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Instytutu Kulturoznawstwa
Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie

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The Bible in Ukrainian Literature

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Od redakcji

W numerze 26 (3/2019) prowadziliśmy na łamach „Perspektyw Kultury” dyskusję na temat roli Biblii w kulturze. Z uwagi na istotność tego zagadnienia w dyskusji kulturoznawczej powracamy kolejny raz z tym kontekstem, ale w odniesieniu do motywów biblijnych we współczesnej literaturze ukraińskiej. Nie da się ukryć, że w ciągu ostatnich kilkunastu lat ukraińska tematyka w Polsce przeżywa renesans. Pewną tradycję posiadają również w Polsce badania nad literaturą ukraińską, a polska ukrainistyka osiąga sukcesy zarówno w odniesieniu do językoznawstwa, jak i literaturoznawstwa.

Pierwszym tekstem omawiającym główny temat numeru jest artykuł Natalii Filonenko (Ługański Uniwersytet Narodowy im. Tarasa Szewczenki), która analizuje recepcję fundamentalnego motywu zaczerpniętego z Biblii, czyli przypowieści o Kainie i Abla, we współczesnej literaturze ukraińskiej. Dalej – Tetiana Pavlinchuk (Żytomierski Uniwersytet Państwowy im. Iwana Franki) – nawiązuje do twórczości pisarza ukraińskiego Oleha Honcharova, który w swoim dramacie *Seven Steps to Calvary* przedstawia symbolikę biblijną w kontekście fantasmagorii. Kolejny tekst Tetyany Tkachenko (Kijowski Uniwersytet Narodowy im. Tarasa Szewczenki) również odnosi się do współczesnej literatury ukraińskiej, a dokładniej do prozy Katryny Grynevychowej, która nadaje nowe znaczenie i rozszerza semantykę obrazów religijnych. Ostatnim tekstem w tym dziale jest artykuł napisany przez Nailię Khairulinę (Ługański Uniwersytet Narodowy im. Tarasa Szewczenki). Autorka omawia w nim semiotyczny obraz Judasza Iskarioty w literaturze ukraińskiej z początków ubiegłego stulecia.

W dziale „Zarządzanie międzykulturowe” zespół czterech autorów: Lyazzat M. Sembiyeva, Lyazzat Beisenova, Azyk Shakharova oraz Aida Zhagyparova (Eurazjatycki Uniwersytet Narodowy im. L. Gumilowa) omawia tematykę dotyczącą programów rządowych Republiki Kazachstanu (ich realizacji i wdrażania), w tym również tych związanych z kulturą.

Tekst ks. Tomasza Homy SJ (Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie), umieszczony w dziale „Duchowe dziedzictwo Europy”, jest kontynuacją tematu podjętego przez tego badacza w numerze 26 (3/2019) „Perspektyw

Kultury”. W podjętym studium hermeneutycznym ks. Tomasz Homa SJ analizuje radość i smutek w życiu duchowym według zasad Ignacego Loyoli, a w publikowanej w tym numerze części autor odnosi się do metodologicznych podstaw podjętego tematu.

W dziale „Przetrzenie cyberkultury” ks. Paweł Maciaszek (Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie) porusza problematykę medialnych opisów kultury jako sposobu na poszukiwanie jej prawdziwego oblicza. Autor potwierdza tezę o zróżnicowanym pojmowaniu kultury przez ludzi, którzy jej nie znają, i takich, którzy chcą poznawać ją coraz dokładniej.

W dziale „Varia” zostały zebrane cztery teksty o różnej i interesującej tematyce. Pierwszy, którego autorką jest Sandra Magdalena Kocha (Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy), omawia, w jaki sposób Hans Christian Andersen ukazuje, jak bohaterowie zakotwiczeni w świecie zmysłowym przebywają długą drogę, by odnaleźć świat, który wymyka się racjonalnemu poznaniu. Ta droga jest określana „drogą miłości” oraz „drogą jaskini”. W kolejnym tekście Katarzyna Rutkowska (Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski) oraz Anna Rut przedstawiają własne badania dotyczące wybranych aspektów rytuałów okołostartowych piłkarek. Autorki wykazały, że rytuały to przede wszystkim istotny element funkcjonowania zawodników i są stałym elementem każdej ceremonii sportowej. Ponadto stanowią ciekawe, nierzadko intrygujące i wręcz magiczne ubarwienie rywalizacji sportowej. Dalej – w tekście Beaty Bigaj-Zwonek (Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie) powracamy do Biblii. Autorka omawia motyw religijny w polskiej sztuce współczesnej na przykładzie ukrzyżowania. Tekst udowadnia, że dzisiaj motyw religijny stanowi pretekst do różnorodnych wypowiedzi artystycznych, które dotyczą religii, problemów społecznych oraz wewnętrznych przeżyć samych twórców. Zamykającym numer tekstem jest artykuł Beaty Stuchlik-Surowiak (Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach), która zajęła się problematyką kobiet zbójniczek z XV stulecia. Bohaterki tekstu, przebrane za mężczyzn, napadały na dwory i wozy kupieckie. Artykuł przybliżył dzieje życia tych kobiet oraz zestawia informacje na temat ich rozbójniczej działalności, które zachowały się w dawnych kronikach.

Zapraszamy do lektury!

Łukasz Burkiewicz – kulturoznawca, historyk i ekonomista kultury. Adiunkt w Instytucie Kulturoznawstwa Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie. Jego zainteresowania naukowe są związane z dziejami kultury państw basenu Morza Śródziemnego w średniowieczu i epoce nowożytnej. Zajmuje się również podróżami średniowiecznymi. W kręgu jego badań znajdują się ponadto kwestie związane z zarządzaniem, marketingiem i ekonomiką kultury.

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From the Editors

Issue 26 (3/2019) of the journal *Perspectives on Culture* discussed the role of the Bible in culture. Owing to the importance of this topic in cultural studies, we are revisiting this context, but with reference to biblical motifs in contemporary Ukrainian literature. It cannot be denied that over the past dozen or so years, Ukrainian subject matter in Poland has been undergoing a revival, especially if we look at it through the prism of the economic situation (Ukrainians' migration to Poland). Research on Ukrainian literature is also a tradition in Poland, and Polish Ukrainian studies achieve success in both linguistics and literary studies. In order to continue the scholarship on the role of the Bible in culture, we undertook the task of exploring this problem in relation to Ukrainian literature and culture.

The first text that discusses the leading topic of the issue is an article by Natalia Filonenko (Taras Shevchenko Lugansk National University), who analyzes the reception of the fundamental Bible motif, i.e., the parable of Cain and Abel, in contemporary Ukrainian literature. Tetiana Pavlinchuk (Ivan Franko Zhytomyr State University) refers to the oeuvre of the Ukrainian writer Oleg Goncharov, who presents biblical symbolism in the context of phantasmagoria in his play *Seven Steps to Calvary*. Another article, written by Tetiana Tkachenko (Taras Shevchenko National University, Kiev), also focuses on contemporary Ukrainian literature, and more specifically on the prose of Katrya Grynevycheva, who bestows new meanings on and expands the semantics of religious images. The last text in this section is an article written by Nailia Khairulin (Taras Shevchenko National University, Lugansk). The author examines the semiotic image of Judas Iscariot in Ukrainian literature from the beginning of the previous century.

The four authors featured in the Cross-Cultural Management section—Lyazzat Sembiyeva, Lyazzat Beisenova, Aliya Shakharova, and Aida Zhagyparova (L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University) talk about government programs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (their design and implementation), including those related to cultural areas.

Father Tomasz Homa's essay (Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow), included in the European Spiritual Heritage section, is a continuation of

the writer's earlier thoughts expounded in Issue 26 (3/2019) of *Perspectives on Culture*. In this hermeneutic essay, Fr. Tomasz Homa SJ analyzes joy and sadness in spiritual life according to the principles of Ignatius of Loyola, and, in this part, the author addresses the methodological foundations of the topic.

In the Areas of Cyberculture section, Fr. Paweł Maciaszek (Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow) raises the issue of media descriptions of culture as a way to search for culture's true face. The author confirms his thesis about the diverse understanding of culture by people who do not know it and those who want to learn more about it.

Four texts on various interesting subjects were collected in the Varia section. In the first article, Sandra Magdalena Kocha (Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz), discusses selected fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen. The author shows how characters anchored in the sensual world travel a long way, referred to as the "path of love" and the "path of the cave," to find a world that escapes rational cognition. In the next text, Katarzyna Rutkowska and Anna Rut (Catholic University of Lublin) present their own research on selected aspects of rituals performed by female football players. The authors demonstrate that rituals are primarily an important part of athletes' functioning and are a fixed element of every sports ceremony. In addition, they are an interesting, often intriguing, and even magical enrichment of sports competition. In Beata Bigaj-Zwonek's essay (Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow) we return to the Bible. The author discusses the religious trope of the crucifixion in contemporary Polish art. The text proves that today the religious motif is a pretext for a variety of artistic statements on religion, social problems, and the inner experiences of the artists themselves. The closing text is an article by Beata Stuchlik-Surowiak (University of Silesia in Katowice), which describes the representations of female robbers from the 15th century. The heroines of the text, dressed up as men, attacked castles and merchant carts. The article introduces the lives of these women and compares information about their robberies that has survived in ancient chronicles.

Have a pleasant reading!

Łukasz Burkiewicz—Cultural studies scholar, historian, economist of culture, and Assistant Professor at the Institute of Cultural Studies at the Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow. His scholarly interests are related to the cultural history of the Mediterranean region in the Middle Ages and the modern age. He also deals with medieval travels. His research includes issues related to cultural management, marketing, and economics.

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The Artistic Reception of the Bible Legend about Cain and Abel in Modern Ukrainian Literature

ABSTRACT

The article investigates the reception of the biblical tale of Cain and Abel in the story by A. Zabuzhko *Kazka pro kalinovu sopilku* (*The tale of Cain's Flute*) and the poem by O. Irwanec, *Braty* (*Brothers*). The subject of the study were the forms and methods of interpreting traditional motifs and images.

The biblical legend, its folklore and literary interpretations were selected as the basis for the considerations (J.H. Byron, I. Franko). Following an anti-religious trend in the treatment of traditional images, the authors created a postmodern version of Cain—a murderer and victim at the same time. The material of the Cainic tale also served the writers to address the issue of the relationship between extraordinary personalities and the average ones, and the lesser value of the first in the eyes of God. The result of the study are conclusions about the nature of postmodern reinterpretation of literary tradition in the works of A. Zabuzhko and O. Irwanec.

KEYWORDS: Bible legend, postmodernism, reinterpretation, reception, traditional motives and images

STRESZCZENIE

Artystyczna recepcja biblijnej legendy o Kainie i Ablu we współczesnej literaturze ukraińskiej

Artykuł eksploruje recepcję biblijnej opowieści o Kainie i Ablu w opowiadaniu *Kazka pro kalinovu sopilku* (*Baśń o Kainowej fujarce*) O. Zabużko i dziele poetyckim *Braty* (*Bracia*) O. Irwanec. Przedmiotem studium stały się formy i sposoby interpretacji motywów i reprezentacji tradycyjnych. Jako podstawę rozważań wybrano folklorystyczne i literackie interpretacje opowieści biblijnej (J.H. Byron, I. Franko). Ich autorzy, wpisując się w antyreligijną tendencję przetwarzania obrazów tradycyjnych, stworzyli postmodernistyczną wersję Kaina – mordercy i ofiary zarazem. Materiał opowieści o Kainie posłużył pisarzom także jako możliwość odniesienia się do kwestii relacji pomiędzy osobowościami niezwykłymi a zwyczajnymi ludźmi oraz mniejszej wartości

tych pierwszych dla Boga. Wynikiem rozważań są wnioski na temat natury postmodernistycznej reinterpretacji tradycji literackiej w pracy O. Zabuzhko i O. Irvanec.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: powieść biblijna, postmodernizm, reinterpretacja, recepcja, obrazy i motywy tradycyjne

Artistic reception of the Biblical tale about fratricide has a long history in Ukrainian literature, but for most artists it was not the entire story that became a subject for interpretation, but the image of Cain as the first embodiment of the criminal-rebel on earth (Franko, *Smert' Kajina* [Cain's death], Kobyljanska, *Zemlja* [*The earth*], Janowskyj, *Wershnyky* [*Riders*], Zemljak, *Lebedyna zgraja* [Swan flock], Sosyur, *Kajin* [Cain], Rubchak, *Kajinovi* [Cain's tribe], etc.). The biblical story provided writers with space for raising important existential, moral, philosophical, and social problems. Perhaps this is why the problem of transformation of biblical scenes and images in literature today remains one of the most pressing issues, as evidenced by numerous studies (Hundorov, Ilnytskyj, Pavlichko, Sulima, Tyholoz, et al.). The main research interest was the adaptation of the Biblical canon texts of individual writers and deciphering the authors' interpretations of traditional motifs and images.

The aim of our study is to demonstrate that the reception of the Cain image in the artistic creativity of Zabuzhko and Irvanec is relevant in the context of the Cainic literary discourse while at the same time it is marked by originality. Considering the novel by Zabuzhko *Kazka pro kalinovu sopilku* (*The tale of Cain's Flute*) and the poem by Irvanec, *Braty* (*Brothers*), we shall define which elements of the biblical story were the subject of the reception and what was the purpose of their use.

The research on the current reception of the eternal images and stories are worth considering from the position of exercising a multidisciplinary approach that includes the views of modernist and postmodernist philosophies, elements of psychoanalysis, mythological, post-colonial and feminist criticism, on top of structuralism. This research is motivated by the eclecticism of the artistic practice. In our exploration we shall use the achievements of mythological criticism, literary-historical, typological and comparative psychoanalytic approaches.

Considering the novel by Zabuzhko, researchers traditionally emphasize its folk sources (Ageeva, Bashkirov, Goloborodko, Pavliuk), as the interpreted biblical foundation works somewhat superficially and seems detached from folklore. The poem by Irvanec remains unnoticed in literature studies who generally determines the relevance of our study.

The researcher Vardevanyan notes that the traditional elements, for a fundamental rethinking of the Cainic story in folklore and literature, are the circumstances, motivation, and the effects of fratricide. Already George Byron started the tradition of clarifying the ethical and philosophical categories in the material of the biblical legend of Cain and Abel. The anti-religious essence of his Cain manifested in the disagreement with the fact that God is the embodiment of goodness: “’Twas his will, And he is good.//How know I that? Because He is all—powerful, must all—good, too, follow?” (Byron, 2002)

The tale of Cain’s Flute by Zabuzhko classified the biblical fratricide story in the typology of the folk stories about the old man’s and old woman’s daughters. However, the writer’s interest is not in the Biblical story in general, but the fratricide motif (which is transformed under the influence of folk tradition in into a sororicide motif) and the folk interpretation of punishment for this sin associated with the lunar myth that was productive in the work of the Romantics:

Daddy, what is this dark spot on the Moon? ... That, Basil said, is the brother who stabbed the other brother with a fork. There were two brothers, Cain and Abel, and God placed them above the ground, for people to see, and to not forget that sin. (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 79)

An original interpretation of the biblical legend by Zabuzhko is delivered through the prism of her character Annie. The little girl who first saw the spots on the moon and heard the legend of Cain and Abel could not understand why God punished both brothers (“if they are put there for punishment, why were they both punished equally?” (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 79) and why was God so cruel and malicious: “how can God ever keep them there on the Moon, especially impaled on the fork ... Doesn’t that hurt him?” (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 79). As an adult, she again turns to the biblical narrative, but now she is bothered by another question: “Why did the Lord accept Abel’s sacrifice, and not Cain’s?” (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 110). And, thinking about it, Annie realizes that Cain did not “raise the fork against his brother for nothing” (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 110) but in rebel against the injustice perpetrated by God. Apparently, the Cainic spirit of protest against God and “the highest injustice,” the ardent disobedience inherent in Annie, could have made it into Zabuzhko’s created character of Anna as the image of the Ukrainian Cain-woman. That this is not a copy of the traditional literary image but a self-standing image with a corresponding semantic content, is indicated by those postulates, against which the heroine rises, accusing God:

She shouted at the sky above covered with twisting clouds ... at Him who was sitting there, never allowing her to look at His face, and the echo of her mighty laughter sounded in the forest, like the noise of an invisible army: *And what do you know!* (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 117)

The writer uses the biblical legend in her reconsideration of the folk story, its inlaying as a palimpsest, while the story of the sisters shows the author's interpretation of the well-known folk motif. The comparison of Zabuzhko to the proto-text and its folk interpretation occurs in the context of the central problems of the work: the struggle and the origins of love and hate, good and evil. Researchers usually correlated the image of Annie with the negative character of the old woman's daughter and the image of Lena with the positive one of the old man's daughter. However, the author's concept does not provide for such unambiguous characterization of the women. Anna

particularly wanted to break the limits dictated by birth, family laws to break away from women's fate, and became hostage to the myth of the happy marriage as the highest female achievement, the beautiful princess in a crystal unattainable tower, who is waiting for the liberator-prince to come. (Ahyeyeva, 2003, p. 296–297)

Anna takes an interest in the history of the biblical brothers when she herself begins to feel the injustice of society's attitude to her and to Lena. Anna predicts the murder of her sister at the beginning of the book: Lena tried to arouse her sister's anger by all she did:

in fact, the only thing Helen seeks is to see Annie's anger come out, only that, and nothing more, as though this anger was the goose, which Olenka was instructed to watch over ... so, Helen watched over the goose and the goose fed itself and grew until it became enormous. And was it beautiful. (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 78)

The poetic work *Brothers* by Irvanec adds its own interpretation of the images of the Cain and Abel. In the poem, the biblical motive of the crime and punishment fades into the background, and in Cain's doubts are subject to interpretation. Cain does not dare to commit murder, but not thanks to the understanding of the despicability of such a deed, or fear the Lord's ire, but out of with reluctance to help create a halo of martyrdom around Abel.

This original reception ponders moral and ethical concepts of good. Cain is frightened by Abel's "goodness," "kindness," "silent love" and "humble grief." Cain recognizes the murder which he is intended to commit, as a "good deed" because will turn Abel into an innocent sacrifice: "I am

a good brother. // My name is Cain // But I have failed to kill” (Irvanec, 1991, p. 46). As one can see, the poet’s reception of the biblical legend fits into the anti-religious tradition in interpreting the image of Cain, but also presents its new version. The Cain of Irvanec is not actually against God, but against Christian morals, the virtues of which are humility and sacrifice. Abandoning the murder of Abel, Cain punishes him for his kindness and humility that he considers wicked because Abel refuses to defend himself, deliberately choosing becoming the sacrificial victim:

Sneakily innocent,
You shall fall upon the earth,
And the proper name Cain
Will be the one for all bringers of death.
And you, obedient and humble,
And yours shall be forever
The name of the hapless victim.
Brother Abel!
I shall not kill you.
Now, go (Irvanec, 1991, p. 46)

O. Irvanec rethinks not only the image of Cain, and through the prism of his mind, also the image of Abel. By changing the polarity of the traditional characters, the reader is presented with the “good brother Cain,” who failed to kill Abel with the evil “heavenly dream,” “that I [Kain] will kill you one day” (Irvanec, 1991, p. 46). With such a reconsideration, Irvanec places axiological accents on the binary opposition Cain-Abel, the corresponding Cainic positions that interpret Cain as the chosen one, the bearer of a higher power, and Abel as figure marked by weakness and forgettable.

Zabuzhko and Irvanec alike generally follow the trend of anti-religious interpreting of the image of Cain, by modernizing its reinterpretation of the literary tradition (started in world literature by George Byron, and in Ukrainian literature by Franko). In the opinion of Vardevanyan “modernist paradigm of Cain the criminal transforms Cain into a victim; post-modern mythology also creates an ambivalent mythologeme of a contradictory personality that is both the killer and victim” (Vardevanyan, 2008, p. 13). The Cain of Irvanec and Anna of Zabuzhko are striking examples of this postmodern concept: for both authors it is the most important not to justify crime, but to rehabilitate a murderer, understand them and forgive. But if Irvanec’s poem, rethinks ethical categories by a natural reversibility between the concepts of good, evil, the novel by Zabuzhko develops the idea that evil breeds evil only.

In the above interpretation of the Cainic plot also presents the problem of the relations between a an exceptional person and the average one,

while the latter seems preferred by God: “He favors only His wretched creatures, only the poor in spirit are dear to Him, while the best and strongest ... He persecutes and humiliates, and He rewards the small for fear that His reign be not taken from Him” (Zabuzhko, 2004, p. 116). As the Cain of Irvanec explains the fact of Abel being chosen by God due to his humility and gentleness, the devil of Zabuzhko explains it as his insignificance and poverty of spirit.

As one can see, the artistic reception of the biblical tale of Cain and Abel in the works of Zabuzhko and Irvanec has a very original character and deserves further attention in literature studies.

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Emptiness Effect, or What Lost Symbols Say
(on the Basis of the Drama *Seven Steps to Golgotha*
by Oleg Goncharov)

ABSTRACT

Bible themes and story lines have always been of interest in Ukrainian literature. In recent decades, creative rethinking of biblical codes and symbols has taken place, especially in themes connected with questions of faith, truth, prophecy, sacrifice, kindness, malice, etc. The contemporary Ukrainian writer Oleh Goncharov gives coverage to this issue in his drama *Seven Steps to Golgotha*. This article deals with the problem of a biblical symbol, experiencing alienation, losing its own symbolic meaning, and creating emptiness. This emptiness, however, is only visible because a new meaning replaces it, gains another meaning, and becomes a new symbol. Phantasmagoria—the genre of the play chosen by its author—makes it possible to use various approaches and experiments, to organize the plot's chronology, to justifying the characters' actions, and arrange a story line, in particular.

KEYWORDS: phantasmagoria, biblical symbol, false prophecy, biblical and prophetic discourse, alienation of a biblical symbol

STRESZCZENIE

Efekt pustki, czyli o czym mówią ustracone symbole (według dramatu Olega Honczarowa *Siedem kroków do Golgoty*)

Tematy biblijne zawsze były aktualne w literaturze ukraińskiej. Obecnie trwa artystyczny namysł nad biblijnymi kodami i symbolami, zwłaszcza tematami związanymi z zagadnieniami wiary, prawdy, proroctwa, dobroczynności, dobra, zła. Współczesny pisarz ukraiński Oleg Honczarow podaje interpretacje wymienionych problemów w dramacie *Siedem kroków do Golgoty*. W artykule rozpatrywany jest fenomen utraty znaczenia przez symbol biblijny i powstanie pustki na jego miejscu. Ta pustka zaś wydaje się pozorna, ponieważ w tym miejscu pojawia się nowy sens, który staje się nowym symbolem. Autor traktuje swój utwór jako fantasmagorię, co pozwala mu na

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użycie różnych eksperymentów i chwytów literackich, organizację czasu i przestrzeni, wyjaśnienie zachowania się bohaterów, opracowanie szczegółów fabuły.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: fantasmagoria, biblijny symbol, fałszywy prorok, biblijny prorocki dyskurs, alienacja symbolu biblijnego

The author of the play which is the subject of my analysis—Oleg Goncharov (Гончаров Олег Васильович)—is a writer, playwright, poet, and composer. He was born in 1953 in the Lviv region of Ukraine. He is the author of the novel *The Main Target of the Attack* as well as 19 dramas, over 100 humorous stories, poetry, and musical pieces.

Seven Steps to Golgotha 2 is the second version of the play. The first version was published in the collection *Strike of Illusion: An Anthology of Contemporary Ukrainian Drama* (Goncharov, 2004, p. 370). It has stirred up the interest of researchers, especially that of O. Bondareva (2008, pp. 259–275) and O. Kogut (2010, pp. 195–200) and has been thoroughly critiqued and studied from various angles: obvious biblical allusions, characteristics of the plot, the contemporary context of Ukrainian dramaturgy, the moral and ethical order, the archetypes found in the text, stylistic drawing according to the principles of Antoni Artaud’s “theater of cruelty” and Bertolt Brecht’s “epic theater,” etc.

To begin with, let me briefly outline the plot of the play in question. The events take place “somewhere in the desert.” The time of the story is also undetermined. The main character, Japheth, thinks of himself as the Messiah; he hews a cross for himself to climb Golgotha and gain the fame of the Messiah. On his way to Golgotha, he is accompanied by Devilar, the Owner of Time, who—ironically and accusingly—comments on the story of the self-proclaimed Messiah, but does not interfere in the course of events. Here, the Messiah is the antipode of the Christian savior, because his history is criminal, and in Devilar’s description, he is the embodiment of sin itself. While drunk, Japheth kills his wife and maid and, placing a cross on his back, goes to the city of Keilah. There, he begins to preach freedom and justice, persuades the people to revolt, appears in the castle of Joda—the king of Keilah—who would not mind playing the role of Pilate. Japheth stays in the castle, stirs up intrigues, gains the king’s trust, and after his foretold death in the pit with vipers, he becomes king of Keilah.

In the second act, the self-proclaimed Messiah makes full use of his royal power. The philosophical aphorisms, thanks to which he builds the illusion of a preacher, are now uttered less often, while acts of revenge crime and debauchery occur more frequently. The subjects of the late King Joda,

who become subordinate to the new king, hate him and scheme against him. Dissatisfied, miserable, and suspicious, Japheth-Messiah does not give up his dream of climbing Golgotha, and thus proving the omnipotence and fame of God, without the fact of crucifixion. Japheth-king forces his subjects to build Golgotha, which becomes a symbol of his crime.

During a phantasmagoric crucifixion, the souls killed by Japheth appear as a symbol of higher punishment. Japheth is crucified by his friends who served him out of fear rather than obedience. For Japheth, resurrection, which was prepared for the Messiah according to the biblical myth, becomes a punishment for his sins, because it lays the foundation for further crucifixions every five years, i.e., eternal dying.

Goncharov's play can be interpreted on three levels: the biblical symbols themselves, the loss of symbolic meaning, and the new meaning they attain.

The biblical symbols include the cross, the donkey, Golgotha, the crown of thorns, the number seven, names, and others.

The biblical symbols lose their original meaning (a blind donkey turns the well wheel; a wreath of thorns on which spikes are regularly cut so that it does not pierce the forehead when worn everyday; the main character hews the cross by himself, tries it on to check whether it is comfortable, and uses it as a bed; the unfulfilled miracle of the descent into the pit with vipers is a result of an error; named characters do not fulfill the roles assigned to them). Compared to the real torments of Christ, the need to have a comfortable cross seems absurd. Japheth makes it easy for him to wear. And if "the road is far" to Golgotha, then considering the repetitiveness of Japheth's death and resurrection, this is an eternal Golgotha.

The biblical symbols acquire a new meaning. Japheth has achieved his goal—to become a god on Earth and to experience unlimited power in human understanding within a short time. This is a primitive identification of God with only power, not with sacrifice; with selfishness, not with altruism. Devilar's banal (at first glance) idea that God exists as long as people believe in him becomes true for Japheth at the moment of his crucifixion and condemnation to eternal dying. The crucifixion is a sign of the return to the original meaning. Japheth is crucified as punishment for the crimes he has committed, so his crucifixion stands as the crucifixion of a false prophet. This artistic vision of the Gospel motif leaves the viewer to think about the roots of evil.

