

“FAITHFUL HIGHLANDERS”:
CONSTRUCTIONS OF PEASANT MASCULINITY AND CITIZENSHIP
IN MODERN POLISH POPULAR AND ACADEMIC HISTORY
(1840-1914)

by

Alicja W. Kusiak-Brownstein

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Brian Porter-Szűcs, Chair
Professor Ewa Domańska, Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)
Professor Geoff Eley
Professor Kali Israel
Professor Genèvieve Zubrzycki

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DEDICATION
To my husband, Michael Clifford Brownstein

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PREFACE

“DO NOT BE ASHAMED OF YOUR PEASANT”

Is peasant citizenship in the Polish national community a dead question now, in the twenty-first century? It is doubtful. Even if the smallholders as class is transforming and becoming downsized, the peasant cultural heritage remains a sensitive issue, undermining the myth of social solidarism and pointing to some unresolved problems buried in history. Neither the agrarian reform of 1919-1920, implemented at the beginning of the Second Polish Republic, nor the more radical reform executed in 1946-48 by the Polish People’s Republic adequately addressed the problem of the position of peasants within the national community. According to both states’ propaganda, peasants became “righteously” rewarded for ages of exploitation with land endowments, but the national culture never sufficiently re-evaluated the abusive power relationships and their consequences between the cultural successors of the nobility and of the peasants.

This is not to say that there were no attempts to do so. There were some: for instance, writers of peasant origins dedicating their works to the rising national and social awareness about village culture as well as social and economic problems. But those works remained on the margins of the national discourse. Even a novel of such stature as *Peasants* by Władysław S. Reymont, the Noble Prize winner in 1924, did not fully address the issue of the changing

position of peasants, as a class, within the modernizing Polish community, instead depicting peasants in anthropological manner—as a community living in their (nearly) closed world, an entity somehow beyond history. A few novels denouncing social injustice, violence, and exploitation in the village, such as Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *Janko Muzykant*, Bolesław Prus’ *Antek*, or Eliza Orzeszkowa’s *Cham* or *Dobra pani* (not to mention the almost entirely forgotten works by Władysław Orkan), have been important voices but now their resonance is very weak, or gone. The strong, compelling, and critical voices of writers and intellectuals of peasant origins calling out to rethink the place of peasants in contemporary Polish culture and social life, as well as in national history, remained on the margins. Being a peasant was definitely “not cool”.

This situation changed only recently. A few years ago the leading Polish daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* published a poignant letter in which a young career woman argued that in contemporary Poland admitting that one had a peasant background requires more courage than coming out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or a transgender. Recalling her own and her friend’s experiences, she claimed that by revealing peasant origins one is exposed to harsh social ostracism. The cultural capital coming from an excellent education and a rich cosmopolitan life, as well as from the economic capital springing from occupying a high rank in the corporate world, can barely make up for the stigma associated with the fact that one’s family still live on a farm.

This powerful letter was just one voice in a debate on “the peasant identity of Poles,” which *Gazeta Wyborcza* carried on in 2012 under the bold title “Do Not Be Ashamed of Your Peasant.”¹ The titles of press articles—“Peasant-phobia,” “The Brakemen of Modernization,”

¹ Dorota Wiodecka, “Wszyscyśmy z sieci. Nie ze wsi,” (An interview with Ignacy Karpowicz), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 28, 2012; Teresa Smolińska, “Chamofobia ma się dobrze,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 5, 2012; Dorota Wodecka, “Polaki to wieśniaki,” (An interview with Jacek Wasilewski), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 7, 2012; Grzegorz

“How a Pole Defiled a Pole, or the Slavery in the Polish Style”—encapsulate the antagonizing tones in the debate. While the peasant issue became a subject in public debate already 2009, in 2012 the discussion was steered toward questioning the legacy of serfdom in modern Poland, and critically revisiting the issues of the cultural origins of post-World War II Polish national identity. The heat of this debate arrived at a time when I was working on formulating arguments for my dissertation. In my work, I have been analyzing representations of peasant citizenship and masculinity in Polish culture during the long nineteenth century. That debate greatly influenced my own take on the issue, helping me to reframe my original analytical questions and arguments. Most of all, it convinced me that I should use this dissertation to convey my voice in the discussion about the origins of post-communist Polish national identity—the debate which is the most important since the collapse of the communism.

In this ongoing debate, the participants represent the whole political spectrum. The conservatives and populists present peasants as primordial patriots always faithful to God and the Fatherland, and emphasize the role of social solidarity in shaping the sense of nationhood. The neoliberals regard the rural population as unpredictable and a potentially dangerous obstacle to the modernization processes, always in need of elite supervision and guidance. The Catholic Church and religious-political movements traditionally infantilize rural communities, and speak

Sroczyński, “Lemingi konra Sarmaci,” (An interview with Marian Pilot) *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 8, 2012; Janusz A. Majcherek, “Hamulcowi modernizacji,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 8, 2012; Jacek Żakowski, “Chłopofobia,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 13, 2012; Arkadiusz Pacholski, “Jak Polak zhańbił Polaka, czyli niewolnictwo po polsku,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 22, 2012; Adam Czech, “Chłop potęgą jest, nie miasta,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 29, 2012; Anita Pawlak, “Wyplukać skutki barbarzyństwa,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 31, 2012; Paweł Wroński, “My, szlachta,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 5, 2012; Piotr Guzowski, “Chłop w kajdanach ideologii,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 21, 2012. Also: Izabella Bukraba-Rylska, “Ta wstydliva polska wieś,” *lewica.pl*, June 13, 2009; Krzysztof Pilawski, “Ziemia dla chłopów,” *lewica.pl*, November 15, 2009; Dariusz Łukasiewicz, “Rola i niedola,” *Polityka*, July 4, 2011; Przemysław Wielgosz, “Pięćset lat kacetu: Ojczyzna-pańszczyzna,” *lewica.pl*, June 19, 2012; Piotr Kozak, “Pańszczyzna: Niedokończona sprawa,” *Krytyka Polityczna* February 23, 2014.

to them as well as about them in utterly inadequate language, which reveals a lack of awareness of the scope of the social changes experienced in the Polish countryside in the last 25 years. The young Left presents a revisionist and an often agonistic take on the peasants' past and present, going as far as to call for financial retributions from the heirs of the aristocratic families and from the Catholic Church for centuries of profiting from serfdom. According to their argument, the retribution should be paid to offspring of the serfs; that is, to about 90% of Poland's population.

The timing of this debate was not accidental, as it coincided with a deep crisis of identity and trust that peasant political organizations have recently suffered. In twentieth-century Poland, the agrarian parties played a crucial role in the governing process. Located in the political center and leaning toward the right, the peasant parties were usually indispensable in forming government coalitions.² Yet, by 2011 two major agrarian parties—the centrist Christian democratic Polish People's Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*), and the left-wing populist and nationalist Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland (*Samoobrona*)—lost credibility among their voters, predominantly the small-holders and workers in agribusiness. That political vacuum raised fears of the liberal and neo-liberal minded elites that a rural electorate might be taken over

² In this dissertation I use the term “agrarian parties” and “peasant parties” interchangeably. In Polish language the parties formed by small-holders are called either “people's parties” (*partie ludowe*), or “peasant parties” (*partie chłopskie*). Historically in modern Polish the term “people” (*lud*), and “people's” (*ludowy*) have strong associations with the peasants, much weaker associations with the nobility or bourgeoisie and urban intelligentsia. In Polish the use of the term “people” (*lud*) to signify “the nation” became common only during the Communist period, and therefore carries a strong ideological charge. In contemporary Poland the term “Polish people” (*lud polski*) is only used among the conservative and populist Catholic groups (such as the circles centered around Radio Saint Mary), which widely adopted the Communist phraseology in their religious and political language. There, “the Polish people” (*lud polski*) signifies “the Polish (Catholic) nation” (*naród polski*), and at the same time “God's people” (*lud Boży*). In other sectors of Polish public life the term “the Polish people” (*lud polski*) practically does not appear, certainly not as an ideologically significant phrase, but sometimes as a lapsus.

by radical populist parties or far rightist social movements. In such a political context, after 25 years of marginalization, the cultural and political legacy of peasants was placed in the center of the public debate.

From its start, that debate about identities and social perception of the rural population turned into a discussion about the character and authenticity of modern Polish national identity. As such, this debate addresses the major results of the transformation from communism to democracy and a market economy, namely the emergence of social and economic divides within a once (more) homogenous society, and the effects of these divides on the sense of social and national solidarity, re-creating sharp social divisions through the complicated processes of the social, cultural, and political exclusion and marginalization of certain populations and groups.

In the decade following the collapse of communism in Poland, the Polish national identity was reconstructed mainly around the ideological cornerstones of the anti-communist dissident movement (the so-called “the Solidarity ethos”) and Catholicism (the social teaching of the Church, mainly inspired by Pope John Paul II).³ Around 2004, when Poland joined the

³ On the role of Catholicism in shaping modern Polish national identity: Brian Porter-Szücs, Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); *Geneviève* Zubrzycki, The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Brian Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), Jan Kubik, The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of the State Socialism in Poland (College Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Adam Michnik, The Church and the Left, transl. by David Ost (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993). On the role of a dissident ethos in post-1989 Poland and Eastern Europe: Padraic Kenney, The Burdens of Freedom: Eastern Europe Since 1989 (Black Point, N.S.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); István Rév, Retroactive Justice: Prehistory of Post-Communism (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Padraic Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Katherine Verdery, The Political Life of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Post-Socialist Change (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); --, What Was Socialism and What Comes Next? (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); David Ost, Solidarity and the

European Union, the new processes of identity formation came into play, most importantly the attempts to reshape Polish national identities around the ideas of regions and “Europe,” instead of that of the state. While inventing, or reinventing the regional identities generally failed (with the exception of a few historically culturally distinctive regions), the idea of the supra-national, European identity became compelling, especially among the growing Polish middle-class and the large population of Polish immigrants in other European countries. Moreover, those complex processes of the transformation of the national identity overlapped with an ongoing progress of neoliberal capitalism. As for the mid-2010s, the traditional Polish identity, rooted in Catholicism and the legacy of anti-communist movements, predominates among conservative Euro-skeptics, as well among the populations and groups that have been excluded from the benefits of the systemic change.

This debate about the legacy of serfdom and peasant culture is important as the political context for my dissertation because it proves that social history and cultural memory stand in the center of the current national identity crisis. The post-1945 Polish intelligentsia is mainly of peasant origins, and so are its successors—the contemporary Polish middle-class, as well as the urban precariat.⁴ Yet, as many participants of the debate “Do Not Be Ashamed in Your

Politics of Anti-Politics: Opposition and Reform in Poland since 1968 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990).

On changing identities in contemporary Poland: Agnieszka Bielewska, Changing Polish Identities: Post-War and Post-Accession Polish Migrants in Manchester (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012); Marian B. Biskupski, Independence Day: Myth, Symbol, and the Creation of Modern Poland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴ On the precariat: Guy Standing, The Precariat (London: Boomsbury Academic, 2011); --, A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

On peasant origins of Polish intelligentsia: Dariusz Jarosz, Polityka władz komunistycznych w Polsce w latach 1948-1956 a chłopci (Warszawa: DiG, 1998); Rolnictwo i wieś europejska: Od korzeni ku wspólnej przyszłości, ed. by Zbigniew T. Wierzbicki and Andrzej Kaleta (Toruń: Wyd. UMK, 1998); Jan Turowski, Socjologia wsi i rolnictwa (Lublin: KUL, 1995); Małgorzata Słodowa-Helpa, Ludność wiejska Wielkopolski w procesie przemian

Peasant” —mostly scholars, intellectuals and artists—argue, in the collective memory of the contemporary middle-class its peasant origins are deeply repressed and mixed with resentment.

The temptation to treat this problem with a psychoanalytical approach has been hard to resist, as I will demonstrate below, but other approaches, including a variety of social and economic analyses of the mechanisms of social exclusion, added to this complicated picture of re-imagining and ideological re-conceptualization of the class divisions.⁵ Some media discussants have recounted all the wrongs done to peasants during the centuries of serfdom, undermined the moral foundations of the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1572-1795), and called into question the morality of the nobility—the political nation and its cultural and economic successors. Nevertheless, they have generally avoided or come up short in proposing how to affirm the peasant background, to turn it into a reason for pride, or to at least neutralize the shame coming from the stigmatizing memory of serfdom and cultural backwardness.⁶ Significantly, except for a few artists and scholars who openly confess their

społeczno-ekonomicznych: Przeobrażenia struktury społeczno-zawodowej w latach 1945-1970 (Warszawa: PWN, 1988); Zenon Tomaszewski, Przeobrażenia ustrojowe w rolnictwie Polski Ludowej (Warszawa: LSW, 1974); Awans pokoleniowy, ed. by Józef Chałasiński (Warszawa: LSW, 1964); Kazimierz Sokołowski, Odpływ ludności ze wsi (Warszawa: PWN, 1961); Józef Chałasiński, Rewolucja młodości: Studia o awansie młodego pokolenia wsi i integracji narodu polskiego (Warszawa: LSW, 1969); --, Przyszłość i przeszłość inteligencji polskiej (Warszawa: LSW, 1958); --, Społeczna genealogia inteligencji polskiej (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1946); --, Młode pokolenia chłopów: Zagadnienia kształtowania się warstwy chłopskiej w Polsce (Rzym: Wyd. YMCY PAW, 1946).

On continuity of the nobility as Polish elite in post-World War II Poland: Longina Jakubowska, Patrons of History: Nobility, Capital, and Political Transitions in Poland, Ashgate: 2012.

⁵ On social change in Polish society after 1989: Michał Buchowski, “The Specter of Orientalism in Europe: From Exotic Other to Stigmatized Brother,” Anthropology Quarterly 79/3 (2006); Elizabeth C. Dunn, Privatizing Poland: Baby Food, Big Business, and the Remaking of Labor (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Jacqueline Hayden, Poland’s Troubled Transition, 1989-2008 (Taylor & Francis, 2011).

⁶ Janina Koźbiel, Słowa i światy: Rozmowy Janiny Koźbiel with Wiesław Myśliwski and Marian Pilot (Pruszków: Wyd. JanKa, 2012). Wiesław Myśliwski and Marian Pilot, the top Polish contemporary writers of the 1930s generation 1930s consequently write about the rural society. Especially Marian Pilot always makes very clear that

peasant background and affirm it on personal level, the voices from the countryside, including the rural middling-class, such as agro-businessmen, schoolteachers, clergy, and educated youth, has been conspicuously silent in this debate.

One of the most important voices in this recent discussion on the subject of the peasants' role in post-1945 Polish national identity is Andrzej Leder's *The Over-Dreamed Revolution: Exercises From Historical Logic* (2014).⁷ The author, a philosopher inspired by Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek, argues that between 1939 and 1956 Poland became the arena of the greatest, yet never acknowledged revolution, which transformed the society, sped up the processes of modernization, and gave birth to the contemporary Polish middle-class. Leder argues that the tragedy of Polish history lays in fact that that modernizing revolution was not only facilitated by foreign occupations, but also was made possible by the extermination of Polish Jews, landed gentry, and the old intelligentsia by the Nazi and Stalinist regimes. According to Leder, after 1945 that the social void left by the extermination of the traditional Polish elite was filled by the offspring of peasants, making them historical beneficiaries of both the Nazi genocide and the communist destruction of pre-World War II Polish society. That shady background of social advancement, underpinned by the shameful memories of serfdom, accounts for the repression of

his art and intellectual formation was born in the peasant community. Pilot is more radical than Myśliwski, in his take on historical memory and the legacy of peasant culture in contemporary Poland. Apart from contemporary Polish literature, the radical reappraisal of the legacy of serfdom in Polish culture comes from the theatrical productions of the directing duo Monika Strzempka and Paweł Demirski, epitomized by their provocative play *In the name of Jakub S.*, based on the history of the Galician Peasant Rebellion in 1846. Ewelina Godlewska-Byliniak, "W imię Jakuba S. Strzempki i Demirskiego," in: *Dwutygodnik* 12/2011. A very interesting and radical critique of the legacy of serfdom comes also from folk and alternative musicians gathered in the R.U.T.A. Project (The Movement of Utopia, Transcendancy, Anarchy, or, Reactionary Terrorist-Artistic Union), particularly from their album *Blazing – Songs of Revolt and Misery from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century*. R.U.T.A., *Gore – Pieśni buntu i niedoli XVI i XIX wieku* (Karrot Kommando 2011).

⁷ Andrzej Leder, *Prześlona rewolucja: Ćwiczenia z logiki historycznej* (Warszawa: Krytyka Polityczna, 2014).

peasant origins among the contemporary Polish middle-class. Moreover, Leder argues that this historical context is also responsible for repressing the memories of the Holocaust in post-World War II Poland. One of his most controversial arguments attempts to explain the high level of political antagonism in post-1945 Poland, which the author calls “the war of everybody with everyone,” as a consequence of the vanishing of the peasants’ “natural enemies”: noblemen and Jews. In the logic of his argument, the lack of “traditional” adversaries resulted in the peasants’ redirecting their distrust and rage against themselves toward the institutions of the state and the new elite.

Reviews praise Andrzej Leder’s book as one of the most important studies in the history of mentality that was ever published in Polish. Leder certainly poses questions of great importance, and his analysis of the twentieth-century origins of national identity in contemporary Poland is certainly bold, thought provoking, and inspiring. However, pointing to peasant mentality as the source of the dysfunctionality in the social and political life in contemporary Poland is not new. The author imposes such a characteristic of peasant mentality quite arbitrarily, hazardously playing with the traditional stereotype of the peasant; that is, one who is historically stigmatized for being an obstacle to modernization; one who, though poorly equipped with a sense of civic duties, boldly demands the state’s assistance as he is unshakingly rooted in patronage relationships, and thus lacks a sense of individuality, indispensable in the democratic process.

Contemporary working rural communities have already been marginalized during the process of systemic change, and stigmatized for their alleged dependency on the state. Using that stigmatization as an explanatory device not only weakens Andrzej Leder’s argument, but also slightly surprises, as he comes from the circles of the Polish Young Left. While Leder pushes

forward the discussion about the role of the peasant legacy in Polish contemporary culture, he calls for a form of collective psychoanalysis that downplays the complexity of the historical context for the sake of essentialization. Historians may certainly appreciate the theoretical framework of his book, yet the Leder's approach to history, treated primarily as a reservoir of facts, his focus on the twentieth century, which blinkers him from seeing the problem from a larger historical perspective, as well as his lack of comparative perspective even in the context of Polish national history (imperial, post-imperial, and post-dependency), call for constructive criticism and advancing the debate.

I recalled Andrzej Leder's book because in my dissertation I am preoccupied with very similar questions, namely what is the relationship between the noble and folk cultures and between the distinctive social and cultural memories in a hegemonic Polish national identity, or in civic masculine identity, to be precise. Yet, I come to different conclusions than the author of *The Over-Dreamed Revolution*.

I go beyond the hatred-and-jealousy argument and demonstrate that rural communities never felt at home in that sphere of the symbolic space of Polish culture that dealt with the state and citizenship. While embracing Polish national identity—epitomized in the figure of the Pole-Catholic—peasants had no problem with God (yet reveal complicated, often passive-aggressive, and explicitly aggressive attitudes toward the Church hierarchy), yet they did have a big one with the Fatherland, particularly when it was represented as a state: its institutions and officials. The source of that peasant ambiguity toward the Polish national identity, as well as the national elite—regardless of its social origins—lays in the fact that the Polish master narrative, shaped in the nineteenth century, failed to fully and affirmatively incorporate peasants. It offered them neither a beautiful and moving story to cherish, nor a compelling hero to identify with.

Moreover, it failed to create such a story and a hero either through a compelling moral expiation and critique of serfdom—the ideological, social, and economic foundation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which is regarded as a progenitor of modern Poland, or just by inventing it. Instead, the narratives including peasants into an imaginary Polish nation came profoundly short in representing them as first-class citizens. This shortcoming is particularly visible in nineteenth-century representations of Polish national medieval and early modern history. On an analytical level my dissertation demonstrates a large array of ambiguities as well as its discursive sources and consequences in those parts of the national grand narrative that attempted to include Polish peasants into the nation as manly citizens. Thus, the peasants were included into an imaginary Polish nation but as second-class citizens. While the peasant origins of the contemporary Polish middle class and urban precariat is unquestionable, their shame of being peasants does not entirely come from self-hatred. It rather comes from the fact that the discursive field of Polish culture continues to replicate inequality in citizenship and use the legacy of serfdom as a handy stigmatizing device, mainly by affirming the legacy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, its noble democracy, and its noble citizenship. In this way, the Polish new elite—as the new nobility—is simply ashamed of its peasant progenitors, as it questions the legitimacy of their leadership and culturally privileged status. The uncritical use of the cultural legacy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the cultural and social hegemony of the nobility in various modern Polish national discourses posed rigid limits on the national imagination, reproducing the old stereotypes, reinforcing the use of culture as a means of social exclusion, and reinforcing the sense of primary and secondary class citizenship in contemporary Poland.

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ABSTRACT

“Faithful Highlanders”: Constructions of Peasant Masculinity and Citizenship
in Modern Polish Popular and Academic History (1840-1914)

by

Alicja W. Kusiak-Brownstein

Chair: Professor Brian Porter-Szűcs

My dissertation argues that in nineteenth-century Poland, the way male citizenship was imagined shifted from a class-based definition, in which Polishness was regarded as social capital, that is, as the property of being born a nobleman, to a democratized construction, where Polishness was regarded as symbolic capital, a quality which could be earned by participation in the national political struggle, and which was also embodied in folk/ethnic characteristics, with the important consequence that was the reconstruction of national memory.

The key category in my analysis is the concept of symbolic ennoblement. My main argument is that the reconstruction of Polish peasant masculinity around the turn of the nineteenth century was inspired by modern trans-Atlantic colonial, emancipation, nationalist and

empire-building processes and discourses, while at the same time this masculinity was also built on a transformed version of the early-modern meaning of Polish national identity, thus understood in both political and cultural terms. The final outcome presented a combination of both, but with an unresolved ambivalence in political and cultural perceptions of modern Polish civic peasant identities that has continued to the present.

The process of this reconstruction was twofold: it encompassed the construction of peasant historical national memory, but also the reconstruction of the elite's national memory with representations of peasants as respectable compatriots. I argue that the reconstruction of a peasant masculinity endowed with national identity was possible only if memories of the humiliations of serfdom were silenced, and the racial justifications for the feudal social hierarchy were disguised. Symbolic ennoblement, as a way to masculinize peasants as Polish citizens in such a reconstructed national memory, was itself a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The concept of inclusion into the Polish nation in terms of symbolic ennoblement resulted in marginalizing the folk culture within the national culture, diminished the role of peasantry as the actual core of modern Polish society, and transformed the nobility's culture into the national one. One of the consequences of symbolic ennoblement in turn of the century debates was an ideological discrimination in the quality of Polish national citizenship. That discrimination continues, not only in contemporary Polish society, where it shapes the political language with which Polish citizens relate to each other as members of the nation-state, but also in Poles' relationship with neighboring nations (Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians), which were regarded as originating in the peasantry.

I focus my analysis on a group of north Carpathian highlanders (*góral*), particularly on the highlanders of the Podhale and Tatra Mountains.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The original question that guided this project was: how were peasants turned into Poles under the absence of nation-state institutions of elementary education, an army, in a land where trains had different wheelbases? Building my question on the conclusions of Eugene Weber's seminal work, I kept in mind Geoff Eley's argument that the most successful national projects before World War I appeared in Ireland, Greece, and Poland.¹ In all three cases, the national was formed in underdeveloped rural societies, with significant diasporas. Yet, as nationalism studies have revealed, the formation of a strong national identity in rural societies is not uncommon. In Poland's geographic proximity we can point to Czech, Slovak, Ukrainian, and various Balkan national identities, as well as to Baltic (especially Lithuanian), and Scandinavian ones. In all those processes of national identity formation, peasant and/or folk culture was elevated to the position of the dominant element. Yet, this was not the case in Poland.

The folk culture never became the dominant element of Polish national culture; rather, it remained a native, almost "oriental" one. How did it happen that contemporary Polish national community, a community of peasant origins in its own imagination, continues to be a nation of the nobility? My reflections on the issue of the shame of being a peasant led me to rethink the

¹ Eugen J. Weber, Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

emphasis on the role of various forms of exclusion in studies of the process of nation formation and focus instead on the processes of including peasants in the national symbolic sphere, particularly in the visions of a common national history.

My dissertation is based on the assumption that in nineteenth-century Poland, the way male citizenship was imagined shifted from a class-based definition, in which Polishness was regarded as social capital, that is, as the property of being born a nobleman, to a democratized construction, where Polishness was regarded as symbolic capital, a quality which could be earned by participation in the national political struggle, and which was also embodied in folk/ethnic characteristics, with the important consequence that was the reconstruction of national memory. The process of imagining peasant citizenship, that is a self-aware membership in the national community, was complex and full of unresolved ambiguities. This dissertation stresses the importance of reimagining peasant masculinity as one of the crucial aspects in constructing modern peasant male citizenship in Polish stateless national community. During the course of case studies I demonstrate the limitations, which stem from a desire to inscribe serfs as a patriotic agents into medieval and early modern history, without fully addressing the social and political consequences of serfdom as well as the noble democracy for the peasant sense of cultural and political loyalties. Unlike other histories of constructing national representations, my dissertation underscores the failed attempts, as well as the successful ones. By showing a series of failed attempts, ambiguous outcomes, repressed historical contents, and rebellious political counter-narratives emerging from the personal problems of some author, I dwell upon the issue how the impossible became possible: how Polish modern national discourse managed to successfully convey a compelling story of peasant male patriots, while having so little to offer in the form of real histories. One answer to this this question is that prior to 1914, the figure of the

male peasant patriot in Polish national discourse was so vague, and in a sense so detached from actual Polish national history, that this vagueness and detachment actually allowed the formation of a compelling symbol that could barely find purchase in any actual historical account, and yet proved to be attractive for peasants (as Keely Stauter-Halsted demonstrated in her book), and acceptable for the Polish elite.

Except for one Polish national hero of peasant origins—Bartosz Głowacki, a scytheman who was ennobled and killed during the Kościuszko Uprising (1795), Polish history lacks peasant heroes known by name. In fact, Bartosz Głowacki is also not known by his serf name: Wojciech Bartus. When Tadeusz Kościuszko was ennobling Bartus on the Raławice battlefield, he changed his first name to the nobler sounding Bartosz, and made-up a new surname: Głowacki, indicating cleverness, which Bartus demonstrated on the battlefield.² The dominant role of Bartosz Głowacki, as an icon of peasant citizenship in national memory does not mean that history did not preserve the names and histories of other peasant soldiers. It means only that Głowacki fit the model of an ideal peasant citizen, partly because he fell before the collapse of the uprising and avoided the humiliating return to the estate of his lord as a serf. The national discourse began celebrating Bartosz Głowacki only in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly around the anniversary of the Kościuszko Uprising in 1895. The attitude of his contemporaries toward the first peasant citizen was such that the circumstances of his death and the place of his burial were neither documented nor remembered. Głowacki probably died from his wounds, probably in one of the military hospitals. He is believed to be buried together with

² Głowacki comes from the word *głowa*, meaning: a head, wits, cleverness.

other casualties of the Battle of Szczekociny in the one of the churches in Kielce, which later became the place of his commemoration.³

Bartosz Głowacki's iconic yet volatile presence in the national discourse symbolizes the larger problem with representations of peasants as citizens. Except for Głowacki, other figures of peasant citizens appear rather as a collective hero, as symbols, or as allegories. Their iconic status is usually reduced to the framework and the intended meanings—the rest, that is, the real historical context, is of less or no importance. Such a construction of national icons is not, however, unique to the Polish case, or to popular heroes. As my inquiry into the icon of the Mother-Pole (modern Polish national role model for upper class women) argues, the vaguer an icon is, the more powerful it may become as used in the symbolic language of art and populist politics. Thus, in this dissertation I analyze constructions of peasant male citizenship in a gender context, particularly vis-à-vis cultural representations of a noblewoman, who often assumed the shape of the Mother-Pole. In a sense, I offer here an investigation of an elusive process of mutual construction of two “frameworks,” ideological constructs, with very little historical content.

My analysis proved that a noblewoman served as the safest counterpart for reconstructing peasant masculinity and national citizenship, and it was precisely because of the nature of gender relationships. Various figures of noblewomen helped to erase the historical baggage and the notion of subjection within a national fantasy about a historic social solidarism. In the national imagination, the intersection between gender and class opened up spaces for reinventing lower-class masculinity, and inventing a modern sense of citizenship. This dissertation demonstrates that for historical reasons the configuration of a peasant man and a noblewoman, as a framework

³ Jan Lubicz-Pachoński, Wojciech Bartosz Głowacki: chłopski bohater spod Raławic i Szczekocin Warszawa (Kraków: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1987).

for reshaping peasant masculinity and citizenship, was much more promising than that of peasant men and noblemen, or peasant men and peasant women.

My dissertation examines various meanings of symbolic ennoblement (*symboliczne uszlachcenie*) in constructing peasant citizenship and masculinity. The notion of symbolic ennoblement was present in Polish discourse since the beginning of the nineteenth-century, though Polish political discourse did not pay much attention to it. Until to the abolition of serfdom in Polish lands (until 1864),⁴ nobility was a legal and social status; therefore the concept of symbolic ennoblement was something like a political oxymoron. Early Polish democratic philosophy wrestled with the idea of an ennoblement of the masses as a way of inclusion into the national community but abandoned this idea quickly, since universal ennoblement rendered nobility as a class meaningless. Moreover, the idea of a selective ennoblement went against the principles of democracy, and that further questioned the whole concept among democrats.

But as my study relates to the history of imagining the nation, I found this old concept useful in my analysis of the construction of peasant citizenship. I found that in the realm of national culture, where it emerged, it helped to reorganize semantic hierarchies between men of two major classes within a transforming national community. This concept had no social or legal consequences, but important discursive ones, as it became crucial in understanding the process of erasing the humiliating memories of serfdom, and assimilating peasants into an imaginary realm of the nation as respectable citizens. Though I do not use any rigid theoretical framework, my study evokes Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital to show how the concept of symbolic

⁴ The abolition of serfdom occurred in different times in different regions of Poland: in Prussia in 1821-23, in Austro-Hungary in 1846, and in Russian Poland in 1861-64.

ennoblement helped to re-imagine the male peasant.⁵ Thus, I treat the category of nobility or nobleness as an open one. I explore various ways of symbolic ennoblement unfolding between the notion of nobility, representing an estate, and nobleness, representing a certain set of moral and physical qualities. I therefore use the notion of symbolic ennoblement as an analytical category in all its vagueness and ambiguities. As symbolic ennoblement was applicable to men only, gender is an overarching category in my study. I analyze constructions of peasant civic characteristics in conjunction with the reconstruction of masculinity.

⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); --, Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

The Historiographical Context

Half a dozen studies on Polish modern nationalism in the nineteenth century circumscribed the immediate context of my dissertation. In his groundbreaking social history of the revolution of 1905 in the Russian partition of Poland, Robert Blobaum interwove his examination of the formation of the national identity into a larger canvas of the emergence of a mass political culture in Russian Poland at the beginning of the twentieth century. Though primarily concerned with urban dwellers, Blobaum also discussed the radicalization among peasants and the manorial workers in the countryside. As the waves of strikes and social unrest rippled through the imperial borders, reaching from Russian Poland to Austrian Galicia, those events were among the most dramatic in the history of Polish peasants in modern times.⁶ In *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland*, Brian Porter-Szűcs provides a magisterial analysis of the transformations of the political ideas of Polish nationalism, demonstrating that the language of hatred and discipline became crucial for national exclusion.⁷ In this book, as in his second, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland*, peasants figure only as a distant object of religious disciplines and national ideology.⁸ The role of anti-Semitism in the process of defining the Polish nation in modern times was further explored in *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*, a collection of essays edited by Robert Blobaum.⁹ Galician peasants became an explicit object of

⁶ Robert Blobaum, *Rewolucja: Russian Poland, 1904-1907* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

⁷ Brian A. Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁸ Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁹ Robert Blobaum, *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

study in Keely Stauter-Halsted's book *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of the Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914*. The author provided a compelling examination of the social, economic, and political circumstances of the rise of modern civic national identity among Catholic Polish-speaking peasants in Western Galicia.¹⁰ In her *Commemorations of The Shaping of Modern Poland*, Patrice Dabrowski turned to the field of cultural studies, examining the impact of national festivities in Galicia on national identity formation among urban and rural populations.¹¹

All those studies are rooted, though in different degrees, in modernist, constructivist, and post-colonial theories of national formation.¹² They assume, quite rightly, that as a mass identity, national identity is a profoundly modern phenomenon, which in the case of Poland was only able to emerge after the abolition of serfdom, the beginning of industrialization, and a significant increase in the education of the lower classes associated with the rise of what Benedict Anderson calls "print capitalism."¹³

Yet, the abolition of serfdom, the development of bi-lingual education of for the masses, the harnessing of free peasants to state institutions such as the army, and the transformation of the pre-partition manorial social and economic relationship, had different dynamics in different partitions of Poland. Though the choice of a region in these case studies may have been personal,

¹⁰ Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of the Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

¹¹ Patrice Dabrowski, *Commemorations of the Shaping of Modern Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

¹² Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflectons on the origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983)

it has an important effect—certain fragmentation. On the one hand, attempting to step away from earlier studies of the national history led scholars to frame their work in the context of imperial history, which fruitfully challenges the nation-state theoretical framework of analysis with its embedded nationalist teleology. On the other hand, a focus on a particular imperial territory—either Galicia or Russian Poland—naturally confined the analysis of the processes to regional areas. Unfortunately those studies did not, however, carry a comparative analysis within the framework of an empire. Thus, while breaking away from a national delineation in shaping a historical problem, they did not manage to go beyond national boundaries.

Studies by Elie Kedouri, who argued that the origins of modern nationalism should be traced to the Enlightenment, or those by Anthony D. Smith, who tried to negotiate a common ground between modernist and primordialist theories of nationalism, did not gain much traction among English-language historians of modern Polish nationalism.¹⁴ By contrast, theories tracing the origins of modern Polish national identity to the Enlightenment, or which regard Polishness as a primordial quality, have held sway in Polish historiography.¹⁵

¹⁴ Elie Kedouri, Nationalism in Asia and Africa (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1970); Anthony D. Smyth, Theories of Nationalism (London: Duckworth, 1971); --, The Ethnic Origins of Nations (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1986); --, National Identity (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); --, Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism (London: Routledge, 1998); --, Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach (London: Routledge, 2009).

¹⁵ Andrzej Walicki, --, Naród, nacjonalizm, patriotyzm (Kraków: Universitas, 2004); Jerzy Jedlicki, A Suburb of Europe: Nineteenth-century Polish Approaches to Western Civilization (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999); Tomasz Kitzwalter, O nowoczesności narodu: Przypadek Polski (Warszawa: Semper, 1999); Andrzej Walicki, The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Polish Nationhood: Polish Political Thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kościuszko (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989); --, The Three Traditions in Polish Patriotism and Their Contemporary Relevance (Bloomington: The Polish Studies Center, 1988); --, Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); Tadeusz Łepkowski, Polska – narodziny nowoczesnego narodu, 1764-1870 (Warszawa: PWN, 1967); Marcei Handelsman, Rozwój narodowości nowoczesnej (Warszawa: PIW, 1973).

This preference for primordial nation-state theoretical frameworks in local historiography comes from the conscious, ideological choice (and convictions) to adhere to the national master narrative. In some instances such a choice comes from a simple, unreflective approach to theory. In many others, however, that choice is very mindful and has nothing do with complying with a certain ideology, with political conformism, or with intellectual laziness. It is rather an intellectual outcome aiming to overcome one of the fundamental contradictions in Polish history: the conflicted concepts of liberty, political freedom, democracy, and a nation. The paradox of Polish history is that modern Poles nearly always regarded their country and their would-be or existing state as a legitimate offspring of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and consequently tended to perceive themselves as cultural and political heirs of the noble nation.

Polish national discourse during the partitions (1795-1918) thus rarely challenged those convictions, struggling to bind in sacred wedlock an ill-matched couple: the haughty nobility and their cultural successors, and distrustful and self-conscious ex-serfs and their cultural offspring. Brian Porter-Szűcs is certainly right when he argues that the development of the modern conception of the nation was “hotly contested and its victory was by no means assured.” Yet, from the perspective of nineteenth-century Polish popular culture, there was a general agreement that Poland was delineated by the borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the height of its glory. But the ideological legacy of the Commonwealth as a common good, as well as its history, remains very problematic. Thus, modern historians of culture (in the widest sense of this term), guided by their source materials, naturally tend to analyze the meandering ways in which Poles tried to decide who belongs to the nation as much as who does not. While it is much easier to study the processes of social exclusion, delineating a national community, my task in

this study is to demonstrate that it was equally hard to erase social prejudices and learn to respect and welcome indispensable newcomers to the nation—even in cultural representations.

As my readers will see in my dissertation, I never intellectually left Poland. That professional decision reflected in my research, as well as in the narrative of this final draft. Since my arrival in the U.S. as a graduate student, I have stayed connected with the intellectual community of my origins, I have expanded it, and I systematically contribute to it. It is hard for me to overestimate how much my Polish scholarly community contributed back to my own work. Since it was my intention to write this dissertation so that it would be comprehensible and engaging for both local and international readers. Regardless of whether my position is called “transnational” or that of an “intercultural mediator,” I am most concerned with the appropriate identification of my professional standpoint. I am therefore open to a critique related to transnational scholarship on the region I am working on and still have roots in.¹⁶

As I believe that a more inclusive approach to local scholarship might be beneficial for the English-speaking scholarship, I drew on Polish scholarship. By doing so, I not only enrich my own work, but also acknowledge the importance of the vast and rich body of scholarship in history, ethnography, ethnology, and literary studies published “over there,” engaging in a dialogue, addressing their conclusions within a theoretical framework of my own work. For instance, even if in some studies gender is not strongly pronounced as an analytical category, yet gender relationships appear as a part of the researched problem, I treat it as a text/statement related to studies on gender.

Though my dissertation has “Poland” in its title, it is not a national history in the traditional sense. National history, particularly in the case of Central and Eastern Europe, slowly

¹⁶ Ewa Domańska, “Jakiej metodologii potrzebuje współczesna humanistyka?,” *Teksty Drugie* 1/2 (2010); Michał Buchowski, *Etnologia polska: Historie i powinowactwa* (Poznań: Wyd. Nauka i Innowacje, 2012).

becomes obsolete, especially in scholarship that does not focus strictly on a nation-state, or on national institutions and politics. My dissertation joins this body of scholarship, especially those on nineteenth-century Galicia that stresses the trans-national and trans-cultural character of identity formation, multiplicity, permeability, fragmentation, and contingency of cultural identities.¹⁷ It also challenges the lingering area studies paradigms that confine studies of East European cultures to their region. As Larry Wolff and Maria Todorova compellingly demonstrated, Eastern Europe was constructed as the European periphery long before the Iron Curtain fell. This dissertation hopes to demonstrate that it is also possible to tell the history of Central and Eastern parts of Europe as an integral part of the whole continent, by attentiveness to the flow of cultural tropes. Such a perspective of seeing Poland as part of Europe was always

¹⁷ Larry Wolff, The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012); Nathaniel D. Wood, Becoming Metropolitan: Urban Selfhood and the Making of Modern Cracow (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010); Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe, ed. by Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009); Cynthia Paces, Prague Panoramas: National Memory and sacred Space in the Twentieth Century (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009); James E. Bjork, Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008); Pieter M. Judson, Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture, ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jeremy King, Budweisers Into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present, ed. by Maria Bucur-Deckard and Nancy M. Wingfield (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001); Scott Spector, Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin-de-Siècle (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Mariia Todorova, Imagining the Balkans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Pieter M. Judson, Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Pieter M. Judson, Inventing Germanness: Class, Ethnicity, and Colonial Fantasy at the Margins of the Habsburg Monarchy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1993); William W. Hagen, Germans, Poles, and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772-1914 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

present in Polish historiography, which only recently learned that it actually had to argue being a part of Europe.

Thus, my work demonstrates how much the construction of peasant national identity depended on European cultural texts, images, and institutions, such as the medieval English tradition, Scottish history, German education system, ancient Classic texts, Swiss and Bavarian tourism, Slovak folk-tales, Bohemian religious history, etc. Moreover, by focusing on the phenomenon of Polish-language culture in the long nineteenth century, I argue how transnational it was, as it freely traveled across the borders of three continental empires, and while their authors not only simultaneously lived in several different cultures, but they also regarded themselves as Poles, subjects of (often) many empires, and most of all – as Europeans. The biographies of the authors I discuss in my study illuminate this point. The complex state, national, and esthetic allegiances of the authors of the cultural texts transpire throughout their works, and ultimately through their imagining Polish peasants as Polish citizens.

As a consequence, I look at the construction of national identity in cultural texts as a mosaic: a particular one is always original, distinctive in composition, but the pieces of which it is made appear in all the other ones. I am not interested in re-establishing the hierarchies between an original and a copy, in the construction of the national identity, but in the beauty of the composition, which made the national history compelling and the national identity worth possessing.

As a case study, this dissertation focuses on representations of highlanders in representations of Polish history, not on representations of contemporary highlanders or the highlands, in Polish culture during the partitions. Because of that, the scholarship dedicated to

the exploration of the modern “discovery” of the highland area and its people for tourist or cultural purposes serves me as a secondary historiographic context.

Primary Source Basis, Methodology, and Organization

Though I recognize the value of imitating a good scholarly work, my dissertation is not modeled after any other dissertation, or book, though it was inspired by various intellectual history and cultural studies. During my research I did not limit my primary sources to any particular type of materials. Instead, I included a variety of textual and visual materials, which allowed me to explore my research questions. Thus, my dissertation drew on an archive of nineteenth-century print materials, including popular and academic historiography, novels, poems, dramas, ethnographic accounts, descriptions of archaeological sites, tourist guides, as well as material objects such as paintings, frescos, photographs, geographic and landscape formations, and local flora.

Such a wide source base, selected on purpose, gave me a unique chance to use this dissertation as a laboratory in which I tested my analytical skills. Methodologically, my work is eclectic. I use various methods in this study, according to the type of the material I am analyzing and the question that I was asking. I liberally applied various theoretical approaches: literary, linguistic, discourse, semiotic, and biographical. Those approaches led me to one purpose: to demonstrate through a variety of historical sources the configurations and limitations of the concept of symbolic ennoblement in constructing male peasant citizenship in representations of the Polish nation.

I propose a particular approach to chronology in which rather than focusing on a narrowly defined period, I instead write about several periods at the same time. My primary analysis revealed that prior to the first partition of Poland (1772), there were two historical wars in which peasants, and particularly the highlanders, appeared as militant agents: the Mongol

invasions of the thirteenth century and the Swedish-Polish War of the seventeenth century. Consequently, those two wars—one medieval, the other early modern—received special attention in my dissertation, not only as an object of nineteenth-century representations, but also as history on its own terms. Combining nineteenth century with medieval and early modern histories, according to their states of the fields in the nineteenth-century and today's allowed me to show how history, in its various cultural representations, was manipulated, reinvented, and crafted in its cultural representations.

Peasants as National Icons

When beginning my work, I considered structuring my dissertation around certain iconic representations of peasant citizenship embodied in the figure of the highlander. In Polish Studies, Franciszek Ziejka centered on icons in his work on representations of peasants in Polish culture.¹⁸ In the field of Russian history, Cathy A. Frierson used the same composition of her narrative in *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia*.¹⁹ In Ziejka's as well as Frierson's, the dynamic character of their analyses comes mostly from their discussion of the historical evolution of a particular icon. Ziejka, for instance, inscribed the peasant icons into the theory of national awakening, and into a chronology of literary studies and history of Polish national politics, arguing for a steady rise of appreciation of peasants as citizens by the nation and in the nation. Both those works show that focusing on the icons gives a study of cultural representations a static character, and poses the great risk of an argument being trapped in the internal logic of a particular cultural representation, and as a result, in crippling an icon rather than problematizing it. Moreover, such an approach limits the possibilities of exploring the processes of production and reproduction of the inner ambiguities in cultural representations of peasants as citizens, which is one of the goals of my dissertation. So, instead of delivering a pageant of peasant national heroes, I looked for a way to demonstrate how an elusive cluster of protean figures of peasants cast in roles embodying various aspects of

¹⁸ Franciszek Ziejka, *Złota legenda chłopów polskich* (Warszawa: PIW, 1984); --, *W kręgu mitów polskich* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1977).

¹⁹ Cathy A. Frierson, *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

citizenship triggers uncertainty, confusion, and anxiety; how it convinces yet leaves an unsettling sense of a doubt, a conviction, which I brought away from my research in primary sources.

In Polish history, the icons of the peasant-citizen emerge from the history of military formations, and therefore are deeply embedded into the history of the national struggles. The figures of peasant citizen-soldiers that dominate the national imagination are the scytheman from the Kościuszko Uprising (1794), and the legionnaire from the Polish Legion organized by General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski in Italy, which subsidized the French republican and Napoleonic armies in the period of 1797-1807. Those two representations are, however, not equal in the national memory: the scytheman enjoys pride of place over the peasant legionnaire. The reasons for this inequality are ideological.

Polish national discourse tied both of those wartime icons through twisted knots to the ideology of the Enlightenment, universal male suffrage, and the concept of citizen-soldiers, while marginalizing the role of social revolution, overthrowing feudalism, and Poles' taking part in foreign imperial projects (France). Crafting the history of peasant soldiers in Polish military units during the agony of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the French Revolution and Napoleon's Empire, proved to be politically and ideologically sensitive. Those knots were at times hard to pass through for the contributors as well as followers of an ideology of national unity rooted in the principle of social solidarism, as the ideas of the Enlightenment are generally hard to straightforwardly connect with an ideology of noble republicanism rooted in serfdom. The imperial aspect was also tricky, since there were three partitioning empires that had abolished serfdom and paved the way for their citizenship in the future Polish nation.

It was much easier to cast Kościuszko's scythemen in the role of patriotic defenders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and convince an educated audience to accept such an

interpretation of history. In spite of Tadeusz Kościuszko's hopes and the attempts of a handful of Polish radicals, the idea of freeing peasants who voluntarily enlisted in the Polish army during the war against Russia was terrifying for the nobility. The nobility massively boycotted the Kościuszko government's demands to organize and arm manorial peasants units before sending them to military posts in the hope that they would conduct partisan warfare against Russia. Ultimately, the nobility refused to organize a peasant militia, a decision that contributed a much to the fall of the uprising. It proved that the civic nation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was more concerned with protecting the noble's economic and social status quo, than with protecting what was left out of the state's independence. Although nineteenth-century Polish intellectuals were well aware of this, it was relatively easy to conceal by claims of the overwhelming power of the Russian army, internal problems with military and economic supplies, or the bad luck of military leaders.

It was much harder to disguise the role of anti-feudal Enlightenment ideology in the case of Dąbrowski's legionnaires. Thus, the national discourse highlighted some facts from their history, such as poignant scenes of soldiers' courage and ultimate self-sacrifice, their loyalty to France and Napoleon as allies and guarantors of the reconstruction of Polish statehood, and the martyrology of Polish soldiers—victims of the political treacherousness of France and unwilling instruments of the French imperial project. The radical democratic ideology, which provided a basis for the Polish Legion, was presented rather as an effect of social solidarism forged between the Polish nobility and the peasants, bonded together by the miseries of serving as a mercenaries to a foreign nation-state while being deprived of their own. Ironically, Józef Wybicki's song of

the Dąbrowski Legions, known as *Dąbrowski's Mazurka* (1797), acquired a status of the national anthem during the nineteenth century.²⁰

So, instead of focusing on icons related to military formations, I followed my primary sources, which in the first half of the nineteenth century searched for a model of the peasant citizen among Ukrainian Cossacks. I decided, however, to focus on a very distinctive cultural peasant group, with a unique history and identity: the highlanders of the Podhale.

²⁰ The history of editing the actual Wybicki's text between 1797 and 1918 (when the song was officially recognized as the Polish national anthem), by eliminating the stanzas too closely related to ideas of peasant radicalism is an interesting topic of itself, but lies beyond the limits of this dissertation.

Polish Highlanders

As in the case of Ukrainian Cossacks, the cultural distinctiveness and history of the Podhale highlanders was shaped by their environment. My dissertation focuses on a geographic region on the northwestern side of the Carpathian Mountains.

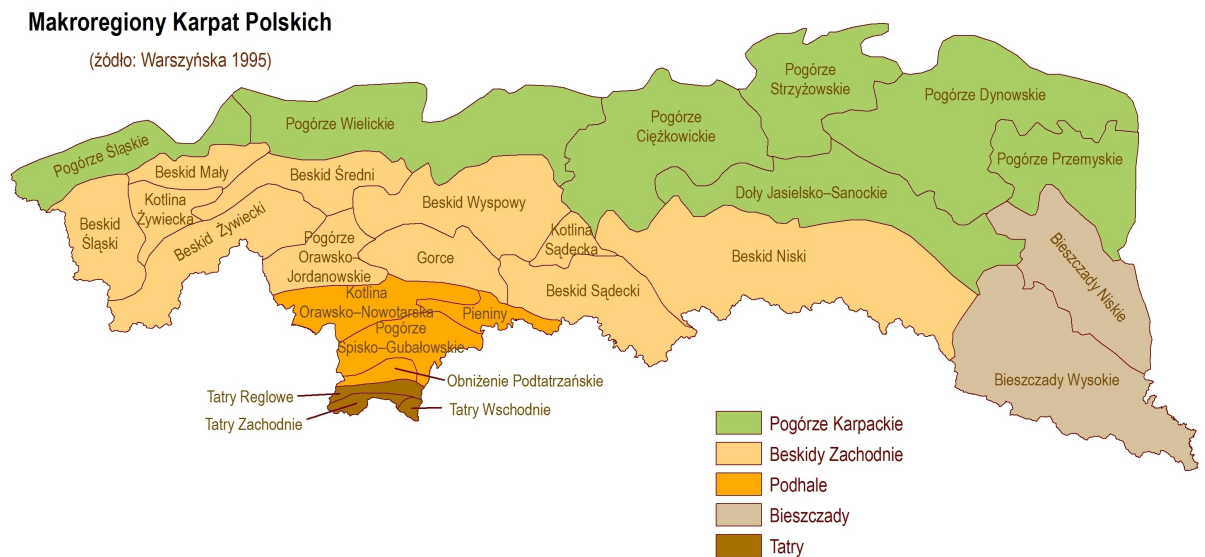


Figure 1. Regions in Polish Carpathian Mountains: Tatra, Orawa, Spisz, Gorce, Pieniny, Podhale (Kotlina Orawsko-Nowotarska), Beskids, Bieszczady, Pogórze

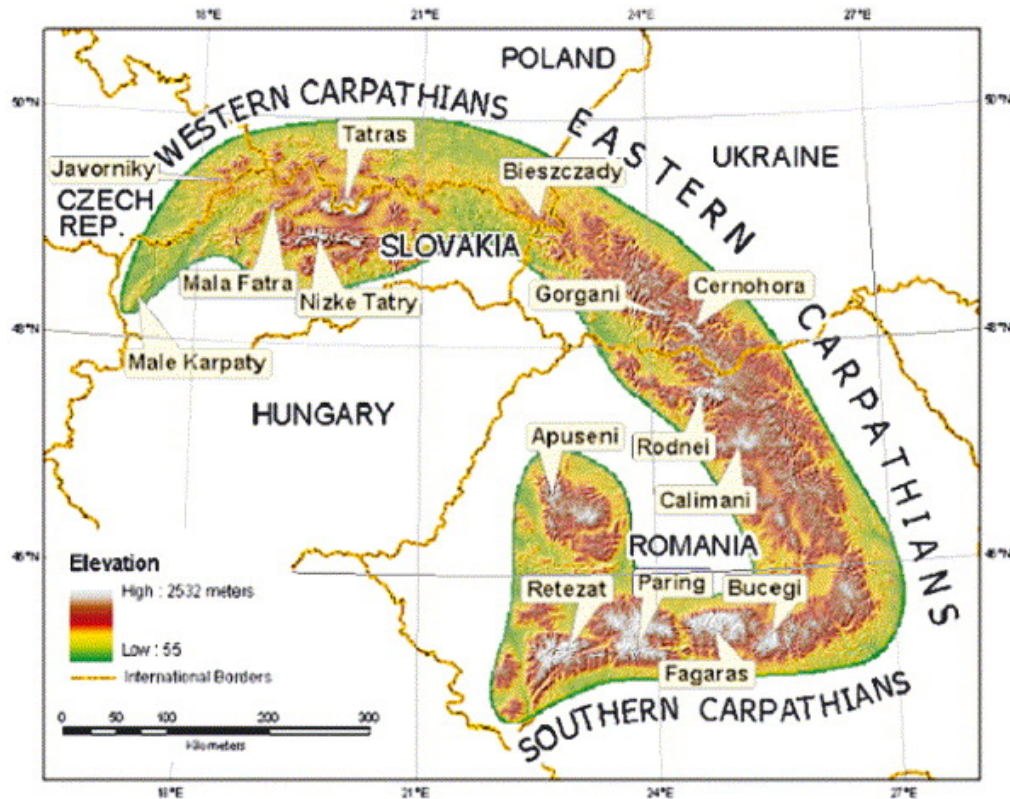


Figure 2. The Carpathian Mountain

This area is delineated by the historical regions of Silesia, Lesser Poland, Podolia, Carpathian Ruthenia, Slovakia (historically known as Upper Hungary), and Moravia. The area is cut by manifold chains of mountains and hills, including the Tatra, the Pieniny, the Gorce, various chains of the Beskidy and the Bieszczady mountains, and the Podhale: a plain at the foothills of the Tatra. To the north, the mountain region reaches up to Cracow, Tarnów, and Przemyśl. It overlaps with the cultural and administration region of Lesser Poland. The mountain area was taken over by the Austrian empire in 1769-70, and until 1918 belonged to western Galicia.

In the Middle Ages the rocky peaks of the Tatra created a natural border between the Kingdom of Poland (or Duchy of Cracow) and the Kingdom of Hungary (Upper Hungary as

Slovakia was known at that time). In the nineteenth century, the Tatra became a borderland between two Austrian Crown Lands: Hungary and Galicia. Up to the mid-nineteenth century, the existence of a border was of little or no consequence for highlanders. After the abolishment of the serfdom in the region in 1846, however, the transformed social relationships established by the new property rights and property borders, gained great significance in the lives of the common folk. The rise of the national movement in Slovakia, and attempts to include Galician peasants into the Polish national project since the middle of the nineteenth-century, had profound consequences for transforming a sense of the national identity in the region—for the trans-imperial national elites much greater than for the highlanders themselves. The border became a highly contested object of identity formation for the Tatra highlanders.

The nineteenth-century process of ethnographic classification of the highlanders was largely carried out within the framework of the national project.²¹ The populations living on northern and southern sides of the Tatra even now can comprehend each other better than Poles from the lowlands can comprehend the highlander dialect. Apart from a close resemblance to the Slovak language, the dialect from the mountains, as proved by late nineteenth-century written texts,²² and my contemporary first-hand knowledge of it, included a significant number of words derived from Hungarian, German, Ukrainian, Yiddish, and Romanian, and have a very

²¹ Jarosław Majcher, Tatry: Śladami pierwszych fotografów i turystów (Opole: MS, 2014); O ojcach założycielach i pierwszych budowniczych Muzeum Tatrzańskiego, ed. by Mieczysław Rokosz (Zakopane: Tatrzański Park Narodowy, 2012).

²² Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, Na Skalnym Podhalu (Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1903-1910). This collection of 40 novels was then republished in Cracow in 1915. Przerwa-Tetmajer's dilogy *The Legend of the Tatra* was first published in Warsaw in 1912, and then republished both in Russian Poland and in Galicia. Władysław Orkan, Komornicy (Lwów: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze, 1900); --, W Roztokach (Lwów: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze, 1903); --, Pomór (Kraków-Warszawa: S.A. Krzyżanowski and Wende and S-Ka, 1910); --, Drzewiej (Kraków: Spółka Nakładowa "Książka": 1912).

distinctive accent, derived from Hungarian via Slovak. In the nineteenth-century various populations inhabiting the mountains spoke all the aforementioned languages (including Czech and French). Yet, as the dialect also preserved some of the medieval and early modern vocabulary and archaic grammar forms from medieval Polish, nineteenth-century ethnographers and artists claimed the highland dialect to be the purest relic of the old Polish language. The Nobel Laureate Henryk Sienkiewicz reified that myth by using the Tatra dialect, together with some relics of old Polish, in inventing the medieval Polish language for his best-selling historical novel *The Teutonic Order* (1900). Sienkiewicz's take on the highland culture helped to construct it as the reserve of an ancient, "pristine," Polish folk culture.

Though in Polish history and culture the Carpathians, and particularly the Tatra, are often represented as the ultimate national borderland, it is only from the vintage point of the history of the Polish nation-state.²³ In contrast to modern national perception, the Carpathian trails historically served as wide-open gates for cultural exchange. In the former lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the mountain area was second only to Ukraine, but could easily compete with the cultural openness of Silesia. The mountain area was a melting pot, or rather mixing bowl, of different cultures. Both the habitat and the habitus account for the richness of the highlander peasant culture, for its distinctiveness compared with other regions of ethnic Poland (the area covering the medieval Kingdom of Poland), and ultimately for its appeal to nineteenth-century national intellectuals, and the Polish middle-class.

Though the Carpathian highlanders comprise one of the most distinctive and diverse folk groups among Polish peasants, traditional ethnography went to great lengths in distinguishing between various populations of the local peasants. The process of ethnographic classification

²³ Patrice Dabrowski, *ibidem*.

began in the first half of the nineteenth century and concluded after World War II, resulting in the reification of multiple groups of highlanders. Over time, the local populations embraced those classifications, which were encouraged by tourism and state-sponsored folk and performing arts, and reinforced by the education system. The process of the commodification of highlander culture in their distinctive regional locales was accompanied by the parallel processes of modernization, including mass migrations, and slow, limited progress in education, literacy, and travel. The processes of modernization, initiated by the abolishment of serfdom and changes in economic relationships, rapidly altered “the old ways” in the lives of highland peasants, much to the regret of ethnographers, artists, and tourists. Tourism-based cultural exchange had also played a very important, yet often underestimated role in the modernization of the region, particularly the resort areas. Yet, the cultural distinctiveness of the highlander culture survived, mainly in local dialects, still-living customs, in forms of local production and ways of home economy, and in occupations related to commodity production and performing arts targeting (mainly) tourists.

The geographic location of the highlanders on the Carpathian trails allowed them much greater mobility than the peasants from the lowlands, where the means of mobility control were much more effective than in the mountains. The mobility of men was embedded in the traditional forms of regional economy, especially pasturing. Moreover, as Galicia suffered great underdevelopment during the nineteenth century, the great numbers of landless peasants as well as the inhabitants of the small farms seasonally migrated in search of work. During the nineteenth-century, overpopulated Galicia, including the mountains, became a great source of recruits for the imperial army.

The arable, though for the most part infertile, land was cultivated on the north side of the Tatra, the mountain meadows provided grazing areas for sheep, cattle, and goats, and the forests were exploited for the wood, mushrooms, berries, and hunting, which was illegal for peasants. According to the oldest historical accounts, the northern Carpathian territories were already inhabited in the twelfth century. The acts of the legal establishment (*lokacja*) of villages prove not only a new settlement but also confirm the existence of the older. Archeological excavations demonstrate that this area was inhabited even much earlier. The structure of arable land suggests, however, the exploitation of the forest, hunting, gathering, and fishing. Pasturing came to the northern Carpathians in the late Middle Ages from its southern site, probably from Red Ruthenia or Transylvania, though linguistically it is related with Wallachia, the region located in contemporary southern Romania, neighboring with Serbia and Bulgaria.

The first historically known catastrophic events, which changed the structure of the local population, were the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century. The forays depopulated some areas in the mountains. Subsequently, during the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, the rulers of the Duchy of Cracow repopulated this area with “German colonists”. The sources do not clearly determine the ethnic origins of those colonists, but they came from Saxony, Silesia, and from Greater Poland. They brought to the region new customs, new ways of domestic economy, agriculture and husbandry. By the end of the seventeenth century they merged linguistically and religiously with the rest of the population. Simultaneously, the Polish-speaking population from the north was also settling in the area.

The Ukrainian-speaking Greek-Catholic groups of the Łemkos and the Huculs inhabited the eastern parts of the region, particularly the eastern Beskidy chains and the Bieszczady

Mountains.²⁴ The Wallachians (or Transylvanians) had their villages founded on a particular law and maintained distinctions in customs, clothing, and home economy (the Ochotnica area in Gorce). The Spisz, the Orawa, and the Pieniny Mountains were partly inhabited by Slovak-speaking and German-speaking Protestant populations. Various Protestant churches marked their cultural presence in the historical and cultural landscape of the region. Jews living in towns and villages had multiple ties with local peasant populations.

The local landlords in early modern times, and during the nineteenth century, led cosmopolitan lives and households, and it was not rare for Polish landed nobility from the German and Russian partitions to have a summer home in the mountain resorts. The imperial officers stationed in highland towns in various posts of administration, juridical courts, schools, army, police, churches etc., as well as merchants and free professionals recruited from all the lands of the Habsburg empire, added to the local cultural *mélange*. The waves of international tourists, mainly Polish from the German and Russian partitions, added to this conglomerate.

In early modern times, with the exception of the Swedish invasion, the mountains were one of the areas directly impacted by the wars. For this reason they provided a refuge for people from neighboring, war-torn Bohemia, Transylvania, Hungary, Ukraine, and Poland. As the mountain region did not offer great economic opportunities, particularly not in agriculture, it

²⁴ I am not, however, interested in this dissertation in constructing the national identity among Greek-Catholic, Ukrainian speaking populations of the highlanders. See: [Galicia: A Multicultural Land](#), ed. by Chris Hann and Paul R. Magocsi (Toronto-Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2005); [Encyclopedia of Rusyn Histry and Culture](#), ed. by Paul R. Magocsi and Ivan Pop (Toronto-Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Paul R. Magocsi, [The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism: Galicia as Ukraine's Piedmont](#) (Toronto-Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2002); --, [Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End](#) (Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, 1999); --, [The Rusyns of Slovakia: An Historical Survey](#) (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1993); --, [The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus., 1848-1948](#) (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978).

usually was a temporary safe haven. Yet, it had been a more permanent outpost for all sorts of vagabonds and outlaws, much like the “wild fields” of Ukraine.

The outlaws made their living in the area by robbing the merchants crossing the mountain passages between Hungary and Poland, either through the Orawa (west of the Tatra) or through the Spisz (east of Tatra). Those passages became more traveled, as more comfortable land passages connecting the Balkans and the Levant with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Baltic countries became unsafe during the wars involving Hungary, the Commonwealth, Cossacks, the Ottoman Empire, and the Crimean Khanate. As the hardly accessible Tatra Mountains are located between the Orawa and Spisz regions, they made an excellent natural shelter for the outlaws, who could control the passages both in both regions, robbing by the wayside local rich peasants, petit merchants, and landlords who were not able to afford sufficient manorial troops.

Armed robbery was not a permanent but seasonal and age-determined occupation. The outlaws recruited from fugitive peasants, criminals (often noblemen), army deserters, and vagabonds, but for the most parts from desperate or adrenaline-driven peasants. As the shepherds stood on the bottom of the highly divided village structure, together with the youngest sons or male offspring of the poorest families, it was this group that provided most of the outlaws. Moreover, as the northern Carpathians were generally poorer than the southern, for multiple reasons, including the worse vegetation for the less fertile soils and the harsher climate (colder temperatures and frequent devastating cyclonic windstorms), the robbers tended to recruit from the Polish side rather than Slovak. Robbery was not limited to attacking the merchants, who were often protected by the local armed forces, but targeted other rich peasants from the area. The Podhale and Tatra highlanders nursed their hatred particularly toward the Oravians, as the latter

became a frequent target of their attacks. In the late nineteenth-century this regional animosity served as a surrogate for constructing a sense of national difference, as the Tatra and Podhale highlanders became identified as Polish, and the Oravians as Hungarians and Slovak.

Robbery, mostly stealing sheep and cattle, and occasionally plundering the homesteads, was generally an occupation for young men, in some populations serving as a ritual of passage into adulthood. If a highlander's career as a robber was successful, he capitalized on his past (and legend) to gain respect in his community. But as the violent assaults often targeted the neighboring communities or even its own, the outlaw also risked making life-long enemies and endangering his family into generations-lasting local vendettas. This culture of the outlaws in the mountains was very distinctive in comparison to peasant life-styles in the rest of Polish lands. It captivated the imagination of Polish artists and tourists, and resulted in the mythology of the brave and honest Tatra outlaws.

Tatra folk culture was rich in stories about Juraj Janosik, the most famous outlaw of the region. The highlander legends about the local hero inspired Polish writers and artists. Both in legends and in the folk-inspired Polish literary tradition Janosik appears as a superhero and the ultimate model of highlander masculinity. He was represented as an exceptionally strong, brave, smart, just, and sexually irresistible champion of the poor and serfs, and a merciless persecutor of cruel and greedy local landlords. Janosik appears in folk tales, as well as in songs, toponyms, and visual arts, particularly in the glass paintings. Janosik and other outlaws provided a surrogate for the fantasy about the robust, belligerent, witty, and religious Polish peasant, which became an indispensable element in the national eugenic fantasy about the strong, militant, yet loyal and moral Polish peasant, a fantasy which after 1918 General Andrzej Galica turned into a reality in form of the Podhale Rifles units in the Polish Army.

