invisible line between prudence and obsequiousness; the Warsaw intelligentsia evaluated his conduct positively, aptly identifying its clearly forced elements.

In the earliest years after the Vienna Congress, expressing adoration and gratitude with respect to Tsar Alexander I was part of a commonly accepted ritual in the Kingdom of Poland, and it is plausible that the real feelings were thus reflected to a considerable degree. During the Kościuszko celebrations in 1818 in Krakow, Jacek Przybylski, the merited veteran of the local Enlightenment, could blend, in his Latin sextain to the honour of Kościuszko, a praise of the 'Grand-Famous Heroe' (*Wielkogołówny Bohatyr*, as *Gazeta Krakowska* described the late Supreme Commander) with a compliment addressed to two Russian emperors: "Thus hath the Pious EMPEROR KING ALEXANDER deposited the bones of the one whose warfare deeds had been praised by EMPEROR PAUL."<sup>250</sup>

Disillusionment was increasing in the Kingdom of Poland in the twenties: it became even clearer that the expectations from the first years after 1815 would remain unfulfilled. Klementyna Tańska, a pessimistic and thoughtful woman, unwilling as she was to become enthused about things, was rather soon disillusioned with Alexander I. As the tsar threatened in 1821 that "endangered will be the political existence of our Kingdom" in case the financial disorder continues, Tańska wrote down in her diary: "I now scorn the emperor, seeing in him a false-hearted monarch who covers himself with a cloak of virtue whenever he believes that such appearances might be of use [...]. There was a time in my simplicity when I concluded that he actually had those attributes [with the appearances of which] he has only deluded the world. How unpleasant it is to be compelled to recede [from] such opinion!"

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250 "Sic cuius CAESAR PAULUS laudaverat arma, // CAESAR ALEXANDER REX Pius ossa legit"; *Gazeta Krakowska*, No. 55, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1818, p. 654.

Again in the 1820s, another diarist of Tańska's age exercised scant restraint in criticising the relations prevalent in the country. Tymoteusz Lipiński was a fraternal nephew of Józef Lipiński, an official with the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, a circumstance that made Tymoteusz acquainted with any and all gossips circulating around the corridors of power. When Józef-Kalasanty Szaniawski acquired a special financial gratification from the emperor, which was justified by his having "shattered his health in the service of the public", Tymoteusz noticed sarcastically: "His sacrifice is [even] greater" as he not only forfeited his health but also his "goodwill and repute". A critique frequently appearing in his diary is of the "reverend censorship's" doings, usually ironic in tone; also frequent is a commiseration over the illegal arrests of true or presumed conspirers. When, however, the monarch is referred to, the diary's tone changes diametrically: "An appalling piece of news. A great sorrow for Poland! Our adored monarch is dead. [...] The father of the Poles ceased living." But this is still nothing compared to the enthusiasm triggered by the Warsaw coronation of Emperor Nicholas. The coronation day, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1829, "shall become memorable in the history of our Kingdom, a great day, one that elevates the nation's dignity in the eyes of the world, one that penetrates the hearts of Poles with gratefulness and expectancies. This is the day that Nicholas I has accomplished the deed whose great mission is to religiously combine the monarch with the nation; that is, in a word, he has crowned himself as a Polish king."<sup>251</sup>

As is apparent, even severe criticism of the Kingdom's daily affairs would not imply any dispute over the legal validity of the ruling political order. It seems to me, although this observation is not liable to a definite conclusion, that it is Lipiński's, rather than Klementyna Tańska's, attitude that was typical to educated Polish people between 1815 and 1830. Helena Szymanowska, an uncommonly smart and well-read sixteen-year-old maid, noted down on her way from Warsaw to Russia in 1827, as she was crossing the Kingdom's frontier: "Although I have already crossed the borderline of today's Poland, near Brest, I consider the country passed through up to Minsk to be Polish land, for although violence has torn [it] off from our fellow-countrymen [...], the Polish language has all the same not perished, and the dwellers of what today is Russia would certainly exhibit with the first word caught that there is Polish blood flowing in their veins." This resolute patriotic declaration did not prevent her from being moved a few months later at the tomb of Emperor Alexander and his spouse: "Their coffins, sprinkled

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251 T. Lipiński, *Zapiski z lat 1825-1831* ['Notes from 1825 to 1831'], ed. by K. Bartoszewicz, Kraków 1883, p. 141.

with tears of gratitude, prove to be the best evidence that their virtues and benefactions are now, as they were while they lived, admired and bewailed.”<sup>252</sup>

Once such things are found written in personal diaries, any manifestations of official homage are all the less astonishing. Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz impersonated the Warsaw society’s salon opposition; his mockeries of Grand Prince Constantine and senator Novosiltsov were passed mouth to mouth around the town, and his comedy play *Dwa stolki* (the main character, a social-climber official, had many traits identifiable with Kajetan Koźmian) circulated in handwritten copies. Tymoteusz Lipiński was very afraid of what would happen in case Niemcewicz was appointed chairman by members of the Society of Friends of Learning when Stanisław Staszic died: “Our Niemcewicz is unwelcome with the court and the Government; [...] if only Niemcewicz is not elected, for the Society’s good!”<sup>253</sup> This same Niemcewicz, when already appointed the Society’s chairman, delivered a speech at a public meeting in praise of Nicholas the emperor and the king, as a “Caesar of the Slavians [Slavs],” who “with his mighty right arm brings back into civilisation the lands [...] famous in the Antiquity, those toured by Jason, described by Herodotus, and glorified by Xenophon with his pen”; who “extorts from the barbarians’ yoke this beautiful Greece, the cradle of heroism, sciences and fine arts”<sup>254</sup> (alluding to the then-ongoing Russian-Turkish war). Nicholas’s Warsaw coronation was honoured with a Latin ode by the Rev. Edmund Andraszek, a Piarist, member of the Warsaw’s Society of Friends of Learning, a late-date representative of the intellectual tradition of Poland’s most enlightened monastic order. He expressed his joy that the new king of Poland “whose country is protected by Boreas [northern wind – M.J.]”, extending his rule over half of the globe, adds through his coronation honour to the “crown of the Piasts” (“*Piastorum diademati*”, which was coincidentally erroneous to say, as the old royal insignia from pre-Partition time no longer existed).<sup>255</sup> Of interest in his ode is the reference made to the Commonwealth’s pre-Partition history.

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252 H. Szymanowska-Malewska, *Dziennik* [‘Diary’] (1827-1857), ed. by Z. Sudolski, Warszawa 1999, pp. 17-18 (note dated 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. 1827) & 53 (note of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1828).

253 T. Lipiński, op. cit., p. 49.

254 A. Kraushar, *Towarzystwo Warszawskie Przyjaciół Nauk 1800-1832. Monografia historyczna osnuta na źródłach archiwalnych*, t. 3, *Czasy Królestwa Kongresowego*, cz. 4, *Ostatnie lata 1828-1830*, Kraków-Warszawa 1905, s. 92.

255 [E. Andraszek], *Ode in solempni Inauguratione Augustissimi, potentissimi et serenissimi Nicolai I Autocatoris Rossiarum etc., etc. etc., cum regio diademate insignitus ab omnibus Poloniae ordinibus Rex Poloniae salutaretur*, [Warsaw] 1829, pp. 3-4 [unnumbered].

It is namely striking and astonishing how (relatively) frequently partitioning monarchs tended before 1830 to see themselves as the heirs of the Polish kings of yore. By the moment the Wilno University celebrated its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in 1828, ruled by rector Waclaw Pelikan and inspector-general of the Wilno science district Nikolay Novosiltsov, it had become a thoroughly loyal institution, pacified after the recent upheaval connected with the Philomath Society affair and with other youth associations. This loyal academy issued on the occasion of its celebrations a medal featuring the busts of King Stephen Báthory, Tsar Alexander I and Tsar Nicholas I, thus worshiping the three monarchs of which the first was the University's founder, the second, its reviver and the third, the ruling monarch. The hall in which the celebration was held was adorned with the effigies of, among others, Kings Stephen Báthory and Stanislaus Augustus, Tsar Alexander, and the Rev. Piotr Skarga, the University's first rector.