The biblical context is already manifest at the level of composition: the first act of the play consists of seven scenes, symbolizing the steps to Golgotha; in the second act, the symbolic "Golgotha" of Japheth, calling himself a god on earth, begins: his spiritual and physical torments foretell his infamous death. The hero's behavior and mood change radically: "My

wrists and feet are starting to hurt. I'm starting to think I have wounds on them"; "The back of my head burns like fire and I feel drowsy" (Goncharov, 2009). The seven deaths suffered at the hands of Japheth and the seven mortal sins are also symbolic.

Based on the biblical myth, used as a matrix, a literary myth is created, the purpose of which is to rethink the most important human truths, the possibility of a true prophet or a false prophet appearing. Although there are many different truths, certain truths are inviolable, especially the eternal understanding of good and evil, truth and untruth, and sin and punishment. The language and the play's ending confirm the causal link between the events and they form the context in which the drama can be interpreted as a return to Christian values, for example, to a just punishment for evil. Japheth's punishment—reliving his evil deeds every five years: killing his wife, arriving in Keilah, and being crucified—create an image of eternal death.

The author's artistic conception is to highlight the fact that the biblical symbol seemingly loses its sacred meaning. Even the first meeting of Devilar and Japheth produces the effect of denying God:

MESSIAH: (*surprised*) Do you know my real name?

DEVILAR: I know everything about everyone.

MESSIAH: (*insolently*) You are lying! A man can't know everything!
(*Smiling with a sneer*) Maybe you're God?

DEVILAR: Fortunately not. I did better in life. (Goncharov, 2009)

Devilar renounces the possibility of being God: in the drama he takes on a fantastical character, be it a higher judge, a higher adviser, a demon tempter, or a man who prognosticates all events and is able to anticipate the future punishment for crimes. His "sandals not covered in dust" and sarcastic comments on Japheth's life do not correspond to the traditional visual images of God. In his thoughts about "misery and disapproval of excellent figures," Jean Paul draws on the comments of the aesthetician Buterwek that "the greatest thief can, from an aesthetic point of view, sometimes be more charitable than the greatest virtue." He concludes from this statement that, aesthetically, "a demon is more attractive than god" (Asmut, 2014, p. 92). By introducing Devilar to the play, the playwright seems to "transfer" theatre direction "into the hands" of fate. Compared with the symbolism of the demonic Devilar as a representative of a higher authority—the Owner of Time—Japheth-Messiah becomes an even greater demon: the embodiment of sin itself.

With the distorted understanding of reality, the understanding of death also changes. The Gospel story of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection

presents an image of death as the most terrible event of human existence. The Passion of Christ—this is how the suffering of the crucified Son of God is defined; his suffering has no equal. Goncharov represents the degeneration of a human being in such a dimension that death is no longer a tragedy, but an ordinary affair, a path to illusory liberation:

Now everything.... If the past cannot be fixed, it must be eliminated.
I think I did the right thing killing them. Sooner or later someone would
kill them! Aren't there enough bloodthirsty bandits wandering the desert!
It's better to die from my axe (Goncharov, 2009)

Rationalizing your own actions justifies all crime and creates its own separate truth, which leads to almightiness.

The sarcastic mood of the play makes one doubt the possibility of the prophet's coming. Joda states that "in our day, the Messiah can neither appear nor be born at all! We are not going through the end of the world now" (Goncharov, 2009). The coming of a false prophet is occasioned by the statement that a true prophet cannot appear, and his fate becomes the sign of a prophecy: a punishment for sins.

The symbolism of names also makes up the biblical prophetic discourse used in the text. Japheth (this is the real name of the Messiah in the play) was one of Noah's sons and is one of the founders of humanity; Esau, nicknamed Edom, was Isaac's older brother; Raphael was one of the seven archangels. I would like to draw special attention to the name Joad. In *Saints' Lives*, gathered by Dmitry Rostovsky, we find a story about the prophet Joad, who came from Samaria and was summoned by God to reveal the worship of the idols of the Israeli king, Jeroboam. There, God forbade the prophet to eat bread, drink water, and travel back the same road he came. A prophet foretold Jeroboam's death from God, but on his return the king did not obey God's command and tasted the food which the false prophet Emwe offered to him. For this, the prophet Joad was killed by a lion, but his body was intact and he was buried near the home of the prophet who had tempted him (Rostovsky, 1906, p. 608). Goncharov's Joad dies in a pit with vipers in front of the eyes of a false prophet.

The discussion on the subject of true prophecy and false prophecy is not new in Ukrainian literature. For example, Volodymyr Vynnychenko referred to this theme in the play *Prophet*, whose first title was *Messiah* (1930). In this play, the death of the main character, the prophet Amar, is an illusion of the resurrection. In Vynnychenko's text, the clash of ideas, the struggle for the truth of this or that theory, revolves around the desire to be needed by society, to shape one's life according to one's beliefs and principles, the fulfillment of which guarantees happiness. Human sacrifice (the

prophet Amar's death), which is supposed to be a liberation and rescue, is the basis for the emergence of new beliefs against the backdrop of previous ones. We discern the thought that "all truth can be turned into a lie and a lie into the truth" (Vynnychenko, 2003, p. 269). Everything depends only on the inner calling and perseverance in following one's principles. The blurred boundary between truth and lie is justified by the illusion of the possibility of introducing general happiness. Characteristic of Vynnychenko, the tendency to emphasize the meaning carried by the concepts of morality–amorality, truth–lies, and good–evil centers on the idea of increasing the happiness of humanity. On the other hand, Goncharov draws attention to the lack of any positive idea and the need to do good to another. The idea of messiahship, pseudo-messiahship, and power is associated only with one's own benefit and focusing on one's own goods.

Vynnychenko searched for harmony: he was on the side of a society that was not spoiled by civilization, living in harmony with nature, with one's desires, thoughts, and actions, "in accordance with word and deed" (Pavlinchuk, 2010). Amar's offering of himself for preserving and spreading the theory is not self-denial; on the contrary, God who has ceased to be God and approximates man in experiencing his feelings, ascends to heaven, gaining recognition and fame. The problem of the development of his theory and its adequate (true) interpretation lies with his successors (Pavlinchuk, 2010, p. 157).

In his drama, Oleg Goncharov unveils the linguistic construction of the text. Devilar formulates a philosophical context: "I am time, and time belongs to both good and evil"; "You won't wash it from the inside [of your head]. Your thoughts are too dirty" (Goncharov, 2009). Japheth-Messiah formulates a series of new pseudo-commandments of the earthly God: "Dirty thoughts are born out of a dirty life"; "Wanting to embark on a difficult path leading to a noble goal, it is foolish to stuff your pockets with gold and burden your heart with friendship and goodness"; "A weight that is lightly carried becomes light"; "Criminals don't need a teacher. They need a hangman"; "When the truth is at work—mercy is out of place"; "A man with a purpose should have a hardy heart"; "If you want to be considered God, forget about fear"; "Earthly God should feel nothing but his own grandeur"; "If you have a good head on your shoulders, you will reach Golgotha at the expense of a people who believes in you!"; "My people will build Golgotha or die!"; "Revenge must be long-lived"; etc. (Goncharov, 2009).

The sacred quality of the word, its purpose, and its power are defined in the first verses of St. John's Gospel "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1). The word contains spiritual information and meaning and the divine code. Goncharov presents the consequences of using the word not for its original biblical purpose, but for evil: "I've always been fascinated by

people like you.... People who have achieved fame ... and who were able to use [it] in their favor at the right moment. The word, as well as one's own example, can even change the course of history" (Goncharov, 2009). Japheth-Messiah creates the illusion of prophecy.

The idea of an apostolate—which involves faith, obedience, and service—is also connected with the subject of prophecy and messianism. The appearance of Geriniy, an accidental student, builds up a picture of the relationship of the new Messiah and his disciple, based on a mutually beneficial agreement. While the New-Testament Christ included Matthew, a tax collector, among his apostles, we know Geriniy to be a robber who is still following the same path, which he believes to be a necessity:

MESSIAH: Can you read?

GERINIY: Of course, sometimes we robbed people who had books with them. As it turned out, reading books is a lot more enjoyable than robbing and murdering. However, reading books alone will not keep us alive. (Goncharov, 2009)

These words appeal to the conscience of anyone who explains or justifies their actions with a higher necessity—difficult living conditions or a collapse of spirituality in general. The desert where New-Testament Jesus preached and fed the crowd of people with two fish here becomes a test for humanity: the one who has strength has power.

GERINIY: And what, are you going to just kill me like a lamb?

MESSIAH: You just wanted to do the same to me a moment ago. What has changed suddenly in the universe?

GERINIY: The rules of the game have changed. Now you have a knife in your hand. (Goncharov, 2009)

Geriniy's mundane musings on good and evil become rationalized and correspond to primitive thinking and a utilitarian understanding of charity: "You can become a craftsman or bake bread. Only then you will have to start paying taxes. When I stop robbing, I'll give others the opportunity to rob me" (Goncharov, 2009). The problem here is as follows: the force used to fight evil is also evil. Not reacting to evil and being passive also serve evil. Such sophisms lead to a vicious circle of ideas and understanding of reality.

Goncharov equips his characters with the ability to understand primitive human instincts and to use this knowledge to their advantage. Accepting Jesus's teachings did not earn fame, respect, and wealth on earth; it did not entail success, but persecution. In contrast, the Messiah and Herynij assume that their messianism will be a complete success:

GERINIY: Take me with you.

MESSIAH: Why do I need you?

GERINIY: In squares full of people I could wash your tired legs. Slaves like to see the suffering of free citizens. (Goncharov, 2009)

The characters in this play are divided so that everyone expresses thoughts on good and evil, but at the beginning of the play those characters that stand on the opposite side of the main character leave the stage: Cassinia (Pure Soul), Rovena, and Hannah. The benevolent motives are veiled by sinister ones, which gives the impression of an absolute triumph of evil. Within the long dialogues, there are discussions in which everyone tries to expose their own truth or rationally justify the victory of evil:

RAPHAEL: The death of a treasurer always gives rise to rumors. The more reliable the treasurer was, the more ignominious the rumors are. It always has been and always will be so. There is no place for an honest soul in this world. In our world, an honest man is a gladiator who should fight with his own hands against lions released to hound him. (Goncharov, 2009)

It can be seen in the play that supporters of the royal court and evildoers do not recognize their own guilt in eradicating faith in the existence of good. Cassinia the Pure Soul, Rovena, and Hannah, however, come back to that world at the time of the crucifixion of Japheth-Messiah.

You can also see here the symbolic problem of humans' responsibility for their fate: "Messiah is not a name," the Owner of Time warns Japheth. "Messiah is a fate" (Goncharov, 2009). We witness the misunderstanding of fate determined by the name when Japheth travels up Golgotha in the company of the thief Isavrikos. Japheth does not want to share the fame that will befall him as the only God; he cannot imagine it happening otherwise:

ISAVRIKOS: I will go with you.... I will even help you carry the cross!

MESSIAH: (*angrily*) What?!! Can you help? You want to help me carry the cross?! But this is my cross. (Goncharov, 2009)

According to the biblical myth, Jesus was crucified alongside two criminals. In Goncharov's play, Isavrikos pulls nails from under his belt and, along with the other highwayman, Herynij, completes the crucifixion. The earthly God, the embodiment of sin itself, is condemned to eternal dying, and becomes the God of death.

The author describes his drama as a phantasmagoria, which allows him to use a variety of literary devices and experiments, especially when it comes to the organization of space-time. The framework—the same

beginning and ending of the play (Messiah hews the cross, kills his wife, then sets off in search of his own Golgotha) anticipates the repetition of the plot and logically evokes the questions of when the audience meets the main character for the first time and whether this situation is taking place for the first, second, or maybe hundredth time. The main character in the play wakes up from his slumber, which suggests a conventionality to what is happening. The setting is also not specified, only “somewhere in the desert.” A reality is conjured up before the reader that relates to eternal themes and plots.

The phantasmagoric context is also maintained by the combination of polycultural traditional elements of mythology: ancient (the constant climbing up the Golgotha [a mountain] with the cross [the stone of Sisyphus]); medieval European (an astrologer who brews a potion of immortality for the king); and fantastical (Devilar, the Owner of Time, and his role—be it a sage, a demon, or a tempter). This confirms the existence of eternal truths that possess meaning beyond any named or proclaimed space, beyond any proclaimed earthly God, and are inimitable.

The plot is a series of events that are perceived as an arbitrary convention and used not in order to characterize the self-proclaimed Messiah, but to visualize the sin/crime itself. Naturalistic images of killing, cynical statements, worldviews which are not based on any principles, and mental pathologies are the embodiment of evil.

The postmodern era announced the destruction and secularization of the most important human values, leaving humankind lost. After realizing this fact, we can suppose that there will be a return of lost values, and a recognition of their existence also separately from the traditional understanding of God. In this context, Kuart’s utterance, which he tried to prove to Japheth, also plays an important role: “God is higher than human sins” (Goncharov, 2009).

The plot of the “reverse Gospel” (Bondareva, 2008), the secularized display of Christian values and the distorted elucidation of Christian truths, is not an end in itself or a bold repudiation of universal truths characteristic of postmodern literature—this lost meaning of Christian symbolism receives a new, literal sense, not an allegorical incarnation. The void that appears in place of the lost symbol returns to its sources and receives its original meaning, thus forming a new symbol with a new meaning.

Seven Steps to Golgotha, the philosophical drama by Oleg Goncharov, raises the problem of human existence, essence, and destiny. When the characters realize the finality of human life and experience the fear of death, it conjures up thoughts about the illusions of immortality. Power and fame cease to matter, there are no magical recipes for eternal life, the fear of death by violence and murder evaporates. Human life, which does

not matter in the perspective of primitive understanding of values, however, gains the highest value by punishing criminals.

The uncertain boundary between life and death manifests itself in the original artistic interpretation of the concept of “eternal life,” according to which the infinite experience of the same period of one’s life becomes a symbol of death, while the return of the dead, “pure” characters—Casinia, Rovenia, and Hannah, who were removed from life at the beginning of the play—denies death as the final end and manifests the idea of the resurrection. Paradoxically, life and death, which are in a mutual relationship and seem not to differ from each other anymore, gain meaning in the face of the idea of a full-fledged life of a human being, where the arbitrarily set final boundary opens the possibility of continuing existence in human memory, in the duration of beliefs and theories.

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The Reinterpretation of Biblical Images in Katrya Grynevycheva's *"On the Way to Sykhem" and Other Stories*

ABSTRACT

Paper deals with the peculiarities of the small prose by Katrya Grynevycheva. It clarifies the symbolic dominants, means of character creation, and the author's world outlook. The article identifies biblical images in her book *"Po dorozhi v Sychem" ta inshi opovidannya* [*"On the way to Sykhem" and Other Stories*]. The writer uses paraphrases for citation of the Biblical text. She adds new meanings and extends the semantics of religious images. The images include: Heroes, Characters, Flora and Fauna, and the Elements. Katrya Grynevycheva correlates such concepts as ground, terra, earth and Homeland. Thus, Ukraine is spiritual substance. The investigation reveals the main features of the author's individual style. The book represents a variety of genres (legend, fairytale, parable, storytelling). The Christian intertext pervades all stories. Katrya Grynevycheva builds the artistic God's world and insists on basic truths (love, faith and peace). The paper proves the uniqueness and significance of the writer's heritage in the development of Ukrainian literature.

KEYWORDS: Bible, story, parable, contrast, symbol, open finale

STRESZCZENIE

Reinterpretacja obrazów biblijnych w zbiorze opowiadań Katri Grynewyczewej *„Na drodze do Sychem” i inne opowiadania*

W artykule przedstawiono cechy opowiadań Katri Grynewyczewej, odkrywając ich dominanty symboliczne, specyfikę budowania postaci przez autorkę oraz ich orientację filozoficzne, a także określając zarysy biblijnych obrazów zawartych w książce *„Po dorozhi v Sychem” ta inshi opovidannya* [„Na drodze do Sychem” i inne opowiadania]. Pisarka reinterpretuje w niej tekst Pisma Świętego. Nadaje mu nowe znaczenia i zawartość semantyczną, rozwijając obrazy religijne, np. postaci główne (Pan Bóg, Jezus Chrystus, Maryja), inne postaci (apostołowie, król Salomon, królowa Saby), flora i fauna (baranek, pszczoła, wilk, mak, tarnina), żywioły (woda, ogień, wiatr) itd. Katria Grynewyczewa

zestawia ze sobą zjawiska takie jak gleba, ziemia, ziemia ojczysta i ojczyzna. W rezultacie Ukraina nabiera charakteru substancji duchowej. Artykuł bada główne cechy indywidualnego stylu autorki (metaforyzacja życia, symbolika kolorów, asocjatywizacja). Zbiór opowiadań reprezentuje rozmaite gatunki literackie (legenda, baśń, przypowieść, podanie). Całość narracji przenika intertekst chrześcijański. Katria Grynewyczewa przedstawia artystyczną ekspresję Bożego świata, akcentując stałość jego prawd duchowych – wiary, miłości i pokoju.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Biblia, historia, przypowieść, kontrast, symbol, otwarte zakończenie

Kateryna Vasylyvna Grynevych (1875–1947) was a Ukrainian writer and editor of the *Dzvinok* children's magazine, and an active public figure. She gained recognition in Ukraine only at the end of the last century. However, literature experts focus primarily on her historical novels (*Sholomy v sonci* [*Helmets in the sun*], *Shestykrýlec* [*Six-winged*]) and an interesting collection *Nepoborni*, devoted to the conflicts in the Ukrainian life during the Austro-Hungarian times. Meanwhile, the works that make up "*On the way to Sykhem*" and *Other Stories*, categorized as children's literature, are perceived as mere writing exercises, rejecting what is outlined in their outlook and the writer's dominant individual style.

First of all, we are talking about a distinct Christian core. Katrya Grynevych does not violate the sanctity of biblical images and motifs, but she reinterprets them on a personal and national level. She originally "ethno-marks" events, modifying and expanding the semantics of their sacred symbolism.

The first story in the collection, *Hospod' i orachi* (*The Lord and the harrowers*), is a reminiscence of Christ's Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13: 3–23; Mk. 4: 3–20; Lk. 8: 5–15). The wisdom of the Son of God is embodied in an instructive story, which the narrator interprets. At the same time, the writer modifies the parable. God acts as a central character, the core around which the events occur, and who reveals the nature of two other participants in the plot. It is worth noting that the author builds a conditional polylog: the characters receive similar questions, but provide different answers. At the same time, the defined chronotope is maintained, the semantics of which, however, can be expanded in view of the problems raised on top of the timelessness and universality of human types.

Katrya Grynevycheva compares two laborers. The characters are described not only according to their behavior, but also by the names the author gave them: "little man" and "man," in which we see axiological

accents. The poor little man could not properly till his fields due to illness, however, he believed in God's providence. The second one, on the contrary, made efforts to prepare the soil, but his arrogance and pride made him reject any higher power. So, the Lord rewards the one who asks for help, recognizing his dependence on the Almighty and does not complain of his fate. The egocentric man is left to his own devices and he loses his harvest. Katrya Grynevycheva emphasizes that God does not punish him because the rye was yielded where His feet touched the ground. He respects the choice of the man who should understand his error and, if desired, fix it.

Following the parable genre structure, the author provides a defined locus of attention. The Lord travels accompanied by the clacking of storks among willows and forget-me-nots, in Ukrainian folk costume (*svitka, cheres*), sincerely happy about the spring and human labor, because He, too, is a worker. He sows the seeds of goodness, love and joy that can help a person overcome any obstacles, alleviate suffering, and find the meaning of life. Therefore, in this context, there is an ambivalent sign, symbolizing God's work with souls and the continuous presence of God in all living things. However, the writer does not jump into conclusions, encouraging the recipient to contemplate on the parable and the responsibility for one's thoughts, words and actions.

The story *Na mohyli ravvi Azamata* (*At the grave of Rabbi Azamat*) combines the religious, mythological, historical and iconic aspects forming a dilogy with *Hospod' i orachi*. Majnun helps Alexander the Great in interpreting the mystery of the living eye, donated to him by an elder guardian of the throne of Yahweh. It is no coincidence that the Old Testament name of God was chosen to explain human nature here because of its semantics of "I am what I am" (Exodus 3, 14) that is consistent with the interpretation of eyes as the mirror the soul (L. Tolstoy). Also, it assumes the opposition of the Eye of God (Psalms 32, 18) and human eyes. If the first protects and loves, the latter require and disable. Both are directed by the sensitive universal, only with a different dominant.

The artistic frame of the work is a dialog between a young lady and the caretaker of a cemetery, who represents the wisdom of old age. Katrya Grynevycheva uses paraphrases for quoting the biblical text, focusing on the central character of the story:

For the living know that they shall die: and the dead know nothing, and there is not reward for them anymore, because the memory of them is gone, and their loves, and their hates, and their envies, are now perished; neither have they any portion in anything that is done under the sun! (Eccl. 9, 5–6)

“Those eyes, that rest under the earth, do not see any more. Time and the ground give them comfort” (Grynevycheva, 2004). She emphasizes the futility of earthly attributes (status and wealth) that hinder seeing one’s true nature. At the same time, she emphasizes the integral part of the worldly life, which include pain and regret, joy and despair, confusion and desire for more.

It should be noted the story is permeated by a distinct onomastic contrast. The semantics of the name and nickname of the hero contain antonyms: Azamat means “mighty, big” while Majnun—“crazy.” Yet, both interpretations make up one integral whole, showing a man of extraordinary wisdom, inaccessible even to the king.

The unique construction of the work—as a text inside a the text—reveals a significant range of the issues raised. Katrya Grynevycheva compares the philosophical categories of life and death, eternity and transience, stupidity and wisdom, wealth and poverty in the material and spiritual dimensions, combining various phenomena in the parable of life, which are permanent components of macro- and microcosms of the universe—God, nature, and people. She also updates Skovorodinska’s principles of “philosophy of the heart” where a person is not defined by wealth or status, but by the internal state of harmony.

Besides parables, the collection includes works which can be classified as fairy tales. Thus, in the story *Molochij* (*Spurge*), the writer uses folk motives to deal with the metaphors of life. A dying mother entrusts her little girl to the moon and stars. Following her guidelines, the girl obediently and humbly accepts various ordeals, and gets rewarded by being finally married to a young prince.

The author combines the personalization nature inherent in Ukrainian culture with biblical overtones. The herbal talisman of spurge (*div-snih*), out of which the orphan girl makes her garment, and whose seedpods resemble wings, is reminiscent of a little earth angel, that then forms a flower on the heroine’s head in the form of a bridal wreath. In addition, prickly thorns used as buttons represent the suffering of her pure soul. Carnations not only decorate the house of old woman Mort, but also “greet her with their fragrance like a family member.” The last feature transforms flowers into good predictors of future events that will be decisive in the destiny of their ward.

The angelic protection of the girl character appears on an external and internal level. The narrator emphasizes her unusual ability to revive the earth, and at the same time plants respond to her with full flower and fruit. Humility, kindness and the hard-working nature of the girl help her keep her fortitude against violence and greed from her landlady. The harmony of the natural and human worlds sanctify the Lord’s protection, which is found in fairy light that guards the child in her sleep:

The moon was not shining and the night was still, but light burned bright over the orphan's bed like silk vestments in the church. (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 40)

Here we should recognize the semantics of the “day-night” antinomy. In the light of day the girl experiences insults, harm, and neglect, while darkness feels comfortable, warm, and light. The first sphere describes the society, while the second defines God and nature. What a community cannot understand, is familiar to the person, who is guided by the primary child-like imperatives with an expressive sensitivity dominant. Not coincidentally, the prince takes the strange (for the pragmatic and selfish public) girl to his “court on the tallest hill, pitched high above the banks of the human sea.” The sincere soul is separated from the crowd of the philistines who do not fear God and lack conscience. Therefore, gratitude, faith and obedience to the Lord's will become the key to her happiness.

It is advisable to specify the image frame of the work. The benevolent moon and the rich stars are recipients of the mother's plea, and then they become the symbols of the orphan's words who can raise the human heart in her hands up to the sky. The comparison stresses the depth of the girl's suffering, revealing the purity and greatness of her soul.

In another work, Kattrya Grynevycheva retells the famous story of King Solomon and the bee. But unlike many interpretations, she presents a small bee as the main character of the work, giving it unique features. The reader learns the name of the insect (Cvitanka), her portrait (silver legs, shapely head, fiery wings, tear like pearls) and her fate (most fun). The author equates this representative of nature with a human being, focusing on the uniqueness of every person. In addition, she compares the monarchs of two different worlds. Queen Bee is forced to sacrifice her subordinate to save the nest from destruction. Meanwhile, the reaction of Solomon expresses human nature, prone to emotional outbursts and condemning others due to his personal interests.

However, the wisdom of the biblical king is found in curbing his rampant and wicked desire for revenge. A right decision affects his fate. The bee helps solve the problem with Queen of Sheba's flowers (1 Kings 10; Luke 11, 31; Matt. 12, 42) and becomes the best advisor to the famous monarch: “The little bee became his matchmaker, and even more! This was an unforgettable day, when she shared the glory of Solomon” (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 65).

Including the fairy tale *Car Solomon i pchilka* [King Solomon and the bee] in the collection, the writer wanted to show the interdependence of all things on earth. Even insects, small at first glance, can change the life of a person, and even an entire country. The human world and the world

of nature are dependent on each other and partially overlap. All thoughtless intrusions into one will lead to the destruction of both. However, the text presents the matter of choice, which we make every second and requires our informed decisions.

The problem of choice is fully explored in the story *Darovanyj cherevychoķ* [The given slipper] which uses certain biblical allusions. A talented tailor named Svyryd is robbed by his brother. The man finds himself at a crossroads: either tell on his blood relative, who is a drunk, or accuse himself. Looking for solace, the tailor goes to church, where he plays the violin before a crucifix. Christ, moved, gives him a slipper embroidered with pearls, but soon Svyryd is accused of theft and deceit. Jesus, however, saves the man from death by repeating the miracle and giving the condemned man the other shoe. An amazed customer invites the tailor to work in a big city where the man finally finds solace.

Analyzing this piece of fiction, one needs to pay attention to the reinterpretation of the shoe custom (Ruth 4, 7). The Crucified is suffering for Svyryd's brother's sin, removing the man's pain and saving him from despair. Kattrya Grynevycheva emphasizes the figure of the chosen one. Jesus bestows a gift on the tailor, who puts his own soul into items, as the needle burns from the heat of his hands, and the violin embodies the essence of an artist: "in the twilight of the church, a lamentation song sounded, vibrating with urgent regret for a young life, a complaint about undeserved injustice, and all injustice in the world" (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 60).