In this region, the economic and social relationships between peasants and the nobility, the state, and Church institutions were very complex.²⁵ In medieval times, villages were granted various types of laws, including German law, Polish law, and later—the Wallachian law. All those laws regulated the communal self-government of the villages, as well as defined the relationships between a village founder—usually a local duke or some Church institution—and the peasant community in slightly different way. But historically there were also other forms of settling peasants, not only by encouraging colonization. At first, the colonists were not serfs but free peasants. They had their financial obligations to a landlord but enjoyed less social control. They could travel freely, resettle their children, and men had unquestioned patriarchal power over their families. But that changed together with the property laws and the estate structure under the Commonwealth. As the royals let more of their land as endowments or leases to the nobility, they lost the control over the peasants. The once free peasants then found themselves an addition to land that had changed ownership. The development of the noble democracy during the early modern period secured the nobility's immunity of their property rights and their absolute power over their estates. Thus, when a new owner refused to honor past agreements with villagers, peasants became powerless, as there was no other authority to whom they could appeal. Serfdom became a common social and economic relationship in the Commonwealth.

Through the Middle Ages and the early modern period, one alternative way to bring in colonists was to settle the male war captives in villages. Initially the status of the war prisoners was that of slaves. In the early modern period, the status of slave applied, theoretically, only to “the unfaithful”—Muslims and the Orthodox—as the Catholic Church, at least nominally, condemned the practice of enslaving other Catholics. Some of the war slaves were kept at courts

²⁵ Kazimierz Tymieniecki, Historia chłopów polskich (Warszawa: PWN, 1965-69).

as servants, particularly in magnate residences, but also at middle nobility manor houses. While maintaining a large group of servants was a symbol of social status, it was also expensive. For those reasons, the middle nobility, or even the royal landlords, preferred turning their slaves into serfs by giving them homesteads, tools, livestock, and arranged for their marriages in local serf families.

The echoes of settling war slaves, in this case the Mongols, also called the Tatars, survived in some local oral traditions in the region, particularly in the Tatra. Nineteenth-century ethnographers and mountain explorers picked up local legends about the Tatar settlers, connected them with local family names, toponyms and, most of all, with the studies of the physiognomy of the highlanders, particularly males, to argue that the population of their contemporary highlanders from the Tatra has the hereditary features of the medieval Asian invaders, including their bravery and ferocity. This instance of the racialization of the Tatra peasants is particularly interesting, if juxtaposed with simultaneous efforts at constructing the highlander culture, particularly the dialect, as a living relic of medieval Polish culture. In one of Chapter Two, I explore the Mongolian/Tatar legends and their impact on the construction of peasant masculinity.

Like other serfs, war slaves did not own their farms, and they were obliged to give a share of their produce, or money (rarely) in the form of a *corvée* to the manor house.²⁶ The *corvée* included also free labor, which a serf was obliged to provide regularly as well as on demand to his lord. The manorial relationships regulated control over the mobility of peasants. The serfs could not leave their farms without consent of the landlord. That included marriage, as each and every marriage needed the landlord's consent. Serfs living in villages belonging to

²⁶ Stefan Inglot, Historia chłopów polskich (Warszawa: LSW, 1970-1980); Włodzimierz Dworzaczek, “Dobrowolne” poddaństwo chłopów (Warszawa: LSW, 1952); Jan Rutkowski, Poddaństwo włościan w XVIII wieku w Polsce i niektórych innych krajach Europy (Poznań: Drukarnia Zjednoczenia Młodzieży, 1921).

different owners needed not only to obtain the landlord's permission to marry, but also to pay a fee for a spouse, usually a wife, as compensation to the manor house for the loss of a worker. That practice was common even in the nineteenth century, and for centuries encouraged the endogamy between serfs inhabiting the estates owned by one landlord. Even if from a legal standpoint serfdom was not slavery, in practice the conditions were very close to it.

In the mountain regions, the landlords included the nobility, royals, and Church institutions. The last case appears in my Chapter Two exploring the legends on Saint Kinga, Duchess of Cracow, and the "Poor Clare's estate" which she founded, and which survived five hundred years. The status of Poor Clare serfs was different from that of an ordinary nobleman, as they were owned by a women's religious convent, an important religious, economic, political, and cultural institution in the region, dedicated to nourishing the cult of a royal female saint (first as a state, then as local one), as well as of a female patron of the poor.

Though the majority of peasants in the mountain areas were manorial serfs, some villagers in the Podhale and especially in the Tatra Mountains maintained the status of a royal peasant.²⁷ It was a very particular group. Up to the seventeenth-century, those peasants belonged to the Polish kings, inhabiting scraps of local royal estates. In consequence, it was a king who was the highest authority regulating the relationships within the village as well as between his villages and the external world. All the legal disputes involving royal peasants fell under royal jurisdiction. Royal peasants usually enjoyed greater freedom, a lighter corvée, and royal protection in conflicts with local landlords. Moreover, as the only group of peasants in the Commonwealth, royal peasants were subjected to military service in the royal army, as so-called

²⁷ Jerzy Luciński, Rozwój królewskiej w Koronie od schyłku XIV wieku do XVII wieku (Poznań: PTPN, 1970).

peasant infantry (*piechota wybraniecka*). During peacetime, they had the right to carry weapons, which was prohibited to other serfs.

As a consequence, royal peasants developed a very particular relationship to the state and their king compared to ordinary serfs, for whom the king was a mythical persona with the aura of a supernatural being but with no practical importance for peasant lives. Socially and economically, royal peasants resembled very much the low rank petit-nobility, which owned small plots of land, lived in a village-commune with other members of the family (*szlachta zagrodowa*), and did not differ in their life-style from the rich peasants. The major difference between the free peasants and the petit-nobility was the latter's self-awareness of being the nobility, their personal freedom and the right to participate in governmental institutions (often only nominal), the memories of family history, and often confirmed by ennobling documents. For those reasons, the royal peasants were the only peasant group that could be regarded as a surrogate for peasant-citizens. Some writers, artists, and historians during the nineteenth century exploited that cultural and social proximity between royal peasants and the petit nobility in their attempts to show peasants as early modern nobility. I explore this subject in Chapters Four.

The economic transformation during feudalism in Poland has been for decades a subject of extensive historical research. Up to the end of the sixteenth century, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was prospering thanks to good conditions for selling grain, agricultural produce, and wood to west European countries. As the wealth of nobility grew in the sixteenth century, so did that of the peasants. Peasants of that time appear in the primary sources much wealthier than their offspring in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The number of free peasants in the country was still large and the nobility kept the *corvée* for serfs within reasonable limits. A

monetary economy arrived in the villages, but that picture changed drastically during the seventeenth century, for multiple reasons.

One underestimated factor was climate change. European historians call the seventeenth-century “the small glacial period,” for during that century a radical drop in the temperature jeopardized agricultural production. The effect of climate change not only on the scope of production, but also on what was produced was striking: in the late Middle Ages, in some areas of Lower Silesia and southern Greater Poland, local vineyards produced wine. The drop in the quantity and quality of production met with a rising competition with agricultural production that was beginning to come from European colonies to the Atlantic and the North Sea ports. Moreover, the Thirty Years’ War further undercut consumer demand in German lands, which was the closest market for selling agricultural goods from the Commonwealth.

The long seventeenth century was also a period of constant strife in the Commonwealth, which carried on wars with Muscovy and Russia, Sweden, the Crimean Khanate, and the Ottoman Empire, to mention the major players, and experienced devastating civil wars with Ukrainian Cossacks. There were few regions of the Commonwealth that remained untouched by war. That included the mountain areas, which suffered only from the relatively short Swedish occupation. As always, the wars brought hunger and disease, to which the rural populations were most vulnerable. This century saw also significant shifts of rural populations, as peasants were either exterminated as casualties of war, or died of disease and hunger; many fled from their villages to escape invaders, marauders, sometimes the landlord’s exploitation, sometimes just to escape from the exhausting drudgery of daily farm life.

The turmoil of the seventeenth century devastated not only the Commonwealth’s economy but also its political system. The system of the noble democracy, founded on the

economic power and privileges of the middle-nobility, was deteriorating, opening the road to oligarchy. The royal power, already impaired in the first half of the century by the conflict between King Sigismund III Vasa and the nobility that arose from the king's attempt to strengthen his power at the expense of the Parliament (*Sejm*), was further damaged by the catastrophic reign of an unwilling king, Jan Kazimierz Vasa, whose lack of political skills, and political actions aiming against the very interests of his Kingdom, brought the state to the verge of the collapse, and opened an abyss of distrust between the throne and the noble nation. The military victories won by the Commonwealth secured the geopolitical *status quo* of the state for another hundred years, but did not halt the erosion of the political system, in which the aristocracy gained ground against both the king and the middle nobility lost, and the aristocracy won.

As the middle nobility grew poorer, they exploited their serfs all the more, to compensate for their declining income. The kings with their fading power and proverbially empty treasury leased out most of the royal estates, and cared only about the steady income from them. The new landlords imposed on the royal peasants the same ways of exploitation as on regular serfs, provoking violent clashes and rebellions. One such an example was Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's Rebellion.

The social tensions in the region outlasted the fall of the Commonwealth. The Galician Peasant Rebellion of 1846, also called simply the Galician Slaughter, is one of the most important and yet underestimated events in Polish modern history. The rebellion began with serfs attacking noble manor houses in an act of self-defense from the nobility's alleged plans to exterminate peasants. In fact, the peasant rebellion coincided with attempts to instigate an all-partitions Polish uprising, with headquarters in Cracow. The so-called Cracow Uprising went up

in flames due to weak preparations, as well as treachery from one of the high-ranking conspirators. As the Prussian and Austrian police became aware of plans for the insurgency, they incited peasants against the noblemen. Their attempts proved effective, as the relationships between serfs and the nobility for years had been growing tense, with the nobility unable to make any legal and economic concessions for peasants. The role of Austrian officials was unquestionable, as they paid peasants for delivering nobleman dead or alive to the police posts. In effect, the planned national uprising turned into peasant pogroms of Polish nobility.

The nobility was solely a target of peasant bloody rage. The peasant rebels acted with a cruelty that stunned contemporaries: they tortured the noblemen and manorial officials before killing them, they murdered their victims as if slaughtering animals, and did not spare women, children, or elders. The rebellion occurred in the sub-mountains (*Pogórze*) and mountain areas, but did not spread to the Tatra region. In the Tarnów region, where the rebellion was the most fervent, nearly 90% of the manor houses were burned. The peasant rebels killed up to 3 thousand noblemen and associates, including few clergymen, but no Jewish or German person was hurt.

The most infamous leader of the Galician Rebellion was Jakub Szela, an illiterate serf from the Jasło area. A former soldier drafted to the Austrian army, he self-mutilated himself to avoid the future service. He became notorious for his exceptional brutality during the rebellion. After the rebellion the Austrian officials resettled Szela to Romanian Bukovina, endowing him with a large farm in gratitude for his role in suppressing the Polish uprising.²⁸

The memories of the Galicia Peasant Rebellion were largely suppressed in the mainstream Polish culture, though as memoirs reveal, they left deep and long-lasting impression

²⁸ Krzysztof Traciłowski, *Jakub Szela* (Puławy: Warszawska Firma Wydawnicza, 2011); Franciszek Ziejka, *Jakub Szela* (Warszawa: PWN, 1980); Czesław Wycech, *Jakub Szela: Pięć prac o Jakubie Szeli* (Warszawa: LSW, 1956); -, *Powstanie chłopskie w roku 1846: Jakub Szela* (Warszawa: LSW, 1955).

and mutual distrust between peasants and the nobility. By 1900, the subject became a sort of a national taboo, though nobody forgot the events of 1846 in Western Galicia. The rebellion simply needed to be suppressed from the national memory for the sake of building a sense of national unity and of national politics. While the memories of the Galician Slaughter were silenced in the public discourse, in the national culture the figure of Jakub Szela turned into a symbol of a national traitor, and a monstrous murderer. In contrast to the national culture, the folk tradition from the region where the Peasant Rebellion took place remembers Jakub Szela as a peasant hero, a fearsome defender of his fellow folk from oppressive manorial relationships. Only recently have those second memories found their way into the mainstream of Polish culture.

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter One I analyze constructions of peasant masculinity and civic virtues in representations based on hagiographies of Polish saints. I focus on legends related to Saint Kinga, Duchess of Cracow during the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, as the cult became the most powerful in the region's countryside. I analyze different versions of the legends in relation to the transformation of Saint Kinga's cult from a dynastic cult, to a state cult, a regional cult, and to a national cult.

Religious texts greatly influenced popular representations of Polish national history and thus, representations of peasant historical experiences were deeply embedded in the religious framework of collective memory. The inner logic of these religious texts, as well as the Church's convictions about the distinctive moral characters of particular social estates determined the ways peasants were represented. While religious texts continued to feed the secular representations of the history of peasants, by the end of the nineteenth-century the latter changed the characteristics of peasants and noblemen as historical actors, transforming their scope of agency, as well as their mutual relationships, including gender ones.

Chapter One analyzes various conceptualizations of a highlander's masculinity. Religious texts depicted peasants, regardless of their gender, as either victims or cowards in need of a nobleman's protection. I argue that such religious constructions of male peasants shifted from that of victims or cowards to that of accidental subject of a ruler, to conscientious helper of oppressed noble women, to defender of the nation's weakest groups in need of manly protection. I demonstrate how those different roles reshaped the images of peasant masculinity, endowing them with the rudiments of civic awareness and civic virtues, such as loyalty, bravery,

compassion for superiors in distress, and readiness to help distant members of the “national community,” particularly the elites.

Chapter One also stresses the gender consequences in reconfigurations of civic relationships between peasant men and the nobility, by demonstrating how representations of royal and noble women changed in this context from bold symbols of gender-neutral noble paternalism, to images of oppressed women embodying the “nation in distress”; from images of the power of the ruling estate intended to elicit respect, to that of helpless victims intended to evoke pity, compassion, and a sense of social solidarism. In this context I argue that representations of the wartime rape, which first appeared in Polish literature and art in the mid-nineteenth century, played a crucial role in shifting this gender and civic dynamic. I conclude this chapter by showing how during in the nineteenth century the legends migrated from the realm of hagiography to the local family histories.

Chapter Two continues my analysis of the representations of peasants in histories of the Mongol invasions, but as my argument develops it takes as case studies some other military conflicts in the area. In this chapter I analyze the secular narratives: historiography, novels, dramas, legends, oral tales, as well as the “acculturation” of topography—instances of endowing archeological sites and the natural with cultural meaning. I investigate how peasant men became linked with Polish statehood, its rulers, the nobility, and the national elite in narratives of national history. Therefore, I move my analysis a step forward from Chapter One, and explore representations of more explicit peasant citizenship, particularly representations of peasants in roles as defenders of the country.

I begin this chapter by discussing the late nineteenth-century historiography on the impact of the Mongol invasions on Polish lands. I argue that the secular popular national history

downplayed the national martyrology, and stressed the role of peasants in national self-sustainability, and in physical persistence in spite of the devastating invasions; that is, in the genealogical continuity of settlements of Polish ethnicity on the territory of former Polish Kingdom. In the late nineteenth century, historical debates on the scale of the impact of the Mongol invasions on Central and Eastern Europe was embedded in a larger political and ideological context related to the unification of Germany and the German empire project. German historical scholarship, informed by the ideology of spreading civilization via colonization, used evidence of medieval colonization to argue for a historic German mission in the east. Polish intellectuals formulated their own counter-narratives, arguing that the Polish nation survived the invasions and was soon able to halt an un-going German push to the east. In this context, I argue, the new representations of historical peasants emerged, now integrated into the Polish nation, in roles of auxiliary or voluntary troops aiding Polish knights. The topos of a helpless peasant and a coward was no longer useful. In secular discourse, those figures gave way to collective peasant actors embodying the untamed peasant rage and barbaric militancy in resisting Western invaders.

Yet, I also argue, that the attempts to endow the figures of historical peasants with a more coherent group or military identity turned into a very difficult endeavor. Chapter Two explores the literary efforts to recast Carpathian highlanders as Polish Scots and Cossacs, and analyzes the reasons for their failures. The failure to create convincing images of highlanders as militant peasants or shepherds with their twisted, yet multilayered ties to their sovereigns—“the commonwealths”—reveals how the actual history confines the contents of what was imaginable and what was not in popular representations of national history.

When the efforts to turn highlanders into Cossacks or Scotts failed, I argue, the authors reached for a traditional topos, wrapping the peasants as a group in the shape of a young woman, a desirable minor in constant need of a moral guidance. While this topos evoking “the natural relationship of sexes” proved to be useful in conveying a sense of national solidarism, it simultaneously negated the value of peasant masculinity and its role in constructing a modern peasant citizen.

In my analysis of the legend of the sleeping knights of the Tatra I demonstrates the role of intertextuality in shaping images of peasants. The legend cast peasants in yet new roles as witnesses of the national mystery and would-be miracle of regaining independence. Peasants appeared here as potential helpers, the nation’s “youths” waiting for an awakening of political consciousness, as indispensable participants in future struggles for independence, and future citizens.

The historiography about archeological sites called “coach-castles” offered yet another instance of casting highlanders in the role of defenders of the state and the nation, protecting the southern Polish border. The historiography and archeology of the coach-castles represented peasant soldiers in camaraderie with the nobility. This take, though imaginable and convincing, did not gain many followers. I argue that part of the problem emerged from the ways in which the actual history hampered the literary efforts, including the problematic attempt to erase the legacy of Protestantism from the history of peasant radicalism and civic movements.

I conclude Chapter Two with a discussion of the patriotic but ephemeral riot in the Tatra Mountains called “The Chochołów Uprising” and show how this local event was used to prove the-highlanders’ patriotism and civic virtues. I also explore how the memory of this event was

engraved into the landscape, how it was spread among Polish tourists, and how highlanders themselves embraced it as an attractive addition to their multiple cultural identities.

Chapter Three focuses on the seventeenth-century Swedish invasion and peasant riots. I discuss the historical and literary representations of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's Rebellion and the role of his peasant followers. I offer a brief biography of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, as it is crucial for understanding the historical explanations and literary constructions of the motives of the peasant rebels who followed him. I argue that the sexual relationships between noblemen and peasant women under the serfdom, as well as homosocial desire, informed the outcome of this version of the "national romance." By introducing the royal peasants, this chapter shows the ways in which the highlanders were hybridized into a petit-nobility-like group.

A significant part of my argument deals with Jan Kasprowicz, the author of *Napierski's Rebellion*. I use his biography to demonstrate how it informed his particular construction of highlanders as rebels and followers of the king-usurper. In my argument the author's biography is crucial to understanding not only his choice of the theme for the play, but also his political critique of the agrarian parties, as well as the mechanisms of the party-based system in mass politics. Moreover, I argue that his biography is crucial to understanding his radicalism and iconoclastic approach toward the national history. I end this chapter with demonstrating how the first historically proved instance of the emergence of peasant civic personhoods and subjectivities fell into oblivion in the national history.

I conclude my study with an Epilogue in which I show how those ambiguous modern constructions of peasant masculinity, aiming to elevate representations of the highlanders as Polish citizens, helped to create a vague, yet powerful idea of highlanders as Polish patriots and how effective they became in the propaganda used for the political mobilization of peasant men

before the World War I. I do so by analyzing the history of the Podhale Squads. Those regional military units, organized from the local highlanders, created the basis for the formation of the distinctive, highlander military units in the Polish Republic Military Forces: the Podhale Rifles. General Andrzej Galica, who initiated organizing such a particular highlander unit—the only unit in Polish armies in the twentieth century with a distinctive peasant and regional identity—drew on the diverse modern traditions of imagining the highlander as a virile peasant-patriot. I argue that while the tradition of the Podhale Rifles was invented, it was done so within the discursive limits of representations that I analyze in my chapters.

CHAPTER II

SAINT KINGA AND HER “FAITHFUL HIGHLANDER”: THE VICTIM, THE HELPER, AND THE DEFENDER

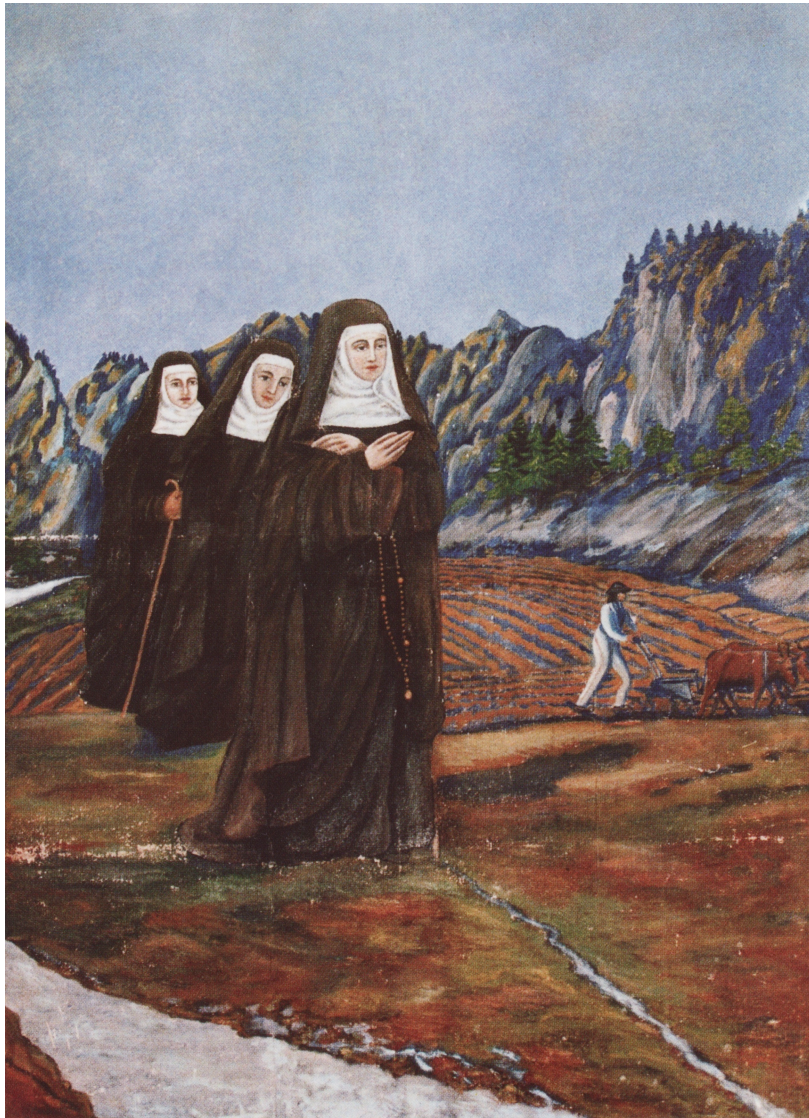


Figure 3. A church painting referring to the legend of the wheat in Krościenko by an unknown artist, circa 1918

The Legend of the Wheat

In his poetic guide called *Tatra in Twenty Two Images*, published in 1860, Bogusz Stęczyński recalled a folk tale that he claimed to have heard from the local peasants. On her escape from the Tatars, almost 600 years before, Saint Kinga and her Poor Clares encountered “a highlander sowing the wheat on his plot.” The Duchess–nun told the peasant that tomorrow the Tatar horde would pass by his homestead and ask if he had seen any women on the road. Kinga instructed the highlander to answer that yes, indeed he had seen them while sowing the wheat. When the Tatars stopped by the peasant’s door the following day, the man answered as he had been instructed, while pointing at his wheat, now fully grown and ready to be harvested. The Tatars came to the conclusion that the nuns must have passed by peasant’s house months before, and that surely the devil had thwarted their plans to capture female slaves for their Crimean harems. Retreating from the Podhale to Hungary, the Mongols left the highlander, astonished at the miracle that had occurred on his field.²⁹

The miracle of the wheat is one of many such stories about St. Kinga in the Stary Sącz region.³⁰ The story relates to a historical event in 1287–1288. When threatened by Mongol raids, Kinga of Cracow, an ex–Duchess and a Poor Clare, escaped from her convent in Stary Sącz to Pieniny Castle, a small border-protection fortress hidden in the mountains. Thus, the legend appears embedded in one of the most dramatic moments of Polish medieval history: the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, which affected the entire population of the southern

²⁹ B. Z. Stęczyński, *Tatry w dwudziestu czterech obrazach skreślone piórem i rylcem* (Kraków: Księgarnia i Wyd. Dzieł Katolickich, Naukowych i Rolniczych, 1860), 42-43.

³⁰ The most popular legend about St. Kinga tells about the miraculous transfer of salt from Hungary to Wieliczka, a town near Cracow.

part of the Kingdom of Poland, mostly peasants. Stęczyński's version of the legend is particularly suitable for an analysis of the construction of peasant masculinity for several reasons. First, it offers a simplified version of the story with minimal, yet significant, artistic alteration; second, it was written for a popular readership; and third, while recalling elements of a legend inspired by Marian apocrypha, it appeared in a secular context, with religious and patriotic subtexts leavened by the genre of tourist guides.

In this chapter, I use the legend of the wheat and the cult of St. Kinga as a Polish national royal woman saint, to discuss three aspects of the construction of peasant civic masculinity, as exemplified by the highlander. First, I will analyze representations of a peasant man as a noble's subject in wartime. That role, the oldest and most prominent prior to the abolition of serfdom, was typically defined through the figure of a victim. Cowardice, which became a part of the stereotypical representation of a peasant man, also justified the social hierarchy by evoking essential characteristics of a noble man as a warrior and a defender.

The second aspect presents a peasant man as an involuntary helper of the nobility. The legend of the wheat reconfigures the traditional feudal relationship between men of power-related social groups. Instead, it offers a complex image of a woman's paternalism with a multifold relationship between a superior woman and her peasant man, for Kinga appears in this telling as a ruler and as a national saint. Representations of women's paternalism, especially stressing the aspect of 'motherly care' for a lower-class dependent, were rooted in nineteenth-century conservative gender discourse and helped to propagate images of social solidarism of the nation in the face of war. Exploring representations of woman's paternalism led my analysis toward the image and prominent gender role model of the Mother-Pole. Thus, I argue that examining the cult of St. Kinga deepens our understanding of both the construction of the

Mother–Pole, and the role of the cult of the Virgin Mary in its formation. I argue that, while St. Kinga’s cult represents certain nineteenth–century aspects of the Mother–Pole, she also embodies the figure of the Mother of Poles. Images of the Mother of Poles, most prominently the Virgin Mary and, of particular Polish women saints and queens, played a crucial role in the construction of peasant men’s political subjectivity within the national, conservative, populist, and popular discourses and representations of history.

The third aspect, the peasant man as a protector, relates to the reconfiguration of the relationships of symbolic power between socially superior women and peasant men in the context of gender differences in the experience of war. I argue that the mid-nineteenth century version of the legend of the wheat shows how images of sexual violence within representations of Polish history became more explicit and gained a distinctively new role during the second half of the nineteenth century. The rape of Polish women became a prominent topos in discussions of national belonging. That shift reconfigured noble women’s paternalism. By rescuing women from enemies—sexual predators—the peasant man gained more symbolic agency, yet at the expense of a noble woman. Such representations show a peasant man as a protector of the biological and moral wellbeing of the national community. Set in the context of post-emancipation serfs, these representations also underlie the recognition of a peasant man’s exclusive rights of control over the sexuality of their dependent women, challenging the noblemen’s free access to peasant women. Yet, these same representations, with their themes of biological and moral purity, expelled women-victims of sexual violence in war, regardless of their social background, beyond the boundaries of the national community.

In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the frameworks of peasant historical memories, stressing the influence of the Catholic Church on their contents and forms. As will become clear

in the following chapters, by 1914 Polish peasant memories preserved stories of two historical wars, mostly due to the influence of the Catholic cult of saints and sacred images: the thirteenth-century Mongol wars, commonly known as the Tatar wars, and the seventeenth-century Swedish war. The cult of St. Kinga stands as an excellent example of how regional peasant historical memories were shaped within the religious and national ones. By bringing in a detailed discussion of St. Kinga's cult, I demonstrate how, during the nineteenth century, it was transformed from a state to national cult, how it became Polonized, and how it defined the mnemonic Polish-Catholic landscape of the Cracow-Stary Sącz region, becoming part of 'genuine' folk memory. The constructions of peasant masculinity and citizenship are embedded in these contexts. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of mid-nineteenth-century ethnographic accounts showing how the legend of the wheat became incorporated into local and familial memories, and how the images of a peasant man—as a subject, a helper, and a protector—preserved ambivalences affirming his masculinity, and yet questioning it. The coexistence of all these aspects made peasant masculinity precarious, de-essentialized and prone to conflicting interpretations. The transformation of representations of peasant men from that of a coward to that of a protector demonstrates one route of symbolic ennoblement, in this case at the expense of diminishing the position of women of the nobility.

Peasant Memories of the Tatars Invasions

In this section I present different frameworks within which “folk memory” was shaped. This is important because the process of constructing the “folk memory” was intertwined with the parallel and complementary process of reconstructing the elite sense of national history with peasants inscribed them in more significant ways than just war casualties. I demonstrate in this subchapter that the “folk memory,” as well as the elite historical imagination concerning peasants was derived primarily from hagiographies, and thus from sacred Polish history. One of the consequences was framing peasants in Catholic history in Poland, and through it – in the history of the Polish nation, in the common concept of the “bulwark of Christianity”.

Bogusz Stęczyński’s version of the legend exemplifies the Romantic notion of a folk tale (or a legend) regarded as the genuine bearer of an ‘ancient’ national memory. That Romantic type of historicism originated in Poland in the 1820s, with intellectuals and poets in Lithuania,³¹ and was strengthened in the two following decades by poets representing the so-called “Ukrainian school of Polish Romanticism”.³² Both the belated so-called “home current” of Polish Romanticism (*nurt rodzimy*), which began in the late 1830s, together with Romanticism-inspired ethnography, lasted until the mid-1840s, when they were severely disrupted by the political shock caused by the Galician Peasant Rebellion (1846). Yet, the early ethnography survived the decline of the high expectations for folk culture, and the subsequent loss of interest in it among the artistic and intellectual elite, well into the second half of the nineteenth century. The revival of interest in folk culture took place in the 1870s. The stimulus for it came from several sources. In the 1870s, ethnology was emerging as an academic discipline in Poland,

³¹ Such as Joachim Lelewel, Zorian Dołęga-Chodakowski and Adam Mickiewicz.

³² Such as Juliusz Słowacki, Antoni Malczewski, Seweryn Goszczyński, Józef B. Zaleski, and Michał Grabowski.

receiving structural support from new academic periodicals such as *Wista* and *Lud*, as well as from newly established museums.³³ The growth of national tourism, especially the development of Polish mountain resorts and spas, provided another incentive. Around the turn of the century, literature as well as the performing and visual arts, turned again to folk culture in search of ethnic and national motifs. Heavily inspired by neo-Romanticism, the return to folk culture received strong political support from populist and national movements. Again, ‘folk memory,’ regarded as a fossil of the ‘ancient’ national memory, was resurrected as a concept with both scientific and ideological consequences. By the end of the century, works of the early ethnographers along with the spirit, which animated them, revived.

In late nineteenth-century Galicia, several major structures framed peasant historical consciousness.³⁴ One was the state-supported secular elementary schooling;³⁵ another was a non-official, ephemeral, charity-like schooling organized by local Polish elites, justified in patriotic terms as a form of civic service for their poor compatriots. The third structure was the popular culture, which was nourished by a burgeoning popular press, literature, music, and secular as well as religious ornamental commodities. Yet, regarding the low level of literacy and the predominance of Catholicism among Polish-speaking peasants, it was the Church that most significantly shaped the historical consciousness of Galician peasants.

Official and apocryphal hagiographies, nurtured by sermons and local cults, inspired historical folk tales, which bloomed in a commensal symbiosis with hagiography. The stability of the religious structure in Western Galicia allowed overcoming demographic fluctuations as

³³ Józef Burszta, “Etnografia,” *Słownik etnologiczny* (1987).

³⁴ *Maurice Halbwachs: On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

³⁵ Michał Bobrzyński and his infamous school reform: Waldemar Łazuga, *Michał Bobrzyński: Myśl historyczna a działalność polityczna* (Warszawa: PWN, 1982).

well as local changes in political loyalties. Individuals or groups that identified themselves with a particular region integrated the religion-based collective memories related to it as their own.³⁶ Religious rituals surrounding cults of saints anchored the memorial practices of the community of believers, and commemorated particular events, from the royalty and the state first, and then the national history. Disseminating from churches ‘under the thatches,’ the hagiographies and apocrypha provided a fabric for folk history tales that was recycled, and later ‘rediscovered’ as ‘genuine’ remnants of the ‘ancient’ national memory. The religious union between the divine presence and the material objects and sites, which Maurice Halbwachs identified in his study on the Holy Land,³⁷ and Pierre Nora calls “remembering within the sacred” and attributes to “so-called archaic primitive societies,” fortified the Romantic and neo-Romantic convictions about grasping the true memory of the people, that is—of the nation.

Polish historical consciousness of peasants in the mountain region, particularly in the Podhale, emerged against the background of sacred memories related to local, mostly medieval, saints.³⁸ According to Polish literary critics, Polish hagiographies of pre-modern times lacked

³⁶ Hagiographical writings addressed to the peasants demonstrate the ways in which peasant ‘historical memories’ were ‘awakened’. In his hagiography of St. Kinga, Karol Antoniewicz, a priest, invokes the memories by apostrophes to the artifacts symbolizing peasant domesticity. Antoniewicz endows them with an ability to ‘witness’ God’s grace, and therefore to transcend the past: “You, humble peasant huts [...] you witnessed the miracles of love and mercy of the virginal Kunegunda’s heart!”. He wrote: “The highlander’s hut, hung over an abyss like an eagle’s nest, was [...] a palace to her; the fir tree’s bench – her beloved throne [...]”. Karol Antoniewicz, Wspomnienie o Świętej Kunegundzie (Leszno: E. Guenther, 1862), pp. 6-7. Thus, the abstract, and yet common artifacts appear to have relic-like qualities.

³⁷ Maurice Halbwachs, La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre Sainte; étude de mémoire collective (Paris: PU de France, 1941).

³⁸ Most notably St. Stanisław (a bishop-martyr), St. Jadwiga the Queen, St. Bronisława (a nun), St. Jacek Odrowąż and St. Czesław (both monks).

any original folk input.³⁹ Scholars emphasize the derivative character of Polish folk tales about saints.⁴⁰ Ethnologists argue that, regarding the number and frequency of recurrences in verbal folklore of southern Poland, the legends of St. Kinga are second only to the Marian ones.⁴¹ Moreover, many of Kinga's legends drew directly from Marian apocrypha.⁴² The legend of the wheat is an example of such a derivation, for it reuses motifs from the Holy Family's miraculous escape to Egypt.⁴³

One of the consequences of the derivative character of folk 'memories' from sacred Polish history was a construction of characters central to the folk tales in accordance with the poetics of apocryphal hagiography. The legends of St. Kinga provide an excellent example of such derivations. The saintly Duchess-nun reveals her magic-like powers, creating the very geographical shape of the Podhale region. While fleeing to Pieniny castle, Kinga throws behind

³⁹ Włodzimierz Jurow argues that while West European hagiographies contained the "legends growing up from folk imaginativeness," in Poland "such threads cannot be found neither at the height of the Middle Ages, nor in the sixteenth century. [...] The tales about the deeds of the saints associated with Polish tradition, the popular as well as the Church-sponsored, genetically originate from an elite culture (*kultura oficjalna*), from the monastic, court, and clerical circles. Certainly [...] *Miracula* demonstrates some stories about peasants who were healed thanks to the protection of a saint. It [only] proves that the tales of saints circulated in villages." Włodzimierz Jurow, "Praktyka pisarska i literackie tradycje żywotów świętych polskich do końca XVI wieku," *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, Vol. 14, No. 6/8 (1970), p. 129; J. Grajner, *Studya nad podaniami ludu naszego* (Warszawa, 1859).

⁴⁰ „[T]he majority of [...] legends about blessed Kundegundis [...] were constructed from the motifs known from the apocrypha and hagiographies.” Julian Krzyżanowski and Helena Kapeluś, "Kinga," in *Słownik folkloru polskiego* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1965), p. 168; Urszula Janicka-Krzywda, "Postać bł. Kingi w folklorze słownym Polski południowej," *Nasza Przeszłość*, Vol. 88 (1997), p. 34. —, "Postać Matki Bożej w folklorze słownym polskiego Podkarpacia," *Nasza Przeszłość*, Vol. 79 (1993), pp. 16-18.

⁴¹ Janicka-Krzywda, "Postać Matki Bożej..." , p. 34.

⁴² Janicka-Krzywda, *ibid.*, pp. 51-55.

⁴³ The apocrypha on the miracle of the wheat performed by the Virgin Mary on her escape to Egypt appeared in Polish, among others in *Legandy o Matce Boskiej, Panu Jezusie i świętych pańskich*, ed. by Józef Grajner (Warszawa: Synowie S. Niemiry, 1904), pp. 72-74.

her a comb, a rosary and a belt, which subsequently turn into a forest, the Dunajec river,⁴⁴ and the Three Crowns peak⁴⁵ into the Pieniny Mountains, or alternatively, into the Tatra Mountains themselves.⁴⁶ Legends surrounding particular places and objects in the mountains, enhanced the sacred mnemonic landscape associated with St. Kinga.⁴⁷ Framed by the popular hagiography and ‘ancient’ history, those particular elements of the environment gained a hierophanic potential, and could be turned into signs of sacralization of the land and/or its belonging. In 1862, concluding her hagiography for peasants, Rev. Karol Antoniewicz wrote: “No time will ever erase the name of good Queen Kinga from the memory of the dwellers of Sącz and [...] of the banks of Dunajec and Poprad, or from [the memories] of the honest people of the Carpathian mountains, as well as from all the areas that witnessed Her virtues and which became an object of Her care and love!”⁴⁸

By the turn of the century, hagiographical memory, transformed within folk culture, was presented as ‘authentic’ peasant memories of Polish history.⁴⁹ The development of tourism helped various sacred mnemonic landscapes to acquire a national meaning. At the same time, the

⁴⁴ The major river in the region.

⁴⁵ The highest peak of the Pieniny Mountains.

⁴⁶ Hagiographical legends represent St. Clare as defending her convent from the Saracens. Thus, the story of the defense of Pieniny Castle might as well relate to true stories, as be a derivation from the hagiography of a founder of the Poor Clares; Kowalska, *ibid.*, p. 353. In Józef Szujski’s poem Kinga’s diamond crown turns into the Tatra. Józef Szujski, “Święta Kinga: Legenda tatrzańska,” *Czytelnia dla Młodzieży*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (1860), p. 38. Maria Konopnicka, “Na Dunajcu,” *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, Vol. 101 (1877), p. 340.

⁴⁷ In many cases the environmental elements associated with St. Kinga’s legends overlap with legends about the Virgin Mary. Urszula Janicka-Krzywda, “Motywy przyrodnicze w legendach o Matce Bożej na polskim Podkarpaciu,” *Peregrinus Cracoviensis*, Vol. 4 (1996), p. 93-4.

⁴⁸ Antoniewicz, *ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁹ An ethnographer, Urszula Janicka-Krzywda, maintains that “[...] nowadays it is difficult to pinpoint what was original—the folk legend about the Hungarian princess, or religious tales [...] spread by the Church teaching.” Janicka-Krzywda, *ibid.*, p. 34.

hagiographic/folk legends began conveying ‘memories’ of the state/nation’s past, by presenting a particular territory in terms of the national sacred land, and by poetically evoking Polish royals as symbolic ‘producers’ and ‘primeval owners’ of the geographical (physical) space, as the nation’s ancient habitat. By the end of the partition period the mountain region, among few other places, gained the status of such a nation’s holy land.⁵⁰

Polish medieval chroniclers, both court- and Church-sponsored, typically used peasant experiences to emphasize the horrors of war. Conventional accounts of massacres, injuries, kidnappings, runaways, or being hunted down in hideouts, served to demonstrate the bestiality of invaders rather than the misery of their victims, the peasants. The accounts were least expected to prove peasant bravery in the face of military force.⁵¹ In contrast to historiographies and hagiographies, legends about saints provided, if not personalized, then singularized accounts of peasant experiences in past wars. Moreover, the religious narratives provided frameworks in which gender/class were constructed vis-à-vis the ‘enemy’ as well as the ‘lords-as-kinfolk,’ in the extreme conditions of war. Therefore, Catholicism influenced the ways in which peasant masculinity intersected with class, and consequently how it was interpolated.

Peasant knowledge of the Mongol invasions of the Podhale became primarily embedded in the religious cult of St. Kinga. In popular culture St. Kinga appeared in manifold frameworks: feminine Catholicism, Catholicism as Polish cultural identity, the history of Polish and Austrian statehoods, and modern Polish nationalism. The historical contexts of the promotion of Kinga’s cult are crucial for my argument. Various historical traditions mingled during the partition

⁵⁰ Maria Sandoz, “Dunajec,” in: S. M. Immaculata, *Bł. Kinga* (Kraków: Wyd. Księży Jezuitów, 1925), p. 248.

⁵¹ A rare example of a story demonstrating a commoner’s bravery in battling the Mongols comes from an account on the siege of Sandomierz contained in the thirteenth-century Rus’ian *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, a part of *Hypatian Codex*, which in the nineteenth century was known only to a handful of Polish medievalists. The text is quoted in: Tomasz Jasiński, *Przerwany hejnał* (Warszawa: KAW, 1988), p. 69.

period, and came to prominence in the two decades around the turn of the century, when the cult of St. Kinga finally became ‘nationalized’. It was during that time that Kinga’s position was reaffirmed in the Polish pantheon of saints, and she came to symbolize a critical moment in the history of Poland and in the history of Poles. It was around the turn of the century that Kinga turned from a holy queen, a patroness of the Polish state into a holy queen, a mother of the Polish nation, and more significantly, of the Polish people (*lud*). The construction of peasant masculinities in relation to a woman—a queen and a saint—within the religious/national framework is central to my argument.

Lady of Sądecczyzna: Her Life, Her Cult and Her Legends

In this section I present the cult of St. Kinga as a major hagiographic context in inscribing peasants into the national history. I bring the historical figure of St. Kinga, Duchess of Cracow, as well as show how her cult evolved from a dynastic one, to a state and regional one, and finally to a national cult. St. Kinga's cult is particularly important if we want to see how peasant (higglander) masculinity was reconstructed within the national historical imagination; that is, how peasant men's sense of citizenship and shared responsibility for the nation's biological purity, was presented. St. Kinga's cult during the nineteenth-century came to convey a gender-specific war experience in the figure of a Christian woman enslaved or assaulted by a foreign invader. The later receptions of that motif exemplify how popular history produced by the elites utilized the Catholic tradition of a maiden in distress or a sexual martyr, hybridizing it into a folk tale and nationalizing it.

The life of St. Kinga (Kunegunda) of Poland, the wife of Prince Bolesław V the Chaste, is well documented.⁵² Born in Esztergom in 1234 as a daughter of King Béla IV of Hungary,

⁵² Piotr Stefaniak, *Święta Kinga Arpadówna OSC (1234-1292)* (Kraków: Wyd. Inst. Teologicznego Księży Misjonarzy, 2012); Barbara Kowalska, *Święta Kinga, rzeczywistość i legenda. Studium źródłoznawcze* (Kraków: Avalon, 2008); Maria Barbara Styk, *Święta Kinga w poezji polskiej. Antologia 1644-2001* (Lublin: Tow. Naukowe KUL, 2001); Izidor Borkiewicz, *Święta Kinga w świetle legend i historii* (Stary Sącz and Kraków: Wyd. OO. Franciszkanów "Bratni Zew," 1999); Marek Czeakański, *Święta Kinga. Czasy, życie, kult* (Kraków: Wyd. M, 1999); Johannes Długossius, *Święta Matka Kinga. Żywot świętej Kingi według Jana Długosza*, ed. Antoni Żurek and Ryszard Banach (Tarnów: Biblos, 1999); Cecylian Niezgoda, *Święta Kinga. Żywot hagiograficzny* (Stary Sącz and Kraków: Wyd. OO. Franciszkanów "Bratni Zew," 1999); Jerzy Wojtczak-Szyszkowski, *Średniowieczne życiorysy bł. King i bł. Salomei* (Warszawa: Wyd. UW, 1999); Bolesław Przybyszewski, *Żywot świętej Kingi księżnej krakowskiej* (Tarnów: Biblos, 1997); Marian Kornecki, "Bł. Kinga – pamiątki, obiekty kultu, dzieła sztuki. Inwentarz z terenu diecezji tarnowskiej," *Currenda*, Vol. 140, No. 1-3 (1990); Aleksandra Witkowska, *Bł. Kinga w średniowiecznych przekazach hagiograficznych* (Tarnów: Seminarium Duchowne, 1986); Marja Immakulata,

Kinga was sent to Kraków at the age of five.⁵³ Growing up under the influence of her female relatives whose religious devotion earned them sainthoods, Kinga strived to achieve Christian perfection from an early age.⁵⁴ After taking a vow of chastity together with her husband, the Duchess dedicated herself to charity works, helping the poor and lepers. Her devotion, according to hagiographies, granted her the title of *mater pauperes*. In 1280, Kinga founded a convent of Poor Clares in Stary Sącz, endowing the nuns generously with the town chosen for their settlement and twenty-eight surrounding villages.⁵⁵ Kinga's donation became the basis for the so-called "Poor Clares' state," which lasted over five hundred years, maintaining the benefactor's cult. Kinga moved to the convent after her husband's death in 1279, first as a secular resident and a member of the Third Franciscan Order, and then after 1280 as a regular nun. She was never an abbess of the convent, as maintained in legends, yet since becoming a dowager and renouncing her royal title, Kinga kept the title of the Lady of Sądeczczyzna (*Pani Sądecka*).⁵⁶ Kinga died in Stary Sącz in 1292, surrounded by an aura of sanctity. The first hagiography of Kinga published, listing her miracles, appeared in thirty years after her death.⁵⁷

Błogosławiona Kinga (Kraków: Wyd. Księży Jezuitów, 1925); Stanisław Rosół, Święta Kinga, jej klasztor i miasto Sącz Stary (Nowy Sącz: Komitet św. Kingi, 1892).

⁵³ She was a daughter of and queen Maria Laskarina, and a granddaughter of Theodoros I Komnenos Laskaris, Emperor of Nicaea.

⁵⁴ Kinga of Cracow was a great-niece of Duchess Jadwiga Andechs, known as St. Jadwiga of Silesia, a wife of the Polish Prince Henry I the Bearded. Kinga was also a niece of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (a princess), a sister of St. Margaret of Hungary (a princess) and of Blessed Yolanda of Poland (a duchess), Kinga's younger sister. Kinga's mother-in-law, Duchess Grzymisława, venerated as blessed, together with Kinga's sister-in-law Blessed Salome of Poland, a wife of Duke Kálmán (Coloman) of Lodomeria, influenced Kinga's religious upbringing. Especially Blessed Salome, as a devout supporter of the Franciscan spirituality in Poland, played an important role in Kinga's religious formation.

⁵⁵ Henryk Barycz, "Stary Sącz poprzez stulecia," Studia Historyczne, Vol. 1, No. 3-4 (1958), p. 73.

⁵⁶ B. Kowalska, *ibid.*, 122, 129.

⁵⁷ Vita et miracula sanctae Kyngae ducissae Cracoviensis (1329).

Though formally canonized in 1999 by Pope John Paul II, since the beginning of the fourteenth century Kinga was always referred to as a saint. I use this title as a cultural *usus*.

While St. Kinga of Cracow witnessed all three of the Mongol invasions of Poland, the population of the Podhale suffered two of them. The first attack on Polish territories occurred in 1241 following Batu Khan's subjugation of Russia.⁵⁸ The invasion came as a result of an attempt to subjugate the Kingdom of Hungary. The subjugation of Polish eastern and southern principalities was intended to secure the northern boundary during Mongol military operations on the southern side of the Carpathian Mountains. The Mongol army, aided by their Rus' an vassals, swept through the whole southern Polish territory, reaching up to Lower Silesia but sparing the Podhale. After the defeat of Poles in the battle of Chmielnik in 1241, Duchess Kinga sought refuge in Hungary and eventually found it in Moravia. At the time, she was seven years old, and though married, still in the custody of her mother-in-law, Duchess-Regent Grzymisława. The event that defined the first Mongol invasion in Poland was the defeat of the allied forces of Polish, Moravian, Czech, German, and French rulers, led by Prince Henryk II of Silesia, near Legnica (1241).⁵⁹ As Henryk II was Kinga's first cousin as a son of St. Jadwiga of Silesia (Hedwig von Andechs), the first invasion of the Mongols became a part of both the sacred history of Polish royals and the family history of Kinga of Cracow.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ This occurred between 1238 and 1240.

⁵⁹ Stefan Krakowski, Polska w walce z najazdami tatarskimi w XIII wieku (Warszawa: Wyd. MON, 1956), 140-154. Waclaw Korta, ed. Bitwa legnicka. Historia i tradycja. (Wrocław-Warszawa: Volumen, 1994). Jasiński, *ibid.*; W. Korta, Najazd Mongołów na Polskę i jego legnicki epilog (Katowice: Śląski Instytut Naukowy, 1983).

⁶⁰ Henryk the Pious was a son of Duchess Jadwiga of Silesia, who was an aunt of Kinga and a future saint herself. The Battle of Legnica is an important part of hagiography of St. Jadwiga of Silesia. See: Kazimierz Stronczyński, Legenda obrazowa o Świętej Jadwidze Księżnie Szlązkiej. Według rękopisu z r. 1353 przedstawiona i z późniejszymi téżże treści obrazami porównana (Kraków: PAU, 1880). Trude Ehler, et al., eds. Legenda o św.

The second Mongol invasion (1259–1260) appeared to be the most devastating. The invaders ravaged the Cracow-Sandomierz Principality and for the first time reached the mountain area. It was during the second invasion that villages disintegrated under the raids, and though peasants sought hiding places in forests and swamps, specially trained Mongol warriors hunted them down even there.⁶¹ During that time Kinga, accompanied by her husband, sought refuge in central Polish and eventually in Hungary.⁶² The legend about the Duchess offering her “imperial” dowry to enable her husband to pay for the defense of the country relates to the events of the second invasion.⁶³

The third Mongol invasion of 1287/88 targeted the southern parts of the principality. Mongols hoped to sack Cracow and Sandomierz to open up a passage for their main army led by Töle Buqa (Teleboga) Khan through the Carpathian Mountains to invade Hungary. That passage led through the Sądeczynna area (Kotlina Sądecka), the Tatra, and the Spisz.⁶⁴ The third invasion witnessed the first victories of Polish knights over the Mongol army and their vassals.⁶⁵ It was during that time that Kinga, then already a Poor Clare in Stary Sącz, took refuge in

Jadwidze. Legende der hl. Jadwiga, (Wrocław: Wyd. Dolnośląskie 2000); Teresa Wąsowicz, Legenda śląska (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1967).

⁶¹ Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 52, 70, 76.

⁶² Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶³ According to Szczęśny Morawski, Bolesław the Chaste lacked the courage to defend his country, so the leadership was taken by the aristocratic family of the Gryfs (a family of German origins), while the military operations were financially supported by the Hungarian princess. Stanisław Morawski, Sądeczynna (Kraków: Wywiałkowski, 1863), Vol. 1, p. 103.

⁶⁴ The plan failed because of the logistic problems and of the losses suffered by Mongols troops during the siege of Cracow.

⁶⁵ The major victory over Prince Lev of Halych leading the Rus' troops took place in 1280 near Goślice.

Pieniny Castle.⁶⁶ During the invasion, the Mongols took over the abandoned convent in Stary Sącz but did not destroy it. Likewise, the area of Stary Sącz did not suffer devastation because Mongol warriors treated that region as their base for raids into Hungary.⁶⁷ Most of the legends of St. Kinga relate to the events of the third invasion, including the legend of the wheat. It was also during the last invasion that peasants appeared as defenders for the first time.

The cult of saints provided the major framework of remembrance about the Mongolian invasions in Polish culture. The cults varied regionally. In Lower Silesia, for instance, the historical memories centered on St. Jadwiga of Silesia, Kinga's aunt.⁶⁸ In the Sandomierz area (southeast of Cracow), it was a cult devoted to the Dominican brothers, the townsmen of Sandomierz, and the refugees from the countryside.⁶⁹ That event became embedded in the cult of the Dominican martyrs, and served the modern Catholic and national narratives as the first historical account of a mass extermination of Poles.⁷⁰ But it was by and large the cult of St.

⁶⁶ Archeological studies of the remains of Pieniny Castle confirmed that the site was inhabited in the late thirteenth century. Therefore, Długosz's account on the residence of Kinga and her nuns in the castles found further support. Stanisław Kołodziejcki, "Zamek Pieniny w świetle badań archeologicznych," in *Wierchy*, Vol. 49 (1981), p. 320.

⁶⁷ Jasiński, *ibid.*, 76. One version of the legend about the event, which might be a later inclusion, stresses that the Rus' knights opposed destruction of the convent as an act of a sacrilege.

⁶⁸ Duchess Jadwiga, accompanied by Duchess Anna, her daughter-in-law, survived the first Mongol raid in Trzebnica near Wrocław, sheltered in the Cistercian nuns' convent, which Jadwiga founded and which eventually became the place of her burial and the center of her cult. St. Jadwiga is believed to have professed crusader martyrdom for her son, Prince Henryk II the Pious, on the battlefield of Legnica, during the first invasion. Indeed, the Duke fell during the battle and his severed head was carried away as a war trophy to the Khan.

⁶⁹ The Mongols slaughtered all of these people, after they surrendered and were promised their lives, during the second invasion in 1260. In his *Annals*, a medieval chronicler Jan Długosz writes about the two-day slaughter of all of the residents of the town. His account found a contemporary confirmation in archeological excavations on St. Jakub's Hill in Sandomierz. Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 69.

⁷⁰ Długosz's account on the sacking of Sandomierz in 1241, during the first Mongol invasion, recalls the slaughter of the Cistercian monks, clergy, as well as common people regardless of their gender and age, and sparing only some youths for slavery. T. Jasiński explains the Mongol's brutality by their military strategies. The Mongols

Kinga, as a figure of memory, which carried on popular knowledge about the history of the Mongolian invasion above regional and partition divides, transforming the peasant Catholic memory into the national one.

Polish history prior to and during the nineteenth century represented the Mongol invasions as a metaphor for the foray of *Tartari*, the inhabitants of hell, as the epitome of the devastation of the state and of the extermination of the nation (*lud*). Such a view accorded with pan-European historical interpretations. During the partitions, however, popular Polish histories (including those informed by Catholicism), tended to merge the Mongol invasions with seventeenth-century conflicts between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Crimean Tatars and the Ottoman Empire. The latter took place on the territory of Ukraine and, to lesser

categorized besieged cities as the *sajn*, the good ones, which gave up immediately, and the *mau*, the bad ones, which resisted. According to Jasiński, Sandomierz was most certainly classified as the *mau*, and in consequence the defenders were exterminated. Building on S. Kałużyński's argument, Jasiński maintains that Mongols generally spared educated people in the invaded populations, mostly the clergy. That fact, however, was omitted in official hagiographies and historiographies for ideological reasons. Jasiński, *ibid.*, pp. 48, 52.

The cult of the Dominican martyrs was associated with the relic of the "sacred soil" soaked with the blood of the innocent victims killed by the Mongols on the cathedral hill. The martyrdom of the Dominican brothers and the inhabitants of Sandomierz was commemorated in a series of 12 oil paintings known as *Martyrologium Romanum*, painted by Karol de Prêvot between 1708 and 1737. The large canvases decorate the northern and southern naves of the St. Mary's Nativity Church (now a cathedral). D. Kamuda, "Malarstwo," in Feliks Kiryk, ed., *Dzieje Sandomierza XVI-XVIII w.*, Vol. 2 (Warszawa: 1993); E. Górecki, *Przewodnik po katedrze sandomierskiej* (Sandomierz 1935). The infamous painting of the ritual murder of a Christian child by the Jews is a part of the *Martyrologium*. The motif of the blood of innocent Christians spilled by the Unfaithful, apparent in the series, was overlooked by Jolanta Tokarska-Bakir in her acclaimed book *Legendy o krwi: Antropologia przesądu* (Warszawa: WAB, 2008), pp. 399-402.

In the late nineteenth century, the topos of sacred soil soaked with blood appeared also in Stary Sącz, in association with St. Rocco's church. Scholars overlook that similarity of the hagiographic motif. In his book on St. Kinga and her convent written in 1892, S. Rosół recalls the commemorative origins of St. Rocco's church, founded in the site where Georgely Soos, a Hungarian ally of Polish Dukes, defeated the Mongols and freed Polish slaves: "By a strange fate, this chunk of land, sprinkled by blood spilled in the defense of the fatherland, has become a place of eternal rest for the inhabitants of Stary Sącz." Rosół, *ibid.*, 8.

extent, in southeastern Poland. Mingling the medieval and early modern historical events under the common banner of wars with the Unfaithful conformed fully to one of the most persistent national myths of Poland as the “Bulwark of Christianity” (*antemurale Christianitatis*). Inspired by the Counter-Reformation, the idea became a cornerstone of the early modern ideology of nobility.⁷¹ In popular, and populist, post-Romantic interpretations, idea of Poland as “Christ of the nations,” coined by the great Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz, originally meant to make political, ethical, and religious sense of the suppressions suffered by Poles after the November Uprising (1830–31). Later, however, it merged—in a rather contradictory manner with the author’s own understanding—with that of much earlier concept of the “Bulwark of the Christianity”. By the interpretative maneuver of mingling the Mongols with the Crimean Tatars as one and the same trans-historic political predator, and Poles as crusaders of northeastern Europe, the popular history managed to push back ‘proofs’ of Poles protecting Christian Europe to the thirteenth century. Moreover, in the national imagination, inspired by anti-Russian sentiments, the ruthless and despotic “Tatar” served as an Aesopean figure masking the real enemy, the Russian, in a double role of a ruler and of a faithful subaltern of the empire, both executors of the Polish desire for freedom. Often, the racialized representation of the “Tatar” embodied derogatory characteristics of the Russian as merely ‘an Asian savage’ speaking the Slavic language.⁷²

⁷¹ The Polish nobility in the early modern period believed that they descended from the ancient tribe of Sarmatians, that is, the Scythians. Consequently, they believed that peasants, their serfs, descended from the Slavic tribes which the Sarmatians conquered and subjugated in antiquity. The Polish nobility shared that justification of the relationships of the feudal power with Hungarian or Rus’ian nobilities.

⁷² It happened often but was not the rule. The derogatory characteristics applied in most cases to the common soldiers, lower rank bureaucrats, or merchants. See: Józef I. Kraszewski, *Bezimienna: Powieść z końca XVIII wieku* (Lwów: F. H. Richter, 1869), where Russian noblemen are represented as Asian sexual predators.

Moreover, the notorious *jasyr*, the abduction of young women into sexual slavery practiced for centuries by Mongols, Tatars and Turks—a motif central to the legend of the wheat—soaked into the popular historical consciousness as a gender-specific war experience.⁷³ Polish historians estimate that unlike the first, the second and third invasions aimed solely at pillage, plunder, and the kidnapping of slaves.⁷⁴ Yet, there are differing opinions in Polish historiography as to which estate, peasants or townsmen, suffered the most casualties.⁷⁵ Historians estimate that, while during the first invasion about 3% of the population of affected principalities perished, during the second one, regarding the passivity of the knights in defending the principalities, the losses reached up to 10% of the population, and about 10,000 people were kidnapped into slavery.⁷⁶

The motif of kidnapping young women became essential in describing the modern characteristics of Tatar/Turkish invasions.⁷⁷ From primary sources and pre-modern

⁷³ Contemporary primary sources proved the kidnapping of women slaves. According to the anonymous author of the *Kronika Wielkopolska*, during the slaughter of the surrendered in Sandomierz in 1260, Mongols spared “women [...] young and beautiful girls as well as boys;” *Kronika wielkopolska*, ed. by Brygida Kürbis (Warszawa, PWN, 1970). The Russian chronicle *Latopis Halicko-Wołyński* notes in regard to the third invasion of 1287/88: “Tatars [...] took only unmarried maidens into slavery twenty and one thousand of them.” Also, Jan Długosz passed on information about a great number of kidnapped youths of both genders; Krakowski, *ibid.*, p. 220. Krakowski, however, questions accounts in the primary sources. Krakowski, *ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

⁷⁴ Krakowski, *ibid.*, p. 159, 211.

⁷⁵ That disagreement is embedded in Polish criticism of German historiography. From the nineteenth century, German historiography regarded the Mongolian invasions as the main cause that triggered the German colonization movement to the Polish principalities. Polish historians opposed this interpretation from the early twentieth century. By questioning the scope of losses in the peasant population, Polish scholars tried to prove both the smaller scale of devastation and, consequently, a smaller range of the German colonization movement.

⁷⁶ S. Krakowski and T. Jasiński stress that Mongols kidnapped slaves only during their rides beginning in January or February. That would question the great slave hunting in Poland during the second and third invasions. Krakowski, *ibid.*, p. 199; Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 75.

⁷⁷ Rosół, *ibid.*, p. 12.

historiography, women's *jasyr* migrated to nineteenth-century visions of history. In modern Polish culture, the theme of women's enslavement superseded the stories about kidnapped children, a motif so prominent in Balkan histories of the Turkish invasions and rule.⁷⁸ The motif of Christian women's enslavement appeared in historical fiction and in visual representations.⁷⁹ In the context of nineteenth-century attitudes toward sexuality, the historicity of the subject allowed writers to present otherwise obscene images of sex crimes and the sexual slavery of respectable women in the context of national and religious history, fulfilling the patriotic task of historical education of the 'masses' through literature, as well indulging both the popular yearning for the national melodrama and for pornography.

Stęczyński's version of the legend of the wheat provides an example of how popular history utilized the Catholic tradition, hybridizing it into a folk tale and nationalizing it. Yet, in the particular case of St. Kinga's cult—or in most of the cults of Polish saints in the nineteenth century, for that matter—the relationships between Catholicism and Polish statehood and nationhood were far from being straightforward. Thus, it is important to bring up the history of St. Kinga and her cult as a contextual framework. In this framework, many elements in Kinga's cult seem especially important for the analysis of gender representations in the nineteenth century: the shifting state(s) support of the cult, the ideology of *antemurale Christianitatis*, the replacement of the idea of the people (*lud*) with that of the nation as the object of Kinga's

⁷⁸ Janissaries.

⁷⁹ For examples see: Józef I. Kraszewski, *Historia o Januszu Korczaku i pięknej miecznikównie*, (1874), Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Pan Wołodyjowski* (1887-1888), and most notably Jadwiga Łuszczewska's *Branki w jasyrze*; Deotyma (J. Łuszczewska), *Branki w jasyrze* (Warszawa: Teodor Paprocki, 1901). The whole chapter dedicated to St. Kinga in Deotyma, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 114-124 and 144-168. Visual interpretations include works by Józef Brandt, *Odbicie jasyru*, (1878), painted in Munich, Germany where Brandt lived and kept his art studio. Yet, Henryk Rodakowski's *Hetman Koniecpolski uwalnia jeńców z niewoli tatarskiej pod Haliczem* (1875-1876) was badly received by critics for unrealistic representations of "sweet Polish women."

patronage, and the absorption of Marian elements into the cult of Kinga, a saint-Queen of Poland.

Emerging locally around the convent of Poor Clares in Stary Sącz, Kinga's cult became state-sponsored early on.⁸⁰ After the re-unification of the Kingdom of Poland in the first part of the fourteenth century, St. Kinga's cult served as a way to reaffirm the restored royal power of the Piast dynasty over the Polish Crown.⁸¹ Duchess Kinga of Cracow, chaste, brave, and merciful, aided a cohort of the saints descending from the Polish royal family. By promoting Kinga's cult, the Piast dynasty followed the example of the Hungarian royal family, who buttressed their political power with cults of royal saints.⁸² St. Kinga herself offered a good example of such politics, turning her convent in Stary Sącz into a center of the cult of the saints descending from the Arpadian dynasty.⁸³

Moreover, the last Piasts found Kinga's promotion of Saint Stanisław's cult politically useful, as his cult became central to the idea of the unification of Polish principalities during the thirteenth century.⁸⁴ In 1079, King Bolesław the Brave killed Stanisław, Bishop of Cracow, and

⁸⁰ The beginnings of Kinga's cult in the Sądectczyzna and in Hungary dates to 1307. Feliks Kiryk, "Sąddecka Pani," in: *Rocznik Sądecki*, Vol. 27 (1999), p. 19.

⁸¹ Both King Władysław Łokietek and his wife, Queen Jadwiga invested a great deal in Kinga's cult. Władysław emphasized his close ties, as a child, to his aunt Kinga. The King also swore that Duchess Kinga maintained her chastity throughout her marriage. This royal confirmation provided a basis for the development of Kinga's cult as that of a 'virginal queen-wife' espoused to God.

⁸² Gábor Klaniczay argues that in medieval Hungary the "consecration of royal power" appears more clearly than in other Central European countries. Gábor Klaniczay, "Königliche und dynastische Heiligkeit in Ungarn," in Jürgen Petersohn, ed. *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter*, (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1994), pp. 343-362.