A similar trend penetrated public addresses delivered by the Rev. Jan-Pawel Woronicz. As a Krakow Bishop, he praised in 1818 the virtues of Tadeusz Kościuszko, who "has left the example to posterity that a nation, even if most severely haunted, will not die until not forsaken by its national spirit." Kościuszko was not successful in restoring Poland, Woronicz argued, but this was eventually accomplished by Alexander I, who "with his sensitive eye has caught up with our castaways whilst drowning in the ocean", promising to them that Poland should be rebuilt, and has already made a "first step" on this path.<sup>256</sup>

Woronicz saw in Tsars Alexander and Nicholas the heirs to the Polish state tradition. He even portrays Alexander as a Biblical Cyrus who freed the Israelites from their slavery; thus, the Russian emperor and the king of Poland fulfil God's designs by freeing the Polish nation. It could be believed that a messianic pattern of the Polish national history, known from Woronicz's earlier works, was fulfilled as the Kingdom of Poland was established: "the chain of our Mieczysławs and Boleslauses, broken-off for a while, got stuck together anew."<sup>257</sup>

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256 J.P. Woronicz, *Przemowa przy złożeniu do grobu śmiertelnych zwłok Tadeusza Kościuszki, miana w kościele katedralnym krakowskim dnia 23 czerwca 1818* ["The address delivered at deposition in the grave of the mortal corpse of Tadeusz Kościuszko, at the Cathedral Church in Krakow, on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1818"], w: idem, *Dzieła poetyczne wierszem i prozą* ["Poetic works, in verse and prose form"], vol. 3, ed. by J.N. Bobrowicz, Leipzig 1853, pp. 130-143; quote after pp. 131, 136.

257 Idem, *Kazanie podczas pogrzebowego obchodu po Aleksandrze I, cesarzu wszech Rosji, królu polskim, miane w kościele metropolitalnym warszawskim dnia 17 kwietnia 1826 r.* ["The sermon during the funeral celebration of Alexander I, Emperor of All the Russias, King of Poland, as delivered at the Metropolitan Church in Warsaw, on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1826"], in: *ibidem*, vol. 3, p. 217.

The Enlightenment inherited from the Baroque a relish for panegyrics. These pieces were obviously different from those written earlier on, composed with a comprehensible style and without (at least partly) the exorbitance once so loved. The model for the period's authors was Plutarch of Chaeronea, one of the most valued authors in the Enlightenment era; his *Parallel Lives of the famous Greeks and Romans* ranked as beloved reading material, providing patterns of conduct for a number of generations. In the time of the Duchy of Warsaw and of the Kingdom of Poland, works praising the virtues of the living and the dead were multiplying; 'commendation' or 'extolment', a sort of brief biography merged with extended obituary, was one of the favourite literary forms.

To those accustomed to this manner of writing and speaking, apologies of Nicholas or Alexander might merely have seemed to be instances of respect for the obligatory rhetorical convention. It is perhaps even more important that for an educated nineteenth-century European, except for a handful of radicals, a constitutional monarchy was not merely the best of any and all political systems, but simply and plainly a 'natural' one. The fact that the anarchical system of the Commonwealth was borne in mind had an influence too: it reinforced the conviction, characteristic to the Enlightenment, that a strong government yields certain benefactions; constitutional monarchy thus seemed to be a reasonable trade-off. Moreover, those people witnessed the first Polish coronation since Stanislaus Augustus' coronation, over seventy years ago! That past event, given the armed conflict conditions, had passed almost without resonance. The most recent coronation, taking place after about a dozen years of peace, and economic growth, in Warsaw, a city that had undergone a marvellous development, must have seemed to many Poles a sort of confirmation of the justice of the compromised solution applied to the Polish state of affairs in 1815. Even more, it would seem a warranty of inviolability the Kingdom's political existence. After all, Nicholas said a prayer prepared by Primate Woronicz, whose content made Tymoteusz Lipiński so enchanted; a prayer that sounded like a commitment to observe the constitution. "Let the wisdom that surrounds Thy house be with me", the emperor and king prayed. "Do drop it down from the heavens [...], so that I contrive to rule for the happiness of my peoples and for the fame of Thy holy name, befittingly with the constitutional act bestowed on me by my august predecessor, and as already inaugurated by me."<sup>258</sup>

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258 Idem, *Modlitwa odczytana przez najjaśniejszego Mikołaja I, cesarza wszech Rosji przy koronacji na króla polskiego w Warszawie dnia 24 maja 1829 r.* [‘A prayer, read out by His Majesty Nicholas I, Emperor of All the Russias, upon his coronation as a Polish king, in Warsaw, on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1829’], in: *ibidem*, vol. 3, pp. 225-226.

Alina Witkowska has subtly, and extremely aptly, analysed the conditions for these monarchical sentiments in the constitutional Kingdom framework: “The Poles were inclined to give in to the charm of royal majesty and splendour. After all, this was one of the articles of state autonomy, and it revived recollections of the time when this country still had its own monarchs. [...] It could easily be foreseen that Warsaw would be longing for more visits from the imperial court.” During his Warsaw visit in 1829, Nicholas “knocked down the wall of wariness, displayed the will to cooperate, which was accepted enthusiastically and gratefully. [...] And it is possible that a number of moral dramas of the future November Insurrection were rooted in that good impression Nicholas had exerted in Warsaw. It is quite a hard task to rebel against a monarch toward whom one is not so much obligated but rather gladly loyal.”<sup>259</sup> In any case, Nicholas made several gestures targeted at the intelligentsia: he received a deputation of the Society of Friends of Learning, paid a visit to the university, and afforded a competition prizes fund.

Having been through the experiences of the Napoleonic wars, the Poles very much expected to live in peace, and to have a monarch ‘of their own’: hence, both rulers of the Kingdom of Poland could count on a credit of benevolence and that any gesture they might make, be it even the most perfunctory one, should be read as a token of affinity toward the nation.

Visits paid by kings have always been festive events during which loyal enthusiasm was a natural attitude, so to say. Yet, the state required loyalty on a daily basis, not only in the sphere of practical behaviours but also in the sphere of ideas. And this not after the fashion of later date totalitarianisms, of course: the requirement was basically confined to civil servants who still formed a rather marginal fraction of the population. Whether a ‘nobleman with a farmstead’, an artisan, or a merchant, not to mention the peasant population, the people still had the opportunity (at least until 1830) to live their lives out virtually free of contact with the state authority (save extraordinary circumstances such as war). Still, the intelligentsia, dependent as it was in its great majority upon government or public service, was particularly exposed to ideological pressure from the state.

But was it just the state? Patterns of behaviour were also imposed by the Catholic Church, but the intelligentsia residing in larger cities were subject to a lower level of pressure than the other social groups. In the event that someone did not manifest his or her anticlericalism too overtly, he could live a completely irreligious life. Somewhat paradoxically, a larger pressure to celebrate religious

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259 A. Witkowska, *Kazimierz Brodziński*, Warszawa 1968, pp. 134; 135-136.

ceremonies came from the state than from the Church (or, putting it more precisely, from the state supported to this end by the Church). The twenties saw an increasingly clear tendency among education (and other) authorities to push religion in propagation of obedience to authority. For instance, the Governmental Commission for Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment demanded the Warsaw University council to present a list of professors not attending the Sunday mass at the university church; this is how religious ceremonies were identified with state celebrations, the failure to participate standing for an act of disobedience which affected the state as well. In 1826, the Governmental Commission ordained a five-day church service, including street processions, for all its subordinate institutions in Warsaw.

Obviously, even the liberals and other followers of secular rule accepted in that epoch certain traditional areas for the mutual penetration of the Church and the state to a much larger degree than in later times. There is no doubt that ideological pressure was growing during the twenties, particularly for teachers who were tended to with special care because of their contacts with the youth. This was the case not only in the Kingdom but also across the former Commonwealth territory.