The parable- and fairy tale-like story shows the importance of faith in the life of the individual. The villagers, without any doubt and remorse, attack, throws stones and abusive insults on someone whom they previously respected. This image can be interpreted as the personification of Doubting Thomas. If Jesus did not show mercy for the second time, the crowd would have lynched the innocent man. So, the lack of trust in one's neighbor and disbelief in the power of God (the crowd was not convinced even by bloody tears running down the face of the Crucified), hence the rejection of miracles will cause self-destruction of mankind—a spiritual suicide inevitably resulting in its physical disappearance.

The problem of faith and trust also dominates another story, *Chervona ĳoriuķa* [The red cow] in which the ethnic marking is shown by the presence of angels in the "sacred corner" of the cottage together with a jug of magical herbs. A poor widow trusts passersby and invites them in, which she is rewarded for with her fondest wish coming true, which she was hesitant to implement. Jesus relieves her of her fear of the future. He gives the red cow who fed the whole family to a wolf as food. (Incidentally, this predator symbolizes human nature, as discussed below). Surprised disciples seek to change Christ's will and only an explanation from their

Teacher helps them understand the meaning of His action. The Son of God heard the thoughts of the mother who was concerned about her children-laborers in the city. Living in the woods, she could not give, help, hug and protect them. The loss of the cow helped the woman get rid of her fear and to set off to meet her children, thus reuniting the family. So, in fact, Jesus made the friendly hostess' dream come true.

It should be noted that the writer uses biblical motifs and images. Miracles of Christ are revealed by the location of guests in the small cottage, in marking all gathered there with the plant's white juice (Matt. 14: 13–21, Matt. 15: 32–39; Mk. 6: 31–44; Mark 8: 1–9; Luke 9: 10–17; John 6: 5–15). Compassion of the Son of God's disciples is manifested in their trying to save widow's animal by changing its color.

The cow symbolizes sacrifice (1 Sam. 6: 7–14), which encourages the widow to change her life and children. Interestingly, Katrya Grynevychева also uses the word “cow” as the unit of measure. This assumption is confirmed by the explanations given to the Apostles by Jesus on the relationship between the loss of the animal and the family reunification. Two types of water (Gen. 26, 19) embody the definition of springing water and bitter water (quagmire, stagnant) that resemble the souls of men. The comparison of the widow's children to bees updated the image of Our Lady as the most beloved image of mother with Child in the world.

Maternal love is the leitmotif of the legend titled *Ма́к (Poppies)*. The writer creates contrast by describing Nazareth as “black,” which is emphasized by bright red spots of blood on the road. National symbols are permeating not only through color symbolism, but also in the choice of the flowers, because poppy in Ukrainian culture signifies the purity of a girl, which correlates with the chastity of Our Lady—the Virgin Mary.

The baby's sickness makes His mother run barefoot to look for medicine in the city. The carpenter's wife, singing a lullaby, does not notice anyone and anything, being focused on the Child only, “her heart coming up to her throat.” The award for her commitment is the Child's smile and the wreath of poppies made by the little boy on His mother's head.

Interestingly, two images of Jesus Christ are presented. The father, carpenter Joseph and Mary truly love the boy who plays with other children and showers his family with flowers and hugs. The boy's illness highlights the human component of the Son of God, actualizing the depth of His suffering on the cross. This indicates the subtext presence of the adult Christ, who appears at the end of the work. The author notes that drops of the blood of Our Lady turned into poppies, flowers that always accompany our “daily bread ... as a long cord of coral beads.” That seems to be an allusion to the New Testament, the approach of Pesach, when Jesus made His flesh bread (John 6, 48–56). Also it is worth mentioning that poppy

has yet another meaning—innocent blood shed—that points to Christ’s sacrifice for mankind. The author presents a certain semantic gradation: the unbreakable nature of the mother-child bond, the interdependence of redemption and sacrifice, and the sanctity of God.

It is advisable to note that the theme of sacrifice is a dominant in the work of Katriya Grynevycheva. She explores this concept at different levels. In *Poppies*, maternal devotion is presented, and in the *On the way to Syh-kem*, the universal dimension of sacrifice is accented.

Talking about Jesus wandering with his disciples, the writer describes an artistic portrait of Christ, which uses Old Testament images. She distinguishes His copper-colored wavy hair, comparing His dark and warm face with topaz and the slenderness of His stature with the lily of Sharon. The spiritual superiority of the Son of God is emphasized by His disdain for material goods, gifts and His caution around any living beings:

all the attention of His glowing eyes was set on not stepping foot on any of the violet grasshoppers bouncing among the blades of weeds. (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 43)

The power of Jesus is manifested in the unconscious change of the insolent shepherd, who suddenly feels mental turmoil due to his internal terror resulting from his own emptiness under the gaze of Christ.

During the trip, travelers meet two shepherds. The first appears as a cynical and sinful man who despises both nature and people. The second shepherd is willing to help the newcomers. She looks like a little angel, a polite and friendly child who loves everyone and fills all around her with the love as well. Her sincerity and purity is shown in her behavior towards animals. She sees them as her friends or even children who need protection and care.

Jesus blesses the girl. However, when Peter asks Him about her future, He says that He would give this earthly angel the rude shepherd for a husband:

Not only for her I must worry ... Then he will have wheat and Chelbon wine until the end of his life, and thousands of skeins of white wool at home. (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 46)

The dialog between Peter and the Son of God exposes the ambivalence of the world, consisting of heaven and earth, and the Lord’s human, physical and spiritual nature. The fisherman feels for the shepherd girl, mourning her future family “bliss.” He reacts emotionally to the news, because he lives in the present, focused on the human life matters, looking at an

individual. Meanwhile, Christ talks about the fate of each person and humanity in general. Children who are fully loved by their mothers who are driven by kindness, grow up to be righteous people. The brutal shepherd receives a chance to repent for his sins and change, revealing the source of terror within himself and opening up for Jesus.

Thus, the image of the sheep becomes meaningful. The animals which appear in the text belong to the shepherd. The girl becomes an *Agnus Dei* for a man in order to save his soul and being and to educate the future generation about purity and kindness. Jesus Himself becomes a shepherd, a wise and fair teacher who cares about His human flock.

God's sacrifice for the salvation of mankind is presented in *Mysalexova stricha* (*Mysaleh's meeting*). A pilgrim, lost in the forest, meets a traveler who tells him he lost his sheep and weeps. The man is struck by the presence of this unusual knight: "Dear and noble" figure, "glowing good visitor from heaven," eyes like stars, "grand purity of features" and "divine radiance" in his face. The mystery is revealed a few years later in the "worst of nights" during Mysaleh's pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The man sees his acquaintance crucified on the cross. Asked what did He do wrong, the Nazarene (as in Eusebius of Caesarea) says that this was committed by a lost sheep. The Syrian protests saying that such wounds could be inflicted only by predators (wolves, bears, or rabid dogs). A moment later the night covers everything around, and only howling and cries of animals can be heard.

It is worth looking for specific content items. The image of Mysaleh is gradually revealed by his emotional reception of events. First, the writer emphasizes the courage, strength and joy of the pilgrim. Subsequently, he is filled with curiosity and compassion towards the stranger in the woods. Finally the pilgrim sinks into despair when witnessed with the bloody execution of the Innocent. Mysaleh rightly points to the inhuman nature of the executioners, whom he equates with predators. There emerges the famous idiom, the source of which is the Bible: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7, 15).

A "lost sheep" who would become a "prodigal son" by accepting the faith of Christ and finding himself through it, is transformed into a pseudo-judge who entices, encourages and ultimately directs the crowd to perform the bloody execution of Jesus. Besides, this actual literary allusion it also becomes a "winged word." The Roman writer Plautus defines egocentrism in his comedy *Asinaria*, using the well-known saying: "A man is a wolf rather than a man to another man." Spiritual or physical homicide is always like a boomerang and leads to self-destruction.

Despair and anguish of the Righteous One determine the relation of God to everyone, even when one "lost sheep" inflicts an incredible pain

on the Almighty. The burden of sins of irrational creatures causes not only emotional but also physical suffering to the Savior who accepts the Lord's will and makes a willing offering of Himself for His ungrateful children. The ambivalence of humanity and the continued fight between impurity and purity, between good and evil, death and life concentrated in the image of Mysaleh who runs away from the city of crime and cruelty, shocked by the terror of the execution and in remembrance of the red light in the house of Pontius, who performed the unfair trial of the Innocent. The world is suddenly dominated by solid darkness, contrasting with the red color. Both colors become symbolic revealing the spiritual nothingness of the executioners and the greatness of the Crucified, manifested in His bloody agony.

The final piece of the collection, which includes issues raised in the texts of interest to us here is *Dyvna nich* (*A strange night*). A boy named George receives a bowl of flour from his teacher, but he loses this treasure through his antics of the wind who blows it away. He goes for help to a witch named Khyma. The image of this woman is embodied in ancient Ukrainian beliefs (animism, totemism, fetishism) inherited by Molfars, village medicine women, and seers who serve as mediums between the natural world and the human one. Katrya Grynevychyeva emphasizes the old woman's respect for all living things which she owes her gift to: "Before who begin anything, do anyone you meet any good. Even very small, at least make them laugh" (Grynevychyeva, 2004, p. 67).

The writer presents pantheism as a dominant mentality of the Ukrainians.

The boy goes in search of the offender and witnesses an unusual conversation. He hears the voices of dead soldiers killed while defending their homeland and its independence. Cossacks were ready to fight, but inert future generations are unlikely to appreciate the enthusiasm of their ancestors. Thus, the wind retells what he saw and heard. The wind has to admit the lack of enthusiasm, courage, and willingness to defend the homeland by the contemporaries who "quashed their conscience."

By the way, the choice of the wind as an interlocutor for the dead is not accidental, because an Ukrainian belief was that the wind can carry souls who follow it like a signpost.

Despite the sadness of reality, the "north" and "gusty" wind welcomes the boy politely, returns the flour and gives him some nuts from a squirrel and some grains from a hamster. For the child, material wealth becomes unimportant. Georgie is now aware of his responsibility to his ancestors and descendants for the future of his country, nation and people.

In the image of the hero biblical accents are also embedded. The boy is a shepherd. So, his job is to guide and lead the flock of the new generation,

capable of fighting. In addition, the child, giving this promise identifies the treason of the Homeland with the betrayal of the corrupt disciple of Christ:

I am not betraying your faith, my homeland, no! And I shall not put forth my hand for Judas' coins, though am I poor! And if I ever encounter an abandoned grave, where no path leads anymore, I will clear it from the weeds, I will bring flowers and remember the precious blood that fell on you, dear earth ... Here God himself, engulfed in light, glanced at the shepherd George. (Grynevycheva, 2004, p. 71)

Speaking of abandoned graves, the writer once again emphasizes forgetfulness and ignorance of history as the main cause of Ukrainians' troubles. The story shows the personification of nature as a mediator between the worlds that permeates the entire collection. A bizarre mix of Christianity and Paganism identify and outline the view on the Ukrainian homeland as a spiritual substance.

Having analyzed the collection of Katrya Grynevycheva's "*On the way to Sykhem*" and other stories we can conclude that the book offers an impressive variety of genres (parable, fairy story, legend, tale). All the texts have an open ending, as the future of the central or minor fictional characters remains unknown. The novelist stresses the independence and responsibility of the decisions that people make every minute of their lives.

Religious, namely Christian intertext is the dominant of the literary texts. The writer explores and reinterprets biblical images and motifs enriching them with the semantics of subjective meaning, which involves national reinterpretation of phenomena and events. She gives a sacred value to the Fatherland as the basis of human existence. At the same time, the author creates an artistic model of God's world, where every being depends on the harmony and peace, which are warranted by acts of love and faith.

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Judas Iscariot's Semiotic Image in Ukrainian Literature at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century (the Element of Treason)

ABSTRACT

The article under consideration is devoted to the semiotic analyses of the biblical apostle Judas Iscariot, one of the most contradictory religious characters. The article demonstrates the semiotic paradigm of Judas, including portrait semiotics (paleness, timidity, secrecy and slouch), gesture semiotics (abrupt movements) and symbolic semiotics (hopelessness, suicide). The research stresses the aspect of venality. It is proved that Judas Iscariot became the archetype of venality not only in literature, but in art generally. The article's summary will be used for students learning literary criticism and philologists.

KEYWORDS: semiotics, archetype, portrait semiotics, symbolism

STRESZCZENIE

Semiotyka przedstawień Judasza Iskarioty w literaturze ukraińskiej początku XX wieku (aspekt zdrady)

Artykuł poświęcono semiotycznej analizie biblijnej postaci Judasza Iskarioty. Biorąc pod uwagę wieloaspektowość jego przedstawienia religijnego, postać Judasza w kulturze stanowi przedmiot współczesnych badań. Artykuł ukazuje paradygmat semiotyczny obrazu Judasza, na który składa się semiotyka portretu (blada cera, zawstyżenie, skrytość), semiotyka gestu (gwałtowne ruchy) oraz semiotyka symbolu (beznadzieja, rozpacz). Nacisk położono na elementy zdrady i sprzedajności człowieka. Udowodniono, że Judasz Iskariota reprezentuje archetyp zdrajcy.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: semiotyka, archetyp, semiotyka portretu, symbolizm

Modern literary science is characterized not only by the diversity of viewpoints, but also by alternative approaches to the analysis of literary text. The study of literary works related to their semiotic aspects of research has become quite popular in recent decades. This is due to the fact that the process of *semiosis* (sign-making) in literature is inevitable.

We can roughly distinguish between two permanent sources of such codes. First, literature is a mirror that reflects the sign systems operating in other areas of culture: mythology, religion, politics, science and everyday communication (body language, symbolism of flowers, etc.). Secondly, the signs are elements of artistic and poetic “language,” the updating of which does not mean ignoring the system of the previous codes.

Biblical meanings were extremely important for the development of Ukrainian culture. Many Ukrainian writers widely used the Bible as a proto-text in their work. Therefore, the semiotic analysis of biblical motifs and characters in the works of culture positions itself as a promising methodology.

Judas Iscariot—a religious image in literature—was an Apostle characterized as opposed to holiness with the following features: betrayal, envy, greed. Many literary critics sought to interpret this complex psychological and philosophical image in a special way. As the most important studies one might mention: *Iuda Iskariots'kyj v ukrajyns'kij literaturi XX st.* and *Svoyeridnist' transformaciyi yevanhel's'koho syuzhetno-obraznoho materialu v ukrajyns'kij literaturi XX stolittya* by V. Antofijchuk, *Tradyciya motyviv ta obraziv svitovoyi literatury u tvorchosti Ol'hy Kobyljans'koj* by S. Kyrylyuk, *Motyv zrady u literaturi pochatku XX stolittya* by O. Podlisetska and others.

From the point of view of the semiotics of Judas Iscariot, he is the archetype of sin, betrayal, greed and corruption in human literature. The proposed study will consider the image of Judas Iscariot in the light of corruption of the human soul for wealth or some profit. Based on this, the purpose of this article shall be the semiotic analysis of the image of Judas Iscariot in the works of Ukrainian literature of the early twentieth century with emphasis on the aspect of treason.

The whole complexity of the image semiotics of Judas, in my opinion, is realized in the works by two prominent Ukrainian writers—Lesia Ukrainka's drama, *Na poli krovu* [*In the field of blood*] (1909), and Olga Kobyljanska's story *Juda* [*Judas*] (1917).

In the process of interpreting these works we shall create a semiotic paradigm for the image of Judas, including the semiotics of portrait, the semiotics of gestures and the semiotic of symbolism.

Lesia Ukrainka's drama *in the field of blood* is a striking example of how the most famous “international” plot can acquire a new original meaning. The title field of blood is a field where already a few days after

the crucifixion of Jesus is cultivated zealously by its rightful owner, Judas Iscariot. His brief meeting and conversation with the occasional traveler, an old pilgrim provides the whole frame for the short (only 22 pages) drama.

In the storyline, Judas Iscariot purchased a plot of land on the clay and saline soils near Jerusalem for the thirty pieces of silver he received for betraying Christ and he is working hard tilling the ground. However, his measured pace of life is interrupted by the old pilgrim, who is thirsty. The conversation between Judas and pilgrim reveals the deep psychological essence of Judas' betrayal and his philosophy of corruption. At the beginning of the play, Judas appears to the reader as a pale, shy (he did not even raise his eyes to look at the pilgrim) and thoughtful man. That is the portrait of the hero-traitor that is presented to us. At the climax of the dramatic work, Judas' abrupt gestures and raised voice reveal his unbalanced nature:

Judas (with desperate boldness changes his hitherto sad, secretive manner, to loud and open arrogance):

And even if so?!

You think I'm afraid of this word?

'Sold! Betrayed!' Does one who betrays for nothing, do better?"

(Lesia Ukrainka, 2015, p. 5)

The following dialog reveals the philosophy of Judas' corruption. Having sold himself out for thirty pieces of silver, Judas the traitor is not aware that he had sold his soul, and now he does not belong to himself anymore:

PILGRIM:

This is not about sellable goods.

JUDAS:

What are sellable goods? Whatever that is unnecessary, may be sold. So, I had a teacher—when he became redundant, I sold him.

(Lesia Ukrainka, 2015, p. 7)

The finale of the drama remains deep philosophical—the pilgrim goes on, and Judas, aware of his despair, sadly continues tilling the land:

Judas stands for a minute, squeezing his head with his hands, then knocking his fists on his head, grabs the hoe and, without stretching his back or wiping the sweat, continues to work, senselessly. (Lesia Ukrainka, 2015, p. 10)

The artistic heritage of O. Kobylianska has a particular structure that is filled with symbolic images, signs and codes. Her story *Judas* presents the reader with an elderly farmer whose life was disrupted by the First World War.

The farmer takes care of the cattle of his son, who went to war. When a troop of Russian soldiers interrogates the farmer to say in what direction Ukrainian soldiers have gone, he refuses, but after beating, he randomly shows where he saw several soldiers. Ironically, he directed the Russian soldiers straight onto Austrian soldiers, among whom his son was: "He unintentionally became the killer of four souls" (Kobylianska, 1983, p. 319). Not knowing this, the farmer finds justification in the fact that he gave the money given to him by the Russian soldiers as a reward to the priest. But as the farmer decides to bury the dead, it seems as if some force is forcing him to look at the face of one of the four soldiers shot and "his gaze falls on his own son," "his own, only child, dead" (Kobylianska, 1983, p. 320). Thus, the father refers to himself as Judas, who, as a victim of circumstances, killed his own son. He commits suicide hanging himself by the neck. But, unlike the act of Judas, the farmer's act is did not known to anybody: "The forest, the single trees on the edge—and away from this place there, deep in the valley, a lonely peasant cottage" (Kobylianska, 1983, p. 322).

The transformation of the image of Judas demonstrates the depth of the author's psychological insight into the most infamous traitor in the history of mankind.

A researcher of the works of O. Kobylianska, J. Klym'yuk, compares the *Judas* novel with the with dramatic work of Lesia Ukrainka, *In the field of blood*, considering that both works

unite in myth and parable, firstly, generalized images of the main characters who, though different in the semantic meaning of the Gospel image of Judas, are basically archetypal, that is, reduced to a psychological specimen of a traitor. Secondly, due to the parabolic comparison of two remotely interconnected eras (early twentieth century and the biblical history), the images and events become allegorical works, i.e. signs of parable and mythological conditionality. Thirdly, the evangelical semblance used in the works allows the authors to expand the boundaries of artistic generalization and move ordinary cases of life to the level of the eternal problems of human existence. (Klym'yuk, 1988)

The semiotics of the image of Judas in the works of Olga Kobylianska and Lesia Ukrainka disclose a coded algorithm: portrait semiotics—gesture semiotics (behavior)—character semiotics—awareness of the betrayal (suicide, hopelessness).

Thus, the ontological conclusion is what binds both pieces together: the traitor's life becomes impossible when the victim of their act of betrayal is a loved one (child, respected teacher). These works, which, in my opinion, are some of the most important interpretations of the image of the biblical character, clearly underscore the depth of the axiological determination and psychological motivation of the authors referring to the biblical image of Judas Iscariot.

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The Role of Budget Planning in Improving the Efficiency of Economic Policy in Kazakhstan

ABSTRACT

In the budgeting system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is focused on achieving results, a special place is occupied by state programs.

A state program is a comprehensive document that defines the main directions of state policy in the field of its implementation, which is directly linked to the development strategy of the state as a whole and the concept developing a particular industry.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, a state program is a strategic planning document containing a set of planned activities and interlinked by tasks, deadlines, implementers, resources, and public policy instruments that ensure—within the framework of the implementation of key state functions—the achievement of priorities and goals of state policy in the field of socioeconomic development and national security. In other words, a state program is an instrument of state regulation of the economy, ensuring the achievement of promising goals and objectives through the use of available resources.

State programs are documents of an inter-sphere, inter-sectoral, and inter-departmental nature that define goals, objectives, and expected results in the priorities and strategic directions of the country's development and are developed for a period of at least 5 years in order to implement the higher documents of the State Planning System.

KEYWORDS: budget, government program, government policy, strategic plan

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STRESZCZENIE

Rola planowania budżetu w poprawianiu wydajności polityki gospodarczej w Kazachstanie

W systemie budżetowym Republiki Kazachstanu, który koncentruje się na uzyskiwaniu korzystnych wyników, szczególne miejsce zajmują programy państwowe. Program państwowy to obszerny dokument określający główne kierunki polityki państwa w zakresie jej wdrażania, co jest bezpośrednio związane ze strategią rozwoju państwa jako całości i z koncepcją rozwoju poszczególnych branż przemysłowych.

W Republice Kazachstanu program państwowy to dokument planowania strategicznego, zawierający zestaw planowanych czynności związanych z zadaniami, terminami, środkami, osobami odpowiedzialnymi za wdrażanie i z instrumentami polityki publicznej, które zapewniają – w ramach realizacji głównych funkcji państwowych – osiągnięcie priorytetów i celów polityki państwowej w zakresie rozwoju socjoekonomicznego i bezpieczeństwa narodowego. Innymi słowy program państwowy jest instrumentem państwowej regulacji gospodarki, który umożliwia osiągnięcie założonych celów poprzez użycie dostępnych zasobów.

Programy państwowe są dokumentami natury międzystrefowej, międzysektorowej i międzyoddziałowej, które definiują cele i oczekiwane rezultaty odnośnie do priorytetów i kierunków strategicznych rozwoju państwa i są opracowywane przez okres minimum 5 lat w celu wdrażania wyższej rangi dokumentów Państwowego Systemu Planowania.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: budżet, program rządowy, polityka rządowa, plan strategiczny

State programs occupy a special place in the budgeting system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is focused on the final results.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, a state program is a strategic planning document containing a set of planned activities, interlinked by tasks, deadlines, the resources and parties involved, and public policy instruments that ensure—within the framework of key state functions—the achievement of the priorities and goals of state policy in the fields of socioeconomic development and national security.

To date, eight state programs have been developed in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Table 1 shows the main indicators of these state programs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Table 1*State Programs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2013–2019*

No.	Name	Government agency responsible for development	Period of implementation	Amount of financing (billions of KZT)
1.	State Program for Infrastructure Development, “Nurly Zhol”	Ministry of National Economy	2015–2019	7,676.1
2.	State Program for Development of the Agro-industrial complex	Ministry of Agriculture	2017–2021	2,374.2
3.	State Program for Healthcare Development, “Densaulyk”	Ministry of Health and Social Development	2016–2019	1,969.7
4.	State Program for Development of Education and Science	Ministry of Education and Science	2016–2019	1,405.4
5.	State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development	Ministry of Investment and Development	2015–2019	878.3
6.	State Program for the Functioning and Development of Languages	Ministry of Culture and Sports	2011–2020	19.1
7.	State Program, “Information Kazakhstan – 2020”	Ministry of Investment and Development	2013–2019	3,482.17
8.	State Program on Combating Religious Extremism and Terrorism	Prosecutor General’s Office	2013–2017	103.2

State programs in the Republic of Kazakhstan are developed in order to implement the policies of the State Planning System, such as the Development Strategy of Kazakhstan until 2050, the Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2020, etc.

The tasks specified in the documents at the first level of the state planning system must also be present in the state programs.

In 2017, the government took a number of measures to implement the recommendations of the Accounts Committee which were aimed at improving the efficiency of the implementation of program documents by ensuring the achievement of performance indicators, in particular:

- introducing a mandatory interim assessment of the implementation of program documents at least 2–3 years after they come into effect,
- establishing a ban on adjusting the indicators of program documents in the last year they are valid,
- ensuring cascading of target indicators of documents of the state planning system in the strategies and development plans of national holdings and companies, and
- regulating the requirement to work on errors by assessing the implementation of a state or government program before setting it for loss.

At the same time, an analysis of the implementation of the national budget for the reporting period indicates the persistence of certain systemic shortcomings that impede the effective implementation of policies defined by the Head of State in the documents of the state planning system (Methodology for Assessing Achievement of Goals, 2019).

- In most cases, the main macroeconomic indicators of a country (GDP growth, decline in unemployment, growth in the non-primary sector of the economy, and non-primary export) are presented as indicators which are influenced by both external and internal factors that do not arise from the program document.
- The target indicators of program documents are adjusted downward while the amount of funding is simultaneously increased.
- There is a duplication of the goals, objectives, and activities of program documents.
- In this regard, it is not possible to track the actual effect of invested financing on the country's economic development from the implementation of the activities of a specific program.
- Achieving the performance indicators in the development programs of all regions in the aggregate during their decomposition does not ensure that the planned target indicators of a higher program document will be achieved.
- There is a lack of consistency and continuity of development in some sectors of the economy.
- The development of government programs is carried out without taking into account the potential risks of their untimely implementation. A lack of proper explanatory work and, in some cases, regulatory

legal support prevents widespread access to state support tools aimed at developing entrepreneurship and job creation.

Thus, the program and target orientation of the budget is not fully ensured, nor is a significant multiplier effect on the development of economic sectors.

As part of assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of state and government programs, an analysis was carried out with cascading the achievement of target indicators and indicators of the results of various industries' development according to the sequence from the level of national target indicators and indicators of the Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2020 (Strategy 2020) to indicators of the results of budget programs.

Given that Strategy 2020 is set at a loss without an appropriate assessment, the weaknesses and strengths of the current state planning system are required to ensure the effective implementation of the Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025 (Strategy 2025).

The State Program for Healthcare Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan – “Densaulyk,” 2016–2019

The goal of the health program is to improve public health in order to ensure sustainable social and economic development of the country. The implementation of the program is scheduled for the period 2016 to 2019. The executors of the program are the Ministries of Health and Social Development (executive officer), Internal Affairs, Culture and Sports, the National Economy, Defense, Education and Science, Investment and Development, Agriculture, Finance, Energy, and Justice, as well as the Municipality of Nur-Sultan and Almaty regions.