⁸³ Kiryk, *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸⁴ Kinga became one of the strongest supporters of the Franciscan order in Polish lands. The Franciscans proved to be particularly useful in promoting the idea of a unification of the Polish Crown, which was for over a century divided into small principalities. St. Kinga, following the example of her aunt St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and assisted

ordered to hack the Bishop's body into pieces and thrown into a pond. According to his hagiography, during the translation of the Bishop's relics in 1088 to Wawel Cathedral, the severed parts of St. Stanisław's body "miraculously rejoined". In the fourteenth century this miracle changed its meaning from a symbol of the excesses of secular power, to a symbol of the restituted Polish Crown. Prior to the partition of Poland, the hagiographic legends presented St. Stanisław's dismembered body as a prefiguration of the feudal fragmentation of the Polish Kingdom. That symbolic aspect of St. Stanisław's hagiography traversed the medieval period, and in the nineteenth century came to represent the idea of the 'resurrection' of the partitioned Commonwealth. St. Kinga came to be remembered as the one who promoted the cult of the bishop-martyr and who "obtained God's mercy for the crime of St. Stanisław's assassination, which was believed to stain the entire nation" leading to the dissolution of the state.⁸⁵

The Jagiellonian dynasty, which (generally speaking) succeeded the Piasts,⁸⁶ showed more interest in promoting their own royal saints, to justify their vague rights to the Polish Crown.⁸⁷ The most important among them was the cult of Queen Jadwiga d'Anjou, King of

by her sister-in-law Bl. Salome, promoted the Franciscan model of spirituality in Poland. Franciscan spirituality gained popularity among the Polish elites, especially women. Approximately twenty daughters of the Piasts joined the Poor Clares. Two of the daughters of king Kazimierz the Great, the last of the Piasts ruler, were given the name Cunegundis (*Kunegunda*), the name absent in the Piasts genealogy prior to the arrival of Kinga. All that proves that the Piasts invested in the Kinga cult as a state-supported cult. Kowalska, *ibid.*, 136, 328; Czesław Deptuła and A. Witkowska, "Wzorce ideowe zachowań ludzkich w XII i XIII wieku," in Aleksander Gieysztor, ed. *Polska dzielnicowa i zjednoczona*, (Warszawa 1972), p. 150ff.

According to B. Kowalska, the later hagiographies and historiographies (for example by Jan Długosz) added the story of Kinga's promoting St. Stanisław's cult. Kiryk, *ibid.*, p. 17. Kowalska argues that the Duchess could actually have been involved in the process of the bishop's beatification. Kowalska, *ibid.*, p. 213-214.

⁸⁵ Rosół, *ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸⁶ With the short reign of the d'Anjou dynasty, represented by king Louis and his daughter, crowned king of Poland, Jadwiga d'Anjou.

⁸⁷ Namely, the cult of St. Kazimierz Jagiellończyk, as well as that of Queen Jadwiga d'Anjou.

Poland.⁸⁸ After her death in 1399, King Consort Władysław Jagiełło (Jogaila, Grand Duke of Lithuania) succeeded her on the Cracow throne and established a Lithuanian dynasty in Poland. Though surrounded by a popular cult from the moment of her death, the formal beatification of Jadwiga d'Anjou took place only in 1979. From the beginning of her cult, representations of St. Jadwiga d'Anjou, especially in the apocrypha, overlap with those of St. Kinga, especially as “a mother of the poor.”⁸⁹ In consequence, the Arpadian-Piast Duchess' cult was overshadowed by that of the d'Anjou-Jagiellonian King-Queen's up to the end of the sixteenth century.⁹⁰

The Counter-Reformation invigorated St. Kinga's cult. King Sigismund III Vasa initiated the process of her beatification and King Jan III Sobieski brought it to a successful conclusion in

⁸⁸ Queen Jadwiga, a daughter of Louis I, King of Hungary and Poland, in 1384 was crowned as *Hedvig Rex Poloniae*, as King of Poland.

⁸⁹ B. Przybyszewski, *Żywot świętej Kingi księżnej krakowskiej: Vita sanctae Kyngae ducissae cracoviensis* (Tarnów: Biblios, 1997), pp. 47-49, 51, 66. Representing wives of feudal rulers as protectors and advocates of the poor was a common motif in European medieval culture. The sources of representations varied, though the ideal of a Christian woman's piety prevailed over the social expectations from elite women coming from women's prerogatives based on sharing the patriarchal feudal power with men. M. Cetwiński demonstrated that the first representation of the wife of a Polish ruler, as “a mother of the poor” dates back to *Gesta principum Polonorum (The Deeds of the Princes of Poles)* by Gallus Anonymus (fl. 11th–12th centuries) and to the literary image of one of the wives of Bolesław I Chrobry, the first Polish king, most probably Emnilda of Lusatia (Anonim zwany Gallem, *Kronika polska*, PBI, chap. 13). Gallus also praised Judith of Bohemia, Duchess of Poland, the mother of Boleslaus III the Wrymouth (11th century), *ibidem*, chap. 30. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Jadwiga of Andechs, known also as St. Jadwiga of Silesia, excelled in charities. Later, St. Kinga and St. Jadwiga d'Anjou the Queen fully conformed to the ideal of female royal charity service to the poor. Marek Cetwiński maintains: “If one assumes the charities as a signifier of the progress of the new [Christian] faith, then its triumph dates back to the thirteenth century – to the time of the canonization of St. Stanislaus, St. Jadwiga [of Andechs], as well as to the lives of Kinga and Salomea.” Marek Cetwiński, „Opieka nad biednymi i jej rola w sprawowaniu władzy w świetle średniowiecznych źródeł śląskich,” in Antoni Barciak ed. *Curatores pauperum. Źródła i tradycje kultury charytatywnej Europy Środkowej* (Katowice: Instytut Górnolaski, 2004), p. 37.

⁹⁰ In his *Annales seu cronici incliti regni Poloniae* written in the 15th century (probably 1471-3), Jan Długosz provided an important account of the life of St. Kinga. He also authored a separate hagiography of her: *Vita beatae Kunegundis* (1471). Długosz was among one of the strongest supporters of Kinga's canonization.

1690.⁹¹ In 1715, Vatican announced Blessed Kinga a holy patroness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁹² Thus, her cult was reaffirmed as a state one, now under the banner of re-Catholicization.⁹³ Already in the second half of the seventeenth century, in the midst of wars, St. Kinga became venerated as a defender of the endangered Fatherland, shortly after King Jan Kazimierz declared the Virgin Mary as Queen of Poland.⁹⁴ The defender aspect of Kinga's sainthood provided a basis for King Jan III Sobieski's petition to Rome to resume her beatification; the Pope's approval followed the king's relief of Vienna against the Turkish siege in 1683. From the seventeenth century onward, Kinga's associations with the Mongolian invasion provided a 'medieval' foundation for the idea of a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the *antemurale Christianitatis*, and the nobility as defenders of the faith. The cult helped in mingling the images of medieval Mongols with those of Crimean Tatars, then subjects to the Crimean Khanate, and in the early modern times subjugated to the Ottoman Empire. Operating as an avant-garde of the Turkish army, Tatars entered into countless skirmishes and pillaging in the southeastern part of the Commonwealth, mostly in Ukraine.⁹⁵

⁹¹ The beatification ceremonies took place in Stary Sącz. Soon afterwards the convent was flooded with requests for the relics from all over the Commonwealth. Witkowska, *ibid.*, p. 382.

⁹² Kiryk, *ibid.*, p. 19.

⁹³ In 1670, King Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki reinstated the private worship of the salt miners to St. Kinga in one of the churches in Wieliczka into a state worship by introducing continuous annual masses commemorating the saint. Witkowska, *ibid.*, p. 380; A. Gaczoł, "Kult błogosławionej Kingi w Wieliczce i jego odbicie w sztuce," in Olga Dyba and Stanisław Kołodziejski, eds. *Patientia et tempus. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Doktorowi Marianowi Korneckiemu* (Warszawa: Ośrodek Dokumentacji Zabytków, 1999), p. 66.

⁹⁴ Ludwik Kowalski and Stanisław Fischer, *Żywot bł. Kingi i dzieje jej kultu* (Tarnów: Tarnowskie Tow. Kulturalne, 1992), p. 193; Ł. Walczy, *ibid.*, p. 29.

⁹⁵ The first Polish-Turkish war took place in 1485-1503. Between 1620 and 1699, Poland and Turkey were four times in a state of war.

Kinga's cult was propagated thanks to the most popular hagiographical work ever written in Polish, *Lives of Saints* by Piotr Skarga (1579), a Jesuit priest and a confessor of King Sigismund III Vasa. In the nineteenth century, *Lives* was more likely to be found in peasant households than the Bible.⁹⁶ St. Kinga's cult was spread by other hagiographies as well.⁹⁷ During the Counter-Reformation St. Kinga's iconography significantly developed.⁹⁸ Stary Sącz, Cracow, Wieliczka, Bochnia and Nowy Korczyn became centers of the cult and pilgrimage sites.⁹⁹

In 1770, prior to the first partition of Poland, Austria took over the highland area of the Commonwealth, including the Spisz, the Sądecka, as well as the Nowy Targ and Czorsztyn

⁹⁶ *Żywoty Świętych Starego i Nowego Testamentu* by P. Skarga, first published in 1579, became tremendously popular through the following centuries. There were 9 editions of the book by the time of the author's death. By 1939, the book was republished for the 32nd time; *Lives...* was published, among others, in Kraków, Lwów, Sanok, in Chełm, Poznań, Piekary Śląskie, in Warsaw, Łódź, Płock, in Petersburg and Vienna. Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 21. The hagiographies were lined up in accordance with the liturgical calendar. The book contains 11 biographies of Polish saints. *Lives of Saints...* is regarded as one of the highest achievement of Polish baroque literature. According to Jurow: "Legends have the characteristics of short stories and at the same time of religious 'readings' (*czytanki*) [...] they were stories about the lives of heroes (*herosi*), whom Polish believers knew mainly from chants and indirect lore." Jurow, *ibid.*, p. 133. Katarzyna Smreczyńska (...-...), a peasant-highlander mother of Władysław Orkan, taught herself to read and write using *Lives of the Saints* by Piotr Skarga. See: Ignacy Maciejowski (Sewer), *Matka* (Warszawa: Biblioteka Dzieł Wyborowych, 1900).

⁹⁷ In 1617, Przemysław Mojecki published his translation of Długosz's *Vita beatae Kunegundis*. Nearly a century later, in 1718, Marcin Frankowicz published a much-extended hagiography called *The Image of Holy Perfection...* (*Wizerunek świętej doskonałości...*), which enjoyed many re-printings. Frankowicz drew on Długosz, though he added miracles from years 1522-1714. Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 21-22.

⁹⁸ Witkowska remarks on the multitude of visual representations of St. Kinga in Kraków alone, though most of the paintings perished during following centuries, due to the devastation during the "Swedish Deluge" and numerous fires during the eighteenth century. Witkowska mentions the cycle of the illustrations of St. Kinga's life by Tomasz Dolabella (1614-1622) commissioned by Sigismund III Vasa and Bishop Szyszkowski. Witkowska, *ibid.*, p. 379.

⁹⁹ A. Witkowska OSU, "Kinga, Kunegunda," in *Nasi święci. Polski słownik hagiograficzny* (Poznań: Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, 1995), p. 378. Witkowska noticed that Cardinal Jerzy Radziwiłł, the bishop of Kraków at the end of the sixteenth century, introduced the practice of demonstrating the reliquary containing Kinga's head during the mass and offering it to the pilgrims to kiss. Pilgrims who attended masses at St. Kinga's grave during certain feasts, enjoyed a 100-days indulgence.

counties. The process of Kinga's canonization, initiated in 1753, was halted by the partitions, which constrained the pilgrimage movement. In 1782, Emperor Joseph II Habsburg dissolved all the contemplative convents, including the Poor Clares. This act abolished the five-hundred-year old financial, juridical, and administrative power of the Poor Clares over their *patrimony*, including Stry Sącz. It also disrupted for a few years a sacred continuum of the cult, embodied in its site, the convent in Stry Sącz. Furthermore, another of Joseph II's decrees in the early 1780s prohibited the construction of road chapels and local pilgrimages.¹⁰⁰ That also affected the stability of St. Kinga's cult.

The Catholic Habsburgs, however, did not intend to abolish St. Kinga's cult. On the contrary, Austria attempted to use the 'Arpadian legacy' to legitimize their political control over southwestern Poland. The Habsburgs supported their claims to that area with the thirteenth-century tradition, according to which the Hungarian rulers called themselves kings of Galicia and Lodomeria.¹⁰¹ Already in 1770, to justify the annexation, Empress Maria Theresa's commissars searched the Stry Sącz convent for any documents stipulating that the occupied territory historically constituted the dowry of Duchess Kinga of Cracow, and therefore belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary. They found nothing. During a gathering with Polish nobility and clergy, however, the Austrian commissar alleged that the first occupation was the recuperation of the Duchess Kinga's dowry to the Hungarian Crown.¹⁰² In the following year, the Habsburg

¹⁰⁰ Stanisław Kutrzeba, Historia ustroju Polski w zarysie (Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1920), Vol. 4, p. 145.

¹⁰¹ Łukasz Walczy, „Kult bł. Kingi w ośrodkach górnictwa solnego,” in Studia i materiały do dziejów żup solnych, Vol. 18 (1994), p. 32.

¹⁰² Władysław Bazielich, Historie starosądeckie (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1965), 136-155; Teofil Modelski, “Okupacja Sandeczyny i Nowotarszczyzny w 1770 r.,” Kwartalnik Historyczny Vol. 37 (1932).

archivists elaborated further, yet still insufficiently from legal point of view, the dowry argument.¹⁰³

After the third partition of the Commonwealth (1795), the Austrian administration attempted to redirect St. Kinga's cult from focusing on the Polish state toward the profession of salt mining. The Viennese court aimed to shift the center of the cult from Stary Sącz to Wieliczka near Cracow, the location of the major salt mines. The new administration of the salt mines transferred Kinga's relics and the major memorabilia to St. Anthony's chapel in the mine.¹⁰⁴ After few years, however, the Poor Clares gained a decree delaying their dissolution, regained Kinga's relics and placed them back in Stary Sącz. Soon after, the nuns reinstated their convent and opened a girl school.¹⁰⁵ Saving the convent meant saving the national aspect of St. Kinga's cult. The battle over the 'Polonization' of St. Kinga's cult finally ended with great success during the years of the Galician autonomy (1860–1873).

In her book on St. Kinga published in 1892 and republished many times, Maria Sandoz noted: "There is perhaps no other more poetic persona among our Polish patrons than St. Kunegunda, rightly called the 'queen of legends.'"¹⁰⁶ The poet dedicated one of her poems to the legend of the wheat.¹⁰⁷ Kinga frequently appeared in historical and popular writings during the partition era. The first surge of her popularity occurred around 1860, emerging from two

¹⁰³ Bazielić, *ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁰⁴ The Court Chamber for the Mints and Mining (K. K. Hofkammer für Münz und Bergwesen) officially announced Kinga as a saintly patroness of the salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia. A. Gaczoł, *ibid.*, p. 64. Many wells, corridors, chambers and chapels were named after Kinga. Krystyna Paluch-Staszkiel, „Kaplica Bł. Kingi w kopalni soli w Wieliczce,” *Studia i materiały do dziejów żup solnych*, Vol. 10 (1981), p. 114.

¹⁰⁵ Poor Clares ran a school for lay girls in Stary Sącz already in early modern times, yet after 1782 the schooling became the convent's *raison d'être*. Barycz, *ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁶ Maria Sandoz (Podolanka), *Błogosławiona Kinga Królowa i Patrona Polski* (1892), after: J. Dybiec, „Błogosławiona Kinga w legendzie, literaturze, nauce,” *Rocznik Sądecki*, Vol. 27 (1999), p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ Maria Sandoz, *Boża pszeniczka*, Dybiec, *ibid.*, 26; S. M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, p. 245.

unrelated sources. One was the patriotic sentiment that culminated in the early 1860s, stimulated by the January Uprising (1863–4) in Russian Poland and its aftermath. The more immediate one came from ‘the discovery of the mountains’ for tourism, which happened around the same time: “Almost all the guides to the Pieniny and the Sądeczczyzna talk about blessed Kinga.”¹⁰⁸ The second surge in Kinga’s popularity occurred in the decades around the turn of the century, reaching its peak in 1892, on the six-hundredth anniversary of her death.¹⁰⁹ The third, between 1905 and 1912, seemed to come as a Catholic response to a time of social unrest, marked by the Revolution of 1905 in Russian Poland and peasant strikes in Galicia.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 30. In 1896, a great chapel decorated with salt sculptures dedicated to St. Kinga was built in the Wieliczka salt mine, A. Gaczoł, *ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁰⁹ Kazimierz W. Wójcicki, “Kunegunda (święta),” in *Encyklopedia Powszechna* (Warszawa 1864), Vol. 16, pp. 449-452; N. (Michał Nowodworski), “Kunegunda,” in *Encyklopedia Kościelna*, Vol. 11, pp. 517-519; S. Załęski, *Św. Kinga i klasztor starsądecki* (Lwów 1882). In 1884, Wojciech Kętrzyński’s publishing “Vita et miracula sanctae Kyngae...” in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, Vol. 4, pp. 682-744. This publication stirred up an academic interest in Kinga.

Among the jubilee prints: W. Biedroński, “Róże św. Kunegudny,” in *Krakus*, Vol. 4 (1892), p. 50; I. Bogdalski, *Błogosławiona Kinga, jej żywot i dzieła* (Kraków 1892); M. Maturski, *Kazania krótkie na przeniesienie relikwii bł. Kingi do nowej trumny* (Kraków 1892); S. Pallan, *Święta Kunegunda, patronka Polski i Litwy* (Tarnów 1892); S. Rajss OFMConv., *Nabożeństwo ku czci błogosławionej Kunegundy...* (Kraków: Nakł. Zakonnic Klasztoru Staro-Sądeckiego, 1892); --, “Pieśń do błogosławionej Kunegundy,” in *Tygodnik Katolicki* Vol. 2, No. 13 (1892); S. Rosół, *Święta Kinga, jej klasztor i miasto Sącz Stary* (Nowy Sącz: Kom. Św. Kingi, 1892); M. Sandoz, *ibid.* Sandoz’s poems appeared in many reprints, Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 26. S. Marja Izabela Żmigrodzka, a magistra of Poor Clares from Stary Sącz sponsored editions of Bogdalski and Sandoz, as well as a production of figurines and medallions with St. Kinga, for the devotional sale. S. M. Immaculata, *Bł. Kinga* (Lwów 1925), p. 172.

The jubilee of St. Kinga (July 23-31, 1892) attracted about forty thousand pilgrims from all Polish provinces. Card. Albin Dunajewski celebrated the feast, which included two processions with relics of St. Kinga and decorating a figure of the saint with a crown - “a gift from Polish ladies”. Armenian Archbishop Izaak Mikołaj Issakowicz delivered a sermon. M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, p. 174.

¹¹⁰ The majority of publications on St. Kinga after 1905 appeared in Russian Poland. This fact might signify a reinvigoration of the cult in the Russian partition as an aftermath of the jubilee of 1892, as argued by Dybiec. Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 26. It may, however, mean that it came also as a response to the events of 1905.

The invigoration of the cult around the turn of the century came from various sources. The Catholic Church in Galicia gave one stimulus; the populist movement became another one, presenting St. Kinga as one of the earliest promoters of the Polish language in the liturgy and missionary works.¹¹¹ Kinga's cult was significantly strengthened by her jubilee in Stary Sącz, which drew most of the Polish Catholic establishment and some forty thousand pilgrims.¹¹² In the aftermath of the jubilee, during his ingress in 1901, Bishop Leon Wałęga—a fervent opponent of the peasant movement in Galicia—claimed Blessed Kinga a patroness of the Tranów diocese, and in 1905 managed to resume the process of her canonization.¹¹³ All those initiatives invigorated pilgrimage movements to Kinga's relics in Stary Sącz.¹¹⁴ Alongside old places of the cult emerged new ones. In 1904, the St. Kinga's Jubilee Civic Committee opened a grotto-chapel forged in the ruins of Pieniny Castle. In the following years, the chapel became a

¹¹¹ Witkowska, *ibid.*, p. 375; Barycz, *ibid.*, p. 73.

¹¹² S. Rosół, in loyalist style, emphasized that the patriotic matters in the jubilee are strictly subordinated to the religious ones. Rosół, *ibid.* p. 35.

¹¹³ A. Witkowska OSU, "Kinga, Kunegunda," in: *Nasi święci. Polski słownik hagiograficzny* (Poznań: Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, 1995), p. 383. Leon Wałęga, Archbishop of the Diocese of Tarnów, was an ardent opponent of Rev. Stanisław Stojałowski, a Galician priest and a deputy to the Austrian Parliament who was a prominent activist in the peasant (populist) movement in Galicia and edited journals addressed exclusively to peasants, *Pszczółka* and *Wieniec*. Stojałowski organized peasant self-help groups and peasant trade unions, among others. His radical criticism of the clergy, nobility, and bourgeoisie—Polish as well as "foreign" (German, Czech, and Jewish)—for exploiting peasants in the name of social justice, which he drew from Pope Leo's XIII encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), put Stojałowski in permanent conflict with the local Catholic establishment, resulting in temporary excommunication, imprisonment, and Church censorship of his writings. In consequence, Stojałowski became a target of the condemnation of the local Galician priests, who presented him and his works as godless deeds. Bishop Wałęga was among the most passionate enemies of Stojałowski. Józef Wołczański, "Listy ks. Stanisława Stojałowskiego do Arcybiskupa Józefa Bilczewskiego z lat 1901-1902," *Nasza Przyszłość*, Vol. 90 (1998), p. 387-410; --, "Wałęga Leon," *Słownik biskupów katolicyzmu społecznego w Polsce*, Vol. 3, p. 166-169; S. Kołodziej, *Duchowieństwo decezji tarnowskiej wobec ruchu ludowego* (Tarnów: Biblos, 2009).

¹¹⁴ Stanisław Salaterski, "Z dziejów kultu błogosławionej Kingi na Sądecczyźnie," *Rocznik Sądecki*, Vol. 22 (1994), p. 199.

site of local pilgrimages, as well as a tourist attraction. In 1907 inhabitants of the predominantly Eastern Catholic Lemkos village of Żegiestów Zdrój, a popular spa in the Pieniny area, erected the first church in the Sądecczyzna solely dedicated to St. Kinga.¹¹⁵ Rejuvenation of the cult also stimulated St. Kinga's iconography. There are 42 parishes in the Tatry and the Pieniny area owning images and sacred objects related to St. Kinga. Cheap prayer cards with images of the saint circulated in 48 different versions.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Kinga, as a given name, became popular among the inhabitants of all social groups in the area.¹¹⁷ Religious songs also flourished.¹¹⁸ "St. Kinga's miraculous springs" could be found in multiple locations across the Pieniny, and so-called "St. Kinga's little feet" on rocks in the shape of a footprint in many places in the Podhale.¹¹⁹ Even old linden trees in Stary Sącz were associated with St. Kinga.¹²⁰ As a "mother of people," the Duchess appeared in a multitude of popular writings addressed to the lower classes, which exploited legends as well as national historical apocrypha.¹²¹ Most of the popular

¹¹⁵ Salaterski, *ibid.*, pp. 197, 200.

¹¹⁶ Salaterski, *ibid.*, p. 203.

¹¹⁷ Salaterski, *ibid.*, p. 204.

¹¹⁸ *Immaculata*, *ibidem*.

¹¹⁹ As with the legend of the wheat, the legend of the footprint in a rock comes from Marian legend: when peasants failed to assist Kinga with her carriage, a stone softened under the saint's feet, giving her relief from exhaustion.

Janicka-Krzywda, *ibid.* p. 51.

¹²⁰ Salaterski, *ibid.*, p. 204.

¹²¹ Antoniewicz, *ibid.*, the fourth edition, reprint in Karol Antoniewicz, *O świętych polskich* (Kraków: A. Koziński, 1906); A. Kisielewski, *Żywot Świętej królowej Polskiej* (Lwów 1867); J. Leszek, *Żywot św. Kunegundy* (Kraków 1868); J. Chociszewski, *Żywoty św. patronów narodu polskiego* (Poznań 1874); E. Zorjan (E. Sedlaczek), *Święta Kunegunda patronka ziemi polskiej* (Macierz Szkolna 1886); S. Parasiewicz, *Święta Kinga, królowa polska* (Lwów: Wyd. Ludowe, 1886).

devotional books on St. Kinga were inexpensive and distributed to parish and village libraries (*biblioteki ludowe*).¹²²

On the wave of national sentiments, Kinga's position as a holy royal patroness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, that is—of the nation of Poles and the Polish nation—was reasserted. In the popular perception of history, in the Polish royal Catholic 'pantheon', Kinga stood by St. Jadwiga d'Anjou, St. Wojciech (Adalbertus), St. Kazimierz, as well as St. Stanisław.¹²³ The most profound assertion of Kinga, as Queen-Mother of the Poles, appeared in the greatest artistic and devotional commemorative endeavor in modern Poland: the construction of an underground chapel in the salt mine of Wieliczka dedicated to her. The initial work on the chapel began in 1895 (a few years after the jubilee) and was finished in 1910s.¹²⁴ The chapel contained many patriotic symbols. The pulpit, for instance, built in 1903 by a salt miner and a

¹²² Books by Sedlaczek and Parasiewicz, for instance. Dybiec, *ibid.*, p. 25. Michał Synoradzki, "Święci patronowie i patronki: Opowieści religijne," *Dzwonek Częstochowski*, Vol. 4 (1904), pp. 37-49; G. Gawalewiczówna Toporczańska, *Dobra królowa. z żywota bł. Kunegundy. Opowiadanie historyczne* (Warszawa 1906); n.n., *Żywot św. Kunegundy (Kingi) królowej polskiej* (Lublin 1906); n.n., *Żywot bł. Kunegundy (Kingi) z opisem kaplicy arcybiskupa Komorowskiego pod wezwaniem Pana Jezusa Ukrzyżowanego w kolegiacie łowickiej* (Warszawa 1908); n.n., *Święta Kunegunda królowa Polska* (Warszawa 1912); M[aria Gertruda Skórzewska CSIC], *Święta Kinga w Ziemi Sądeckiej: Legendy tatrzańskie w dwóch aktach* (Jazłowiec 1911); Jan Pabis, *Żywot bł. Kunegundy księżny Polski, pani ziemi sądeckiej, patronki narodu polskiego* (Stary Sącz 1912).

¹²³ Józef Chociszewski, *Żywoty świętych patronów narodu polskiego. Dla ludu i młodzieży* (Poznań 1874), pp. 118-125; Aleksander Popławski, *Święta Kunegunda i siostry jej B. Helena czyli Jolenta i B. Małgorzata* (Kraków: Nakł. autora, 1881).

¹²⁴ The construction of the chapel was initiated by Austrian officials of Polish origins: the Councillor of Treasury Józef Waydowicz, the senior mining concellor Sylwester Miszke and the mine manager Edward Windakiewicz. Paluch-Staszkiel, *ibid.*, p. 120. Works on chapel lasted until 1963, but the first stage ended up before the outbreak of World War I. Paluch-Staszkiel, *ibid.*, p. 104. C. [F. Piestrak], *W podziemiach wielickich* (Wieliczka 1903); --, *Kilka słów o Wieliczce i jej kopalniach* (Kraków 1903); --, *Kopalnie soli w Wieliczce* (Lwów 1907); --, *Przewodnik po Wieliczce i jej kopalniach* (Wieliczka 1912).

self-taught sculptor Józef Markowski, was set upon “Wawel rock.”¹²⁵ The elements of the pulpit’s base brought further references to the royal castle in Cracow. Its design was inspired by the walls of the castle and it also contained a sculpture of a dragon, derived from the legend of the Wawel dragon. Decorative shields on the pulpit showed early modern crests of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. Thus, while evoking traditions of the Commonwealth, the crests were composed in an exactly the same way as on the seal of the National Government from the time of the January Uprising of 1863–64.¹²⁶

Moreover, Jan Matejko represented Kinga as Queen of the Tatra in his painting commissioned by the salt mines of Bochnia.¹²⁷ In *St. Kinga* (1892), the Duchess appears against a background of the Tatra’s skyline, enlightened by the rays of heavenly grace.¹²⁸ Embedded in national mythology, from a medieval “mother of the poor”, a benefactor of the Polish army, and a holy defender of the Polish state, Kinga, Queen of Poland, turned into the Mother of the Tatra, of the Podhale, and of the highlanders themselves.

¹²⁵ Paluch-Staszkiel, *ibid.*, p. 129. Paluch-Staszkiel argues that the inspiration for the patriotic motifs on the pulpit came from Feliks Piestrak, a salt mining engineer, who supervised the artistic and architectural side of the project, or from E. Barącz, another engineer, who in his youth studied art in Munich where he befriended artists from the Polish painters colony, and maintained relationships with circles of artists in Cracow as well. Paluch-Staszkiel, *ibid.*, p. 129-130.

¹²⁶ Paluch-Staszkiel, *ibid.*; Walczy, *ibid.*, p. 34. On one of the chapel walls there is a relief made in a green salt representing the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt, to which the legend of the wheat is associated.

¹²⁷ Stanisława Serafińska, *Jan Matejko: Wspomnienia rodzinne* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1955).

¹²⁸ Matejko painted this particular picture for the society of Bochnia. Criticized for the results, he withdrew his promise and the painting finally went to Wieliczka.



Figure 4. Jan Matejko, *St. Kinga as Mother of the Tatra* (1892). Muzeum Żup Solnych w Wieliczce

Between Coward, Victim, Helper, and Defender

In traditional representations, derived unchanged from medieval and early modern sources, the gender of peasants, both men and women, appears as an unmarked category defined by their social relation to a superior, in the case of St. Kinga—to a woman. The highlander appears, at best, as an incidental helper. This section demonstrates that the masculinity of the highlander, as a peasant, emerges as a marked category only when it is framed in a gender context, when a superior woman is sexually assaulted by an enemy.

Historically, in the Kingdom of Poland and in the Commonwealth, with the exception of the royal peasant infantry (*piechota wybraniecka*) and private magnate armies, peasants were not summoned to military service. During the Mongol invasions, only village *vogts* and mayors (*soltysi*) were called to join the knights, as they were counted among the landowners.¹²⁹ The townsmen's martial duties were limited to the defense of their towns; the peasants' military services were limited to performing a special kind of corvée, usually to work in fortifying towns and castles, to build and maintain barricades, and sentry duty.¹³⁰ Early on, the sentry obligation was changed to a payment in grains or coins. During relocations of an army, peasants were expected to help the knights by carrying their tackle, supplying noblemen with carriages, and in some cases, preparing their weaponry.¹³¹ Certainly during the Mongol invasions, the role of knight's 'helper' was the only respectable way for highlanders to engage in warfare, except for acts of immediate self-defense. Theirs was also the fate of victims.

¹²⁹ Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 31.

¹³⁰ Jasiński recalls one of the documents issued by Duke Bolesław IV the Chaste in 1258, during the second Mongol invasion, thanking the bishop of Kraków and the diocesan clergy for lending him their "free men as well as serfs" to prepare the defense of the principality. Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 67.

¹³¹ Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 33-34.

The highlander in the legend of the wheat appears as a peasant man who is engaged in sowing seeds, one of the most symbolic activities attributed to his position, and who comes into a direct interaction with Kinga, a saint and a royal, obediently and loyally fulfilling her instructions and being rewarded for it. The gender of the peasant appears as an unmarked category, defined by the relation of power to a socially superior woman. Thus, the masculinity of the sowing highlander decreases, and yet it comes to signify his social characteristics. In the religious and national contexts of the legend, the highlander acts as a metonymy of the peasantry, as an estate (*stan*) or later, a class. The masculinity of the highlander thus becomes visible only when framed in gender-feudal relationships.

The peasant in the legend plays the role of an incidental helper/defender because he does nothing more than what he is asked to. Finding himself on the saint's path, the peasant is obliged to fulfill his feudal duty. His 'courage,' so to speak, in confronting the enemies, is backed up by God and reaffirmed by the patronage of a saintly benefactor. The role of the helper in hagiographic legend, however, differs from that identified by Vladimir Propp in *Morphology of the Folk Tale*.¹³² In a hagiography, a saint acts as the ultimate hero. A helper's function conforms to the poetics of medieval hagiographies, where commoners appear as witnesses to God's miracles as represented by the supernatural powers of a saint. The hagiographic helper, unless he/she/it provides divine assistance to a saint in distress, is always an ordinary person, an animal, a plant, etc. By becoming a saint's helper, a peasant man—and in accordance with logic of mythological metonymy, all 'sowing men'—become witnesses to their blessed landlady's powers to reverse the natural cycle; that is, to her miracles and sanctity.

¹³² Vladimir A. Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968).

The hagiographic mode of representation complies with the historical realities as well as with the stereotype of peasant experiences of war as mostly victims, by-standers or at best, helpers to the nobility. The stereotypical representation of peasants in elite culture traditionally stressed their cowardice or their status as victims. An early version of the legend of the wheat, published in 1839 in one of the first Polish journals addressed solely to peasants, “The People’s Friend” (*Przyjaciel Ludu*), well illustrates such a mode of representation.¹³³ Published in Leszno (Prussia), the journal was addressed to lower class readers of Polish. In the Great Duchy of Posen, peasants were emancipated in 1821 and the level of literacy among them was greater than that of their counterparts in the Austrian and Russian partitions. Written by an anonymous author, *Lady Kinga (A Legend, According a Highlanders’ Tale)* contained 34 stanzas, simple rhymes, and was easy to memorize.¹³⁴

Although the peasant in “The People’s Friend” version appears to be a medium through which the reader encounters Kinga and witnesses her miracle, he is represented in a stereotypical way: a highlander experiences “Godly fear” at the sight of Kinga and her entourage, and his fright deepens even more when confronted by an investigating Mongol. Had such a representation come from the Catholic tradition, or was it a residue of feudal ideology, or both? There is no way to determine if it had come from the hagiographical *licentia poetica*, or if it was just an artistic manifestation of the stereotypical characteristic of the servile attitude of the newly emancipated serfs toward their Polish and German lords, as well as religious and secular

¹³³ “Przyjaciel Ludu, czyli Tygodnik Potrzebnych i Pożytecznych Wiadomości” (1834-49) was published in Leszno, in the Prussian partition. The journal was established by, and up to 1839, edited by Jan Popliński and his twin brother Antoni, as well as by Paweł Ciechański (who was the official chief editor). Maurycy Motty, *Przechadzki po mieście* (Warszawa: PIW, 1957).

¹³⁴ n.n., “Pani Kinga (Legenda, wedle podania górali),” in *Przyjaciel Ludu, czyli Tygodnik Potrzebnych i Pożytecznych Wiadomości*, Vol. 5, No. 45 (1839), pp. 359-360.

authorities. That stereotype, which embodied one of the axioms of the gender ideology of the nobility and their cultural successors, persisted for centuries.¹³⁵ To stigmatize another man as a coward on the basis of his social standing was itself an indication of symbolic violence, a performative enactment of homosocial and gender hierarchies.

¹³⁵ In Bartek zwycięzca, Henryk Sienkiewicz explained the ferocious bravery of the main protagonist, Bartek, a Polish peasant soldier drafted into the Prussian army and fighting against French, by his initial state of child-like dread and fear experienced in combat. As a result, Bartek's courage appears as an act of mere self-defense. Henryk Sienkiewicz, Bartek zwycięzca (Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1882).

Noble Women's Paternalism and the Social Solidarism

In this section I demonstrate how peasant masculinity, and thus the notion of citizenship, was shaped and reshaped in relationship to a noble woman. I frame the stories of St. Kinga and her "faithful highlander" in a larger national symbolic framework centering on the figure of the Mother-Pole, and on the Marian cult. Thus, I demonstrate the shift of cultural perceptions of St. Kinga, as one of the incarnations of the Mother-Pole, with consequences for reconstructing peasant (highlander) masculinity and sense of citizenship.

The position of helper subordinates the peasant man to the real hero of the story, who is a woman/nun/ex-Duchess/saint. The configurations of gender, class, and religious relationships are crucial in constructing peasant masculinity. The peasant from the legend does not help his landlord, but rather his landlady. In the legend, St. Kinga embodies three dimensions of power to which the highlander was subjugated: the royal, as she is an ex-Duchess of Cracow and Lady of Sądziejna; the religious, as she is a saint; and the feudal, as she is the founder and foremost benefactor of the convent in Stary Sącz, which owned many villages and serfs in the Pieniny area.

Peasant masculinity is thus constructed vis-à-vis a noble woman who, apart from being an indirect feudal senior, was responsible for the peasants' welfare based on the gender divisions of feudal authority. The charities performed by St. Kinga recounted by the hagiographies locate her in the context of a pre-emancipation gender/class ideology in which healing the serfs, feeding them in times of famine, and supervising their moral and religious conduct, fell within the scope of the powers of the landladies. St. Kinga in the legend, for instance, does not ask the peasant to lie to the Tatars, since the Decalogue condemns false testimony. Instead, like the Virgin Mary,

St. Kinga performs a miracle to assure the truthfulness of her dependent. Since the emancipation of the serfs in the Habsburg Empire took place in 1846, the paternalist role of a landlady in her relationship to peasants of both genders was still more of a social reality than historical memory.¹³⁶ Thus, Kinga's positions as a nun, an ex-Duchess, as well as a saint, "a mother of the poor," a holy patroness of the region, of the state—and thus of the nation—indicate a noble woman's paternalist relationship to her male dependents. St. Kinga embodies a woman of power, yet one humbled by extraordinary religious devotion.

Social and religious relationality in the construction of historic peasant masculinity served well in imagining the nation, especially in post-emancipation Polish culture, because of its abilities to bracket, mediate, or even silence class tensions, to convey a strong sense of national solidarism, and to grant a divine reward for obeying the "God-given" relationships of power. The legend of the wheat expresses an ideal of the loyal relationship between local peasant men, heads of the households, and their real and symbolic lords, the heads of the Polish nation. In a metonymic form, nuns and their barefoot leader fleeing from the Tatars represent the historical nation: the nobility. The peasant man appears then as a faithful servant to the nobility-in-distress. The legend's lesson is that God blesses those who conform to the social divisions and who protect the innocent and persecuted, including the socially superior. The wheat in the legend symbolizes gold, and therefore prosperity, which is bestowed on those who fulfill their social obligations and respect feudal relationships of power. The religious context of the tale moves the legend as a 'historical' representation beyond historical 'realism' into the space of Catholic-Polish mythology were, labeled as 'folk' memory, the tale gains the status of the 'national

¹³⁶ See: Edward Raczyński, *Pani Róża, synowa Zygmunta Krasieńskiego, potem Edwardowa Raczyńska* (Londyn: Nakł. Autora, 1969).

ontology'. As such, it becomes evidence of the social solidarism and cooperation in the face of an enemy, of the strength of the national bond over the social differences, of the historical 'truth of the people'.

Historically, the power of Polish queens varied. In medieval times the queen-consorts remained in the shadow of their husbands. Only a few, mostly thirteenth-century ascetic queens and duchesses, passed into history as significant cultural and religious sponsors. In most cases historical knowledge about Polish medieval queens is scanty and does not go much beyond their genealogy and names. It was due to the fact that the court culture, including courtly love, was very uncommon in the Piast courts, with the exception of a few Lower Silesian courts where German cultural influences were strong. Though Jadwiga d'Anjou, as a descendent of the royal families of Naples and Budapest, certainly knew the way of life at West European courts, her ascetic preferences tamed the development of the secular court culture. The queen who is strongly associated with the promotion of court culture is Queen Zofia (Sonka Holszańska), the last wife of King Władysław Jagiełło. Yet, her case also illustrated how hazardous it was for Polish queens to sponsor the court culture, as she was accused of having extramarital affairs with some courtly knights—an accusation which meant to question the paternity of her two sons with King Władysław, and heirs to his power. Though finally resolved in favor of the queen, the accusation of unfaithfulness for participating in rituals of the courtly love became a warning sign for other Polish queens. The early modern period did not strengthen the position of Polish queens either, in spite of the fact that the nobility did not tolerate the institution of official royal mistresses. Virtually every queen—and there were in fact very few (the Italian Bona Sforza and the French Marie Gonzaga)—who got involved in politics paid a high price, as in such a case a clash with the nobility was unavoidable. Though Polish queens had their separate courts,

including chancelleries, they financially depended on allowances from the notoriously empty state treasury, and the expences of their courts needed to be corroborated by the Sejm (the noble parliament). As the kings were elected in Poland, the choice of the queens was also a matter of the nobility's concerns, and needed to be approved by the Sejm (in the case of marriage made before the election). Under such circumstances a queen's dowaries was very often distributed even before she arrived in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Moreover, since the monarchy in Poland was elected and not hereditary, the European royal families did not market, so to speak, their most promising female offsprings to the Polish court, and even the Habsburg princesses, who often made Polish queens, arrived with very modest dowaries, and very often only delivered a fraction. That all contributes to the fact that Polish queens had a relatively weak position compared to, say, powerful early modern royal mistresses, and that unlike Russia, Austria, England, or Sweden, with the exception of the short reign of Jadwiga d'Anjou in the fifteenth-century, Poland does not know the institution of a powerful female ruler. These facts certainly question the myth of an exceptionally powerful position of Polish women in noble society, but exploring it lies beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Significantly, the hagiographic and popular representations of St. Kinga, particularly in the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth centuries, shared some characteristics with the icon of the Mother-Pole, a role model for patriotic women.¹³⁷ The upper-class women's financial support of national military endeavors constitutes one of the common tropes. Kinga was

¹³⁷ On the Mother-Pole in nineteenth-century Polish culture: Alicja Kusiak, "Krajobraz z patriotką," in: Polka: Medium, Cięż, Wyobrażenie, ed. by Agnieszka Zawadowska, Maria Janion, Monika Grodzka, and Katarzyna Czaczoł (Warszawa: Fundacja Odnawiania Znaczeń, 2005); --, "Polin, Patriotin, Frau: Über die Konstruktion der Weiblichkeit in Rekonstruktionen der Vergangenheit", in: Zwischen Kriegen: Nationen, Nationalismen und Geschlechter-verhältnisse in Mittel- und Osteuropa 1918–1939, ed. by Johanna Gehmacher, Elizabeth Harvey, and Sophia Kemlein (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004); --, "Heroína narodowa. Kobiety w historiografii Kazimierza Wójcickiego," in: Dialogi w kulturze, ed. by Izabela Skórzyńska and Joanna Ostrowska (Poznań: EmPi2, 2002).

remembered as one who offered her “imperial” dowry to pay for the defense of the country.¹³⁸

Edward Sedlaczek, a prolific author of a popular historiography entitled *Saint Kinga: A Patroness of Polish Land*, published in 1886, recalled Kinga’s generosity in sponsoring the warfare: “[...] when the land and the nation were in danger the good Lady did not spare a penny. As she was always a mother of the nation (*matką narodu*), rescuing it at a time of need, she could not abandon it when the enemy so horrendously threatened it with a loss.”¹³⁹ Yet, Kinga’s ties and contributions to the image of the Mother-Pole exceed her sponsorship of national warfare.

Representations of Kinga allows to explore various facets of the Mother-Pole as a model of patriotic womanhood: the most powerful female normative model in Polish national discourse, and yet the most under-researched and under-theorized. The Mother-Pole, as a product of modern Polish gender discourse, tends to be presented in a reductionist way, as a universal, supra-class gender role model, as well as a social disciplining device, heavily inspired by Catholicism.¹⁴⁰ The connection between the Mother-Pole icon and the Marian cult became an

¹³⁸ Some versions of the legend maintain that Kinga also sponsored rebuilding the country after the Mongol invasions. Those legends find some historical references to Kinga’s support of the colonization movement. Regarding the support of foreign settlers, however, this claim appears slightly twisted in the context of the nationalist interpretation of history in the early twentieth century.

¹³⁹ E. Zorjan (E. Sedlaczek), *Święta Kinga patronka ziemi polskiej* (Lwów: Macierz Szkolna, 1886). Copy cited: E. Zorjan, *Święta Kinga patronka ziemi polskiej* (S.n. 1912), pp. 11, 14.

¹⁴⁰ B. Budrowska, *Macierzyństwo jako punkt zwrotny w życiu kobiety* (Wrocław: Funna, 2000), pp. 175-175-195; D. Kornas-Biela, “Macierzyństwo we współczesnej cywilizacji a nauczanie Jana Pawła II,” in *Macierzyństwo*, J. Augustyn, ed. (Kraków: WAM, 1998); “Nowy etap feminizmu czy powrót do źródeł stworzenia?,” *Więź* No. 1 (1998); J. Pleskaczyński, “Macierzyństwo Najświętszej Maryi Panny wzorem wszelkiej formy macierzyństwa,” *ibid.*; H. Skierczyńska, “Pozycja kobiet w społecznej nauce Kościoła katolickiego,” in *Od kobiety do mężczyzny i z powrotem: Rozważania o płci w kulturze*, Jolanta Brach-Czaina, ed. (Białystok: Trans Humana, 1997); Anna Titkow, “Kobiety pod presją? Proces kształtowania się tożsamości,” in *Co to znaczy być kobietą w Polsce?* Anna Titkow and Henryk Domański, eds. (Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 1995), p. 14-15; Monika Węgierek, “Wybrane katolickie

axiom in Polish Studies and in popular cultural perception. Without a doubt, the Marian cult contributed to the formation of this role model, yet the complexity of the relationship between a model of women's political engagement and a model for Marianism-inspired women's Catholic piety, remains to be explored. The legend of the wheat, with its positioning of a peasant man vis-à-vis his female feudal superior, helps to shed light on how gendered Catholic representations of women's sainthood shaped constructions of both peasant masculinity and noble femininity.

Discussing modern Polish Marianism, Brian Porter-Szűcs argues that the figure of Mary in Catholic history is "multivalent", for "[...] she has been made to carry a wide variety of meanings and serve a multitude of purposes."¹⁴¹ In practice, however, researchers emphasize the dual role the Virgin Mary plays in both Catholicism and the national discourses. According to Porter-Szűcs:

Polish Marianism [...] gains much of its power from the way in which it links seemingly contradictory models of femininity within a national [...] worldview. Mary, the Queen of Poland, has been offered to the faithful as a model for conceptualizing the feminine within the nation, a model which is flexible enough to endure because it rests on a basic dichotomy: on the one hand, Mary is

i protestanckie elementy płci kulturowej (gender) w stereotypie roli kobiety," *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny*, Vol. 1-2 (1995); A. Sobolewska, "Kobieta albo człowiek," *Res Publica Nova*, No. 1 (1994); Barbara Limanowska, "Między nami masochistkami: Nowa Tożsamość, stare stereotypy," in *Głos mają kobiety*, Sławomira Walczewska, ed. (Kraków: eFKa, 1992); Monika Monczka-Ciechomska, "Mit kobiety w polskiej kulturze," *ibid.*; Magdalena Środa, "Kobieta: wychowanie, role, tożsamość," *ibidem*; Bożena Chołuj, "Matka Polka i zmysły," in *Res Publica Nova* No. 3 (1992); Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, "Women in Polish Society: A Historical Introduction," in *Women in Polish Society*, Rudolf Jaworski and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, eds. (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1992); Rudolf Jaworski, "Polish women and the nationality conflict in the province of Posen at the turn of the century," *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Brian Porter, "Hetmanka and Mother: Representing the Virgin Mary in Modern Poland," *Contemporary European History* Vol. 14, No. 2 (2005), p. 151. Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

powerful, sometimes militant protector of Poland; on the other hand, she is an exemplar of feminine domesticity.¹⁴²

Porter-Szűcs emphasizes that, in contrast to Western Marianism which, in the nineteenth century, gave up the image of “the mighty Queen Mother of medieval devotion,” in Poland “this transition has been less pronounced: her royal power continues to be evoked in the struggle against the nation’s enemies.”¹⁴³ Therefore the duality persisted, anchored in modern Polish nationalism and its independentist aspirations. Discussing the consequences of the dual representation of the Virgin Mary for shaping gender roles in modern Polish national discourse, Porter-Szűcs also notes that, contrary to her maternal side, the militant side of the Virgin Mary, embodied in a figure of the *Hetmanka* (an Early Modern title of the commander-in-chief in the Commonwealth) “is rich with possibilities for heterodox implications for both Catholic doctrine and gender norms”.¹⁴⁴ Porter-Szűcs points to the potential gender subversiveness of “an image of Polish men asking a woman for military assistance,” yet emphasizes that Marian “authority is envisioned in such a way that preserves the primacy of masculine agency [...]”.¹⁴⁵ Still, it remains unclear how the militant hypostases of the Virgin Mary allowed Polish women from all social strata to challenge traditional gender norms.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Porter, “*Hetmanka* and Mother...,” p. 153.

¹⁴³ Porter, *ibid.*, 153.

¹⁴⁴ Porter, *ibid.*, 157.

¹⁴⁵ Porter, *ibid.*, 157.

¹⁴⁶ Brian Porter-Szűcs resolves the problem of opposition within the dual (maternal and leaderly) representations of the Virgin Mary by stressing her divine character: “A mortal woman might find it hard to contain such divergent personae, to move from the battlefield to the kitchen without one role undermining the other. Mary, however, has the advantage of being both a terrestrial woman and the mightiest of all saints, and a mystical duality lies at the very foundation of her cult.” Porter, *ibid.*, p. 153.

On her side, the Mother-Pole has not been a homogenic construct either. Like the Virgin Mary, the Mother-Pole has also had her share of multivalencies: the icon changed over time, and altered in different social, political and cultural contexts. Ways in which the Mother-Pole was constructed appear crucial in defining gender and social roles and relationships in the time of the partitions. The defining condition of the Mother-Pole, as I argue, is her “polysemy”, to use Victor Turner’s term, a “multivocality of many symbols, [...] many significations simultaneously.” Turner explains polysemy by the “nodal’ function” with reference to “intersecting sets of classifications.”¹⁴⁷ In the case of the Mother-Pole, it seems worth dusting off the structuralist approach just to realize “the nodal function” and the yet unfixed position of that role model in both spheres of class-based gender ideologies and in the national mythologies. For the Mother-Pole reluctantly comes into an unambiguous relationship with any agent or any figure of national imagery, including the “society,” “the nation” or their individual male or female agents. The only figure that managed to stabilize her in a binary yet multifaceted relationship has been her (political) son: the symbolic ‘Insurgent’ in the nineteenth century, or a warrior for national freedom in the nineteenth-century interpretations of the past. Even in such a pair, however, the Mother-Pole deviates from nineteenth-century gender ideals, because she grants her maternal love only to her chosen sons, who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the fatherland while rejecting traitors and despising cowards.¹⁴⁸ As such, the Mother-Pole challenges the traditional characteristics of the merciful Virgin Mary, who forgives and advocates for

¹⁴⁷ Victor Turner, The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 41-42.

¹⁴⁸ Alicja Kusiak, “Polin, Patriotin, Frau: Über die Konstruktion der Weiblichkeit in Rekonstruktionen der Vergangenheit”, in: Zwischen Kriegen: Nationen, Nationalismen und Geschlechter-verhältnisse in Mittel- und Osteuropa 1918–1939, ed. by Johanna Gehmacher, Elizabeth Harvey, and Sophia Kemlein (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004).

sinners. Moreover, in her Romantic versions, the icon of the Mother-Pole evokes rather an Apocalyptic image of a “woman clothed with the sun” who, if not directly militant, appears in direct confrontation with Evil. Furthermore, linking the militant representations of the Virgin Mary to the “Apocalyptic Woman,” brings to mind the Catholic doctrine in which the latter might not even represent the Virgin Mary, but the Church itself.

Regarded from such a perspective, the Mother-Pole in her militant aspect resembles, or even comprises, the patriarchal characteristic, for in the *Hetmanka* it is God, not the Virgin Mary, who strikes down various ‘infidels.’¹⁴⁹ The Virgin Mary, as the mightiest among the saints, appears as sharing and executing God’s powers. In popular representations, the maternal and paternal aspects in both representations tend to blur and merge into an image of a powerful ‘matriarch’. In Catholic theology, the Virgin Mary remains a saint, not a deity, even if in popular Catholic discourse she is perceived as such.

In Polish culture since 1656, the Virgin Mary is represented as Queen of Poland. St. Mary was granted such a title in the oaths taken by King Jan Kazmierz Vasa, the senators and the nobility during the Second Northern War, known in Poland as the Swedish Deluge (1655–1650). The oaths included two parts. In the first the King proclaimed the Virgin Mary as Queen of Poland. In the second, he gave a never-fulfilled promise to “alleviate the life of our working folks”, which was one of the rarest public indications ever expressed by any Polish monarch to intervene in the relationships between the serfs and their lords. The oaths were heavily inspired by the Marian devotion promoted by the Counter-Reformation, and yet Marianism played a fundamental role in the Vasa dynastic policy aiming to strengthen royal power over the

¹⁴⁹ Porter-Szücs stresses that the Polish clergy occasionally emphasized Mary’s position as a mediator of God’s miracles, fighting a popular perception of her as a semi-goddess endowed with autonomous supernatural powers. Yet, as he argues, “[i]n popular religious practice these doctrinal niceties are often ignored.” Porter, *ibid.*, p. 157.

religiously diverse Parliament. Since the election of the first Vasa king, Sigismund III in 1587, the Marian cult had been steadily promoted to a position of a state cult; by the end of the nineteenth century it reached the status of a national cult. Scholars of gender believe that the unique position of Marianism in national life deeply influenced gender relationships in modern Poland.

In practice, Catholicism did not homogenize the Mother-Pole into a universal role model for all Polish women, though it did evoke it as such. The roles projected by the icon depended on women's various social positions. In modern political and religious discourses, the Mother-Pole could and did easily split between her major hypostasis: the Mother-Pole and the Mother of Poles. The Mother-Pole of the lower classes drew mostly on the maternal image of the Virgin Mary, which was anchored in the cult of the Holy Family, and represented the self-sacrificing mother confined to her household, where she reproduces the nation both biologically (embodied in, among others, extremely popular representations of the Breastfeeding Madonna (*Matka Boska Karmiąca*) and ideologically by instilling children with the Catholic piety expressed in the Polish language. Both images merged on occasions, yet, in view of the history of popular support for the Polish uprisings and the history of democratization in Poland, presenting a peasant woman as the Mother of Poles was simply impossible.

Transgressions of gender norms allowed by sainthood were certainly not the rule in Catholicism, though sainthood has been capable of enlarging the sphere for renegotiating them. The modern nationalisms in Catholic countries seemed to explore such possibilities, to mention only the cult of Joan of Arc in the nineteenth century. The role of the royal women saints in the

history of modern nationalism remains underexplored, certainly in Poland.¹⁵⁰ From this point of view, however, the paternalist aspect of the Mother-Pole became even more visible. If the Virgin Mary was claimed as Queen of Poland in the mid-seventeenth century, it is important to notice that the majority of venerated Polish women saints, from the baptism of Poland in 966 to 1914—including those who were canonically consecrated and those who had a popular following—came from royal families. Pre-partition Catholicism produced few venerated women from the lower social groups, even from among the well-born nuns. In contrast to France, Polish Catholicism up to the twentieth century did not develop any popular cults of a female saint of plebeian origins.¹⁵¹ Around the turn of the century, the Polish female saints who enjoyed the greatest following came from medieval royalty.¹⁵² Among them, especially St. Jadwiga, St. Kinga, and St. Salome, gained a special place in the Polish pantheon of national saints, for they were officially recognized as patronesses of the Polish state.

St. Kinga contributed much to the polysemy of the Mother-Pole, as a non-Marian, yet Catholic embodiment of both a saint and a queen of Poland. Her representations exemplify the characteristics of many such royal woman saints, such as devotion, piety, charity, financial support of the state and the nation during war, care of the religious performance of their dependents, praying for the protection the nation or the state in distress, fortitude in face of an enemy, care for the dependents' moral and material wellbeing while under the attack of enemies, rebuilding the country after a war, militancy wedded with a deep sense of gender subordination

¹⁵⁰ For modern example, see: the cult of Empress Elizabeth of Bavaria in Austro-Hungary and in Austria, and the cult of Saint Olga in Russia.

¹⁵¹ The great majority of Polish modern female saints were either nuns or the founders of new orders, especially during the nineteenth century.

¹⁵² Notably: Duchess Jadwiga of Silesia, Duchess Anna of Silesia, Duchess Salome, Duchess Jolanta, Duchess Kinga, and Queen Jadwiga d'Anjou.

and womanly humility—all of which appear in the Mother-Pole role model. Modern hagiographies preserved this model, embedded as it was in feudal gender paternalism, and yet modernized after the enfranchisement of peasants.

Kinga's characteristics paired or mingled with those of Queen/King Jadwiga d'Anjou, and came to symbolize the nurturing of Polish statehood and the women of its historical elites in images of the royal and holy Mothers of Poles. St. Jadwiga d'Anjou became the most prominent female saint of the nineteenth century precisely because of a dualism in the ideological construction of femininity. For the private sphere, because she married against her heart and died in childbirth, Jadwiga came to symbolize self-sacrifice and compliance with patriarchal (parliamentary) power for the sake of the wellbeing of the state, the nation, and the Church.¹⁵³ The circumstances of her death especially, helped to turn Jadwiga into a quasi-virginal queen in the national mythology. Jadwiga's personal sacrifice of marrying an unloved husband, Lithuanian Prince Władysław Jagiełło, allowed the "peaceful" baptism of the Duchy of Lithuania, which created a political coalition able to withstand the Teutonic Order "drang nach Osten," and laid the foundations for the imperial-like power of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Yet, by the late nineteenth-century, other elements in Jadwiga's legend prevailed, particularly her role as a leader of the Polish army, regaining Rus' from Hungary to Poland (1387). Her uncompromising political position vis-à-vis the Teutonic Order, aimed at regaining the Dobrzyń Land to the Polish Crown in a diplomatic way. Thus, in the late nineteenth century St. Jadwiga d'Anjou rose to the role of a founding mother of the historic might of the Polish Crown, even of its imperial ambitions, and a saintly patroness for the hopes for its future restitution.

¹⁵³ Zygmunt Kaczkowski, *Kobieta w Polsce: Studium historyczno-obyczajowe* (Petersburg: K. Grendyszyński, 1895).

Kinga's role was more modest. Like Jadwiga, she embodied an ideal of sexual purity. As other thirteenth-century saints, Kinga renounced a sexual relationship with her husband, and became venerated as a "virginal Queen-Consort". Kinga's excessive asceticism was regarded as the reason for God's blessing to Poland and Poles, because the Duchess was regarded as the main spiritual force behind the defense during the third Mongol invasion. Published by the Polish Educational Society (*Macierz Szkolna*) for Polish language popular schooling, rich in factual mistakes and in the didactic manner of 'historiography for the people', Sedlaczek's biography of St. Kinga consistently invokes the "good queen" as a mother: first of her servants, then of the sick and poor, and finally of the nation. The litany of St. Kinga's virtues reflects the characteristic of woman's paternalism. Kinga appears as a docile follower of the Church, "merciful and benevolent," feeding the hungry, suffering, patronizing, and as a consoler and "a true mother of the miserable".¹⁵⁴ The origins of the Duchess did not matter in her status as the Mother of the Nation. The author explains that even though "the Lady was Hungarian by birth, she was so good to us, as she was blood of our blood, and bone of our bones".¹⁵⁵

Among the saintly royal patronesses of Poland, it was St. Jadwiga d'Anjou and St. Kinga who contributed the most to the nineteenth-century concept of the Polish Mother of the Nation. That concept interpolated mainly women of upper classes, and prevailed in representations of queens (that is of noblewomen) as financial sponsors of national endeavors, including military ones.¹⁵⁶ Both saints embodied the maternal martyrologic aspect of the Mother of the Nation, by

¹⁵⁴ Zorjan, *ibid.* pp. 5-6, 21, 27-28.

¹⁵⁵ Zorjan, *ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁵⁶ S. Rosół calls Kinga "lady of the Polish nation," Rosół, *ibid.*, p. 16. The story of Kinga offering her "imperial" dowry to finance the drafting of knights to protect Poland was one of the most famous legends. Rosół, *ibid.*, p. 18-19. St. Kinga's *vitae* recalls her intercession to God during Bolesław's confrontation with the Mongols and the Polish victory secured by the divine intervention of Saint Gervase and Saint Protase. Przybyszewski, *ibid.*, p. 51.

During the partition, St. Kinga became finally ‘Polonized’ (nationalized). Her Hungarian-ness, apparent in medieval *vitae*, during the nineteenth century entirely disappeared and so did the recognition of the convent in Stary Sącz as a place of the royal cult of the Arpads. Kinga came to represent an ideal of a patriotic Polish woman of the gentry, in a mode typical of nineteenth century national ideology. J. Siwicki, Książka do nabożeństwa dla Polek (Wrocław 1827); K. Maniewski (Podtatrzanin), Kinga polska niewiasta (Vienna: Druk. O.O. Mechiterystów, 1868). A poem by an anonymous author in St. Kinga’s road chapel “Pod Ocieniem” (1888), in which the saint is invoked as the queen of Poland, a patroness of the Pieniny Mountains, and a mediator between Poles and God. Maria Barbara Styk, Święta Kinga w poezji polskiej (Lublin: Tow. Naukowe KUL, 2001), p. 52. Numerous religious chants: “Śliczny kwiat polski,” “Szczęśliwa córko,” “O Kunegundo, polski wonny kwiecie,” “Przedziwny w darach,” “Przesławna córo Węgier,” “Kingo królowo, Patronko nasza,” “Święta królowo” M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, pp. 198-219. In “Sól bł. Kingi,” the saint is also invoked as a protector of Poles against socialism, M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, p. 202.

Though the tradition claiming that Polish knights asked Kinga as queen-dowager to keep royal power after her husband’s death goes back to her earliest *vitae* (Przybyszewski, *ibid.*, p. 57-8), the fusion of images of both St. Kinga and Jadwiga became clearly visible at least from the mid-nineteenth century. This is an under-researched topic. Karol Antoniewicz, a Jesuit priest, formerly an insurgent and the father of a family, in mid-century published his Wspomnienie o Świętej Kunegundzie. Antoniewicz wrote his devotional pieces primarily for Polish peasants, with both a religious and a patriotic mission in mind. The author departs from both official hagiographies and legends, yet his representation of Kinga derives heavily, and against the historical facts, from popular representation of queen Jadwiga: Kinga occupies a “Sarmatian throne” [p. 1], a number of conquered nations and “Slavic countries” pay her homage [p. 3], Bolesław the Chaste is “a favorite king” of the nation [p. 5], a motif of the nation begging a royal woman-successor to become its ruler [p. 11], a queen’s sacrifice for the sake of the prosperity of the nation [p. 12], and finally Kinga as a “Queen and Mother of Poles” [p. 10]. Antoniewicz went so far as to claim that Kinga visited the Hucul dwellings [p. 7]. Moreover, Antoniewicz emphasized Kinga’s claims to maternity as based on the “laws of evangelical love” [p. 7], which not only mingles her with Saint Jadwiga but links her to noble paternalism, which provided the grounds for a gender national ideology. K. Antoniewicz, Wspomnienie Both queens appeared in a historical reading for children in the series: n.n., “Dwie królowe. Św. Kinga and św. Jadwiga,” Czytania dla szkół i ochron, No. 7 (Warszawa 1862). Karol Szajnocha in his Św. Kinga emphasizes that the Duchess sponsored both mercenary troops to fight the Mongols as well as rebuilding the devastated country with her dowry. He also claims, against the historical evidence, that Bolesław granted Kinga the Sądecczyzna as a reward for her generous and patriotic gift; K. Szajnocha, *ibid.*, pp. 1-27.

In 1906 Włodzimierz Tetmajer painted a picture presenting St. Kinga accompanied by her husband, prince Bolesław IV the Chaste, at the head of the Polish knights. The picture was painted on the ceiling of the presbyterium of Saint Sebastian’s church in Wieliczka. In national gender ideology, the financial sponsoring of the ‘country in need’ by women became one of the main characteristics of the Mother-Pole icon.

referring to the Virgin Mary's representation as Mater Dolorosa¹⁵⁷ pitying their fallen children, especially sons. The image of the Polish Mater Dolorosa could be traced back to the cult of St. Jadwiga of Silesia mourning those who were slain by Mongols on the battlefield of Legnica. The images of both the suffering Mother of God and Mothers of Poles provided an ideological framework for representations of women of the nobility 'offering' their sons' lives for the 'sacred national cause,' and mourning the fallen as martyrs.¹⁵⁸

The stories and symbols provided by Polish royal saints as "mothers of the poor" and Mothers of the Nation contributed to the construction of the icon of Mother-Pole, by strengthening the aspect of noble women's militancy and by justifying their political engagement. The feudal tradition, reframed by the modernized Catholicism, reaffirmed the paternalistic authority of upper-class women in the realm of morality (including the nation's moral economy). The aspect of their material and spiritual sponsorship of national causes especially, as well as in their paternalistic role of guiding and providing for their lower class 'dependents', could indeed strengthen traditional women's roles in Polish society, as Brian Porter-Szűcs suggests. But this occurred not simply by reproducing the liberal private-public division via the Marian cult with a national tinge, but through reasserting class divisions and class/gender relationships, thus presented as a 'truly' national distinctiveness, supported by a *mélange* of history and religion. It is important to remember, however, that those aspects of the

¹⁵⁷ The typical representation of Kinga as a Polish "Mater Dolorosa", a queen wondering through the battlefield, mourning the fallen knights, appeared for instance in Teofil Lenartowicz poems *Szopka* (1849). Published after the November Uprising (1830-1), authored by a poet who established himself in Polish literary canon as a folk bard, a "lyrist of Mazovia", the poem was a stylized folk song. Teofil Lenartowicz, *Szopka: Poezye* (Wrocław: 1849), pp. 45-46.