It nonetheless happened from time to time that a teacher regarded as radical was staved off from contacts with young people, probably the most telling example being Joachim Lelewel, who was removed from the faculty of history in Wilno. The philosopher Józef Gołuchowski was also forced, at the same time, to leave the chair he had held with the same university: senator Novosiltsov feared that the new trends in the Romantic philosophy could exert a deleterious influence. In the Poznań high school (gymnasium), Józef Muczkowski, a teacher who was popular with the students, was sacked when his pupils gave him as a gift and a token of favour a “ring embellished with miniatures featuring [Prince Józef] Poniatowski, Kościuszko and Napoleon”.<sup>260</sup> Repressive measures of this sort were grounded upon national as well as social issues; it might even seem at times that a ‘radicalism’ and democratic attitude of the victimised pedagogues was more appalling to the authorities than their patriotism. Repressive measures were also known to the Republic of Krakow; they were clearly caused in that area by anxieties of a social, rather than national, radicalism.

The degree of annoyance the political systems after 1815 caused in the Polish territory ought not to be overestimated as it has been by certain historians.

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260 M. Motty, *Przechadzki po mieście* [‘Strolling through the city’], ed. by Z. Grot, vol. 2, Warszawa 1957, p. 176.

There were indeed moments, such as the Philomathes affair in Wilno or during the 1826 investigation in Warsaw into illegal organisations, when the wave of arrests was increasing: “a great terror prevails in the town”<sup>261</sup> at such moments indeed. However, the repressions applied were spot-targeted, striking individuals while the society as a whole did not live in a climate of fear, contrary to the influential image drawn by Mickiewicz in his *Dziady*. Even representatives of the educated classes, who intrinsically tend to sense political oppression most keenly, somehow managed in their majority to settle down in the ‘small stabilisation’ of the period of 1815-1830; this is true for a considerable part of the young generation too. The Warsaw-based education authorities never managed moreover to extirpate the liberal spirit from the academy; professors submitted for inspection general outlines of their lectures and subsequently talked basically about whatever they wanted to, observing a certain degree of cautiousness, of course. Given the stage of administration development at the time, full control of the university would be impossible, as would full control over the youth (as described above): the state’s ambition to influence the social life much exceeded the state’s actual potential.

Yet, there was resistance, and retaliation was applied.

The vast majority of the conspiratorial movements of the 1820s had set no precisely defined goal for themselves. ‘Polish nationality’, which the conspirers bound themselves to protect, reinforce and support, was not a minutely defined concept. It could have meant any political strivings, starting with the observance of the Kingdom’s constitution and ending with complete independence for the country; otherwise, emphasis was put on the development of the national culture, primarily on the conservation of the language and knowledge of the past. It was only reprisal that caused the conspirators to gradually radicalise their objectives and eventually formulate, very slowly and inconsistently, an independence postulate. It can be assumed that at least until the memorable night of 29<sup>th</sup> November 1830, the opposition, whether overt or clandestine, did not on the whole endeavour to thoroughly destroy the state of affairs created by the Congress of Vienna. An observance of the Kingdom’s constitution and an annexation of Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands to the country had set limits not exceeded at that time in the nation’s imagination.

This of course did not preclude critical attitudes. As already mentioned, high-school and university students spontaneously gave voice to their patriotic sentiments on several occasions; probably the most mature expression of the

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261 T. Lipiński, op. cit., p. 25 (note dated 20<sup>th</sup> February 1826).

oppositional mood was the parliamentary court's verdict passed for the Patriotic Society case. This major conspiratorial organisation of the 1820s, associated with the name of major Walerian Łukasiński (detained in as early as 1824), took efforts at some point to enter into conspiracy within Russia itself, which soon was to culminate in the Decembrist revolt of 1825. These dealings were eventually discovered and Tsar Nicholas forwarded the matter, in line with the Kingdom's constitution, to a *sejm* court, consisting of members of the Senate (the higher chamber of the Diet), for consideration. The Kingdom's censored press published scant information on what the court was doing about the case, while access to the court room at the Krasiński Palace in Warsaw, although formally open, was in practice severely restricted. (Prince Constantine allowed access to uniform-wearers, which limited the circle of those admitted to people holding official, military or local-government posts; he also ordered that entries be made in a visitors' book, which triggered concerns of retaliation.) But the news obviously leaked and the senator-judges deliberated under the pressure of patriotic opinion on the one hand, and of the Tsar and the Grand Prince on the other. The trial was run for more than a month (April to May 1828) and was concluded with relatively lenient sentences.

The way the senators did this outraged Nicholas, though it was by no means their intent to act disloyally toward the monarch, or to attempt to controvert what the Vienna Congress had resolved. Stronger radical sentiments were probably testified to by a handwritten anonymous brochure titled *Głos obywatela z zabranego kraju z okazji Sądu Sejmowego* ['The voice of a citizen from an annexed country, on the occasion of the *Sejm* Court']. The author was Maurycy Mochnacki, as it turned out later on, and the brochure circulated in manuscript copies: "There's no homeland that we now possess, there's only a memory of our having once had one that has survived. This Kingdom of Poland of today, what is it really other than a tinsel put forward to beguile the gullible? May we be saved from being cheated by the erroneous perception that we are a nation whereat aliens grin! What we are is the periphery of an alien power, conquered, ruled by proconsuls, severely oppressed, wherein that pernicious action against the rules of political life is permanently continued, to the doom of our breed and our name."<sup>262</sup> Mochnacki found, with evident rhetorical exaggeration, that "Ever since the foreign army burst into Poland for the first time, there is nothing

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262 *Głos obywatela z Poznańskiego do senatu Królestwa Polskiego z okazji Sądu Sejmowego* ['A voice of a citizen from the Poznań Area, to the Senate of the Kingdom of Poland, on the occasion of the *Sejm* Court'], [1828], in: M. Mochnacki, *Pisma...*, vol. 2, pp. 11-19 (title given in a 1834 edition; manuscript versions of 1828 are titled

that would have turned for the better in here. That same subjugation; that same contempt for domestic freedoms; that same pride; and, that same sneering at the insolent.” Ideas like this one ought to be neither overestimated nor neglected. These were views of individuals, mainly in the younger generation. The fact that they appeared formed an alternative to the legalistic stances. They could rather easily attract ranks of adherents under altered political circumstances.

The general conclusion is that even in Warsaw, not to mention provincial areas, the Kingdom’s society remained basically passively reconciled with the state order. If the system’s stability was ever put under threat, it was not owing to the behaviour of sparse radicals. The prevalent reason was that the Kingdom’s state ideology was founded entirely upon Enlightenment ideals which were increasingly diluted and, during the 1820s, more and more often perceived as worn out.

### 3. The Insurrection

These sentiments of reconciliation with the existing state of affairs, as discussed earlier, exerted a decisive influence on the course of the November Insurrection. The young army cadets and university students who entered toward the late 1820s into the plot called by historians, after its leader, ‘the Piotr Wysocki Conspiracy’, nourished rather imprecise patriotic convictions and would probably have been satisfied with guarantees that the constitution would be observed and that the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands would be annexed to the Kingdom. (Another consideration is that such warranties would be completely impossible from the Russian standpoint.) The plotters had no particular political concept, and believed that it would suffice to give a signal for the outbreak and afterward let the experienced politicians take the helm. But there was nobody willing to lead the movement, to their astonishment: higher ranking officers would rather sacrifice their lives for their monarch than join a rebellion; the minds of frightened notables readily produced scenes from the French Revolution. Grand Prince Constantine, who was about to face death on the memorable November night of the attack on the Belweder palace, was not the only one to see the rebels as new Jacobins. These feelings were shared by numerous Poles, and not all of them conservatives: mostly those fearing that an inopportune eruption would bury forever the Kingdom’s autonomous political existence. The Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland, whereto the popular Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and

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*Głos obywatela z zabranego kraju z okazji Sądu Sejmowego* [‘A voice of a citizen from an annexed country, on the occasion of the Sejm Court’].