Strategy 2020 is not broken down into the program indicators in two indicators, which does entail the risk that certain key priorities and guidelines for the development of the healthcare sector will not be fulfilled. No changes or additions were made to the current program (the funding levels and indicators were unchanged).

In accordance with the passport and according to the Action Plan for implementing the program, financing is provided in the total amount of 1,969.7 billion KZT (KZT).

Table 2

Breakdown of Financing for the Program for 2016–2017 (millions of KZT)

Source of financing	2016				2017			
	By Program	Planned	Actual	Deviation	By Program	Planned	Actual	Deviation
1	2	3	4	5=4-2	6	7	8	9=8-6
National budget	92,389.3	110,542.0	109,237.6	16,848.3	69,309.9	170,495.7	166,287.2	96,977.3
Local budget	34,945.5	43,227.6	43,127.4	8,181.9	19,035.9	9,779.9	9,771.7	-9,264.2
Other sources (Health Insurance Fund, National Fund)	700.0	700.0	699.9	-0.1	319,735.0	–	–	-319,735.0
Total	128,034.8	154,469.6	153,064.9	25,030.1	408,080.9	180,275.6	176,058.9	-232,022.0

The funds of the Social Health Insurance Fund (FSMS) have not been used as planned. The execution of the program for the reporting period was instead carried out at the expense of the national and local budgets (Methodology for Assessing Interaction, 2017).

The predicted and utilized amounts of budgetary funds are significantly different from the amounts approved by the Action Plan (in 2016: 25,030.1 million KZT; in 2017: 232,022.0 million KZT).

- In 2017, local budgets reduced the amount of financing of program activities by 9,264.2 million KZT against the background of excess funding in 2016 by 8,181.9 million KZT.
- Losses were incurred due to litigation in the supply of liquid cytology containers in the East Kazakhstan region (78.8 million KZT), the failure to submit acts of work performed by foreign clinics due to the completion of the treatment course (482.0 million KZT), and a tender for the purchase of laboratory equipment which was not won (361.0 million KZT).
- In 2017, the non-use of funds financed by external loans from the national budget in the amount of 3,161.3 million KZT was accompanied by a failure to achieve the indicator for providing electronic health passports (planned: 2%; actual: 0%).
- This situation has arisen due to difficulties encountered in the procurement procedures for the platform as part of the World Bank project.

Due to the peculiarities of the implementation of projects involving co-financing from international financial organizations, there are risks

that the objectives of the Concept for the Development of e-health of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2013–2020—in terms of creating electronic health passports for the country’s population by 2020—will not be met.

The State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2015–2019 (GPIIR)

The aim of this program is to stimulate the competitiveness of the manufacturing industry, aimed at increasing labor productivity and the volume of exports of processed goods.

The program is planned to be valid from 2015 to 2019. The executors of the program are the Ministries for Investment and Development (the main executor), Agriculture, Energy, and the National Economy, as well as local executive authorities “Baiterek” NMH JSC, “KazAgro” NMH JSC.

In accordance with the Strategic Plan of the Ministry for Investment and Development (MID), the target indicators of the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development are aimed at implementing the following goals of Strategy 2020:

- domestic and foreign investment in non-primary sectors of the economy (manufacturing, agricultural processing, and services) will increase by at least 30%,
- the share of foreign direct investment (FDI) in GDP will increase by 10%,
- sources of investment will be diversified (10 major investing countries, each with a share of 5% or more),
- manufacturing will represent at least 13% of the GDP,
- non-primary exports will represent at least 45% of total exports,
- the volume of non-oil exports will be at least 50% of the total production of the manufacturing industry,
- labor productivity in the manufacturing industry will increase at least twofold,
- the energy intensity of GDP will decrease by at least 25%,
- the share of innovatively active enterprises will increase to 20%,
- the gross production of chemical products will increase threefold, and
- more than 20 new types of chemical products will be produced.

In accordance with the state program of industrial and innovative development, an increase in the proportion of manufacturing in overall GDP is projected to reach 11%–12% (taking into account global trends in the increasing role of services in the global economy and other factors).

It follows that the state support of the manufacturing sector within the framework of the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development is not aimed at increasing the share of manufacturing in the GDP structure to 13%, as provided for in Strategy 2020. This, in its sense, calls into question the policy focus on diversifying the economy.

In accordance with the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development, a new direction is provided for the implementation of its main priorities through ensuring the attraction of investment, including foreign investment. Also, in accordance with the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development, investments in fixed assets in the manufacturing industry are calculated in order to achieve the target indicators for the value of exports and to increase labor productivity in the manufacturing sector (Methodology for Assessing Development, 2019).

Given the above and the fact that investment in fixed assets is a factor which directly affects labor productivity, according to the estimates of the Accounts Committee, the target indicator for investments in fixed assets in manufacturing is more aimed at achieving the Strategy 2020 goal of increasing labor productivity in the manufacturing sector.

The objectives of Strategy 2020 to increase the gross production of chemical products and expand the types of chemical products have not been specifically reflected in the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development. So, in the latter, agrochemistry, petrochemical chemistry, and the production of chemicals for industry, which are provided as key priorities, do not contain specific indicative parameters in terms of their output and proportions.

Of the target indicators presented, only an increase in export volumes fully characterizes the competitiveness of manufacturing products. The remaining indicators are factors which affect competitiveness, and according to the estimates of the Accounts Committee, they do not sufficiently characterize the dynamics of its change. There is no correlation between the target indicators and the tasks and activities of the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development.

It should be noted that the measurement of the indicator for increasing export volumes in the program is based on its growth in terms of value (U.S. dollars), which largely depends on the influence of price factors, that is, on changes in the price of products and the KZT exchange rate. In conclusion, the measurement of export volume in value terms when the Kazakh tenge is weak against the U.S. dollar distorts the real picture of the volume of exported goods. According to the estimates of the Accounts Committee, the measurement of the indicator under consideration should also be carried out in physical terms (in tons), which objectively reflects the degree of industry competitiveness on the domestic market.

Along with the fixed target indicators, the program identifies four tasks with their corresponding performance indicators and measures:

- completing an effective basic industry through the modernization of enterprises in traditional sectors,
- creating new points of industrial growth through the implementation of large industry-forming projects,
- ensuring the conditions for the emergence of highly efficient industrial entrepreneurship oriented at export and/or a continuous increase in the productivity of their labor, and
- creating the prerequisites for the emergence of a critical mass of innovatively active businesses.

Parallels and duplicated measures of state support for the manufacturing sector in the framework of other program documents are noted. Thus, the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development indicators and objectives intersect with other program documents in some cases. Due to this connection, it is not possible to assess the actual impact measures of state support had on achieving certain results.

A comprehensive audit of all state support measures is required in order to eliminate the redundancy and mutual contradiction which impede efforts to increase the effectiveness of measures aimed at balanced economic growth of the country and to determine the degree of impact each program document has on the target setting in a given area.

The Government Decree from October 30, 2014, No. 1159, approved the plan of measures for implementing the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development, consisting of 87 measures—41 of which require funding. The implementation period for 26 events was to be completed by 2017 or 2018.

On September 6, 2016, the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development introduced changes aimed at reducing the number of target indicators and revising their values. The values of the target indicators for the growth of non-commodity exports, labor productivity, and energy intensity underwent changes.

The adjustment of the “Increase in Labor Productivity in the Manufacturing Sector” target indicator demonstrates a decrease relative to the previously planned growth, while the funding for the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development activities was increased from the national budget by 36.4%, from 643.9 billion KZT to 878.3 billion KZT, mainly aimed at achieving the indicator in question. A corresponding decrease was achieved due to changes in the base comparison period from 2012 to 2015, according to which there has been a trend of a significant decline in labor productivity relative to the positive dynamics of 2012, and an actual decrease in the value of the indicator, from 37% to 22%.

This downward correction of the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development target indicators along with an increase in funding volumes is irrational. According to the estimates of the Accounts Committee, if the conditions affecting the implementation of the program change, the instruments for achieving the goals should be specified, and not the goals themselves. The current situation indicates poor planning of the values of target indicators in the development of the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development.

The action plan for the implementation of the program (the Government Decree from October 30, 2014, No. 1159) provides for various sources of financing (national and local budgets, the National Fund, borrowed funds, private funds of businesses, and private investments). In fact, according to the Ministry of Investment and Development, from 2015 to 2017, funding was provided each year from the national budget, including through targeted transfers from the National Fund.

Thus, in 2015, almost 90% of all funds allocated to the implementation of the program were allocated towards increasing the value of exports (Moldashev, 2017). In 2016, half of the funds budgeted by the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development were expenses for the target indicator for investments in fixed assets.

This dynamic continued; according to the results from 2017, the costs of achieving the target indicator for investments in fixed assets amounted to 61% of the total funds budgeted by the State Program for Industrial and Innovative Development (excluding local budgetary funds).

A parallel increase was noted (starting from 2016) in financing activities aimed at achieving the target indicator for labor productivity, bringing its share in the financing structure by the end of 2017 up to 25% (in 2015: 7.2%; in 2016: 14%). Moreover, in the budgetary programs there are no indicators of the productivity growth of businesses that received state support.

Thus, a significant portion of the funds is allocated for financing activities whose impact on the achievement of target indicators is impossible to assess in terms of their indirect impact.

The State Program for the Development of Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship, 2017–2021

The goal of the employment program is to promote productive employment and citizens' involvement in entrepreneurship. The implementation of the program is scheduled for 2017–2021. The executors of the program are as follows:

- in the first area of the program (providing program participants with technical and vocational education and short-term vocational training), the Ministry of Education and Science,
- in the second area of the program (development of mass entrepreneurship), the Ministries of the National Economy and Agriculture, and
- in the third area of the program (the development of the labor market through the promotion of employment and labor mobility—overall coordination of the program), the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population.

Strategy 2020 is not broken down into the program indicators by 3 indicators, which creates the risk that certain key priorities and guidelines for the development of productive employment will not be realized.

In accordance with the program passport and the Action Plan, the implementation of the tasks is provided for by funds from the state budget in the amount of 258.3 billion KZT: 122.5 billion KZT from the national budget and 135.8 billion KZT from the local budget.

Table 3

Volumes of Financing of the Program for 2017 (millions of KZT)

Source of Financing	By Program	2017		
		Planned in budget	Actual	Deviation
1	2	3	4	5=4-2
National Budget	40,296	40,525.7	40,440.6	144.6
Local Budget	45,038.4	39,032.6	38,796.0	-6,242.4
Total	85,334.4	79,558.3	79,236.6	-6,097.8

According to a report from the government, there was an excess of finance allocation in the amount of 144.6 million KZT from the national budget; underfunding from the local budget amounted to 6,242.4 million KZT under the law titled “On the Volume of Transfers of a General Nature between the National and Regional Budgets, Budgets of the City of National Significance, the Capital, for 2017–2019” (hereinafter, general transfers). At the same time, the funds allocated under general transfers were not fully utilized—the savings amounted to 236.6 million KZT.

Of the budgetary subventions forecast for 2017 for the implementation of program activities, the Ministries of the National Economy, Education and Science, and Labor and Social Protection distributed 23.8 billion KZT in areas, while the balance of the unallocated amount nationwide amounted to 16.2 billion KZT as originally created savings, for 2018—6.2 billion KZT. In this connection, poor planning was noted in determining the need for budgetary subventions. Also, it was proven that some funds and savings on general transfers were used for purposes unrelated

to the implementation of measures for capital, medium-term and current repairs, and the improvement of settlements (Muratbekova, 2015).

“Nurly Zher” Housing Program

The goal of the housing program is to increase the availability of housing for the population. The program is planned to be in effect from 2017 to 2021. The executors of the program are the Ministries for Investment and Development (the main executor), the National Economy, Finance, Energy, and Agriculture, as well as the local executive authority, the National Bank, joint-stock companies Baiterek National Management Holding, “Kazakhstan Mortgage Company,” “Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund,” and “Samruk-Kazyna Real Estate Fund”, and the Housing Construction Savings Bank of Kazakhstan.

Strategy 2020 does not include indicators for characterizing housing affordability for the population.

The “Nurly Zher” program has been adjusted twice (in October 23 and December 26, 2017) in terms of changes in funding, the indicators of results, and implementation mechanisms. There has been a systemic decrease in the indicators of the program’s results, which has not entailed appropriate adjustments to the target indicator.

Thus, reductions were made in the volumes of commissioning credit and rental housing (by 1.4695 million m²), housing commissioning due to subsidized loans from developers (by 31,400 m²), extra-budgetary funds allocated for the implementation of the “Nurly Zher” program (186.1 billion KZT), the issuance of a guarantee for shared construction by the Guarantee Fund (342.7 billion KZT), subsidized mortgages for housing purchases (240 billion KZT), and subsidized loans to developers (5 billion KZT).

A decrease in performance indicators was also noted in the number of subsidized mortgages for the purchase of new housing (by 16,000 units) and the coverage of the shared construction market with a guarantee from the Guarantee Fund. Moreover, these changes do not correlate with the objective of the program, to increase the availability of mortgage lending and stimulate housing construction by private developers.

Systematic adjustments predetermine the conclusion that there are no corresponding forecasted projects for credit and rental housing in the regions indicated for the implementation of the planned volumes of the program, which creates the risk that the planned indicators for the commissioning of housing will not be achieved. The mechanism and volume of extra-budgetary funds, including funds for bond loans of quasi-public sector entities for housing construction, has repeatedly changed.

These facts indicate poor planning by the authorized body for architecture, urban planning, and the construction of allocations between regions of funds raised through the issuance of bonds, taking into account the debt limits of the budgets of local executive authority regions, and the cities of Nur-Sultan and Almaty.

In addition, it should be noted that the demand for housing significantly exceeds supply. For example, as of January 1, 2012, there were 197,400 people on the waiting list in the local executive authority to receive housing from the housing stock; as of July 1, 2017, it was 450,700—more than a two-fold increase (128%). At the same time, the sharp decline in the indicators of new instruments for subsidizing mortgages for housing purchases and loans to developers indicates possible failures in the approaches being used.

In the approved national budget for 2017–2019, funds in the amount of 11.0 billion KZT and 10 billion KZT were provided for subsidizing interest on loans to developers and mortgages issued to the population, respectively, through a targeted transfer from the National Fund (the funds were transferred to the financial agents of the joint-stock companies “Damu” Entrepreneurship Development Fund and “Kazakhstan Mortgage Company”), which were reduced to 700 million KZT and 600 million KZT, respectively, when the national budget was updated for 2017.

Clearly, problems in the subsidy mechanism have been traced which prevented the task of increasing the availability of mortgage lending from being achieved during the reporting period; therefore, the allocated funds were used inefficiently. Moreover, prerequisites have been created for financial agents to receive remuneration by placing funds intended for subsidies in a second-tier bank (Mukhamedieva, 2012, p. 105).

According to a government report, the non-achievement of the goals stems from the late implementation of the program and from the disinterest of commercial banks in developing a mortgage, due to the lack of long-term funding in Kazakh tenge and the requirements of banking legislation. In this regard, it is seen that the above approaches are not being implemented effectively and do not stimulate demand from the population or offers from private developers.

This negative trend and the associated risk were noted in the framework of the Accounts Committee’s Conclusion on the draft law, “On the National Budget for 2018–2020.” According to the estimates of the Accounts Committee, the achievement of the “Housing commissioning financed by all sources” target indicator, against the backdrop of the related performance indicators not being fulfilled, denotes the risk of inefficiency of the planned measures in the field of housing construction.

In accordance with the program passport and according to the Action Plan, funds in the amount of 1,335.4 billion KZT are allocated for its

implementation, of which 802.8 billion KZT is from the national budget and 552.6 billion KZT is from private equity, including entities of the quasi-public sector.

Table 4

Volumes of Financing of the “Nurly Zher” Program in 2017, By Source (millions of KZT)

Source of Financing	“Nurly Zher” Program	2017 year		Deviation
		Planned	Actual	
1	2	3	4	5=4-2
Total	214,961	171,656.0	170,656.0	-44,305.6
including:				
– National Budget	168,861	36,845.3	36,845.3	-132,016.0
– National Fund		90,710.4	90,710.4	90,710.4
– Extra-budgetary funds, including bond loans	46,100	44,100.0	43,100.0	-3,000.0

State Program for the Development of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2016–2019 (GPRON)

The goal of this program is to increase competitiveness in education and science and to develop the human capital needed for sustainable economic growth. The program is scheduled to be valid from 2016 to 2019. The executors of the program are the Ministries of Education and Science (executive officer), Agriculture, Health and Social Development, Investment and Development, Finance, Culture and Sports, the National Economy, an Internal Affairs, as well as the municipalities of Nur-Sultan and Almaty, and regions.

Strategy 2020 is not broken down into the program indicators by two indicators, which suggest the risk of failing to fulfill certain key priorities and guidelines for development in the field of science.

In accordance with the State Program for the Development of Education and Science passport, budgetary funds and other funds not prohibited by the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan are provided for the execution of activities in the amount of 1,423.4 billion KZT (1,153.0 billion KZT from the national budget, 252.4 billion KZT from the local budget, and 18.0 billion KZT from other sources).

According to the Plan of Measures for the implementation of the program, the actual financing amounted to 1,390.1 billion KZT, with a deviation from the local budget of 33.3 billion KZT when compared with the approved passport of the State Program for the Development of Education

and Science. Moreover, in the Plan of Measures for the implementation of the program, other sources of financing are presented only in a total amount over the years, without listing their allocation to the relevant activities (General Standards, 2016).

There was a decrease in the initially approved amount of financing of the State Budgetary Scientific Practical Program at the stage of developing an action plan for its implementation.

Table 5

Volumes of Financing of the State Budget for Social Protection in 2016–2017, By Source (millions of KZT)

Source	2016				2017			
	GPRON	Planned	Actual	Deviation	GPRON	Planned	Actual	Deviation
National Budget	322,349.0	322,930.6	322,082.6	-266.4	261,801.0	241,264.6	240,552.6	-21,248.4
Local Budget	55,141.2	157,789.9	155,483.5	100,342.3	57,819.6	204,092.4	203,862.6	146,043.0
Other Sources	–	–	–	–	3,379.2	–	–	-3,379.2
Total	377,490.2	480,720.5	477,566.1	100,075.9	322,999.8	445,357.0	444,415.2	121,415.4

Despite the plan to attract extra-budgetary sources of financing, the implementation of the activities of the GPRON was in fact carried out exclusively from budgetary funds. Throughout the program's entire period of implementation, one of the reasons for the budgeted funds not being allocated (total amount of non-execution for 2016: 3,154.3 million KZT; for 2017: 941.6 million KZT) remains litigation.

The process of introducing a results-oriented state planning system in Kazakhstan proceeded largely randomly, with minimal analysis of the previous steps. Multidirectional innovations created an additional burden on government entities, which resulted in a negative perception of the system and contributed to the growth of formalism and an increase in opposition from government entities. Consider the conducted SWOT analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the results-oriented state planning system (Table 6).

Table 6

SWOT Analysis of the Results-Oriented Public Planning System

Strengths	Weaknesses
advantages for the government: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• more complete information on the implementation of state tasks and the use of budgetary funds in various areas of the state is regularly received• a potentially more efficient distribution of budgetary funds between competing cost items due to more accurate and complete information on the results of the program in accordance with the priorities of state policy• less budgetary funding through increased efficiency of the public sector• the ability to compare several proposed program options in terms of expected results and costs• prerequisites for increasing control over the activities of ministries and departments by establishing performance indicators and comparing actual results with forecasts• identification and elimination of duplicate or ineffective programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• dependence on international institutions and organizations• the inappropriateness of accurately copying foreign experience in all-Russian and regional conditions• strict requirements on the timeframe for introducing innovations in budget reform (1–2 years), which does not allow for a deep, comparative analysis of the proposed new principles of budget management• fewer objects of direct state administration: budget services are provided by a small number of agencies, the privatization of state property continues, and the development of outsourcing of public services is planned• a large political component in state budget management• attempts to shift all types of effects (including political or social) to a quantitative, measurable basis of performance indicators within the framework, and to deny a non-economic approach• high requirements for a clear statement of goals and results• aggregation of budgetary expenditures, which does not provide a clear picture of budgetary spending and which reduces the transparency in managing budgetary funds• integrating results-oriented budgeting into the budgeting process is challenging (this problem has not been fully resolved in any country)• establishing a link between socially useful results with the amount of funding and the activities of subordinate organizations is difficult• the lack of a systematic approach in applying the various methods and criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of budget management
advantages for institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• independent spending of budgetary funds to achieve desired results is possible (independence in the operational management of expenses, cost savings, and changes in the cost structure while observing appropriation limits and within programs)• the relationship between the expected results of the program and the amount of resources required can be at least approximated—it is better to plan your activities• requests for increased budgetary financing can be reinforced with an economically sound calculation of the effectiveness of the program	
advantages for society: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• better understanding of what goals the government sets for itself, how well those goals meet the needs of the population, to what extent these goals can be achieved, and at what cost	

Opportunities

- interaction between public authorities on the exchange of management information can be optimized
- contractual relations between state authorities and the largest taxpayers of the region can be established
- the timing of the budgeting process can be streamlined, providing information necessary for developing the budget
- optimal solutions for maintaining the budget network and alternative sources of budgetary revenues can be found, improving public administration of non-tax budgetary revenues
- an operational and visual system of indicators and criteria for the effectiveness of budget management can be created for the purposes of “internal” public administration

Threats

- increased dependence on financial support from the national budget and international institutions to finance various projects of administrative and budgetary reforms
- in case of a deficit or inefficient debt policy, bankruptcy of the state or municipalities in connection with the loss of financial and budgetary independence
- an increase in the number of executive bodies, a decrease in the quality of labor, and an increase in red tape
- the loss of traditional approaches and many years of experience managing the state budget, and the difficulty in restoring it in case new principles and methods must be introduced into the framework of budget reform

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis, first of all, relates to the formal side of the approach in state planning. As a rule, it all comes down to the presence and enumeration of a large number of programs, at both the central and local levels, artificially creating an erroneous representation of the “state scale” in planning (Ogorodnikov, 2018).

As the analysis shows, the implementation of activities to implement industry programs have their own flaws regarding the stages of development, implementation, monitoring, and control. Most of them are focused on functions that were not within the competence of state bodies, the lack of clear financial support procedures, and the discrepancy between the estimated costs and the actually available funds.

Industry programs were primarily aimed at obtaining financing, without an analysis of the multiplicative effect of its implementation (economic, social, etc.). The mechanism of interaction between government agencies was limited to an action plan for the implementation of programs that failed to ensure the coherence, consistency, and relevance of the measures implemented.

During the implementation of the programs, the following problems were noted: the lack of proper coordination at both the central and regional levels on the implementation of programs; the lack of any preliminary study; and the failure to meet deadlines due to the lengthy implementation mechanisms.

At the stage of monitoring and control of sectoral programs, non-compliance with the requirements for intermediate monitoring was noted,

which led to a waste of budgetary funds throughout the entire phase of program implementation and closure, as well as the lack of transparency in the implementation of program documents and formal personal responsibility.

The next step in the further improvement of the results-oriented state planning system was the introduction of the evaluation process in 2010 when the System of Annual Assessment of the Effectiveness of Government Bodies was introduced (Omirbaev, 2007, p. 132).

The purpose of the assessment was not to punish ineffective state entities, but to identify systemic problems, and study and disseminate the positive experience of the most effective state structures. One area was the assessment of the effectiveness of achieving and implementing strategic goals and objectives.

At the beginning of the assessment, when analyzing the quality of the strategic plans of state entities, the appraisers fixed a formal approach for the state entities in drawing up plans. The target indicators did not help in determining the achievement of the goals and objectives, which were formulated vaguely, without clear criteria. On the one hand, this could be explained by the complexity of planning in social systems, as well as the lack of sufficient experience in monitoring and forecasting key performance indicators of a state body for that assessment period.

The first results of the assessment made it possible to identify the main systemic problems of strategic planning in Kazakhstan, as well as to begin targeted work to eliminate them. After the assessment, all state entities received individual conclusions on the quality of the preparation and implementation of their strategic plans. In addition, the conclusions contained recommendations for correcting the deficiencies which had been identified. As a result, during the assessment for 2010–2012, there was a tendency to improve the efficiency of government bodies. Thus, the assessment, launched in 2011, became a prerequisite for qualitative change and improvement of the state planning system in Kazakhstan.

Nevertheless, at present, an urgent issue is improving the procedures for planning strategic goals and objectives and developing a clear mechanism for exchange, at the state level, of budgetary funds as well as material and human resources. This is necessary since the absence of such a mechanism leads to poor execution of the program with the full development of budgetary funds, as the evaluation experience shows. Unfortunately, the practice is basically to evaluate programs according to the plan for the development of budgetary funds, and not the actual material result (Omirbaev et al., 2012, p. 205).

In general, there are problems requiring further improvement of the current system of state planning:

1. the large number of documents of the state planning system, which complicates their effective implementation,
2. the quality of documents of the state planning system,
3. the duplication of documents and indicators of the state planning system,
4. the weak relationship of strategic, economic, and budget planning,
5. ineffective risk management,
6. the imperfection of the mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of documents of the state planning system and the activities of state entities, and
7. the qualifications of personnel involved in the planning process.

1. Poor budgeting

In the practice of budget planning of state entities of Kazakhstan, it is allowed for administrators of budget programs to include unreasonable and inflated expenses in the process of forming a budget for the upcoming period. When considering budget applications, the procedure for recording the results of budget execution of previous years, achieving results, the results of inspections, etc. is not regulated. Poor planning is evidenced by the annual increase in the volume of redistributed funds (10.0% of the budget).

2. Quality of state planning system documents

When developing and implementing strategic and program documents, there are certain disadvantages and issues, such as the following: (The Main Provisions, 2011)

- A large number of program documents containing a large number of indicators are being implemented, which leads to dispersal, the inefficient use of financial resources, and complicated monitoring and control over their implementation.
- Some of the strategic goals of the parent documents are not broken down into subordinate documents. Moreover, some goals are directly duplicated in the subordinate documents of the state planning system.
- About 30% of strategic goals are not quantifiable, which makes it difficult to monitor their achievement.
- The number of indicators in the strategic plans of government entities varies from 90 to 1,000 units.
- Forecasting of planned values of indicators is not carried out at the proper level. Due to the lack of evidence-based planning methods, there

is a practice of unreasonably underestimating the planned values of indicators.

- The synchronization of the state planning system with statistics is not ensured. There is no clear system for collecting statistical indicators, which makes it difficult to monitor and evaluate the achievement of individual indicators.
- The data of state entities collected in the framework of administrative accounting is not systematized and is not sufficiently accessible for both statistical agencies and other interested state entities.

3. Duplication of documents and indicators of the state planning system

Separate sectoral programs duplicate both state programs and strategic plans of the relevant state entities in terms of goals, activities, and indicators. For example, the Sectoral Road Safety Program for 2012–2014 duplicates the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011–2015.