¹⁵⁸ Such representations were tremendously popularized by the uprising's "Pietas" in Artur Grottger's cycles of drawings *Warszawa I*, *Warszawa II*, *Polonia*, *Lithuania*, and *War* (1861-1867) dedicated to the January Uprising.

national motherhood remained of little applicability to the project of emancipating peasant women, while they certainly had an impact on constructions of peasant masculinity.

The relationship of the saintly elements in “Mother-Pole” with peasant masculinity is more complicated, and the legend of the wheat allows us to see it. Gender relationships between upper-class women landowners divested of their traditional feudal authority over their serfs, significantly altered with the gradual enfranchisement of peasants. Yet, the alterations were far from being straightforward. St. Kinga in legend demonstrates the wide scope of her power vis-à-vis the commoners: she excommunicates the inhabitants of Krościenko, and subjects men to sentry duty for denying her help on the way to Pieniny Castle; she condemns her serfs for abandoning young nuns in the forests after ordering them to carry the nuns to the castle; and she curses peasants for not giving her shelter during her flight. St. Kinga in distress punishes, curses, excommunicates, acting as a feudal landlady who exercises, quite historically, absolute power over her serfs. Stories illustrating the relationships of feudal power survived in hagiographic legends, yet were mediated by the ‘maternal’ qualities of the saintly Duchess. In the post-emancipation period, those feudal aspects in the legends were transformed into a disciplining device, used mostly by the Church as a historical memory of the ‘old ways’, a reminder of the ‘traditional’ social relationships with chastising potential.

Wartime Rape, Sexual Slavery, and Reconfigurations of Peasant Masculinity

In this section I discuss how the figure of wartime rape and sexual slavery, as a topos in the national history, helped to symbolically emancipate the figure of the peasant man from the paternalistic relationship to his landlady, and in consequence from his landlord (the nobility). I demonstrate that the popular visions of history, such as embedded in historical novels, attributed a modern sense of masculinity to images of peasants; namely, a paternal patriarchal power over women and control of their sexualities. This change was paralleled by a deeper reevaluation of the role of women in the national community, when gender came to figure as more egalitarian, yet also a discriminatory feature, as women, regardless of their social background, became regarded as the ultimate reproducers of the nation, and thus their bodies would protect the biological (the racial) purity of the nation. Again, strengthening the sense of peasant masculinity and constructing the rudiments of citizenship happened, discursively, at the expense of the traditional construction of upper-class women's power.

The legend of the wheat also reveals an aspect that shows the emancipation of a peasant man from the paternalistic relationship to his landlady. Later representations of the relationships between the two shifted, presenting the peasant as braver and granting him more agency; that is, emphasizing his masculinity at the expense of the shrinking authority of the lady. This aspect comes into view in the representation of the gendered experiences of war.

Sexual violence, though present in women's hagiographies, usually appears through the topoi of protecting virginity to the point of martyrdom, or of preserving conjugal chastity (as in the hagiographies of Saint Kinga and other Polish queens). Polish hagiography, however, avoided pushing any claims of sanctity for virgins and wives raped by the Unfaithful. That

included adolescent nuns. According to historiography, the aim of Mongol raids was both pillage and the *jassyry*. In the older versions of the legends, Mongols chased the nuns to rob them: they were after their gold. In Stęczyński's version of the legend of the wheat, Mongols pursued the nuns to kidnap them: they were also after their bodies. The change of emphasis was not without consequence for the construction of peasant masculinity.

In his mid-nineteenth-century version of the legend, Stęczyński explicitly articulated what used to be downplayed in the earlier versions, mainly that the nuns were women, and some of them were young. Historically, most of Kinga's Poor Clares were girls, and one of the main purposes of the Mongol invasion was to capture women slaves. Prior to 1987, Polish Catholicism had officially recognized only one woman-martyr, while only a few others were commemorated locally.¹⁵⁹ That paucity is striking in view of the prominence of the *antemulare Christianitatis* ideology, and the number of venerated martyrs. As I noticed before, most of the stories about the revered nuns' encounters with predators focus on the Mongol invasions. The Asian assailants appear, for example, in the hagiography of Saint Bronisława Odrowąż, a Norbertine sister from the Zwierzyniec convent in Cracow.¹⁶⁰ The hagiographies of the Norbertine nuns and St. Kinga

¹⁵⁹ In 1987 John Paul II beatified Karolina Kózka as a virgin-martyr killed in the defense of her virginity. Karolina Kózka was a young peasant woman, who lived in the village of Radłowa (Tarnów county), in western Galicia. Kózka, an activist in her parish, was believed to have been stabbed to death during World War I by a Russian soldier-marauder who attempted to rape her. Though Kózka's history is authentic, her cult seems to be built upon the one of Maria Goretti, an Italian young laywoman who was also stabbed protecting her virginity in 1902. Goretti's beatification process began in 1935 and finished in 1947. The emergence of Kózka's cult in the diocese whose saintly patron was St. Kinga, does not seem to be accidental, yet exploring this topic lays beyond this dissertation. J. Białobok, *Błogosławiona Karolina Kózkówna* (Rzeszów: Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne, 2005); U. Janicka-Krzywda, *Patron, atrybut, symbol* (Pallottinum 1993).

¹⁶⁰ During the first Mongol invasion, Bronisława, a mother superior, was believed to have hidden with her charges in the woods near Zwierzyniec called Wolski Forest. In commemoration of St. Bronisława's fortunate escape, the limestone formation believed to have sheltered the nuns was called Maiden Rocks.

both share the motif of a flight or an escape, as well as an imaginary environmental setting. As the Maiden Rocks belong to the Jurassic limestone formation of the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland, though much lower, they resemble the Pieniny Mountains, also formed with limestone.¹⁶¹ The only Polish cult of a blessed woman-martyr, St. Benigna, originates from Lower Silesia and also relates to the Mongol invasion. St. Benigna was believed to be among a group of Cistercian nuns from Trzebnica, who fled to Wrocław in search of shelter. While protecting their virginity after the sack of the city, Benigna and other nuns were killed by the Mongols.¹⁶²

A unique and lasting example of a commemoration of the martyrdom of nuns during the Mongol invasions comes from the convent of the Norbertine Sisters (Premonstratensian

¹⁶¹ The name Pieniny is derived from *piana*, meaning foam. The name associated the mountains with the rapid flow of the Dunajec, the major river of the area, which cuts through the mountains, and yet also associated the white color of the limestone with the water's froth.

¹⁶² Hagiography and historiography tell very little about Benigna. There is not even agreement whether her martyrdom took place during the first (1241) or the second (1259) invasion. Benigna is believed to descend from a knight family in the Kujawy (central Poland). Her cult originally developed around her grave in Wrocław cathedral, yet already in the fourteenth century her relics were moved to Włocławek in the Kujawy, forming a new center of the cult. In his Breve from 1634, Pope Urban VIII allowed maintaining Benigna's cult under the condition of obtaining an official confirmation by the Vatican. Though St. Benigna was recognized as a saint patroness of Poland during the seventeenth century, neither King Władysław IV Vasa, nor his brother and successor Jan Kazimierz, pursued the issue of an official corroboration of her cult. St. Benigna's cult was maintained in the Kujawy-Kalisz Diocese up to 1879, when the authenticity of her relics came under question, and in consequence her holiday was removed from the diocesan liturgical calendar. Afterwards, Benigna's cult became marginalized, erasing Polish women's martyrdom from Catholic and national memories. P. Pawłowski, "Benigna (?-1241 lub 1259), błogosławiona męczennica, cysterka," in *Włocławski Słownik Biograficzny* Vol. 5 (Włocławek 2008), pp. 5-7; Anna Witkowska and J. Nastalska, *Staropolskie piśmiennictwo hagiograficzne*, Vol. 2 (Lublin 2007), p. 172; J. Pater, *Święci w dziejach Śląska* (Wrocław 1997); *Encyklopedia katolicka*, Vol. 2 (Lublin 1985), p. 271; S. Chodyński, "O św. Benignie," in *Przewodnik Katolicki*, No. 36 (1898), pp. 312-314; I. Stebelski, *Żywot św. Eufrozyny i Prascewii* (Wilno 1781). St. Benigna's cult also developed in Bohemia, where she appears under the Slavicized name Dobrotiva.

canonesses) in Imbramowice, northwest of Cracow. A polychromic painting inside of the convent church, above the nuns' choir, depicts the martyrdom of the Norbertine Sisters killed by Mongols in 1241, in their convent in Witów.¹⁶³ The center of the painting represents the slaughter of the nuns at the hands of oriental-looking warriors, while the figural group in the center shows three nun-survivors, who saved their lives in nearby woods.¹⁶⁴ The wall painting was completed in 1719 by a Cracow-based master painter known as Wilhelm Włoch, who worked on polychromic decorations of the church together with his wife, and their daughter Wilhelmówna. The painting was regarded as a votive for the nuns' survival of the Third Northern War (1701-21).

¹⁶³ L. Sobol, Kultura Klasztoru SS. Norbertanek w Imbramowicach (Kraków 2007).

¹⁶⁴ Known also as the Great Northern War (1700-1721). Formally, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was not a part of this war, yet Polish king August II Wettin got involved in the war as an Elector of Saxony. Most of the warfare took place on the territory of Poland. The countries most involved in the war—Sweden, Brandenburg, Denmark, Russia—were non-Catholic and therefore condemned by the Church and Catholic nobility as “heretics.” About the votive character of the painting: Karolina Targosz, “Obraz wojen i zaraz początków XVIII w. w kronikach zakonnich,” in Między barokiem a oświeceniem: Wojny i niepokoje czasów saskich, Krystyna Stasiewicz and S. Achremczyk, eds. (Olsztyn: Ośrodek Badań Nauk. im. W. Kętrzyńskiego, 2004), pp. 130-131.



Figure 5. Wilhelm Włoch and Wilhelmówna, *The Martyrdom of the Norbertine Sisters of Witów*, polychrome (circa 1719), the convent church of the Norbertine Sisters in Imbramowice.

Unlike the Dominicans of Sandomierz, and in spite of St. Bronisława's cult, the Norbertine Sisters of Witów had never been officially recognized as blessed or saint martyrs. Their cult was local and commemorative.¹⁶⁵ The painting, as a reminder of the nuns' martyrdom, ideologically linked the thirteenth-century Mongol invasions with eighteenth-century wars with the 'heretics'—the Protestant Swedes and their German allies, as well as Orthodox Russians—unequivocally building upon the ideology of *antemurale Christianitatis*. Beginning from 1703, with short breaks, until World War II, the Norbertine Sisters ran a school for well-born girls in

¹⁶⁵ A. D. Kraszewski, *Życie Świętych Zakonu Premonstratenskiego* (Warszawa 1752).

Imbramowice.¹⁶⁶ Their school enjoyed a high reputation among affluent Catholic Polish families from all three partitions particularly during the nineteenth century. Thus, the painting of martyrs of Witów through two centuries served as a visual pedagogical lesson addressed to the nuns' charges, reminding young women of Polish elites of the gendered perils of the war with the 'Unfaithful'.

The memory of the Norbertine martyrs of Witów revived in the 1890s and passed into history thanks to Jadwiga Łuszczewska, better known by her pen-name: Deotyma.¹⁶⁷ Łuszczewska, one of the most prominent Polish women-authors of the last decades of the nineteenth century, dedicated her bulky historical novel *Women-Slaves in the Jasyr* to imaginative adventures of two Polish noblewomen in Central Asia, enslaved by Mongols during the first invasion. The author addressed her novel mostly to women and juvenile readers.

Historians of Polish literature tend to downplay the significance of the novel for its didactic plot. Indeed, judging by the genre's standards, Łuszczewska's story seems naïve. In a dramatic journey through Europe and Central Asia, two enslaved Polish noblewomen manage to

¹⁶⁶ The school was established in 1703 by the abbess Zofia Grothówna. Grothówna also commissioned the wall painting from Włoch during the rebuilding of the convent, which burned down in 1710 as the result of an accident caused by reckless female servants. Zofia Grothówna, Historia domowa klasztoru imbramowskiego Zakonu Premonstrateńskiego odemnie Zofii Grothówny xieni ręką własną pisana, i sobie dla pamięci y sukcesorkom dla informacji dalszej zostawiona, a w roku Pańskim 1703 zaczęta, sygn. A 27 (Imbramowice: Klasztor Panien Norbertanek). M.S., [M. Łukaszewska and M. Sebal], Siedemsetletnie dzieje (1226 – 1926) Klasztoru PP Norbertanek w Imbramowicach (Przemyśl 1926); M. Dębowska, "Kształcenie dziewcząt w klasztorze norbertanek w Imbramowicach w XVIII wieku," in Historia świadectwem czasów: Księdzu Profesorowi Markowi Tomaszowi Zahajkiewiczowi, W. Bielak and S. Tylus, eds. (Lublin 2006).

In 1857, Józefa Saska, a cousin of Stefan Żeromski, graduated from Imbramowice's school; years later Żeromski used her story as a model for Wierna rzeka, his acclaimed novel about the January uprising.

¹⁶⁷ A. Biernacki, "Łuszczewska, Jadwiga," in Polski Słownik Biograficzny, Vol. 18 (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Ossolineum and Wyd. PAN, 1973), pp. 581-583.

avoid sexual abuse, thanks to their inborn noble, national, and religious virtues, by successfully manipulating members of the Mongol elite and their associates of various ethnicities.

The novel, however, contains a great deal of the author's own anthropological observations from central Russia. As an adolescent woman, Łuszczewska accompanied her parents to exile in central Russia (Kazan area). Her father, Waclaw Łuszczewski, was sentenced for his participation in the January Uprising. Łuszczewska took extensive notes on their journey and during their exile. Her novel shows that she regarded the cultural *mélange* of Russian, Tatar, Chuvash, Ukrainian, and Azeri people living by the Volga River, in a fairly Orientalist manner. The popular Polish anti-Russian stereotypes enforced Łuszczewska's conviction that the cultural and political genealogy of the Romanovs' Russia went straight back to the thirteenth-century Mongol empire. Alas, literary history tends to overlook the Aesopean aspect of Łuszczewska's novel, especially on gender relationships. The January Uprising warfare witnessed cases of sexual violence as a form of wartime retribution committed mostly by Russian common soldiers, many of whom, according to the contemporary sources, came from Central Asia. Published in 1901, *Women-Slaves in the Jasyr* contains a chapter on the slaughter of the Norbertine Sisters in Witów, though the author spared her two main female noble characters, as well as her sensitive readers, from graphic images of sexual violence, leaving just hints of them.¹⁶⁸ The book contains a chapter on St. Kinga as well. Łuszczewska's novel enjoyed great popularity, and was re-printed many times.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Łuszczewska did not think highly of her *Women-Slaves...*, blaming Russian censorship for spoiling the final outcome of the novel. J. Rokoszny, *Wspomnienia o Deotymie* (Radom 1934); Biernacki, *ibid.*, p. 582.

¹⁶⁹ Antoni Mączak recalls that in September 1939 his schoolteacher read to her pupils Łuszczewska's *Women-Slaves...*, trying to convince her juvenile charges that the war now was more frightening than the one in the thirteenth century. The students, however, were convinced that Tartars, as depicted by Deotyma, were much more dangerous than Nazis. A. Mączak, *Latem w Tocznabieli*, *ibid.* p. 15.

Sexual violence during war highlights the gender vulnerability of women, regardless of their social position, and through this change of context reframes the interpellation of peasant masculinity. To return to the legend of the wheat, as a subsidiary helper fulfilling his Christian and servant duty, a peasant man saves the nuns from sexual predators. The crop miraculously springing up in one night appears as a form of God's blessing for the good deed of protecting the noblewomen from being forced into sexual slavery by the nation's and the Church's 'Other,' and therefore being 'lost,' as community members, subjects, and goods. The wheat, as a symbol of gold, both a treasure and a reward, signifies gratitude for protecting the chastity of noble-born nuns espoused to Christ, whose intact virginity thus confirms the respectability of their male guardians; that is, their noble families.¹⁷⁰ Accordingly, gender difference in the sexual experience of war was in inverse proportion to the symbolic dependency in the social relationships of power. The legend of this particular version conveys its meaning by pointing out the profound difference in the gender experience of war, and through that difference it invokes a peasant as a man in a new role: as a keeper of Polish women's chastity, that is of the 'chastity' of the nation. That difference erases social tensions and endows the tale with a dimension that could be read as yet another sign of national solidarism, all of which helps to make the message 'trans-historic'; that is, modern.

Recalling gender difference in war experiences means to position a peasant man, if not in the main role of a defender of 'our (national) women', then at least to call on him, as on a male member of a cultural (ethnic/national/religious) community, as on a potential guard of the biological wellbeing and respectability of his 'national kin.' The highlander in this tale does not transform into a peasant-knight hybrid protecting maidens in distress. Still, it is God who

¹⁷⁰ Helen Hills, *Invisible City: The Architecture of Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan Convents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

protects the innocents: the women and the nation to which they belong. Instead, by evoking the topic of sexual violence, the tale offers a suggestive metaphor presenting the national subjugation in gender/sexual terms, and appeals directly to the sense of the manly honor of the peasant man (in fact: endows him with one), put in national terms. The image of the nobility represented in form of their ‘feminine’ counterpart; that is, embodied in the landlord’s daughters, demonstrates the vulnerability of the upper class, of the nation or its elite, in the face of an invasion, and demonstrates its need of protection from their social dependents.

Images of Tatars hunting for sex slaves, as I have argued, have their origins in the late seventeenth-century. In early nineteenth century, that topos was reinforced by Romantic literature, which includes the Romantic Orientalism initiated by Adam Mickiewicz’s early translations of Lord Byron’s poems.¹⁷¹ Though histories of the Mongol and Turkish wars implied women’s sexual enslavement, rape was not exclusively reserved for representations of the wars with Muslims.¹⁷² Through most of the nineteenth century, in literature and in art, past wartime sexual violence against Polish women appears either concealed, or ‘silently acknowledged,’ smuggled ‘between the lines’ through cultural and historical allusions, or allegorized.¹⁷³ In 1860, twenty-five-year-old Józef Szujski, a future founding father of the Polish conservative school of history (*szkoła krakowska*), a conservative Austrian politician, and President of the Jagiellonian University, published a poem entitled *St. Kinga: A Legend of Tatra*. While the intended readers were adolescents, Szujski smuggled into his otherwise sweet and innocent verses one that

¹⁷¹ “Giaur: Ułamki z powieści tureckiej Lorda Byrona,” in: *Poezye Lorda Byrona*, transl. Adam Mickiewicz (Paris, 1834).

¹⁷² Józef I. Kraszewski, *Oni i my: Obrazek współczesny narysowany z natury* (Poznań: Księgarnia Konstantego Żupańskiego, 1865). The rape of a servant girl by Russian soldiers during the January Uprising. Grottger.

¹⁷³ Grottger in his drawing cycle on the January Uprising.

mentions “screams of the slain, cries of the dishonored” (*jęk sromoconych*).¹⁷⁴ Over two decades later, in his biography of St. Kinga’s, Sedlaczek indicated the Tatars’s “abuse of women” (*znieważają niewiasty*).¹⁷⁵

In the second half of the century, “a Tatar” became more explicitly depicted as a sexual predator, and sexual violence as a war crime targeting the nation as a whole, as well as a family unit; that is, the fathers, brothers, and husbands of rape victims. In 1880 Józef I. Kraszewski published *Jazdon’s Son* (*Syn Jazdona*), the tenth volume in his series of historical novels designed to present Polish history from pre-historic times to the fall of the Commonwealth.¹⁷⁶ The novel, covering the second half of the thirteenth century, tells the story of a controversial historical figure, Bishop of Cracow Paweł of Przemanków. Though the first Mongol invasion appears in the novel only as an episode, Kraszewski spotlighted the sexual violence as a terror of warfare: the Mongols “[...] do not spare anyone’s life, except the youths, whom they enslave to feed their beastly lechery.”¹⁷⁷

Yet importantly, in Kraszewski’s novel the ‘Tatar-like’ sexual violence plays a particular role in denouncing the Polish knights’ violent relationships with their serfs. In his literary visions of Polish history, Kraszewski often blamed the aristocracy and the high-ranking clergy for

¹⁷⁴ Szujski, *ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁷⁵ Zorjan, *ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁷⁶ From 1880 to 1914, the novel was re-published four times, mainly in Warsaw, in so-called cheap editions: 1889, 1897, 1905; in an expensive edition in 1912; and in a version abridged by K. Łozińska published in 1913. The abridged version removed the theme of the bishop’s affair with a kidnapped nun, yet emphasized the violent relationship to peasants and servants.

¹⁷⁷ J. I. Kraszewski, *Syn Jazdona* (Warszawa: LSW, 1978), pp. 34, 38, 41. Kraszewski drew a very critical image of the bishop for which he was severely criticized by his contemporaries as well as later conservative critics (S. Helsztyński, „Przesłowie,” in: Kraszewski, *ibid.*, pp. 5-10; in *Sądcecczyzna* (1863) Sz. Morawski praised the bishop for his ‘taming’ the German influences in Poland, attributing his horrendous reputation to the envy of his political, pro-Germanic, opponents; Morawski, *ibid.*

damaging the state's and the nation's interests. The Prologue to the novel depicts the future bishop's reckless raid on a peasant homestead and his attempt to abduct a serf's daughter.¹⁷⁸ The scene's main function is to introduce the violent traits of the main protagonist. Literary historians tend to interpret the scene as an expression of class antagonism, while bracketing its apparent sexual aspect.¹⁷⁹ Yet, in the context of the Mongol threat, the sexual assault on a peasant girl in the following pages of the book stresses the 'Tatar-like' relationship of Paweł of Przemanków to his 'dependents.' This foreshadows the bishop's future crimes against the king, the state, the nation, and Christian morality, rather than serve as a motif of *raptus puellae*, so important in a romance, or as an expression of the dialectic of class struggle. Kraszewski confronts a young aristocratic scoundrel with a "white bearded" peasant patriarch who, chased off by the lord's dogs and thugs, desperately tries to rescue his daughter.¹⁸⁰ The peasant stands in defense of his daughter's chastity; that is, in self-defense of his family and his own respectability, which are endangered by the noblemen's sexual rights to peasant women's bodies. Disciplined for the raid by his guardian-knight, Paweł of Przemanków answers him: "What's so important about the peasant's daughter, that the lord cannot touch her? She grew up in my land like a mushroom..."¹⁸¹

The author partly blames the future Bishop's of Cracow tendency toward debauchery on his father, who maintained a harem-like court, yet again refers to 'Oriental' sexual practices: after his wife's death, Jazdon of Przemanków "had lived his life in a pagan way. [...] [h]is court,

¹⁷⁸ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, pp. 18-23.

¹⁷⁹ Z. Halawa, "Posłowie," in Kraszewski, *ibid.*, pp. 418, 422.

¹⁸⁰ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁸¹ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, p. 23.

as of savages, was full of various women, which were bought for him from remote countries.”¹⁸²

The message of Kraszewski’s narratives is clear: feudalism, with its institution of serfdom, justified by the authority of the Church, was deeply morally corrupt, violating the ‘natural’ (that is Christian) power of a man over his family. Through these scenes, Kraszewski challenged his readers to confront one of the most taboo social norms defining sexual relationships between noblemen, their women serfs, as well as men serfs up to the time of emancipation.¹⁸³

Furthermore, the writer placed both a norm and a practice in a historical perspective, underscoring their ambivalences by demonstrating the semi-consensual participation of women serfs in a lord’s sexual adventures; at the same time, Kraszewski sets those norms and practices within a legible and pejorative cultural idiom of ‘Oriental barbarianism’ embedded in a figure of excessive sexual indulgence.

The message became even clearer in the author’s elaboration of a romantic motif in the novel: the bishop’s abduction and liaison with a nun from a convent of Poor Clares in Skala, founded by the blessed Duchess Salome of Poland, a mentor of St. Kinga. A fallen Poor Clare named Bieta, after being sent away by the bishop, receives shelter at Kinga’s court, where she experiences a spiritual transformation. From the perspective of a late-nineteenth-century liberal (in a classic sense) intellectual, such as Kraszewski and his like-minded audience, the

¹⁸² Kraszewski, *ibid.*, p. 27. Perhaps the most famous Polish ‘nobleman’s harem,’ gathering mostly peasant women and eastern slaves, was maintained by Zamoyski, the first husband of Queen Maria Kazimiera Sobieska, in the mid-seventeenth century.

¹⁸³ The scene of Paweł’s farewell to serf women is also significant by the explicit, public instructions that the young lord gives to his current and future peasant lovers and their women-guardians. At the same time, the author shows the genuine sorrow of women at the departure of a ‘golden youth’ (Kraszewski, *ibid.*, p. 53). The writer touched upon, though did not elaborate, the complexities of the social and sexual relationships between a lord and young female peasants. Kraszewski took direct issue with the sexual liaison between a peasant woman and a landlord in one of his most famous contemporary novels *Ułana* (Petersburg and Mohylev: Bolesław Wolff, 1855).

‘traditional’ Polish noblemen’s rights and access to their female serfs’ sexuality became stigmatized as uncivilized, unmanly, and non-modern— “Tatar-like,” that is Oriental, or, simply, Russian. Consequently, recognizing a peasant man’s rights to control over the sexuality of his female dependents endowed him with respectability characteristic of the modern definition of male citizenship.

Later in the nineteenth-century, a rapist came to be represented more explicitly as a religious and national “Other”. In Henryk Sienkiewicz’s historical novels, which became the most popular representations of the historic wars in Poland, rape and attempted rape occupy a central place in the narratives. According to the romance’s poetics, rape always serves to signify the ultimate moral corruption of a villain regardless of his social standing, whether he is an individual or a collective character. That is the case in Sienkiewicz’s *The Deluge* (1886), depicting seventeenth-century Polish-Swedish War, where Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł, a Calvinist and the king’s traitor, attempts to rape the main heroine, a noblewoman Oleńka Billewiczówna. Radziwiłł’s motives come mostly from a desire to indulge his yearning for an erotic adventure, making him a Polish version of a libertine. Yet, he is equally motivated by the desire to humiliate his socially subordinate antagonist, a nobleman Andrzej Kmicic, Oleńka’s ex-fiancé. Moreover, Radziwiłł’s sexual assault on an orphaned granddaughter of a leader of the local nobility highlights Prince’s political corruption: his unambiguous inclination to an absolutist rule and contempt for social norms, fundamental to the noble democratic way of life. In another Sienkiewicz’s blockbuster novel, *The Teutonic Order* (1897-1900), the attempted rape of Danusia, a twelve-year-old daughter of the Polish landlord Jurand of Spychów, kidnapped and imprisoned by the *komtur* Zygfryd de Löwe, reveals the scale of moral corruption among the Teutonic Knights and exposes the Order as the false Christians.

Sienkiewicz consequently used the motif of rape as signifier for political rebellion, including the emasculation of the lawful rulers. That was the case in the first part of the trilogy, *With Fire and Sword* (1884), dedicated to the Khmelnytsky Uprising in 1648. In one of the most dramatic episodes of the novel, the Orthodox and the United Ukrainian peasants, “darks” (*czerni*) as they are called, rape Catholic nuns, mostly daughters of local nobility, in the sacked town of Bar. Yet, the most lurid examples of rape as rebellion and patricide come from Sienkiewicz’s *Fire in the Steppe* (1888), dedicated to the seventeenth-century wars with the Muslims.

Although in *Fire in the Steppe* Sienkiewicz spares readers graphic depictions of sexual abuse, he nevertheless conveys its both dreadful and exciting presence. Already at the beginnings of the second part of the novel, dedicated to events on the Polish-Turkish borderlands in Ukraine, the author emphasizes the difference in gender experience of Muslims wars. With a mild irony, Mr. Zagłoba, a nobleman and an experienced veteran of the Cossack wars, inspired by Shakespearian Falstaff, responds to colonel Michał Wołodyjowski’s young wife’s eagerness to participate in combat, by saying: “If Turks take you two [...] your fate will be far different from Michał’s anyway.”¹⁸⁴ Zagłoba’s words foretell the most dramatic episodes later in the novel.

Sienkiewicz made the villain of his novel a young and passionate Tatar, a fosterling of a Polish noble family. Azia appears to be a long-missing favorite son of Crimean Mirza, fallen as a Cossack ally during Khmelnytsky’s uprising. Though brought up in the Christian religion and serving as a Polish army officer, after learning his true identity Azia betrays the Poles and joins the Khan of Crimea. Ill-treated in youth by his lord for courting his daughter, and latter disappointed in love for his superior officer’s wife, Azia takes revenge on his foster family, brutally slaughtering his former lord and ‘father’, only after making him learn the fate of his

¹⁸⁴ Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Fire in the Steppe*, trans. W. S. Kuniczak (New York: Copernicus Society of America and Hippocrene Books, 1992), p. 251.

daughter. Azia gives Ewka as a slave to one of his subordinate officers, while keeping Nowowiejski's would-be daughter-in-law, Zosia Boska, to himself. Adam Nowowiejski, an unfortunate son, brother, and fiancé, tracks Azia down in the steppe, tortures him and executes him by impalement. Adam's macabre revenge, however, does not come from indulging a thirst for blood, but rather from the need to 'properly' avenge the patricide and humiliation of his dependent women: Azia, as his father's fosterling, was also Adam's childhood friend, a kind of foster-brother.¹⁸⁵ The motif of rape, as a way of rebellion against the patriarchal power, recurs in Azia's forbidden love of Basia, colonel Michał Wołodyjowski's wife. The genealogy of Sienkiewicz's Azia is Romantic.¹⁸⁶ Yet, what distinguishes Azia from his literary predecessors is his lack of an inner moral conflict and one dimensionality: Azia's actions appear exclusively driven by his unrestrained desires and an excessive pride. Moreover, Sienkiewicz explains such characteristic in racial terms as the inborn nature of the Tatars, that is: of Asians.

Importantly for my argument, in Sienkiewicz elaborates on the young women's "fate worse than death", though within the limits of late nineteenth-century literary decency. The fate of Azia's would-be fiancé, Ewka, appears pitiful. While pregnant from her owner, the young woman is sold to a Turkish slave trader, to be re-sold in Istanbul. Yet, more noteworthy is the fate of Adam Nowowiejski's fiancé, who becomes Azia's personal slave. The story of Zosia's enslavement served Sienkiewicz to convey his view of the dialectics of the relationship between a sexual abuser and his female victim, or, a male slave owner and his sexually exploited female slave. In contrast to Ewka, whose sexual awakening Sienkiewicz emphasized several times

¹⁸⁵ The way Azia is executed, by impalement, was reserved for political traitors. This form of execution contains an emasculating association.

¹⁸⁶ As passionate lover, Azia resembles Juliusz Słowacki's Cossack Mazepa from the drama of the same title (1840), or Semenka from his The Silver Dream of Salomea (1844).

(including Ewka's infatuation with Azia), Zosia embodies an ideal of a noble girl's sexual and moral purity. An experience of abuse, however, transforms and corrupts that innocent victim. Sienkiewicz presents changes in Zosia's psyche as a permanent effect of sexual and physical brutality. Constant beating and sexual abuse turn Zosia into a compliant slave, who does everything to avoid physical and emotional violence, including voluntarily offering sexual favors to her master.¹⁸⁷ According to Sienkiewicz, such change in the young woman's character became irreversible, making her unsuitable to return to her society. The writer makes Zosia, a victim, aware of her psychological damage and its irremediable effects.¹⁸⁸

Sienkiewicz's readers would never learn the final effect of those experiences on Zosia's religious faith, though they do understand the tremor they caused. The novel, however, suggested the circumstances of young women's and minors' renunciation of Christianity and conversion to Islam. Reaffirming the 'irreversible,' Sienkiewicz offers a respectable way out for women abused by Muslim sexual predators, through accommodation in Ottoman society. The slave

¹⁸⁷ "[...] she was now, the slave and plaything of that [...] monster, trembling before him like a spiritless, whipped dog, crawling towards him on her hands and knees, watching his face and hands in terror to see if he was about to seize a bull whip, and hold her breath and hold back her tears." Sienkiewicz, *ibid.* p. 562. "Sitting like a trembling animal on the floor of his tent, she kept her eyes fixed on her master's face to guess his mood before he exploded in anger over her. She watched every movement of his hands and tried to anticipate his wishes, and when as often happened she made a wrong guess [...] she crawled at his feet, half dead as she was with terror, pressing her pale lips to his boots and clutching convulsively at his knees, and crying out like a tormented child [...] At least she reached such a state of terror and abasement that she thought it a privilege and an act of grace when Azia, stabbed by sudden lust, [...] reached for her body." Sienkiewicz, *ibid.* p. 564.

¹⁸⁸ "She knows that even if some miracle tore her out of those inhuman hands, there was no coming back to what she had been. She was no longer that other Zosia, as fresh and new as the first snow of Winter, as clean and pure as a crystal spring, able to give love for love with an honest heart. All that was gone forever and swallowed up in darkness as if it had never existed as all. And because there was no sense or reason to that abysmal degradation in which she found herself, because she had done nothing to deserve it, she couldn't understand why she was being so terribly and mercilessly punished. [...] Why was she a victim of such a terrible injustice? Why did God's anger lie upon her with such a crushing weight? Sienkiewicz, *ibid.*, p. 562.

experience of sexual abuse made Zosia lost for her noble-Christian society, but did not damage her chances to establish a decent life in a harem, as a wife of a sweetmeats dealer in Istanbul, where she ended her life. In this context, Sienkiewicz's images of Tatar rape victims demonstrate that cultural 'apostasy' could salvage, to a degree, an enslaved Polish, or a Christian, woman's respectability, though it makes her return home impossible.

In the theme of Azia's illicit love for colonel Wołodyjowski's wife Basia, Sienkiewicz offers his historical (and contemporary) women an alternative to the perils of enslavement. Confronted by Azia, Basia fights him and runs away. Further, the author states that if enslaved, the colonel's wife would rather kill herself, than allowed a rape.¹⁸⁹ Sienkiewicz, however, recognizes that only extraordinary women would possess such integrity and bravery, while the weak majority submits to the dehumanizing practices. So, the feminist scholars' claims that the virtue of Sienkiewicz's heroines "always defends itself somehow by itself, probably through the strength of the unwavering [moral] principles" prove to be wrong.¹⁹⁰ Sienkiewicz appears to be incapable of going beyond the classical models of women's response to rape, fashioning his characters either for Lucretia, or for Cassandra. Yet, as contemporary commentators and later critics emphasize, Sienkiewicz's audience, especially women, approved and enjoyed his literary eroticism and his take on gendered national ideology.¹⁹¹

Though the experience and impact of sexual violence in the Commonwealth is under-researched, primary sources prove that women of all social groups, including the nobility, who survived wartime rapes, had viable chances to reintegrate within their families and

¹⁸⁹ Sienkiewicz, *ibid.*, p. 564.

¹⁹⁰ Magda Monczka-Ciechomska, "Mit kobiety w kulturze polskiej," in *Głos mają kobiety: Teksty feministyczne*, ed. Sławomira Walczewska (Kraków: Fundacja eFKa, 1992), p. 101.

¹⁹¹ Zygmunt Falkowski, *Przed wszystkim Sienkiewicz* (Warszawa: PAX, 1959), pp. 298-299; Anna Leo, *Wczoraj: Gawęda o niedawnej przeszłości* (Warszawa: F. Hoesick, 1929).

communities.¹⁹² Nineteenth-century literary representations, however, embed the meanings of rape in the images of the nation's integrity and use rape to stigmatize and purge. In consequence, literary rape victims appear sentenced to a symbolic death, as their 'contaminated' bodies and minds are expelled from the national community. Sienkiewicz's novels provide an excellent example of that late nineteenth-century attitude toward the victims of sexual violence, mingling modern cultural racism with gender ideology in the author's visions of pre-modern Polish history. Although marital unions between Christians and Muslims existed in Poland in pre- and modern times, as in the case of Polish Tatar ennobled families dwelling in Lithuania, such relationships enjoyed an ideological recognition only if Muslim families proved to be loyal Poles. While Sienkiewicz introduces his readers to the institution of the sworn brotherhood (*pobratymstwo*), practiced between Polish and Tatar soldiers in the seventeenth century, there was no women's equivalent of such. As the case of wartime sexual violence demonstrates, the issue of women's 'loyalties' was ambiguous.

Moreover, through the images of women's experiences in the Muslim wars, Sienkiewicz places miscegenation in the center of his novel. Azia, kidnapped as a child by some Polish nobleman, who hoped to use the child as a token of exchange for his own twelve-year-old sister, kidnapped by Tatars and enslaved in Crimea. The kidnapper lost Azia in the steppe and was never able to retrieve his sister, whom Tughai-Bey bought for his harem. In a prophetic vision, he foresees his would-be nephew killing him in combat.¹⁹³ Thus, Sienkiewicz incorporated into his vision of the Polish-Turkish borderlands the old Balkan motifs of kidnapped relatives and the constant threat of fratricide, along with the Ottoman institution of the Janissaries and Christian

¹⁹² "Małpa – człowiek w cnotach, obyczajaju i kroju: Anonimowa satyra czasów saskich," in *Miscellanea staropolskie: Archiwum Literackie*, Vol. 6 (Wrocław: 1962), p. 174.

¹⁹³ Sienkiewicz, *ibid.*, pp. 306-308.

inhabitants of harems, so characteristic of the southern *antemurale Christianitatis*. Polish nineteenth-century national imagery did not produce any significant figure of sexually abused women's reintegration into her community: their fate was a symbolic death, unless they managed to salvage their chastity.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ A rare example is Pieśń o chlebie by Stefan Żeromski. The main character of this novel, a collectively raped woman-mother during World War I, is able to survive the trauma and assume a motherly role for her son. Yet, the novel, though naturalistic in its aesthetics, is also an allegory of Poland.

“The Faithful Highlander” as a Family History

In this section I analyze how the hagiographic legend turned into “a family history,” in the context of developing tourism in the region of the Pieniny Mountains. Thus, this section gives an example how the hagiographic and literary legends were internalized by peasants, then how the “folk memory” validated the legends, and came back to the written sources—in this case, historiography as well as tourist guides. I also demonstrate how the written version of this folk legend preserved a linguistic ambiguity, signifying the subjugated position of a peasant man vis-à-vis a landlady, marking a persistence of ambiguity in cultural representation of the highlander.

Without doubt, the image of the highlander as a loyal helper to his lady and her charges appeared in the legend as a relatively late addition. The earliest hagiography of St. Kinga shows no trace of the legend of the wheat. It was written at the beginning of the twelfth century, most probably a Franciscan monk associated with the royal court. On the contrary, the earliest text contains an account showing the ungraciousness and cowardice of peasants:

During her flight from the Tatars, the sisters, little girls, were entrusted to certain people, including peasants (*kmiecie*), who were to carry them on wagons to the Pieniny castle, to save their lives. Yet the peasants, reluctant to do so for being burdened with taxes too high as well as being terrified by death, abandoned some of the young sisters in the snow, some in forests, and in other dangerous places [...] and ran away. The sisters, facing death, cried in tears and pitiful voices like children; there were sisters: Zofia, Michał’s Klara and Salomea. All those sisters,

thanks to Divine providence and the blessed Lady's virtues, clearly avoided death and in good health returned to the Lady.¹⁹⁵

This fragment throws sharper light on the realities of the relationships between Kinga and her serfs, as well as peasant loyalty and chivalry in a time of distress. Historians have confirmed, though they differ in the interpretation of the act, that prior to the third Mongol invasion Kinga reformed the economy in her estate by exchanging the peasant's natural *corvée* for money taxation, and that taxes were high. Consequently, peasant loyalty toward their landlady shriveled. The peasant men, apparently summoned to perform their martial *corvée*, transportation, failed. The hagiography, which was written in Latin, stigmatized peasants for their disloyalty toward their saintly lady. The earliest hagiography shows peasant cowardice and their inclination to betrayal. That early counter-knightly characteristic of the commoners, reaffirmed by a historical example, expressed nothing more than the medieval axiom underlying the ideology of the feudal hierarchy: the 'common knowledge' of the elites about the inborn nature of bravery, and true masculinity.

Accounts about the abandoned sisters lingered on in popular stories about St. Kinga for centuries, yet during the nineteenth century this aspect of the story was obscured by the pastiches emerging from mingling with the Marian apocrypha. The apocrypha, however, turned into a 'real' historical memory. In his historical study *Sąddeczyzna* (1865), Szczęsny Morawski recalled the account about the sisters' abandonment by the convent serfs in the village of Kadcza:

They [Poor Clares] crossed the Dunajec between today's village of Miodziusie and Krościenko. They could not walk further because of exhaustion. Kinga sent to

¹⁹⁵ Przybyszewski, *ibid.*, p. 78.

Krościenko, to the townsmen, to get horses. They refused for they did not have any. So, according to the tale, she cried out of sorrow and cursed them: may they never have any horses or even shoes! In a nearby field a man, Kras, was plowing. He unharnessed oxen from the plow and carried Kinga to the Pieniny, for which she blessed him, so his plot was always fertile.

The next day Kras witnessed the miracle of the wheat and was confronted by the Mongol warriors.¹⁹⁶ A few pages further on, Morawski recalls another version of the miracle of the wheat: now Kinga throws her comb onto Kras' plot, which transforms into a crop.¹⁹⁷ It is either an editorial mistake or the author found it hard to resist recounting both versions, even at the price of inconsistency. Still, in both versions Morawski called the highlander "Kras" and it is a unique example of the personification of a helper. Yet, there is more in the name than that.

The name Kras, very unusual as a given name in Polish, derives from the adjective *krasy*, meaning beautiful, handsome, but also red or piebald.¹⁹⁸ Significantly, in modern Polish, especially in rural communities, the adjective *krasy* came into syntactic connection almost exclusively in the context of husbandry. As "piebald," *krasy* refers to the color of a horse or a cow.¹⁹⁹ The proverbial name for a cow in Polish has been *Krasa* or *Krasula*. The expression *byku krasy*, "you handsome bull", which is commonly used as an excerpt from the proverb, "handsome bull of a lowly race," until now has served as a deprecating, derogatory, and patronizing expression addressed to a man pretending to be nobler than his genealogy

¹⁹⁶ Morawski, *ibid.* 160-161.

¹⁹⁷ Morawski, *ibid.* pp. 162-163.

¹⁹⁸ Morawski uses the name Kras in Genetivus as *Krasemu*, which indicates that the name is just an abbreviation from *Krasy*, an archaized version characteristic of the pre-modern Polish. An adjective *krasy* derives from *krasa*, an old Polish name meaning beauty, or good looks.

¹⁹⁹ In Polish, in relation to horses the more often used is an adjective *srokaty*.

indicates.²⁰⁰ Since Morawski, otherwise an analytical historian, recalled the name Krazy without any hint of seeing its connection to male farm animals, one may assume that he must have heard it during his ethnographic trips and took it for granted, as a historical memorabilia preserved in the local collective memory. Indeed, he wrote further in his study: “The owner of Krazy’s plot is Salomon Kak from Szczawnica, an offspring of the plowman Krazy. Tales about Kinga live in mouths of that family. Only recently they bought back this plot and they tell everybody and everyone that they always have had a crop there! Because Kinga’s blessing is with that plot.”²⁰¹ The name of the righteous highlander, then, might signify his inner beauty or the beauty of his deed, and yet, the name emphasizes the social status of the helper, by connecting him simply with farm animals. Kras was symbolically ennobled by his deed, yet remains in his social place of “a lower race”.

The popular book on Kinga and Stary Sącz, published for the jubilee of 1892, repeats Morawski’s accounts. During the flight near Kadcza village, peasants escorting Kinga and her charges abandon the wagons and run away. Forced to travel on foot through snow to Pieniny castle, Kinga was yet again treated ungratefully by her ‘children,’ this time in Krościenko. When peasants refused her transportation, Kinga excommunicated them.²⁰² There was only one poor peasant, as the story goes, who in an act of mercy drove the nuns to the foot of Pieniny castle.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ “Podlej rasy byku krazy”.

²⁰¹ Morawski, *ibid.* pp. 163.

²⁰² The memories of the Krościenkovians’ disobedience toward their lady might also echo in a legend in a church near Krościenko which sank under the Black Dunajec river. According to the legend, a highlander from the countryside dove into the river and found a submerged church in which a priest celebrated a mass for “frogs, toads and lizards, that had been human, but turned into reptiles after they drowned.” S. Morawski, *Sąddecka*, Vol. 1 (Kraków: Wywiakowski, 1863), p. 71.

²⁰³ Rosół, *ibid.* 23. U. Janicka-Krzywda recalls an oral version in which a highlander actually offers a wagon which he used for his work and takes the nuns into the castle. Janicka-Krzywda, *ibid.*, 51.

Though the fields near Krościenko, as the site of the miracle of the wheat, were already pointed out by the anonymous poet in “The People’s Friend,” and by Stęczyński in his tourist guide, only Morawski and Stanisław Rosół offered stories wedding both traditions of peasant betrayal and rescue, neutralizing the sin, emphasizing the virtue, and allowing peasant men to save their modern manly characteristic. Yet, the conflicted representations of the bravery of St. Kinga and the cowardice of the peasant men became embedded into one and the same memory framework. Still, from the late nineteenth century, believers sang a chant dedicated to Kinga: “Futile is a savage chase, vain is a jackal’s anger / Greater is a prayer’s strength and a faithful highlander”.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ “Przesławna córo Węgier,” in: M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, 215.

CHAPTER III
THE KING'S MEN:
HIGHLANDERS AS DEFENDERS OF THE POLISH STATE

Gendered representations of a nation and its enemies have become a commonplace in studies on nationalism. While a nation is usually represented as manly and virile, its enemies appear effeminate and weak, and these gender qualifications, as essentializing metaphors, translate into images of a nation's strength in the realm of international politics. Consequently, nations are believed to build their historical master narrative on images of war and manly heroic warriors.²⁰⁵ Poland, however, constitutes an exception to this rule.

The reason is not because the medieval Kingdom of Poland or the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth did not achieve military victories or launch conquests, for they did. Yet, as mentioned in the previous chapter, only two historic wars—the Mongolian invasions and the Swedish war—acquired a special status in Polish national memory before 1914, and both of them tell a history of a disaster. Relatively successful wars with the Teutonic Order, Muscovy, or the Ottomans appeared much more rarely. This tendency might be partially explained by

²⁰⁵ Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (London: 2005); Ida Blom, et al. *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: 2000); Anne McClintock, "No Longer in a Future Heaven: Nationalism, Gender and Race," in: Geoff Eley and Ronald G. Suny, *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York: 1996), pp. 268-284.

ensorship in the Prussian and Russian partitions, as well as the conformism of the authors.²⁰⁶ The explanation of their role in the national memories lies in the signifying potential that they acquired in the moral economy of nationalism. Histories of both invasions demonstrated the dissolution of statehood, an extermination of people, and the economic devastation of the land. Yet, both of them also proved the nation's ability to persist, restore, and thrive in the future. In Polish independentism, the role of histories of endurance differed from that of military triumphs, for they did not trumpet a lost glory, feeding pessimism and fatalism, but rather proved the nation's capacity to revive; that is, they nurtured hopes for the future. Thus, the Mongol and Swedish invasions served as historical evidence of the nation's biological and cultural capabilities to persevere and reconstitute an independent statehood. For all of them, those histories glorified the nation as an indestructible cultural and social entity. While contributors to the Polish national *imaginarij* drew their metaphysical ideas of the nation's rebirth from multiple sources, including Catholicism, Christian heterodoxy, neo-Platonism and occultism, the concept of the nation's historical transcendence embedded in images of survival, converted easily into Christian images of resurrection, helped to merge national ideologies with Catholicism, and laced supernatural interventions of saints or of the Virgin Mary into the nation's history, reinforcing the sense of being "a chosen nation," so common to all nationalisms.

²⁰⁶ This tendency, however, was debatable. For obvious reasons, it was much easier for Polish writers to publish anti-German works in Russia, or even in Austro-Hungary, than in Prussia. For instance: between 1897 and 1900, Henryk Sienkiewicz published his *Teutonic Knights*, an anti-German novel, simultaneously in Russia (Russian Poland) and Austro-Hungary (Galicia). *Teutonic Knights* became a bestseller. Yet, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, the most prominent Polish writer since the mid-nineteenth century, published many of his anti-German historical novels while living permanently in Dresden.

Between Apocalyptic Destruction and Resurrection:

The Mongol Invasions in the Late-Nineteenth-Century Historiographical Debates

In this section I analyze late nineteenth-century historiographic debates on the effects of the Mongol invasions in Polish social history. This analysis provides the background for understanding the construction of meaning of this major historical event and its responsibility for depopulation and its aftermath. It also provides an immediate historical context for the analysis of the re-construction of peasant men (highlanders) in civic roles, through reconfiguring the peasant sense of masculinity.

Medievalists maintain that peasants served in defense during the siege of Podolniec and Stary Sącz in 1287. While contemporary Polish historiography cautiously approaches the issue of Mongol presence in the Tatra Mountains, having not boldly denied the possibility, historians of the late nineteenth century boldly denounced such suppositions as a fiction, and relegating them to the realm of folk legend.²⁰⁷ The accounts of highlanders engaging the Mongols in the Kościeliska Valley came from traditions that can be traced back to the early nineteenth-century; that is, to the beginning of the exploration of the Tatra, and has a truly Romantic genealogy.²⁰⁸

The effects of the Mongol invasions on Poland appears as one of the most ideologically and politically loaded issues in modern Central-European historiography of the Middle Ages. A

²⁰⁷ Jasiński, *ibid.*, pp. 72-74.

²⁰⁸ Krakowski talks about a battle “by the Dunajec, near the Kościeliska valley,” Krakowski, *ibid.*, p. 218. Yet, it is not the Dunajec that flows through the Kościeliska valley but the Kościeliska Potok, which feeds the Dunajec outside of the valley. Krakowski seems to repeat this information after Szczęsny Morawski, *Sądcczyzna* (Kraków: Nakł. Autora, 1863-1865), as well as J. Milan, *Napad Tatarów na Polskę za Leszka Czarnego w roku 1287* (Sprawozdania gimnazjalne w Stanisławowie za r. 1905/6). Also, Karol Szajnocha, a historian, in his semi-popular study *Św. Kinga* claims that the Mongols reached Hungary through the Tatra already in 1241: Karol Szajnocha, “Św. Kinga,” in: *Szkice Historyczne* (Lwów: K. Wild, 1858), Vol. 1, p. 23.

significant shift in perspective took place around the first decade of the twentieth century. German historiography tended to argue that the apocalyptic scale of the devastation of Polish lands in the thirteenth century explained the massive German colonization movement to the east following the invasions. Such interpretations were initiated by Richard von Roeppele in the mid-nineteenth century, but fully developed in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.²⁰⁹

At first, Polish historians accepted the theory of the destruction of Polish agriculture by the Mongols, yet at the very beginning of the twentieth century they pushed forward with counterarguments. The most important thesis came from Franciszek Bujak (1875-1953), a professor of history at Jagiellonian University in Cracow, and the founder of social and economic history in Poland. Bujak was also one of the first Polish historians of peasant origins.²¹⁰ Franciszek Bujak argued that agriculture in the Lesser Poland region (Western Galicia) showed symptoms of revitalization already at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and though severely affected by Mongol invasions, it was able to recover mostly by its own resources.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Richard von Roeppele, Geschichte Polens (1840); Richard von Roeppele, Über die Verbreitung des Magdeburger Stadtechts in Gebiete des alten polnischen Reiches (Breslau: 1857). Colmar Grünhagen further developed von Roeppele's theory in his Geschichte Schlesiens (Gotha: F.A. Perthes, 1884-1886). About the Polish-German polemics: Krakowski, *ibid.*, pp. 5-9, 154-158; Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 40.

²¹⁰ Andrzej F. Grabski, Kształty historii (Łódź: Wyd. Łódzkie, 1985); Anita K. Shelton, The Democratic Idea in Polish History and Historiography: Franciszek Bujak, 1875-1953 (Boulder, Colo: East European Monographs, 1989); Hanna Madurowicz-Urbańska, Franciszek Bujak - o nowy kształt historii (Kraków: PAU, 2001); Bogna Szafranec, Franciszek Bujak (1875-1953): Życie, działalność naukowo-dydaktyczna i społeczna (Toruń: Adam Marszałek, 2009).

²¹¹ Franciszek Bujak, Studia nad osadnictwem Małopolski (Kraków: PAU, 1905). Also, the notable Polish medievalist Oswald Balzer argued against the German thesis in his article "O Niemcach w Polsce," *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, Lwów: 1911.

Later, Polish historians argued that open-field battles rarely took place in Europe after the thirteenth century, and Poland was no exception. Prior to the Mongol invasions the basic war strategy, including civil war, was to attack an enemy's land and plunder it in the most efficient way in the shortest possible time. Fortified towns, as well as natural shelter—swamps, forests, and hills—served as sites of defense and refuge for peasants.²¹² As peasants became exposed to many military conflicts prior to the Mongol raids (mostly the wars carried on by local dukes, as well as to the frequent raids by Russians, Prussians, Lithuanians, and Yatvongus), they acquired certain skills for self-defense and survival. Some contemporary historians, for instance, argues that regarding the high level of forestation of Polish lands, peasants most probably hid in forests and swamps during raids. Such arguments appear as a reiteration of a thesis explicated already in the nineteenth century.²¹³

The historical controversy, however, remains unresolved. The major difference between local wars and the Mongol raids came from the twofold character of the latter. During an initial strike, the Mongol avant-garde, having a good orientation in an assaulted area due to reconnaissance carried on by espionage, and operating with staggeringly quick speed, spared homesteads with goods while killing or at least injuring all of their inhabitants; in the second strike the Mongol army plundered properties that had been left intact.²¹⁴ Contrary to the historians' speculations, the historical primary sources claim that the Principality of Cracow was almost entirely depopulated during the second Mongol invasion. Nineteenth-century authors, however, drew more on primary sources than on their contemporary historiographical debates,

²¹² Jasiński, *ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

²¹³ S. Rosół, Święta Kinga, jej klasztor i miasto Stary Sącz. Szkic historyczno-monograficzny na pamiątkę uroczystości 600 letniej rocznicy śmierci Św. Kingi (Nowy Sącz: Komitet Św. Kingi, 1892), pp. 6-7.

²¹⁴ Jasiński, *ibid.*, p. 40.

and it was their vision that ultimately shaped the national popular memory. In the Polish national master narrative, the Mongol invasions provided the first instance of the apocalyptic destruction suffered by Polish lands and Polish people, and therefore served as a rhetorical, or historical point of reference to the invasions that came later. As a narrative of the nation's suffering, it is rich in topoi of obliteration and martyrdom.

The only heartening examples of Polish defense came from accounts of the third Mongol invasion in 1287-88. Polish knights repelled the attacks of the Mongols, and the newly fortified towns of Cracow, Lublin, and Sandomierz managed to withstand the sieges. Moreover, the Mongol forces suffered two major defeats in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, north of Cracow. Yet, in spite of the few Polish victories, Mongols plundered the Sądecczyzna, burning the town of Podoliniec and laying siege to Stary Sącz. Only after the Hungarian intervention led by George of Sovar did the Mongols retreat to Rus', in February of 1288 at the latest.²¹⁵ All the stories of highlanders fighting the Tatars relate to the episodes of 1287.

²¹⁵ Jasiński, *ibid.* pp. 72-74.

Dogged Peasants in The Fortress of Nature

This section analyzes the legends about peasants acting in self-defense from the Mongol invaders in the Kościeliska Valley—the most picturesque valley in the Polish Tatra and the major tourist destination. First, I focus on an example derived from a mid-nineteenth-century illustrated tourist guide. Then, I proceed to analyze the literary depictions of a medieval legend about the Dog Field of Wrocław, to demonstrate how nineteenth-century Polish popular history reconstructed the gender of peasant men from that of unmarked category to masculinity marked by out of control aggression. This new notion of peasant masculinity, characterized by unrestrained physical violence, appeared in the context of nineteenth-century representations of medieval Polish history. Thus, representing peasants as belligerent men whose aggression (controlled by the knights), was successfully turned into a means of war against a foreign invasion, helped to articulate the new sense of peasant citizenship: serf-men endowed with a sense of patriotism, loyalty to the larger political entity, and in solidarity with their lords in the face of foreign invasion.

In his guidebook, Bogusz Stęczyński recalls one of the legends about the Kościeliska valley. During one of the raids, the highlanders sought refuge in the mountains but the invaders followed them. In a valley, the highlanders “vengefully greeted” the aggressors: “Stones, like hail, fell from all sides / Squashed the invaders! [...] / Yet, the corpses of raiders rested long enough / ‘til the wolves sniffed them, rotten, and chewed them all up.”²¹⁶ Stęczyński used the legend to explain the source of the name of the most picturesque of the Tatra valleys, the

²¹⁶ Stęczyński, *ibid.*, p. 138.

Kościeliska, attributing it to Polish word *kości*, which mean *bones*, here of the Mongol warriors, left unburied at the skirmish site.²¹⁷

Stęczyński's highlanders in the Kościeliska Valley acted as a collective body, as a community in self-defense. The gender of the collective is unmarked, yet emerges from a heroic act, or at least out of the peasants' ability to successfully confront the aggressors. Peasant virility appears in relation to the defeat of the invaders. Not only did the Asian warriors die a humiliating death, stoned in a trap; they were also deprived of a burial. Since antiquity—most famously, the fate of Hector's body in Homer's *Iliad* and of Polyneices' corpse in Sophocles's *Antigone*—the denial of burial ultimately humiliates an enemy and emasculates a warrior. Moreover, in ancient pagan and Christian symbolism, leaving the human remains as prey to animals meant that the human body turned into beasts' flesh. Therefore, in both traditions the denial of burial appears also as an act of de-humanizing the defeated.²¹⁸ As in the legend of the wheat, in the legend of the Kościeliska Valley it is God who empowers the peasants, though this time without the intervention of a saintly mediator. Still, the victorious peasants recognized the source of their strength and manliness by giving thanks to God, who protected 'the faithful and just' and restored peace to the Christian world. Thus, the fate of the invaders came as a sign of Godly justice.

The story of the Kościeliska Valley bears some resemblance to a legend of the Mongols surrounding Pieniny Castle with Kinga and her Poor Clares. Divine providence protected the Duchess and her charges, mainly through the means of "a terrible Carpathian tempest, which

²¹⁷ Stęczyński, *ibid.*

²¹⁸ Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity: 200-1336*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995; --, "Images of the Resurrection Body in the Theology of Late Antiquity," *Catholic Historical Review* 80, no. 2 (1994).

uprooted trees and chunks of rocks, throwing them all, with the sound of thunder, on the heads of the aggressors,” according to some version of the legend.²¹⁹ Szczęsny Morawski emphasized the participation of Ruthenians as the Mongol’s allies in the siege of Pieniny castle, and dazzled his readers with an image of a surge of the Dunajec River as God’s miracle: “Whoever saw a horrible mountain storm in the Tatra or the Pieniny will admit that Christian Rus’ needed to acknowledge God’s judgment over itself and heaven’s against itself. [...] Terrified Ruthenians ran off, followed by superstitious Tatar savages.”²²⁰ Morawski also qualified the story of the siege at Pieniny, as a form of local collective memory: “I knew old people who told me that they heard those stories from their grandfathers and great-grandfathers!”²²¹

Thus, if seen as the embodiment of the forces of nature, both the storm and the peasants’ acts were inspired by God. In consequence, peasants might appear closer to the “forces of nature,” than to warriors—men guided in their actions by a high moral code and political ideas. The act of self-defense also appears as a ‘natural,’ instinctive reaction rather than a conscious protection of the political *status quo*. This semantic propinquity between a defender and a protector reflects a variety of contextual conceptualizations of the peasant position vis-à-vis the nation: from early modern ideology of the nobility, through Romantic to conservative, and social Darwinist. Yet, the legend of Pieniny Castle is not the only one that might have inspired the legend of the Kościelska Valley as recorded by Stęczyński; certainly not the only one that, in the literary and historical imagination, fused peasant militancy with the trope of “nature’s rage.”

²¹⁹ Rosół, *ibid.*, p. 23; Maria Sandoz, “Zameczek w Pieninach,” in: M. Immaculata, *ibid.*, p. 252.

²²⁰ Morawski, *ibid.*, p. 162. Random and rapid surges of the Dunajec are hydrologic facts and do not have to be regarded only as a trope of supernatural intervention. The river’s surge relates to the character of the mountain weather system, especially to the impact of melting snow and seasonal rains.

²²¹ Morawski, *ibid.*, p. 165.

The tale of the Kościeliska Valley also resembles in its details an account of the medieval battle on Dog's Field (Polish: *Psie Pole*; German: *Hundsfeld*), which had become an outlying area of Wrocław (German: Breslau) by the nineteenth century. The legend tells the fate of the German king Henry V's troops, who attacked Lower Silesia in the early twelfth century, then a part of the Kingdom of Poland. In their attempts to take Wrocław, German knights were trapped by Poles and suffered a major defeat. Their unburied bodies became carrion for dogs, which devoured them with an exceptional fury. Inspired by a common medieval motif yet picturesquely woven into history of the Polish-German wars by Master Wincenty Kadłubek in his *Polish Chronicle* (ca. 1190 to 1208), this story became popular in Poland during the partition era, providing a colorful thread in the fabric of the national mythology.²²² Although the account of the Dog's Field battle, like most of the other accounts in Kadłubek's chronicle, lost credibility in academic historiography already in the nineteenth century, Gallus Anonymus, the author of an earlier and more respected medieval Polish chronicle, *Gesta Principum Polonorum* (ca. 1115), emphasized the role that the "dogged peasants" (*zajadle chłopstwo*) played during the invasion of Henry V.²²³

The historical memory of the battle of Dog's Field lived on into the nineteenth century. Szczęsny Morawski, whose anti-German views underlie his history of the Ślądeczyzna, asserts that the German Imperial eastern aspirations in the tenth century were "humiliated" at Dog's Field.²²⁴ The motif of "dogged peasants" was further developed by Józef I. Kraszewski in *The Royal Sons* (*Królewscy synowie*), a historical romance in a series covering Polish history from

²²² Michał Kaczmarek, "Bitwa na Psim Polu", in: *Encyklopedia Wrocławia* (Wrocław: Wyd. Dolnośląskie, 2000). Samuel Orgelbrand, *S. Orgelbranda Encyklopedia Powszechna*, Vol. 12 (Warszawa: 1902), p. 406.

²²³ R. Żerlik, „Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku,” in: *Historia Śląska*, ed. by M. Czaplinski, E. Kaszuba, G. Wąs, and R. Żerlik (Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002), p. 43.

²²⁴ Morawski, vol. 1, p. 45.

prehistoric times to the fall of the Commonwealth. Published in 1877, the novel deals with the competition between two sons of Prince Władysław Herman in the late eleventh century.

Kraszewski's historical romance depicts a fratricide conflict between Zbigniew, an older and illegitimate son, and Bolesław, a younger legitimate offspring and future prince, one of the most successful in fighting against the Holy Empire of the German Nation. Relying heavily on medieval chronicles, Kraszewski offered yet another historical example illustrating his interpretation of Polish history: the destructiveness of power struggles among the Polish elites, a critique of the Polish aristocracy, the retrospective yearning for a strong leader, and the constant Germans threat. Literary scholars remark that in sketching his idealized image of young Prince Bolesław, Kraszewski was inspired by *Chanson de Roland*, and in *The Royal Sons* provided a Polish version of it. That would make the work a belated example of Romantic medievalism.

Yet, written after the unification of Germany, the novel reveals most of all a historicist response to anti-Polish measures undertaken by Bismarck's administration, and to the Kulturkampf. In this respect, Kraszewski's Prince Bolesław emerges as an ideal of a Christian warrior, a defender of the state, the Church and the nation, defeating the German emperor, his subsidiaries and Polish traitors who carry on an unjust war. Contrary to the historical facts, of which he certainly was aware as a good historian, Kraszewski calls Henry V not a king but an emperor. Thus, the choice of title seems to be politically significant. Moreover, the final victory was for the most part won by dogged peasants, on Dog's Field.

Kraszewski proposed a creative way of absorbing Kadłubek's motif of dogs into his narrative, and eventually into his powerful and prominent vision of Polish history. He did it, however, in a way that reminds us more of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* than *Chanson de Roland*. In Kraszewski's version the dogs, ejected from Wrocław as it prepared for the siege, harassed

German invaders, preying on the horses' corpses and howling in gloomy prophecy. Over a few days, the howls of the dogs came to resemble human whispers and derisive laughter. On the critical morning before the battle, the surrounding forest encircled and entrapped the German knights. Disguised in branches, much in the mode of Great Birnam Woods, "dark serfs (*czerni*) and peasants [...] grey, dark, [and] russet, crept like a swarm" toward the German troops, and attacked them.²²⁵ The Prince and Polish knights assisted in the slaughter, which violated the chivalric code, and was carried out mostly by peasants.