Adam-Jerzy Czartoryski were co-opted, issued on the day following its setup a proclamation summoning temperance “in the name of Nicholas, the Emperor and the King,” praising Grand Prince Constantine for his decision to withdraw Russian troops from the town and leave the matter to be settled between the Poles themselves, calling for the avoidance of fraternal bloodshed, and expressing the hope that “any and all raptures [...] will pass away with the night that has covered them up”.

And yet, they did not pass away. In opposition to the passivity of Constantine and the Polish elites of the Kingdom, the actions of a small group of radicals were slowly gaining momentum and within a few weeks turned by inertial force into a national uprising.

No centre of power capable of directing and leading the country materialised. The dictatorship of General Józef Chłopicki (December 1830/January 1831) did not meet expectations, giving way instead to a five-member National Government that combined three political currents usually referred to as aristocratic (with Prince Adam Czartoryski, as the President), liberal (or ‘Kalisz’, so named since its main representatives came from this town), and democratic (represented by Joachim Lelewel). Establishing a coalition government in a situation of a national peril was not in itself a bad idea, but this government proved incapable of developing a coherent policy and superimposing its will on the army commanders; otherwise, this body did not quite care about the *sejm*, which was permanently in session and which also did not produce a majority capable of pursuing an active policy. Neither the advocates of conciliation, the liberals nor the radical democrats were powerful enough to bring their ideas into effect; what is worse, they really did not have any concept of procedure, appealing instead to vague clichés. The conservatives spoke of a need for trust and unity; the liberals advocated civic freedoms and a resolute fight for independence; the democrats summoned the ‘people’ to battle, having in reality no close contact with them.

All the high-ranking army men, those old Napoleonic officers, had learned one primary lesson in their glorious careers: a war against Russia was not to be won. Consequently, they tried to avoid a decisive general battle in order to protect their army from defeat. This ‘minuet’, as General Jan Skrzynecki, commander-in-chief since August 1831, described the battlefront situation, went on for more than six months, its conclusive point being the army crossing the Prussian frontier near Brodnica in early October 1831.

Anyone reading the Insurrection-era press and journalistic commentaries is certainly astonished at how quickly the language of public life was changing. A number of phrases which were notional or reflective categories referring to the late Enlightenment period still functioned (the word ‘E/enlightenment’ itself still

being widely used). In parallel, the way in which (the) nation, Poland, and patriotism were discussed was changing quite radically. The monarchical/constitutional cliché was giving way to an independence cliché not infrequently tinted with a messianic and sacrificial tone. An ideological *and* generational ‘change of the guard’ had occurred: the young radicals did not take power in the Insurrection but disseminated a new style of talking politics which, in the face of a complete evisceration of the preceding late-Enlightenment style, was betimes taken over by the elder generation and by the educated people at large. A majority of the society (which is also true for its educated elites) normally tends to adapt to political change, albeit usually with some delay. The same inertia and disinclination to step out of line which formerly reinforced the stability of the Kingdom’s political system now appeared to have benefited the rising. The increasing influence of European Romanticism supported this change.

The November Night (29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1830) itself exerted an influence on some, particularly young, people, dragging them out of the ruts of daily routine. Jan-Nepomucen Janowski, a democrat and anticlericalist but definitely no plotter or rebel, was sitting on the evening of 29<sup>th</sup> November in his accommodation tied to the Staszic Palace (as a librarian with the Society of Friends of Learning), browsing through some documents of the Revenue and Treasury Commission he was a clerk with. Alarmed to hear about the unrest, he dashed out into the street, having taken up an exhibit from the Society’s museum collection, General Jan-Henryk Dąbrowski’s rapier, as he had no weapon of his own. He spotted in the street one of his colleagues, someone he had known just as a passionate lover of card-playing, at the head of a crowd marching toward the Arsenal. “Seeing that Biłgorajski himself has, I thought to myself, so suddenly converted into so zealous a patriot, patriotism must needs be an infectious and really magic sentiment.”<sup>263</sup>

Patriotic exhilaration grew as the uprising unfolded. Maurycy Mochnacki clamoured for ‘Jacobinic’ methods. For him, in contrast to the moderate ones, ‘exaltation’ was not an insult but a proud self-definition. The terms he had used a few years ago in his literary disputes now assumed a political character.

The press also did whatever it could to prevent the fervour from cooling. “Revolution has broken out in Petersburg”<sup>264</sup>, it was reported. “The Turks have commenced hostile steps with Russia”; “France [...] has vowed to provide us

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263 J.N. Janowski, *Notatki autobiograficzne 1803-1853*, [‘Autobiographical notes, 1803-1853’], ed. by M. Tyrowicz, Wrocław 1950, p. 158.

264 *Podchorąży*, No. 12, 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1830, p. 47.

with their assistance, while Jeneral Sebastiani (Minister of the Exterior) [...] is said to have uttered these words: 'A hundred and fifty thousand of our soldiers will hasten to help the Poles!'"<sup>265</sup>

Kazimierz Brodziński, so recently Mochnecki's definite polemist, now seemed to march in the same direction as his adversary, proposing new measures that had not been applied in Poland on a larger scale before: "May the capital town's pertinent streets, bearing their ludicrous names, be a momento of the historic memorials of fame or suffering [...]; may there be a Podchorążych [Army Cadets] Street and Chłopickiego [General Chłopicki] Street, may there be a Więźniów [Prisoners] Street! Konarski and Staszic are worthy of a similar veneration!"<sup>266</sup>

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1831, at a meeting of the Society of Friends of Learning, Brodziński read out his work *O narodowości Polaków* ['The nationality of Poles'], the major, if not the only, philosophical text written in the course of the Insurrection, and clearly influenced by it. "God wanted to have nations individual, like humans, such that they influence all of humankind, forming a common harmony"; this statement comprises two of the basic constituents of the Romantic national idea. First, the parallel of nation and individual, which on the one hand enabled the creation of the most fantastic visions of a collective character and, on the other, allowed the genesis of the idea of a nation's political rights as analogous to the liberal idea of the individual's rights. ("The rights of peoples are inalienable] and not liable to obsolescence", as we can read in an address delivered to the inhabitants of the former Commonwealth's eastern lands to the *sejm* in as early as January 1831.) The other important element of a Romanticist concept of nation is the belief in a common harmony that will emerge from a variety of diverse national cultures. This idea was inherited from the German late-eighteenth-century thinker Johann-Gottfried Herder. Brodziński was not the first in Polish culture to express it but it was only then that it became an essential element of Polish thinking about (the) nation as an issue. A third thought joins those two, proving of particular importance specifically in the Polish context: nations are supposed to sacrifice themselves for mankind much as individuals should sacrifice themselves for the nation, the only differentiation being that "a man can perish for the nation whilst a nation cannot perish for humankind".

Unique to the Polish nation is that it suffers in a peculiar way, more severely than any nation in the West. It suffers for the others, for "it has been [...] its

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265 *Rozmaite wiadomości* ['Various news'], *Podchorąży*, No. 5, 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1830, p. 19.

266 K. Brodziński, *O pamiątkach narodowych* ['Our national relics-of-the-past'], *Kurier Polski*, No. 389, 13<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1831; reprinted in: idem, *Mowy i pisma patriotyczne* ['Patriotic addresses, orations and writings'], ed. by I. Chrzanowski, Kraków 1926, pp. 67-69.

destiny marvellous to come out of the grave at the sound of an attack on the liberty of nations”, that is, come forward to defend the achievements of the French Revolution and the Belgian Revolution of 1830. (The common opinion claimed at the time that tsar Nicholas entertained the idea of intervening against the revolutionary France, which intent was eventually thwarted by the Polish uprising.) This is how the wave of Polish Romantic messianism was surging. The idea’s prehistory dates back at least to the Baroque period, with its concept of the ‘bulwark of Christendom’ against Islamic Turkey, with the recent significant contribution of the concepts of Jan-Paweł Woronicz; yet, it was only the Brodziński text that marked a breakthrough moment in the history of this idea.