Some strategic objectives are implemented through several program documents. For example, the construction of engineering infrastructure is carried out according to several programs: Business Roadmap – 2020, Employment Program – 2020, the “Development of Regions” program, the Program for the Development of Single-Industry Towns for 2012–2020, and the “Affordable Housing – 2020” program.

At the local level, the existing strategic plans of the executive bodies, financed from the regional budget and the budget of the cities of Nur-Sultan and Almaty, duplicate the respective regional development programs in terms of content, indicators, and measures.

4. Weak relationship of strategic, economic, and budget planning

In accordance with the basic principles of a results-based budget, the strategic plan of the state body should focus on the development priorities of the supervised sphere for the medium-term in conjunction with budgetary expenditures. At the same time, certain key problems of the relationship of strategic, economic, and budget planning are highlighted below.

The strategic plans of government entities include indicators on the national level, the achievement of which depends on the integrated work of a number of government entities and businesses, for example, indicators reflecting the general state of society, ecology, and the economy, which can

be influenced by both external factors and the environment, natural phenomena, global trends, etc. (Regulation, n.d.).

The government's strategic plans also include indicators and measures whose implementation does not directly affect the achievement of priority goals and objectives. These indicators and activities reflect ongoing activities and should be included in the operational plan. The presentation of detailed and extensive information is not conducive to a full analysis of the document and distracts attention from the truly important strategic tasks.

Also, the strategic plans of state entities are frequently adjusted in connection with changes in budget parameters and the adoption of new documents of the state planning system.

In accordance with the Budget Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the budget program determines the direction of budgetary expenditures, interconnected with strategic directions, goals, objectives, and outcome indicators established in the strategic plan of the state body. The budgetary program should contain indicators of results and the amount of financing of budgetary expenditures. However, in practice, budgetary programs are formed on the basis of planned types of expenses, financing mechanisms, as a result of which several budgetary programs are implemented to achieve one goal or task, or one budgetary program is aimed at achieving several goals and objectives. This situation does not allow the amount of funds necessary to achieve the corresponding goal and task to be determined.

5. Ineffective risk management

When developing a strategic plan, the state entity does not plan its risks or only plans them formally, and the risk management measures are declarative in nature. The potential consequences of the risks are underestimated. In conditions of global volatility, risk management should be carried out systematically for subsequent management decisions.

For example, the reason for the decline in exports of the metallurgical industry in 2011 was the unavailability of transport for goods, following the oversight of considering the risk of transport insecurity. As a result, the necessary measures were not taken to prevent this risk, which led to a decrease in the foreign trade balance of Kazakhstan.

6. Imperfection of mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of documents of the state planning system and the activities of state entities

Despite positive trends resulting from the implementation of assessment in the state planning system, approaches to the assessment of documents of the state planning system do not yet fully comply with international standards. At the same time, there are a number of structural problems that need to be addressed.

The existing assessment of strategic and program documents (with the exception of territorial development programs) is mainly aimed at assessing the degree to which the planned results are achieved. There is limited assessment of social and economic efficiency, planning quality, and the sustainability of maintaining the achieved effect of strategic and program documents, (Nazarbayev, 2013) as well as measurement of the level of satisfaction of beneficiaries.

According to the current legislation, strategic and program documents are evaluated every three years and upon their completion—with the exception of territorial development programs and strategic plans, which are evaluated annually. The Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2020, the Forecast Scheme of the country's spatial development until 2020, state and industry programs, territorial development programs, and the strategic plans of government entities are subject to assessment. This assessment provides an analysis of the achievement of specific results and the factors that influenced the implementation process, as well as recommendations for adjusting the document and more. However, the assessment does not cover the analysis of the relationship between strategic and budget planning, in particular, strategic indicators and the budgetary funds planned for their implementation, which over the years has not resolved the problem of their low correlation.

Extension of the assessment coverage has been hindered by the high resource intensity of this process, due to the following reasons: a lack of developed mechanisms of internal assessment in the evaluated structures, insufficient participation of the public sector in the assessment process, and a lack of automated information systems. Finally, the consequence of the increased resource costs of the assessment is inefficiency and a limited choice of analytical tools.

7. The qualifications of personnel involved in the planning process

One of the most important factors affecting the successful functioning of the state planning system and the application of the main principles of budgeting for results are the qualifications of the personnel involved in the planning process, their skills in developing non-financial indicators (target indicators and performance indicators), and definition of the necessary measures to achieve goals and objectives. The main problems in this area are the insufficient qualifications of employees of state entities, high staff turnover, at both the central and regional levels, a lack of continuity, and insufficient quality of education.

The topic of results-oriented budgeting is still insufficiently explored, not only in Kazakhstan, but throughout the world. There are many examples and descriptions of how the governments of various countries have sought to link the budgeting process and the planning of an activity's results; a number of researchers have shown the pain points of the traditional financial management system. At the same time, though, there remains a clear deficit of critical and comparative analysis which would show the advantages and disadvantages of accumulated practical experience (Decree Dated December 31, 2013; Decree Dated April 23, 2010; Decree Dated August 28, 2009).

Of particular importance is the selection of projects for financing from the budget. Therefore, we consider it appropriate to make the selection according to the following priority criteria:

at the macro level

- the development priorities of economic sectors
- the effect of influence on the development of industries
- the elimination of interregional imbalances
- the lack of an alternative to the budget (strategic objectives) at the project level
- high socioeconomic returns
- opportunities to attract private investment

Thus, it should be noted that the issues of effective management of the budgeting process are still relevant for Kazakhstan. There are significant methodological difficulties in measuring the performance of the government, ministries, and departments, the effectiveness of budgetary expenditures, and the difficulties in more closely integrating results planning and the budgeting process.

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Joy and Sadness in Spiritual Life According
to St. Ignatius of Loyola: A Hermeneutic Study
Part II: Inspired by St. Ignatius of Loyola: Reading Feelings—
An Attempt at Interpretation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to attempt to interpret human emotionality as expressed in the experiences of joy and sadness, in view of the precepts of one of the schools of Christian spirituality: Ignatius Loyola's teachings (1491–1556). According to this current of spiritual philosophy, which draws on the centuries-old experience of the biblical and Christian understanding of the emotional dimension of our lives, as well as the experiences and thoughts of Ignatius himself, our emotionality—often experienced as a kind of incomprehensible “buzz”—may, in reality, constitute equally emotional, legible “speech.” This “speech” becomes understandable when we can properly “read,” that is, recognize and understand, the emotional experiences we experience in this sphere. The article's *reading feeling* is a proposal of commonsensical–sapiential deciphering of both our emotional and emotional–spiritual experiences and joys and sorrows, as well as *analyzing* and *interpreting* them in the search for relevant meanings that they often carry or express.

KEYWORDS: character, emotionality, reading feelings, spiritual discernment, natural background: psychophysical, existentially situational, existentially constitutive, supernatural background, joy, sadness, emotional and emotional–spiritual states, temperament, feelings, spiritual life

STRESZCZENIE

Radość i smutek w życiu duchowym według św. Ignacego Loyoli. Studium hermeneutyczne. Część II: Inspirując się św. Ignacym Loyolą: lektura uczuć – próba interpretacji

Celem tego studium jest próba interpretacji ludzkiej emocjonalności w jej uczuciowej formie wyrazu w postaci przeżyć radości i smutku, w świetle założeń jednej ze szkół duchowości chrześcijańskiej, mianowicie tej zaproponowanej przez Ignacego Loyolę (1491–1556). Według tego nurtu życia duchowego, czerpiącego zarówno z wielowiekowego doświadczenia biblijnego i chrześcijańskiego rozumienia emocjonalno-uczuciowego wymiaru naszego życia, jak i wniesionych do niego doświadczeń i przemyśleń poczynionych przez samego Ignacego, nasza emocjonalność doświadczana niejednokrotnie jako swoisty i często niezrozumiały „gwar” może, w rzeczywistości, stanowić równie emocjonalną, czytelną „mowę”. „Mowę”, która staje się zrozumiała z chwilą, gdy potrafimy właściwie „rozczytać”, czyli rozpoznać i zrozumieć, doświadczane przez nas w tej sferze emocjonalno-uczuciowe przeżycia.

Lektura uczuć, o której mowa w tytule tej części, to pewna propozycja zdroworoządkowo mądrościowego *rozczytywania* naszych zarówno emocjonalnych, jak i emocjonalno-duchowych przeżyć i stanów szeroko rozumianych radości i/lub smutków oraz ich *analizowania* i *interpretowania* w poszukiwaniu nierzadko zawartych w nich istotnych dla nas znaczeń, których swego rodzaju nośnikami, czy też formami wyrazu, są niejednokrotnie właśnie tego rodzaju doświadczenia.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: charakter, emocjonalność, lektura uczuć, rozeznanie duchowe, podłoże naturalne: psychofizyczne, egzystencjalnie sytuacyjne, egzystencjalnie konstytutywne, podłoże nadnaturalne, radość, smutek, stany emocjonalne i emocjonalno-duchowe, temperament, uczucia, życie duchowe

1. A few words about the method

Reading feelings is a proposal for a commonsensical–sapiential reading of our emotional experiences and states as well as an analysis and interpretation of them in the search for the relevant meanings that they often carry or express.

My approach is situated in the philosophical current of a personalistic understanding of humanity, and is inspired by Ignatius of Loyola’s experiences and thoughts on spiritual life, which were described in Part I of this essay, so it also makes an allowance for other dimensions of our life, which seem not to have been of direct interest to Ignatius.

As an approach, it is only one possible way to understand and interpret our emotionality. It is a way that I would call hermeneutic, or rather hermeneutic–practical, given the fact that it focuses on both the problem of a hermeneutic nature—i.e., the problem of understanding either what we communicate or what is communicated to us by means of emotional forms of expression¹—and also a practical problem, namely, one concerned with providing “an adequate answer,” that is, one that accounts for both the message contained in the experience and its source, i.e., the background and cause of this message, communicated to us in the language of emotions, as well as the good of our personal existence and/or development.

Indeed, this hermeneutic–practical *reading of feelings* is not (neither *only* nor *primarily*) a cognitive theoretical approach to our emotionality, consisting of an existentially-distanced search for a *commonsensical–sapiential reading* of our emotional experiences, focusing on the various sources/backgrounds that can cause them, their potentially diverse types, and the multiple forms of emotional expression that they can take. This approach *is* the search for an equally existentially-distanced, *commonsensical*, proper *interpretation* of any meanings that may be communicated to us through this type of experience. Without questioning the importance or necessity of such scientific theories, this *reading* is an attempt to transcend this scholarly distance of a purely theoretical approach to the emotionality that we experience existentially, by examining it *both* cognitively–theoretically and existentially–practically.

Many will likely agree that, taking into account the human daily experience of emotions, it seems that it can be reasonably assumed that if not all of them, then at least some can be conceived of as a kind of “language,” which—as has already been mentioned—either we use to communicate with each other on the level of emotionality, or “the Other” (however understood) addresses us in such a language with a message to convey.

Similarly, many will probably admit that we are often unable to appreciate this hermeneutically *linguistic* function of emotional experiences and states, and its importance in our personal lives, as we experience these messages, generally, as a kind of incomprehensible and/or irrational “emotional static,” or rather, as “white noise.”

The possible recognition, in emotionality experienced thusly, of certain experiences and states that may function as a kind of language communicating to us, in its own particular way, something that would be

1 I borrow the understanding of the hermeneutic problem in the sense used herein in its essence from Paweł Dybel. According to him, “a hermeneutical problem [is] the problem of understanding what the Other is saying to me” (Dybel, P. [2012]. *Oblicza hermeneutyki*. Krakow: TAiWPN Universitas, p. 17).

existentially significant for us, requires—as in the case of any linguistic event—specific prerequisites.

In the case of reading feelings, such prerequisites will inevitably include *self-knowledge*, that is:

1. knowledge of our own psychophysical structure—especially our temperament—and its current condition,
2. events that build the “here and now” of our personal and interpersonal “everyday life/history,” and our character,
3. our own idea for life, our own plan for life, i.e., the existential foundation and horizon of the meaning of our everyday life/history, and
4. personal life in faith.

2. A variety of emotional and emotional–spiritual sources of experiences and states

The emotions that appear in us, as Ignatius pointed out in his autobiographical *A Pilgrim's Journey*, may have various sources or grounds, namely both *natural* and *supernatural*. The former—i.e., the natural sources—encompass at least two feelings that are significant from the point of view of *the reading of feelings* and that will become the subject of the following terminological distinctions and analyses. These are psychophysical and existential sources. Among the latter category, the especially important ones are those that I would call existentially situational and existentially constitutive. As for the second type of sources of experiences and states that are of interest to us—i.e., supernatural sources—Ignatius, recalling his convalescence in *A Pilgrim's Journey*, generally mentions two of them, namely, one constituted by the actions of the good spirit—God and his angels—and the other by the actions of the evil spirit.

We must note here that these and similar natural and supernatural sources of our emotional experiences and states can occur both separately and simultaneously. An example of the separate occurrence is *times*. Ignatius recommends three ways of making a sound and good choice: during the first time, second, and third time. There are situations in which, as in the “first” time, only one spirit—one supernatural medium—which governs us, or as in the “third” time, when our actions spring from a natural source, when “the soul is not acted on by various spirits, and uses its natural powers freely and tranquilly” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 46).

One of the examples of the second form, i.e., the simultaneous occurrence of emotional and spiritual states caused by essentially opposite sources during one spiritual experience that has chief significance for

communication (in the sense referred to in the reading of feelings), is the second time. Ignatius introduces the dictum “so I ought to choose whatever I do” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 45) as the prelude for making a choice. However, during the second time, unlike during the first and the third times, “the experience of the discernment of various spirits” causes both consolation and desolation during the decision-making process. Another example can be found in the *A Pilgrim’s Journey*, where Ignatius describes the presence and action of an evil spirit in a serpentine form during his thanksgiving prayer after spiritual enlightenment on the shores of the Cardoner River (Loyola, 1553–1555/2001, p. 79).

Finally, when it comes to the example of the natural and supernatural factors coinciding and the significant relationship between them as a complex cause of spiritual awakening, I tend to identify it in another of Ignatius’s spiritual experiences, which Father Luis Gonsalves da Câmara mentions in the *Preface to A Pilgrim’s Journey*:

While Master Polanco and I were eating with him, our Father said that Master Nadal and others of the Society had many times asked him to do something, and that he had never made up his mind about it, but that, having recollected himself in his room after having spoken with me, he had had such great devotion and such a great inclination to do it, and (speaking in such a way as to show that God had given him great clarity on his duty to do it) he had made his mind up completely. (Loyola, 1553–1555/2001, p. 1)

3. The reading of feelings – a case study

In my attempts to decipher emotional and emotional–spiritual experiences, as well as states of joy and sadness in various forms of expression, which I propose later in this study, bearing in mind the inspirational nature of the study expressed in the title of this section, I limit myself to delineating only some of the possible directions of analysis of the selected types of experiences and states which have, or appear to have, only one source.

3.1. Psychophysical background

Emotionality analyzed in this case is an emotionality that, in its most rudimentary dimension, is a psychophysical reaction to equally psychophysical experiences. The hypothalamus, which is the primary center of the entire instinctive and emotional system, seems to play a key role in this kind of dynamics.

As a center of instinctive and emotional life, the hypothalamus is the locus of primary biological needs and basic emotions (fear, aggression, and anger). The physiological symptoms which accompany emotions depend on it, such as sweating, tachycardia, changes in blood pressure, increased urine output, etc. In psychoanalytical terms, the hypothalamus could correspond to the deeper part of the human psyche, known as the id and unconsciousness. (Fedeli, 2003, p. 76)

Considered to be a psychophysically defined area of human life, which is inherently biological and natural, emotionality is an important component of the temperament (Fedeli, 2003, p. 85). At the same time, however, it may be significantly linked to our current psychophysical state. Therefore, the ability to read it and interpret any message it contains, as well as to provide an adequate response to it, requires self-knowledge, especially in the first area—one's own psychophysical individuality and its condition—as well as one's temperament.

Indeed, when looking at our own emotionality, it is not uncommon for us to notice certain regularities between such experiences and states and our psychophysical condition. For example, it is not difficult to observe that some usually quite fast-changing emotional experiences and states, like dissatisfaction, discouragement, or sadness, on the one hand, and contentment, cheerfulness, bliss, and joy, on the other, to name just a few, appear or intensify, usually in specific psychophysical circumstances.

The negative feelings arise, as a rule, in moments when our psychophysical immunity is overstrained or lowered, which may be caused by severe fatigue, weakness, illness, or stress. The positive ones arise when we protect or strengthen our psychophysical immunity, for example, by making sure to maintain a healthy lifestyle, work practices, and proper rest, which regenerates us.

However, everyday experiences also make us realize that although our current psychophysical state of being, which is inherently subject to change, is not inconsequential for the occurrence of specific experiences or emotions, nor is our innate and rather fixed temperament. Indeed, the strengthening or suppressing effect of our temperament on emotional experiences and states dawns on us with almost unquestionable obviousness.

With all this in mind, how can we attempt to decipher and interpret our experiences and emotional states, and, in the case under consideration, those that have a psychophysical and/or temperamental background? The "map" suggested below offers one of the methods for this kind of analysis which contains several coordinates of the commonsensical-sapiential charting of our emotionality. Without aspiring to be an

all-encompassing tool, it nevertheless allows, in my understanding of the issue, to set out important directions in the search for both an understanding of our emotionality experienced differently by individuals and for a constructive approach to the communication it contains. Here are the coordinates:

- A. The “Question”: When does the 1) contentment/joy or 2) sadness/dejection appear?
 - 1. For example, “when I get enough sleep”; “when I run because I like running”; “when I feel adrenaline”; “...”
 - 2. For example, “when I’m very tired, stressed, etc.”; “...”
- B. “What’s it all about?”: an attempt to read and interpret the possible message
 - 1. Maybe: “I’m in touch with myself;” “I’ve recharged my batteries”; “...”
 - 2. Maybe: “I’ve reached my limit or crossed it”; “...”
- C. “What’s next?”: an adequate response to the source/background of the emotional state
 - 1. Maybe: “I’ll stick to it, because it’s useful for me, I benefit from it”; “...”
 - 2. Maybe: “I’m going to rest, regain my strength, and these emotions will disappear or decrease”; “...”
- D. A specific lesson to be learned
 - 1. Maybe: “your psychological wellbeing really also depends on you”; “...”
 - 2. Maybe: “get to know your capabilities and don’t strain yourself”; “...”

The general lesson to be learned, which might seem obvious, not to say trivial, but often forgotten or neglected to our detriment, may be that in a vitally important way we communicate not only with others, but also with ourselves, and that we do so by using this particular language of emotions, among other things. Using the metaphor of railway signals, one could say that such emotional experiences and states often play the role of such signals that protect our psychophysical safety and healthy functioning.

Incidentally, practical knowledge of this type of emotional experiences and states, as well as their strictly natural determinants—not only inner, psychophysical–temperamental ones, but also those external, environmental, both of which are significant, especially in building and modeling the emotional tuning of oneself—not is alien to Ignatius. On the contrary, he is not only familiar with it, but he also recommends it in *Spiritual Exercises* in order for a retreatant to induce a specific emotional state in the

psychological sense, so that he can engage more fully in the internalization of the subject of his thoughts and contemplations.²

3.2. Existentially situational background

Emotions born out of reactions to the various events that make up our existentially relevant—personal and professional—everyday life seem to be the second-most “typical” and common form of the emotionality we experience. Bearing in mind our basically personal involvement in these events, as well as their existential significance to us, I call them *situations*. However, due to their functions as sources of such or other experiences and emotional states, I call them the *existentially situational background*.

Interpersonal relationships, work, and social engagement, to list only some of these existentially important areas of our personal activity, are the realities which dynamically construct the aforementioned situations from which our everyday life is woven, and which shape, together with the social environment, the existentially understood story of each of us. These areas, due to their importance to us, often generate particularly intensively experienced emotionality. In this game, like in this socially significant everyday life, we are alone.

For this reason, experiences and states with an *existential* background in a *situational* sense are usually characterized by relatively high “readability,” which allows us to pinpoint their source or multiple sources relatively easy. As a rule, we generally remember, for example, the start of an interesting friendship, some harm done to us, the promotion we received recently, or a successful initiative to which we devoted a lot of energy and time, as well as the emotions that they evoked in us or still evoke when we think about or remember them. Therefore, in the case of analyzing emotional reactions of joy and/or sadness with an existential situational background, both the memory of events which make up the everyday life of our personal and interpersonal *here and now*, and our *history*, as well as

2 For example, Ignatius advises a retreatant who wants to feel repentance and suffering for his own sins, so that he may help himself arouse such spiritual states by “tuning himself” mentally, creating an appropriate external environment. To contemplate better, he finds it useful “to deprive [himself] of all light, closing the blinds and doors while [he is] in the room, if it be not to recite prayers, to read and eat” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 31). Similarly, for those who desire to experience “joyful thoughts, although good and holy, as, for instance, are those on the Resurrection and on heavenly glory” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 51), he recommends “to use light or temporal comforts—as, in summer, the coolness; and in winter, the sun or heat—as far as the soul thinks or conjectures that it can help it to be joyful in its Creator and Redeemer” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 55).

the awareness of one's own character, so the second of the areas of broadly defined self-knowledge plays a particularly important, although not exclusive, role.

We must note, however, that, unlike psychophysical and temperamental emotions, this type of emotionality does not have so much to do with our innate temperament, but rather mainly with our character, shaped by both ourselves and by the social environment in which we live. However, the influence of the first background, especially the temperamental one, usually has a significant impact on the way we experience existentially situational emotions, namely, above all, on their "color" and intensity. Nevertheless, the various "influences" of the psychophysical and temperamental background, regardless of how major its effect on the situations we experience is, should be clearly distinguished from the existentially situational background, which I consider to be the source of joy and/or sadness.

Indeed, despite the fact that both these backgrounds are essentially *natural*, they differ considerably. As for experiences and emotional states which are rooted in our psychophysical condition and temperament, we are dealing, fundamentally, with influences that are independent of our will, as they are innate "needs" and "behaviors." However, with emotions rooted in existential situations, our "values" come to light, as do our more or less conscious and free "actions": undertakings that make our decisions a reality, and which are somehow related to values.

Considering existentially situational emotional states and experiences, as previously, let us use a "map" to read and interpret them, bearing in mind its limitations and simplifications, as well as the illustrative nature of possible readings of them.

- A. The "Question": When does the 1) contentment/joy or 2) sadness/dejection appear?
 - 1. For example, a) "when I meet with people close to me"; b) "when my work fulfills me and, at the same time, is noticed and appreciated in various ways"; c) "when I can help someone;" "when ..."
 - 2. For example, a) "when things are not so good between us"; b) "when my professional development and advancement have stalled"; c) "when I experience different forms of heartlessness, anonymity, alienation, or indifference"; "when ..."
- B. "What's it all about?": an attempt to read and interpret the possible message
 - 1. Maybe: a) "the experience of closeness and acceptance from being with people with whom I have emotional bonds is vitally important to me: it opens me up, strengthens me/gets me back

- on my feet, brightens me up ...”; b) “recognition in the eyes of others is important to me: it motivates me, brings me a sense of security, boosts my confidence, enhances the mental comfort of my work ...”; c) “truly, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35)
2. Maybe: a) *causally*—“it hurts, divides, and/or destroys me/us ...”; *communicatively*—“I/we can’t find common ground ...”; *prospectively*—“the bonds which are fundamentally important to me are threatened and my/our world might fall apart ...”; *existentially*—“I miss it terribly/I’m ‘hungry’ for this deep warmth and light of our mutual openness, acceptance, and closeness ...”; b) “I’m suffocating ...”; “I’m burnt out ...”; “where is the recognition and appreciation, I give my best—this treatment is unfair ...”; c) “I can’t live like that! ...”; “why ...?”; “it’s a nightmare! ...”; “but why be good to others?!”
- C. “What’s next?”: an adequate response to the source/background of the emotional state
1. Maybe: a) “I will prudently cherish and develop these valuable relationships of acquaintance, friendship, and love in their various aspects: the time I dedicate to them, the mindfulness, the gestures of closeness I show, the reciprocity, my participatory presence, the verbal and non-verbal communication ...”; b) “I will maintain my current style of professional commitment, applying the principle of yes for working ‘with a human face’ and no for dehumanizing perfectionism and the rat race ...”; c) “Keep up the good work. I will continue to act in this way, because the reason for my joy is the good of the person I help (treating a person in need like a subject, not an object) ...”; “only not like this” (if the real motivation of my helping others is mainly seeking my own complacency or self-affirmation, and thus, instrumental treatment of people in need) ...”
 2. Maybe: “I will try to face these existentially situational difficulties and crises that I am experiencing, trying to transform them into qualitatively new stages of my a) interpersonal, b) professional, and c) social realities, knowing that—realistically—more or less, but not everything is up to me.” Thus, specifically and “adequately,” maybe: *in interpersonal relationships*—“I will search for understanding of, an explanation for, and a positive solution to the problem. Empathy or “getting inside another’s skin,” i.e., putting myself in their shoes and examining the bone of contention between us, from their point of view, can help me better understand their attitude, and at the same time teach

me more about the actual source of the crisis we are experiencing, and thus to fully understand the meaning of the sadness that this crisis evokes in me. An honest conversation turning into a dialogue seems to be the most suitable way of fruitfully overcoming our crisis ...” or also “...”; *in the professional realities of life*—“getting stuck in a dead-end job” is not what I expected to be the capstone of my professional career. I need to diagnose its causes,—those that I have influence over and those that I cannot influence—draw conclusions, and give myself a new chance, despite the despondency overcoming me: failures happen, *errare humanum est*” or also “...”; *in the social realities of life*—“heartlessness, anonymity, and indifference dehumanize me, poison me, and kill me. I do not agree to this. These toxins, unfortunately, are not only around me, but also inside me. What I can do is start from myself, trying, by choice, to be less toxic to myself and to others—less heartless, anonymous, and indifferent—and the sadness and dejection they arouse will start to dissipate, after all life is sweeter and brings more happiness, the less our poisons are in it ...”; or also “...”

D. A specific lesson to be learned

1. Maybe: “My multifaceted social world is built on the foundation of values which are existentially important to me, especially acceptance, closeness, love, openness, creativity, understanding, and recognition. When I manifest these values in social life, they also become vehicles and forms of expression. These values give my life depth, taste, splendor, and energy and are important sources of my existentially situational emotions of joy ...”
2. Maybe: “Emotional states of sadness with an existential background signal difficulties and crises in various spheres of my personal, subjectively concretized existence. Ultimately, they signal the threats of annihilation of my vital values that constitute the sense-generating structure of my life understood in this way.”