Kraszewski's image of 'peasant warriors' is far from an idealization. The power of militant peasants lays in their infinite number, their ability to continue ("[s]ome fell, others rose from the earth"), and their unpardonable warfare ("the numerous blacks were killing the wounded, ripping off their armor, and looting").²²⁶ Driven by vengeance, peasant soldiers appear as 'savages,' ignoring even such a basic chivalric rule as respecting Christian remains.²²⁷ Yet, as in Stęczyński's Kościeliska Valley, the fate of the German knights and their treacherous Polish allies on Dog's Field came as God's punishment. Moreover, only a patrimonial sovereign, Prince Bolesław, was able to control peasant wartime rage—that untamed force of nature set free of necessity to defend the Prince's realm and the homesteads of his subjects. In consequence, Kraszewski's vision of the battlefield near Wrocław appears as a ground for prey of both dogs and looting peasants, as well as a mourning field of German imperialism.

As a historian, Kraszewski addressed weak evidence in primary sources of that Polish victory by recalling an *argumentum ex silentio*, claiming that the imperial sources preferred to

²²⁵ J. I. Kraszewski, *Królewscy synowie* (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1960), p. 494.

²²⁶ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, pp. 494-497.

²²⁷ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, p. 498.

forget about that humiliating expedition altogether.²²⁸ As an artist, Kraszewski wrapped the episode in the murky tone of a Shakespearian tragedy, showing that God is with the righteous, and the fate of assailants and traitors is a dreadful downfall. To convey his message, Kraszewski recalled the daunting image of the powers of unleashed peasant militancy.

Within the national grand narrative, both events—the battles in the Kościeliska Valley and at Dog’s Field—drawn from medieval history, show common themes. The fate of the nation’s enemies, whether they are Christians or “the unfaithful,” proves to be the same: the enemies are killed, and denying them burial turns their earthly remains into the bodies of beasts. The means of self-defense applied by princely warriors in Silesia and the highlander peasants in the Tatra also shows similarities. In a symbolic way, in the face of the invasion, the militant efforts of peasants almost equal those of the knights. Defending a ruler and his state symbolically ennobles the peasant, showing their ability to voluntarily carry on the ultimate sacrifice for the large and abstract, as well as smaller and immediate communities. And yet, their apolitical inspiration, based upon an “animalistic” drive to survive, to defend their families, or a problematic Christian desire to take vengeance on an enemy with no mercy, determines the cultural reading of peasant courage, leaving them vulnerable to shifting representations either as patriotic defenders, or as “dogged blacks.” Thus, the peasant soldiers appear constantly in need of moral guidance from their superiors, which complies not only with the logic of the Romantic concept of a national awakening of the masses, and with ideals of national paternalism and class solidarism informed by Christianity, but also conforms to ideas of Social Darwinism lingering in

²²⁸ Kraszewski, *ibid.*, p. 501.

the second half of the nineteenth-century in Polish national discourse even where they should be least expected.²²⁹

Thus, the subalternization of the peasant-soldiers found justifications in terms of the ethics of warfare. On the one hand peasants appear as powerful soldiers, which is a fantasy fundamental for most of Polish national ideologies, envisioning militancy of Polish peasants the *conditio sine qua non* of a success of any national military endeavor aiming to regain an independent state. On the other hand, the fresh history lesson of the Galician Peasant Rebellion of 1846, as well as the older one of the Cossack uprisings of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, colored the images of peasant militancy with a permanent stain: the horrors of peasant militancy, and the fear of it. Thus, the inbuilt principle of necessity to control peasant militancy signifies the national elite's deeply rooted distrust and fear of their national peasant fellows. This principle was mediated and naturalized by the rhetoric of national and religious solidarisms.

²²⁹ Porter, Brian. When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Highlanders as Polish Scots and Cossacks

In this section I analyze the attempts to represent Polish highlanders as Scots and Cossacks. This section focuses on a travelogue, a novel, and a poem by the nineteenth-century revolutionary, political activist, and poet Seweryn Goszczyński. In this section I bring in Goszczyński's biography to demonstrate the ideological origins of his attempt to construct a collective identity of Polish peasants as patriots in narratives of Polish medieval and early modern history. Thus, I demonstrate the ideological and historiographical reasons for Goszczyński's conceptual failure to construct Polish highlanders as Polish version of Scots or Cossacks.

In the late 1830s, Seweryn Goszczyński spent some time exploring Galicia. By then, Goszczyński (1801-1876) was already a person of symbolic stature in Poland.²³⁰ Born in Humań

²³⁰ On Goszczyński: M. Grabowski, Literatura i krytyka, vol. 3 (Wilno: T. Glücksberg, 1840); Lucjan Siemieński, Portrety literackie, vol. 1 (Poznań: J. K. Żupański, 1865); Wincenty Pol, „Po bożym świecie i w podziemiach Wieliczki,” Sobótka, 1871: 23-24; Agaton Giller, „Seweryn Goszczyński: Szkic biograficzny,” in: Sobótka. Księga zbiorowa na uczenie pięćdziesięcioletniego jubileuszu Seweryna Goszczyńskiego (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1875); --, Pamiętka półwiekowego jubileuszu Seweryna Goszczyńskiego we Lwowie dnia 7 marca 1875 roku (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1875); Stanisław Zdziarski, Pierwiastek ludowy w poezji polskiej XIX wieku (Warszawa: E. Wende, 1901); Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, Wrażenia (Kraków: Gebethner i Wolff, 1902); Gabeł Korbut, „Goszczyński Seweryn (1801-1876),” in: Wiek XIX. Sto lat myśli polskiej, vol. 5 (Warszawa: 1909); Zygmunt Wasilewski, Z życia poety romantycznego. Seweryn Goszczyński w Galicji. Nieznane pamiętniki, utwory i listy z lat 1832-1843 (Lwów: Tow. Wydawnicze, 1910); Bogusław Serwin, Próba charakterystyki twórczości Seweryna Goszczyńskiego (Kraków: Fundusz Naukowy, 1911); Stanisław Windakiewicz, Walter Scott i lord Byron w odniesieniu do polskiej poezji romantycznej (Kraków: Druk. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1914); Aleksander Słapa, Goszczyński na Podhalu (1832): Kartka z przeszłości Podhala i Tatr (Kraków: Gebethner i Wolff 1915); Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, Notatki literackie (Warszawa: Orgelbrand: 1916); Z. Lubertowicz, „Pieśń skalnych Tatr,” Echo Tatrzańskie 1918: 1-7; Fryderyk Hoesick, Tatry i Zakopane: Przeszłość i teraźniejszość, vol. 1 (Poznań 1921); Stanisław Pazurkiewicz, Poczucie przyrody w twórczości Seweryna Goszczyńskiego (Tarnów: Księgarnia Z. Jelenia, 1921); Zygmunt Wasilewski, Seweryn Goszczyński: Szkice literackie (Poznań 1923); K. Breitmeier,

(Ukraine) in 1801, Goszczyński passed into Polish history as one of the founders of the “Ukrainian school” of Polish literary Romanticism. A fervent conspirator, in the 1820s Goszczyński joined the Union of Free Polish Brothers (*Związek Wolnych Braci Polaków*). In 1830, the poet joined Piotr Wysocki’s conspiracy in the Russian Kingdom of Poland and on the night of November 29/30, charged the Belvedere palace in Warsaw, a residence of the King-Regent, Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich Romanov, intending to kill him. The event triggered the November Uprising of 1830-31 (the Polish-Russian war). Goszczyński served in the uprising as a captain, and fought at Stoczek in one of the major battles of the war. After the fall of the insurgency, he emigrated to Paris, and then temporarily to Austria.

In Galicia, Goszczyński initiated about a hundred conspiracies.²³¹ While in Lwów in 1834, Goszczyński established the Union of Twenty One (*Związek Dwudziestu Jeden*) with Wincenty Pol, a future prominent poet, and Franciszek Smolka, a future president of the Austria-Hungarian parliament, among other members. In 1835, in Cracow, Goszczyński co-founded the Polish People’s Society (*Stowarzyszenie Ludu Polskiego*). Ideologically and structurally, the organization was based on the Galician Carbonari movement, proposing a radical democratic program and claiming the need to enfranchise the peasants and grant them citizenship in a regained Polish statehood. The organization contained a special “Peasant Department” (*Wydział Chłopów*).

Seweryn Goszczyński w Tatrach; Bogdan Suchodolski, Seweryn Goszczyński: Życie i dzieło (1801-1876) (Warszawa: Wyd. Nauki Ministerstwa Wyznań i Oświecenia Publicznego, 1927); Zygmunt Wasilewski, Pieśń w górach (Warszawa: Patria, 1930); Janina Znamierowska, Liryka powstania listopadowego (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego, 1930); Bogdan Suchodolski, Polskie tradycje demokratyczne: Idea demokracji w ujęciu myślicieli polskich od St. Staszica do St. Witkiewicza (Kraków: M. Arct, 1946); N. Obrębska, „Życie i twórczość literacka Seweryna Goszczyńskiego,” in: Wybór pism rewolucyjnych S. Goszczyńskiego i R. Berwińskiego (Warszawa: Książka, 1948); Maria Janion, Lucjan Siemieński (Warszawa: PIW, 1955).

²³¹ Zygmunt Kaczkowski, Mój pamiętnik (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1907).

Seweryn Goszczyński's political views appeared as the most democratic among the major figures of the Polish Romantic movement. Yet, his democratic convictions changed prior to his involvement in the messianic sect of Andrzej Towiański, which he joined in Paris in 1842. In 1830s, Goszczyński took a trip to the Podhale and the Tatra, conspiring for his organization, writing his journal and collecting ethnographical materials for his future works.²³²

Seweryn Goszczyński's contribution in the discovery of the Tatra and the highlanders was remarkable, mostly thanks to his *Journal of a Journey to the Tatra Mountains* (1832), one of the first travelogues and ethnographic accounts of that area, and his literary works.²³³ Polish literary studies boldly call Goszczyński "the Columbus of the Tatra," though others left literary reminiscences of the Tatra before.²³⁴ Goszczyński popularized the mountains by bringing the highlanders to public attention in Poland and presenting them as the most 'worthy' among Polish peasants.

In Galicia, Goszczyński spent several months as a guest in a manor house of count Adolf Tetmajer in Łopuszna, a village near Nowy Targ. Adolf Tetmajer, known also as Tettmayer von Przerwa, was a deputy to Galician Sejm of the Land (1870-1876), the marshal of Nowy Targ County (Podhale), a local politician and intellectual. He introduced Goszczyński to the culture and history of the region, and accompanied him on his travels through the area. Goszczyński carried on his ethnographies among Tetmajer's serfs and other local peasants, and also used extensively Adolf's library, which contained writings on regional history. There is no doubt that

²³² Siemieński, *ibid.*

²³³ Janina Rosnowska, *Goszczyński: Opowieść biograficzna* (Warszawa: Wyd. Literackie, 1977); Halina Krukowska, *Noc romantyczna (Mickiewicz, Malczewski, Goszczyński): Interpretacje* (Białystok: Wyd. Filii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1985).

²³⁴ Most notably Stanisław Staszic (1755-1826), a naturalist, educator, and politician.

the Tetmajers mediated Goszczyński's encounters with the Tatra culture and highlanders, a fact that literary critics often overlook.

Goszczyński's interest in the Tatra was first in the natural surroundings, then in the culture, but after two decades, when the memoir was finally published, the poet had become disappointed with the people and turned back to the landscape. From an early age, long before he first set foot in the mountains, Goszczyński was fascinated by the Tatra. For a man who grew up on the plains of Ukraine, the Tatra embodied the Romantic topos of the mountains: a dramatic landscape that was home to a brave people, and the perfect location of tragic histories. The Alpine landscape of the Tatra, which he encountered in 1830s, did not disappoint him.

The primary reason for Goszczyński's stay in Galicia was politics. His host, Adolf Tetmajer, also fought in the November Uprising and spent some time in Paris as a political refugee. He gladly welcomed the illegal émigré from Paris. Goszczyński's political mission was to explore the possibilities of organizing a conspiracy among Galician peasants. After the fall of the November Uprising (1830-1831), many political commentators among émigrés argued that one of the reasons for the failure of the Uprising was the lack of support among peasants for the Polish military endeavor. To gain such support, the Polish elite—at the time predominantly landed nobility—needed to reform social and economic relationships with their serfs. This meant most of all the abolition of the serfdom in the Russian and Austrian partitions.²³⁵ This claim was one of the cornerstones in the democratic programs among various émigré groups in France and England between 1831 and 1861. Moreover, analysis of the reasons for the November Uprising's fall appeared in a larger framework of debates over the social structure and traditions of the political system of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where serfdom played a key role.

²³⁵ In Prussia, serfdom had already been abolished in the 1820s.

Those debates revived discussions about the Kościuszko Uprising (1795) and its unfulfilled democratic program, including granting peasants serving in the Polish army a personal freedom and limited scope of citizenship.

In spite of his political agenda, Goszczyński's journal shows that the author got to know the peasants more as a tourist than as a political agitator. With the exception of the ethnographic sections, Goszczyński's journal contains little information about his direct encounters with peasants. There are several possible reasons: the fear of having the manuscript confiscated, a concern with censorship, or perhaps the author lost interest in politics after his conversion to Andrzej Towiański's sect in later years. The journal was completed after Goszczyński's joining Towiański's religious sect. Yet, these reasons do not fully account for the scarcity of comments about peasants. If Goszczyński had more direct contact with them, his descriptions would be deeper than the tourist-flavored comments found in the journal. Thus, it appears that already in 1832 Goszczyński found highlanders inapt to support patriotic causes, and ill-suited to play an active role as political partners of the nobility in national politics. It was certainly one of the greatest disappointments of Romantic nationalism and democratic politics before the abolition of serfdom.

For Goszczyński, as for many Romantics, politics was a consequence of art and vice-versa. His conspiracies and politics became entangled with his ethnographical studies and literary works. Goszczyński visited the Tatra twice. His first exploration resulted in his journal and three poetic novels: *The Kościeliska Valley*, *The Frightful Rifleman (Straszny strzelec)*, and *Oda*. All these writings provide great examples of a struggle to turn a Romantic fantasy of Polish peasants as a part of the nation into a powerful myth, and of the failure to do so.

Literary critics concerned with the genealogy of themes and motifs often emphasize that Goszczyński, who reconceptualized Ukraine and the Cossacks in modern Polish literature, attempted to do the same for the Tatra and the highlanders. Goszczyński's acclaimed work *The Castle of Kaniów* (*Zamek kaniowski*) was published in 1828. Certainly, the poet aimed to do with the Kościeliska Valley what Adam Mickiewicz did to the town of Troki and Lake Świtez in Lithuania,²³⁶ and what Ryszard Berwiński and Juliusz Słowacki did to Lake Gopło and the town of Kruszwica in Greater Poland (Prussian partition).²³⁷ A part of *The Kościeliska Valley*, an opening poem titled *The Bonfire* (*Sobótka*), circulated among the reading public, but most of the poems remained unpublished. *The Frightful Rifleman* received bad reviews, and so did *Oda*, yet they were popular and republished many times. One of the reasons for this artistic failure of a talented writer was his inability to turn the highlanders into Romanticized Cossacks: free and militant peasant-soldiers.

In his youth, Goszczyński was strongly influenced by Scottish Romanticism. In his memoirs, he recalls that on 29 November 1830, after having a beer with Lieutenant Piotr Wysocki—his leader in the cadets' conspiracy against the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich Romanov—he came back home in the afternoon, finished translating one of Sir Walter Scott's romances, took it to a printing house, and by the midnight with other conspirators charged the Belvedere Palace intending to kill the Duke and instigate the national uprising. The revolutionary also translated James Macpherson's *The Poems of Ossian Songs*.

²³⁶ In his Konrad Wallenrod and Świtez.

²³⁷ The geographic interests of the Romantic poets were not, of course, clearcut. In 1832 Juliusz Słowacki wrote a drama Mindowe on the same theme, taking place in Nowogródek in Lithuania. Ryszard Berwiński, a poet from the Great Duchy of Poznań, wrote Bogunka na Gopło (1940) locating the action of his poem in Gopło.

Goszczyński hoped that he might turn the Tatra highlanders into the Polish Scots. Tatra peasants certainly had a stronger sense of personal and communal freedom than peasants in other parts of Poland. The arable lands in the mountains, except the Podhale, were scattered, rocky, and of little productivity, so many peasants in this area were largely employed in sheep and cattle pasturage. The occupations of the shepherds were strictly gendered. That included gender-based taboos in customs and beliefs. Women, mostly young, pastured the cattle and produced cow-milk based foods. The cattle pastures were usually located in proximity of the homesteads. While the reasons for that were practical—the small number of cattle, the predominant role of the cow-milk products in the family diet, and safety reasons, such as protection from theft and animal predators (mostly wolves, occasionally bears)—in practice this kind of pasturing did not demand women to part from their families for long and far. By contrast, the men, particularly young ones, found employment with pasturing sheep, producing sheep-milk products, and with fleecing. While sheep pasturing was much more physically demanding, it also gave shepherds a greater scope of uncontrolled physical mobility as well as agency, including carrying arms. Part of masculine shepherd culture was entering into countless violent encounters with other shepherds, peasants, landowners, or even state officials. Those qualities in peasant male lives could not match those of inhabitants of the lowland regions of Poland, where the physical mobility was constrained by serfdom, and the rural environment was much more controlled. Only Ukraine with its vast open lands and scarce feudal controlling agents, as well as large forest complexes and marshland on the borderland between Poland and Lithuania could match the mountains in environmental conditions for developing a sense of peasant freedom.²³⁸

²³⁸ Notably, the Kurpiowska Forest on the borderland of the Eastern Prussia and Lithuania.

The shepherds developed a system of homosocial bonding outside of family relationships. Their cultural practices show strong homoerotic and affirmation of militant masculinity. Certainly, the lives and customs of the Tatra shepherds are part of the larger Alpine and Balkan cultures. Yet, while framed in the nineteenth-century cultural map of Poland, the highland culture stood out with its images of strong, brave, and virile (if unruly) shepherds, providing the material for constructing a fantasy of a robust and “savage,” yet “noble” male Polish peasant. The nobility of peasant men in such representations came from various conceptualizations of freedom of the shepherd’s life, as well as shepherd’s love of freedom. These idealized characteristics of a particular professional group tended to extend to the whole male peasant population and, by excluding women, to all highlanders.

In practice, the Carpathian trails did not limit the mobility of men from the Tatra. Many of them served in the Austrian army in far corners of the empire, and fought abroad. Those veterans, who came back to their homesteads, brought with them an intimate knowledge of guns, and did not shy away from using the weapons in illegal hunting and trapping, or as a resolution tool in local conflicts. As in other wild and mountainous areas, brigandage was a common peril, and local legends told of the deeds of brave outlaws. While peasant veterans from Prussian and Russian armies had the same abilities and tended to practice them, especially in forest areas in illegal hunting, the presence and use of guns in highlander homesteads was customarily tolerated by the landowners and the state officials for reasons of protection from the both ill-willed men and hunger-driven animals. Thus, in Polish culture the highlander appears as a rare example of a

peasant man equipped with a rifle, yet showing peaceful intentions toward his upper-class national compatriots.²³⁹

Seweryn Goszczyński found an immediate inspiration for his first novel in local stories of the outlaws (*zbójnicy*) living in the Tatra. The outlaw as a literary figure was closely associated with the Romantic representations of the Cossacks. Janosz, the main hero of *Sobótka*, is an outlaw. Goszczyński was inspired by the local stories about Juraj Jánošík, the most famous outlaw active in the area of Moravia, contemporary northern Slovakia, and the Podhale. The poem is focused on the transformation of Janosz from an outlaw into a defender of his community—and therefore, of Poland.

The reasons for Janosz's transformation are not clear since the poem was never completed. An exceptionally handsome and strong young heir to an affluent peasant household, Janosz is engaged to the most beautiful girl in his village. The couple lives in an idyll, anticipating their imminent marital union. Yet suddenly, the girl disappears in a forest without a trace. Goszczyński gives two hints about the reasons: she was either abducted by the female swamp demons (*dziwożony*) and transformed into one of them; or she fell victim to a Tatar spy disguised as a monk, a forerunner of the Tatar foray into the village. In both cases the bride is considered dead. The tragedy crushes Janosz, and leads—unexpectedly quickly—not only to losing all his wealth, but also his moral integrity, as he turns into a violent neighbor and becomes an outlaw in his own peasant community. It is during the summer solstice bonfire ceremony celebrated by the villagers, when Janosz undergoes a swift, yet unfinished transformation: the ballads about his unhappy relationship with his bride bring Janosz to a catharsis, and a sudden attack of the Tatars on the villagers gives him a chance to stand up as a

²³⁹ After the abolition of serfdom, masses of highlanders migrated in search of work to the Hungarian plains, the Slovak valleys (Upper Hungary), to the Polish lowlands, and even to the United States.

defender and make up for his trespassing of the communal customs and laws. The poem ends just as the Tatars attack the village, and Janosz transforms once more from an outlaw into a hero.

According to Maria Janion, in this period of his life Goszczyński regarded the highlanders as incarnations of the Cossacks.²⁴⁰ Janion analyzed *Sobótka* vis-à-vis *The Caste of Kaniów* and the construction of the character of the outlaw Janosz vis-à-vis the powerful character of Cossack Nebaba. Goszczyński made the latter character a leader of the *koliyivshchyna* peasant rebellion (1768-1769) in Ukraine. In Nebaba, the poet created a powerful Romantic figure of the peasant warrior: a political and cultural hybrid. Such a social, cultural, and political hybridization of the Polish peasant hero was only possible by setting him safely in the cultural and political borderlands. Theoretically then, highlanders should have been well-suited to a similar artistic and ideological project, yet all of Goszczyński's fictions about the Tatra highlanders failed to convey a compelling image of a manly peasant patriot.

Maria Janion argues that it was not the lack of ethnographic material that restricted Goszczyński, and it is hard to disagree with her statement. It is clear from his correspondence that he collected a rich archive of ethnographic notes, which came into the temporary possession of some of his literary colleagues, who did not hesitate to use them for their own works – together with Goszczyński's original notes on sketches in ethnography-based literary fictions. Lucjan Siemieński especially used Goszczyński's notes from the Podhale visit quite liberally, which caused a falling out between the two friends. The circulation of Goszczyński's notes is not well documented, and only a few literary historians have pointed out the derivative characteristics of the writings on highlanders that came from the Goszczyński-Siemieński's

²⁴⁰ Maria Janion, "Kozacy i górale," in: *Gorączka romantyczna* (Warszawa: PIW, 1975).

circle.²⁴¹ Yet, the main limitation of Goszczyński's rich and unique archive was the nature of its source: the Tetmajers family.

Goszczyński's knowledge about the history of the region and its people certainly constrained his artistic invention, and *Sobótka* proves that weakness. Goszczyński limited himself to very narrow narrative choices in developing the story of Janosz after his transformation: the poet could make his hero either a defender of the village or a defender of a region, but nothing more than that to keep his poem within the otherwise flexible limitations of the Romantic historical imagination. Regarding Janosz's powerful and destructive love for his dead bride (a motif rooted in Frenetic Romanticism), any happy solution in the form of social advancement would appear a political fantasy. Moreover, in the genre of a national gothic story, as Goszczyński sketched it, there was no place for "... and they lived happily ever after". The poet could miraculously save the girl, as a Tatar captive for instance, but than Janosz's inevitable quest to rescue his fiancé would lead him outside of the Tatra, and that was certainly not the poet's intention. Furthermore, Goszczyński only touched upon Janosz's evil side: elaborating his vices against his community in adjectives rather than in verbs made the poem ambiguous. But this left no space for inserting a political and ideological message: Janosz's peasant community became his innocent victim after his personal tragedy. Therefore, as a character, Janosz complies more with the stereotype of the savage peasant, lacking any moral instincts, than with the altruistic hero.

Paradoxically, the class and cultural conflicts between Cossacks on the one hand, and the Polish nobility, Russians, and the Crimean Tatars on the other, as well as the imaginary geographic boundlessness of Ukraine and the mobility of the Cossacks as soldiers and

²⁴¹ Danuta Sosnowska, *Seweryn Goszczyński: Biografia duchowa* (Wrocław: Leopoldinum, 2000).

serviceman, gave much better narrative possibilities for constructing a split-personality peasant hero, than a landed highlander bound to his community, household, and rather narrow territory of his “freedom” beyond which the rule of nobility and the reality of serfdom proved to be uncontested historical truth.

The geometry of geography haunted the artistic imaginations of Polish writers: the sense of freedom in the vertical boundlessness of the mountains had more of a spiritual quality, suitable for self-exploration, while the horizontal boundlessness of the steppe, associating easily with physical and social mobility, links a notion of freedom with various political utopias, including a political nostalgia.

Goszczyński’s Janosz is both a shepherd and the richest heir in the village, but while the author could not have seen this as a constraint at the beginning of his work, it haunted the rest of his poem. First, in real life the “free” shepherds spent most of the growing season away from villages. Furthermore, they were usually the poorest of the village community, and therefore their militant virility was rooted in a desire to contest their position at the bottom of the social order. A shepherd/rich heir/outlaw as a hybrid was too unwieldy and proved to be unable to carry out the mission of becoming a peasant medieval hero beyond the fence of his village.

Comparing Janosz with Cossack Nebaba from *Kaniów Castle*, Maria Janion noted that in contrast to the Cossack, the highlander appears as a one-dimensional character.²⁴² Goszczyński affirmed the physical strength of his hero but at the same time Janosz shows no interest in politics. Maria Janion is right that this one-dimensionality distinguishes Janosz from the “split-personality” Nebaba—the epitome of the Romantic hero. Yet, she does not take into account that Goszczyński drew both characters from ethnography and history, and that he simply did not

²⁴² Janion, *ibid.*

find the same political consciousness among his contemporary highlanders, as he did among his contemporary Ukrainians.

It is, however, certainly possible to see Goszczyński's Janosz as a precursor of the late-nineteenth-century tendency in Polish culture to represent highlanders, and the Tatra outlaws in particular, as an embodiment of physical strength and vigorous Polish peasant masculinity. This was certainly a part of the national eugenic fantasy about strong and healthy peasants and a personification of the nation's vigor. This fantasy emerged in the late nineteenth century, at a time when all of Goszczyński's works were already published and well saturated into the current Polish literary culture. Seen from this perspective, Janosz's reasons for committing to the national cause appear less important, and his lack of political consciousness seems like a strength rather than a fault. Janosz symbolizes the peasant part of the nation as robust and combative, though naïve and easy to influence and govern. Thus, his patriotism comes as a "national awakening," a metaphor much cherished in Polish national writings, regardless of esthetic and ideological provenience. But even if what really inspires Janosz's actions is a foreign invasion, his "national awakening" is mediated by the Romantic triad of love, lust, and loss.

Goszczyński was believed to have grasped spirit of the mountains but failed to grasp the spirit of the mountain people. His artistic intuition of showing the highlanders as potential peasant national heroes was viable, but his ethnographic and political explorations proved that his expectations of the highlanders and their culture were too high. The critics were disappointed with *Sobótka* and Goszczyński never finished *The Kościeliska Valley*. Yet, even when *Sobótka* turned out to be a failure from a narrative point of view, still, it was written in fine verses, so the poem was reprinted many times as a whole or in parts, in all three partitions of Poland. Moreover, because of Goszczyński's literary stature, *Sobótka* was granted a special place in the

history of Polish literature and ethnography, as one of the most interesting attempts to fully introduce highlanders and their culture to mainstream Polish culture. For that reason, many commentators in later years criticized Goszczyński for not completing his project. That includes Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, Adolf Tetmajer's son, who was a prominent poet, a regionalist, and an ardent promoter of the highlander culture into the mainstream of Polish culture at the turn of the century.²⁴³

In the 1860s, Szczęsny Morawski exploited much better the motif of the highlanders faithfully helping the Polish lawful king to maintain his God-given right to rule. In *Sądcecczyzna*, Morawski recounts an episode from the turbulent history of the feudally divided thirteenth-century Poland. Soon after the second Mongol invasion, the ambitious and aggressive Duke Konrad I of Masovia took control of Cracow, usurping the title of the Polish High Duke—the highest feudal title among the dukes of the Piast dynasty. According to Morawski, knights Klemens of Ruszcza, a voivod of Kraków, and the Gryf brothers challenged Konrad I, and orchestrated the return of the young Duke Bolesław and his wife Kinga to Cracow. Morawski claims that the commoners (*lud*) largely supported a rebellion against the Masovian duke, and the Gryf brothers formed their army with highlanders and forced the usurper to leave the capital city. Thus, highlanders appear as warriors faithful to a legitimate ruler and, moreover, to a young ruler deprived of his patrimony by the evil “uncle,” and therefore as a group and a military tool the peasant highlanders fulfill the medieval ideal of knighthood, as protectors of the weak and orphaned. Morawski recalls the important role of a mayor of a village of Podoliniec (*soltys*), who saved duke Bolesław's life in the mountains, by advising his liege lord to seek shelter in the

²⁴³ Goszczyński rescued teenage Kazimierz Tetmajer during one of their climbing trips in the mountains. Tetmajer always remembered this accident, regarding it as a form of spiritual connection between the Romantic poet and himself.

Pieniny castle. The duke gave this unknown by name mayor a “ravaged” Podoliniec with associated lands, forest, and streams, with a mill, inn, and hunting rights for “the lifelong heirdom” (*dożywotnie dziedzictwo*).²⁴⁴

Morawski’s account proves that, if studied closely, history could offer feasible, though cliché, stories of heroic peasants in medieval history. As a history of Goszczyński’s struggles with turning highlanders into Polish Scots or Cossacks proved, the Romantic class/estate, cultural, and gender hybridization often proved to be a dead-end street in the national imagination. Though artistic imagination accepts no limits, the national artistic imagination needed to comply with history and contemporary social norms to fulfill its function, otherwise it would turn into a mere historical utopia or a fairy tale.

²⁴⁴ Morawski, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 109.

Highlanders as a Sensual Temptress in Need of Guidance

This section continues focusing on Seweryn Goszczyński's works, as they provide one of the major bodies of texts that inscribe highlanders into Polish history. Concentrating on *Oda*, a historical novel written in the mid-nineteenth century, I demonstrate how Goszczyński overcame the failed attempts to construct highlanders as a militant ethnic group of peasant warriors, and instead depicted them in poetic terms as a woman in marital ties to the nobility, yet in constant need of a moral guidance. Thus, traditional gender ideology served him to express the sense of social solidarism, indispensable in forming national community, yet again repressed masculinity as the gender of peasants, for the sake of showing them as lacking emotional self-control, yet simple minded and able to correct their deeds if consistently morally guided.

Seweryn Goszczyński's love for the Tatra and the Podhale prevailed over his disenchantment with the Romantic belief in peasant patriotism and the failure of *The Kościeliska Valley*. In 1842 he wrote another novel set in the Tatra, titled *Oda*, which gives a good example of the foundational national romance. The highlanders, in mid-1830s, appeared to Goszczyński as not mature enough to be entrusted with the national cause of regaining an independent statehood in the name of the Polish nation. The landed nobility, for their part, appeared to him unable to embrace the idea of emancipating the serfs, and enlarging the civic national contract. The relationship between the manor house and the village, though full of mutual distrust rooted in daily experiences and in family and historical memories, remained based on pre-partition patriarchalism. Goszczyński still regarded the Polish "Third Estate" as the essence of the people (*lud*), but he was leaving Galicia for Paris deeply dissatisfied not only by the moral indolence

and political conformism of the Galician Polish-speaking nobility but also by the moral qualities of the peasantry. He did not believe in their political qualities at all.

When the Romantic democracy turned out to be implausible even in literature, Goszczyński began imaging the Polish nation as a historical body bonding the lords and their serfs in a patriarchal “great family”. The old concept of patriarchalism, rooted in the noble republicanism, including practices of serfdom, would appear hard to digest for any democrat of that time. Yet, softened by employing gender metaphors in the poetic political imagination, this concept could and did convey an ideal of national unity. *Oda* shows that Goszczyński knew this, and used it to retreat to more conservative ideals in his vision of nation formation.

Goszczyński’s political and religious views evolved during his long life. In 1842, when *Oda* was published, Goszczyński, then a disillusioned democrat and revolutionary, officially joined the Circle of God’s Cause, a Christian heterodox sect established and led by Andrzej Towiański among Polish émigrés in Paris. An ardent democrat, Goszczyński began to lose his faith in democracy in Poland while conspiring in Galicia. Even so, he never lost his deep distrust toward the Polish political conservatives, epitomized by Prince Adam Czartoryski and his Hotel Lambert, a Polish monarchist party in exile in France. Always critical and suspicious, if not disdainful toward the Catholic clergy, Goszczyński accused them of being power-hungry and of purposefully keeping the masses of believers in a state of ignorance. He also became one of the crucial zealots in the authoritarian structure of Towiański’s sect.²⁴⁵ In this context, *Oda* demonstrates the author’s attempts to overcome his disillusionment with democratic politics and with the peasants’ failure to fulfill the role of active and constructive agents in the national drama, by ideas of class solidarism derived from Christian ideology.

²⁴⁵ Krzysztof Rutkowski, *Braterstwo albo śmierć: Zabijanie Mickiewicza w Kole Sprawy Bożej* (Paris: Libella, 1988); Alina Witkowska, *Towiańczycy* (Warszawa: PIW, 1989).

Failing to present a peasant man as a national hero, Goszczyński presented a peasant girl as an embodiment of highlanders; that is, peasants (the people), and the Tatra, as the land, that is Poland. If in *The Castle of Kaniów* the poet directly addressed the issues of social and political conflict that tore the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth apart, in *Oda* he presented this conflict as a matter of religion. By doing so, Goszczyński followed two of the greatest Polish Romantic poets and ideologues of that time: Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki. Goszczyński knew both of them personally (he was especially close to Mickiewicz) and shared their fascination with the transformation of Polish and Lithuanian pagan cultures into Christian ones. The interest in Slavic and Baltic pagan cultures originates from the first decades of the nineteenth century, and from the academic circle of the Imperial University in Vilna. It was Joachim Lelewel, a historian from Vilna, whose works and lectures influenced not only Romantic poets, but also the major current in Polish historiography and Polish democratic ideologies of the first half of the nineteenth century.²⁴⁶ Lelewel was among the first Polish intellectuals who regarded residues of

²⁴⁶ Daniel Beauvois, Wilno – polska stolica kulturalna zaboru rosyjskiego 1803–1832 (Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2010); Henryk Słoczyński, Światło w dziejopisarskiej ciemnicy: Koncepcja dziejów i interpretacja przeszłości Polski Joachima Lelewela (Kraków: Historia Iagiellonica, 2010); Maria Biernacka, Joachim Lelewel: Księgoznawca, bibliotekarz, bibliograf (Warszawa: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1993); Bogusław Cygler, “Z wolnością mego sumienia.” Poglądy Joachima Lelewela na religię i rolę Kościoła łacińskiego w dziejach (Gdańsk: Wyd. “Marpress,” 1992); Stefan Kieniewicz, Joachim Lelewel (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1990); Andrzej F. Grabski, Joachim Lelewel i demokracja niemiecka: Z dziejów międzynarodowych kontaktów polskiej lewicy w dobie Wielkiej Emigracji (Łódź: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1987); Joan S. Skurnowicz, Romantic Nationalism and Liberalism: Joachim Lelewel and the Polish National Idea (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1981); Helena Więckowska, Joachim Lelewel: Uczony, polityk, człowiek (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1980); Tadeusz Słowikowski, Joachim Lelewel, krytyk i autor podręczników historii (Warszawa: PWN, 1974); Bogusław Cygler, Działalność Joachima Lelewela na emigracji w latach 1831-1861 (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1969); Janusz Pajewski, Z badań nad pracami historycznymi Joachima Lelewela (Poznań: Wyd. Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 1962); Ignacy Chrzanowski, Joachim Lelewel: Człowiek i pisarz (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1946); Artur Śliwiński, Joachim Lelewel: Zarys biograficzny, lata 1786-1831 (Warszawa: Wyd. Kasy im. Mianowskiego, 1932).

paganism in folk cultures (at least as it was believed to be) as relics of the pure Slavic and Lithuanian traditions, and therefore, the quintessential elements of national cultures.²⁴⁷ Polish democrats of the first half of the nineteenth century highly respected Lelewel as a leading intellectual. Lelewel's interpretation of Polish history, particularly his concept of communal rule (*gminowładztwo*), supported the views that presented the pre-Christian Western Slaves as freedom-loving tribes for whom feudalism with their institutions of serfdom was entirely foreign and imposed by the force.

Yet, in contrast to Mickiewicz's condemnation of the Teutonic Knights as false Christian crusaders in his *Konrad Wallenrod* (one of the canonical texts of Polish Romanticism), to Słowacki's anti-clericalism, and to Berwiński's Panslavic affirmation of paganism, Goszczyński showed the least religious ambiguity in sketching his heroes and villains. He did so by wrapping his vision of the origins of the nation in a metaphor of a marital love. The poet deviated from his earlier democratic views, and drew his image of the nobility's patriarchalism from both Christian and republican political sources, mostly by using the metaphor of a loving husband guarding the morality of his wife, and holding responsibility for his family's moral, cultural, and political integrity. In *Oda* Goszczyński did not hesitate to defend the social and political domination of the nobility over peasants by claiming the nobility's spiritual superiority: it was the nobility, according to history and the poet, which gave peasants Christianity—the true faith and a promise of salvation in the after-life—and have been since guarding peasant's faithfulness to it.

In *Oda* Goszczyński again chose the Kościeliska Valley as the location of his story, but this time it appears as the site of a confrontation between Slavic paganism and Christianity for the “soul” of the Polish people. The novel's action takes place during the rule of the first Polish

²⁴⁷ Maria Janion, *Niesamowita słowiańszczyzna: Fantazmaty Literatury* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 2005); Monika Rudaś-Grodzka, *Sfinks słowiański i mumia polska* (Warszawa: IBL PAN, 2013).

king Bolesław I the Brave at the turn of the tenth and eleventh centuries. As in a classic romance, its major themes include love, seduction, betrayal, and revenge. The love triangle consists of a warlord named Gromwid, his peasant wife Oda, and an eremite called Czarnodum.

As the king's vassal, Gromwid rules the Tatra from a castle built upon the rocks in the valley. His wife Oda embodies female sensuality. This peasant girl, obviously endowed with exceptional beauty, is a recent convert to Christianity. Interestingly, Goszczyński made Gromwid introduce Oda to Christianity and christens her himself before their wedding. Ascribing a lay character to an apostolic mission is, thus, quite striking and significant, and it does seem to resonate with Goszczyński's experiences in Towiański's sect.

The married couple live immersed in sensual pleasures. The sexual and emotional bliss weakens Gromwid's manly qualities, making him postpone his knightly duty of joining King Bolesław in his expedition to Kiev. Consumed by guilt, and admonished by his guardian angel (who very much resembles a Polish Hussar from the seventeenth century),²⁴⁸ Gromwid decides to leave Oda immediately, entrusting her chastity to his male servant and vowing vengeance for any infidelity. After Gromwid's departure, Oda despairs, seeking consolation in solitude. In one of her rambles through the wilderness of the Kościeliska Valley, the woman encounters an eremite, Czarnodum. Enchanted by his singing and intrigued by his gift of showing visions of those who are away, Oda approaches Czarnodum with a request to show her Gromwid. The eremite, thus introducing himself as a Christian monk living in a nearby grotto, agrees, yet asks Oda for some offering for the sake of the pagan gods. At first reluctant, Oda complies with Czarnodum's request, which drives her away from Christianity. At the same time, Oda becomes

²⁴⁸ “[...] I saw a youth of miraculous beauty [...] his braided hair slipped out from under the helmet and two eagle wings [...] fell from his back [...]” S. Goszczyński, *Oda: Powieść z czasów Bolesława Wielkiego* (Poznań: W. Simon, 1886), p. 7.

romantically interested in the eremite himself, a man in the flesh and in love with her, rather than in an apparition of her husband. In the climax, the seductive eremite reveals to Oda his true identity: he is a pagan priest, a conspirator against the Church, and a personal enemy of her husband. In this very moment Gromwid appears, defeating Czarnodum in a fistfight. While dying, the would-be lover assures the husband about the chastity of his wife, blaming himself for seducing her. Yet, the forgiving husband is not able to find his wife. Only the next morning Gromwid finds a remorseful and dying Oda, who threw herself from the rock, claiming her fate to be God's punishment for her dual infidelity. The devastated husband dies in a chapel built up upon her grave.

Goszczyński made up the male names to sound pre-Christian Slavic, and derived a female name from medieval tradition. By doing so, the poet endowed the names with meanings reflecting the qualities of the characters: Gromwid means "the one who saw the lightning," and Czarnodum means "the one with the dark thoughts." The name Oda is both a historic Germanic female name, and the name of a poetic genre. Several Odas appear through Polish medieval history, including the spouses of the two Polish rulers. Oda of Haldensleben was the second wife of Duke Mieszko I, the first historically proven Polish ruler from the tenth century. Another Oda was the daughter of Margrave of Northern March, and thus initiated a long, but for the major part silenced, line of Polish queens and duchesses of German origins. Goszczyński could have been familiar with the history of Oda von Haldensleben, awkward for the modern Polish national memory. Duke Mieszko abducted Oda from the monastery of Kalbe, where she was either a novice or a nun. In spite its literary potential and romantic character, the abduction of Oda von Haldensleben, Duchess of Poland and a mother of Mieszko's I three sons, was largely suppressed both in Polish literature, arts, and history. Since the end of the eighteenth-century, Polish cultural

memory had been always highlighting the role of Duke Mieszko's first wife, Doubravka of Bohemia. Not only was Mieszko's marriage to Doubravka part of accepting Christianity by the pagan Duke of Poland and his people, but the Bohemian duchess became the mother of the first Polish king, Bolesław the Great. Though never declared a saint—which was quite unusual in cases of Christian royal brides whose marriages heralded conversions to Christianity by their pagan or heterodox royal grooms—Doubravka almost completely overshadowed in national memory Oda von Haldensleben.

The reasons for this historical amnesia seem to be clearly ideological. Oda of Haldensleben was not only German, but she was also espoused (or intended) to God, so her abduction from a convent by Mieszko questions the sincerity of the first Polish historical ruler's conversion to Christianity. Since the first-born of Mieszko's sons, King Bolesław the Brave, is remembered above all for expelling his stepmother and his younger brothers, Polish historiography from early on vilified Oda of Haldensleben as a Germanic evil stepmother on the throne who favored her progeny over the rightful successor. As a result, this first historical testimony of the "passionate love" of the first historically known Polish ruler became awkward for the modern Polish grand narrative, especially in medieval history, where Germans were traditionally cast in roles of historical villains. And yet, Oda of Haldensleben was not the only one of that name in early medieval Polish history. King Bolesław's the Brave third wife, Queen Oda, a daughter of Margrave of Meissen, has been erased from Polish national history as well. The fact that Oda von Meissen became the first queen of Poland has been silenced, and her character practically does not exist in the Polish national memory.

Goszczyński's narrative suggests that the author might have been acquainted with these suppressed fragments of Polish early medieval history. His Oda is a passionate lover,

overwhelming her husband with her charms, reminding us of both wives of the first historic Polish rulers. But that is the end of possible historical references because otherwise Goszczyński's medieval Oda is a peasant woman, a Christian neophyte, and nothing in her pedigree suggests a foreign extraction. Moreover, there is no historical evidence that the name Oda was popular among Polish peasants in the Middle Ages. Primary sources indicate that the name was not even popular among the medieval Polish nobility. Still, in his novel, Goszczyński Polonized, Slavicized, and mythologized a Germanic and historical female name, redrawing its genealogy from Ancient Greek poetry to the pre-historic Slavic peasants, and bracketing and silencing the romantic history of Polish-German relationships.

For Oda means also “an ode” in Polish. Thus, homonymy appears important for symbolizing the author's intention to present the historical moment, the actors, and an abstract idea of the nation in the form of pathos. Furthermore, Oda as a name given to a main female character refers directly to Juliusz Słowacki's drama *Balladyna*, in which the name of the main female character, Balladyna, is coined from the word “ballad.” Słowacki also set his drama at the inception of Christianity in Poland, which suggests another conceptual derivative that Goszczyński took from Słowacki. In both *Balladyna* and *Oda*, there are peasant women who symbolize the people, as a surrogate of Poles, and thus of the nation. But while *Balladyna* uses the figure of a peasant woman—a ruthless “woman from nowhere” who became a queen by means of murder—to epitomize the destructiveness of an untamed thirst for power and link it, in a quite Shakespearean manner, to women's passion, *Oda* by contrast shows a peasant woman as a figure of a passionate but naïve people.²⁴⁹ A woman's passion as a metaphor of revolutionary and anarchist disorder, or simply of the untamed rage of people, has its modern origins in the

²⁴⁹ Brigitte Schultze, *“Z chłopca król”: Cztery wieki tradycji tematu literackiego w Polsce* (Kraków: Universitas, 2006).

conservative response to the French Revolution.²⁵⁰ But certainly many writers of that time, including Polish ones, used this metaphor in less direct ideological ways, playing more on gender than class stereotypes and prejudices. Goszczyński's misogyny is no secret to literary scholars of Romanticism, but has received almost no critical attention. Goszczyński showed (peasant) women's passion as a self-destructive quality, explaining it as ignorance and lack of moral fortitude, and demonstrating its two sides: Oda/the people is an inconstant, yet sincerely loving "big child" who can be most faithful, if guided and always supervised.

It was mainly thanks to his use of the gender metaphor of a loving marital unity between a knight and a peasant woman that Goszczyński could turn the Tatra into a hotbed of the historical Polish nation. The poet gave up the Romantic aesthetic of frenzy, which he so compellingly employed in *The Castle of Kaniów*. *Oda* shows no trace of brutality of the class conflict, but sings a song of social solidarism under the auspice of Christian *caritas*. Certainly, locating the story at the inception of the Christian era allowed that. Goszczyński's utopian vision of the late pagan-early Christian society as a harmonious union between knights and peasants owes a lot to Lelewel's concepts of community rule.

In such a vision, the nobility embodied in the character of Gromwid brings peasants the gift of Christianity, banishes the old pagan beliefs, and guards the moral integrity of the peasants. Their rule is justified by their performance of the religious and moral supervision of their 'dependents,' much as the power of father over his family was conceptualized in classic republicanism and liberalism.²⁵¹ The nobility also brings "the nation" the might of statehood, and even a promise of imperial expansion (an expedition to Kiev): a promise of the political

²⁵⁰ Janusz Trybusiewicz, *De Maistre* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1968).

²⁵¹ Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

domination and exploitations of the ethnic “others,” which the history of Polish expansion to the east proved to be true.

Like *Kościeliska Valley*, *Oda* did not meet with critical applause. Built upon a cliché, the romance disappointed critics both in its content and in its form. Read from the perspectives of the history of Polish literature or criticism, which traditionally focuses on conceptual originality and mastery of form, *Oda* indeed must disappoint. Yet, in spite of the apparent shortcomings, the novel was republished many times, finding its way to the exclusive as well as penny libraries, and being republished at least seven times in all three partitions, mostly between 1870-1910.²⁵² As such, *Oda* contributed to popularizing the Tatra and the highlanders in Polish culture. Interpreted as an example of imagining the national bond using gender metaphors, this medievalist novel is hard to overestimate.

If the *Oda* character represents sensual peasantry, the metonymy embodies more its male, than the female members. Romantic literature, not to mention the pre-Romantic writers, did not come up with any significant positive image of peasant women’s sensuality and sexuality. Few peasant women in Polish rococo literature originate from sentimentalism, particularly from French literature. Even the eighteenth-century Polish literary critics, however, jeered that giving peasant heroes Polish names in Polish-language poems or dramas unintentionally caused in the reader’s mind a grotesque effect springing from a clash of the pastoral narrative with pitiable and deplorable images of a real village. Certainly one exception is the figure of Karusia from Adam

²⁵² S. Goszczyński, „Powieści prozą,” in: *Dzieła*, vol. 1 (Wrocław: Z. Schletter, 1852); --, „Powieści prozą. Poezje liryczne i powieści wierszem,” in: *Dzieła: Nowy wydanie poprawione*, vol. 1 (Lipsk: F.A. Brockhaus, 1870); --, *Oda: Powieść z czasów Bolesława Wielkiego* (Lwów: Księgarnia Polska, 1878); --, „Oda,” in: *Powieści: Przez Autora Zamku Kaniowskiego*, vol. 1 (Warszawa: Wyd. Dzieł Tanich A. Wiślickiego, 1879); --, *Anna z Nabrzeża: Oda* (Warszawa: Nakł. „Wędrowca“, 1891); --, „Powieści wierszem. Powieści prozą. Pierwociny literackie,” *Pisma: Wydanie kompletne...*, ed. Z. Wasilewski (Lwów: Tow. Wydawnicze, 1904); --, „Powieści,” in: *Dzieła zbiorowe Seweryna Goszczyńskiego*, ed. Z. Wasilewski (Lwów: H. Altenberg, 1910).

Mickiewicz's ballad *Romanticism*. The mad peasant girl, however, embodies the Romantic idea that the folk people (*lud*) preserved and had cultivated cognitive sensibilities, ethically and epistemologically superior to the scholarly rationalism preached by the masters of the Enlightened and their followers. Thus, she symbolizes a moral property of a subjugated social estate (as a cultural entity) rather than women of her social group. Likewise, Balladyna from Juliusz Słowacki's drama, another young peasant woman, stands for the idea of corruption by lust for power, and not for her social group. Even later representations of peasant female lovers from the turn-of-the-century can hardly match Oda.²⁵³

Thus, in *Oda* Goszczyński used his old assortment of poetic metaphors: like the Ukrainian girl in *The Castle of Kaniów*, Oda embodies nature, the land and its inhabitants. As an object of desire, she unwillingly triggers a deadly confrontation between the leading male characters representing an ascending elite figure and a descending one: the pagan priest and Christian warriors. As an emblem of nature, Oda is strong-willed, powerful, unpredictable, and needs to be tamed. As an emblem of the people (*lud*), she is naïve, sensual, unable to manage her own feelings, tempting but unreliable, prone to seduction, and therefore in constant need of moral guidance. These metaphors originate in the Enlightenment trope of peasantry (mostly men) envisioned as “noble savages” and minors, as sensual, feral, driven by desires, superstitions, and error-prone judgments, just like women. As such, the peasantry—and particularly peasant men, who represent the strongest and most dangerous part of it—are in constant need of guidance and supervision. Thus, a feudal patriarchy rooted in an ideal of noble democratic patriarchy appears to Goszczyński, a former democrat, not only as the best, but also as the most natural relationship between the nobility and the peasants.

²⁵³ An exception is Jagna from Władysław Reymont's *Peasants*, who in the mythical structure of the novel embodies a rustic Venus.

The difference between *The Kościeliska Valley* and *Oda* shows how far Goszczyński had come from his Carbonarian democratic concepts to an affirmation of republican patriarchalism and Christian solidarism. There is no doubt that the Galician Peasant Rebellion of 1846 influenced Goszczyński's change of attitude toward peasants as a national force. "Seduced" by the Austrian government, Polish peasants "betrayed" the Polish nobility, and instead of joining forces in a new uprising against the foreign oppressor, "the people" rushed to slaughter the nobility, their symbolic fathers and would-be brothers—that was how the rebellion was explained by the shocked Polish elites. Like many intellectuals, Goszczyński reacted to the trauma of the Galician Peasant Rebellion with ideas of Christian solidarism, meaning to bridge the social gap in the national interest, and heal the national memory. Thus, although he was once one of the most uncompromised of Polish revolutionaries, he now followed the views of Zygmunt Krasiński, another towering figure of Polish Romanticism, an aristocrat and a conservative who preached Christian social solidarism as the only way for the Polish nation to survive.

Goszczyński's works demonstrates the limits of the use of intertextuality in the national imagination: the homosocial community of Carpathian outlaws and shepherds could not be used as an analogue to the military organization of the Ukrainian Cossacks, or the medieval Scottish clans. After 1846, for Goszczyński, the only way to salvage the male highlanders was to utterly emasculate them, symbolically turning them into a child-like woman figure, and go back to something like "born-again" noble republicanism.²⁵⁴ The masculinity of the Tatra highlanders needed to wait several decades for its rediscovery, now as a part of eugenic national fantasies, motivated partly by moral panic about the deterioration of the Polish race.

²⁵⁴ By that time Goszczyński himself, as many other members of Polish émigré society in Paris experienced in various degrees Christian or occultist ways of being spiritually and morally "born again".

The Sleeping Knights in the Tatra

In this section I analyze various representations and presence of the legend of the sleeping knights of the Tatra. The legend of the sleeping knights was far and away the most popular in the Tatra Mountains, and from its emergence carried a strong Polish national symbolism. In my analysis I show the geological background of the emergence of this legend, as well as demonstrate the derivative character of this legend. By discussing its origins, I will point to its roots in medieval European traditions, as well as to trans-national channels in which various motifs derived from those traditions circulated. Thus, I emphasize the role of the Polish elite, and their property ownership across imperial borders, in forming a vital channel for circulating and reinforcing national symbols and narratives. By pointing to the changes in various versions of the legend of the sleeping knights I demonstrate how the feminine agent (the queen) in the original version, was repressed and replaced with a masculine one (the king), while giving a peasant man yet another role, that of a witness of the nation's might and a voluntary helper who fails in the ultimate test of loyalty because of his vanity, and thus did not deserve to be included into the national elite.

The legend of the sleeping knights in the Tatra is one of the most popular associated with the region. Although its content suggests medieval origins and thus yet another instance of preserving historical events in peasant cultural memory, the legend did not emerge until nineteenth century. Its great popularity in Polish culture relates closely to the discovery of the Tatra for tourism, as well as to perceiving the Podhale folklore as the ancient Polish culture. The legend tells that in one of the mountain caves there are sleeping Polish knights with their leader, waiting for a sign to battle for Poland's freedom. When the signal arrives, the enchanted army

will reemerge from the Tatra and support with its supernatural power the cause of Polish independence.

Here I will set aside the genealogy of this legend. Instead, I argue that both the background of its formation and popularization, as well as the manner of its hybridization play an important role in constructions of peasant civic masculinity. I explore the opalescent fabric of the legend, as revealed prior to 1914, and the configuration of the highlander figure vis-à-vis figures of Polish medieval knights and their lieges.

The oral culture of the Tatra is rich in stories about buried treasures, sharing that feature with other mountain cultures. The geological character of mountain landscapes, with their hidden caves, grottoes, underground passages, rock crevices, and nearly inaccessible, barren, and desolated lakes, provides a fertile ground for breeding fantasies about hidden wealth, often guarded by some supernatural powers. The rocky lairs, which in pre-modern times provided a shelter for outlaws of different sorts, including the highway robbers, and the mineral mines and related industries, often located in the mountains, fed that kind of tale as well. Moreover, nature itself nurtured human dreams of riches by creating visual illusions of precious stones hoarded away in mountain hiding places, through combinations of light, water, minerals, and plants.

While exceptionally poor in ores and gems, the Tatra tales of hidden treasures grew from all the sources mentioned above. In the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, iron and copper ores were exploited in the Tatra on a small scale. At the same time, an iron mill, employing mostly German miners, operated in the Kościeliska Valley. Yet even that short-lived mining enterprise nurtured tales of precious metal and gem exploitation. The Tatra is also home to a moss called *Schistostega osmundacea* (*świetlanka*), which relates to the *Schistostega pennata*, known also as goblin's gold, a luminous moss that grows on rocks. Reacting with light, the moss

shines with an emerald gleam. Though rare in the Tatra, the Schistostega ability to misrepresent precious gems were well known already in the late nineteenth century.²⁵⁵

Szczęśny Morawski located the “enchanted cave” with sleeping knights in the Kościeliska Valley, “on the right bank of Dunajec, in the alps, which nowadays belong to Chochołów village.”²⁵⁶ Apart from the historical presence of a mill and a small church, the Kościeliska Valley seems to be an excellently suited location for an enchanted cave because of its geological characteristics. The Tatra Mountains on their northern side are naturally divided into two ranges: the High Tatra, which is built mostly from igneous granite, and the Western Tatra, the geological composition of which contains also metamorphic rocks, such as gneiss and schists, as well as sedimentary rocks prone to erosion. The Kościeliska Valley, located in Western Tatra, owes its spectacular vistas, full of fantastically shaped rocks and a system of caverns, to the fact that it is built from limestone, dolomite, and sandstone. Five major caves of the valley (and the most beautiful on the northern side of the Tatra) were already partially explored in the second half of the nineteenth century and first described in tourist guides in 1870s.²⁵⁷ There is no reason to doubt that generations of natives penetrated those caverns long before the arrival of the first naturalists. With the arrival of tourists to the Tatra, the highlanders added their precious tales to the commodified air, landscape, water, and sheep cheese, and sold that element of their culture to patriotically affected Polish tourists.

The tales of hidden treasures sometimes infuse that of the sleeping knights, but there is no causal relation between those two motifs, and the former is not necessary to the latter in the inner

²⁵⁵ Zofia Urbanowska, *Róża bez kolców* (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica Atlas, 1928), pp. 113-114.

²⁵⁶ Morawski, vol. 1, p. 111.

²⁵⁷ For instance, Adam Gwalbert Pawlikowski.

logic of the legend. The knights and their liege are wealthy by definition, and their mission is not to guard a treasure, but to stand watch; gold is used to pay for keeping them ready.

Though the Polish identity of the enchanted knights has never been contested, there was no agreement which Polish medieval ruler was their leader. Szczęsny Morawski, for instance, argued that since the legend came from the time of the second Mongol invasion, it echoes the flight of Duke Boleslaw and Duchess Kinga to the mountains: “People, being unable to get used to the loss of the last battalions and the bravest leaders [...], being unable to explain king’s absence, dressed their thoughts in beautiful cloths of imagination [...]”.²⁵⁸ In his version, Duke Bolesław and his twelve knights all sit at the round table in the enchanted cavern in the Kościeliska Valley, all in shiny armor, with swords in hand, yet fast asleep. They had been waiting for a battle so long, that “their hair already turned gray, their bodies turned white, their beards grew down to their ankles, and their eyebrows fell down on their faces. Apart from them, there the whole army [...] lays hidden deep down the cave. And at the entrance, two knights sit on rocks, and with both hands supported on their swords they guard the entry and watch: betimes will they wake up the sleeping military leaders, and king, and the army.”²⁵⁹

The nineteenth-century intertextuality in the national imagery went deep and fast, as Morawski’s description demonstrates. The motif of twelve knights and their king sitting at the round table bridged the invented medieval Tatra with medieval Wales. The motif of the sleeping knights echoes the story of Merlin imprisoned in the rocks, or a cave, among other places. Yet, if the number twelve indicated a derivation from the Arthurian legends, it at the same time alludes to the twelve Apostles, a reference much clearer to less educated readers and listeners of the

²⁵⁸ Morawski, vol. 2, p. 110.

²⁵⁹ *Antologia jarmarcznego romansu rycerskiego*, ed. Jolanta Ługowska and Tadeusz Żabski (Wrocław: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Polonistyki Wrocławskiej, 1992).

Polish language. All those examples may signify the origins of the legend, tracing them to British Isles. English influences upon Polish national culture went back to Romanticism (as demonstrated above), and the Victorian culture invigorated medievalism also in Polish culture. For instance, narratives of medieval West European romances proliferated in the culture of semi-literate and illiterate Polish peasants and urban lower classes through ‘penny books,’ as well as storytelling. Yet, the venues of intertextuality were multi-source, parallel, and twisted.

In the cultural exchange between tourists and locals, the highlanders played the role of naïve believers, custodians of the semi-legendary history of Poland’s feudal power, and nurturers of the hope for the nation’s future—the roles assigned to them by Polish cultural successors of the nobility. Highlanders eagerly embraced all those roles, for in the relationship of economic exchange it gave them more advantage than harm. Though in the legend the peasants are not the members of the enchanted army, like Krazy in the legend of the wheat, a peasant man appears as a helper and a potential beneficiary of the feudal lords. In the matter of the sleeping knights in Tatra, as in the legend of the wheat, Szczęsny Morawski used an ethnographic contract by saying: “With godly fear and strong faith, highlanders tell this story, and even give the name of a peasant, who accidentally came to this cave, saw the sleeping knights, and talked with the guards at the entrance, who questioned him whether the roof of St. Mary’s church in Kraków was being replaced with straw”—which in his version is a sign for battle.²⁶⁰

The version written by Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer and published in his collection of folk-tales *On the Rocky Podhale* presents the legend from the perspective of a peasant eyewitness, confessing his secret on his deathbed to a male neighbor. Lost in the mountain passages of the Kościeliska Valley, the highlander-storyteller stepped into a cavern, only to find

²⁶⁰ The motif of a church roof being replaced from shingles to straw refers to the content of a prophecy. Morawski, *ibidem*, vol. 2, p. 111.

the sleeping knights. At first, he deemed them dead. Then, one of the knights woke up and asked the peasant to shoe horses, for the army ought to stay ready when a sign arrives. The terrified peasant worked in the cave for several days, and the knight paid him generously with gold. At the end, the knight asked the peasant to come back in a year to repeat the job, but also ordered him not to look into his sack until he gets back home. When the curious and impatient peasant broke the promise, he found stones and leaves instead of money. To complete the punishment, the peasant had lost the way to the cave forever.

Przerwa-Tetmajer's description of the sleeping knights makes clear allusions to visual and verbal images of the corpse of medieval King Kazimierz the Great, which was exhumed in Wawel Cathedral in the 1860s. In the decades following the event, the image of the king's body circulated in Polish-language print and visual culture, most notably as reproductions of Jan Matejko's drawing of the exhumation.²⁶¹ The pompous reburial of the king stimulated the revival of historicism and medievalism in Galicia and other Polish lands, and fed both patriotic emotions and the national imagery.²⁶² It inspired other artworks, such as Stanisław Wyspiański's spectacular stained glass window in the Franciscan church in Cracow. As Przerwa-Tetmajer lived in Cracow, he drew from Cracow medievalism. Moreover his characterization of the hardworking, yet unreliable peasant helper allude to Stanisław Wyspiański's play *The Wedding* (1901), which was one of the major Polish cultural events at the turn of the century.

Based on the real event in which Wyspiański participated, the play tells the story of the wedding between Lucjan Rydel, an intellectual and an offspring of the noble family, with

²⁶¹ Matejko took part in opening the king's grave.

²⁶² Patrice Dabrowski, *Commemorations of The Shaping of Modern Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

Jadwiga Mikołajczyk, a peasant girl. Intertwining two layers of narrative, Wyspiański drew on his experience of the Rydels wedding in Bronowice (a village near Cracow), and added to it a fantastic layer, in which the key characters of the wedding party confront the ghosts of historical figures. On the symbolic level, the wedding celebrates a marriage between the Polish nobility and the peasantry, thus heralding (as it seems) the birth of the modern and (more) democratic Polish nation. But instead, the festivity turns into a series of confrontations with the nation's repressed historical memories, with the social antagonisms surfacing through still vital remnants of the feudal ideology and mutual distrust between the peasants and the nobility, and with various sources of political stagnation (including aesthetic ones), which halted national aspirations.

Wyspiański reiterated the old democratic ideal (going back to Goszczyński) pointing to the peasantry as the future of the nation, and the nobility's political successor in struggling for restitution of the Polish state. Jasiiek, a young peasant serving as a Best Man at the wedding, is given that extraordinary spiritual and political mission. The ghost of Wernyhora, a seventeenth-century Ukrainian bard and prophet, entrusts Jasiiek with a magical golden horn capable of waking the sleeping Polish nation for its final battle for freedom. Jasiiek, however, loses the golden horn in his mad gallop, while bending to pick up his cap adorned with peacock feathers—one of his proudest possessions, as well as a symbol of vanity and self-absorption. Losing the golden horn plunges the wedding party, that is, the nation, in a lethargic dance, thus symbolizing the stagnation. A peasant given a crucial mission as a messenger of Poland's rebirth fails.

Przerwa-Tetmajer knew *The Wedding* as well as he knew the wedding in Bronowice, for he took part in it. Wyspiański's companion in Cracow bohemian routs, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer was a half-brother of Włodzimierz Tetmajer, a painter, the host of the wedding in

Bronowice, and a prototype of the Host in *The Wedding*. While Lucjan Rydel (the Groom in the play) was Kazimierz's friend, his bride Jadwiga Mikołajczyk was Włodzimierz Tetmajer's sister-in-law, for he also married a peasant woman. Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer himself became a prototype of one of the key characters in *The Wedding*, as he became the Poet. Both Włodzimierz and Kazimierz were sons of Adolf Tetmajer, who hosted Seweryn Goszczyński. Thus, the conceptual connections in Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer's representation of a peasant on a mission to awaken the nation in his version of the legend with *The Wedding*, published several years earlier, are clear, though not noticed by scholars.

The legends of the sleeping knights in the Tatra never agreed upon which medieval king was the leader of the sleeping army. Apart from Duke Bolesław the Chaste, the versions mention King Bolesław the Brave (the first historical king of Poland), King Władysław Łokietek, who restituted the Polish Crown in the fourteenth century, and his son King Kazimierz the Great, regarded as the founder of the medieval power of the Kingdom of Poland. Sometimes the legend does not attribute any leader to the army at all. What has been, however, almost entirely suppressed in turn of the century versions, was the original leader of the army—a woman saint.