It was during the November Insurrection that a type of Polish patriotism started emerging which was to remain ‘valid’ at least into the 1980s, or even till this very day, to an extent. The significance of Brodziński’s text consists in the fact that it presents in an elaborate fashion these same ideas which in a trivialised form were penetrating into broad groups of the intelligentsia and, moreover, were becoming common property through patriotic songs. Together with the other exponents of the current, Brodziński saw moral superiority where Enlightenment people saw abjection and backwardness. Poland, agonised and righteous, suffered for its spiritual excellence, and not for lack of government, as the preceding generation believed. The new patriotism referred to the Sarmatian and noble tradition, while discerning in Polish history a special predilection for liberty and tolerance. It combined the national and the Catholic ideas, whereas any religious values, while often far from the Catholic orthodoxy, were subordinated into the national idea. “Many a time did Poles fight, scare off, flush, // But never for to relish things foreign would they dash. // To destroy the enemy’s crew // Is Polish sons’ virtue!”: the National Theatre resounded on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1830 with these lyrics of a song to the glory of the Insurrection dictator, whose opening line was “Our Chłopicki, brave and valiant soldier” (“*Nasz Chłopicki wojak dzielny*”)<sup>267</sup>. A few months later, on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1831, the National Theatre stage produced for the first time a song that, almost forsaken today, ranked for over a hundred years among the most popular Polish songs: the *Warszawianka* by the French poet Casimir Delavigne, translated (more specifically, Polonised) by Karol Sienkiewicz, a librarian in Puławy, and set to music by Karol Kurpiński, the well-known composer. One of its stanzas claimed: “Either we win, or we’re

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267 A. Słowaczyński, *Mazur wojenny* [‘The War Mazur’], in: *Poezja powstania listopadowego* [‘The poetry of the November Insurrection’], ed. by A. Zieliński, Wrocław 1971, p. 56 (“*Nieraz Polak walczył, płoszył, gromił, // Ale na obce on się nigdy nie łakomił. // Poniższyć wrogów roty // To polskich synów cnoty!*”).

ready // To see our corpses hurled // Barring now the giant who's steady // In his wish to chain the world."<sup>268</sup> The messianic idea was disseminated among the people and army members in this version.

The transformation of the national ideal – its heroisation, combined with its elevation above any other ideals – affected the intelligentsia in two ways. First, being the educated urban class, the intelligentsia easily and quickly appropriated the ideal; second, it was specifically predestined to processing, enriching and popularising the ideal in question. This purpose was served by numerous patriotic celebrations, whose frequency was particularly high in 1831, as if to compensate for the previous several years which were not too fertile in this respect. The visual setting of those celebrations was still maintained in a classicist spirit (triumphal gates), whereas the content was often novel.

There was something theatrical about the nineteenth-century revolutions. A single play was restaged throughout: the French Revolution, the motifs and threads being selected, transformed, and blended. The revolutionaries and their opponents assumed their assigned roles and behaved (not in every case consciously) in the way the unwritten script required. Also, for the Polish educated elites of 1831, the French Revolution was the most obvious example to follow; imitating it was confined within the verbal sphere, as no radical or revolutionary policy was pursued within the Insurrection. This verbal radicalism was apparent especially in the activities of the Patriotic Society, commonly nicknamed 'the Club' – the most important democratic organisation of the Insurrection period. The Club was formed on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1830, in one of the Warsaw town-hall rooms (the town hall was situated in what is Teatralny Square today) and from the following day onwards its meetings were convened in the Sale Redutowe [Mask Ball Rooms] of the old National Theatre edifice in Krasińskich Sq. The square was continually an important rallying point and meeting place in Warsaw, though the city-centre area, as already mentioned, had over the preceding dozen years been moving toward the Krakowskie-Przedmieście route. Now, the Club made a contribution in bringing the Krasińskich-Square area to revival; its location within the theatre building added to the advantage, as the curious theatre audiences "during the entr'actes, listening [to the Club's deliberations], to pass the time, started increasing its membership figure"<sup>269</sup>

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268 K. Delavigne, *Warszawianka* [*La Varsovienne de 1831*], transl. into Polish by K. Sienkiewicz, in: *ibidem*, s. 245 ("Lub zwyciężym, lub gotowi / z trupów naszych tamę wzniesić / by krok spóźnić olbrzymowi, / co chce światu pęta nieść").

269 W. Zwierkowski, *Rys powstania, walki i działań Polaków 1830-1831 roku skreślony w dziesięć lat po wypadkach na tułactwie we Francji* ['An outline of the insurrection,

The activists included a group of radical youth affiliated with the former Wysocki conspiracy, some elder-aged people tied once with the Patriotic Society, and some of the parliamentary (*sejm*) deputies. Maurycy Mochnacki, one of the leaders of the Warsaw Romantic camp in its struggle with the Classicists before the uprising, wanted the Club radicalised and wished that the insurrection, unfolding sluggishly as it was, be injected with a life-and-death revolutionary zeal. A few years later, he described a Club meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1830: a crowd of protesters of the bargaining with tsar Nicholas gathered in Bankowy Square; at twilight, the multitude, “civilians and militarymen, [...] some members of the Chamber of Deputies, barristers, burghers, professors, students, deputies of various army detachments, craftsmen, officer-cadets[,] numbering over a thousand-and-a-few-hundred”, moved to Krasińskich Square: only some of them could find a room for themselves in the Sale Redutowe where the “non-copious light of a few oil-lamps, a mere handful of candles, lightened the clouded foreheads [...] which were animated in equal measure by exaltation, long-time sleeplessness and expectation of important occurrences.” Instead of applause, rifle butts were knocked against the table top, “and no legislative chamber could likely ever express its enthusiasm any better”.

The Club appointed a delegation to the Administrative Council and Mochnacki spun his story. Accompanied by the throng, the delegation returned to Bankowy Square where the Council was deliberating, at the stock exchange building (housing the Porczyński Gallery today). The deputies waited to be received for an hour and finally pushed their way forward into the Council meeting room. “We are here by command of the people who are surrounding this edifice, and we shall all enter here”, responded the delegates to an official making an effort to halt them. “It was probably shocking to those unaccustomed to any revolutionary movement that the Club’s delegates, in their overcoats, arms in their hands, [...] have almost [...] violently entered the presence of those in authority”, Mochnacki comments.<sup>270</sup>

It is quite clear that all these protagonists were role playing: the young intellectuals at the Sale Redutowe consciously ‘put on stage’ a romantic ambience of awe against which revolutionary gestures were repeated (“We are here by command of the people” sounds almost like the famous “gathered people” phrase

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combat and actions of the Poles, 1830-1, as drawn ten years past the occurrences, on a wandering in France’, ed. by W. Lewandowski, Warszawa 1973, p. 403.

270 M. Mochnacki, *Powstanie narodu polskiego 1830 i 1831* [‘The uprising of the Polish nation, 1830 & 1831’], ed. by S. Kieniewicz, vol. 2, Warszawa 1984, pp. 89-93.

uttered by the chairman of French Estates-General of 1789); conservatives, stirred up in the presence of the new Jacobins, had their own role assigned.

The driving idea of the Patriotic Society was to present the insurrection as the struggle of freedom against despotism, combining the messianic thread with an imitation of revolutionary France; this thread was highlighted as almost more important than the national one, hence the idea to organise a symbolic funeral of the Decembrists, participants in the failed Russian revolt of December 1825. The ceremony was held on 25<sup>th</sup> January, the day the *sejm* enacted the dethroning of Nicholas I as Polish king; this coincidence in the dates was meant to prove that the act of dethroning was not an anti-Russian manifestation but was only aimed against the despotism that persecuted the Polish and the Russian nation on an equal footing. As the radical periodical *Nowa Polska* remarked, the Poles were supposed to “carry the torch of freedom to Russia itself, to the Russia that is calling upon us, to the Russia that is blessing our uprising”.<sup>271</sup> Joachim Lelewel soon after worded this same thought into a slogan which finally appeared on the insurgent banners: “For your freedom and ours”. This identification of the fight for Poland with the combatting of despotism rose to become a key element of the Polish Romantic patriotism.