E. A general lesson to be learned: Perhaps the fact that existentially situational emotionality brings to light the fact that apart from vital physical and psychological needs belonging to the sphere of our human corporeality, *values* oriented towards us as human beings and recognized in the psycho-spiritual dimension of our lives are no less important for us, as people, for our human existence as subjects. Their importance, which we experience every day, is that they enable us an extremely important—namely, existentially qualitative—fulfillment of the personal dimension of our life, that is, its “saturation” with both important concretizations of our humanity,

lived fully thanks to the realization of these values and the “depths” and “joys” proper to these values, which are essentially as deep as the values of their source are higher (Scheler, 1967, p. 1521).

3.3. Existentially constitutive background

Emotionality accompanies all areas of our humanity; that’s what experience teaches us, be it ours or other people’s. The emotionality we experience in the context of making the most important existential decisions, or more broadly, in the sphere of what concerns the foundations of our existence and its fundamental shape, is the third extremely important form of emotional experiences and states.

Because their sources have key meanings for our lives, I call these emotions states with an *existentially constitutive* background. This is a background that belongs to the sphere of understanding of ourselves and the world around us, which is fundamentally important to us, and in the context of the *actions* we take in which—to quote Socrates’s thought on human life—“For it is no ordinary matter that we are discussing, but the right conduct of life” (Plato, 375 BCE/2008, 352d). So, more precisely speaking, these are the sources that belong to our most important sphere, the existentially sense-producing thoughts and choices about “*who* and *how* we are” and “*who* and *how* we want to be,” as well as the closely related search for answers to the often gnawing question about the principle which guides our whole life, or about its leading value that we could stick to what “would make living most worthwhile” (Plato, 375 BCE/2008, 344e). At the same time, these sources also belong to our sphere of *existentially primary actions*, derived from these musings, which concretize this kind of search for the guiding principle/value³ and which we raise to the rank of constitutively sense-producing and sense-carrying fundament the already conceived, or the already fulfilled plans of our personal life. That is why the experiences and emotional states generated by the sources which I define as *existentially constitutive* differ significantly from existentially situational

3 Speaking of the *guiding principle-value*, I am not ascribing value to it yet, i.e., I am not indicating that it is positive or negative, but only paying attention to its axiological nature, whose valence, depending on the value that founded it, should only be recognized or understood. I share Max Scheler’s view that “we must point out the significant fact that all values (ethical, aesthetic, etc.) are divided into positive and negative values (speaking in simplistic terms). This is inherent in the *essence* of values and holds true (*gilt*) quite independently of the fact that we can sense (*fühlen*) these particular opposites of values (i.e., positive and negative values), like we sense the opposites of beautiful–ugly, good–bad, pleasant–unpleasant, etc.” (Scheler, 1967, pp. 1512–1513).

emotionality, stirred up by various forms of our personal, existentially significant, activity in the sphere of interpersonal, professional, and social everyday life, i.e., being *with others and for others*, although, for obvious reasons, there can be, and usually are, substantial dependencies between these two types of emotional experiences.

If I tried to capture the essential differences between them, in my understanding, these are in the case of emotionality described here—first of all, its *background*, that is, our personal, existentially constitutive being *towards ourselves and for ourselves*, whose essence, in general terms, involves coming “face to face” with one’s own life and taking it into one’s own hands to shape it the way one desires. This *being*, if treated personally, does not lose sight of *being with others and for others*; it rather constitutes a fundamentally important and necessary basis for such a socially realized dimension of our personally realized existence. Secondly, this difference is complementarily and indicatively aggravated by the fact that this kind of emotional experience and state is treated as a unique “language” in which we communicate something in an emotional way, referring us to the existentially deepest understanding of the bases, goals, and ways of fulfilling our human potential in this world, and thus, also to their ultimate foundations and horizons of meaning. Finally, thirdly, considering the way of experiencing these emotions, whose existentially constitutive sources have their ultimate foundations in the spiritual dimension of our human being, it differs from the ways of experiencing psychophysical and existentially situational emotionality, especially in the degree of some *spiritual* saturation proper to this radically primal, sense-producing all-encompassing depth and gravity.

Therefore, in order to read and interpret experiences and states with an existentially constitutive background, reaching for the already familiar “map” leading us, in this case, to the spiritual dimension of our humanity, co-determined in a significant way by our human openness to transcendence, freedom, rationality, decision-making power, judgement, and, consequently, personal responsibility, knowing your own life plan—its existential foundation, and its horizon of meaning, i.e., the third of the signaled areas of self-knowledge—appears to be indispensable here. Having made these clarifications, let us now proceed to the attempt to decipher such experiences and existentially constitutive states.

- A. The “Question”: When does the 1) contentment/joy or 2) sadness/dejection appear?
 1. For example, a) “when I discover/am able to tell myself/experience the certainty of what I want to do in life and how I want to live”; b) “when I manage to carry out the plan I have for my

- life”; c) “when I act/try to live up to my values and understanding of how I want to live despite all odds”; “when ...”
2. For example, a) “when I feel lost in life”; b) “when what is most precious in my life is underestimated, neglected, or destroyed”; c) “when I experience the grotesque quality of life, which mercilessly consumes and absorbs me more and more”; “when ...”
- B. “What’s it all about?”: an attempt to read and interpret the possible message
1. Maybe: a) “I found my pearl”; “I have an idea for my life”; “I take my life into my own hands”—fascination, challenge, the taste and thrill of adventure, the certainty of the direction of life (orientation in life), awareness of its importance and values for me, catching the “wind in your sails”; “...”; b) “my life is mine”; “it worked ... it was worth it ... that’s it!”; “keep at it!”—the experience that my life is really up to me, the joy of fulfillment, the enthusiasm of action, motivational recharge, satisfaction and pride, self-confidence, a sense of my own power to make things happen”; “...”; c) “that’s what you should do”; “it makes sense”; “I can breathe!”; “I am myself and in my place”; “I can look myself in the mirror”—confirmation that my own choices were right, awareness of the proper foundation of life, satisfaction with sticking to my own compass, experiencing authenticity and loyalty to myself, self-respect, dignity, and pride”; “...”
 2. Maybe: a) “where is the compass of my life?”; “what am I doing?”; “my idea for life is not working!”; “I’m wasting my life?!”; “I don’t know what to do”; “Boor, you had the horn of gold”—confusion, stupefaction, helplessness, uncertainty, disorientation, frustration, blame, bitterness; “...”; b) “my life is threatened”; “I am insulted, destroyed, humiliated, and despised ...”—resistance, rebellion, insecurity, acceptance, support, awareness of harm, injustice, hopelessness; “...”; c) “life is absurd, pointless, inhumane, and ideas for its good management are a toxic illusion”; “Carpe diem!”; “How should one live?”; “I can’t go on like that!”—frustration, disappointment, irony, cynicism, tragedy, comedy, illusoriness, suspicion, powerlessness, anger, despair”; “...”;
- C. “What next?”: an adequate response to the source/background of the emotional state
1. Maybe: a) “I will verify whether my idea of life is reasonable and good. To this end, I will first give calm consideration to the reasons underlying my belief in what I want to do in life and how I want to live, that is, *their content*—these are usually

arguments ‘in favor of’ a given vision of life; *their character*, that is, are they of an emotional, rational, or religious nature ...; *their respective backgrounds*, namely, what lies behind them—my personal experiences, thoughts, and fascinations with someone or something ...; and *the criteria of their truth* and validity for me, that is, why I believe them and lean towards them. Next, I will analyze the criteria of my choice of what I want to do in life and how I want to live, i.e., what motivated me in making the decisions? For example, was it thirst for adrenaline, challenge, the taste and thrill of adventure, a vital necessity of the moment, recognition of my life path and its purpose ...”; or also “...”; b) “I will try to follow the principle of ‘keep going!’ given that although this expression might seem obvious and even trivial, this is not the case if I want to think about the ‘how’ and ‘where to’ of my seemingly trivial ‘keep going!’ After all, experience teaches that every choice, even a reasonable and good choice for the shape of our lives, requires constant mindfulness to put it into practice wisely, that is, to do so in such a way that cares about both the quality of the realization of the project we have chosen and the very shape of life that is proper to it, so that together they translate into our integral growth in humanity in all its dimensions. Hence, the question of ‘how’ in regards to this ‘keep going!’, i.e., the way and quality of our taking our life into our hands is vitally important to the success of this fundamental undertaking of our life. This question, referring to Jesus’s wisdom, asks whether, among other things, figuratively speaking, we erect the edifice of our life on ‘sand’ or on ‘rock’ and whether, by taking this up, we will not only be able to erect some more or less impressive foundations, perhaps arousing our pride and satisfaction, but also whether we will bring this work to its successful completion, that is, to our fulfillment in humanity according to the possibilities which each of us possesses. The same applies to the question of ‘where to’ for this ‘keep going!’, because it also—considering the dynamism of our life and our deeper investigation of it—confronts us with a vital issue, namely, the further existentially essential concretizations of the plan for our lives, their recognition and prudent introduction to the plan.”; or also “...”; c) “I will conduct myself in accordance with my values and understanding of how I want to live, the first criterion for recognizing the rightness of my decisions. Additionally, I will make the accompanying states of spiritual contentment and/or joy arising under the influence of this

kind of compatibility an important aspect of the criterion of spiritual confirmation of their rightness, and by the same token of them being good to me.”; or also “...”;

2. Maybe: a) “I will attempt to constructively work through my experience of feeling lost in life, starting with the recognition of the nature of this ‘getting lost’ I am experiencing. It can signal getting lost in life in the sense of a partial or total loss of this life, namely, more or less the loss of its meaning, authenticity, validity, legitimacy, or power ..., as in a situation of living with a guilty conscience, contrary to one’s beliefs and values ..., or also a total loss, as in the situation of existentially utterly ‘selling yourself out’ to someone or something. However, it can also mean not so much a loss in life, but rather losing one’s way in life in at least two different interpretations: in the first interpretation, when I take on the position of an onlooker who is looking at my plan for my life, instead of proceeding to its fulfillment, taking the spectral, often illusory image of my own life to be its real, existentially life-giving concretization,⁴ or in the second interpretation, when I not only live somewhere suspended between the world of my imagined life and the world of real life, but also when this world of my imagined life has nothing to do with the world of my real life, and does not stand up to the collision with its actual realities. The experience of getting lost in life does not necessarily mean ‘losing one’s way in life,’ although it can express a kind of failure of one’s own idea for this life. When I encounter this failure I can give up or treat it as a life chance for an existentially important correction of both my approach to my own life plan and the correction of the plan itself, if it existentially somehow ‘fails,’ that is, it contributes to my getting lost.”; or also “...”; b) “This is an extremely important and difficult lesson of *the truth and art of living* ‘here and now’ in this temporal human world: everything that is truly ‘valuable’ in our lives ‘costs’ something; therefore, if we do not want give up these ‘valuables,’ we have to be prepared to bear their costs. This fact, which many of us will strongly contest,

4 This situation, by analogy, seems to be aptly characterized by the exhortation of James the Apostle: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do” (James 1: 22–25).

shows us inexorably the need to learn the ‘skill of paying’ such bills, which means paying them wisely, that is, in a way that contributes to our growth as human beings. *The Wisdom of Sirach*, in my opinion, offers special counsel on how to do it wisely, speaking of the ‘costs’ of what is ‘precious’ in life, while doing so in relation to this particular form of ‘preciousness’ which is serving God, nevertheless, without losing, therefore, its universal validity and the possibility of applying it to all other forms of the true ‘preciousness’ of human life. The book advises, “My child, if you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for testing. Set your heart straight, be steadfast, and don’t act hastily in a time of distress. Hold fast to God and don’t keep your distance from him, so that you may find strength at your end. Accept whatever happens to you, and be patient when you suffer humiliation, because gold is tested with fire, and acceptable people are tested in the furnace of humiliation. Trust him, and he will help you; make your ways straight, and hope in him” (Sirach 2: 1–6).

Undoubtedly, the wisdom of this advice is both very *demanding* and *shocking*, in at least a double sense. At the same time, however, it is also *optimistic* advice. It is demanding because it encourages its addressee to live a life radically entrusted to God, extreme to the point where the form of this life will be considered by many of us to be extremely impractical, because it expects us to rise to the heights of heroism buttressed only by the hope of unlimited trust in God. And all this, in the name of ‘preciousness’ that is supposed to be significant content in our lives, to impart its sense-carrying importance and vitality from nowhere other than this preciousness, which is the ultimate foundation and horizon of meaning for both this particular preciousness of the biblical addressee and his whole life, that is, from God himself. It is also shocking because, first of all, it reveals the special drama of human existence in the words ‘prepare your soul for experiences,’ from being tested in different ways, which is inscribed in our life here and now, to experiences expressed metaphorically in the concept of a ‘furnace of adversity,’ in which, according to *The Wisdom of Sirach*, people who are pleasing to God are tried. I will return to this topic later in the study. On the other hand, secondly, this advice is also shocking in the sense that revealing this aspect of our human existence, which is so dramatic in its core, this shock shakes our expectations of our life and its imaginations. Finally, it is also optimistic advice, because it reveals the widest horizon of the

realization of our existence and its ultimate fulfillment, set by God himself—the horizon of what is ‘supernatural’, the horizon that embraces all the horizons of what is ‘natural’ in which we have moved so far, maintaining their importance, and concurrently infinitely exceeding them with all-encompassing fullness. Therefore, perhaps, it is worth considering this advice in our possible search for ways to ‘pay’ wisely for ‘valuables’, which are a weighty content of our lives.”; or also “...”; c) “I’m going to analyze the grotesqueness of life that I’m experiencing, taking into account its forms of expression that I experience in my life and around me, as well as their nature, possible sources, and possible interrelationships. The grotesqueness that I experience is not something ineligible and irremovable, which suddenly falls on me like some Greek fate, but on the contrary, it is something whose presence and scale in my life are more or less dependent on my personal choices, and not on other ideas for my life and their concretizations.”; or also “...”;

- D. A specific lesson to be learned: Maybe “experiences and states with an existentially constitutive background direct our attention to the deepest foundations of our humanity, both in its natural and supernatural dimensions, that is, to the spiritual foundations of our existence, its key values for us, and also to the conceptualization in reference to them, or to already fulfilled ideas for life (life plans). Considering the latter, they direct our attention especially to the criteria of their selection, the ways of concretizing and reformulating, strengthening, finding, and/or rebuilding. At the same time, these experiences show us both the indelible drama of our existence springing from our freedom—which constitutes us personally, as bodily-spiritual beings—and the *possibility of realizing the grotesque form of its concretization* which accompanies this existence, and somehow lies in our power (precisely due to such a creative embedding in the freedom given to us), casting a peculiar shadow over the existence of each of us.”; or also “...”;
- E. A general lesson to be learned: maybe the lesson about one of the paradoxes of our existence, which is fundamentally important in its existentially constitutive dimension, is that in us people, “there is a strange duality in the human which makes for an ethical paradox. We have definitions of good qualities and of bad; not changing things, but generally considered good and bad throughout the ages and throughout the species. Of the good, we think always of wisdom, tolerance, kindness, generosity, humility; and the qualities of cruelty, greed, self-interest, graspingness, and rapacity are

universally considered undesirable. And yet, in our structure of society, the so-called and considered good qualities are invariable concomitants of failure, while the bad ones are the cornerstones of success. A man—a viewing-point man—while he will love the abstract good qualities and detest the abstract bad, will nevertheless envy and admire the person who possessing the bad qualities has succeeded economically and socially, and will hold in contempt that person whose good qualities have caused failure. When such a viewing-point man thinks of Jesus or St. Augustine or Socrates, he regards them with love because they are the symbols of the good he admires, and he hates the symbols of the bad. But actually he would rather be successful than good” (Steinbeck, 1951).

The presence of this kind of dualism in us, generating an existentially significant tension between the ideals and values we admire, declare, and/or choose and the realities we sometimes desire—in the form of emotional experiences and states, as well—involves the need to constantly explore our own way of life, to internalize values constituting its foundation and horizon of meaning, and to learn the ability to justify one’s life choices, especially to oneself ...”; or also “...”

3.4. Supernatural background

We are physical and spiritual beings who belong to the world of “what is natural” and give it a significant expression in emotional experiences and states of joy and sadness, among other things, which we experience many times, stirred up by sources of an equally natural character, which have been mentioned so far. Nevertheless, in our integrally and inalienably bodily-spiritual existence in the world of “the natural,” we not only belong to it, but we also transgress beyond it, as we are essentially *open* to the wholeness of reality, both natural and supernatural, and at the same time in this openness, we are capable of entering specific interactions with it.

This fundamentally important fact of being open in our core finds its existential expression in our *transgression* towards everything transcendent to us, in both the sphere of “the natural” and of “the supernatural,” towards the causative cause, the ultimate horizon of meaning and the ultimate goal, namely, towards Transcendence, which in the Judeo-Christian experience of faith makes God known to us as a personal God. On the other hand, however, he also finds his existential, fundamentally important expression in some *encroachment* into our bodily and spiritual being in this world, into all that is transcendent (in the sense we have already

mentioned above), until the Transcendence Itself, or God, enters our lives. A special embodiment of this openness and accompanying emotionality, which is essentially specific to our human nature and which will become the subject of the following analysis, is *the transgression towards "the supernatural"* as well as the *intrusion of "the supernatural"* into our bodily and spiritual existence, i.e., *transgression-intrusion*, which I call religious experience in a broad sense.

The experiences and emotional states which are the fourth fundamentally important form of emotionality considered in this essay are situated within the kind of experience that significantly expands the horizon of our lives (analyzed so far in their physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions) by the spiritual–religious dimension appropriate for them, co-determined by what is “natural” and what is “supernatural.”

These experiences of spiritual–religious life—both biblical, which was expressed by the author of the *First Letter of John the Apostle*, who points to the basic criterion for knowing their true nature: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1)—and extra-biblical, the model example of which, concretized in the life of Ignatius Loyola was discussed in the first part of this essay, teach us that experiences and states appearing in us as well as joy and sadness related to spiritual and religious life can be aroused by both natural and supernatural sources,⁵ and among the latter, generally speaking, by the actions of a good spirit, and of a bad one.

Given the assumptions of this essay, namely, its limitation to the analysis of selected types of experiences and emotional states that have or appear to have only one source, the subject of my thoughts below is these forms of emotional expressions in the sphere of spiritual and religious life that have a supernatural background. Therefore, in the context of broadly defined religious experience, in order to properly read the nature of the emotional states experienced as part of it and to read and interpret the important messages contained within them, the above-mentioned multifaceted knowledge of ourselves becomes necessary, with particular emphasis on the knowledge of the personal life of faith, or its fourth dimension. This, in turn, when it comes to this work, means knowing both the universally important principles of a life of faith, in the Christian understanding, and our personal way of living it. And in the case of the former, i.e., the principles of a life of faith, this knowledge presupposes, at the very least, a basic knowledge of how the spirits of good and evil operate in our

5 For more on the possibility of experiences and emotional states coexisting with natural and supernatural sources see the section *A variety of emotional and emotional–spiritual sources of experiences and emotional states* in this essay.

human life and what the rules for recognizing these spirits are—and, as a consequence, how to distinguish between their actions—as well as our responses to such manifestations of the *intrusion* of the supernatural into our lives. In addition, it is more than recommended, it is desirable to have someone who already has solid experience in the sphere of spiritual and religious life in this regard accompany us in this kind of reading of spiritually emotional states and in the discernment of their supernatural sources.

Abiding by the inspiration of the spiritual experiences of Ignatius Loyola, it is worth recalling three of his rules for the “discernment of spirits”, rules “for perceiving and knowing in some manner the different movements which are caused in the soul—the good, to receive them, and the bad to reject them” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, pp. 76–79). These rules, which were already mentioned in Part I of this essay, say that they will help us in reading and interpreting spiritual and emotional states which are aroused in us by various movements which are happening in the soul and coming once from the good spirit and once from the evil spirit, such as thoughts, ideas, desires, consolation, and distress.

Third Rule. The third: With cause, as well the good Angel as the bad can console the soul, for contrary ends: the good Angel for the profit of the soul, that it may grow and rise from good to better, and the evil Angel, for the contrary, and later on to draw it to his damnable intention and wickedness

Fourth Rule. The fourth: It is proper to the evil Angel, who forms himself under the appearance of an angel of light, to enter with the devout soul and go out with himself: that is to say, to bring good and holy thoughts, conformable to such just soul, and then little by little he aims at coming out drawing the soul to his covert deceits and perverse intentions.

Fifth Rule. The fifth: We ought to note well the course of the thoughts, and if the beginning, middle, and end is all good, inclined to all good, it is a sign of the good Angel; but if in the course of the thoughts which he brings it ends in something bad, of a distracting tendency, or less good than what the soul had previously proposed to do, or if it weakens it or disquiets or disturbs the soul, taking away its peace, tranquility, and quiet, which it had before, it is a clear sign that it proceeds from the evil spirit, enemy of our profit and eternal salvation. (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79)

Bearing in mind the above reflections and rules, let us now move on to an attempt to read the typologically outlined different types of possible experiences and states with a supernatural background.

- A. The “Question”: When does the 1) deep satisfaction, inner spiritual joy, and happiness or 2) spiritual sadness, dejection, despair, and anxiety appear?
1. For example, a) “when I feel that I am acting in accordance with faith and God’s will being discovered in it”; “When I try to live in such a way that my life is a testimony of faith and love for God and for people”; b) “when I ‘feel’ God’s presence in my life and want to live in this presence”; c) “when I ‘modernize’ God’s commandments and my life of faith in the spirit of ideology and cultural trends, in a variety of ways: explicitly or in a veiled way, in an evolutionary or revolutionary way, by rejecting trends pushing God and his commandments from proposed life forms and visions of the world”; “when ...”;
 2. For example, a) “when I experience stagnation or mediocrity in my life of faith”; b) “when everyday difficulties, troubles, and lack of time pull me away from God”; c) “when I try to grow in union with God and honor him with my life”; “when ...”
- B. “What’s it all about?”: a possible message, an attempt to read and interpret “to some extent” the biblical key and the personal experience of faith.
1. A state of deep satisfaction, inner spiritual joy, and happiness appears
 - a) “when I have the feeling that I am following faith and I’m discovering God’s will in it”; “when I try to live in such a way that my life is a testimony of faith and love for God and for people.” Possible *message*: “the Lord is faithful” (2 Thessalonians 3:3, 3a); “Who but God!”; “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5); “Remain in my love!” (John 15:9b); “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” (Phil 4:13); “The Lord strengthens and supports me”; “I am God’s branch”; “I have a firm foundation that gives me strength in the righteous pursuit of my goal”; “...”; Possible *interpretation* of the message: “perhaps the spiritual, emotional experience makes us realize that “in the persons who are going on intensely cleansing their sins and rising from good to better in the service of God our Lord ... for then ... it is proper to the good to give courage and strength, consolations, tears, inspirations and quiet, easing, and putting away all obstacles, that one may go on in well doing.” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 76) or also: Possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is

the action of a good spirit. The *reason* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus's rule of the discernment of spirits—"Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:20)—and the rules for the discernment of spirits, "Second Rule", speaks of how the spirit of good and evil works in those who act in the service of God.

- b) "when I feel God's presence in my life and want to live in it"; Possible *message*—"Abba, Father!" (Rom 8:15); "You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water." (Psalm 63:2); "I sing in the shadow of your wings. I cling to you; your right hand upholds me." (Psalm 63:8–9); "God loves me, I am not alone"; "..."; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps this kind of joy that comes from experiencing God's presence and the will to live in it, which I would call joy of consolation, may be a form of spiritual "invitation" so addressed to us by a good spirit. A possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of a good spirit. The *reason* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus's rule of the discernment of spirits—"Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:20)—the rules for discernment of spirits, Part I, "Second Rule," and Part II, "Third Rule," which states that "with cause, as well the good Angel as the bad can console the soul, for contrary ends: the good Angel for the profit of the soul, that it may grow and rise from good to better" (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79).
- c) "when I "modernize" God's commandments and my life of faith in the spirit of ideology and cultural trends, in a variety of ways: overtly or covertly, in an evolutionary or revolutionary way, I reject those trends that oust God and His commandment from the proposed forms of life and visions of the world"; Possible *message*—"you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Gen 2:4b–5); "I have the right to do anything" (I Cor 6:12a); "be true to yourself"; "enough with all the superstitions"; "carpe diem"; "your body belongs to you"; "enjoy life"; "..."; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps we are dealing here with some caricature of a genuine life of faith, expressed in actions and messages inscribed in the logic of the actions of the evil spirit, and thus with the experience that bears the hallmarks of temptation

to be a god for ourselves. A possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of an evil spirit. The *reason* for recognizing and interpreting its supernatural source this way is Jesus's rule of the discernment of spirits—"Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:20)—and St. Paul's rule of immutability of the Gospel, unquestionably proclaimed in the *Letter to the Galatians*: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!" (Gal 1:6–8)

Other reasons are the rules for the discernment of spirits, Part II, "Third Rule" and Part I, "First Rule." According to the third rule, "with cause, as well the good Angel as the bad can console the soul, for contrary ends: the good Angel for the profit of the soul, that it may grow and rise from good to better, and the evil Angel, for the contrary, and later on to draw it to his damnable intention and wickedness." (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79)

Here, ultimately, it leads to ousting God and his commandments from my life plan and my world. Also, by analogy, the "First Rule" is another reason, illustrating the fact that "in the persons who go from mortal sin to mortal sin, the enemy is commonly used to propose to them apparent pleasures, making them imagine sensual delights and pleasures in order to hold them more and make them grow in their vices and sins" (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79).