The tale about a mysterious and mystical army of pre-modern warriors wandering through the forests at night, yet invisible during the day, first appeared in the area of the Holy Cross Mountains (*Góry Świętokrzyskie*) soon after the fall of the January Uprising in 1864. More hills than mountains, the range stretches south of Cracow and north of Warsaw, with Kielce as the major city of the region. During the January Uprising, the Holy Cross Mountains became a major war zone. Since the uprising had the character of a partisan war, with small, ill-equipped, trained, and organized Polish troops standing against the regular Russian army, the population of the Holy Cross Mountains experienced all the atrocities of war and pacification, and carried the

traumatic memories through generations.²⁶³ In that context the tale about the ghostly army of avengers was born.

The army was said to be led by St. Jadwiga, Duchess of Silesia, the mother of Duke Henryk II, who fell during the battle of Legnica (1241). As demonstrated earlier, nineteenth-century Polish historiography remembered Duke Henryk as a crusader leading the united army of West European knights against the first Mongol invasion. Nineteenth-century Polish Catholic clergy venerated St. Jadwiga of Silesia as an ascetic, the mother of a crusader, and a holy matron oppressed by the unfaithful. Thus, St. Jadwiga of Silesia stood alongside Blessed Kinga as a major carrier of the religious and historical memory of the Mongol invasions. Just as Polish culture used the figures of Mongols and their invasions in an Aesopian language coding Russians, imperial Russia, and its westward expansion after the January Uprising, so were St. Kinga and St. Jadwiga recast in the national imaginary as figures embodying the ideals of Polish national resistance, perseverance, and vengeance.

Since Romantic messianism, the work of the national imagination merged the historical with the religious, using the familiar tropes of martyrdom and the glory of the fallen to help the defeated cope with their traumas. In the gloomy years following the January Uprising, with raging Russian censorship, political repressions, and the suppression of Polish cultural life—a policy implemented with particular harshness in Kielce Province—the tale about St. Jadwiga's army and their nocturnal marches never reached the Polish cultural mainstream in Russian Poland. Instead, it seems to have migrated through the nearby border to Galicia with early waves of émigrés and Polish tourists to the Tatra. There, infused with British medievalism, St.

²⁶³ One example is the effect of family memories of January uprising on Stefan Żeromski's writings.

Jadwiga's army of ghosts transformed into the enchanted knights and their mighty king, waiting in some cavern for the sign to fight for Poland.

Yet, I propose another route of this tale's migration, which would throw light on the peculiarity of the construction of the peasant helper in the legend, which was allegedly conceived and preserved by peasants. Though some evidence indicates that the legend was indeed conceived during the January Uprising, they also show that the story migrated to the Tatra through Prussian Poland, carried by one of the most cultivated and aristocratic Polish families of the time.

In 1888, the biggest glacial erratic in Greater Poland (the Prussian partition) obtained the status of a natural monument. St. Kinga's Rock, also known as St. Jadwiga's of Silesia Rock, is located several kilometers south of Gołuchów, a small village famous for its early Renaissance castle. In mid-1850s, Tytus Działyński, one of the most prominent Polish politicians and cultural figures in Greater Poland, bought the castle and an adjacent estate, and renovated them for a family home to his son Jan Działyński and his bride, Izabella Elżbieta Czartoryska. From 1857 to 1899, the Gołuchów estate became the residence of Izabella, who transformed it into one of the finest aristocratic residences in Greater Poland, and eventually into a museum of art.

Princess Izabella was one of the best Polish brides of the time. She was the daughter of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, the most prominent Polish politician of the first half of the nineteenth century. A relative to the last Polish King, once an aide-de-camp and a personal friend of Czar Alexander I, as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire, Prince Czartoryski was wearing many caps in his long life, including that of a Pretender for the restituted Polish Crown. After the November Uprising of 1830-31, the Prince established himself in Paris at the Hotel Lambert, shaping the notion of Polish conservatism from France, and

influencing Polish politics until his death in 1861. Izabella received a princely education in Paris, supplemented by traveling through Europe, North Africa, and Middle East. She was a painter, as well as an art collector. Her husband Jan Działyński came from a slightly less titled magnate family, based in Greater Poland (Prussia). A political activist, Jan supported the January Uprising financially, and eventually joined it as an insurgent fighting at a battle of Ignacew (1863). The Prussian state prosecuted Działyński for participation in the uprising, threatening to confiscate his estates. To avoid that, Izabella officially bought the Gołuchów estate from the Działyńskis family, making it her own residence.

The recognition of an extraordinary rock located in a small village in Greater Poland as a natural monument could not have happened without Izabella Działyńska's will. Though the glacial erratic had long been surrounded by commonplace tales about hidden treasures, the legend related to its toponym states that the rock is a burial place of Polish knights, who fell fighting with the Mongols. St. Jadwiga of Silesia (in another version, St. Kinga) begged the Virgin Mary for mercy on the martyrs, and the Virgin turned their death into a sleep. Then, the buried warriors plunged into slumber to stay ready to reemerge and fight for the freedom of the faith. The protection of the (Catholic) faith indicates the inclusion or transformation relating to the Kulturkampf, which in Greater Poland successfully turned Catholicism into a synonym of Polishness.

Yet the story of sleeping knights might also resonate with Jan Działyński's personal memories from the uprising, particularly the widespread practice of the burial of insurgents in unmarked common graves—the burial that he witnessed after the battle of Ignacewo. In many cases in Russian Poland, unable to honor the fallen insurgents in their collective graves, for such acts were being prosecuted as an anti-state political manifestation, the locals often founded small

religious monuments, such as crosses or road-chapels, or transformed the natural formations into commemorative sites. St. Jadwiga's Rock with its legend, historically completely out of place, for neither St. Jadwiga or St. Kinga have any historical connections with Greater Poland, nor the Mongol invasions ever reached this province, suggest such a commemoration of the fallen insurgents, thus disguised in medieval history. Locating such a site in the deep countryside and in a private estate indicates its semi-private, and yet anti-state character.

In spite of the distance and a border, the link between Gołuchów and the Kościeliska Valley were close. As Jan and Izabella Działyński had no children, Jan designated as his successor his nephew, Władysław Zamoyski, the most prominent philanthropist and a major sponsor of Polishness in the Tatra. A political and cultural activist in Greater Poland, as a French citizen in 1885, Zamoyski was forced to leave Germany and moved his financial operations mostly to Galicia. In 1889, he bought the Zakopane estate, containing mostly the mountain range, and in 1902 won a legal case taking over the Morskie Oko Lake—the jewel of the Tatra—and surrounding areas of the High Tatra. Zakopane already enjoyed a reputation of “Polish Davos”. The Zamoyski case settled the territorial ownership dispute between Hungary and Galicia about the highest part of the Tatra, delineating the border, which survived the collapse of several states and has lasted until now. The case could certainly not been resolved without Zamoyski's financial fortune. As Władysław Zamoyski never married, he bequeathed to the Polish nation the Tatra estate, which in the Interwar period formed the core of the future the Tatra National Park, along with his splendid library and museum known as the Kórnik Foundation in Greater Poland (assigned to him by Jan Działyński).

Władysław worked closely with his mother Jadwiga Zamoyska, Jan Działyński's sister. In the spirit shared by all the Działyńskis of Poznań, Jadwiga Zamoyska was devoted to

philanthropy, among other things, the funding of craft schools for peasant boys and girls of Zakopane and nearby villages. Through those schools, which produced the “folk art” based on models designed by Galician artists and collectors Stanisław Witkiewicz and Władysław Matlakowski, Jadwiga Zamoyska played an important, though rarely recognized role in creating the Polish folk culture of the northern Tatras.²⁶⁴

A carefully educated and worldly lady, Jadwiga’s moral and civic formation was shaped under the great influence of her English governess and life-long companion, Anna Birt. Jadwiga’s memoirs reveal that the impact which her English tutor made upon her vision of duties toward the family, society, and the nation, exceeded that of her mother and other female relatives. Though always loyal to Polishness and a devout Catholic (which she practiced with a Methodist zeal), Jadwiga remained an Anglophile by inclination of the heart. It is hard to doubt that she did not know and cherished the treasures of English medieval literature.

Thus, the legend of the sleeping knights could have been born in the mourning fields of the January Uprising, acquired a historicist disguise in the aristocratic residences of Greater Poland, planted in Zakopane, thrived among the local peasants as their genuine folk tale, and as such flowed into the mainstream of modern Polish culture. Such origins would account for the smooth intertextuality of the legend, as well as for its aristocratic content. For although allegedly preserved and certainly repeated by highlanders, the story affirms the nobility and gives no respectable part to a peasant, except to show him as a witness, and, at best, as a foolish helper. That representation stands in contrast with the region’s history, the highlanders’ social memories of feudalism, their historical memories of the outlaws, and their own positive self-image as brave, clever, reliable, and respectable men, as testified in other folk tales. The legend aimed to

²⁶⁴ Jadwiga Zamoyska, Wspomnienia (Londyn: B. Swiderski, 1961).

uplift the national spirit and it fulfills that task excellently. The legend replaced the saintly matron oppressed by the unfaithful with some of the most successful Polish medieval kings, affirming the medieval knights as the cultural ancestors of the cultural successors of Polish-Lithuanian nobility. The legend of the enchanted army became one of the most popular related to the Polish Tatra, and the mountains on the southwestern part of historic Poland acquired a symbolic status as the hotbed of historical Polishness as well as future Polishness.

The legend of the sleeping knights helped to turn the Tatra Mountains into a national monument, but the process of Polonization went beyond the narrative creation. The monumentalization and Polonization of the Tatra landscape went hand-in-hand. During the rapid development of Zakopane as a spa, the new toponymes were imposed on folk-named or nameless peaks, valleys, ridges, rocks, lakes, cavern, and other sorts of geological formations. The modernist poets, writers, and artists used their imagination and artistic invention in coming up with early Slavic, poetic-sounding names of the mountain sites. They often drew heavily on the Tatra dialect, already codified (transcribed) in various literary texts, but did not hesitate to improve it by their own neo-Romantic and modernist sensibilities. The new Polish landmarks in the mountains were established, mostly crosses and road chapels.

The Kościeliska Valley became the site of particularly intensive Polonization. Already in 1852, the notable poet Wincenty Pol commissioned for the local peasants a wooden cross with a motto: “And Nothing Above and Beyond God” to be placed in the Valley. In 1880s, the Tatra Association replaced a rotten cross with the iron one, keeping the motto and officially calling the site “the Pol Cross.” The guides, travelogues, and novels recall that the whole Kościeliska Valley was perceived as nature’s reference to Poland. For example, the Cracow Gorge in the valley was named after Poland’s medieval capital, and its particular rock formations were called after

Cracow's toponyms: the Gate, the Town Hall, the Tower, The Church, the Market Place, the Dragon's Den, and the Wawel. When the Catholic clergy refused to rebury Juliusz Słowacki, one of the greatest Polish Romantic poets, in the Skalka church in Cracow because the Church condemned his heterodoxy, the plan emerged to place Słowacki's ashes in one of the Kościeliska caverns, turning the valley into the poet's ultimate mausoleum. Though advanced, the plan failed.

The ultimate monumentalization of the Tatra as Polish national landscape came with cultural interpretation of a visual site: Mount Giewont, a massive mountain towering above Zakopane. Its location makes it visible from every part of the town. Relatively easily accessible, Giewont became one of most popular tourist destinations, and an iconic visual sight for Zakopane and the Polish Tatra. Early on, the national imagination forced every tourist to see in the mountain a profile of a sleeping knight: a manly profile on the head in a helmet, the neck (the mountain pass dividing two peaks), and the torso with hands keeping a sword. Such a visual perception of the mountain drew on visual references to the medieval sarcophagus, which in Polish education of the national gaze was primarily (though not exclusively) shaped by monuments in the royal Wawel Cathedral in Cracow, the burial places of Polish medieval kings. Though the peak's name Giewont is probably of German origins (*Gewand* – a group of rocks), it soon started to be regarded as the medieval name of a Polish knight. Latter versions of the legend of the sleeping knights place the enchanted cave in the Giewont massif. Giewont, as the embodiment of the sleeping knight became the ultimate way of monumentalization of the Tatra.

The Coach-Castles

This section analyzes the elements of the cultural landscape called the coach-castles, which in nineteenth-century historiography, as well as regional historical memory, were deemed to be remnants of the medieval and early-modern movable fortresses. I use this section to demonstrate how historical memory was constructed based on erroneous identification of the elements of the landscape, and it serves to shape a speculative historical argument that late-medieval and early-modern peasants voluntarily joined the nobility out of a sense of civic duty to protect the Polish border from foreign invaders. This material also serves me to demonstrate the ways the history of Reformation were repressed in constructing the collective political subjectivity of historical highlanders, including their budding sense of civic-mindedness.

Szczęśny Morawski grounded his *Sądecczyzna* in historical primary sources very well. He quoted many documents extensively, and included many translations from Latin. Some of the primary documents he used have perished. Though Morawski's standards of historical critique of primary sources did not comply with those of professionally trained historians of his time, his methodology sheds light on the ways of constructing the history of a region and its people. As a historian of the region who knew the area of his study very well not only from archival research, but also by ethnographic and archeological observations as well, Morawski put written sources in a dialogue with remnants of the material culture, with the topography of settlements, geography of arable land and woodland, and with the physical landscape. Although his contemporaries criticized *Sądecczyzna* for its low standards of historical criticism, Morawski's method offers an interesting example of how national historical imaginations worked together with local memories in shaping a regional identity. *Sądecczyzna* demonstrates how history was used to Polishize the

landscape of the region and the people most intimately related to the land through their work and life-style. It also shows how the landscape was used to localize and explain the history of a nation-state, how Polishness was historicized at the local level, and how it was re-conceptualized to include peasants into the nation as respectable citizen-soldiers. One of the most interesting examples of Morawski's creative approach to historical methodology is his way of supporting the thesis about so-called coach-castles in the Sądecczyzna, the Pieniny, and the Podhale.

The origins of the word coach-castle, as well as their real existence, had been debated in the nineteenth century, prior to Morawski's study. Early historians and ethnographers noticed that the region is rich in toponyms that sound nearly the same, but appear mostly in two variants: *kocie zamki*, or *kotcze zamki*. While the last part of the toponym is consistent, meaning "a castle" (*zamek*, plural: *zamki*), the first one means different things. The word *kocie* is an adjective meaning "cat's," and as such denotes a small, inadequate size, and has a disparaging connotation. The second variant: *kotcze zamki*, relates to the form of a carriage. Morawski elaborated the second etymology into his argument, entirely changing the implications of those alleged fortifications for the regional history.

According to the author, the term *kotcze zamki* –the "coach-castles"– comes from the Hungarian word *kocsi*, meaning "of Kocs," Kocs being a village in Komárom-Esztergom county, in the northwestern part of contemporary Hungary. Historically, Kocs is identified as a place, where in the fifteenth century a new type of horse-driven vehicle was invented. Being light and fast, *a coach*, as it is known in English, instantly spread across Europe. In Poland this new kind of vehicle has been known as a *kocz*. In Morawski's argument, *kotcze* is an adjective from a noun: *kocz*. In such a form, the adjective *kotcze* is made against the rules of Polish grammar; the proper form would be: *kocz*. This collateral grammar form, however, may be justified by the

influence of German etymology, as the German for coach is *Kutsche*. Morawski did recall the German word in his study, and as an educated subject of the Austro-Hungarian empire he knew German very well.²⁶⁵ The fact is that other historians and authors also recalled this collateral grammar form as the major one.

Paradoxically, in this case, German etymology of the topographic names came in handy in claiming the Polish historical identity of this region. Morawski argued that the toponyms related to coach-castles testify to the existence of chains of watchtowers constructed from coaches. The historian listed nearly two-dozen villages and sites in the region where the coach-castles were supposedly located. In some cases, the local memories preserved the toponyms; in others, Morawski pointed to certain land formations that, according to his topographic studies and inquiries among the locals, are the ruins of such mobile fortifications. Morawski identified three chains of coach-castles, and located them alongside valleys of the major rivers of the region: Dunajec, Biała, and Prut, stretching allegedly Polish watchtowers from the western edge of the Bieszczady Mountains in south-east to the Western Tatra. Morawski argues that the coach-castles were set up in times of invasions along Poland's western Carpathian border to defend the state from attacks from Hungary and Austria. The author projected his argument onto his contemporary landscape, as well as on the historical maps of the region. That is, his association of the alleged locations of the coach-castles with that of small medieval boroughs was supported by any documentary or archeological evidence. In his vision, the whole region appeared militarized and protected by peasant soldiers led by the nobility.

Historically, Morawski's argument was not entirely made up. The coach-castles were nothing more than a *tabor*, a kind of wagon-fort serving for defense as well as a military camp.

²⁶⁵ Morawski, vol. 1, p. 78.

Known already in ancient Rome, the wagon-fort rose to prominence in Central European warfare during fifteenth-century Hussite wars in the territory of Bohemia. The word *tabor*, popularized in Polish languages for this kind of military fortification, came from Czech language, as a derivation from the name of the town Tábor.²⁶⁶ Founded in 1420, Tábor became the capital of the radical faction of Protestant Hussites, known as Taborites. The Taborites were later remembered for their radical egalitarianism, and Tábor for its peasant commune. The conservative Austro-Hungarian historiography depicted the Hussite as fanatical and cruel, if not well disciplined, peasant soldiers. By contrast, Czech national historiography of the nineteenth century regarded Taborites as national heroes. Since in the fifteenth and the seventeenth century, the word *tabor* in Polish was used mostly to refer to the Cossack military strategy of using wagon forts on the Ukrainian steppes. That strategy appeared very effective in the Cossack's countless skirmishes with the Tatars of the Golden Horde. That Cossacs, as Hussites, were regarded by Polish nobility as peasant soldiers could add a class dimension to the cultural connotation of that military strategy, but this needs more extensive study in early modern military, social, and cultural history, and as such lays beyond my study.

Szczęśny Morawski stressed the Slavic origins of a wagon fort, apparently being not aware of, or deliberately suppressing its ancient origins. Moreover, in his speculations over the extensive use of an abatis, which could naturally support the coach-castles' defensive power in woodland areas, Morawski claimed that the idea of a wagon fort is native to Poland, and thus predates the Hussite Wars.²⁶⁷ This type of fortification, as he argued, spread in Poland between the fourteenth- and the fifteenth centuries under King Władysław Jagiełło. Furthermore, Morawski argued that the coach-castles originated in Polish lands precisely in 1410, when a

²⁶⁶ Coach-castle in Czech is *vozova hradba*.

²⁶⁷ Morawski, vol. 2, p. 79.

Hungarian aristocrat of Polish origins, Ścibor of Ściborzyce, known also as “the king of Slovakia,” attacked and plundered the Podhale and the Sądeczczyzna. Ścibor’s raids on the southern territory of the Polish Kingdom occurred during the war between Poland and her allies with the Teutonic Order, in the territory of former (and future) Prussia. Though Ścibor legitimized his attack by forming an alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg, he was also well known in history for his fighting against the Hussites. Thus, by his twisting the chronology of the local wars, Morawski’s speculation undermined the hypothesis of the Hussite origins of the wagon forts, claiming its genealogy in medieval Poland.

There is no doubt that Morawski suppressed the cultural connotations between the coach-castles and the Hussites to weaken the historical memory of Protestantism in the region, though the Polish Brethrens (the Arians and the Socinians) marked a strong presence in the history of the Sądeczczyzna. Though in this part of Poland Arianism came over century after the Hussite Revolution occurred, that Polish wings of Anabaptism, alongside other Protestant denominations, were largely marginalized and condemned in the Polish national grand narrative, especially coming from Galicia. In the second half of the century it became more and more difficult to claim Polishness without Catholicism, and various Protestant denominations came to be nationally associated mostly with immigrants in the Galician towns of German, Baltic, Hungarian (from Transylvania) origins or with converts from Judaism. Most importantly for the region’s cultural geography, however, the Protestant denominations often stood as a marker of Slovak nationality. Known as Upper Hungary, the territory of contemporary northwestern Slovakia in the nineteenth century included Orawa, Liptów, and Spisz adjacent to the Tatra Mountains from the south, and thus neighboring with Galician Podhale, Pieniny, Beskidy, and Sądeczczyzna. The presence of the Lutheran and Calvinist churches in Orawa, Liptów, and Spisz

goes back at least to the seventeenth century, and was visually and culturally embodied in so-called articular churches located in major urban centers of the provinces, for example in Liptovský Mikuláš and Kežmarok—places with which the Polish speaking highlanders kept complex trade, family, and animosity bonds. A loyal subject of Austro-Hungary and a Polish patriot, Morawski affirmed the formative role of Catholicism upon the identity of Poles and its former state.

Though the leadership in coach-castles obviously belonged to the nobility, the peasants were indispensable to the success of those border watchtowers. Not only peasants, according to Morawski, supported the coach-castles by cutting wooden abatis to support the coach-castles, but they also appeared as the most tenacious defenders of those forts.²⁶⁸ Morawski offered his readers some vision of the life in the coach castles, describing in detail cooking, lodging, division of military labor, and even entertainment. His idealized literary pictures come across as a song of a patriarchal egalitarianism in the military camps, where peasants felt almost equal to the noblemen, and noblemen respected peasants, and fraternized with them.

Though inspired by social solidarism and ignoring history, the images of class solidarism and national unity in the face of war were nevertheless anchored in the author's personal observations and experiences. Though Morawski speculated, he did so within a familiar context. For example, while writing about supposed primitive infrastructure within coach-castles, he claimed that they were just like the huts that he encountered in camps of lumberjacks and shepherds during his travels through the region. By linking building practices of his contemporary nomadic peasant workers with historical military structures, Morawski added a

²⁶⁸ Morawski, vol. 2, p. 79.

historical value to his ethnography, and at the same time added a patriotic value to the history of male peasants of the region.

In another parallel, Morawski pointed to hunting as another source of his historical anthropological imagination, since he knew hunting first hand. The author compared the relationships between noblemen and peasants in coach-castles to those in his contemporary hunting camps, where upper-class hunters mixed with peasant chasseurs and huntsmen, added to which was “[...] a warlike spirit, fed by good food and drinks, and by veterans’ tales, in which fraternization comes so easily and sincerely...”²⁶⁹ In his naïve, romanticized, crude historicist, if not manipulative way, he tried to explain a spirit of fraternity in coach-castles shared by all the men, regardless of their social position and power relation, as a national fraternization in uncorrupted nature.

In the last part of his discussion of the coach-castles, Morawski recounted the unfortunate outcomes of Ścibor’s attack, which ended with the region being plundered and Stary Sącz burned down. Thus, the history of failure of the coach-castles contrasts with Morawski’s earlier praise of that strategy, but it also offers an accolade of the peasant military contribution to the country’s defense. In a manner that in decades to come would find a full elaboration by Galician conservative historians, Morawski blamed the nobility for the failure to defend the country. He repeated the old accusation of the noblemen-soldiers’ lack of perseverance, and excessive attachment to comforts. The tendency to blame the nobility for all the misfortunes of the Polish state was certainly not Morawski’s invention, but its multi-faceted genealogy does not have exclusively democratic origins. Still, in less than twenty years after the Galician Peasant Rebellion, Morawski argued that when in the fifteenth century the nobility left the coach-castles

²⁶⁹ Morawski, vol. 2, p. 81.

because of a lack of provisions, and left the country a prey to the aggressors, only peasants stood on guard, defending their homeland. As the most vulnerable during an invasion, highlanders were determined to withstand it.

Only in one case, as Morawski writes, did the peasant levy succeed. The historian recalled the resistance of peasants from the village of Łomnica, which managed to defeat Ścibor's troops. The history (also testified to in other historical sources) of this military victory shaped Morawski's vision of his contemporary inhabitants of Łomnica.²⁷⁰ He presents the blood lineage among the villagers going straight back to the fourteenth century, and therefore the nation's continuing presence in the village is unquestionable—and so is the local memory: “[...] the men of Łomnica till this time are each one as a mountain fir, and appear so alike, so distinct by their merry impetuosity, militant but loquacious, that it is hard to refuse them the characteristics of an ancient kin (*znamiona odwiecznej gniazdowości*).”²⁷¹

Morawski's brief remarks on the ancient kinship and its characteristic presents a clear allusion to the cultural characteristic of the Polish class of the petty nobility. Comparing Łomnica to a settlement of freeholders was more acceptable in a local history of Sądecczyzna because this particular village, from its founding to Morawski's time, was always a royal property. Though still a private property, peasants of Łomnica belonged to the Polish kings, and this legal relationship granted them certain privileges, as well as securing their unusual position compared to regular serfs. For one reason, they belonged directly to the jurisdiction of a king, and thus the justice given to them was mediated by royal officials, instead of their landlords, who were both the serfs' judges and executors. Moreover, the king's peasants were obliged to serve in the private royal army, and consequently had rights to store weapons in their households.

²⁷⁰ Now the village is called Łomnica-Zdrój.

²⁷¹ Morawski, vol. 2, p. 83.

In post-serfdom Poland, through their cultural and legal proximity to the peasant freeholders, the royal peasants appeared the most suitable to be presented as a surrogate of the free peasants, as well as stand as the proxies of the impoverished petty nobility, which cultivated their land with their own hands. Over the century, the petty nobility came gradually, though not uncontested, to represent “the salt of the Polish nation,” and often culturally designated a peasantry without the shameful stigma of serfdom. Thus, Morawski framed the image of brave peasants into a familiar and culturally welcomed idiom, and endowed those highlanders with a collective respectability, as constructed in narratives about petty noblemen. Since his educated readers, including circles of the local landowners, knew the legal status of Łomnica and its people, and thus could understand the allusion, readers less oriented in local history and economy enjoyed an image of brave peasants, without questioning its historical context, those peasants’ relation to feudal power, their rights to carry the weapons, and legal motivation of their patriotism.

The Chochołów Peasant Uprising of 1846

This last section discusses a minor highlander riot, organized and orchestrated by the local clergymen, in the Tatra in 1846. The riot was a belated offshoot of a trans-partition Polish conspiracy, which in this year meant to instigate a mass national uprising. The uprising conspiracy was squashed on the eve of the insurgency by Austrian governmental officials, who aggravated Polish-speaking peasants' fear of the nobility by spreading gossip about the alleged nobility's genocidal attempts on peasants. As I demonstrate in this chapter, from the middle of the nineteenth century, this peasant-clergy riot in the Tatra, though strategically insignificant, became a historical event and gained prominence in the Polish master narrative for two reasons: because it helped to overshadow the Galician Rebellion which took place in the same year, and because it helped to represent highlanders in the roles of insurgents and civic-minded Polish patriots.

One of the most peculiar events in Polish national history was the Chochołów Uprising, which acquired a symbolic meaning far greater than what actually happened. The uprising lasted about two days. On February 21, 1846, amidst the Galician Peasant Rebellion, thirty armed peasant men from four Tatra villages attacked the customs stations between Austrian Galicia and Hungary, plundering its weapons and destroying signs with Austrian state emblems. The leader of the uprising, Jan Kanty Andrusikiewicz, was a parochial school teacher and an organist in a church in Chochołów. The leadership group also included three local Catholic vicars.²⁷² The

²⁷² Józef Leopold Kmietowicz of Chochołów, Michał Głowacki of Poronin, and Michał Janiczak of Szaflary. Rev. Józef Leopold Kmietowicz (1819-1859) was born in Stary Sącz, and studied theology in Košice and Tarnów. After being ordained, he served as a vicar first in Dobra, and then in Chochołów, gaining a name for his patriotic sermons. After Andrusikiewicz was wounded, Kmietowicz took over the leadership of the highlander rebels. Though the Austrian court sentenced him to death, the execution was not carried out because the Bishop of Tarnów,

rebellion was not an independent outbreak but part of a military plan aimed at fomenting a popular uprising, called late the Cracow Uprising. Yet, after the outbreak of the Galician Peasant Rebellion, the uprising was recalled. That order, however, reached the remote mountain area too late.

Peasants of Chochołów, which supported the uprising with the greatest number, were susceptible to propaganda calling for overthrowing the Austrian officials because of their long-lasting dispute over property lines with a local landlord. Since the court supported the landlord against the villagers, the peasants rebelled against Austria in the name of the future Poland that—through the mouths of conspirators—promised them protection of their property rights. On February 21, a group of armed rebels managed to take over the customs houses in three villages, as well as the gamekeeper's lodges. Yet, the next day the Austrian military troops pacified the rebels, with significant and eagerly offered help from peasants from the village of Czarny Dunajec, near Chochołów. The local officials managed to mobilize the peasants of Czarny Dujac by playing on an old neighborhood animosity between the two villages, and by spreading the news that the inhabitants of Chochołów, as supporters of Polish lords, planned to attack Czarny Dunajec, slaughter their inhabitants, and take over their land.²⁷³ Thus, the peasants of Czarny

Kmietowicz's superior, refused to revoke his ordination. The sentence was changed to twenty years. Using the amnesty, Kmietowicz came back to Galicia two years later, and received a helping hand from the Poor Clares, who gave him a residence by one of the churches in Głębokie. Afterwards he moved to Muszyna as a vicar and ended his days uneventfully, as a respectable vicar.

The least fortunate among the leaders of the Chochołów Uprising was another lower-rank clergyman, Michał Głowacki (1804-1846). Born in Nowy Sącz, a graduate in theology from Lwów, he served as a vicar in Poronin. An avid collector of the local folklore, a Slavic philologist, and a poet, Głowacki was a late offspring of the Romantic movement. He died in Nowy Sącz prison, before the 1848 amnesty. Witold J. Kowalów, Ks. Michał Stanisław Głowacki "Świętopelk" (1804-1846): Folklorysta i współorganizator powstania (Biały Dunajec-Ostróg, 1999).

²⁷³ Janusz Andrusikiewicz, Poruseństwo Chochołowskie 1846 wydane z okazji 150-rocznicy Powstania Chochołowskiego (Czarny Dunajec: Zarząd Gminy, 1996); Przewodnik: Muzeum Powstania Chochołowskiego,

Dunajec, as in many villages north of it, rushed to act in self-defense. The insurgents were soon tried and sentenced to long terms in prison (in most cases 20 years). Most of them, however, were soon released as a result of the Revolution of 1848, when the Habsburg monarchy granted an amnesty that included the earlier political prisoners.

The Chochołów Uprising was organized by the village elites of lower ranks. All of the leaders came from outside of the Tatra region, though most of them came from either peasant or petit bourgeois families. Jan Kanty Andrusikiewicz was born in a village near Limanowa and was educated in Bochnia. Living in Chochołów, Andrusikiewicz challenged the authority of both the local landowner and the local pastor, by raising peasants' civic consciousness and by spreading among them patriotic propaganda—actions that were not welcomed by the conservative priest and the landowner. As Andrusikiewicz stood for peasants' interests in winning their trust, the villagers followed him in rebellion against the local, that is, the Austrian, authorities. Wounded during the skirmishes, Andrusikiewicz was sentenced to twenty years, yet released after two, taking advantage of the amnesty.

The unfortunate insurgent came back to Chochołów only to collect his starving family. Though being unable to find any employment for a long time, Andrusikiewicz eventually settled in Łącko, a village near Nowy Sącz, hired by a local landowner and industrialist from the area.²⁷⁴ Maksymilian Marszałkiewicz was his fellow conspirator, and a local personage in local patriotic circles. Prior to the Galician Peasant Rebellion, Marszałkiewicz's manor house was one of the

Oddział Muzeum Tatrzańskiego im. Tytusa Chałubińskiego w Zakopanem, edited by Jerzy Darowski and Józef Kamieński (Zakopane: Muzeum Tatrzańskie im. Tytusa Chałubińskiego, 1988); Powstanie chochołowskie 1846 roku: Dokumenty i materiały, ed. by Rafał Gerber (Warszawa: Ossolineum, 1960); Władysław Łyś, Powstanie chochołowskie (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1956); Stanisław Eliaż Radzikowski, Powstanie chochołowskie w roku 1846 (Lwów: Polskie Towarzystwo Nakładowe, 1904); Pruski Jan Alojzy, Więźniowie stanu z roku 1846 w Cytadeli Szpilberg (Lwów: Nakł. Autora, 1848).

²⁷⁴ Marian Tyrowicz, "Andrusikiewicz, Jan Kanty," in: Polski Słownik Biograficzny, Vol. 1 (Kraków, PAU, 1935)

centers of the democratic conspiracy. In the spring of 1846, it almost became a site of peasant's attacks. The Marszałkowicz family avoided being killed only because of Maksymilian patronized the local villages, including Kamienica, where he offered jobs and charities. When the highlanders of nearby village attacked his manor house, the highlanders from his village came to the landowner's family defense.²⁷⁵ Marszałkowicz was a close friend of a historian Ludwik Kubala. The Marszałkowicz's large library served, among others, Lucjan Siemieński and Szczęsny Morawski, which he eventually donated it to the Polish Academy of Learning in Cracow.²⁷⁶

The memories of the Chochołów uprising among the Tatra highlanders remained fresh in the second half of the nineteenth century. One of the most celebrated peasant residents of Zakopane, Jan Krzeptowski, known also as Sabała and Sablik, whose talents in music and storytelling inspired dozens of Polish artists visiting Zakopane for decades, took part in the uprising, and carried vivid memories of it up to the end of the century. The aura of a peasant insurgent certainly added to his extraordinary status as the most renowned peasant artist from the Tatra. The earliest commemoration of the Chochołów Uprising was a votive figure of St. John of Nepomuk, very popular in the whole territory of Central Europe as a holy protector from floods and droughts, but also of a good name. The highlanders from Chochołów erected the figure of St.

²⁷⁵ Marszałkowicz was not the only patriot-victim of peasant attacks in 1846. Less fortunate was another conspirator, Julian Goslar (1820-1852), who helped Jan Kanty Andrusikiewicz to spread the patriotic gospels among the Tatra villagers. Goslar, a passionate democratic revolutionary of German extraction, did not take part in the skirmishes of February 21, but at that time was severely beaten by the peasants and delivered to the Austrian authorities. Later, he became involved in various conspiracies in Austria, Hungary, and Germany, and was eventually executed. Stefan Kieniewicz, Pomiędzy Stadionem a Goslarem: Sprawa włościańska w Galicji w 1848 roku (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Ossolineum, 1980).

²⁷⁶ Władysław Pierzga, 700 lat Kamienicy Gorczańskiej (Kamienica: Gminny Ośrodek Kultury, 1997).

John of Nepomuk, placing its back toward Czarny Dunajec to stigmatize the peasant neighbors' treason and infamous participation in the pacification of the uprising.²⁷⁷

A more respectable commemoration came in 1901, when the Tatra Society attached a plaque dedicated to the participants of the Chochołów Uprising to one of the rocks in the Chochołowska Valley, which is one of the most popular tourist sites in the Tatra. The Society also named the nearby mountain peak after Rev. Józef Kmietowicz, one of the uprising's leaders.²⁷⁸ That choice of patron, explicable by Kmietowicz's tragic and short life, had a multilayered political significance, going beyond mere celebration of the peasant insurgency. While around the turn of the century the Catholic Church in Galicia was holding a strong loyalist position, supporting a Polish national agenda only if it was in accordance with the principles of the imperial and Vatican politics, the Church also began organizing work and propaganda on the grounds of social politics, aiming to challenge the socialist organizations and presenting itself as historical protector of the peasant rights. Thus, commemorating Rev. Kmietowicz, who was discriminated against and yet protected by his superiors for his nationalist political involvements, placed him alongside the Polish clergymen, which in the nineteenth century combined Catholic and national ideals. In the minds of patriotic visitors to the Tatra, particularly those from Russian Poland, Kmietowicz stood with Rev. Stanisław Brzóska (1832-1864), a general chaplain in the January Uprising and a leader of his own military unit, which he recruited from amongst the peasants in Podlasie and with which he fought against Russian army until the spring of 1865, long after the leaders of the uprising were tried and executed. For visitors from Prussian Poland,

²⁷⁷ Though St. John of Nepomuk's surname has a toponymic character, as coming from the town of Pomuk (later Nepomuk), this Czech surname sounds in Polish, as well as in the highland dialect, like "he did not help". The same is true for John Nepomucen, which is another version of that saint's name.

²⁷⁸ Zofia Radwańska-Paryska and Witold H. Paryski, *Wielka encyklopedia tatrzańska* (Poronin: Wyd. Górskie, 2004).

he stood alongside many Polish priests, most of all Rev. Piotr Wawrzyniak (1849-1910), who was born in a smallholder's family, a diligent organizer of Polish economic, cultural, and political institutions in the Great Duchy of Poznan, and who already by the end of the century was gaining an iconic reputation among his compatriots.

For Galician visitors, Rev. Kmietowicz paired with the man who invented Zakopane, as Polish Davos: with Rev. Józef Stolarczyk (1816-1893), a pastor of Zakopane, a local institution-man, a passionate and successful promoter of the town as a spa, and the Tatra for tourism. According to the hearsays repeated by many turn-of-the-century sources, Stolarczyk often repeated that after the Galician Peasant Rebellion he could not bring himself to serve peasants stained with blood, so he asked his superiors to send him to one of the Tatra villages, because only they had not participated in the fraternal bloodshed.²⁷⁹ Yet that explanation, whether true or not, above all stresses the paternal and unique relationship of the pastor and his parishioners, the highlanders. Rev. Stolarczyk came to be regarded by the Polish elites traveling to Zakopane as the ideal of a Polish priest: firm but fair, and loving yet stern preacher, who by transforming one mountain village lost to civilization to its very center, brought prosperity to his impoverished and brute "sheep." Thus, erecting Kmietowicz's name on the peak of the Chochołowska Valley came as symbol of social solidarism in the name of the nation, and as a reminder both to the Church, and of the Church about the role that national elites expected the clergy to play in modern Polish society.

The national history gave that one-day event incomparably greater significance than the event could deserve, but it was purely for ideological reasons. In 1904, Stanisław Eliaz Radzikowski, one of the major figures promoting tourism in the Tatra, published *The*

²⁷⁹ Fryderyk Hoesick, Tatry i Zakopane: Przeszłość i terażniejszość (Poznań: Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, 1921).

Chochołowskie Uprising of 1846, another attempt to supersede the memories of the Galician Peasant Rebellion by the memories of faithful and patriotic highlanders. “The uprising under the Tatra,” and “Poruseństwo Chochołowskie”—the translation of the Polish literary word “insurgency” in the Tatra dialect—added a poetry and locality to what was a peasant anti-feudal rebellion married with the Polish national ideology. The Chochołów Uprising became crucial for constructing the highlander as a Polish citizen, and to historicize peasant patriotic armed mobilization.

CHAPTER IV

TRAITORS DECEIVED AND CONFUSED: PARADOXES OF PEASANT LOYALTY

In previous chapters I demonstrated the ways in which the national narratives constructed peasants as victims of foreign invasions, as well as defenders of the state and the nation. Both roles endowed representations of male peasants with the rudimentary characteristics of citizens. Though they appeared for the most part as a collective subject, they were, nevertheless, capable of morally connecting a sense of responsibility for their communities and a “fatherland” with performing a deliberately militant act of self-defense and of protecting their other compatriots, including the nobility. In this chapter I analyze representations of an emerging peasant civic personhood, yet in the context of an internal conflict. In Polish national memory shaped under the partition, those representations center around one historical event: Aleksander Kostka-Napierski’s rebellion of 1651 in the Podhale.

The Proper Time for Improper Love: The National Romance and Sexual Politics under Serfdom in Narratives about the Mongol and Swedish Invasions

I begin this section with Aleksander Kostka-Napierski and his cultural representations. His biography fed some literary representations, encapsulating major problems with constructing peasants, in this instance – highlanders, as full-right citizens. The first problem I discuss here is one posed by the social history of medieval and early modern history of Poland; namely, the impossibility of writing into the specifics of Polish medieval and early modern history a marital, romantic, or sexual relationship between a peasant woman and a nobleman, thereby securing the respectability of the woman and possible offspring from such a union.

In 1860s Szczęsny Morawski noted in his *Sądcecczyzna* that the memories about the acts of kings in medieval Poland merged and tangled.²⁸⁰ But that was also the case in the following centuries. While writing *The Kościelisko Valley*, Seweryn Goszczyński debated whether to set the action of his stories during the Mongol or the Swedish wars.²⁸¹ Maria Janion argues that the choice of the Mongol over Swedish wars in *The Kościeliska Valley* was motivated by the poet's need to choose a distant past to introduce the fantastic characters in the poem: a medieval monk and a Slavic female swamp demon (*dziwożona, mamuna*). Goszczyński faced a similar chronological dilemma with *Oda*. The poet considered whether to set the action at the threshold of the Christian era or in the seventeenth century, during the Polish-Swedish war. His hesitance found its way into print. In the edition of *Oda* published in Poznań in 1886, which I used,

²⁸⁰ Morawski, *ibidem*, vol. 1, p. 73.

²⁸¹ Maria Janion does not see any parallel, yet she noticed, after Stanisław Pigoń, that Goszczyński could not decide whether to place the action of his novel during the Tartar or the Swedish wars.

Gromwid is called a vassal of seventeenth-century King John III Sobieski, instead of eleventh-century Bolesław the Brave.²⁸²

Placing the story of a lawful marital union between a peasant girl and a mighty landlord in the seventeenth-century Commonwealth would certainly evoke embarrassment among the readers. All educated Poles of that time knew that any landlord had free access to his serfs' bodies, and more or less consensual relationships, including rapes, were common practice. Yet, no one talked about this. First, because that embarrassing social custom placed Polish society and the noble democracy in the same category as a stereotype of the Russian society and the autocracy. Polish émigrés in France and England desperately attempted to differentiate and distance themselves from such a cultural proximity, to more compellingly argue that the Polish nation is a European victim of Russia, the "Asian" barbarian oppressor. And second, because that custom was certainly not convenient for any nineteenth-century democratic activist, as it stood at the heart of "what is wrong" with the noble democracy, and questioned the moral integrity of the noble patriarchal family, the idealized image of which was so important in conveying the sense of an oppressed nation on the fringes of the civilized Europe. While Polish national activists often condemned serfdom in the name of democratic ideals, they rarely went into details beyond denouncing the general economic and social effects of serfdom on the cultural, political, and economical condition of the nation. The sexual practices under serfdom were silenced then, and still remain unexplored in the contemporary national memory and historiography.

Readers of *Oda* knew from history books, or from their common social knowledge, that according to the Commonwealth laws, if a nobleman married a peasant woman, his offspring

²⁸² Seweryn Goszczyński, *Oda: Powieść z czasów Bolesława Wielkiego* (Poznań: W. Simon, 1886), p. 17.

inherited the serf status of their mother. Consequently, such a marriage socially stigmatized a nobleman, raising questions about his legal sovereignty as the head of his family, and pushed him beyond the boundaries of the noble society. In other words, no one prohibited a nobleman from getting sexually or emotionally involved with a peasant girl, but marrying her was a social disgrace and family disaster.

In the end, Goszczyński gave up the period of seventeenth-century Polish-Swedish War and moved his romance to the onset of Christianity, historically far enough to convey his fantasy about a marriage between a nobleman and a peasant girl. His detour is, however, surprising because during the Swedish invasion, the Podhale witnessed the greatest political activism among the highlanders, and dramatic events worthy of the attention of a Romantic poet. During the Swedish invasion, in 1651 the Podhale became the area of a peasant rebellion against the nobility led by Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, a nobleman of unknown origins, who claimed to be an illegitimate son of the Polish King Władysław IV Vasa. A bastard-usurper leading a peasant rebellion to seize the throne or establish his own dominion by promising to change the social system by breaking the freedom of the nobility and establish a direct relationship between peasants and the king, would serve well as a plot for a Romantic literary work, especially with a democratic agenda. Maria Janion did not notice that after his visit to Adolf Tetmajer, Goszczyński had the historical material to write a Walter Scott-like novel in hand. That Goszczyński sacrificed the literary and political potential of the seventeenth century history of core Polish lands for the sake of an insipid romance is surprising given a man whose twin identities of a political activist and a poet were so intertwined.

Was Seweryn Goszczyński familiar with Kostka-Napierski's history? On one of his trips with the Tetmajers, the poet visited the castle of Czorsztyń in the Pieniny Mountains, once

Kostka-Napierski's headquarters. In his *Diary of a Journey to the Tatras*, Goszczyński wrote how moved he felt at the sight of the ruins. He recalled Zawisza Czarny, a medieval Polish knight and mentioned Aleksander Kostka-Napierski. Though nineteenth-century historians and ethnographers emphasized that there were no historical memories of either Kostka-Napierski or his peasant companions among local peasants, it does not mean that there was no historical memory about that anti-feudal rebellion among the nineteenth-century Polish elites residing in the region. The Tetmajers and the local clergy whom Goszczyński met during his trips could have mentioned the history of Kostka-Napierski, to say nothing of books, which Goszczyński skimmed in the manor house in Łopuszna. Adolf Tetmajer had good knowledge about regional history, which he proved in his popular publications, and there is no reason to underestimate his home library.

Aleksander Kostka-Napierski: The Perfect Villain for an Imperfect Rebellion

In this section I discuss those aspects of the biography of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski that made him a perfect model for the romantic hero. At the same time, I demonstrate how his social politics—particularly his attempts to mobilize peasants for the protection of the king and against the nobility—discredited him as a possible national hero.

Aleksander Leon Napierski, vel Aleksander Kostka von Sztemberk, vel Szymon Bzowski (about 1620-1651) was a military officer. He grew up at the court of King Władysław IV Vasa. Well educated in court of queen, Kostka-Napierski excelled in the knowledge of foreign languages. He served most probably as an Austrian mercenary in Germany during the Thirty Year' War, switching his services to Sweden just before the outbreak of the Polish-Swedish war. He carried out some secret diplomatic missions for King Władysław, details of which remain unknown. After king Władysław's death, when the royal younger brother Jan Kazimierz Vasa was elected king, Aleksander Kostka-Napierski sought employment at the royal court in Stockholm, but soon returned to the Commonwealth. The Vasas had very tenuous relationships with Sweden, their homeland, resulting in several wars, but Stockholm remained one of the closest capitals for them.

In 1651, during the Cossack uprising, using a (presumably) forged letter of King Jan Kazimierz Vasa, Kostka-Napierski began a military levy, mostly among peasants in the Podhale, terrifying the local nobility with the prospect of arming peasants and setting them against the manor houses. This was because during recruitment, Napierski issued a proclamation, allegedly based on the royal letter, calling peasants to stand up to protect the king from abuses by the treacherous noblemen. The letter gave the royal promise of personal freedom to every peasant in

exchange for his military service directly to the king, and encouraged peasants to attack the nobles.

Nineteenth-century historians generally agreed that Aleksander Kostka-Napierski was at that time in cahoots with Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, a leader of an on-going Cossack uprising in Ukraine, as well as with György II Rákóczi, Prince of Transylvania. Most of them presented Kostka-Napierski as a puppet in hands of the Ukrainian and Hungarian master politicians. Certainly, the content of the alleged royal appeal condemning the nobility, denouncing abuses of their privileges, and calling peasants to stand by the king as their only judge and lord resembles all too well the anti-noble Cossack propaganda of that time. There is little doubt that Khmelnytsky, Rákóczi, and possibly the Austrian court hoped to take advantage of the Commonwealth's political weakness, and take control of its Carpathian territories. Thus, since the nineteenth century, Polish historiography tends to interpret the events related to the Kostka-Napierski rebellion as the first attempt at the partition of Poland, and his own action as an early instance of state treason, which had plagued the Commonwealth during the eighteenth century.

Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's career as a rebel was short. Though he managed to take over Czorsztyn castle in the Pieniny Mountains—the major military post in the Podhale guarding a mountain pass between Austria, Upper Hungary (Slovakia), and Poland—local peasants responded with little enthusiasm to his anti-feudal agitation. The private army of the Bishop of Cracow sent to pacify the rebellion brutally suppressed all signs of peasant defiance on its way, and soon besieged Kostka-Napierski in Czorsztyn. Rumors and experiences of noble atrocities committed in response to peasant's unrest influenced the attitude of the rebels accompanying Kostka-Napierski in the castle: they handed him over to the military leaders of Bishop

Gembicki's army for a promise of the royal mercy. Kostka-Napierski was tried for treason and sentenced to death by impaling. The execution was carried out in Cracow.

It is astonishing that some two centuries later Seweryn Goszczyński, a master of the Romantic frenzy and a connoisseur of cruelty in literature, let that history go, especially because Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's uncertain background added much color to the history of the rebellion. Nineteenth-century historians knew the rebellion, and its context. After the outbreak of the rebellion, a rumor spread that Aleksander Kostka-Napierski was an illegitimate son of the deceased King Władysław IV, a brother of the current unpopular and ill-fated King Jan Kazimierz. If trusted and used in domestic and foreign propagandas, such a revelation could have unpredictable consequences for the already complicated state of the Commonwealth's affairs. And yet, the royal parentage of the then, 30-year-old officer was not impossible.

The nobility close to the royal court were well aware of King Władysław's disorderly love life and his fancy for random sexual encounters with women of different social backgrounds during his long bachelorhood.²⁸³ If a son indeed, Kostka-Napierski would have been born during king's youth, before his succession to the throne. Thus, his birth could be easily concealed either by his friends, or by the royal court of his fanatically religious father, King Sigismund I Vasa. Then, after the succession to the throne and with the compliance of his pious and queen consort Cecylia Renata von Habsburg, King Władysław IV could have placed his bastard in her court to give him a proper education, and in appropriate time sent him as an officer to one of the allied armies, such as the Austrian one.

Though the primary sources are conspicuously silent about Kostka-Napierski's paternity, they nevertheless left historians some room for speculation. In contrast, the identity of Kostka-

²⁸³ He married at the age of 42.

Napierski's mother is simply impossible to determine. The noble democracy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth did not allow the institution of royal mistresses, though the nobility tolerated them as the kings' private affairs. Among seventeenth-century Polish kings, Władysław IV flouted the nobility's opinion on the royal sex affairs the most, going as far as installing one of his mistresses, Jadwiga Łuszkowska, a burgher woman from Lwów, at his court, and making her his escort at some official ceremonies, much to the public outrage.²⁸⁴ If the nobility had little tolerance for royal mistresses, they had even less for illegitimate royal children, especially during the seventeenth century, with flourishing religious zeal and fierce struggles between the nobility and the kings for the control over the state. Historians argued, that King Jan Kazimierz's open affair with the wife of a high ranking court official, led to a state crisis, questioning the king's succession rights, and resulted in bringing upon Poland the devastating Swedish invasion, when part of the nobility alienated by the king renounced their allegiance and claimed his uncle, Swedish King, as the Polish king.²⁸⁵

Historians of Poland do not give much attention to the homosocial character of the nobility's social and political culture, even though all the institutions of the noble democracy were deeply grounded in a plethora of formal and informal male bonding, from which noble women were almost entirely excluded. The few exceptions of powerful women only confirm the rule, though it is difficult to point to those exceptions beyond some widows-magnates.²⁸⁶ Those

²⁸⁴ Henryk Wisner, *Władysław IV Waza* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1995), Jarema Maciszewski, *Władysław IV* (Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 1988), Władysław Czaplinski, *Władysław IV i jego czasy* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1976), Leszek Phdohercki, *Władysław IV, 1595-1648* (Warszawa: Wyd. Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1974), Artur Śliwiński, *Król Władysław IV* (Warszawa: M. Arct, 1925).

²⁸⁵ Adam Kersten, *Hieronim Radziejowski: Studium władzy i opozycji* (Warszawa: PWN, 1988).

²⁸⁶ Anna Jabłonowska is one celebrated example: Józef Sowiński, *O uczonych Polkach* (Warszawa 1821); J. Bartoszewicz, "Anna z Sapiechów Jabłonowska," in: *Dzieła*, Vol. 10 (Kraków 1881); Janina Bergerówna, "Księżna

exceptional women gained control of their property usually as a result of skilful navigation through family politics, leading to a successful suspension of the patriarchal guardianship, to which all noble women in the Commonwealth were subjected. Though the position of women in the royal court, as well as in magnate courts, increased during the eighteenth century, many commentators on public life lamented the raise of “women’s power” as a symptom of the corruption of the principles of the noble republicanism by West European absolutism. It is hard to find a political writer of that time who did not connect the visibility of women’s presence in the political arena, and their attempts to influence politics, as a sign of an absolutist threat to noble democracy. While such a perception of gender politics was obvious to some nineteenth-century Polish historians, contemporary historians, who ideologically shy away from using a gender perspective, too often unreflectively frame their writings on noble women in the stereotype of Polish historical exceptionalism in practicing gender equality.²⁸⁷ In spite of countless case studies and a few monographs, we still do not fully know how the Commonwealth’s law and political institutions conceptualized gender difference among the nobility, and how they put it into practice. Yet, a parallel reading of biographies of eminent

pani na Kocku i Siemiatyczach: Działalność gospodarcza i społeczna księżnej Anny z Sapiechów Jabłonowskiej,” Archiwum Towarzystwa Naukowego ze Lwowie, Section II, Vol. 18/1 (1936).

²⁸⁷ For a sober outlook at gender relationships among the nobility in the early modern period: Karol Szajnocha, “Staropolskie wyobrażenia o kobietach,” in: Dziela, Vol. 4 (Warszawa: Józef Unger, 1876).

Monographs on women’s history in the early modern period: Maria Bogucka, Women in Early Modern Polish Society, Against the European Background (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004) treat the European context in fact as a background rather than an analytical context. Major works on women’s history in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth include: Maria Bogucka, Białogłowa w dawnej Polsce: Kobieta w społeczeństwie polskim XVI-XVIII wieku na tle porównawczym (Warszawa: Trio, 1998); Andrzej Karpiński, Kobieta w mieście polskim w drugiej połowie XVI i w XVII wieku (Warszawa: Instytut Historii PAN, 1995); Cezary Kukło, Kobieta samotna w społeczeństwie miejskim u schyłku Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej: Studium demograficzno-społeczne (Białystok: Wyd. Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 1998); Lucja Charewiczowa, Kobieta w dwunaj Polsce, do okresu rozbiorów (Lwów: Państwowe Wyd. Książek Szkolnych, 1938).

magnate women and of the studies on cultural representations of women, alongside the studies in criminal and legal history of the Commonwealth, reveal a huge discrepancy between the triumphant image of Polish noble women's exceptional position, and the misogyny and gender violence that emerges from countless legal accounts and noblemen's family histories.²⁸⁸ Problems of gender relationships of townswomen, Jewish women, and peasant women are even more neglected. The case of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's absent mother encapsulates the problem of the marginalization of women in the early modern Polish elite.

The idea that Kostka-Napierski could indeed have been an illegitimate son of the Polish king by some noble maiden was easily imaginable, and so posed a real threat to the already shaken stability of the royal power. The future leader of the rebels grew up in a royal court, in his adolescence spent some time at the court of a prominent Kostkas magnate family, and after coming of age had no difficulties pursuing a military career as a middle-rank officer, first in Austria, than in Sweden, in countries with which the Vasas had the closest familial relationships. Though Kostka-Napierski changed his name several times during his short life, he claimed no relatives, and no relatives claimed him. Changing identity was not unusual among military vagabonds, especially in seventeenth-century Central Europe torn by wars, but in the Commonwealth, where the noble name and the familial connections guaranteed personal freedom, privileges, and often an immunity from committing crimes against the non-nobles (a right so important for military officers, as they often entered into a violent conflicts with townsmen and petit nobility about the provisions, requisitions, etc.), it was very unusual, and almost always related either to breaking a law, or lack of a lawful origins. Oddly, during the trial, Kostka-Napierski's noble status was never seriously contested, yet the investigators were most

²⁸⁸ Marcin Kamler, Przemoc między szlachtą sieradzką w XVII wieku: Opis zjawiska (Warszawa: Aspra-JR, 2011).

interested in finding his real name. When under torture he claimed to be king's half-brother, the investigation was halted immediately and Bishop Gembicki asked King Jan Kazimierz for further instructions. The king's answer, which is unknown, arrived quickly and caused resuming an investigation in which the accused confessed his third "real name" (Szymon Bzowski), and the judges sentenced him to punishment adequate to the crime. Though it is possible to see Kostka-Napierski's claims as a way to draw out the investigation and use any resource to obtain a better treatment, or to receive a more humane way of execution, it is also possible to explain his action by his truthfulness. If that was the case, King Jan Kazimierz reacted in accordance with his own political interest, silencing the traitor and/or an imposter as soon as possible.

Despite their efforts, historians never managed to uncover Kostka-Napierski's origins, which would make him an even more exciting surrogate for a Romantic hero. In his masterful study, Adam Kersten provided a painstaking archival and contextual analysis of all historical sources, as well as dissembling in the archives (including almost immediate destruction of the acts from an investigation after execution), and concluded that among the hypothesis on Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's origins the one which sees in him an illegitimate son of King Władysław IV seems most probable. According to Kersten, the king most likely fathered Kostka-Napierski with a woman of insignificant social status, either petit nobility, or a burger, which would account for the complete absence of the mother and the maternal family from his Kostka-Napierski's history.²⁸⁹

Amongst all the Romantic and post-Romantic writers, Seweryn Goszczyński was in the best position to write about that rebellion as lead by a presumed or a real imposter. Yet, he did not. One certain reason was the shock of the Galicia Peasant Rebellion. In looking for a historical

²⁸⁹ Adam Kersten, Na tropach Napierskiego: W kręgu mitów i faktów (Warszawa: PIW, 1970).

template to explain why such a violent peasant uprising happened in the heartland of Poland, in the “civilized” countryside that was the epitome of the nation’s “private sphere,” Polish intellectuals and artists often compared it to Kostka-Napierski’s rebellion. Both were believed orchestrated by the Austrian Empire from backrooms. Both aimed to destroy the Polish state/government and the noble supremacy from the inside, by steering peasants’ hatred of the manor houses. Both took place in approximately the same geographic region, and both leaders were represented as moral degenerates driven by personal vengeance, ambition, and “paid by foreign money.” Another reason was to show the Napierski’s rebellion as Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s doing, and therefore as an act of the Cossack (and Russian) diversion. The framework of the political and diplomatic history successfully obscured the social issues, which made that rebellion possible.²⁹⁰

²⁹⁰ Kersten, *ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

At the Judicial Courts and the Manorial Courtyards:

Polish Peasants' Conflicts with the Nobility in the Mid-Seventeenth Century

In this section I focus on the representation of peasants in civic roles through various modes of juridical disputes and law enforcement as represented in the modern historiography. That material serves me to further demonstrate the limitations in attempts to inscribe the highlanders in civic roles into Polish history, in this case, in the context of social and legal history.

Marginalizing the historical role of Kostka-Napierski in the national memory resulted in repressing memories about that biggest peasant rebellion in the core territories of the Polish Crown, which in the nineteenth century subtended to the territory of the ethnic Poland. Adam Kersten tended to see Kostka-Napierski's rebellion and other peasant upheavals of the time as "an anti-feudal ferment" rather than deliberate anti-feudal uprisings, as the seventeenth century peasants' "[...] resistance, aversion, or even hatred nearly always were directed toward particular people from among close associates, but not against the abstractions: the state, or the feudal system."²⁹¹ Although the phraseology accounts for a judgment of the scale of the events and the scope of its historical impact, it does downplay the fact that they all indeed presented anti-feudal violent peasant outbreaks.²⁹² As Adam Kersten argued, those local outbreaks, though smaller than peasant uprisings in Ukraine, nevertheless played a more important role in using fear to shape local relationships between the nobility and peasantry in the Polish Crown, for they

²⁹¹ Kersten, *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

²⁹² In his historical study Kersten, convincingly, tried to look for a middle ground between the nineteenth-century historiography diminishing the role of the Napierski's rebellion, and the communist historiography, which tried to overplay its importance as one of the major examples of the violent class struggle in early modern Polish history. For the discussion of the historiography: Kersten, *ibid.*, pp. 7-17.

presented a real, not an abstract threat. In the first part of the nineteenth century, the local memories and knowledge of the history of peasant unrest subsisted rather in the manor than peasant houses, even though the scope of the migration from the countryside was fairly small. Later in the nineteenth century the creation of the national master narrative, and national pedagogy around an image of social solidarism helped to marginalize those frightful, shameful, and politically inconvenient memories. Yet, even among the peasants the reminiscences of the historical antagonisms survived in folk-songs and folk-tales, as it did in family histories of the nobility and in obscured academic historiographies. Those histories and memories kept feeding the mutual distrust between nobility and peasants almost to the end of World War II, nurturing a historical counter-narrative focused around social difference.²⁹³

The Polish-Swedish war was particularly rich in violent peasant outbreaks, which—in contrast to the national historical master narrative shaped in the nineteenth century—were not exclusively directed against the Swedes as acts of peasant self-defense, nor did they spring from a desire to defend the Catholic faith from the heretics, which united the Polish-speaking nobility and peasants.²⁹⁴ In the first years of the Swedish war, the Greater Poland, for instance, saw many peasant packs attacking the manor houses. Many of those assaults used the opportunity to take advantage of the precarious political position of the noblemen under the occupation of the Swedish army to plunder the noblemen's property. Many were motivated by private or collective

²⁹³ On the peasant origins of Polish intelligentsia after 1945 and their cultural effects: Józef Chałasiński, Společna genealogia inteligencji polskiej (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1946); --, Przeszłość i przyszłość inteligencji polskiej (Warszawa: LSW, 1958); Andrzej Leder, Przeźniona rewolucja: Ćwiczenia z logiki historycznej (Warszawa: Krytyka Polityczna, 2014).

²⁹⁴ Andrzej Kersten, Chłopi polscy w walce z najazdem szwedzkim 1655-1656 (Warszawa: PWN, 1958); Olgierd Górka, Legenda i rzeczywistość obrony Częstochowy w roku 1655 (Warszawa: PWN, 1957); Władysław Szczotka, Udział chłopów w walce z potopem szwedzkim (Lwów: Wieś, 1939); Ludwik Kubala, Wojna szwedzka w roku 1655 i 1656 (Lwów: H. Altenberg, G. Seyfarth, E. Wende i Spółka, 1913).

vengeance on a cruel lord. Yet, many of those assaults were ideologically motivated by the Protestants—mostly Anabaptist—propaganda, which though present in the Commonwealth from the mid-sixteenth century, flourished under the Swedish occupation, targeting not only the Catholic nobility, but also the Catholic clergy. The Czech Brethrens (the Hussitism-based Protestant denomination) in Leszno in Greater Poland demonstrated strong support for the Swedish king, and their Anabaptist ideas steered and influenced many peasant outbreaks in the area. The Polish Brethrens (the Arians) in central and southern Poland took similar actions. Particularly active were the Polish Brethrens south of Cracow, close to the mountains, where their anti-feudal ideology fell on eager peasant ears.

Nineteenth-century writers and artists, more than historians, liked to tie Protestantism to political treason, as the myth of the Pole-Catholic was growing stronger and it was politically handy. In his bestselling historical romance on the Swedish invasion called *Deluge*, Henryk Sienkiewicz made the two brothers of the powerful magnate Radziwiłł family the epitome of the aristocratic traitors of the Commonwealth. Prince Janusz Radziwiłł, the Voivod of Vilna and the Great Hetman of Lithuania, and Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł, were both Calvinists, and both—as historical figures and literary characters—allied with the Swedish king. Sienkiewicz's shameful stigma has stuck to both historical characters to this day. Since the second half of the nineteenth-century, the myth of the Pole-Catholic as forged by the seventeenth-century wars and the counter-Reformation overshadowed the early modern native Polish sources of criticism of serfdom, in most parts intellectually rooted in Anabaptism and Calvinism.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ Janusz Tazbir, *Reformacja, kontreformacja, tolerancja* (Wrocław: Wyd. Dolnośląskie, 1996); --, *Reformacja w Polsce: Szkice o ludziach i doktrynie* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1993); Lech Szczucki, *Nonkonformiści religijni XVI i XVII wieku: Studia i szkice* (Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 1993); Janusz Tazbir, *Szlachta i teologowie* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1987); *Socinianism and Its Role in the Culture of the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. by Lech Szczucki and Zbigniew Ogonowski (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Science, 1983); Janusz

One effect of such a manipulation of history was pushing the “peasant issue” in the Commonwealth to the Ukrainian steppes rather than analyzing it in the Polish Crown lands, and demonstrating that it was an ethnic and religious problem rather than social and ethical one. For the Romantics and their ideological successors, it was easier to ponder the cultural and political hybridity of the Cossaks and Ukraine, as it conformed to both their aesthetic and historiosophic ideals embodied in “the split hero” and “the split land.” The otherness of Ukraine/Cossaks and their dependency on the Commonwealth/nobility gave a safe distance in deliberations on the political downfall of the noble republic and its social reasons. As the Polish national master narrative demonstrates, it is always easier to discuss problems of serfdom and peasant rebellions as a case of Ukraine and Cossacks, not only because of the historical scale of the social practices, intensity of the events, and political self-consciousness (real or presumed) of the historical actors, but also because of historians’ problems with ethical confrontation with the brutalities of serfdom practiced by Polish noblemen on the Polish serf, and the violent reactions of the former.²⁹⁶ The early modern nobility was terrified by the threat of peasant upheavals in Poland, as elsewhere. That terror was passed through the archives, and returned with a new force during and after the Galician Peasant Rebellion. Thus, as the former enemies could not be removed from the land, silencing was one of the strategies for the nobility and their cultural successors to

Tazbir, Bracia polscy na wygnaniu (Warszawa: PWN, 1977); --, Arianie i katolicy (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza: 1971); Lech Szczucki, Wokół dziejów i tradycji arianizmu (Warszawa: PWN, 1971); Zbigniew Ogonowski, Socynianizm polski (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1960); Literatura ariańska w Polsce XVI wieku: Antologia, ed. by Lech Szczucki and Janusz Tazbir (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1959); Zbigniew Ogonowski, Arianie polscy (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1952).