The wave of patriotic excitement of the first few days of the Insurrection led the university students to establish an academic guard, under the leadership of Professor Krystyn Lach-Szyrma. In December 1830 the guard defended General Chłopicki, the uprising dictator, against criticism from the Patriotic Society. As has been mentioned, the Club’s radicalism virtually exhausted itself in words and gestures. Its members admittedly called each other ‘citizen’, which the conservatives did not quite like: when Walenty Zwierkowski addressed General Henry Dembiński, fêted in the capital city as a ‘citizen’, he later confessed to somebody else that he had “recognised a Clubbist” by this very saying.<sup>272</sup> To the despair of several Polish historians in later years, no broader attempts at radicalising the masses were made, any such actions being limited to contacts with the Warsaw bourgeoisie and artisans. Neither the peasantry question nor the Jewish question was seriously addressed. The only serious attempt by the Patriotic Society to do politics in the street ended up losing control over the mob; the street lynching law in the night of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1831 killed some thirty people, suspected, legitimately or not, of treason or considered enemies of the insurrection. The Society dissented

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271 Excerpt from *Nowa Polska*, as quoted (with no date specified) in: J. Skowronek, I. Tessaro-Kosimowa, *Warszawa w powstaniu listopadowym* [‘Warsaw in the November Insurrection’], Warszawa 1980, p. 92.

272 W. Zwierkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

all the faster from the people's excesses and did not even try to discount them politically in the race for power resulting from a dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief and National Government which went on for the next couple of days. The riots reinforced the conservatives' belief about the utterly menacing Jacobinism. This belief, it seems, could have been one of the factors hindering warfare, as if the prospect of a radicalised society carried forward by a possibly victorious war posed a threat to the social order itself. The mythical guillotine seemed more dangerous than the real Russian army of General Ivan Paskevich.

Even with no radical politics appearing with the Insurrection, a revived social and cultural life offered the intelligentsia almost infinite opportunities to discuss, publish, and pursue social activities. Except for a few days in February 1831, the war was fought almost until its very last moment from far away in Warsaw, and it seems that the capital was not completely aware of how fragile the foundations of freedom regained in November were. On 4<sup>th</sup> September 1831, Joachim Lelewel still appeared concerned in a letter to his Wilno friend staying in Paris in the first place about Lithuania's appropriate representation in the Kingdom's *sejm*; he was so eager about the Polish army finally "hastening to beyond the Bug and the Niemen, to reach fellow countrymen. In Gediminas's capital town shall we convene there, Leonard!" he assured his correspondent.<sup>273</sup> (To avoid thinking too critically of Lelewel's apparent lack of acumen, let us just mention that on that same day the French consul in Warsaw informed his foreign minister of the option and capability to defend the city militarily for months.) Three days later Warsaw was seized by the Russians; Lelewel himself set off wandering on foot: via Zakroczym, Płock, and Brodnica, he finally made it as far as Paris.

Lelewel's letter is of interest not only because it testifies to the illusions entertained about independence: it offers a picture of an abundant intellectual life in liberated Warsaw. Newspapers, "multiplied twofold" compared to the period before the Insurrection, best testified to this trend. *Nowa Polska*, already mentioned elsewhere, gained the primary importance among the period's periodicals; worth mentioning alongside it is *Polak Sumienny* ['The Conscientious Pole'], a moderately conservative daily not infrequently surprising readers with its interesting releases; also, *Patriota*, published by former Wysocki Conspiracy members. Of the periodicals that existed before then, *Kurier Polski* became the organ of the liberals (i.e. the 'Kalisz' faction) and its importance increased.

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273 J. Lelewel to L. Chodźko, letter dated: "Warsaw under siege, 4<sup>th</sup> September 1831"; in: J. Lelewel, *Dziela* ['Works'], vol. 1, *Materiały autobiograficzne* ['Autobiographical materials'], ed. by H. Więckowska, Warszawa 1957, pp. 365-367.

Two major information dailies, the old *Gazeta Warszawska* and the much younger and more dynamic *Kurier Warszawski*, thrived.

The theatre was experiencing moments of flourishing; it seemed as if the golden time of Boguslawski forty years before was back now. On 30<sup>th</sup> November, the first day of liberty, the Warsaw theatre staged, obviously enough, the opera *Krakowiaczy i Górale*, with hot-topic ditties added, as tradition demanded.

Throughout December, performances were held like some festivals, often turning into patriotic manifestations. From then on, the glamour of this new form of entertainment paled somewhat, but the theatre was reviving the premiere performances of new circumstantial pieces. The theatre building was stirred, moreover, by Patriotic Society meetings; audiences were joined by those who otherwise appeared among them only occasionally. Craftsmen and burghers came around in increasing numbers; women also turned up more and more often.

This was not specific to the theatres, though. Cafés were a favourite place for radicals to meet; sometimes the Patriotic Society would gather at a café: “the assemblies at ‘Honoratka’ and the so-called ‘Dziurka’ are frequented by patriots, male and female alike<sup>274</sup>”; women started appearing as ‘arbiters’ at *sejm* sessions (which was somewhat more than today’s spectator or observer, as the viewers on the gallery often contributed to the house’s ambience and could influence the attitude of the speakers or voters). In general, among the groups set on the margins of normal cultural life, women gained most of the benefit of the Insurrection. Well, not all of them, perhaps: aristocrats had opportunities to appear on the public forum whereas lower sphere women were still faced with a closed door. For the women of the intelligentsia, November 1830 certainly opened up new opportunities.

Some held the opinion that women ought to appear in mass numbers at patriotic celebrations, military parades and in the theatre, so they could publicly manifest their patriotism. Others protested, considering participation in manifestations easy, and relatively shallow; to their minds, it was better for women to show off their patriotism by action and not by words, organising fundraising, taking care of the wounded, preparing bandages, sewing uniforms and pennants (a very important thing, as every cavalryman had to have a pennant at his lance), or even helping the conscribed men to do office work (this latter postulate, the most interesting one, was not delivered upon). The women themselves, insofar as their views can be reconstructed based on utterances perhaps taken out of context, had no unambiguous view in this respect. Among the Warsaw intelligentsia, the figure

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274 W. Zwierkowski, op. cit., p. 62.

of Klementyna Hoffmanowa (Hoffman), née Tańska, came to the fore. Together with a few of her colleagues, she set up a 'Union for the Patriotic Charitable Activity of Female Varsovians', in as early as December 1830. This organisation's intellectual profile was quite clear: out of its sixteen major activists, we have the biographical data of ten, all being wives of clerks or officials, lawyers or army officers. Among those volunteering for work in military lazarettos, burger and intelligentsia ladies were dominant. Lazarettos were 'environmental', the most 'intellectual' one being the one arranged in the University rooms in Krakowskie-Przedmieście Street, where professors' wives worked. This social labour contributed simultaneously to the integration of the milieu.

Efforts in military hospitals bore measurable results as the mortality rate of the wounded and sick soldiers was considerably reduced; this labour also quite often called for genuine heroism, once the cholera epidemic reached Warsaw on its way from Russia late in the spring, the last great cholera epidemic that infested a great part of the continent. In turn, the other great and broadly propagated action which was supposed to prove that the civilians' attitude was patriotic, including women and the masses, had an almost exclusively propagandistic effect: it was, namely, the people's volunteer participation in reinforcing the fortifications of Warsaw or, as it was then phrased, "heaping up the embankments". In the spring and summer, it had the flavour of a patriotic picnic, so the comparison with building the Kościuszko Mound in Krakow a few years ago came out quite naturally. It does not seem though that any military effect was brought about in this way.