2. The state of spiritual sadness, dejection, worry, and eventual despair appears
 - a) "when I experience stagnation or mediocrity in a life of faith"; a.1.1) Possible *message*—"What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management" (Luke 16:2); "I'm spiritually lazy"; "I'm lukewarm"; "..."; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps the one that Ignatius mentions as the first reason for distress in his "Ninth Rule." He notices in it that we may find ourselves desolate (here in the form of spiritual sadness) "because of our being tepid, lazy, or negligent in our spiritual exercises; and so through our faults, spiritual consolation withdraws from us" (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017,

p. 76). At the same time, perhaps it is also the reason he speaks of in the “First Rule,” when he draws attention to the way the good spirit works in the lives of people in a state of spiritual death, to which the situation of spiritual stagnation and mediocrity often leads. It consists in the fact that “in these persons the good spirit uses the opposite method, pricking them and biting their consciences through the process of reason” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 75). A possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of a good spirit. The *reasons* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural background might be the Rules for the discernment of spirits, Part I, both the “First Rule” and the “Ninth Rule”; a1.2) Possible *message*—“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5); “Now remain in my love!” (John 15:9b); “my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit” (John 15:1b–2a); “I neglect my life of faith”; “God cares for me”; “...”; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps the state of spiritual sadness we experience is given to us by God in order to encourage us to revive our life with him, and it so makes us realize that he cares about us and looks after us. For this purpose, by the spiritual sadness which the good spirit awakens in us, he stands at the door of our lives and “knocks” (cf. Rev 3:20), wanting us to hear his voice and open ourselves to him in this experience of spiritual desolation. Thus, let us accept his invitation, extended to us in such a state of sadness, to live with him in friendship and fellowship through a return to original zeal and conversion (cf. Rev 3:16–20); A possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of a good spirit. The *reasons* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural background are the Rules for discernment of spirits, Part I, “First Rule,” St. John’s Gospel—Jesus’s teaching on abiding in him and in his love (John 15:1–11)—as well the Apocalypse of John—the teaching about being spiritually “lukewarm” and the principles of exiting this kind of “lukewarmness” by restoring the original zeal and conversion—contained in the *Letter to the Church in Laodicea* (Rev 3:14–22); a2) Possible *message*—“there is no God” (Ps 53:1); “I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing at all” (Is 49:4); “You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am

ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me” (Jer 20:7); “What good is faith for me?”; “I don’t feel the need to change anything”; “This faith is killing me”; “Isn’t it better to end it all?”; “One big delusion!”; “...”; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps it contains half-truths, discouraging reasoning, hopeless perspectives, camouflaged self-justifications, persistence in stagnation, questioning of faith, a rejection of God, that is, spiritually “toxic” messages because they distort, debilitate, or depreciate authentic experience of faith. Possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of an evil spirit. The *reason* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus’s rule of the discernment of spirits—“Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20)—and also the rules for the discernment of spirits, Part II, the “Fifth Rule,” in which Ignatius teaches us that “we ought to note well the course of the thoughts, and if the beginning, middle, and end is all good, inclined to all good, it is a sign of the good Angel; but if in the course of the thoughts which he brings it ends in something bad, of a distracting tendency, or less good than what the soul had previously proposed to do, or if it weakens it or disquiets or disturbs the soul, taking away its peace, tranquility, and quiet, which it had before, it is a clear sign that it proceeds from the evil spirit, enemy of our profit and eternal salvation” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79).

- b) “when the hardships of everyday life, trouble, or lack of time pull me away me from God.” Maybe: b1) The possible *message* “You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water” (Ps 63:2); “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28); “If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5); “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain” (Ps 127:1); “You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you” (Lk 12:20); “I do not want to live like this!”; “I miss you”; “Can’t it be any other way?”; “...”; Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps the state of spiritual sadness experienced in such a way seems to bear signs of grief or longing (sounding with a note of longing), invites us in many ways to remain with God who is somehow “lost” in the whirlwind of everyday life, as if this emotional state oriented

towards him “wanted to let us know” that “God cares for you, so through the longing and sadness that he arouses in you, he wants you not to depart from him, but to make an effort to develop the ability to experience the hardships of living with him.” Possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of a good spirit. The *reason* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus’s rule of the discernment of spirits—“Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20)—the rules for the discernment of spirits, especially both Part I, the “First Rule” and Part II, the “Fifth Rule”; b2) Possible *message*—“it’s impractical!”; “Well, you can’t have everything!”; “So where is God’s concern for me now?”; “...”; Possible *interpretation* for the message—perhaps seems to be suggested by the tinge of disappointment and doubt that resonates in this kind of messages of sadness, which I would call a sadness of disappointment and doubt. These two feelings, more or less subtly articulated, permeate me and discourage me from living with God. A possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of an evil spirit. The *reason* for such recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus’s rule of the discernment of spirits—“Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20)—and the rules for the discernment of spirits, especially Part II, the “Fifth Rule.”

- c1) “when I try to grow in union with God and make my life a testimony to him.” Maybe: c1) Possible *message*—“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34); “Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul” (Job 3:20); “why?”; “Jesus, I trust you”; “...” Possible *interpretation* of the message—perhaps this kind of sadness is a state of spiritual distress. If we were to accept such a diagnosis, then analyzing it in the context of the rules that Ignatius recommends applying when experiencing distress, we would have to ask ourselves about the reasons for which we find ourselves in such a state. Are we in distress because “[God wants us] to try and see how much we are and how much we let ourselves out in his service and praise without such great rewards as consolation and great graces” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 77)? Or because “[God wants to give us] true acquaintance and knowledge, so that we may interiorly feel that it is not ours to get or keep great devotion, intense love, tears, or any

other spiritual consolation, but that all is the gift and grace of God our Lord, and that we may not build a nest in a thing not ours, raising our intellect into some pride or vainglory, attributing to us devotion or the other things of the spiritual consolation” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 77)? The possible *background* of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of a good spirit. The reasons for this recognition and interpretation of the supernatural source is Jesus’s teaching about the removal of branches by the Father, “so that it will be even more fruitful” (Jn 15:2) and the rules for the discernment of spirits, Part I, the “Ninth Rule,” about three principal reasons why we find ourselves desolate, here about the second and third reasons.

c2) Possible message—“Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9); “How will you be able to endure the kind of life you have to live for 70 years?”; A possible *interpretation* of the message may be found in the “Second Rule” indicated in Part I of the rules for the discernment of spirits “In the persons who are going on intensely cleansing their sins and rising from good to better in the service of God our Lord ... for then it is the way of the evil spirit to bite, sadden and put obstacles, disquieting with false reasons, that one may not go on” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 76). “A possible background of this spiritually emotional experience or state is the action of an evil spirit. The reason for such a recognition and interpretation of its supernatural source is Jesus’s rule of the discernment of spirits—‘Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them’ (Matthew 7:20)—and the rules for the discernment of spirits, Part I, the ‘Second Rule.’”

C. “What next?”: an adequate response to the source/background of the emotional state. In each of the analyzed cases, if the spiritual and emotional states and the accompanying thoughts actually have a supernatural basis in the above sense, the first and basic step is to become aware of the state of one’s personal life of faith, and to pay close attention to what the given state and its verbal articulation in the form of thoughts incline us to do, observing what moods they evoke in us, what understanding they inspire in us, and finally, how it all affects us, by acting in accordance with the “Fifth Rule” from the rules for the discernment of spirits. According to this rule, “we ought to note well the course of the thoughts, and if the beginning, middle, and end is all good, inclined to all good, it is a sign of the

good Angel; but if in the course of the thoughts which he brings it ends in something bad, of a distracting tendency, or less good than what the soul had previously proposed to do, or if it weakens it or disquiets or disturbs the soul, taking away its peace, tranquility, and quiet, which it had before, it is a clear sign that it proceeds from the evil spirit, enemy of our profit and eternal salvation” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79).

1. When it comes to the first group of typologically outlined experiences and spiritual emotional states, characterized by the influence of supernatural sources, i.e., good spirits, God and his angels, which either through the states of spiritual joy/consolation, or the states of spiritual sadness/distress, ultimately lead to the growth of faith in us, revive it and strengthen it by awakening the will to stay in touch with Jesus, by kindling love for God and people, or by purifying this faith and love—in relation to spiritual and emotional experiences and states understood in this way—accepting the “message-invitation” to the development of our humanness to reach its fullness which finds its final fulfillment in God himself, and cooperating with their spiritual sources, according to the situation in the personal life of faith in which we currently find ourselves, is the basic criterion for searching for adequate responses to the kind of actions of the good spirit in us. Answers which, depending on the recognition of the state of our life of faith, can be expressed in different forms, such as returning to God through multiple “conversions of the heart,” committing to a more mature sacramental life (reconciliation, the Eucharist, etc.), i.e., living with God present in our lives, as pursuing a deeper life in prayer, and as acquiring the ability to seek and find God in everything.
2. However, taking into account the second group of typologically outlined supernatural experiences and spiritual states that, through both states of spiritual joy/consolation and spiritual sadness/distress, ultimately, one way or another, drive us away from growing in friendship with God and with people, and are identified by Ignatius in his rules as actions originating from an evil spirit, “the enemy of our profit and eternal salvation”; with regard to this kind of spiritual emotional experiences and states, Ignatius proposes several criteria for providing an adequate response to them (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79). One of them is *rejecting such experiences and states each time*, in the sense of “following” them, because the goal of such agitations that “are caused in the soul” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 76) is always to

inflict some spiritual harm on us.⁶ Another, equally important response is our *counteracting them accordingly*, when “the person who is exercising himself in spiritual things opposes a bold front against the temptations of the enemy, doing diametrically the opposite” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 77–78). Yet another response is not keeping secret, but sharing this kind of experience with a person experienced in the operation of the evil spirit, who is familiar with “his usual deceits” and can recognize them in the experiences and spiritual states experienced by us, under his influence (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79). Finally, the last of these is the criterion of *recognizing one’s own weaknesses*, thanks to careful analysis of the strategy of the evil spirit in relation to us, in order to strengthen ourselves spiritually morally and/or religiously. Ignatius notes that the evil spirit acts similarly to a commander of troops who, wishing to conquer a fortress, searches for its weakest, least defended place. “In like manner the enemy of human nature, roaming about, looks in turn at all our virtues, theological, cardinal, and moral; and where he finds us weakest and most in need for our eternal salvation, there he attacks us and aims at taking us” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 77).

- D. A specific lesson to be learned—Perhaps we are unavoidably in the “sphere of interest” of both the good and evil spirits. Nevertheless, this interest, both in the first and in the second case, has a fundamentally different purpose. While Psalm 16 accurately captures the deepest sense of the first one in the words, “You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Ps 16:11), the sense of the latter one is equally aptly expressed by the laconic characterization of the evil spirit contained in the rules for the discernment of spirits, wherein Ignatius calls him “the enemy of our profit and eternal salvation” (Loyola, 1522–1524/2017, p. 79). Moreover, this kind of interest in us finds its real, existentially spiritual expression in their “battles” for us, which occur not somewhere “outside of us,” but in our personal lives, and in these battles we are not neutral observers, but we must always pick a side.
- E. A general lesson to be learned. Perhaps the fact that in all the typologically analyzed cases of experiences and emotional states, with

6 We find this kind of criterion both in justifying the purpose of the rules, in the laconic statement that they serve—“for perceiving and knowing in some manner the different movements which are caused in the soul the good, to receive them, and the bad to reject them,” and in the rules themselves.

both natural and supernatural backgrounds, we always experience them integrally as bodily-spiritual beings, although in our analyses of these experiences, we usually focus only on specific dimensions of our lives which the case in question relates to in a particularly significant way. What seems to be an obvious and banal statement at its core turns out not to be one in the least when we ask what it means that, firstly, we participate in every experience integrally, and, secondly, that we participate in it precisely as bodily and spiritual beings? Such a question necessarily touches on the issue of possible references and relationships between experiences and emotional states aroused by one or another source, proper to the different dimensions of one and the same humanity which has been discussed in this study so far. In the same vein, it puts the center of attention on the *integrity* of our existence as human beings and its *dynamic character*, important in the context of our humanity in the world “here and now” and, at the same time, in the horizon of Transcendence, which reveals itself to us through religious experience. On the other hand, it touches on the issue of our human *car-nality*, which constitutes our way of being human as bodily-spiritual beings in the world given to us, namely, its essence, importance, and inalienability, on the premise that everything we do in any area of our existence—physical, mental, or spiritual—is always somehow mediated through this corporeality. It is through our corporeality that we express *who we are, what our values are, how we understand the meaning of life, who we want to be for ourselves and for other people, and who we want to be for God*. In our bodies, we also realize all these understandings and our existentially important attitudes inspired by them, from love and acceptance of ourselves and the Other (man and God), to hatred and rejection of ourselves and each and every Other.

I intend to devote the third part of this essay series to these questions, asking about their biblical and philosophical interpretations and the possible implications and inspirations proceeding from them, which still remain valid today. As for the study proposed in this part on *reading feelings*, of course, it does not exhaust the complexity of emotionality and is not intended to do so; nor is it meant to be the only, first, or best one. Instead, this essay is guided by the intention of becoming a contribution to learning to understand ourselves in this important area of our humanity, which will also become the subject of the third part of the series.

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Descriptions of Culture in the Media as a Search for its True Image

ABSTRACT

The article confirms the thesis that culture is understood in various ways. There are people who do not know culture and those who want to know more about it. Such a desire stems from the need to solve the problem that arises from different understandings of culture and from the fact that what some people call culture, others call anti-culture. The fact that the media are used in the search for the true image of culture is presented in the article through an analysis of the messages presented in the media. If we assume that the role of the media is to help people to discover the truth by discussing issues that are relevant to people's lives, we can say that they truly undertake such a task when it comes to culture. The media emphasize the fact that values such as truth, goodness, and beauty are present in culture. All of these values come from God and lead to him. They make mankind need and search for culture continuously. Thanks to them, we can experience holistic development and understand more deeply what the essence of true humanity is. Without these divine values, human life—marked by false anthropocentrism—will always be filled with activities that can be described as “anti-culture.”

On the basis of selected texts, the article demonstrates the dependence between recognizing true culture and accepting responsibility for it. This responsibility is expressed in a constant effort to broaden one's horizons of thought, to engage in various areas of life, and to create—through true universal fraternity—various communities. This way, the proper development of not only culture, but also of humanity can take place. It is also the path which leads to an effective defense against secular humanism, which is so hostile to religion.

KEYWORDS: culture, media, truth

STRESZCZENIE

Medialne opisy kultury jako poszukiwanie jej prawdziwego oblicza

Niniejsze opracowanie potwierdza tezę o zróżnicowanym pojmowaniu kultury. Są ludzie, którzy jej nie znają, i tacy, którzy chcą poznawać ją coraz dokładniej. Pragnienie takie spowodowane jest chęcią rozwiązania problemu, który powstaje przez różne rozumienie kultury oraz przez fakt, że to, co jedni określają terminem kultury, inni nazywają antykulturą.

Na podstawie analizy zaprezentowanego przekazu medialnego pokazany został fakt wykorzystywania środków społecznego przekazu do poszukiwania prawdziwego oblicza kultury. Jeśli środki te mają pomagać człowiekowi w docieraniu do prawdy – omawiając aktualne dla ludzkiego życia kwestie – to w temacie kultury rzeczywiście podejmują się takiego zadania.

W umieszczanych w mass mediach treściach dotyczących kultury podkreślany jest fakt obecnych w niej wartości, takich jak prawda, dobro i piękno. Wszystkie one pochodzą od Boga i do Niego prowadzą. One sprawiają, że człowiek nieustannie potrzebuje i poszukuje kultury. Dzięki nim może bowiem doświadczać integralnego rozwoju i coraz dokładniej rozumieć, na czym polega prawdziwe człowieczeństwo. Z kolei życie człowieka bez tych Bożych wartości, naznaczone fałszywym antropocentryzmem, zawsze wypełnione będzie działaniami, które określić można terminem „antykultura”.

Na podstawie zaprezentowanych medialnych treści wskazana została zależność rozpoznawania prawdziwej kultury od przyjmowania za nią odpowiedzialności. Odpowiedzialność ta wyraża się w nieustannym podejmowaniu trudu poszerzania horyzontów myślowych, angażowania się w różne dziedziny życia, tworzenia – przez prawdziwe powszechne braterstwo – różnorodnych wspólnot. W ten sposób realizować się może właściwy rozwój nie tylko kultury, lecz także człowieka. Jest to również droga, na której dokonuje się skuteczna obrona przed wrogim religii laickim humanizmem.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: kultura, media, prawda

The concept of culture is defined in numerous ways and frequently refers to various spiritual and material achievements, both individual (belonging to a person) and collective (developed by a social group). The English cultural anthropologist, Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917) explained that these achievements consist of patterns of thought and behavior (1871, as cited in O’Neil, 2006).¹ The descriptions of culture which have been

1 The definition developed by Tylor is one of the most frequently quoted descriptions of this phenomenon: culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (1871, as cited in O’Neil, 2006).

adopted in academic studies (and they are abundant and diverse) demonstrate that the understanding of this notion undergoes an unceasing evolution. Similarly, discussions devoted to culture held in the media approach culture from many different angles. It is widely accepted that the term “culture” is one of the most complicated concepts, and although over 150 definitions of this term can be found in English, it must be admitted that culture is inherently undefinable. “The definition of culture remains elusive and contested” (Frischmann, 2006). It is also beyond the individual and refers to a particular community, as people create culture by engaging in social life.

Culture is certainly a very complex concept and, as such, it has its own complex specificity. Culture is discussed in the media on a regular basis, and the discussions are usually aimed at finding answers to the following questions: What is culture? What is its role in the lives of people and society? How do contemporary societies understand culture and how do they actively participate in it? What human activities in the area of creating culture become anti-culture activities? The synthetic analysis of various descriptions of culture in the media presented in this article aims not only to describe the types of discussions about culture held in the media, but also to demonstrate that their objective is to find the true image of culture.

The confirmation of the significance and timeliness of this topic can be found in the teachings of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, both of whom reminded us that the clearly discernible “split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time” (Paul VI, 1975) and pointed at the media and cultural areas as an *areopagus* with a particular value for human life. In fact, the contents drawn from it not only provide information, but also shape and inspire people in their everyday lives (John Paul II, 1990).

The article is based on the observation method, which is one of the methods used in social science research; it presents the results of an intentional search for facts, a planned activity of cognition. The contents of the article can be used to confirm or contradict formulated hypotheses.

Current state of knowledge about culture

This part of the article will focus on two aspects of culture: one will describe the lack (or insufficient amount) of knowledge about culture and the need to educate people (especially young people) in this area; the other part will present examples justifying the need to define at least basic criteria to be met if human creativity is to be assigned to the area of culture.

Media messages address the state of knowledge about culture in Polish society. For example, Rev. Tomasz Horak (b. 1944), a preacher and long-time editor of the Catholic weekly magazine *Gość Niedzielny* [*The Sunday Guest*], who has written over 1,200 texts, described in one issue a meeting with young people preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation, during which he mentioned the topical problem of the clash of two cultures—Christian and Muslim—in the world. The conclusion he came to—which he shared with the readers of the magazine and on the website www.faith.pl—expresses his conviction that 14- and 15-year-olds do not know what culture is; it is *terra incognita* for them. This discovery prompted him to express the following postulate: the time has come for activities coordinators to come forward to adolescents and explain to them—in language that young people can understand—the “eternal rules of human culture. As a Christian, I will add Christian culture” (Horak, 2018).

An important voice in the discussions about culture—expressed by Michał Merczyński, a Polish culture studies expert and program coordinator—is the claim that there are “more and more young people who are interested not only in their social and emotional life, in showing off, visiting clubs, and having fun. They also want to participate in cultural events of their choice” (Cyz, 2011). Education, therefore, plays a special role in culture (for both its recipients and its creators). As Paweł Potoroczyn, a Polish culture manager and journalist, observes, for “Citizens of Culture” education is more important than the financial resources allocated to various cultural projects (Cyz, 2011). In this context, it is worth quoting one of the comments to the above-mentioned text by Rev. Tomasz Horak. Its author (signed as “SF”) not only agreed with the opinion about the widespread lack of knowledge about “high culture” among young people, but also suggested that *Gość Niedzielny* should include a series of articles devoted to it.

Another issue concerning knowledge about cultural activities is the proper identification of such activities. Apart from culture, we can also talk about anti-culture (which is an obvious contradiction of the former), and the two should be clearly distinguished from each other. However, not everyone agrees with this view and, consequently, certain people do not find it necessary to distinguish between them. Stefan Meetschen—a journalist working for the German weekly magazine *Die Tagespost*—wrote in a Catholic weekly magazine, *Idziemy* [*We are Coming*], that

what was once considered tasteless, low, worthless, and even dangerous has become fashionable, popular, and applauded. This process can no longer be halted and the only thing that cultured audiences can do is to make prudent choices among various cultural offers. (Meetschen, 2015)

Meetschen also wrote that in order to make the right choice, it is probably necessary to know the criteria according to which we can distinguish between culture and anti-culture. In his opinion, when considering any such proposal, we should ask ourselves whether it enriches our lives or whether it constitutes a serious threat to them. If it does harm, it certainly is an anti-cultural—and at the same time anti-social—program (2015).

An example confirming the importance and timeliness of possessing sufficient knowledge about culture—which enriches the life (especially the spiritual life) of both individuals and society—is the dispute over introducing limits to access to cultural works. One such dispute was over a Polish theatrical performance from 2017 entitled *Klątwa* [*The Curse*]. The Polish Episcopal Conference issued an opinion stating that the play met the statutory definitions of blasphemy and that Christians’ religious feelings were offended by the profanation of the cross which took place during the performance. On the other hand, members of a social movement named “Kampania Wolności Sztuki i Nauki” [“The Campaign for Freedom of Art and Science”] demanded unrestricted access to cultural works (including the uninterrupted staging of *Klątwa*) on the basis of the civil rights guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. They wrote a letter to Archbishop Wiktor Skwarc, who had made an appeal for the play to be cancelled in one of the theaters within his diocese, demanding that the authorities of the Catholic Church respect the constitutional right to freedom of expression (Kampania Wolności Sztuki i Nauki, 2017; Zielińska, 2017).

As such debates reflect the differences in worldviews which are hotly debated in our society, numerous examples regarding culture (and anti-culture) can be found in the media, such as an exhibition of artwork in Miejska Galeria Sztuki [City Art Gallery] (with a discussion on the profanation of the cross and the national emblem);² the screening of Jacek Markiewicz’s film, entitled *Adoracja* [*Adoration*] (he was accused of desecrating holy symbols and claiming that something blasphemous is a form of art);³ or the theatrical performance of *Golgotha Picnic* at the Malta Festival in Poznań (with a discussion on freedom of speech and artistic expression in Poland).⁴

These comments on culture presented in the media confirm the need for a reasoned discussion on the subject. The need for individuals to shape their identity (contemporary society) in this aspect of everyday life is

2 See Białous, A. (2018).

3 See KAI (2013).

4 See Garcia (n.d.)

confirmed by the opinion expressed by Jacek Kowalski, an academic lecturer in art history at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, regarding different understandings of the issue:

One can say that there are people without culture and that there are cultured people. But there is also another division: between people of culture and people of anti-culture. The latter two categories are not clear to everyone. Many people also surely think that such a distinction is pointless. It will be pointless for those who, for example, do not understand the term ‘blasphemy.’ Or who don’t accept it. (Kowalski, 2014)

The values that make up culture and their meaning for mankind

The facts presented in the first part of this article—addressing the very heterogeneous state of knowledge about culture in society and frequent disputes revolving around definitions of culture—should be supplemented with at least several observations which seem to be important for the proper reception of cultural thoughts and human activity. These observations are taken from the media and serve as evidence of the ongoing discussion about the true image of culture.

Culture is of particular importance for humanity, both for an individual and for society. It contains—and conveys—values that are important for human beings. A person not only creates it, but is also subject to its influence. The Second Vatican Council expressed this characteristic of culture in a document devoted to the pastoral work of the Catholic Church: true and full humanity is achieved through culture, that is, through the cultivation of natural endowments and values. Thanks to our daily activities and attitudes towards our everyday tasks (and the way we perform them), each of us is part of the next generation of creators of culture. At the same time, “the circumstances of the life of modern man have been so profoundly changed in their social and cultural aspects, that we can speak of a new age of human history. New ways are open, therefore, for the perfection and the further extension of culture. These ways have been prepared by the enormous growth of natural, human, and social sciences, by technical progress, and advances in developing and organizing means whereby men can communicate with one another” (Second Vatican Council, 1965).

Tomasz Cyz, Michał Merczyński, and Paweł Potoroczyn—who held an interesting discussion devoted to culture on the website www.dwu-tygodnik.com—emphasized the particular role values play in human life, which is inseparably connected with culture. Describing the role of culture in social life, they unanimously concluded that it is a “place of values

which, especially in times of crisis, must spread as far as possible” (Cyz, 2011). Values have the power to overcome crises marked by human problems in the political and economic spheres. At this point, we cannot ignore the opinion that cultural values—through which a crisis can be overcome—affect not only material and temporal realities, but also spiritual and eternal ones. Humankind is, after all, a work of culture, originating from and directed towards God. Culture and faith cannot be separated. The values which are present in culture—through which our relationship with God is created—allow people, at every moment of our lives, to perceive its noticeable and recognizable meaning. Thanks to the meeting between a human being and God-Love, which happens when we perceive this meaning, each of us can create “a model of integral culture, harmonizing body and soul, person and community, reason and emotion; culture based on love, leading—in faith—to the consolidation of the hope of eternal life” (Sochoń, 2015).

Since ancient times, culture has been based on the trinity of the highest values: truth, beauty, and goodness. These values are the only ones which—as Bishop Ignacy Dec reminded us in the Catholic magazine—allow us to talk about true humanity. They condition the happiness of human beings. However, we must not forget that “the source of these three fundamental values is God himself. He is supreme Truth, supreme Goodness, and supreme Beauty” (Dec, 2013).

The values present in the culture we create should not be used to spread propaganda or for business purposes. They should always lead to the discovery of truth, beauty, and goodness. This claim is confirmed by Paweł Potoroczyn’s conviction that “conventional diplomacy is used to do business, [while] cultural diplomacy is used to tell the truth” (Cyz, 2011); he believes that only culture as the message of truth—and not a propaganda tool—gains numerous followers. Only as such is it a form of national identity, an object of national pride, and a force that promotes the state. Such a conviction, Potoroczyn claims, justifies his “dealing with” culture, which aims at educating future generations of its creators and recipients in Poland.

The descriptions mentioned above confirm the unique role of values conveyed by culture in shaping the identity of both individuals and a nation. The goodness, truth, and beauty present in human achievements—which are passed on—have the power to create a community out of individuals and to determine their attitude towards the world and other people. Thanks to them, others can get to know us; they reveal the actual state of reality in which we live and what we are. Bearing this in mind, the organizers of the World Youth Day in Poland in 2016—wishing to present Warsaw in the best light possible—decided to showcase Polish works

of culture. Their presentation was aimed at young people from various parts of the world, who spent several days in the capital of Poland (before meeting Pope Francis in Częstochowa). In a special pavilion, resembling the interior of a cathedral, tourists and pilgrims could admire an exhibition entitled “John Paul II: Sources,” which outlined the history of Poland and Polish Christianity. It included, among other things, several historical events which were important for our nation, whose central figures were Polish saints and other people whose lives linked the history of Poland and the history of Christianity. Moreover, they had the chance to listen to concerts of Christian music and Chopin’s music, taste regional Polish dishes, learn to weave on a loom and make flowers out of materials characteristic of different Polish regions, admire folk embroidery and paper art, and dance Polish folk dances. Young people from all over the world watched films about Blessed Jerzy Popiełuszko, a Polish priest, a martyr for freedom and the truth, and about Saint John Paul II, the Pope for whom culture was a system of values confirming and developing humankind and human society (Jureczko-Wilk, 2016).

Dominic Christopher Sandbrook, a British historian, journalist, and television presenter, confirms the view that culture has the power to promote the state—which is important for those searching for its true image. In his opinion, the successes of the native culture are not only more numerous than high-profile political events, but also have a stronger impact on both individuals and societies. The opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in London in 2012 can serve as a perfect example which demonstrates this role of culture. Viewers and spectators followed the transformation of Great Britain over the centuries through the works of British culture taken from literature (e.g., William Shakespeare, *Peter Pan*, or Lord Voldemort—a fictional character from the *Harry Potter* series), music (e.g., the songs of the Beatles, Queen, and the Rolling Stones as performed by the London Symphony Orchestra), or film (e.g., Mr. Bean and James Bond) (Sandbrook, 2016). According to many observers—including the commentators of Polskie Radio Program Pierwszy [Polish Radio 1]—it was the best opening ceremony of sports competitions in history.