²⁹⁶ The tendency to emphasize the antagonism between nobility and peasants developed particularly in the Stalinist historiography between 1950 and 1956. Yet, in that case, as Adam Kersten has demonstrated, historians overplayed the role of the class struggle in the seventeenth century, imposing on peasants a social and political consciousness beyond any reasonable historical proportion.

cope with a fear of “the people’s rage,” and for peasants—with the shame of serfdom and the stigma of vengeful violence committed not only on the predators but also on innocent minors. The suppression of the political problem not only obscured the historical events, but also buried some peasant heroes, Kostka-Napierski’s two closest collaborators, who gave their lives together with him. It was Stanisław Łętowski, a village head of Czarny Dunajec in the Podhale, and Marcin Radocki, a member of the Polish Brethren, and a schoolteacher in Pcim.

Kostka-Napierski managed to gain the greatest support in two areas of the southern Cracow Voivodship: around the towns Myślenice and Nowy Targ. Both regions had the status of the *starostwo*, which meant they were legally a part of the Crown estates owned directly by the kings. In practice, the kings customarily rented the *starostwos* to the nobility. The peasants in the *starostwo* enjoyed a higher status than ordinary serfs, as it was the king who was their direct lord. The corvée duties expected from the royal peasants were significantly lower than that of serfs from a typical property owned by the nobility. The highlanders from the *starostwo* of Nowy Targ (including the Tatra area) had royal privileges giving them rights to hunting, fishing, and gathering in royal forests, as well as carrying weapons. Some of those privileges dated back to the fifteenth century, and the peasant families proudly stored them in their households, using those documents as legal grounds in challenging the economic disputes with the noblemen. The status of a direct royal beneficiary was unique among the peasantry in the Commonwealth, close only to a status of the self-sustaining petit nobility, or of the offspring of the ennobled war-prisoners, mostly Muslim Tatars, settled in the northern borderland of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Seventeenth-century Tatra regions were plagued by armed robbers, recruited from army deserters and unemployed soldiers, from vagabonds, fugitive peasants, and other adventurers

who sought their luck and shelter in the Carpathians. Outlaw bands attacked manors houses, as well as rich peasant households, usually making little distinction in their choice of prey. Under the threat of robbery, peasants organized their own bands of armed men for the purpose of village self-defense. They were called the *harniks*. As Kersten noticed, “[t]he *harniks* and the outlaw, one enforcing the law, another breaking it, are the characters which do not fit into a typical image of the serfdom village known from other parts of Poland.”²⁹⁷ In practice, the difference between the *harniks* and the outlaws was vague, as often the *harniks* robbed villages in the southern, Slovak, side of the Tatra, and attacked passing merchants, regardless of which language they spoke. In conflicts between a village and a local lord, the *harniks* played the role of a communal militia, which often successfully challenged the manorial troops.

Peasants from the Crown estates cherished their status and privileges, passing not only the papers, but also memories of their exceptionality from one generation to another. The legal disputes between the royal peasants and local landlords, which were resolved by royal courts, influenced an entirely different shape of the civic identity of those peasants. Such disputes mushroomed in both the *starostwos* in the early seventeenth century, as the local renters organized their private serfdom-based estates (the folwarks) on the Crown estates, usually violating the property lines, rights, and personal freedom of the royal peasants. While Stanisław Łętowski was a community leader of the royal peasants from Nowy Targ and Czorsztyn *starostwa*, Marcin Radocki represented them in Myślenice and Lanckorona areas.

Stanisław Łętowski (?-1651) was a village head (*sołtys*) in Czarny Dunajec in the Podhale. Intelligent, literate, rich and worldly, he had the nickname “the Marshal,” derived from the early modern position of a regional leader of the nobility, presiding over their local diets

²⁹⁷ Kersten, *ibid.*, p. 145.

(*sejmiki*). That nickname indicates not only Łętowski's high authority among local peasants, but also shows that the royal peasants perceived themselves as a community, as a sort of the petit nobility. Łętowski was a community leader in two heated conflicts with the *starostas* of Nowy Targ, subsequently with Mikołaj Komorowski and Adam Kazanowski. Łętowski challenged Komorowski when the latter violated the rights of royal peasants by founding two *folwark* estates in Czarny Dunajec and Zubie, and imposed a high corveé, which peasants refused to obey. The peasants initiated a lawsuit against Komorowski at the royal courts, which lasted until Komorowski's death. Stanisław Łętowski represented the peasants in trials in Nowy Targ, Cracow, and Warsaw.

Though after several years of the legal dispute, the highlanders managed to get a favorable judgement, Mikołaj Komornicki refused to honor the verdict. Desperate highlanders openly rebelled, attacked Komornicki's estate, and marched on Nowy Targ, the capital of the *starostwo*. During that military upheaval highlanders organized themselves in the form of a confederation: the nobility's self-governing and militant political body opposing the king for not respecting their rights. They eventually turned against the royal representatives, who tried to act as mediators. Komorowski's winning an appeal fuelled further the peasant unrest in the Podhale. Peasants carried on the legal dispute with Komorowski's successor. Thus, when Kostka-Napierski arrived at Czorsztyn, Łętowski supported him with his whole authority. Łętowski, the only peasant leader from the Nowy Targ area, was tried and executed alongside Kostka-Napierski in Cracow. The last minute change of a sentence of execution by dismembering to one of decapitation and dismembering afterward was regarded as an act of royal mercy respecting Stanisław Łętowski's position as an elder, a community leader, and an agent in legal disputes at

the royal courts. His severed head stuck on a pike, nevertheless, was exposed to the public as a warning sign and a political statement.²⁹⁸

Marcin Radocki (?-1651), the principal of the school in Pcim, represented the royal peasants of Myślenice and Lanckorona in conflicts with their renter landlady Zofia Koniecpolska.²⁹⁹ Zofia came from the very top of the Commonwealth's elite, as the daughter and sister of the Poznań Voivods, and the wife, first of the most successful military leader of the Polish Crown and a Voivod of Cracow (Stanisław Koniecpolski), and then of one of the richest heirs in the Ukraine (Samuel Karol Korecki). A double widow, a member of the most powerful family in the country, and one of the richest woman in the Commonwealth, Zofia was known for her excessive pride and shrewdness, which kept away even her closest family members. She also enjoyed the freedom of managing at least some of her estates, such as those located in the Tatra Mountains. Thus, she acted in the same way as other noblemen, ignoring the rights of the royal peasants who challenged her.

Marcin Radocki gained his civic experience in the same way as Stanisław Łętowski. In the absence of Kostka-Napierski's trial documents, historians argue that Marcin Radocki was a clergyman in the Polish Brethrens church based on their analysis of Radocki's rhetorical justification for his support of Kostka-Napierski and the history of Pcim. Like Łętowski, Marcin Radocki was tried alongside Kostka-Napierski and executed by decapitation.

²⁹⁸ Peasants from the Czorsztyn *starostwo* had similar experiences to their neighbors from Nowy Targ, carrying a long conflict with the nobleman Jerzy Platemberk. Two peasants, Tomasz Tabor of Tylmanowa and Wojciech Łazeński of Ochotnica, represented their communities in a conflict with Platemberk about the maintenance of his subordinate troops, located in their villages. They lost the trial, and later many men from both villages joined Kostka-Napierski's troops.

²⁹⁹ Zofia Opalińska, primo voto Koniecpolska, secundo voto Duchess Korecka.

The Idea Theft and the Hybridization of the Peasant Hero

In this section I discuss the origins of hybridization of the most famous highlander hero – Juraj Janosik, from the real biography of the famous Tatra outlaw and Aleksander Kostka-Napierski. This section points to intertextual dimension in constructing peasant national heroes in nineteenth-century narratives of Polish history.

The shameful and antagonizing history of serfdom undermines many foundational myths in Polish history, including that of social solidarism rooted in the Catholic religion, as well as an image of Poland as a land of the free. As a result, the history of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's rebellion never got their Romantic bard, and found its way into the national literature only at the beginning of the twentieth century, thanks to writers who consciously cultivated their peasant origins or their artistic roots in folk culture: Jan Kasproicz, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, and Władysław Orkan between the two world wars.

The first literary elaboration of the history of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski came from a Galician writer, translator, journalist, scholar, and early ethnographer Lucjan Siemieński (1807-1877). Siemieński's life paralleled that of Seweryn Goszczyński. Born in a nobleman's family, Siemieński fought in the November Uprising, where he was wounded and taken prisoner by the Russians. After his release, he emigrated to Paris, where he befriended Goszczyński. Alongside his friend, Siemieński got involved in democratic organizations, such as the Polish Democratic Association, as well as countless conspiracies, including the Galician Association of Twenty and One. In 1830s, Siemieński and Goszczyński were also fellow members of the literary group formed around the journal *Ziemia*, which was the first attempt to redirect Polish national

literature toward their “Slavic origins.”³⁰⁰ Almost all the *Ziewonia* members fought in the November Uprising, became ardent democrats after its fall, and in their later years moved to conservative positions. Like Goszczyński, in the early 1840s Lucjan Siemieński converted to the Christian sect of Andrzej Towiański in Paris, and later returned to Catholicism. In the late 1840s, Siemieński settled in Cracow, held the position of professor of Polish literature at Jagiellonian University, and faithfully supported the Galician conservatives as a public intellectual.

His literary works include collections of Polish, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian folk tales, translations as well as imitations of the Ukrainian folk songs, and the popular readings in Polish history. Siemieński addressed his writings to children and “the people,” but among intellectually sluggish Galician elites, anybody who was literate read his works.³⁰¹ The simple style of his

³⁰⁰ Galician *Ziewonia* group included (among others) August Bielowski, a future historian, Kazimierz W. Wóycicki, Dominik Magnuszewski, and Ludwik Jabłonowski, a brother-in-law of most notable modern Polish playwright, Aleksander Fredro.

³⁰¹ On Lucjan Siemieński: Lucjan Siemieński: Od wczesnych utworów do *Trzech Wieszczb*, eds. by Marian Małecki, Stanisław Podobiński, and Waldemar Skrzypczak (Częstochowa: Wyd. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie, 1997); Maria Janion, Lucjan Siemieński: Poeta romantyczny (Warszawa: PIW, 1955); Adam Belcikowski, Lucjan Siemieński (Warszawa: Biblioteka Warszawska, 1879); Ludwik Z. Dębicki, Lucjan Siemieński: Wspomnienie pośmiertne (Kraków: Księgarnia J.M. Himmelblaua, 1878); Kazimierz W. Wóycicki, Lucjan Siemieński: Z księgi moich wspomnień (Warszawa, s.n., 1878).

Major works by Lucjan Siemieński: Vacláv Hanka, Krółodworski rękopis..., transl. by Lucjan Siemieński (Kraków: D.E. Friedleina, 1836); Lucjan Siemieński and August Bielowski, Dumki A. Bielowskiego i L. Siemieńskiego (Praga: J. Spurny, 1838); --, Trzy wieszczby (Paryż: s.n. 1841); --, Świtezianka: dramat historyczny (Poznań: s.n., 1843); --, Pamiętniki o Samuelu Zborowskim, zebrane z współczesnych dzieł i rękopisów Biblioteki Kórnickiej (Poznań: Księgarnia Jana Konstantego Żupańskiego, 1844); --, Wieczory pod lipą czyli Historia narodu polskiego (Poznań: J. Łukaszewicz, 1845); --, Podania i legendy polskie, ruskie, litewskie (Poznań: Księgarnia Jana Konstantego Żupańskiego, 1845); --, Czytanie powstępowe: Zbiór powiastek moralnych, wschodnich, legend, żywotów, obrazów moralnych i przypowieści polskich (Leszno i Gniezno: Ernest Günther, 1848); --, Wachmistrz Jaszczołd: Opowiadanie starego wiarusa z kampanii 1809 roku (Kraków: Drukarnia Uniwersytecka, 1848); --, Dzieje narodu polskiego dla użytku młodzieży (Kraków: D.E. Friedlein, 1851); --, Powieści Lucjana Siemieńskiego (Petersburg: B.M. Wolff, 1852); --, Wieczornice: Powiastki, charaktery, życiorysy i podróże (Wilno: J. Zawadzki,

writing, the colorful but uncomplicated plots, and straightforward moral lessons made Siemieński one of the most popular Polish-language authors of his time.

Lucjan Siemieński wrote the first version of *The Outlaws (Opryszki)*, a poem dedicated to Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's rebellion, in the late 1830s using Seweryn Goszczyński's notes from his visit in the Podhale, notes that later provided a basis for Goszczyński's *Diary of a Journey to the Tatras*.³⁰² Goszczyński's notebooks were a treasure. Apart from conveying his impressions, Goszczyński voraciously noted all sorts of folk materials encountered during his journey, alongside concepts and ideas for his future literary works. Fearing that they might be confiscated if he were arrested, Goszczyński kept sending his papers to Paris, to his close friend and fellow poet Lucjan Siemieński, thinking they would be safe in Siemieński's desk drawer. Siemieński had already fled from Galicia to Paris in 1838, in fear of being arrested for his democratic conspiracy. Though Goszczyński several times warned Siemieński in his letters to leave his notes intact, Siemieński not only went through Goszczyński's papers, but soon afterward began to use them for his own literary works.

That betrayal of trust soured the relationship between two poets and companions for some time. It also provided an interesting case of intertextuality, or rather of idea-theft, in Polish Romantic literature. With its troubled history, *The Outlaws* was not a masterpiece because Siemieński's literary skills could not approach Goszczyński's talent. Goszczyński eventually forgave Siemieński, though soon after their conflict Siemieński left Paris and settled in Galicia. While Lucjan Siemieński's professional career was tied to Galicja, Goszczyński remained an

1854); --, Wieczory w Ojcowie czyli Opowiadanie Grzegorza o dawnych czasach Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Warszawa: S. Orgelbranda, 1858); --, Żywot Tadeusza Kosciuszki (Kraków: "Czas" 1866).

³⁰² *The Outlaws* eventually appeared in a collection of poems by him and August Bielowski in 1844, in Poznań. Lucjan Siemieński, Poezye (Poznań: Księgarnia Jana Konstantego Żupańskiego, 1844).

émigré writer throughout most of his life, eventually settling in Lwów only four years before his death.

Though a mediocre literary work and historically bizarre, Siemieński's popular poem carries a historical value. As a bastard poem born out of stolen materials and ideas, *The Outlaws* gives some sense of what Seweryn Goszczyński knew about Kostka-Napierski's rebellion, about Podhale social history, and indicates that the poet considered returning to the subject in the future. Siemieński's poem also indirectly testifies that Goszczyński's notebooks contained stories about the Tatra outlaws, including Juraj Janosik, because the motif of a gang's head rescued by his fellows from the gallows appears in some versions of Janosik's life. Siemieński merged different tales and histories, which he found in Goszczyński's papers, without much consideration for historical accuracy.

Siemieński presented Kostka-Napierski simply as Bohdan Khmelnytsky's agent. Yet, the major distinction of Siemieński's Kostka-Napierski is that his character was a highlander outlaw already before his rebellion, and after being captured and sentenced to death in Cracow, was rescued by his companions and returned as a chieftain of his band to the Tatras. Thus, Siemieński transformed the troublesome character of the nobleman rebel and traitor into an outlaw, giving him even more of the cultural characteristics typical of representations of the Ukrainian Cossacs in Polish culture. Polish culture usually represented the origins of the Cossacs in bands of outlaws of various social and cultural origins, hiding in the open spaces of the Ukraine, preying on peaceful merchants and peasant settlers, and living under their self-proclaimed military laws. One of the most important elements of the cultural perception of Cossacs was their disregard for the social order, and the free mixing of peasants and noblemen in their communities. Siemieński's Kostka-Napierski, as a former outlaw who led a rebellion and then rejoined his

outlaw band, was but a transposing of the cultural myth about origins from Cossacs to the highlanders, and from Ukraine to the Tatra. As a result, Aleksander Kostka-Napierski lost his historical characteristics and gained the mythical, folk-tale ones. As Lucjan Siemieński was very skillful in elaborating on the ideas of others, and rather poor in his own, he simply followed Seweryn Goszczyński's steps in presenting the highlanders as Cossacs.

Moreover, Siemieński's hybrid between Janosik and Kostka-Napierski had some continuity in the future as well. It happened even though Siemieński removed Kostka-Napierski's name from 1863 edition of his poems, when, fifteen years after the Galician Peasant Rebellion and during the January Uprising, he decided to straighten the genealogy of his highland hero by eliminating the complex seventeenth-century historical context and its rich and ambiguous political connotations in his own time.

Kostka-Napierski's Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Historiography

In this section I discuss the representation of Aleksander-Kostka Napierski's rebellion in nineteenth-century historiography. Evoking those historians' biography, I point to their personal investment in particular political ideologies. This section demonstrates the ways in which historiography repressed the Protestant legacy from the social history of Polish peasants, particularly from the history of the emergence of civic attitudes and identities among the highlanders.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Kostka-Napierski's rebellion attracted attention mostly from historians. Yet, by the end of the century there were only two major studies trying to explain what happened in 1651 in villages between Nowy Targ and Myślenice. Szczęsny Morawski devoted a section in a volume of his studies to the peasant rebellion.³⁰³ Morawski's *God's World and Life on It* preceded his *Sądectyczna*, yet relates to it closely as a regional history. Idiosyncratic in his interpretations like all of Morawski's works, *God's World...* maintains its scholarly importance mostly as a repository of information drawn for archives, which in the nineteenth century were not easily available to (for the most part) Cracow- and Lwów-based historians, and in later decades ceased to exist.

The second author who took Kostka-Napierski's rebellion into his scholarly workshop, enjoyed a much greater reputation than Szczęsny Morawski. Never a member of the official Polish academic establishment, Ludwik Kubala was a private scholar and a librarian in the

³⁰³ Szczęsny Morawski, "Rozruchy ludu podgórskiego w 1651 r.," in: *Świątek Boży i życie na nim*, vol. 1 (Rzeszów 1861). Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer drew also on Szczęsny Morawski, *Arianie polscy* (Lwów 1906), published posthumously.

Pawlikowski Library in Lwów.³⁰⁴ Like Morawski, Ludwik Kubala was native to southwestern Galicia.³⁰⁵ Though originally enrolled in Jagiellonian University, after a year Kubala moved to the University of Vienna, where he studied philosophy and history, and graduated with a doctorate. Like many of his contemporaries including Morawski himself, Kubala was involved in political conspiracies during the January Uprising. Contrary to most of his political activist peers, however, he ended up in an Austrian prison for nearly two years. That stain on his Austrian civic record influenced his future career. Though the late Galician Polish establishment honored Kubala with an honorary degree from Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów, that recognition came a few weeks before his death in 1918, at the eve of an independent Poland.

Ludwik Kubala published several hundred essays and multi-volume studies, contributing to the pre-1918 Polish historiography with the most comprehensive vision of the seventeenth century. In spite of that, Polish academic historians tend to treat lightly Kubala's well-written and painstakingly researched historical studies. It is partly due to envy, for up to the 1960s few Polish humanities professors achieved the great popularity that Ludwik Kubala did. His works entertained high-school pupils, and influenced the great works by renowned artists such as Jan Matejko, or Henryk Sienkiewicz. Kubala's commercial success sprang as much from the picturesque language of his literary style, as from the form in which he wrote many of his studies. As he was not bound by the protocols of academic scholarship, Kubala had a particular fondness for the genre of the historical sketch.³⁰⁶ His style of writing was influenced very much

³⁰⁴ Henryk Barycz, *Dwa trudne żywoty: Na drogach rozwoju naukowego Tadeusza Wojciechowksiego I Ludwika Kubali* (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1951), Vol. 1-2.

³⁰⁵ He was born and raised outside of Limanowa, and received his primary and secondary education in Stary Sącz and Nowy Sącz.

³⁰⁶ Tadeusz Bujnicki, "Przedproże *Trylogii*: Od historyków "szkoły krakowskiej" do Kubali," *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 6 (1996), p. 35.

by Sir Walter Scott and Jules Michelet.³⁰⁷ In the 1880s, that Romantic aesthetic genealogy attracted to him many writers who, like Henryk Sienkiewicz, aimed to reinvent (or restore) the genre of historical novel after Józef Ignacy Kraszewski. Calling for brushing aside unnecessary erudition and dogmatic attachment to primary historical sources—Kraszewski’s major sin, according to his critics—Sienkiewicz emphasized the role of rhetorical style to mobilize readers’ emotions, which would fulfill both missions set for a historical novel: to be an effective political tool, and a bestseller.

Yet, while Ludwik Kubala’s studies fed Polish national imagery after Romanticism, they were rarely well digested, and in consequence his interpretations of history were used very selectively. The great majority of his works offered a rigorously researched and nuanced analysis, but while their popularity and the historian’s location outside of the academy gave Kubala a unique visibility, they also turned down his voice as a scholar, transforming it instead into a series of quotations, easily fixable into the patriotic education, yet also equally easily questionable by academic historians. As Kubala’s intellectual fertility continues to discourage historians of historiography from a close study, his contribution is mostly acknowledged as influencing the national arts rather than intellectual debates.

Yet, as Adam Kersten demonstrated in his studies, most of Kubala’s hypotheses still hold up, confirmed by contemporary historical analysis. That is certainly true of his hypothesis that Aleksadner Kostka-Napierski was most probably the illegitimate son of King Władysław IV by a mother of humble origins, that he conspired with Bohdan Khmelnytsky and György Rákóczi, that his attitude toward the peasant rebels was instrumental though not without some

³⁰⁷ Janusz Maciejewski, Przedburzowcy: Z problematyki przełomu między romantyzmem a pozytywizmem (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1971), pp. 27-41.

compassion, and that Marcin Radocki was associated with the Polish Brethren.³⁰⁸ All those theses will ground interpretations of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's rebellion in the future.

³⁰⁸ Ludwik Kubala, "Kostka Napierski," in: Szkice historyczne, vol. 1 (Lwów 1880).

Jan Kasprowicz *Napierski's Rebellion*: The Public Outcome of Private Affairs

This section focuses on one of the most important representation of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski's rebellion, a drama dedicated to this event written by Jan Kasprowicz. My analysis of Kasprowicz's drama is embedded in the context of Kasprowicz's biography. Thus, I emphasize the role of Kasprowicz's social background as the offspring of a smallholder family. I also look closely at the biographical moment in which Kasprowicz wrote this piece. I argue that his construction as the leader of peasant rebellion, as well as a "seducer" of peasants, cannot be fully understood without the background of the personal history of the author.

After Siemieński's *Outlaws*, the subject of Kostka-Napierski's rebellion disappeared from the mainstream of Polish literature for over a half of the century. It reemerged only in the last year of the nineteenth century. By that time the Tatra had achieved the status of the Polish Alps, and Zakopane—of one of the Polish cultural capital cities. The Podhale became regarded as the preserve of ancient Polishness, and the highlanders as Polish "natives" who had managed to preserve elements of ancient Slavic culture. As one who attempted to give Aleksander Kostka-Napierski and his peasant rebels visibility in Polish culture, Jan Kasprowicz was certainly in an excellent position to do so, yet his project passed with little notice. The sources of that lack of notice are complex and provide yet another point view on shaping the peasant heroes and peasant history in modern Polish culture.

Jan Kasprowicz holds a strong position in the pantheon of modern Polish literature. As a poet he is often placed alongside the greatest Polish Romantics and enjoys a deserved reputation

of the best Polish poet of the turn of the twentieth century.³⁰⁹ Kasprowicz's recognition includes also his translations, mostly from classical Greek, German, English, and French (to mention his major works), as well as plays, literary criticism, and scholarly works.

Exceptionally talented, Jan Kasprowicz was born the oldest child in an impoverished family of fourteen in the Kujawy region, in Prussian Poland. His parents worked as agricultural workers on richer farms around Inowrocław (German *Inowrazlaw* and *Hohensalza*). An unlikely candidate for an artist and an intellectual, Kasprowicz's advancement from a village to the top of the national elite was possible also because of the modernizing changes in Prussia, among them developing an education system that included peasant children.³¹⁰ Kasprowicz's German citizenship, however, left also a shadow on his education. After graduating from elementary school Kasprowicz entered a high school in Inowrocław, but because of his patriotic involvement in Polish student self-education clubs he fell into conflict with the school establishment and in effect was removed from the school. Thus, he experienced first-hand the discriminatory politics of the *Kulturkampf*, while continuing his high school education in Opole (German: *Oppeln*) and Racibórz (German: *Ratibor*), from where he was expelled as well. He eventually graduated from the prestigious Mary Magdalene Liberal Arts School in Poznań (German: *Posen*). After graduation, Kasprowicz studied philosophy and literature in Breslau and Leipzig. His avid adversity toward Germany as a state, German officials, and German politics, which eventually

³⁰⁹ Konrad Górski, Tatry i Podhale w twórczości Jana Kasprowicza; Anna Kasprowicz-Jarocka, Poeta i miłość (Warszawa 1958); --, Córki mówią (Warszawa 1966); Roman Loth, "Jan Kasprowicz," in: Polski Słownik Biograficzny; Roman Loth, Wspomnienia o Janie Kasprowiczu (Warszawa 1967); Konrad Górski, Jan Kasprowicz: Studia (Warszawa 1977); Artur Hutnikiewicz, Młoda Polska (Warszawa, PWN, 2004); Hanna Mortkowicz-Olczakowa, Bunt wspomnień (Warszawa: PIW, 1961); Antoni Lange, Pochodnie w mroku (Warszawa: Biblioteka Domu Polskiego, 1924).

³¹⁰ Kasprowicz's mother's maiden name, Kloft, or Klofta, suggests that she could have been of German extraction, likely on Kujawy, which was a borderland between Poland and Prussia.

brought him close to Polish National Democracy, had no effect on his appreciation of German literature and scholarship. The origins of Kasprowicz's intellectual, esthetic, and academic formation lay in Prussia—a fact to which Polish scholars give very little attention, and which is important to understand his understanding of peasant rebellions in the seventeenth-century Commonwealth.

Kasprowicz's ideological views are far from being straightforward. During his school time, he was drawn to socialism. The son of farm hired-hands found socialist ideals more convincing than conservative political agenda governing the alliance of Polish landed nobility and landed farmers in the Great Duchy of Poznan around 1871, which downplayed class inequality and conflicts with a claim of religiously and nationally motivated social solidarism. Kasprowicz was certainly the most religious writer among his peers, yet contemporary literary historians overplay and simplify the richness of his metaphysical thought by labeling it as Catholic in general, and Franciscan in particular. Kasprowicz fell for socialism for the same reasons that another Polish intellectual of village origins did some years later: Stanisław Przybyszewski—Kasprowicz's future friend, a fellow Kujawian, a fellow literary prodigy, and eventually his greatest nemesis. Kasprowicz's political activism brought him twice to the Prussian court, and once to a Prussian prison, where he served six months. Then, at the height of his stormy youth, at the age of twenty eight, Kasprowicz moved to Lwów. That decision transformed his life, art, and politics.

In Lwów, Kasprowicz immersed himself in the local artistic boheme, which differed from that of Cracow with its more metropolitan atmosphere, and more opportunities to actually earn a decent living, which he eagerly embraced, first as a journalist and a writer for the still growing Polish language print market, and then as a scholar. In autonomous Galicia, there was very little

interest in socialism as Kasproicz knew it, and no need for confrontational nationalist politics, which he had carried on in Prussia and Germany. Thus, in Lwów Jan Kasproicz changed from a socialist revolutionary into a cosmopolitan dandy, a brilliant expert and a connoisseur of the newest currents in European arts. His talents flourished. He soon became an admired and desired company among the artistic elite. The social and national issues lost their prominence in his writing, as he immersed himself in metaphysics inspired by his own interpretations of Judeo-Christian ethics and culture, of ancient Greek philosophers, Manichaeism, the religions and philosophies of East Asia, as well as writings by Friedrich Nietzsche, which he (as many German-educated Polish intellectuals from Prussian Poland and Galicia) knew from the original. Although this intellectual concoction was certainly very fashionable among those Polish artists and intellectuals (regardless of the partition) who, around the turn of the century, aimed not only to trailblaze new paths in the arts, but also to renew the national ideology, Kasproicz excelled among them with his talents. Yet, in contrast to his artistic peers, in romancing with muses, and through his stormy love life, Kasproicz never slipped into self-destruction. Over time, his professional life blossomed. In 1904 Kasproicz received a Ph.D. in literature at Lwów University. Five years later he took over a chair in comparative literatures founded especially for him, and after Poland regained independence, became president of Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów. He was the only prominent Polish literary figure who connected an unquestionable literary career with an academic one.

Kasproicz's biography is important for understanding his drama *Napierski's Rebellion* (*Bunt Napierskiego*). The play was first published in 1899 in "The Week," a weekly published in Lwów.³¹¹ Excerpts of the play were also published in the same year in "The Illustrated Weekly"

³¹¹ "Tydzień," No. 1-14 and 16-21 (1899).

(*Tygodnik Ilustrowany*), the major Polish-language weekly published in Warsaw (Russian Poland), and distributed in all three partitions through their filial bookstores.³¹² The play was staged in 1899 at the Theater in Lwów, yet received without much enthusiasm.

As a literary work *Napierski's Rebellion* disappoints, appearing epigonic even in Jan Kasproicz's own artistic biography. By the turn of the century, the writer had already moved away from social issues, which constituted the core of his drama. The play's politics are blurred, for in Galicia the subject of a Polish peasant rebellion against the Polish state and Polish nobility, was still very sensitive one. Though Kasproicz's growing political pragmatism never drew him near to the Galician conservatives and their classist and ultra-loyalist politics, it nevertheless brought him close to the national democrats. While he never denied his peasant origins (though he cut off relations with his family in Kujawy), and celebrated nature and folk life in his writing by drawing on his childhood experiences, as well as spoke against the peasant poverty, Kasproicz kept his distance from the Galician People's Party.

Though many writers of that time used historical costume to dress current social or political issues, his *Napierski's Rebellion* had no such intentions. Instead, Kasproicz turned the history of the peasant rebellion into a classical drama, where fate determines the future of characters, a catastrophe is unavoidable, where the bad are defeated by the worse, where love neither salvages nor redeems but only nurtures destructive desires, and where vengeance is the moving spirit of society and history. Although it is easy to see *Napierski's Rebellion* as a mere reaction to the Galician Peasant Rebellion, such a conclusion would be an oversimplification, making the play looking like a belated historicist drama. Yet, for precisely such an interpretation,

³¹² The play first appeared as a separate book in 1905. Later, Kasproicz included the play into his collected works published in 1912 with no changes.

scholars in Polish literary studies ignore the play as a failed project, even if it was staged in Lwów and published nation-wide over the partition borders.

Keely Stauter-Halsted demonstrated that in the fifty years following the Galician Peasant Rebellion, the state of Polish national politics in Galicia change dramatically, and Catholic peasants were more inclined to perceive themselves as members of a Polish nation, not just as subjects of the “good” Habsburg Emperor. The road of Polish peasants in Galicia to the Polish nation was long, rocky, and winding, and we still do not fully know its history. At least from the Interwar period on, Polish sociologists and historians were well aware of how blurred were Galician peasants’ cultural identities, and that the most important category of self-identification was a-national, “a local,” often associated by the second qualifier of a Christian denomination. They also were aware of how complex were political identities of that small percentage of peasants, who cared about politics and actually had the right to vote and were willing to make use of it. Historians know how much the view of that history prior to 1914 was shaped by the restitution of an independent Polish state in 1918, by the new state historical master narrative, and by the Polish People Party’s (in its various factions) fixed and crucial place in the center of the newly established Polish parliamentary democracy. Kasprowicz was not ignorant of populist politics in Galicia and in Great Duchy of Poznań, and therefore he was too intelligent to commit such a roaring and embarrassingly politically inadequate public comment with his *Napierski’s Rebellion* as to simply show the seventeenth-century rebellion as a historical anticipation of the Galician Peasant Rebellion. Thus, the explanation of the play lays, as I will show, in the author’s private life.

In the year when the play was published and staged, Kasprowicz suffered perhaps the greatest crisis of his life, and certainly the greatest public scandal, in which he played the

disgraceful role of a cuckold. In 1899 Kasproicz's second wife, Jadwiga, left him for his best friend Stanisław Przybyszewski. At the time of affair, Przybyszewski lived with the Kasproiczs as a family friend, and that fact made the scandal even more embarrassing. Jadwiga's decision came as even a greater shock, as she left behind two young daughters for the sake of one of the greatest scandalist of that time.

By 1899 Stanisław Przyszewski enjoyed the reputation of a celebrity born in hell. Worshipped by his followers as an artistic and intellectual genius, and at the same time the epitome of decadence, with his writings, iconoclastic ideas, addictions, and provocative lifestyle, Przybyszewski was regarded as one walking assault on bourgeois morality.³¹³ By the turn of the

³¹³ Gabriela Matuszek, Krisen und Neurosen: Das Werk Stanisław Przybyszewskis in der literarischen Moderne (Hamburg: Igel-Verl., 2013); --, “Der geniale Pole”? Stanisław Przybyszewski in Deutschland (1892-1992) (Hamburg: Igel-Verl., 2013); Marek Fiałek, August Strindberg und Stanisław Przybyszewski: Zwei “Kometen” am Berliner Himmel des ausgehenden 19. Jahrhunderts (Poznań: Wyd. Naukowe UAM, 2012); Kamila Woźniak, Ladislav Klima i Stanisław Przybyszewski: W kręgu nihilizmu gnostyckiego (Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2011); Gabriela Matuszek, Stanisław Przybyszewski-pisarz nowoczesny: Eseje i proza. próba monografii (Kraków: Universitas, 2008); Andriej Moskwin, Stanisław Przybyszewski w kulturze rosyjskiej końca XIX-początku XX wieku (Warszawa: Wyd. UW, 2007); Adam Jarosz, Das Todesmotiv in Drama von Stanisław Przybyszewski (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2013); “Kobiety winny moją trumnę ponieść na swych barkach do grobu”: Odczyty, przemówienia, oredzia, odezwy, ed. by Janina Sikorska (Inowrocław: Muzeum im. Jana Kasproicza, 2006); Totenmesse: Munch – Wiess – Przybyszewski, ed. by Władysława Jaworska and Łukasz Kossowski (Warszawa: Muzeum Literatury im. Adama Mickiewicza, 1995); Ferne komm ich her--: Erinnerungen an Berlin und Krakau, ed. by Roswitha Matwin-Buschmann and Oliver Stuemann (Paderborn: Igel Verl., 1994); George Klim, Stanisław Przybyszewski: Leben, Werk und Weltanschauung in Rahmen der deutschen Literatur der Jahrhundertwende: Biographie (Paderborn: Igel Verl., 1992); Max Joerg, Lebenspathos und “Seelenkunst” bei Stanisław Przybyszewski (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990); Wojciech Gutowski, Stanisław Przybyszewski I Otto Weininger – dwie metafizyki płci, in “Rocznik Kasproiczkowski,” Vol. 10 (1990); Intellectuals and the Future in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1890-1914, ed. by Laszlo Peter, Robert B. Pynsent, and Stanisław Eile (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); Hanna Filipkowska, Stanisław Przybyszewski: W 50-lecie zgonu pisarza (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1982); Friedrich Wilhelm Neumann, Stanisław Przybyszewski als Gegenstand literarischer Darstellung in Deutschland (Koln und Wien: Bohlau, 1975); Heinrich A. Stammler, Stanisław Przybyszewski and Antoni Chołoniewski: Two Interpreters of the Meaning of Polish History (1972); Ole Michael Selberg, Stanisław

century, Przybyszewski not only preached that the world is ruled by the lust, but also submitted to this rule. Few other Polish artists came close to his record of sexual scandals. In the 1890s, Stanisław Przybyszewski had already fathered three children with his mistress, who eventually committed suicide out of despair while pregnant with their fourth child.³¹⁴ Przybyszewski showed no interest in his children, so after their mother's death they were placed in an orphanage. While in a relationship with his mistress, Przybyszewski had an affair with Dagny Juel, a Norwegian writer, pianist, and a muse of German and Scandinavian bohemians. Before meeting Przybyszewski, Dagny had affairs with Edvard Munch and August Strindberg. The couple married in 1893, and in 1898 Przybyszewski moved to Cracow, immediately assuming the position of the leader of its bohemian circles, enjoying himself in shocking the conservative bourgeoisie. Though adored by the young Polish bohemian artists, Przybyszewski was too much to handle for provincial citizens. So, in 1899, that "prophet of the Satan" moved to Lwów, where he found shelter under Jan Kasprowicz's roof, and soon after seduced his wife. At the time of the affair with Jadwiga Kasprowicz, Przybyszewski was still married to Dagny Juel, and was successfully developing another affair, with a young student of painting.³¹⁵ Stanisław Przybyszewski and Dagny Juel formally divorced in 1900, and the Kasprowiczs divorced in 1905. Up to then, Jan Kasprowicz lived with heartbroken pain and a stain on his honor; both were eventually alleviated by Kasprowicz's third marriage to Maria Bunina, 32-years his junior and the daughter of a Russian general, which finally stabilized his social and emotional life.

Przybyszewski og 1890-arenes Norske kunst og litteratur (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1970); Stanisław Helsztyński, Meteory Młodej Polski (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1969); Klaus G. Just, Nihilismus als Stil: Zur Prosa von Stanisław Przybyszewski (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1969); Roman Taborski, Stanisław Przybyszewski und Wien (Wien: Osterreichisches Ost- und Sudosteuropa-Institut, 1967); Aleksander Rogalski, Stanisław Przybyszewski: Próba rewizji twórczości (Poznań, 1937);

³¹⁴ Marta Foerder of Wągrowiec (Great Duchy of Poznań).

³¹⁵ In 1901 Aniela Pająk bore Przybyszewski a daughter, Stanisława, whom he acknowledged only later in his life.

Polish studies call the Przybyszewski-Kasprowicz affair “the greatest scandal of the Young Poland,”³¹⁶ yet never attempted to understand *Napierski’s Rebellion* in terms of its author’s biography.

In 1899, the double betrayal of loyalty and its societal aftermath came to Jan Kasprowicz as a huge blow. As multiple betrayals are a major theme of *Napierski’s Rebellion*, I propose to bring the author back to his work, to understand his vision of the seventeenth-century peasant rebellion and its main actors. Though it is tempting to use a psychoanalytical approach to analyze the play, for the purposes of my study I use the author’s biography only to show how the dismantling of Kasprowicz’s own sense of masculinity and respectability influenced his interpretation and representation of the early modern peasant rebels and their confused loyalties toward their king, their leader, their community, their families, their lovers, and their God.

It is impossible to determine to what degree readers and spectators of the *Napierski’s Rebellion* were aware of a connection between the author’s private affairs and his play. Although contemporary literary critics did not mention it, for obvious reasons, the scandal was widely known, certainly to the artistic and social elites. Yet, I am not interested in the print reception of the play, but rather in the inner logic of the play’s plot, which ultimately resulted in marginalizing *Napierski’s rebellion*—on the Polish stage, in the history of Polish literature, and even in Kasprowicz’s artistic biography. I argue, that what *Napierski’s Rebellion* offered its audience was not just a reminder of a nightmare shallowly buried in social memory and always ready to reemerge in spite of patriotically and religiously motivated social solidarity propaganda. *Napierski’s Rebellion* did not celebrate the precarious alliance between the huts and

³¹⁶ Young Poland being an artistic and philosophical movement, was inspired by neo-Romanticism, modernism, impressionism, expressionism, and symbolism, which emerged around the turn of the century.

the manor houses, but instead stuck a finger in a barely healed wound for no other reason than to open it.

By bringing back the old history ghosts, Kasprowicz did not mean to exorcise them, or to use them to diagnose present politics, as Stanisław Wyspiański did in his *Wedding*, staged in Cracow one year later, but only to scare his Polish audience with an ancient classic fatalism, preaching that there are human desires which turn the wheel of history, and that the past always haunts the present. That historiosophy of rebirth, celebrating perpetual origins following perpetual disasters, both intrinsic to the dialectics of historical change, was predominant in Polish art and philosophical thought of the turn of the century, displacing Romantic national Messianism. Yet, through his obsession with fatalism, Kasprowicz deprived his vision of a historiosophy of rebirth, of an enthusiasm for the new beginnings, and of hopes for a better future. As such, his vision did not go along well with either national or imperial (Austro-Hungarian) ideologies, and could not raise much enthusiasm among educated Galician elites, regardless of their admiration or pity for the author as an artist and as a man.

Why did Jan Kasprowicz decide to use Kostka-Napierski's rebellion as material for his drama? In his works (mostly lyrics) he rarely made historical references. Thus, *Napierski's Rebellion* stands as an exception. The source of inspiration seems to have come from the Tatra culture, not from an interest in seventeenth-century history, or in the history of the peasant issue, though the play demonstrates that Kasprowicz heavily drew on Ludwik Kubala's and Szczesny Morawski's works.

Literary studies often present Kasprowicz as one of the major artists inspired by the Tatra environment and culture. Indeed, the poet visited Zakopane for the first time at the beginning of 1890s, and fell in love with it. Kasprowicz was certainly one of the most avid Tatra aficionados,

and eventually moved to Zakopane permanently. His Villa Harena, kept by his third wife Maria Bunina, became one of the centers of Polish cultural life.³¹⁷ But that happened after 1900. Before that, Kasproicz lived in Lwów and visited the Tatra only as a tourist. His fascination with the Tatra's nature influenced what was perhaps his greatest artistic achievement, a poetry volume titled *A Dog Rose Bush*. That collection of symbolic and impressionist poems was published in 1898, and was highly praised by the literary establishment. That great professional triumph was followed by personal disaster.

³¹⁷ Maria Kasproiczowa, Dziennik (Warszawa: PAX, 1958).

Peasants and their Guru:

Sexuality, Respectability, and Ethnic Politics in Jan Kasproicz's *Napierski's Rebellion*

Building on my previous arguments, this section pushes further my exploration into Kasproicz's construction of peasant masculinity and sense of citizenship, by bringing in the issues of leadership, sexuality, and respectability.

Jan Kasproicz's Aleksander Kostka-Napierski is a Hamlet-like character: vain, immature, arrogant, suffering from superiority complex, yet helplessly submitting to his fate rather than challenging it. His motives spring from the feeling of injustice of a bastard removed from the court. As a leader of the rebellion Kostka-Napierski lacks a political vision, and acts under the influence of impulses, emotions, and most of all—of his desires. Thus, he is not a politician, but a charismatic guru. He ingeniously recognizes the desires and fantasies of his followers, the peasants, and skillfully manipulates them by embodying their hero. Kostka-Napierski's powers are so great, that even experienced and intelligent community leader Stanisław Łętowski, and religious fanatic Marcin Radocki, submit to them, willing to see in the bold soldier a new Messiah.

Such a take on Aleksander Kostka-Napierski explains a serious anachronism, which Kasproicz decided to proceed with, by giving a prominent place of the legend of Janosik in his play. Juraj Janosik (1688-1713) was born nearly forty years after Kostka-Napierski was executed. It may seem that by introducing Janosik, Jan Kasproicz only followed Lucjan Siemieński's *Outlaws*, but it would be a reductionist conclusion, typical for the thematic approach in literary studies. Kasproicz knew that Galician literary critics and his Polish

audience—already for thirty years acquainted with the Tatra folklore—would see that anachronism and hold it against the play.

Jurko Janosik was a historical person whose real name was Juraj Jánošík, a Slovak by origins. He was born in 1688 in the village Terchová, in the Malá Fatra Mountains located in central Slovakia on the outskirts of Orawa. As a teenager, Jánošík fought in Upper Hungary, in the *kuruc* military units for the Transylvanian Prince Ferenc II Rákóczi. In Hungary, particularly in Slovakia, the *kurucs* were groups of armed serfs, peasants, and other fugitives. These peasant troops had operated in the region at least since the 1670s and Protestant peasants formed their core. In several uprisings in the late seventeenth-century the *kurucs* rebelled against Habsburg imperial politics, particularly the progress of the counter-Reformation, and against manorial oppression. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the *kuruc* troops supported Ferenc II Rákóczi in his anti-Austrian uprising, known as Rakoczi's War of Independence in the early seventeenth century, aiming to tear off the Hungarian Kingdom from the Habsburg Empire. It was during Rakoczi's War that young Jánošík learned his soldier trade.

Sometime around 1708, after Austria crushed Rákóczi's *kuruc* army in the Battle of Trencsén, Jánošík was either recruited or forcefully drafted into the Habsburg army. The turning point of his life came in 1710 when, while serving as a guard in a local prison, Jánošík helped in the escape of Tomáš Uhorčík, a famous local outlaw. At first, Uhorčík and Jánošík formed a robber band together, but soon Uhorčík left, and Jánošík became its leader. The band included members from Moravia and both northern and southern sides of the Tatra Mountains. It was active only for couple of years. In 1713 Jánošík was captured, imprisoned in Liptovský Mikuláš, and executed by hanging on an iron hook at the age of 25.

His age was not without consequence for the birth of his legend. As many other folk heroes, Jánošík lived strong and died young. During the two years of its activity, Jánošík's band acquired some fame as brigands attacking only the rich, and sparing lives of their victims. In violent times of the *kuruc* risings and local wars, such chivalry was unusual, giving rise to tales and legends. In the nineteenth-century, that particular characteristic of the local Slovak brigands merged smoothly with stories about Robin Hood, already widespread across Europe in popular literature. The first written tales about Janosik came from the Slovak literature. His career in Polish literature and arts began in the second half of the century when Zakopane turned into a major resort in the northern Carpathians.

In Polish culture, Jánošík's name was Polonized, and his biography was moved to the northern side of the Tatra Mountains. In the folk tales from the northern side of the Tatra, Janosik lived in the 'olden times,' and at the same time in some recent past, as various marks of his activity and presence were still vivid in the local landscape and first-hand memories of grandfathers. The written tales and songs associate Janosik with the times of Empress Maria Theresa von Habsburg (1717-1780), an obvious anachronism. But in the attempts to Polonize Janosik, some Polish writers tended to push Janosik's life further back to the seventeenth century. That was the case in *Napierski's Rebellion* by Jan Kasprowicz.

Kasprowicz needed the legend of Janosik to explain the mesmerizing effect of Kostka-Napierski on his peasant followers. Kasprowicz loved literary pastiche, and his Napierski is one of such eclectic characters. Thus, he merged an image of Janosik, the most famous Tatra outlaw, with elements of heroes derived from Arthurian legends, and those of Robin Hood, such as robbing the rich and giving to the poor, a shepherd's axe driven into a tree and waiting for a successor to pull it out and claim leadership, a miraculous escape for an execution site, falling

into a death-like slumber, just to mention a few motifs. By doing so, Kasprowicz gave the legends of Janosik features of a medieval folk epic, pushing them back from the eighteenth century. In the play, Napierski went to the Tatra prior to his rebellion, fraternized with highlanders, proved himself to be a brave outlaw, and won the highlanders' trust by making them believe that he is an incarnation of Janosik, whom highlanders venerated like a saint. As a resurrected peasant hero, Kostka-Napierski effortlessly mobilizes peasants for his rebellion, and later by revealing his royal origins rises to a stature of a peasant Messiah, securing the unconditional loyalty of highlanders who claim him their king, and pledge their support in marching on Cracow and Warsaw. As Kasprowicz kept his play within the rules of a classic drama (the action take a place in two days), the readers and spectators learn about Kostka-Napierski's past as Janosik only in retrospect.

As seen on stage, Kostka-Napierski resembles rather the stereotype of a populist leader, who dreams only about self-promotion, subjecting the interest of his followers and allies (Bohdan Khmelnytsky), as well as the ideals he claims as his inspiration, to achieving his political and personal goals. Kostka-Napierski uses his peasant soldiers instrumentally, as he does his lover, Stanisław Łętowski's daughter. He betrays his king, his nobleman-supporter, his lover, plans to betray the peasants, just to be betrayed himself. He is a guru obsessed with his own destiny, ruthlessly using and destroying those who fall under his spell.

Thanks to that anachronism, which allowed that particular construction of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, Kasprowicz salvaged a sense of the peasants' civic respectability at the cost of their political sense. The playwright explained the peasants' attack against "Poland" by blaming their lack of education and political experience, which made peasants prone to bamboozling by cunning political tricksters. Thus, he complied with beliefs already widespread among the

majority of his contemporary Galician elite. Moreover, though historically Kasprowicz's explanation of peasant rebelliousness fit better with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Russia than to the Podhale, that anachronism served well the political aim of the play, by inscribing his interpretation into a cultural script well known by Galician and Polish elites.

Even though Kasprowicz's Kostka-Napierski embodies some features of Stanisław Przybyszewski, in my study this resemblance is important only as it supports my argument that the personal conflict influenced Kasprowicz's representation of the seventeenth-century leader of peasant rebellion. Though many readers and spectators after 1899 could have seen Kasprowicz's Kostka-Napierski as an incarnation of Jakub Szela, one of the leaders of the Galician Peasant Rebellion, or a literary offspring of ambitious and treacherous Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł from Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Deluge*, Kasprowicz's hero has a major feature which set him apart from other literary and historical characters, one that he might have been derived from: his charisma as a group leader, the defining feature of Stanisław Przybyszewski.

Jan Kasprowicz discredited the rebellion's leader in more than one way, even without overblown patriotic rhetoric. The playwright simply made Aleksander Kostka-Napierski an unconscious tool of his mother's vengeance. Salka the Unknown (*Salka Nieznana*), Napierski's most devout accomplice, is a beggar woman who follows his steps from his childhood, advises him in his plans, nurtures his ambitions and resentments, and manipulates him entirely to accomplish her own goal: to bring down the ruling dynasty. Salka the Unknown reveals her true identity only at the brink of Kostka-Napierski's fall. She was seduced by the king, made pregnant, and then expelled from the court dishonored and unprovisioned, and for that she vowed her revenge. A witch and a fortuneteller, a woman mad with vengeance who does not hesitate to

abuse her own child to accomplish her plan, Kasprowicz's Salka grew out of Shakespearean evil female characters.³¹⁸

Salka the Unknown proves that Jan Kasprowicz carefully studied Ludwik Kubala's sketch of Kostka-Napierski, and elaborated his take on the rebellion's leader along the same lines. His choice of name, Salomea, indicates the noble or burger origins of the character, as that name was unusual among peasants either in the seventeenth or in the nineteenth century. Though the name also connotes a semiotic relationship with Biblical Salome—the epitome of female seductiveness and cruelty in turn-of-the-century arts and literature—that line of interpretation does not lead far, except in confirming misogyny in the representation of the female character. Though Salka the Unknown acts as an emissary for Bohdan Khmelnytsky among the Polish peasants—another derivation from Kubala, who argued that Khmelnytsky's agents disguised as beggars conducted intensive anti-feudal propaganda among Polish peasants—Kasprowicz wrote her lines in elite Polish language, making no linguistic indications of her possible Ukrainian origins. It is important, because in the case of Wasyl Czepiec, another character in his play, the author made him speak a mix of Polish and Ukrainian, leaving no doubts about his ethnic origins. Could Salka the Unknown be a Jewish woman? Unlikely. Kasprowicz included one Jewish character in his play, Moszje, the former Czorsztyń castle majordomo's supplier, but Moszje is a caricature, the stereotype of a Jew. A beggar from the church courtyards, Salka the Unknown uses Christian religious language and symbols to gain the peasants' trust. If she represents any religious views, it is the worship of infernal spirits, as she practices various forms of witchcraft. Moreover, her demonic side resonates with nineteenth-century historical and

³¹⁸ As mentioned above, as a scholar Kasprowicz was a specialist in comparative literature, and he translated also from English.

literary representations of sixteenth-century Polish royal mistresses, often accused of witchcraft, and represented as sexual temptresses.³¹⁹

One sign of the fatalism in *Napierski's Rebellion* is directly related to the main female characters. Ruined by illicit love, Salka the Unknown assists an affair, which Kostka-Napierski is having with Stanisław Łętowski's only daughter Hanusia, a beautiful and brave peasant heiress. Salka explicitly encourages her son to abandon his scruples in using Hanusia for his pleasure. At the same time, as Hanusia's confidant knows about her pregnancy, Salka discourages Kostka-Napierski from any sense of responsibility for Hanusia's future, discrediting her as a peasant woman. Thus, acting like the procuress of a prostitute, Salka repeats attitudes of those who destroyed her own life. Entirely lacking in compassion, Salka the Unknown looks at Hanusia's fall with satisfaction, seeing in her a successor of her own ill fate—a future social outcast mothering a royal bastard. The play ends up with a vague allusion that pregnant Hanusia, witnessing Kostka-Napierski's capture and disgrace, is going to commit suicide. The suicide of a pregnant woman made even clearer the allusion to Stanisław Przybyszewski's life, though the motif of a suicidal peasant woman with a child, abandoned by her nobleman lover, has some literary traditions in Polish literature, not to mention Stanisław Moniuszko's Polish "national opera" *Halka* (1848).

Jan Kasprowicz, however, did not make Hanusia just an innocent victim, and thus *Napierski's Rebellion* is not simply a melodrama. That choice also handicapped the play's chances for greater popularity. Cliché as it is, the love triangle contains also Hanusia's fiancé, a Ukrainian peasant named Wasyl Czepiec. Like Goszczyński's *Oda*, Hanusia is pure in her naïve and "natural" sensuality—a characteristic that defined the representations of young peasant

³¹⁹ Mistresses of King Sigismund Augustus: Barbara Gizanka, and (to lesser degree) Barbara Radziwiłłówna, his second wife.

women in Polish literature around the turn of the century. Yet, unlike the Romantic Oda, Hanusia acts toward both her suitor and her lover with full awareness of her erotic charms, and uses her sexuality to express her love and disdain. From the beginning of the play, Hanusia mercilessly sexually teases her unloved Ukrainian suitor, and manipulates his desire to question his masculinity. Utterly humiliated, Czepiec is helpless in Hanusia's erotic play, and yet his inability to give her up feeds her disgust for him as unmanly even further. Undaunted Czepiec goes as far as promising to adopt and bring up Hanusia's child with Kostka-Napierski, for he, unlike her parents, sees that Hanusia is pregnant. That offer appalls the woman even more.

The sadomasochistic relationship between Hanusia and Czepiec illustrates the concept of the eternal sexual war, so popular at the turn of the century, and preached in Poland by Stanisław Przybyszewski, among others. Kasproicz's Czepiec is not Stanisław Moniuszko's Jontek from *Halka*, a chivalrous and respectable peasant man eager to rescue "a maiden in distress."

Czepiec's confession of love to Hanusia is mixed with invectives thrown at her and threats of physical assaults. As Czepiec's generous offers are immediately contradicted by violent acts or words, there is nothing honorable in this character except the tragedy of a man caught in a web of sexual desire who lets it destroy his masculine respectability. For Jan Kasproicz romantic love is also not an answer. Like her father's, the motives of Hanusia's attraction to Kostka-Napierski are delusional. She falls in love with a phantasm, seeing Kostka-Napierski as an incarnation of her beloved legendary hero, and loves him with unconditional and fanatic devotion.

Exploring to what degree this love triangle inspired Jan Kasproicz's own private experiences lays beyond this study. What is important, however is the message embodied in the love motif of the play. Though Hanusia feels honored by an illicit pregnancy with the "people's

hero,” a nobleman, and a royal bastard, Salka’s life and Hanusia’s fate demonstrate that, regardless of social position, a woman can only be “ennobled” by a lawful marriage. The illegitimate pregnancy ruins a woman’s respectability, making her a social outcast. A man who ruins a woman in such a way, even if a charismatic guru, does not deserve any respect for he lacks moral integrity. In the case of Kasprowicz’s *Kostka-Napierski*, the condition of private affairs is only a secondary addition to all of the vices of his character.

Female characters in *Napierski’s Rebellion* have strong naturalistic features, which further hindered the possibilities for a positive reception by the prudish bourgeois society. Apart from their stories, the dialogues in which Hanusia and Salka participate have strong and apparent sexual subtexts. Jan Kasprowicz also did not shy from using crude sexual metaphors. As such, the play could be hardly expected to fit the purpose of patriotic education either of the youth or of peasants. Kasprowicz’s lack of prudery, certainly explicable by his aesthetic choice of naturalist language and representations, explicitly undermined the sexual respectability of peasant women, something that the elites did not trust much anyway, but certainly did not wish to confront in a patriotic drama. It is hard to imagine that Kasprowicz did not understand that his play might cause at most a scandal, and at least a cool reception. He probably knew as well that the sexual politics in his play could hardly make it welcome in village libraries controlled by the Catholic Church. He nevertheless decided to support his interpretation of the peasant rebellion on this problematic love triangle. His decision can be explained either as a proof of the author’s coping with his own personal problems through the means of art, or by his desire to demystify the past, as well as the present, by bringing sexual naturalism to the center of national class politics, a subject much mystified by Henryk Sienkiewicz and his contemporary historians, who shied away from dealing with such matters explicitly. Though lacking the flamboyance of

Stanisław Przybyszewski and his followers, Jan Kasprowicz was also critical of traditional morality, and as an artist and intellectual of peasant origins he often and quite comfortably denounced class prejudices so deeply rooted in the aristocratic snobbery of the Galician, as well as Polish, elites. He did not hesitate to bring the issue of sexual relationships as an important aspect in the national and social history of Poland during serfdom, as he saw this element as constitutive in the perception of peasant masculine and political respectability.

Apart from holding the logic of narrative, Wasyl Czepiec plays an important political role in *Napierski's Rebellion*. The character indicates that Jan Kasprowicz read Szczesny Morawski's study of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski because only Morawski recalled the names of two outlaws who joined Kostka-Napierski's troops. According to primary sources used by Morawski, Czepiec and Sawka were peasant brigands whom Kostka-Napierski rescued from the gallows, and for that favor they pledged their services to him.³²⁰ In the play, Kasprowicz mentions Sawka as well, but does not give him any important part. A wealthy peasant and a former outlaw, Czepiec is engaged to Hanusia, as Stanisław Łętowski promised him her hand. That family agreement, however, was undermined after Kostka-Napierski arrived to the village, and impressed both the daughter and the father. Czepiec is humiliated by the broken engagement, and thirsted for vengeance. Kostka-Napierski scorns Czepiec because he is a peasant, yet uses him as a brave soldier. When Kostka-Napierski orders Czepiec on a suicidal mission to stop Polish troops, the Ukrainian orchestrates a rebellion among peasant rebels, which results in giving Kostka-Napierski to the hands of Bishop Gębicki's army.³²¹

³²⁰ Szczesny Morawski, "Rozruchy ludu podgórskiego w 1651 r.," in *Świątek Boży i życie na nim*, Vol. 1 (Rzeszów 1861).

³²¹ This triangle alludes also to the Biblical story of Bathsheba, Uriah, and king David. As such, it appears only as an iconoclastic pastiche and might help to explore Jan Kasprowicz's complicated attitude toward religion.

Czepiec's Ukrainian background is as important and as it is problematic for the inner logic of Kasprowicz's interpretation of the rebellion's history. The playwright made Czepiec a Ukrainian and "a son of a bell-ringer from Grybów," but nineteenth-century Galician ethnography emphasized that the town of Grybów (south of Nowy Sącz) and its area were inhabited by the Głuchoniemcy (German: *Taubdeutsche*, or *Waldddeutsche*), the offspring of the Saxon settlers, who arrived in the region after the Mongol invasions invited by Duke Bolesław the Chase and Duchess Kinga. Polonized in early modern times, the Głuchoniemcy retained a distinctive "Bauernkultur," differing from that of their neighbors by its German linguistic relics, customs and dresses, as well as by the efficiency of their domestic economy, which was believed to place them on a higher level than that of their Polish and Ukrainian neighbors.³²² An immigrant to Eastern Galicia, Kasprowicz was probably not that familiar with the ethnic and ethnographic mosaic of Western Galicia, and most probably mistook Grybów with Gorlice. Gorlice is a town located south of Grybów, and marks the northern borderline of the Lemko settlement.³²³ Thus, Kasprowicz's Wasyl Czepiec was, probably, meant to be a Lemko, an ethnic group related by language and confession to Ukrainians.

³²² Jan A. Karłowicz and Aleksander W. Jabłonowski, "Lud: Rys ludoznawstwa polskiego," in *Polska: Obrazy i opisy*, Vol. 1 (Lwów: Nakł. Macierzy Polskiej, 1906), pp. 69-215; Oskar Kolberg, *Sanockie-Krośnieńskie* (Warszawa, 1900); Józef Szujski, *Polacy i Rusini w Galicyi* (Kraków: Władysław L. Anczyc, 1896), p.17; Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich, edited by Filip Sulimierski, Bronisław Chlebowski, Władysław Walewski, Vol. 6 (Warszawa: Nakł. Władysława Walewskiego, 1885), p. 126; Wincenty Pol, Historyczny obraz Polski: Rzecz o dialektach mowy polskiej (Kraków: Drukarnia C.K. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1869); Wacław A. Maciejowski, Historia prawodawstw słowiańskich (Warszawa: Nakł. Autora, 1856-1865), s. 357.

³²³ The 1931 edition of Jan Kasprowicz's collected work, which I am using in this work, spells the town's name as "Grybowa," which is, most probably, a mistaken name of Grybów. No village or town Grybowa ever existed in Polish lands. Jan Kasprowicz, Bunt Napierskiego. Baśń nocy świętojańskiej: Prolog na otwarcie Teatru Miejskiego we Lwowie (Warszawa: Dom Książki Polskiej, 1931), p. 6.

In creating romantically involved characters, Kasprowicz did not manage to avoid the influence of Henryk Sienkiewicz's Trilogy and its politics. As a passionate Ukrainian lover, ruthless and yet fanatically dedicated to a woman who rejects him, Kasprowicz's Czepiec appears as a cliché of Sienkiewicz's Jur Bohun, a Cossack colonel during Khmelnytsky's Uprising, and one of the main characters in *With Fire and Sword* (1884). Sienkiewicz consciously drew some parallels between his fictional major love triangle in *With Fire and Sword*, including Bohun—the jilted fiancé of Helena Kurcewiczówna, and her Romantic lover Jan Skrzetuski, with the history of Bohdan Khmelnytsky's personal conflict with Daniel Czapliński, about the seduction of Khmelnytsky's wife Helena. The version, which explains the origins of the Khmetnytsky Uprising by the love rivalry between two noblemen was particularly cherished in the nineteenth-century Polish popular vision of national history, for it represented that greatest and most bloody peasant rebellion in terms of a romance, downplaying the role of social and political conflict. Such an interpretation nurtured the beliefs of conservative Polish elites that the Ukrainian separatism from the Commonwealth grew simply out of a private conflict, beliefs that undermined the Ukrainian national project at their very historical roots, showed the masses being bamboozled by their noble leaders, and the division of Ukraine as an unfortunate outcome of a personal conflict that unleashed political powers (the peasant rebellion, Cossack-Tatar alliance, and Russian intervention) beyond their control.

Wasył Czepiec, however, lacks Jur Bohun's charm of a Romantic tragic hero, his individualism, mystery, and sex appeal, which enchanted thousands of fans. What is original in Jan Kasprowicz's creation of Czepiec, and what would be unthinkable in Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel, is the sadomasochistic dimension of the relationship between Czepiec and Hanusia, and a characterologic similarity between the rivals. Both male characters are bound by their

brigandage, and by committing treason. Like Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, Wasyl Czepiec acts are motivated by his passions. Thus, they both lack a crucial element of the nineteenth-century sense of masculinity: a reason underlying their actions, and self-control. Gender insecurity goes deeper, as their acts are also motivated by questioning their masculine respectability: in the case of Czepiec, expulsion from a respectable peasant family; in the case of Kostka-Napierski, expulsion from the royal family. On the basis of that comparison, Kasprowicz's Czepiec could easily symbolize Ukrainians/Cossacks as "bastards" of the Commonwealth, and the peasant soldiers as a social and political hybrid that the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth did not manage to include into its nation, understood as a family of the noblemen, on equal rights. We can take Czepiec as a symbol of Ukrainians a step further.

A Ukrainian brigand being rescued from captivity by a Polish nobleman, and in exchange bonding himself as a soldier to his rescuer, encapsulates the conservative interpretation of the history of the Polish-Ukrainian relationship, according to which the Commonwealth, as the state, gave the unruly Cossacks autonomy in Ukraine, and in exchange the Cossacks protected the Commonwealth from the Golden Horde, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia. Kostka-Napierski's attitude toward Czepiec illustrates further the background of the conflict between the nobility and the Cossacks: unreformed disdain of the nobility toward the Cossacks as peasants, and at the same time using the Cossack military power to protect the southeastern border of the Commonwealth—empty promises of ennoblement in exchange for the military service, and humiliation because of their social status. Even though the details of Czepiec's history came from Szczesny Morawski's study, they go along with the conservative Polish historical narrative very well. Kasprowicz, however, did not ponder the nature Polish-Ukrainian relationships, but

just put a stain of “Juda’s sin” doubled on Ukrainians, as the ultimate nation’s “other,” and by scapegoating Czepiec rescued the honor of ethnic Polish peasants—the highlanders.

Highlanders' Rebellion and the Origins of Polish Peasant Civic Consciousness

This section shows further the problems with inscribing figures of peasants as citizens and their civic-minded attitudes into early modern Polish history. This section stresses particularly the suppression of the history and legacy of Protestantism in Polish national history.