The impact the French Revolution tradition exerted on how the democrats and the radical youth behaved, and the very different way in which this tradition formed the attitude of some of the conservatives, have been discussed. Now, a different influence, which in a peculiar manner blended with the revolutionary tradition, is worth mentioning: the nobility's tradition of resistance against the monarch. Omnipresent across Europe, this tradition had been extremely strong among the Polish *szlachta* [nobility], which is a fact commonly known. Although the monarch's position in the Commonwealth was very weak, the nobility incessantly suspected the kings of striving to bring about an absolutist rule, perceiving any attempt at strengthening the royal prerogatives as a mortal threat to them. This resistance had its most complete manifestations through nobility confederations, the best known of which was the Bar Confederation of 1768-1772, already bathed by then in the myth of the struggle for liberty.

It is quite noticeable that for many of its participants, for a number of politicians and columnists, and for the nobles forming the *sejm* majority, the November Insurrection had much in common with a confederation of this sort,

refusing obedience to the law-breaking monarch. The proclamation of the *sejm* houses of December 1830 was to a considerable extent a juridical enumeration of the instances in which the law and the constitution of Nicholas I had been broken, and this is certainly partly explainable in terms of tactical considerations: the Western European liberal opinion was thus addressed with language comprehensible to it. However, the supposition that the influence of the nobility tradition was equally important is irresistible: it involved resistance not so much against national oppression (which actually did not quite appear in the Kingdom before 1830) but rather against a ruler who was breaking his contract with the nation. This ‘Sarmatian’ antimonarchic tradition was combined with a democracy imported from France, as well as with republicanism, so tightly that the constituents grow indistinguishable in most cases.

Walenty Zwierkowski, who has already been quoted, was an ideal representative of the radically democratic intelligentsia of noble origin whose worldview was forming at the intersection of the two republican traditions: the Sarmatian and the French revolutionary one. The people, i.e. their good and happiness, was the utmost goal for him; the people not being taken into consideration in political calculations was, in turn, the gravest accusation he charged against his opponents. For Zwierkowski, ‘the people’ was not confined to peasants and townspeople: petty nobles were also included, all the strata united by their shared hostility against the magnates. Recognition of the petty nobility as a part of ‘the people’ was an excellent idea as it enabled them to take over the most en vogue ideas of the Western political thought, and to combine them with their traditional dislike of the magnates.

The concatenation of the French influences and the noble tradition is so clearly evident in the question of the national colours. The triumph of the White and Red was not obvious at the time yet. “The tri-coloured ribbon became almost commonly accepted, but this is explained otherwise than by the sentiment of attachment to France. The Polish white and red ribbon has always been the national colour here, but the azure is Lithuanian”, the French consul reported from Warsaw in January 1831.<sup>275</sup> Zwierkowski, son of a Bar confederate, resented announcing white and red as the national colours at the Insurrection *sejm*: the Bar Confederation had three colours, after all: white, red and blue (azure). How about those colours coincidentally being those of the French Revo-

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275 R. Durand, *Depesze z powstańczej Warszawy 1830-1831* [‘Despatches from the insurgent Warsaw, 1830-1’], transl. and ed. by R. Bielecki, Warszawa 1980, p. 88 (Despatch no. 50: Warsaw, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1831).

lution? There was nothing wrong with this; or perhaps, it was even better this way. This apparently trifling thing perfectly shows this special way of thinking: Poland was to be assigned the same national colours as France, but not by way of thoughtless imitation: the colours implied by the Polish tradition were in effect. Ideas form a similar case in point: Poland advocated the same democratic ideas as France but had never borrowed them from France; instead, it developed them in its own independent way.

The fighting did not extend to the Prussian and Austrian Partition areas, but the Insurrection did exert quite a noticeable impact on all the lands of the former Commonwealth. Volunteers hastened all the way from Lwów, Krakow and Poznań; the cordon was crossed mainly by landowners' sons coming from rural areas, whilst the high-school (gymnasium) and university students of most various backgrounds were arriving from big cities. These were not individual cases: a few hundred gymnasium and university students set out from Lwów alone; one among them was Henryk Bogdański, whom we have already met. Earlier on, he was eager to fight for freedom in Greece but now had found an opportunity geographically much closer to his homeland. Committees were set up in Lwów and in Krakow which officially provided assistance to refugees from the Kingdom but in fact supplied the volunteers setting off for the battlefield and organised various actions aimed at supporting the insurgents. As was the case in Warsaw, those committees offered public activity opportunities to all those who could not find a place for themselves in the 'official' environment – that is, women, the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. In the Republic of Krakow, a relatively free land, the theatre incited patriotic sentiments much as the Warsaw theatre did. *Krakowiaczy i Górale* was on the Krakow stage too, along with patriotic plays written 'on the spot'.

Whereas the Prussian authorities threatened to apply repressive measures in the case of any form of support provided to the insurgents (and repression was indeed put into action on several occasions), the Austrian authorities behaved more favourably in an attempt to preserve freedom of movement in case the insurgents possibly won; consequently, they connived in the activities which benefited the uprising. In Krakow itself, the situation was even more advantageous as the Republic authorities basically did not oppose the backing provided to the insurgents, trying instead only to keep up certain appearances so that the city could, as far as possible, be protected against repression from its mighty neighbours. For all that, a turnover took place locally in February 1831: the Senate chairman Stanisław Wodzicki, disliked among the bourgeoisie and students, was dismissed and the rule was taken over by the so-called bourgeois party. The Austrian Galician authorities in Lwów as well as the Krakow

authorities supported the volunteers' departure to an extent, hoping that it would become easier to keep order once the radical youth were gotten rid of.

What were the long-lasting effects of the Insurrection and its defeat with respect to the group of our focus?

The occurrence of a Romantic patriotism, which was thereafter (re)developed by the Insurrection émigrés, probably comes to the fore. Any debate involving the intelligentsia over the following decades had to assume a position against this idea and concept.

Second, a chasmic divide appeared (only then – not yet in 1795!) between the Polish nation and its partitioners. 'Independence' was not a clear concept at all until 1830: the general conviction prevailed that a free Poland could be easily reconciled to the state of remaining under the sceptre of an alien dynasty. Now, the situation got cleared up: the notions of treason, independence, and the fight for freedom assumed more or less the meaning which remained valid till the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For a patriotically inclined Pole, the sphere of possible collaboration with an invading state shrunk: living with a double loyalty grew increasingly difficult; the 'either/or' option became more and more often a must. As is typical of any such transformation, this one was never completed: under the conditions of a partitioned country, they had somehow to continue living and to try to reconcile contradictory loyalties; whenever the conditions appeared favourable, programs of political reconciliation would always appear. But this proved tougher ever afterward, and called for stronger grounds than ever before.

Thirdly, the liaison between the intelligentsia and the aristocracy, so strong before, was weakening. This can be interpreted as a follow-up stage of the intelligentsia growing autonomous as a separate social group, on the one hand, and as a sign of the gradual decline of the significance of aristocracy in Polish culture. The revolutionary excitement period broadened social advancement opportunities for educated people, regardless of their aristocratic patronage. Anyone could have their texts published in newspapers, shine among the Democratic Society members or *sejm* deputies, let off steam doing social work or, at last, prove himself 'on the field of glory' in battle. The aristocracy were more and more often accused of apostasy with regard to the national cause.

Fourthly, and lastly, it seems that the declining importance of the aristocracy had to do with the increased role of the lesser and medium nobility among the educated classes. A nobleman disliked magnates more than a plebeian did, as the latter would more often count on a magnate's patronage. The intellectual democratic ideal drew much from the nobles' democracy idea, a lot of good and a lot of bad things, in fact: readiness to sacrifice and radical sympathies along with exclusivity. Plebeians and immigrants had by far been the important ingredients

of the emerging intelligentsia: Polonised Germans, barber-surgeons coming from abroad, artisans or surveyors of German or Czech origin, Prussian or Habsburg officials being Polonised. With the fall of the Polish state (the Kingdom of Poland of 1815-1831 being such a state, after all), career opportunities for this group were limited; the aristocracy, whose importance was gradually weakening, lost its once tremendous patronage and sponsorship capacities, taken advantage of in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries by relatively numerous plebeians. What with all the doubts as to the possibility of discerning the social origins of the Polish intelligentsia, it seems that the intelligentsia, paradoxically, grew more noble than it had been ever before.

There already appeared certain harbingers heralding the change in question during the Insurrection. The provincial administration started increasingly making use of the local self-governmental element, which, given the situation of the time, virtually meant 'noble only'. In other words, the former management system based upon noble local government was essentially reinstated, while the model that had been founded at least theoretically on a professional bureaucratic apparatus was departed from. A similar phenomenon is identifiable in the promotions of army generals, with nobility-estate candidates being clearly favoured in the Insurrection period. As a result, the insurgent army had more generals of landed gentry origin than the Kingdom's army before November 1830.<sup>276</sup>

These changes and transformations incite the conclusion that in parallel with the defeat of the Insurrection, the developmental direction of the modern educated class in Poland was thoroughly altered. Thitherto, it might have seemed that the Polish educated classes were developing in line with the German model, to assume a conventional description. Something like a Polish educated bourgeoisie (*Bildungsbürgertum*) was emerging as a result, a patriotic and nationally conscious group that was distanced from revolutionary exhilaration; moderately enlightened, it was basically loyal toward its monarchs and the social order.

The basic difference was that in Poland, the intelligentsia layer was tied to the landowning gentry or nobility class much more strongly than its German counterpart: thus, in speaking of a Polish *Bildungsbürgertum*, one refers not just to a strong bourgeoisie existing as a singled-out social group but rather a bourgeois-sentimental cultural type, the type that tends to be associated with the notion of Biedermeier. This culture could be emerging in a countryside manor as well as in an urban salon; for those keen on paradoxes, the Polish educated bourgeoisie,

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276 M. Tarczyński, *Generalicja powstania listopadowego* ['The generals in the November Uprising'], Warszawa 1980, pp. 253-254.

contrary to their German peers, can be said to have been of a 'combined urban and rural' nature. This difference did not erase the very basic cultural resemblance, though. The other differences in comparison with the German situation had to do with economic backwardness and with the fact that the educational system created once by the Commission of National Education was different from what Neo-humanism recommended. In principle, however, the bourgeois Biedermeier culture was dominant in Warsaw, Poznań, Krakow, and Lwów as well as other, smaller towns.

Before 1830, the mean educated person in Poland did not much bother himself with martyrdom, devotion and dedication, plotting and conspiring, or sufferings. There was no room for such ideas or actions in practical behaviour or even in the sphere of ideals or role models. Patriotism was comprehended in terms of doing things for the public good, and staying loyal to one's monarch.

Once the November Insurrection was defeated, the educated classes, distant from the aristocracy, restricted as they were in their expectations of careers pursued in the service of the state and deprived, under severe censorship, of any chance to legally dispute the country's or their own situation, enclosed themselves, for around a dozen years, in the private sphere. In parallel, they were subject to pressures of Romantic patriotism which almost unnoticeably influenced their ideals and role models (although not really their practical behaviours).

It is hard to overstate how significant a change the language of patriotic expression underwent in the course of the Insurrection. The classicist and sentimental poets, and even the early Romantic authors, did not approach conciseness as an essential advantage; now, the rhythm of the marching song (most of these pieces were written by intellectuals for use by common people) and the pressure of patriotic emotion enforced a stronger, harder and more emphatic expression, the type of expression we would sense in patriotic lyrical verses until at least the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Impressed by the fall of Warsaw, Kazimierz Brodziński, author of popular idylls, wrote in the first days of September 1831:

Na zgliszczach narodu stoją,  
Które krwią bratnią oblali;  
Wolność, i naszą, i swoją,  
Ślepo utopić w niej dali.<sup>277</sup>

Standing on the nation's cinders,  
They poured upon them kindred blood;  
Blindly they made freedom tinders,  
Ours and theirs, bathed up in that flood.

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277 K. Brodziński, *Dnia 9 września 1831* ['September the 9<sup>th</sup>, 1831'], in: *Świat poprawiać – zuchwale rzemiosło: Antologia poezji polskiego Oświecenia* ['Amending the World: An Audacious Craft. An anthology of the Polish Enlightenment poetry'], ed. by T. Kostkiewiczowa, Z. Goliński, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Kraków 2004, p. 586.

What better example of a writing style transformed under the influence of political-military changes could be quoted? This transformation is identical with an altered manner of feeling.

The ideal of a quiet life combining efforts made for the benefit of the country with strife for personal happiness was giving way to an ideal of devotion, mission, and democratism. In this sense, the November Insurrection can be said to have been of breakthrough significance in the history of Polish educated classes: it became known ever since that an enlightened bourgeoisie modelled after the German pattern would not appear in the Polish territory. This is the moment in which the Polish intelligentsia, in the sense of the word that was to be dominant in the subsequent generations, began emerging.

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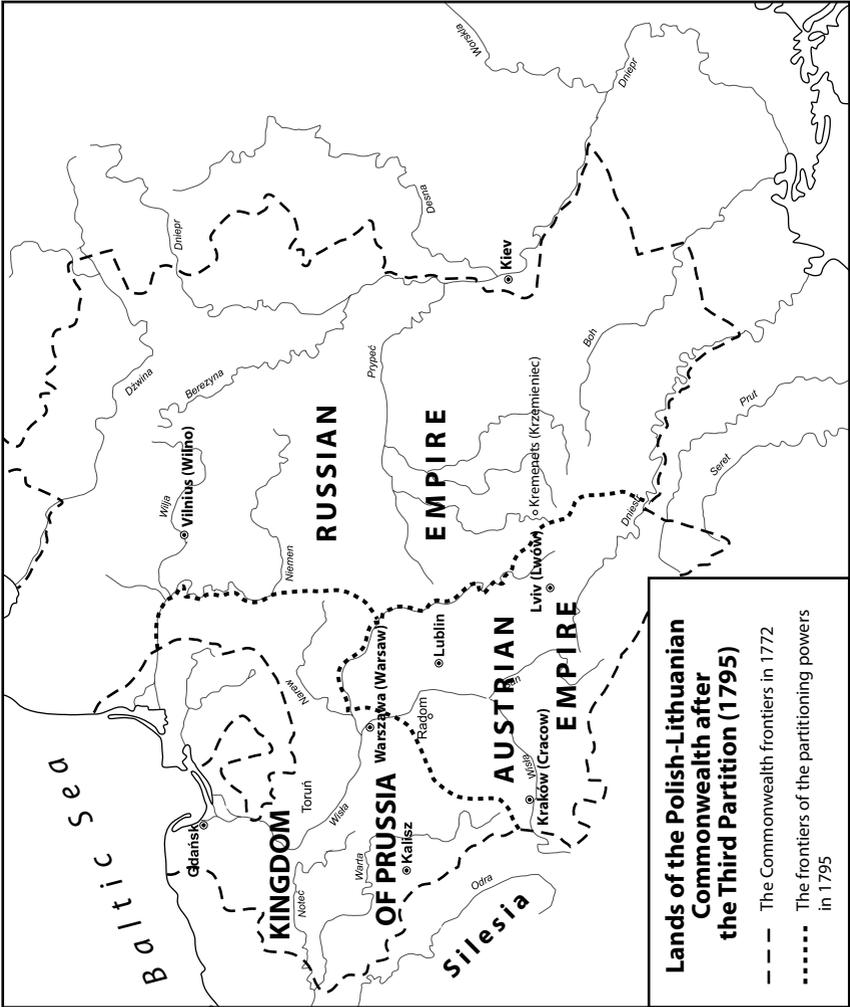
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## **Geschichte - Erinnerung - Politik**

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Herausgegeben von Anna Wolff-Powęska und Piotr Forecki

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