For Jan Kasprowicz, more important than the issue of ethnicity was the social issue with the historic body of the Polish nation. Although Kostka-Napierski sees the problem of serfdom, his goal was not a social revolution but seizing the throne. Thus, he feeds his peasant soldiers with a vision of ennoblement and promotes them to the position of the new military elite. Kasprowicz's Kostka-Napierski notoriously disregards Marcin Radocki's Anabaptist mantras about ascending the New Order, repeated throughout the play. By making Radocki an ill-educated and buffoonish character, reducing his religious fanaticism to random repetitions of quotations from the Gospel, Kasprowicz rejected the view that the peasant rebellion in the Podhale shared some characteristics with the sixteenth-century peasant movement in Germany, thus cutting off the possible intellectual and spiritual links between Polish peasant rebellions with Protestantism.

In *Napierski's Rebellion* peasants are not a radicalized mass prone to ideological manipulation. Though they listen to Marcin Radocki's preaching, Stanisław Łętowski explains their rebellion by broken royal promises to respect their status as free peasants, and a failure of the legal institution to protect peasants from the nobility's abuses. Thus, the peasant motives for rebellion are purely political and legal, not social or religious.

Kasprowicz put into Łętowski's mouths grievances that the nobility violated their peasant civic freedoms, grievances that could be expressed by any nobleman of the Commonwealth, as

well as any enfranchised citizen of any European state circa 1900: annexation of private property, forcing free men into slave labor, assaults on women and other dependents, and violating the physical integrity of another free man. While Kasprowicz did not invent those grievances, as they were historically proven, he cleverly used the case of the peasants from the Czarny Dunajec conflict with Kazanowski to make the exception serve for the general, and represent the highlander peasants led by their “Marshall” Stanisław Łętowski as a kind the petit nobility. From such a point of view, even the noble democracy as a political system need not be criticized, only the execution of its law.

In *Napierski's Rebellion* Jan Kasprowicz used a historic costume to convey his views on peasants' political consciousness. His highlanders, as a collective body, see their political limitations in their lack of education and lack of knowledge and understanding of “worldly matters.” Because of that awareness, they force Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, as their leader, to swear that he will never back down from fights for their rights or from representing their interests, particularly their freedom in controlling their property and personal inviolability. For Kasprowicz those two rights represent the essence of personal freedom and constitute citizenship, in this case unquestionably male. In the drama, that sense of citizenship is embodied in patriarchal control over the sexuality of women, as highlanders often charge the nobility with sexual assaults on their daughters and wives. One of the tragic elements of the drama is the fact that Hanusia's sexual freedom ultimately corrupts the patriarchal position of her father, a leader of the peasant rebels, and that corruption comes from the side of their major noble ally.

Highlanders pay for Kostka-Napierski's pledges with pledges of their loyalty and military service. Their political relationship is thus contractual. The peasants do not recognize Kostka-Napierski as a God-sent royal heir (after all, he is a royal bastard), but elect him as their leader

after he wins their trust to act as a representative of their interests. Thus, Kasprowicz's highlanders act precisely as the nobility in the Commonwealth, who elected their kings on the basis of the political bargain—a coronation contract called “articles of agreement” (*pacta conventa*) signed with each and every elected king. Apart from that personal contract, every king swore to respect the nobility's rights. For their part, the nobility swore loyalty to the newly elected king, and governed the state as various parliamentary bodies alongside the royal court. If a king, according to the nobility, did not respect the election contract, the noblemen had the right to oppose the king on the grounds of breaching a mutual agreement. Through their self-governing body, called a confederation, the nobility was forcing the king to respect the agreement either by obstructing the work of the governing institutions, or by military actions against the king, or by deposing a king.

As a student of Ludwik Kubala's works, Jan Kasprowicz knew that violation of the agreements and loss of trust led to conflicts between the nobility and the kings during the seventeenth century. The first serious conflicts emerged during the rule of King Sigismund Vasa, but the most dramatic one took a place during the time of King Jan Kazimierz . That ill-fated king, who entirely lacked political skills and in fact was never interested in being a king, alienated many powerful noble families who were directly involved in the process of governing as military leaders and provincial governors (the *voivods*). Finally, a large group of the governing nobility deposed the king and claimed (illegally) the Swedish King Gustav Adolph Vasa as the King of Poland. That action brought upon the Commonwealth the Swedish invasion, which at its beginnings and end had more of the characteristics of a civil war than a foreign invasion. The antagonism between the two centers of power: the kings and the nobility, led to governmental

dysfunction, and in the long run, to the collapse of the system and the republic. Kostka-Napierski's rebellion happened in just this political context.

This allusion, clear for an audience with a solid knowledge of Polish history, proves that as an artist and intellectual of peasant origins, one who experienced first-hand German nation-building politics and whose political inclinations drew him toward a national democracy, Kasprowicz saw symbolic ennoblement as the only way peasants could enter the history of the noble nation as respectable subjects, and come to proximity of gaining more or less equal Polish citizenship. The playwright did symbolically ennoble his peasant characters by showing that the highlanders' political consciousness and actions did not deviate an inch from the cultural idiom of noble democracy. The peasants were Polish because they perceived themselves as a political entity in exactly the same way as the nobility. Kasprowicz did not mock the peasants, but instead demonstrated that seventeenth-century Polish highlanders fully adopted the political culture from the nobility, and that even in rebellion against the nobility they acted as the noblemen, forming a confederation, deposing the ruler who had not protected their rights, and "electing" the one who pledged to represent their interests. The rebellion (*rokosz*) and re-election, as elements defining the system of the noble democracy, are central in the *Napierski's Rebellion* political and historical interpretations. In this way, Kasprowicz showed that noble democracy was inherent to historical Polish peasants' politics, and in consequence that the principles of noble democracy are intrinsic and transcendent to the Polish governmentality regardless of social division. The tragedy of the peasant rebellion's history lies in the acutely deceitful character of Aleksander Kostka-Napierski, who seduced and abused peasants for his personal plans. In a symbolic plan, Kasprowicz represented that treachery in the love story of Kostka-Napierski and Hanusia

Łętowska, the desired yet flouted, pregnant yet abandoned daughter of Stanisław Łętowski, the political leader of local peasants and the moral authority in his community.

For Jan Kasprowicz the Polish highlanders are not an impulse-driven anonymous mass, as Henryk Sienkiewicz depicted the Ukrainians in his national epic about the Khmelnytsky Uprising. Kasprowicz decided to do a risky, though interesting literary and historical experiment, which aimed to historicize the peasants from the region affected by Kostka-Napierski's rebellion. Apart from using real historical names and persons in his play, derived from Szczęśny Morawski's historical studies, the playwright gave the characters of the rebellious peasants the names of his contemporary highlander families from Zakopane.

By the time of writing *Napierski's Rebellion* Kasprowicz was already well familiar with Zakopane, where he eventually made his home. The local population of the village around 1900 was 5,700 people. That included the long-term guests, the locals, and migrants from nearby villages employed in various capacities in the growing tourist industry. Zakopane's rapid growth was owed to the transformation of this primarily shepherd village into, subsequently, a spa and a high-altitude climate health resort. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Rev. Józef Stolarczyk, a local Catholic pastor, and Dr. Tytus Chałubiński, a physician from Warsaw, reinvented Zakopane, modeling it on Swiss Davos, and Silesian Görbersdorf (Prussia) as a mountain climate health resort dedicated to the cure of lung diseases, particularly tuberculosis.³²⁴ Zakopane soon became a destination for short-term tourist visits, as well as for long-term, or permanent residency of primarily Galician middle and upper classes, with a significant presence of Poles from the Russian and Prussian partitions.

³²⁴ Alison F. Frank, "The Air Cure Town: Commodifying Mountain Air in Alpine Central Europe," in: Central European History, Vol. 45 (2012), pp. 185-207.

The pool of family names carried by the natives of Zakopane was small. The oldest surnames in the village, as among other highlanders in the Podhale, dated back to the seventeenth century.³²⁵ Yet, the systematic giving of surnames to serfs came with the Austrian administration and was originally related to the recruitment of soldiers to the imperial army. Prior to the abolition of the serfdom, the pool of given names among peasants in all Polish lands seems to have been very small, judging from early modern primary sources. Peasants usually baptized their children with the names of the most popular patron saints. The most extravagant names, such as derivations from foreign languages (mostly German), came to the villages with secular elementary education. The highlander population of the area of the Podhale seems to have adhered to traditional names in spite of outside influences and changing fashions. The most popular names: Jan, Józef, Jakub, Andrzej (Jędrzej), Franciszek, Stanisław, Wojciech, and Maria, Anna (Hanna), Janina, Józefa, Franciszka, Katarzyna, and Zofia, appear in the same families throughout generations. Moreover, the highlanders quite often were giving the same name to siblings. Combined with the narrow selection of surnames, that practice of name-giving was particularly confusing for outsiders of the local community, such as the state administration and institutions. The local communities had no problem with recognizing their individuals, as they widely used nicknames and toponyms alongside the given names (for instance, Johnny the Black from the Valley, or Joe the Lamé from the Spruces). Such ways of identifying village members exists even today, and even now they convey a very strong sense of being a community insider or an outsider. There is no doubt that the peasant names came from the nicknames, toponyms, or (rarely) from the names of the village owners. In the Podhale area peasant names mostly came from the nicknames. In the twentieth century some nicknames institutionalized into

³²⁵ That includes also the surname Kusiak, first noted in the Podhale area in the seventeenth century, and since then present mostly in the Gorce Mountains.

an official second part of the surname (for instance: Bachleđa-Curuś, Bachleđa-Księdzuloz, Karpieł-Bulecka, Gąsienica-Ciaptak), but the records recall as many as 160 nicknames associated with only one family: Gąsienica, in Zakopane, demonstrating how flexible were highlanders' in relation to their surnames.³²⁶ The educated tourists, however, regarded the highlander families from the Tatra carrying the same name as a form of (Scottish) clans, with nicknames signifying branches of the same family tree. Highlanders' elite gladly embraced such an explanation, as it gave them some ancient and Western genealogy, and most certainly distinguished them from other peasants on both sides of the Tatra, boosting their sense of cultural uniqueness and superiority within their class.

In his drama *Kasprowicz* recounts the names of the fallen among Kostka-Napierski's peasant soldiers: Józef Gąsienica, Jędrzek Mocarny, Jarząbek, Horny, Tatar, Stopka, Brzega, Mardula, Roj, Mateja, and Wala. Most of those names are surnames of the most popular tourist guides and other local personages from Zakopane, known to Kasprowicz, as well as to other visitors to that Tatra resort.³²⁷ In this way, not lacking a sense of humor, Kasprowicz gave known faces to the seventeenth-century peasant rebels, and at the same time gave a dramatic history to the elite of the highlanders from Zakopane, showing those brave companions of the mountaineers in conquering the highest peaks in the Tatra, the local politicians, artists, and

³²⁶ Zofia Radwańska-Paryska and Witold Henryk Paryski, *Wielka encyclopedia tatrzańska* (Poronin: Wyd. Górskie, 2004).

³²⁷ Kasprowicz's references were very clear. The names of his contemporary mountain guides: Józef Gąsienica Tomków, Józef Gąsienica Wawrytko, Jakub Gąsienica Wawrytko, Szymon Tatar, Stanisław Stopka, Wojciech Roj, Jędrzej Wala Senior and Jędrzej Wala Junior. Wojciech Brzega, one of the first highlanders who received a higher education in fine arts (in sculpture and furniture design), married to Stafania Czartoryska. Wojciech Roj, a nephew of a Tatra guide, a politician from the Polish Populist Party "Piaś". Wojciech Mateja, a local outlaw whose conflict with Rev. Stolarczyk became a part of the local folklore. The Mardulas, in whose house Kasprowicz boarded during his visits in Zakopane. Kasprowicz was a godfather of the Mardulas son, Franciszek, the future ski runner, a coach of the Polish national representation in ski runs, and a recognized violin maker.

outlaws, as the offspring of the rebellious, yet civic, peasant soldiers, proud men standing in defense of their personal dignity, who just happened to put their hopes in hands of the calculated traitor.

If Kasprowicz's highlanders shared the civic virtues of the seventeenth-century nobility, they also shared their vices. "Marshall" Stanisław Łętowski made his fortune in robbery, including forays (*zajady*) on properties of his peasant neighbors as well as of the noblemen. The weaponry and accessories of the outlaw, displayed in Łętowski's house in an honorary place, leave no doubts about the sources of the political and moral authority of that peasant leader. While on a few occasions Łętowski does not hesitate to put his own personal interests over the wellbeing of his community, the heads of the highlander families are even more prone to do so. The highlanders are easily drawn into the fights, especially when their personal pride, family honor, or financial gain is at stake.

Like the seventeenth-century noblemen, peasant soldiers were incredibly brave, yet at the same time dangerously unreliable. Peasants pledged political allegiance fervently, but their sense of loyalty was shallow, as personal revenge was reason enough for political treason. In his drama Kasprowicz alluded to two historical conflicts about wife seduction: one between Bohdan Khmelnytsky's conflict with Daniel Czapliński, regarded as the initial reason for the Cossack Uprising, and the second between King Jan Kazimierz and Hieronim Radziejowski, regarded as the one which initiated the Swedish War. Henryk Sienkiewicz exploited the wife seduction motif in *With the Fire and Sword*, and thus Kasprowicz's repeating it appears only as a cliché. What is original, however, to *Napierski's Rebellion* is that Kasprowicz ascribed that type of personal conflict—ultimately about control over female sexuality and thus, about maintaining the integrity of the patriarchal position—to seventeenth-century free peasant men.

Like early modern nobility, so often criticized especially by nineteenth-century Galician historians for their ostentatious and ceremonial, yet superficial religiosity, Kasproicz's seventeenth-century peasants are fanatically attached to rituals but barely comprehend the merits of their faith. Their shallow understanding of religious and moral principles makes them particularly prone to manipulations by ignorant yet zealous clergymen, such as Marcin Radocki. Radocki's speeches echo the phrases derived from crude socialist propaganda addressed to farm workers, widespread around the turn of the century in eastern Galicia.

Around the turn of the century, Polish elites denounced peasant greed and their slight sense of solidarism in deeply socially divided Polish villages, as major obstacles in promoting civic and national ideals. Jan Kasproicz repeats all of the characteristics of peasants identified by his contemporaries, but does not simply attribute them to the lack of education, the lack of the political experience and civic consciousness, the lack of deeper understanding of the religious and moral principles, and the never satisfied gluttony of the poor. Instead, he demonstrated that all of the faults of contemporary peasantry were the properties of the historical nobility. Kasproicz's ironic syllogism is built on perverse analogy: contemporary peasants do not need to be symbolically ennobled (educated, Christianized, civilized); that is, included in the Polish nation through the process of acculturation to share the historical succession of the nobility, because the history of peasant rebellions proves that already in early modern times peasants belonged to the Polish nation, if belonging is understood as a form of shared governmentality or, at least, as a conscious choice of political self-organization. Kasproicz said that yes, indeed, peasants are the nobility's "younger brothers" in the national family, but that brotherhood makes them the nobility's double rather, than a sibling-child with the *tabula rasa*, which can be nurtured alongside a desired ideal. The frustration of Kasproicz's contemporaries with wishy-

washy populist politics, with the unreliability of peasant citizens and, more generally, of peasant masses in supporting the national project, has deep historical roots grounded in the ideological legacy of the noble democracy. Thus, Jan Kasproicz creates his own ironic historical interpretation, paraphrasing major arguments of the conservative Galician historians, identifying in the aberrations of the noble democracy a source of the anarchy that caused the collapse of the state, mocking the crude socialists propaganda among the farm workers, criticizing the populist politics in Galicia handicapped by the narrow-mindedness of their leaders, demonstrating the failures of the Christianizing mission of the Church, ridiculing superficial nationalist “peasant-mania” fixed on the Tatra highlanders, and at the same time sorting out his own conflict with his personal nemesis. For all those reasons his play had only a slim chance to become a success. Instead, it remained what it is: brilliant, ironic if not sarcastic, yet a nonchalantly written and very personal artistic comment on current political issues, on national history, with his personal tragedy in background.

CHAPTER V

EPILOGUE:

THE PODHALE RIFLES AT THE SERVICE OF POLISH NATION-STATE

The national propaganda successfully used the tales and stories about brave and faithful highlanders to support the formation of regional paramilitary and military units before, during, and right after World War I. The most important among them were the Podhale Squads. That paramilitary men's organization paralleled the Bartosz Squads (1908), the Riflemen's Association (1910), the Polish Riflemen's Squads (1911), and the Field Falcon Squads (1912). While the members of the Riflemen's Association, the Polish Riflemen's Squads, and the Field Falcon Squads came from all social classes, the Bartosz Squads had a strong peasant identity, as its name referred to Bartosz Głowacki, a scytheman from the time of the Kościuszko Uprising, and the hero of the Battle of Raclawice. The Podhale Squads had a peasant identity as well, though they made a strong distinction by emphasizing its regional identity.

The Podhale Squads were formally established in 1912, by a decision of the Second Convention of the Highlanders Alliance. During that time, the Alliance was quickly rising to the position of a major political and cultural organization, claiming social solidarism and the regional distinction of the region. The First Convention of the Highlanders Alliance, which took a place in Nowy Targ in 1911, commemorated the jubilee of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer. Leaders of the Alliance, as well as of the Squads, came from the first generation of the peasant

intelligentsia. Władysław Orkan, born in Poręba Wielka in the Gorce Mountains (adjacent to the Podhale) and Feliks Gwizdź from Odrowąż Podhalański were both writers and journalists. Andrzej Galica, born in Biały Dunajec, was a civil engineer, and a socialist activist.³²⁸ The Second Convention in 1912 also established a new newspaper called *Gazeta Podhalańska*, which operates even now.³²⁹ The political aspirations of the Highlander Alliance were grand: the newspaper aimed to awaken a national spirit among peasants in the Podhale, the Spisz and the Orawa, where the Polish identity competed with the Slovak identity; the squads meant to militarily affirm the political dominance of Poles in the region. The nationalist mission of the Highlander Alliance fulfilled after 1918, when the Podhale Squads took a control over some villages in the Spisz and the Orawa on behalf of the Polish state.³³⁰ Yet already in February 1913, on the wave of the mobilization, the Alliance called its extraordinary convention in Chochołów to commemorate the anniversary of the peasant uprising, to manifest the strength of Polish national identity on the northern sides of the Tatra. The convention and its final resolution buttressed an image of the highlander as a Polish insurgent, and a faithful servant of the Catholic Church.

Between 1912 and 1913, the Podhale Squads emerged in most of the villages in the Tatra and the Podhale. The first squad was established in Zakopane, the next ones in villages in close

³²⁸ Among other important activists of the Alliance and the Squads were Jan Bednarski, a deputy to the Galician Sejm; Józef Rajski, a mayor of Nowy Targ; Zygmunt Wasilewski, an attorney; and Tomasz Buła, a teacher from the junior high school (gimnazjum) in Nowy Targ.

³²⁹ Feliks Gwizdź became its first editor.

³³⁰ About Andrzej Galica: Władysław Motyka, *Za nasom ślebode za ojczyzne miłom: Tradycje góralskie i górskie w wojsku polskim* (Milówka 2008), 40-64. On the role of the Squads in the Polish-Czech conflict on the Spisz and Orawa following 1918: Motyka, *ibid.*, 74-77.

proximity of Zakopane and Nowy Targ.³³¹ As elsewhere, the local elites from Nowy Targ and Zakopane had a tremendous impact on organizing the first Podhale Squads. Yet, the peasants living north, east, and west from Nowy Targ County,³³² remained less open to the agitation of the Highlander Alliance and the Podhale Squads. That unresponsiveness demonstrates the limits in using regional identity in political agitation.

The Podhale Squads, however, used the national icons as their patrons, such as the Adam Mickiewicz Podhale Squad in Chochołów. That choice of the national symbol certainly reflected identification with the national community yet also proved the scarcity of the local national heroes, or peasant heroes for that matter. As the Bartosz Squads appropriated Głowacki, there was simply no other historical or even a literary peasant hero, able to provide respectable patronage to another peasant paramilitary unite. Mickiewicz's position as a peasant patron was shaky, and supported only on his democratic agenda expressed in *Books of the Polish People and Its Pilgrimage* (1832). The Romantic poet's immediate symbolic connection to the Tatra was only the greatest and most picturesque waterfall in the High Tatra, named after him as the Mickiewicz's Water-Thunders (*Wodogrzmoty Mickiewicza*). Locally called by the highlanders just *Thunders*, the Tatra Society, which was the major tourist and Polish cultural organization in the region renamed the falls in 1891, to commemorate the reburial of Adam Mickiewicz's ashes in the national mausoleum in the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow. That another example of Polonizing the Tatra landscape engraved that Romantic Poet into the highlanders' cultural landscape and memory.

³³¹ Poronin, Chochołów, Witów, Dzianisz, Ciche, Szaflary, Zaskale, Maruszyn, Skrzypne, Waksmund, Ostrowsko, Łopuszna, Bańsk, Odrowąż, Biały Dunajec, Sromowce Wyżne, Sromowce Niżne, Gronków, Harkłowa, Ludźmierz, Nowy Targ, Stare Bystre, and other places.

³³² With an exception of Raba Wyżna.

The number of members in the squads by village varied, by around 1913 reached approximately 50 men per unit. Some squads from bordering villages united. That was in Chochołów, where the squad included about 200 young men from Chochołów, Dzianisz, Witów, and Ciche. The unification of the neighbouring paramilitary units is itself a significant practice, because they challenged the old peasant customs to socially and culturally distinguish themselves in opposition to the inhabitants of the nearest villages. The antagonism between villages, or even settlements, expressed itself in verbal and physical abuses, as well as in physical fights between the youths from antagonized villages. It often ended up in bloodshed, serious injuries, or even deaths, giving a rationale for generation-lasting vendettas. Therefore, the village rivalry served not only as a way of othering, but also as a specific rite of passage for young peasant men.³³³

The paramilitary organization challenged the internal hierarchies between young men in villages, substituting them for the externally given chain of commands. Thus, merging paramilitary units from neighbouring villages challenged that customary practices of identity formation by substituting the local for regional one, and furthermore by including the regional into the national one. National enmity displaced neighbourhood ones; in the case of the Highlanders Alliance national propaganda, the enemy became a Russian-heretic, conforming both to the Polish national and Austro-Hungarian state ideologies. Many senior peasants who served in the Austro-Hungarian army already underwent the “rise of national consciousness” as imperial subjects, and they passed the state ideology on to their offspring, as the cult of the Habsburg dynasty among Galicia peasants proved. But the Podhale Squads were the only organization in the region that merged military practice with Polish and regional national ideology, thus targeting the very intimate identity rooted in local customs.

³³³ In some parts of the Podhale this custom was present even in the 1990s (my field observations).

The ideology of the Highlanders Alliance built directly on the legacy of the Chochołów Uprising of 1846, as in 1913 many local priests and teachers led many of the squads. The Alliance's activists and their travel followers liked to stress that in contrast to other Polish lands, the spirit of class solidarism and patriotism unpolluted by political animosities blossomed in the name of undivided nationhood: "[i]n the Podhale the Falcon does not fight the Squads, nor do the Squads fight the Falcon; the clergy does not take issue with the Squads, does not accuse them of socialism, but with help of such priests [...] they organize more and more hosts."³³⁴ The success of the Squads inspired the Committee of the Alliance to establish the Alliance of the Highlander Squads. The Alliance of Squads was officially proclaimed in May 1913 in Nowy Targ, during the celebrations of the anniversary of the Constitution of May 3, 1791. The squads brought to Nowy Targ about one thousand men, under the command of Kazimierz Guziak, a carpenter from Nowy Targ. The highlights of the gathering were a mass in St. Katherine's Church and a parade of the troops, all dressed in traditional highlander costumes.

Feliks Gwiżdż delivered a speech to the troops in which he presented a model of the highlander-soldier:

"A member of the Podhale Squad needs to be a discerning and honourable Polish soldier. Respect yourself! Do not allow others to drag you into partisan disputes and wrangles, into any work that may disgrace the Fatherland. Respect the garb of your fathers, let your tongue and attire rise to the rank of the tongue and attire of the Polish soldier."³³⁵

Later that year the Squads began recruiting for the Riflemen Squads as well as for Józef Piłsudski's legions, the Polish military units in Austro-Hungarian army.

³³⁴ W. Wilczek, "Drużyny Podhalańskie," in: *Hale i Dziedziny* 1-2, 1994, p. 10.

³³⁵ A. Zachemski, *Ruch Podhalański* (Warszawa 1930), p. 9.



Figure 6. Proclamation of the Podhale Squads in Nowy Targ, 4 May 1913

The photograph from this event shows members of the squad in folk peasant outfits. Many men and women in the audience also appear in peasant clothing, which indicated that some of them might have been relatives or acquaintances of men in the squad. There was also a significant number of townsmen, mostly men, in the audience. Nearly one thousand young men appeared in the Podhale Squads at the market square during that day.³³⁶ Yet, judging from the photograph, the gross number of the participants could reach up to three thousand in the town, which in the second half of the nineteenth century had about five thousand inhabitants. Still, the volunteers and the audience could barely fill up the market square in Nowy Targ.³³⁷ That shows

³³⁶ Motyka, *ibidem*, p. 20.

³³⁷ The market in Nowy Targ was the biggest *agora* in the region. Its dimensions are: 138 x 110 square meters, which gives 1.5 hectare, that is 3.7 acres. The photograph suggests that the parade took place in the shorter part of the rectangle shape market, to the left of the town hall places toward the center of the square.

not only an average support and interest in establishing peasant paramilitary organizations, but also shows that the national celebration of the Constitution on May 3 was probably as massive, as written sources tend to claim.

After the rally, in the City Hall of Nowy Targ, the Executive Committee of the Second Congress of the Highlanders Alliance established the Association of the Podhale Squads, with Zygmunt Wasiewicz as its Commander. Wasiewicz was a lawyer, and majority of other members of the Executive Committee also represented local intelligentsia.³³⁸ Only one member of the Executive Committee came from the lower social strata: Kazimierz Guziak was a carpenter in Nowy Targ, and he was given the most spectacular role in the rally, as the leader of parade. Though some of its members had peasant roots, peasants were underrepresented in the Executive Committee.

On August 4, 1914, the Headquarters of the Podhale Squads (*Komenda Drużyn Podhalańskich*) issued a mobilization appeal to all male inhabitants of the region.³³⁹ The appeal began with a salutation that slightly but significantly differed from a traditional peasant greeting: it invoked not only Jesus Christ but also “Mary, His Mother, The Queen of the Polish Crown.”³⁴⁰ The Headquarters informed these “brothers” about the outbreak of war, in which “Austria-Hungary is fighting against Serbia, Russia, France, Belgium and England,” and emphasized that only “God All Mighty” knew the outcome of that tragic event.

³³⁸ Jan Bednarski was a deputy to Galicia Sejm of the Land from the Podhale, Franciszek Boroń and Michał Pachulski were teachers, Rev. Stanisław Koterba was a vicar in Chochółów, Józef Rajski was a mayor of Nowy Targ, Franciszek Szewczyk was a painter.

³³⁹ Alliance – explanation.

³⁴⁰ The text of the mobilization appeal after W. Galica, “Udział Podhalan w walce o niepodległość,” in: *Podhalanka* 2 (1988).

Though the mobilization appeal did not address the issue of Polish independence directly, the words played on Polish patriotic feelings, as well as on Austria-Hungarian loyalism, and on Catholicism. The appeal also addressed the traditions of the highlanders' patriotic militancy, evoking the memories of "grandfathers" who, under the leadership of "Rev. Kmietowicz, an organist Andrusikiewicz [...] and many others," fought for independence in the Chochołów uprising in 1846, presenting it as a peasant political and national legacy. Those memories served as an ideological device to mobilize the highlanders "to rise" in the name of "Polish glory," and yet were clearly intended to direct peasant militancy not against Austria-Hungary, but against Russia.

For it was the tsardom that was identified as the ultimate enemy of the Habsburg state, the Polish nation, and the highlanders: the appeal encouraged Polish peasants to "rush through Cracow to Moscow." The Russian assault on the fatherland(s), which demanded an immediate military response, was identified as an Orthodox attempt to rip the "holy Catholic faith" away from highlanders. The appeal ended with the words "Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name over Polish land, over Polish troops, which in Thy Name and for Thy Truth are going to fight. Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name over the Podhale Squads, which are moving to the field! [...] Forward in the name of God!"³⁴¹

In September 1914, *Gazeta Podhalańska* published a similar appeal encouraging highlanders to join the Polish Legions. The appeal was issued by Władysław Tetmajer, a son of Adolf Tetmajer and brother of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, a famous painter, and an activist of the agrarian movement, as well as a County Army Commander (*Powiatowy Komendant Wojskowy*) in Nowy Targ. Both appeals called on the highlanders to support Austrian-Hungarian

³⁴¹ Galica, *ibid.*

military forces through Polish auxiliaries, by directly interpolating their civic masculinity. The appeal presented the war in terms of an anti-Russian crusade, casting highlanders in the role of Polish-Catholic insurgents-crusaders. The peculiar combination of militant Catholicism, Polish patriotism, and Austrian-Hungarian loyalty reveals much about how the intelligentsia of the Podhale imagined a successful rhetoric to mobilize local peasants circa 1914.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance (*Związek Podhalań*) claimed both appeals to be a success. Historians estimate that about 1500 men responded to it.³⁴² Wojciech Brzega, a sculptor, a writer, and a political activist, born into a peasant family from Zakopane, recalled encountering the Falcon Club of Nowy Targ boys from the local villages willing to join the Polish troops. With no hesitation, Brzega identified the reason for the peasant response to mobilization: it was “the old Polish (*staropolski*) knightly spirit resurrected in the hearts of the nation.”³⁴³ Wojciech Brzega, an artistic collaborator of Stanisław Witkiewicz, an inventor of the “national highland style in Polish arts,” was certainly not the only one who evoked noble imagery in presenting peasant recruits as a modern embodiment of the Polish knights. That symbolic ennoblement thus came from the young peasants’ patriotic feelings, and their readiness to shed blood as a soldier, for as I have tried to show, there was no figural reference to an ennobled highlander other than as “a noble savage”. Thus, the Podhale Squads helped to close the discursive gap.

The primary historical sources, as well as later historiography, remained silent about the social and economic reasons behind the successful mobilization of young peasants to the paramilitary Polish squads before 1914. According to Franciszek Bujak’s study of the village of Żmiąca around 1907, modes of inheritance among highlanders showed a tendency to keep farms undivided, which resulted in a growing number of dispossessed young men who either lived as

³⁴² Motyka, *ibid.*, p. 20.

³⁴³ Józef Tischner, “Nad wypłowiałą fotografią,” in: *Tygodnik Podhalański* 44, 1998.

semi-servants (*komornicy*) in their sibling-heir's households, or sought employment as a hired hands, or emigrated.³⁴⁴ It was probably this large group of young men, who around 1914 answered the patriotic call and sought their chances for better life in supporting the cause of Poland's independence. As military service in the Austro-Hungarian army, experienced by peasants for generations, proved its limits as a mean of economic and social advancement, the Polish army fighting for the Polish state appeared to some impoverished men in overpopulated western Galicia as an alternative worth testing. Moreover, while Polishness as a cultural identity never sheds its class characteristics, ethnic and religious distinctions grew in importance in the late nineteenth century and thus, for some Catholic Polish-speaking peasants, to become a Polish soldier meant (also) to fight for a state in which nobility could be earned by military service, and "Polish lords" would subjugate other cultural groups.

If Polish national military mobilization appealing to highlanders as defenders of Poland was rooted shallow ground, the roots nevertheless held for the ground was composed of various cultural layers. As argued in this dissertation, around the turn of the century, on the cultural and national map of Poland, the Podhale appeared as the perfect site to develop the fantasy of a brave Polish peasant, of a strong man with a traditional set of values, always faithful to his fatherland, yet independent and proud. Several tendencies brought such a vision to life. One was the eugenic fantasy of a peasant from the highlands as primeval, strong, fit, healthy, and intelligent. Another was the political fantasy of peasants as a class of the nation, one that was semi-civilized yet morally uncorrupted, loyal, solidaristic, brave and dignified. Both major tendencies encapsulated the Polish romanticized vision of the highlander as 'noble-savage,' a vision that while born earlier in the nineteenth century, in the last decades of the partition, offered peasants of Podhale

³⁴⁴ Franciszek Bujak, *Żniąca: Wieś Powiatu Limanowskiego: Stosunki gospodarcze i społeczne* (Kraków: Gebethner i Wolff, 1903).

the appealing prospect of joining the nation as respectable lower-class patriots, distinct from the general category of Polish peasants, who were humiliated by the stigma of serfdom.

After the end of World War I, when Poland regained independence, the story of the always faithful highlander inspired the formation of regional military units within Polish army. The Highland Brigade (*Brygada Górska*), latter known as the Podhale Rifles was a special unit, at the beginning made up exclusively of highlanders. It was established by General Andrzej Galica (1873-1945), one of the leaders of the Podhale Squads.

Born into a rich peasant family in the village of Biały Dunajec, Galica belonged to the first generation of educated peasants of the Podhale. He graduated from the prestigious middle school in Cracow , and studied road and bridge engineering at polytechnic universities in Lwów and Vienna (1898-1903). After graduation he worked as an engineer and as a university teacher in Kraków.

Even as a student, Galica was active in the Polish socialist movement. As a member of the Rifleman Association, Polish paramilitary organization, which during World War I provided a basis for the formation of the Polish Legions, Galica met and befriended Józef Piłsudski, a future leader of Poland, as well as Ignacy Daszyński, a leader of the socialist movement in Galicia. Prior to the outbreak of the World War I, Galica was also active in the regional agrarian movement in the Podhale, working on educational projects together with Władysław Orkan and other leaders of the Highlanders Alliance. Galica was among the initiators of the Podhale Squads (*Drużyny Podhalańskie*). After the outbreak of the war, the Podhale Squads joined with the Riflemen Association. From an initiative of the Highlanders Alliance, and with the support of

Józef Piłsudski, the Commander-in-Chief of Polish military forces, between 1918 and 1919 Colonel Galica organized the Highland Brigade, and until 1920 served as its commander.³⁴⁵



Figure 7: Marshall Piłsudski in the uniform of the Podhale Rifles, painting by Edward Karniej (1890-1942). The eagle feather on Marshalls’s hat is pinned with the swastika, the brigade’s symbol at the time.

Galica, like many other educated peasant men from the region, never denied his background, but affirmed it, enriching his political and professional identities.³⁴⁶ In similar

³⁴⁵ Aleksandra Anna Kozłowska, *Góral generałem. Biografia żołnierza, polityka i literata* (Łódź 2013); Jan Lubicz-Pachoński, “Galica Andrzej,” in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 1948 T.7 s.222-224; Tadeusz Kryśka-Karski i Stanisław Żurkowski, *Generałowie Polski Niepodległej* (Warszawa: Editions Spotkania, 1991); Piotr Stawecki, *Słownik biograficzny generałów Wojska Polskiego 1918-1939* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Bellona, 1994).

³⁴⁶ An article in *Ziemia Podhalańska*, No. 4/IV, 1937.

mode, he used the perception of the exceptionality of the highlanders to create an identity of his brigade, as well as to fashion his own identity as a highlander–military officer.

Galica’s fantasy of a distinctive military unit in the Polish army of highlanders originated in his youth. The future general revealed literary aspirations, which for the most part remained unfulfilled. The project that brought him certain fame was a “stage poem” titled *Janosik*. Written at the beginning of the war, *Janosik* was published in Warsaw in 1922. The following year, the poem was staged in the Juliusz Słowacki Theater in Kraków, one of the major Polish venues. Its success was modest but significant, for Galica’s *Janosik* contributed back to the Tatra folk culture. Since the early 1920s, the march from his poem titled *When They Carried Janicek To Lewoca (Kiej Janicka wiedli od Lewoce)*, with music by Kazimierz Meyerhold, turned out into one of the most popular pieces in the folk music from Podhale, and remains commonly regarded as a true folk song.

The assimilation of Galica/Meyerhold’s song exemplifies an important cultural practice, already initiated in the late nineteenth century, and conceptualized and mastered by Stanisław Witkiewicz. A painter, an architect, a writer, an ethnographer, and an art theoretician, Witkiewicz created so-called “Zakopane style” in the visual arts. Native to Lithuania, an offspring of the noble family, Witkiewicz became a permanent resident in Zakopane in 1890, and spent the following twenty-five years dedicated to exploring, transforming, and popularizing the peasant folk culture from the Tatra and the Podhale. His role in including the highlander culture in Polish national culture is hard to overestimate. Witkiewicz’s “Zakopane style” became the first, and the only successful attempt to extract the “pure” peasant esthetic style, and grant it a

respectable place in Polish national culture.³⁴⁷ Witkiewicz did more than just use the folk culture as an inspiration, or as raw material in creating an artistic piece addressed to an esthetically refined audience looking for folkish and national art. The song from Galica's *Janosik* shows that such a practice was not restrained to the visual arts, and that cultural assimilation and appropriation was going in both directions, since the song from the Juliusz Słowacki Theater found its way to folk music and their origins vanished along the way. Though by no means unique, this practice shows the openness in cultural exchange between the elite national and bourgeois culture, and the regional and peasant one. By the end of the World War I, the "Podhale art," its iconography and music—no longer perceived as a style, but as genuine elements of a distinctive cultural identity—became presented as the highest instance and an epitome of the Polish folk culture, "a treasure," and "a repository" of Polish national culture, "primitive" and uncorrupted by civilization. As such, "Podhale folk art" was regarded as the source of the modern Polish national style, as art historian Piotr Piotrowski calls it, "a nationalization of the modern form,"³⁴⁸ perfected in the Interwar period by Polish Expressionists and Polish Formists.³⁴⁹

Galica stylized his vision of Janosik as a patriot, but he also endowed his hero with some characteristics typical of the ideal of a socialist activist rather than a rich peasant. Janosik appears as a people's *hetman* (an early modern term for the leader of the Commonwealth's armies).

³⁴⁷ Stanisław Witkiewicz, *Styl zakopiański: Zeszyt pierwszy: Pokój jadalny* (1904); --, *Styl zakopiański: Zeszyt drugi: Ciesielstwo* (1910).

³⁴⁸ Piotr Piotrowski, *Sztuka według polityki: Od Melancholii do Pasji* (Kraków, Instytut Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2007), p. 24.

³⁴⁹ Piotrowski stresses that the defining role of the folk culture in Polish Formism was typical mostly to the Kraków artistic circle, and argues that the regional identity of Galicia was mostly responsible for it. Piotr Piotrowski, *Sztuka według polityki: Od Melancholii do Pasji* (Kraków, Instytut Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2007), p. 23-24. Also: Joanna Pollakówna, *Formiści* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1972), pp. 6, 45.

Moreover, the elders in the highlander community preached to the younger peasant men that real masculine qualities can only be achieved by rejecting the desire for material goods (exemplified by a land, a farm, and wealth), and through readiness to serve in the nation's defense, to guard it (*być mu strażą*), to be “a guiding hand,” and by the ultimate sacrifice to the fatherland.³⁵⁰

But Andrzej Galica was foremost a soldier, and his ultimate legacy was organizing an exclusively highlander military unit in the Polish Army—the Highland Brigade. The myth of the brave and faithful highlander provided the ideological background for inventing the historical traditions for the Brigade. As an artist, General Galica devoted much attention to the aesthetic aspects in inventing the patriotic traditions of the Highland Brigade. The uniforms were designed with references to the highlander folk costume, making a visually clear allusion to Tatra folklore. For example, the round soldiers' hats were modeled after the highlander ones, with a hawk feather referring to the decoration used mostly by outlaws, thus strengthening the perception of peasant soldiers as virile, brave, and unafraid of death. The parade uniform consisted of a cap (*gunia*), also derived from the highlander folk costume. The only major element of the brigade's outfit, which during World War II was removed from original attire, was the brigade's symbol, the swastika that Galica chose for it.

In the highly geometric folk design in the Podhale, the swastika was indeed a popular motif, appearing particularly as a carved ornament, from wooden spoons to the outside walls of houses. Late nineteenth-century Polish artists and intellectuals found and cultivated the Podhale swastika with a great excitement, popularized as an element of folk design and thus promoting its use, and even re-engraved it in the mountain landscape, with complex consequences for the perception and construction of the identity of the region.

³⁵⁰ “Hyr i sława” in Andrzej Galica, *Janosik*. Warszawa 1922.

Already the authors of the Podhale style, Stanisław Witkiewicz and Władysław Matlakowski, included it in their catalogues of design. Walery Eljasz-Radzikowski, a painter and a photographer, one of the founders of the Tatra Society and an author of the most popular tourist guides to the Tatra, used the swastika as his personal mark. Also Mieczysław Karłowicz, a composer and one of the most avid mountain climbers of his time, used the swastika as his personal sign to mark the mountain peaks he conquered and passages he blazed. In his short life Karłowicz became a legend as an embodiment of both an artist and an athlete dedicated to the Tatra. His photographs of the Tatra were popular and praised. A member of the Tatra Association, Karłowicz popularized alpinism in the region.³⁵¹ Popularizing skiing in the Tatra, Karłowicz also helped to organize the rudiments of the Mountain Voluntary Search and Rescue. He died buried by an avalanche in the High Tatra during one of his photographic expeditions. A commemorative rock, which was placed on the site where his body was found, is marked with swastika.

Fashioning the swastika as a symbol of the Tatra folk culture was rooted in a multiplicity of semiotic traditions, to which it was attributed. The Germanic origin was certainly there, yet it was not that emphasized, for that could contradict theories representing the highlander culture as the reserve of the ancient Polish culture. Thus, Polish scholars tended to stress the Slavic origins of the swastika. As highlanders used to call the swastika “svarga,” that name gave a source to a linguistic argument connecting the sign with the Slavic god Swarożyc (or Swarog), deemed as a god of fire. The South Asian genealogy of the Podhale swastika was popular, especially among late nineteenth-century Polish adepts of yoga and Buddhism, as well as among supporters of the theories seeing the swastika as proof of the Arian origins of Western Slavic tribes.

³⁵¹ He first climbed in the company of Klimek Bachleda, one of the best highlander guides, and in his last years, just by himself.

The Arian theory of the Podhale swastika left its strong mark on the history of the region during World War II, when the Nazis, relatively successfully, promoted inventing a new identity of the highlanders as the Arian Germanic lost tribe—the Goralenvolk—promising autonomy for the Podhale within the General Governorate, and thus laying grounds for collaboration.³⁵² After the outbreak of World War II, the Polish army decided to replace it as the Highland Brigade’s symbol with the edelweiss, an Alpine flower native to the Tatra’s landscape.

Apart from the secular symbolism of pagan origins, Catholic imagery was also present among the military symbols of the highlander unit. The banners of various regiments of the Highland Brigades contained the images of the Holy Mother of Częstochowa, thus inscribing a tradition regarding peasants as defenders of both Poland and the Catholic faith, and referring to the popular history presenting peasants as defenders of Częstochowa during the Swedish Deluge, as well as to the idea of the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Poland. Later, the image of Holy Mother of Częstochowa was replaced by the image of the Holy Mother of Ludźmierz—a miraculous sculpture from the sanctuary in Ludźmierz near Nowy Targ, a major Marian worship center in the Podhale and the Tatra.

The tendency to ideologically link the Polish army with Catholicism escalated in the late 1930s. It included, among other practices, homages paid by military units to various Marian images at local cult sites, presented as regional *loci* of worship of the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Poland, as well as the particular regions.³⁵³ During those ceremonies, Polish soldiers pledged their allegiance to the Virgin Mary, fidelity “to the holy Catholic faith, the son’s submissiveness to the Apostle Capital, to defend the faith as well as take it as a governing principle in our

³⁵² Wojciech Szatkowski, *Goralenvok: Historia zdrady* (Zakopane: Kanon, 2012).

³⁵³ Motyka, *ibid.*, p. 311.

private, family, social, national, and state life.”³⁵⁴ Again, the analysis of that merging of the state and Catholic ideology in Poland in 1930s lays beyond this study, but signaling it shows the trajectory of ideological development of the peasant military units from being inspired by populist, socialist, and democratic ideals to being inspired by nationalist and religious ones.

If the Highland Brigade uniforms made the unit distinctive and immensely popular in the Polish army already in the Interwar period, so did the music attributed to the highland soldiers. The brigade’s repertoire contained folk songs from the Podhale and Tatra regions, which celebrated masculine virility. By mid 1930s, the Highland Brigade became tremendously popular, being assumed on all state military parades to Warsaw. Young women especially reacted with exceptional enthusiasm to the spectacle of the highlander soldiers.³⁵⁵ The popularity of the Highland Brigade inspired a formation of other regional army units, for example the Hutsul Riflemen of Kołomyja. The Hutsul highlanders inhabited the eastern borders of the Carpathians (former eastern Galicia, and contemporary western Ukraine and northern Romania), and were regarded as a distinctive peasant linguistic and ethnic group related to the Ukrainians. Yet, in contrast to the Highland Brigade, and in spite of using the ethnonyme, the Hutsul Riflemen had used the noble codes of arms as military symbols, thus drawing their tradition from the Polish petit nobility inhabiting that region. The fact that the Highland Brigade originated from the socialist circle of Marshall Józef Piłsudski, and the Hucul Riflemen from the nationalist General Józef Haller circles is partially responsible for the class identity of that military unit, as Haller was an adherent of the National Democracy.

In 1920, during the Polish-Soviet war, the Highland Brigade transformed into the Highland Division. In the following years, the division changed its structure several times,

³⁵⁴ Motyka, *ibid.*, pp. 311-313.

³⁵⁵ Motyka, *ibid.*, p. 180.

finally established as the 21st Division of the Highland Infantry. At the same time, there were several regiments of the Podhale Riflemen, in various relationships to the Division. All of those units cultivated their symbolism and traditions linking them with the Carpathians and the Podhale regions. After the Polish Army disintegrated under the Nazi and Soviet invasions in 1939, the Polish military units were reestablished both in occupied Poland and in Western Europe. Thus, the Podhale Riflemen acquired a special recognition for their participation in Battle of Narvik, during the Nazi invasion of Norway in 1940, and fought in Brittany (France) in 1940, after which it became dispersed and ultimately dissolved. The communist regime eventually reestablished the Podhale Regiments, yet today only the 21st Brigade of the Podhale Riflemen directly draws its traditions from Andrzej Galica's brigade, now strengthened by the traditions of fights in Norway and France. Thus, World War II gave the ultimate historical context for the traditions of the highland soldiers.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The questions that my dissertation tried to answer were: why a national culture in a society of predominantly peasant origins carries such condescension toward the peasantry? What are the sources of the cultural perceptions of Polish peasants as second-class citizens? I chose to answer these questions by studying the national *imaginarium* and analyzing the narrative ways in which peasants were included into the national history in civic roles.

This dissertation examines cultural representations of highlanders, and therefore presents a study in the national imagination of the elites. One only has to read newspapers, reports of various medical, sanitary, educational, charitable committees, memoirs, or the novels published prior to 1914, to realize the chasm between the imagined and the real lives in the mountain villages. The highlanders at the turn of the century struggled with poverty, with multiple agents and modes of exploitation, often lacked social solidarism even within one family, were often subjected to virulent animosities rich in verbal and physical violence, and usually displayed a total indifference to and ignorance of national affairs.

Interestingly, the authors who alarmed public opinion about the destitution of the north Carpathian peasants, at the same time created a compelling counter-narrative idealizing the highlander's lives, their culture, and moral sensibilities, thus presenting "the helpless" and "the egoists" in more civic roles. Intellectuals of peasant origins, such as Jan Kasprowicz and

Władysław Orkan, as well as the aristocratic offspring, such as half-brothers Władysław and Kazimierz Tetmajers, belonged to the most outspoken denouncers of peasant miseries, and at the same time they were the most zealous and celebrated architects of the legend of Polish highlanders.

My dissertation shows that both attitudes in a discourse of the so-called “peasant issue” are not contradictory, but complementary. The narratives conveying a symbolic appreciation and a reassessment of peasants’ roles and characteristics in the national history were inseparable from the appeals to the moral sensibility of public opinion for social and economic reforms in the countryside. Moreover, reconstructing the notion of peasant masculine respectability, as an elementary condition for constructing male citizenship, was indivisible from the processes of modernization, including the gradual progress in the enfranchisement of peasant men embedded in the simultaneous processes of empire and nation building. The narratives depicting peasants as citizens challenged the stereotypes about them, rooted in the everyday, distorted, elite’s gaze, as well as in the historically constructed sense of cultural difference of the social successors to the nobility. In reimagining the Polish national community after the abolition of serfdom, the symbolic appreciation took the form of the symbolic ennoblement of peasants in representations of the national history.

This is not to say that the images and narratives of peasant material, intellectual and moral destitution vanished from the national discourse. Yet, as they flourished, particularly in the print culture of socially conservative circles in all partitions of Poland, the mainstream of Polish national culture came to regard the mocking of peasants as a counterproductive discursive strategy in the realm of the national politics. The intellectual and cultural circles and individuals self-identified with ideals of social progress and democratic national politics continued to use the

figure of the village bumpkin as a symbol of social backwardness, but also pushed forward new images of the civic-minded peasant, a peasant-patriot. As the symbolic appreciation of peasants in Polish national culture only seldom took the form of a thorough moral settling of accounts with the past, particularly with serfdom as a legacy of the noble culture,³⁵⁶ attempts at symbolic ennoblement were characterized by ambiguity, precariousness, and vulnerability. Thus, a complementary coexistence of both types of representations of peasants, which continues to this day, comes as a consequence of the conditions from which they emerged, and not just ordinary binaries. Being called a peasant is still one of the most embarrassing invectives in the Polish language, and very few may see it as politically incorrect act.

The symbolic ennoblement was therefore a way of including peasants into a traditional realm of citizenship in Polish culture. It was a discursive way of constructing a symbolic capital for peasants, in Pierre Bourdieu's sense of this term. As such, this symbolic ennoblement did not have a value of its own. Its value could only appear if connected with other forms of social, cultural, and economic capital. Its value also depended on the mutual recognition of all the parts engaged in a national relationship. In practice, it meant that the value of symbolic ennoblement was limited to the realm of national politics. As symbolic capital, symbolic ennoblement could never match the "real" nobility—the social capital coming from legitimate birth in a noble family. Yet, under certain circumstances, particularly in populist politics, it could trump the economic and cultural capital of non-peasant newcomers to the modern nation, such as national minorities. It was a ticket to the national banquet, but at the far end of the table.

Polish national culture around the turn of the century played freely with, what we may nowadays identify as concepts of ethnic and civic citizenship, blurring them creatively for the

³⁵⁶ Stefan Żeromski was among a handful of the turn of the century relentless prosecutors against the neglect of Polish peasants.

sake of current and permanent arguments within hybridized national ideologies.³⁵⁷ Both French and German traditions of early nineteenth-century nationalism and citizenship were popular among Polish intellectuals—in many instances at once. Moreover, many Polish intellectuals tried to wed both concepts in an ill-matched marriage. They did so for the sake of retaining a historical continuity in the Polish national master narrative, to show partitioned Poland as the only legitimate heir of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Polish nation as a legitimate offspring of the multicultural noble nation. So, while Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus were building their national identities on their difference from the former Commonwealth, and on affirming their folk cultures as the core of their nationness, nineteenth-century Poland experienced two tendencies at once: the emergence of ethnic citizenship with a strong component of folk culture, especially in Prussian Poland, and continuing the affirmation of Polish identity as a noble one in all three partitions. The social, cultural, and ideological bondage to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth stymied the cultural process of integrating folk culture and peasants into the imagined—*per se*—community, casting peasants in uncertain roles as both compatriots and the nation’s others. In Polish culture, certainly prior to 1945, ethnic citizenship (being born Polish) never balanced the weight of the civic one (being born a noble).

The discursive inclusion of peasants into the national community required including them in the history of Polish statehood (the Kingdom of Poland and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), and the Polish nation (the multicultural Polish nobility). As my dissertation has shown, such an inclusion even in the field of literature entailed a great dose of intellectual manipulation and artistic creativity. The subtle work of transforming the history into the national

³⁵⁷ Geneviève Zubrzycki, “The Classical Opposition Between Civic and Ethnic Models of Nationhood: Ideology, Empirical Reality and Social Scientific Analysis,” *Polish Sociological Review* 3(139 (2002); Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

memory involved silencing the roars of social injustice, and boosting the whispers of social solidarity. Producing historical narratives presenting Polish peasants as respectable but not pitiful subjects turned into a difficult task and very often outgrew the intellectual and artistic skills of authors both talented and faithfully dedicated to democratic ideals. The effects of such intellectual endeavors brought representations full of ambiguities, creating images of second-class citizens.

Such an outcome was also determined by the principle of social solidarism in shaping the images of the national past, and associated with it the tendency to marginalize and downplay the traditions of peasant radicalism in Polish lands. Though Polish history witnessed several revolutionary attempts, including the “Polish Jacobins” (1793-96) active during the Great *Sejm* and the Kościuszko Uprising, the Dąbrowski’s Legion, especially during the First French Republic, and the attempts to abandoned serfdom in Russian Poland by the Reds during the January Uprising, the social revolution occurred in Polish lands only in 1905, with one powerful consequence, which was the activization of the masses, including agrarian workers. As social solidarism prevailed in various currents of national ideology, the historical traditions of peasant radicalism were suppressed in the national master narrative, and displaced by those of peasants of non-Polish ethnicity or nationality: Ukrainians Cossacks, and Germans, Czechs, and Slovaks Protestants. Thus, peasant radicalism could have been easily disguised as a form of a national or religious politics.

The Galician Peasant Rebellion of 1864, one of the most important and most downplayed events in modern Polish history, revitalized the traditional fear and distrust of nineteenth-century elites toward the peasants, and urged reassurance of social solidarism, now under the banner of shared religion. As the national history taught Poles then, and teaches them now, revolutionary

ideas always arrived in Poland as a foreign import. The role of the Catholic Church in inhibiting social radicalism by instilling social discipline is hard to overestimate, as Brian Porter-Szűcs has demonstrated. It is, however, worth remembering the anti-clerical movement among Polish peasants in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly in western Galicia. The only revolution that succeeded in Poland was the long-term, complex national revolution, with its ultimate outcomes and outlets in the form of creating a consensual trans-imperial national identity, the supra-state Polish national institutions and organizations, including the print market in Polish, as well as a national visual and performing arts market. The success of the Polish national project relied on including peasants into those cultural markets. As consumers, they could participate in it either as ethnic or as civic Poles, depending on context and identity choice.

The indefinite content of an iconic representation does not, however, mean that it could be simply fabricated. It means the domination of the rhetorical elements aiming to mobilize emotions over the factual ones. As this dissertation aimed to demonstrate, the national imagination is confined by the national history, and the national history shows a remarkable resistance to merging with fictions that historicized and ennobled the peasants. While with some amount of literary skills it is certainly possible to convincingly inscribe the plot of a fiction into a national history, a national history as a discursive framework of the national ideology imposes impenetrable limits on the national imagination, particularly on creating coherent visions of fictional social relationships. The artistic genres dealing with history have to respect those limits, otherwise they will lose their persuasive power in the realm of the national memory and ideology, and slip into the genre of fantasy, which serves well for creating social and political utopias, but it is hard to sell to those whose sense of social hegemony grows out of their knowledge of history, as their family story.

Since symbolic ennoblement related exclusively to men—as it was a man who carried the legal status of a nobleman, served in the army as well as in the governmental institutions—I used gender as one of the overarching categories in my study. I use the category of symbolic ennoblement as a cluster of meanings, and certainly not as a simplified act of declaring the status of nobility. For that reason, I began my dissertation with investigating the reconstruction, or actually the modern construction, of a peasant as a man. Until the abolishment of the serfdom, peasant masculinity was circumscribed by his physical strength, which allowed him to perform particular tasks, and by his ability to procreate, which endowed him with basic prerogatives in controlling his immediate family. With his patriarchal position and individual personhood being drastically limited by the power of his landlord, his pastor, and their associates, deplorably peasant masculinity had more the quality of livestock than of a human being. The first step for the elites in imagining a peasant man as a citizen was thus to imagine his masculine respectability.

As gender roles and relationships transformed alongside political and economic changes, so was the historical imagination of nineteenth-century Polish elites, as I argued in my work. After the abolition of serfdom, peasant men gained economic power of consumption and investment (in the local church, for instance), and most of all, some of them became political subjects thanks to limited enfranchisement. Those conditions reshaped male peasant personhood, and changed drastically their relationships with peasant women, as well as noblewomen.

The relationship with the latter became a particular interesting case study for me, as the reshaping male peasant gender role as a consequence of the abolition of serfdom contributed to an ongoing process of deterioration of the traditional status of the noblewomen in their family, their estate, and in society. In a sense, it was a noblewoman who symbolically lost the most with

the dismantling of feudal manorial patriarchy, as she lost many of her patriarchal prerogatives. The historical imagination reacted to this contemporary change of gender dynamics, as I demonstrated, by introducing motifs of wartime rape into the narratives of history and casting peasant men in the role of defenders of, now all compatriot women's chastity, particularly the noblewomen, to prevent the racial pollution of the national community.

Yet at the same time the historical national romances consequently downplayed the trope of inter-social romance ending in a marriage, particularly of a nobleman and a serf woman, and certainly not in producing a legitimate offspring.³⁵⁸ On the one hand, the law and ideology of the historical nobility prohibited marital unions between noblewomen and serfs, and claimed that if a nobleman entered into a lawful marriage with his serf, he would lose his noble status. On the other, customs allowed noblemen (and probably noblewomen as well) to access freely the bodies of their serfs. As such was the practice in the first half of the nineteenth century, and social memory about it was still fresh in the second half of the century, painting images of respectable lawful unions between noblemen and serfs was scandalous if not obscene for Polish society. In this respect the national romance went further in presenting a serf woman as an allegory of the people, as a desired, yet naïve, impulsive, inexperienced “eternal feminine” in constant need of guidance. This topos, however, trying to elevate the peasants from the position of children to the position of a beloved wife, and from patriarchal to nuptial relationships did not go far, in spite of its Biblical origins. For generations, which had fresh memory or the first hand knowledge about

³⁵⁸ One famous exception, and famous because of its gender exceptionality, is Eliza Orzeszkowa's novel On the Niemen River (1888). The author uses there a motif of a marriage between a noble woman and a peasant man first as the late medieval family legend, and second as a positively affirmed misalliance in her own times. In his case, however, the first peasant man is ennobled by his work and a union with a noble woman, and the second one is actually petit-noble, but his economic modest status is further boosted by the marriage with a noble woman. Therefore the both peasant men are not quite peasant, and certainly not serfs.

sexual manorial relationships, any hint about it would undermined peasant respectability, particular masculine one, reverting the humiliation of manorial subjugation.

The peasant masculinity and civic personhood grew also at the expense of peasant women. Polish nineteenth-century culture demonstrated even less imagination in including peasant women into the national history. The Mother-Pole, a Polish national version of a model of the Republican Mother, originating from the bourgeois context, yet coming to its full blast in the culture of the nineteenth-century nobility and intelligentsia, was very ill suited for peasant women, as it required a significant amount of a cultural and economical capital to be fulfilled in reality. In consequence, peasant women suffered deep marginalization within the national discourse. Their citizenship was reduced to the ethnic one, as the national discourse called for the biological reproduction of the nation, to the cultural reproduction, mainly by instilling the language and the religion upon children, and to production, mainly in maintaining Polish economic status quo in ethnically diverse areas. Though such a claims found particularly fertile grounds among educated peasants in Prussian Poland, with the Church oppressed by Bismarck and the Colonization Commission, they were less adequate in overpopulated, the Catholic Church and Poles dominated mountain area of Western Galicia. More universally in Polish national discourse, a peasant woman figure as a synonym of a backwardness, class egoism, religious fanaticism, and a major obstacle in the processes of modernization, including integrating the national community.

Re-imagined peasant masculinity found its best embodiment in an idealized image of the Tatra highlander. That ideal emerged form the folk tales of a peasant super-hero Janosik, as well as from tourists' admirations of and fascination with the mountain guides from Zakopane. As fearless guides of the "conquers" the crown of the Tatra, and rescuers to the mountaineers, the

highlanders enjoyed something of a celebrity status among Polish tourists and the readers of the emergence of the Tatra alpinism. It lasted at least to the early twentieth century, when the professional alpinism arrived to the Tatra, with competitiveness and high-tech equipments. As the guides could not longer keep up with the technically advanced methods of the collective mountain climbing, they retreated to the role of guides of regular tourists, and a local ethnic attraction, losing much of their masculine allure. They maintained the sexual appeal among tourist women, as the sources prove, yet lost as object of homosexual desire among their Polish male compatriots.

At the end of the nineteenth-century, the strong, fearless, and fit highlander became an embodiment of Polish national eugenic fantasy about a robust and morally integral, yet simple, Polish peasant, an ideal material for the future soldier of Poland's independence. The physical fitness in this ideal overpowered other potential civic qualities, such as ability to contribute to the national economic growth, not mentioning the intellectual competence to participate in a governmental process. The images coined in the mid-nineteenth century presenting peasants as feral militant masses were distilled to a nameless virile hero, a local version of Nietzschean *Übermensch*, drawn by zealous followers of the author of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in all three Polish partitions. Such a metonymy appeared to be more compelling, as the attempts to turn highlanders into the Polish Scotts or Cossacks proved to be historically and politically impossible.

Apart from an iconic superhero, highlanders continue to appear in roles of helpers or witnesses to the national elites. In those narratives, as in neo-Romantic images of a highlander as a timeless superhero, the full peasant citizenship was a suspended quality. It was a condition which was expected to arrive, but when and where? The national imagination was not able to

answer those questions, only in an allegory so beautifully embodied in a legend about the sleeping knights in the Tatra. The peasant citizenship was believed to ascend as a miracle tied with Poland regaining of independence. That belief echoed Poland's great Romantic poet Zygmunt Krasiński iconic verses from *Psalms of the Future*, written in 1844/45, that is right before the Galician Peasant Rebellion: "One redemption, only one / And a miracle just one, / Polish noblemen with folk, / Like two choirs, with one song."³⁵⁹

In contrast to their neighbors, Polish national culture never fully embraced and assimilated the folk culture, leaving it on the fringes of its mainstream. Entangling of various currents of the national ideology with the idea of the rebirth of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and unsettled ideological relationship between Poland and the Commonwealth, contributed to the definitions of the Polish nation as a noble nation, not the peasant one. This under-appreciation of the folk culture differs Poland from almost all of her neighbors: Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, Slovaks, Czechs, and even Scandinavians.

In complex popular cultural concepts of national identity, Polishness was certainly an ethnic quality, which needed to be taught to the masses, as Brian Porter-Szücs demonstrated. But prior to it, it was perceived by a civic quality of being a noble, both by the nobility and their cultural successors, and by peasants. In 1846 Galician peasant rebels expressed it just right, when they rushed on the manor houses attacking "the Poles," to anticipate the "Poles'" attack on peasants in attempt to extermination. It was only soon after the Galician Rebellion when Oskar Kolberg (1814-1890), the last one of the first generations of Polish ethnographers, initiated his *opus magnum*, the 33-volume *Folk: Its Customs, Ways of Life, Language, Legends, Proverbs, Rituals, Superstitions, Plays, Songs, Music, and Dances*. Written by a son of a German

³⁵⁹ Transl. A. Kusiak-Brownstein.

evangelical father, and French mother, that first and only comprehensive collection in Polish folk culture was published between 1857 and 1890. The Polish Folklore Society (*Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze*) was founded only in 1895. Prior to that time, the Polish elite knew very little, about Polish folk culture, that is, about ethnic Polishness, to say nothing of its appreciation. The only exception was the culture of the highlanders. By 1918 it was strong enough to allow inventing the most compelling and long-lasting military tradition of the highlanders as defenders of Polish southern borders, in form of the Podhale Rifles.

Perhaps, a full and thorough re-evaluation of the place of peasants and folk culture in Polish mainstream culture could had happened during the twentieth century, when the first and second generations of post-peasant intelligentsia were coming to age. The harbingers of such efforts came in works by Jan Kasprowicz, Władysław Orkan, Stanisław Przybyszewski, Franciszek Bujak, and others. Alas, the World War II and Stalinism changed this progress. Right has been Józef Chałasiński, Przemysław Czapliński or Andrzej Leder, which in this period see a moment transformation of the cultural consciousness of the new elites. The social advancement was rapid, and the intellectual work did not adequately followed. The accepting of the “popular Sarmatism” came even easier, as the decimated former elite became absorbed into the communist society and turned invisible. The Polish elite, now post-peasant, became “a natural successor” of the pre-war elite and its state.

The role of the Catholic Church in this process as well as the Communist Party (especially after the nationalist cleansing of 1968), are hard to overestimate. On the one hand the Church, with its clergy in majority coming from small-holders, took over some of the elements of a cultural and a social characteristics of the nobility, as custodians of the national history, the national traditions, and traditional values, in which the idealized noble manor-house became an

essence of true Polish and Catholic identity. On the other hand, the communist *nomenclatura* in the communist everyday life and everyday economics assumed a role of a nation's nobility, a privileged estate, as a governing and exploiting body. The noble nation revived in it highly hybridic form.

Nowadays, as the smallholders are vanishing social group, being replaced by the agrobusiness and suburban type of dwellers, the folk culture slowly loses its ambivalent meanings and becomes an object of fascination. If the future of Polish national identity lays in cultural revision, there is a chance for affirmative embrace of the folk culture, peasant history, and rethink the national one.

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