Discovering culture by accepting responsibility for it

Culture, as a carrier of values, creates human life. Thus, values are important and cannot be neglected. People who reflect on their own existence can discover that they exert an influence on the world around them. Creating cultural works and participating in culture enable us to gain control over what is happening here and now. This way human life can become

easier and more joyful. We must acknowledge those who, while revealing the image of culture, emphasize that the measure of its truthfulness is the full and integral development of all mankind. It must be admitted that those who fall into the trap of misunderstanding human action are those who assess the level of cultural development by calculating material goods (their production and consumption) or by measuring one's level of pleasure. The objectives of human creative efforts cannot be confined to what is material, temporal, and pleasurable. Culture is measured by human development, and its progress should include the physical, mental, and spiritual spheres of human life. When even one of these aspects is neglected, we cannot talk about the development of an individual, but about his/her regression. Cultural activity is one that allows for a fuller development of humanity.

It is true that each of us not only creates culture, but also depends on it. Culture shapes people and allows them to develop in their humanity according to a system of values. This system is created and expressed in human activity. It is, therefore, impossible to separate the world of culture from the world of values.

When we talk about the relationship between everyday life and culture, we should point to the obligation of human beings to broaden their horizons of thought. Possessing more detailed knowledge about oneself and the world allows one to create wonderful works of culture. The development of thought results in dynamism in the area of cultural activities. Therefore, it is our duty to take care of our own intellectual development as well as the development of other people. Our task is to develop the human spirit through the acquisition of wisdom and reflection on our own life and the world around us. "Only such formation is culture-forming and bears fruit in the works and acts that are at the heart of every culture" (Rosik, 1992).

The level of participation in culture (manifested by human involvement in various areas of life) has a great influence on the preservation and consolidation of certain works and the disappearance of others. All values, assessments, and norms shaped in society are eroded as a result of the emergence of foreign cultural content and the cultural inactivity of the majority of society. The ever-diminishing influence on the younger generation of artistic, patriotic, or scientific works which are preserved in the collective memory and valued by the old can serve as an example here (Kołodziej, 2014).

While discussing the process of discovering the true image of culture, we should emphasize the role communities play in it. Our responsibility for this field of human activity is expressed in creating communities. The effort of building a community is to be undertaken (among other things)

in order to create cultural works. Only in a group do people learn to create and serve, that is, to act in a culture-creating manner. Neither egoism nor consumerism can create culture. Culture is created by social love, which also motivates people to take responsibility for it. This view is confirmed in the teachings of Pope Francis, who—while pointing to the cultural rejection of God’s fatherhood in the modern world—recognizes the increasing difficulty in achieving an authentic universal fraternity. The rejection of the Christian values present in culture leads to a decrease in both fraternal acceptance and the unity of the human race (Francis, 2019).

Other areas in which definitions of culture embrace an acceptance of responsibility for it are conducting scientific research, making philosophical reflections (shaping one’s worldview), undertaking ethical reflections, developing aesthetic trends (related to authentic art), and performing religious practices. The path marked with such difficulties leads to participation in works of culture, in a broad sense of the phrase. Not making this effort or opposing such practices in other people’s activity should arouse anxiety and objection. For a more detailed understanding of the need to practice these ways of learning about culture, it is worth recalling the observation of Bishop Ignacy Dec. While expressing his opinion on contemporary society, the Shepherd of the Świdnica Church noted that it is marked by a wave of aggression directed at Christianity, especially Catholicism. As the most severely persecuted religion (and followers) in the contemporary world, it is experiencing a dictatorship of relativism. Christianophobia can be easily observed in various parts of the world; it is aimed at systematic demoralization and it ridicules everything that is Christian. “The liberal media are ruled by political correctness built on the neo-Marxists’ ideology. In the name of lofty slogans (modernity, freedom, tolerance, or democracy), it attempts to destroy the traditional form of marriage and family and cut the roots of European culture and Christian civilization” (Dec, 2019).

Mirosław Winiarczyk, a journalist, cultural journalist, and film critic, expressed his opinion about the threats to European and Christian culture when writing in the weekly magazine *Idziemy* about the Polish film *Polityka* [*Politics*], directed by Patryk Vega:

Under the guise of exposing Polish politicians, we are watching a festival of vulgarity, rudeness, and lies on the screen. In six chapters the author reveals his fascination with the brutal media language.... It is based on hate speech, used today in the media and on the Internet by enemies of traditional values of our culture”. (Winiarczyk, 2019)

These words confirm the need for our continuous acceptance of our responsibility for culture.

These reflections on the ways in which culture is presented in the media its creation, reception, and promotion (by taking responsibility) of the values it contains—should be concluded with a description of one of the editions of “Noc Kultury” [“The Night of Culture”]. This event is organized annually in Opole and consists of various cultural events. In 2004, as Rev. Marek Lis, a lecturer at the University of Opole, observed, the program of this event was very rich. However, it included only one Christian offering: the concert of a local choir. Describing this situation in the Catholic weekly magazine *Gość Niedzielny* [*The Sunday Guest*], he noted that this cultural event, which enjoys great popularity, did not include anything offered by the Church. Not participating in such an event, not preparing any musical, artistic, or theatrical performances, or film presentations to be included in it, means silence. It is a wasted opportunity to lead people along the paths of faith, which run through aesthetic experiences and through contact with beauty and art. We must not forget, as Pope Francis warned us, that the sources of cultural works are faith, the Gospel, and spirituality. The text also contains an opinion, in line with the comments regarding “Noc Kultury,” that the Church does not notice (or even neglects) artists. Not participating in this event, which is important for the population of Opole, seems to confirm this attitude of neglect towards people creating culture. They become convinced, as well-known Polish director and film producer Krzysztof Zanussi, cited in Kerner (2014), claimed, that

they cannot really count on the support of the Church: it is not about financial support, as it was centuries ago, but about noticing that culture is an important partner in a dialogue on faith or fundamental values, nowadays discredited in so many environments. It is about telling people who create culture—like John Paul II and his ‘Letter to Artists’—that they are needed in the Church, also as its sensitive and critical observers!”

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“The Path of Love” and “The Path of the Cave” in Selected Works of Hans Christian Andersen

ABSTRACT

In the article, the author discusses the “path of love” and “the path of the cave,” using selected works by Hans Christian Andersen. The Danish fairy tale writer masterfully shows how heroes anchored in a sensual world go a long way to find a world that escapes rational cognition. Most of his characters can easily be described as dynamic, because they change under the influence of powerful experiences. Those who attach more importance to beauty closed in a form devoid of deeper content are condemned. Andersen’s fairy tales have two audiences, children and adults. The former will understand the anecdote and the latter will see the metaphor. The works of the fairy tale writer show autobiographical threads, including his attitude to the Christian religion, in which the triad of truth, good, and beauty turns out to be extremely important.

KEYWORDS: Plato, beauty, love, truth, good, faith, idea

STRESZCZENIE

„Droga miłości” i „droga jaskini” w wybranych utworach Hansa Christiana Andersena

W artykule autor omawia „drogę miłości” oraz „drogę jaskini”, posługując się wybranymi dziełami Hansa Christiana Andersena. Duński baśniopisarz w mistrzowski sposób ukazuje, jak bohaterowie zakotwiczeni w świecie zmysłowym przebywają długą drogę, by odnaleźć świat, który wymyka się racjonalnemu poznaniu. Większość jego bohaterów śmiało można określić mianem dynamicznych, ponieważ pod wpływem silnych doświadczeń się zmieniają. W sposób dosadny szydzi z tych, którzy większą wagę przywiązują do piękna zamkniętego w formie pozbawionej głębszej treści. Baśnie Andersena mają podwójnego adresata, są nim zarówno dzieci, jak i dorośli. Ci pierwsi zrozumieją anegdotę, natomiast ostatni – zauważą głębsze przesłanie. W dziełach baśniopisarza można dostrzec wątki autobiograficzne, m.in. jego

stosunek do religii chrześcijańskiej, w której niezmiernie istotna okazuje się triada prawdy, dobra i piękna.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Platon, piękno, miłość, prawda, dobro, wiara, idea

Ideas in Plato's philosophy are proper objects of knowledge because they are eternal and immutable, so they exist in contrast to things that become. According to the Greek philosopher, it is not material good, but ideal good that stands at the top of the hierarchy of ideas (Tatarkiewicz, 2007, pp. 96–97, 109). Władysław Stróżewski, drawing on Joachim Ritter's research, lists six basic meanings of the idea:

1. external appearance
2. structure or condition
3. content of cognition
4. the concept itself
5. species or genus, and
6. objective reality. (Tendera & Rubiś, 2016, p. 34)

The idea of Good and Beautiful is the measure of all things. As a source of principles for everyday life, ethics, and practical philosophy, it organizes the world. Its cardinal quality is indivisibility. Hence, a philosopher can be defined as someone who can make the multitude and changeability of the sensual world assume a single, permanent form (Ritter, 1910, p. 228–326; Stróżewski, 1992, p. 31).

Making the distinction between sensual and intellectual cognition, Plato assumed that we are able to grasp eternal ideas with our mind. He also listed such absolute personal and community values as Truth, Good, and Beauty (Żuk, 2016, p. 103) and considered the last one to be a form of Good. Beauty derives from mathematical and geometric proportions that surprise, delight, and awe. However, "true" Beauty belongs within the sphere of ontological transcendentalism because it is timeless, which means that it does not arise or perish. In Plato's axiology, the idea of Good is at the top of the order of beings. Good is the highest virtue, the goal of people who seek truth and knowledge (Tuszyńska-Maciejewska, 1999, p. 125).

According to the philosopher's concept, a human being can achieve the triad, in other words—Truth, Goodness, and Beauty—in two ways: by "the path of love" or "the path of the cave." In contrast to the difficult and troublesome "path of the cave," the former seems to be light and pleasant. In Plato's *Symposium*, Diotima states that the "path of love" begins when we appreciate sensual beauty (Plato, 385–370 BCE/2008 [210a–e]). It originates from a love that a person feels for the object of their desire,

their beloved. The “path of love” is natural for a human being because it is based on an innate drive for what is beautiful. It leads to the idea of Beauty and is a time of trials from which, according to Plato, a young man “tried by many tests, like gold in the refiner’s fire” must come out “victorious and without stain” (Plato, c. 375 BCE/2008 [503a]). However, a person cannot ascend higher if he/she is still focused on the beauty of the human body and is not open to the beauty of laws, attitudes, or deeds, and—in the final stage—to Beauty for Beauty Itself. The “path of love” is a challenge even for the most perfect of individuals, because everyone initially desires only bodily beauty (Tandera, 2010, p. 23).

In turn, the “path of the cave” is divided into three stages: turning from the sensible to the intelligible, abandoning pre-conceptions, and finally reaching the Truth. The allegory of the cave is a metaphorical image of people in the earthly world and the ideas that govern them. Liberation from the chains symbolizing worldly things can occur thanks to someone who has seen the sun outside the cave. One man, who has been “enlightened,” must return back into the cave to attempt to “drag up the captives” out of the dark (Plato, c. 375 BCE/2008 [514a]). This process requires thought understood as an internal dialogue of the soul with itself. Thanks to dialectical discourse, the soul overcomes the invisible bonds of habits and customs, and then ascends to transcendence. Exiting the cave is an arduous task because it is closely associated with the suffering experienced by someone who abandons everything concerning the material world (Plato, c. 375 BCE/2008 [515c–517a]). However, not everyone receives this grace, because wisdom is a gift from the gods and does not depend on human will. Departure from the cave is therefore done by means of compulsion (Stróżewski, 1992, p. 106).

Hans Christian Andersen was familiar with the Platonic triad, as evidenced by his works, where he emphasized that it is not external beauty that matters, but internal. There are many examples illustrating this idea, including *The Brave Tin Soldier* (1838), *The Ugly Duckling* (1844), and *The Teapot* (1864). In the axiological world of Andersen, we can observe dualism in character construction. As Ewa Ogłóza put it, they can be characterized by “egotism, self-interest, egocentricity, narrow horizons, and a poor ability to understand on the one hand—and altruism, a child-like, primal quality, naivety, openness, and sensitivity, on the other” (2014, p. 257). According to Klaus P. Mortensen, in the works of the Danish fairy tale writer, “physical space is a sign of internal, psychological space, a space of consciousness—the space of the soul. Resurrecting to another existence means transformation into a different, true self” (2006, pp. 30–31). The metamorphoses of Andersen’s characters are often associated with the search for the Platonic idea of Good, as exemplified by fairy

tales such as *Beauty of Form and Beauty of Mind* (1860) or *The Red Shoes* (1845). In the former story, we are dealing with “the path of love,” while in the latter it is “the path of the cave.” Each of them leads the heroes to one goal: Light.

Alfred, a character from *Beauty of Form and Beauty of Mind*, was completely immersed in the material world and neglected spiritual values. Blindly in love with Kæla, he treated her like a work of art. He admired her appearance, which we can see when “he caught sight of a pair of dark-blue eyes” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 297) and when he compares her to a water nymph: “she might have passed for the beautiful maid of the fountain” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 298). Also, in order to highlight her beauty, he let out cries of delight, an example being the exclamation, “How beautiful she was!” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 298). Alfred idealized his beloved,¹ as the following quote testifies:

The daughter sighed very gently; and how much there may be in a sigh, or attributed to it! The young man attributed a great deal of meaning to this sigh. Those deep-blue eyes, which had been lit up this evening in honor of him, must conceal treasures, treasures of heart and mind, richer than all the glories of Rome; and so when he left the party that night, he had lost it completely to the young lady. (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 298)

The narrator speaks ironically about the sculptor being fascinated by the body and mocks his tendency to exaggerate every gesture of the woman. Alfred attributes tremendous value to trivial things, e.g., putting the heroine’s eyes on a par with treasures and the center of Christian Europe. It is clear from the quoted passage that Alfred then identified the beauty of the body with the beauty of the soul, because for him her appearance concealed the treasures of the spirit and heart.

What turns out to be of crucial importance is the question, what is beauty as a value in art (after all, the main character is an artist)? Saint Thomas Aquinas distinguished two definitions. According to the first (objective) definition, beauty is based on perfection, proportion, and splendor, while with the other (subjective) definition it is closely linked with looking at something with pleasure (Dernes-Sarnowska, 1996, p. 194). Overall, this is aesthetic beauty, while the hero strives for transcendental beauty, which designates “spiritual beings, deprived of all potentialities such as angels or God Himself, His Perfect Beauty” (Duchliński, 2016, p. 258).

1 As is well known, the Danish writer lived and worked in the era of Romanticism, when women were treated like deities. It should be noted that Alfred is a typical romantic: he adores the object of his affection, while ignoring the sexual aspect. See also: Wasylewski, S. (1921). *On Romantic Love*. Lviv. p. XX.

Blinded by her external beauty, the man saw no shortcomings in the education or manners of either woman. The narrator points out that, firstly, Kæla’s mother is stupid (although the appearance of his betrothed fully compensated for it); secondly, her daughter had not mastered the art of conversation, and when “she would talk, she could only now and then let fall a word in the same melodious voice”; and thirdly, she turns out to be lazy:

She was really beautiful; but some said she was rather dull, and slept late of a morning. “She has been accustomed to that,” her mother said. “She is a beauty, and they are always easily tired. She does sleep rather late; but that makes her eyes so clear.” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 299)

Moreover, the artist, bewitched by Kæla’s charm, downplayed the thoughtlessness of his future mother-in-law. For example, when he painted a volcanic eruption, she commented on the artistic fiction with childish naivety:

“What, did you see it throw up white fire?” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 299). For a moment, Alfred’s respect for Kæla’s mamma underwent a sudden shock and lessened considerably, but, dazzled by the light which surrounded Kæla, he soon found it quite natural that the old lady should have no eye for color. After all, it was of very little consequence, for Kæla’s mother had the best of all possessions: Kæla herself. (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 299)

Form absorbed Alfred so much that he forgot about content. Art, in general, is the only field

in which an artist can “log” human emotions and thus transmit them to other people. The artist’s task and goal is to do so in an exceptional, unique way, which distinguishes art (a work of art) from other human activities (creations). (Sosnowski, 2011, p. 13)

Therefore, a work of art should delight the audience as well as convey important metaphysical content. A sculptor who is fooled by external beauty does not create a work of art, but an object that entertains people—like a doll. It is not without significance that the narrator compares the married couples’ apartment with a doll house. Everything inside it is new and richly decorated, but it lacks “life.” Both Kæla and the world in which Alfred lives, blindly believing in the power of form, are a delusion. The hero, commenting on the subject of art, remarks

how, in the scale of creation, inanimate matter was inferior to animate nature; the plant above the mineral, the animal above the plant, and man

above them all ... how the beauty of the mind could be displayed in the outward form, and that it was the sculptor's task to seize upon that beauty of expression, and produce it in his works. (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 300)

However, a question arises: what is the 'greatest' in a human being? Is it the physical form, if Alfred raves about Kæla's attractiveness? One could say, using the narrator's words, that "the magic of form had enchanted him; he had looked at the casket without caring to inquire what it contained" (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 300).

The next step on the "path of love" leading to the truth is the realization that sensible beauty has nothing to do with the beauty of the soul. The narrator, using the metaphor of a casket, which eventually wears out, illustrates what happens to the beauty of a created (contingent) being, which (in contrast to the absolute being) is transient, fragile, and lost (Duchliński, 2016, p. 258):

The casket may be injured, the gilding may fall off, and then the purchaser regrets his bargain. In a large party it is very disagreeable to find a button giving way, with no studs at hand to fall back upon; but it is worse still in a large company to be conscious that your wife and mother-in-law are talking nonsense, and that you cannot depend upon yourself to produce a little ready wit to carry off the stupidity of the whole affair. (Andersen, 1860/1872, pp. 300–301)

At the party, at which everyone was undoubtedly elegantly dressed, the artist noticed the intellectual deficits and the lack of good manners of both his mother-in-law and beloved. It was only then that his eyes opened to what lies under the bodily shell and that he noticed the spiritual beauty of Sophy, which was eclipsed by her plain appearance.

The discrepancy between appearance and behavior is best seen in the following passage:

Sophy was not, pretty. She was, however, quite free from any physical deformity, although Kæla used to say she was a little crooked; ... She was a very sensible girl Her appearance created a new atmosphere in the doll's house, and air was really required, they all owned that. (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 301)

Sophy, in contrast to Kæla's dazzling beauty, possessed inner (moral and spiritual) virtue. Unlike her friend, she was interested in art, she was able to manage the house herself, she was loyal (she cared for Kæla when she got sick). In short, she commanded admiration and respect, not with her appearance, but with her disposition.

Alfred reached the principle of Good when he married Sophy and understood that it is not form that determines the beauty of an artwork, but its content. According to his mother-in-law, the sculptor’s behavior was self-contradictory, because her daughter was truly beautiful, while Sophy was simply ugly. Freeing himself from the bondage of worldly perceptions and habits best reflects his understanding of his mistakes. He concluded that he had previously fallen in love with a dead thing that he personified. After seeing the truth, he realized what was really important in life, namely, having a soulmate with whom you can talk about everything and who you can rely on. It is worth quoting the sculptor’s words on love and art:

You came, Sophy, not in the glory of outward beauty, though you are even fairer than is necessary. The chief thing still remains. You came to teach the sculptor that his work is but dust and clay only, an outward form made of a material that decays, and that what we should seek to obtain is the ethereal essence of mind and spirit. Poor Kæla! our life was but as a meeting by the way-side; in yonder world, where we shall know each other from a union of mind, we shall be but mere acquaintances. (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 302)

The quoted passage clearly indicates that Alfred, thanks to love, had reached the ideal of Beauty and Good. One could easily go so far as to say that he abandoned material goods in order to enjoy the eternal, universal Idea, of which Kæla was only a shadow.

The “path of love,” therefore, as Diotima stated in Plato’s *Symposium*, is indeed pleasant. It is a gentle passage from the material to the spiritual world. Another way to reach the highest idea is the “path of the cave” that Karen—a character from the fairy tale *The Red Shoes*—had to follow.

The prisoners in Plato’s cave only see reflections of the real world. Karen, a dainty pretty girl adopted by an old lady, was also trapped in the illusory world of things. The main character exhibits a lot of negative traits, such as self-admiration (while staring at her reflection, she heard the mirror say, “You are more than pretty—you are beautiful”; Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 345), abject materialism (the purchase of red shoes to feel like a princess), and insensitivity (she didn’t look after her benefactor when she fell ill). The color of the shoes connotes sin (van Gennep, 2006, p. 82), so wearing them at the Confirmation ceremony meant violating the social prohibition and disrespecting the holy place. According to Katarzyna Miller and Tatiana Cichocka, red shoes are customarily interpreted as a symbol of “earthly needs, corporeality, and joy that distracted man from thinking about God” (Miller & Cichocka, 2008, p. 87). This claim proves to be correct, because instead of focusing on the religious rite, Karen was only thinking about the shoes:

It was only of these that she thought when the clergyman laid his hand upon her head and spoke of the holy baptism, of the covenant with God, and told her that she was now to be a grown-up Christian. The organ pealed forth solemnly, and the sweet children's voices mingled with that of their old leader; but Karen thought only of her red shoes. (Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 346)

At her First Communion, the red shoes were also the center of attention, more than than receiving Christ:

And all the people inside looked at Karen's red shoes, and all the figures gazed at them; when Karen knelt before the altar and put the golden goblet to her mouth, she thought only of the red shoes. It seemed to her as though they were swimming about in the goblet, and she forgot to sing the psalm, forgot to say the "Lord's Prayer." (Andersen, 1845/1872, pp. 347–348)

This means that Karen went to church for mundane reasons, not for prayer, but to satisfy her vanity. She wanted people to admire her. The girl's behavior reveals basic human sins and flaws resulting from her attachment to material life—more specifically, pride, vanity, disobedience, ingratitude, and materialism.

The next stage begins with the punishment for her sins. Mircea Eliade, for example, mentions that suffering has salvific properties which worked best for the girl's situation (Eliade, 1998, p. 107). God, through an angel-messenger, condemns the heroine to eternal dance:

"Dance you shall," said he, "dance in your red shoes till you are pale and cold, till your skin shrivels up and you are a skeleton! Dance you shall, from door to door, and where proud and wicked children live you shall knock, so that they may hear you and fear you! Dance you shall, dance—!" (Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 348)

In any case, Karen had to suffer a lot before she learned the essence of faith. She experienced physical pain—"The shoes bore her away over thorns and stumps till she was all torn and bleeding"—and spiritual pain, because she could not go to church, although she gravely wanted to.

The torments that the girl had to go through made the earthly things lose their meaning and the spiritual things grow stronger. It was only when she decided to work in exchange for food and shelter at the pastor's home, look after the children and listen to the Bible diligently, that she understood the meaning of life. Her behavior betrays humility because material things and the fruits of human labor are shifted into the background (Andrzejuk, 2000, p. 45). For example, when the children were talking

about costumes and decorations, Karen shook her head, making it clear to them that no good would come of them. Her unpleasant experience caused by her attachment to material values prompted her to reflect and to change her attitude towards God:

Here she sat down with her hymn-book, and as she was reading it with a pious mind, the wind carried the notes of the organ over to her from the church, and in tears she lifted up her face and said: “O God! help me!” (Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 349)

The culmination of the “path of the cave” is the scene when the heroine sees a golden star. The angel “touched the ceiling, which rose up very high, and where he had touched it there shone a golden star” because “the church itself had come to the poor girl in her narrow room” (Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 349), so the laws of physics ceased to have any meaning.² She received what is needed to leave the cave, and which not everyone experiences: grace. The joining of the soul with the ideal of Good is illustrated by the following quote:

The bright warm sunshine streamed through the window into the pew where Karen sat, and her heart became so filled with it, so filled with peace and joy, that it broke. Her soul flew on the sunbeams to Heaven. (Andersen, 1845/1872, p. 349)

In other words, Karen, having suffered her tribulations, abandoned the bonds that tied her to her body and ascended to transcendence.

To sum up, in the beginning both Alfred and Karen lived at the level of the earthly world. They had habits that separated them from the idea of Good. The sculptor saw nothing but form, and the girl stared at her red shoes, i.e., material things. They both learned that external beauty is illusory. Alfred saw the inner emptiness of the idealized Kæla. In turn, Karen experienced bodily pain in order to finally focus on her soul. The main characters reached one goal, which was the idea of Good. It is worth mentioning that Sophy, being a Christian, said that “in a future state, ... everything beautiful develops itself, and is raised to a higher state of existence” (Andersen, 1860/1872, p. 302). And so Karen soared to heights when her soul reached God.

2 In general, flight or ascent usually involves the soul’s meeting with God. For example, Zofia Wyskiel emphasizes that “death is the flight of the soul from the constraints of the body, the flight of the eagles—it is embracing the Heavenly Father.” Wyskiel, Z. (1954–1955). *On death*. Retrieved January 16, 2020 from http://www.duchprawdy.com/s_medarda_zofia_wyskiel_o_smierci.htm

In conclusion, learning about the idea of Good is natural and begins in the sensory world. Beauty is close to a human being, both bodily (the preference for physical beauty is hardly noteworthy) and intellectually (the human soul intuitively seeks beauty). Timaeus aptly conveys Plato's axiology as follows: "the world is the fairest of creations and he [the maker of the universe] is the best of causes" (Plato, c. 360 BCE/2008 [29a]).

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Selected Aspects of the Pre- and Post-Match Rituals of Female Football Players

ABSTRACT

Rituals are an interdisciplinary subject. They can carry many meanings and have different values for the person who performs them or believes in superstitions associated with them. Rituals are mysterious and intriguing, and thus more interesting as an area of scientific study. Observation of the sports community shows that ritualization applies not only to the ceremony itself, but also to the behavior and performance of individual players, especially during the pre-match period. This awareness prompted research and discussion on the place/role of rituals in the mental and physical preparation of athletes.

The study included 62 female football players playing in Polish league competitions. They completed a questionnaire called "Rituals in Sport." The aim of the study was to learn about the ritualized practices of players and their teams. The survey questions also concerned the subjectively felt relationship between rituals and the expected outcome of the match, among other things. The analysis of our findings confirmed that the female footballers' pre- and post-match practices are ritualized. The scope, diversity, and multiplicity of meanings of the rituals performed by individual players reveal the significance of this interdisciplinary phenomenon.

KEYWORDS: rituals, sports, football, sports psychology, mental preparation

STRESZCZENIE

Wybrane aspekty rytuałów okołostartowych piłkarek

Rytuály to zagadnienie interdyscyplinarne. To zjawisko, które może nieść wiele znaczeń i mieć różną wartość dla osoby, która je wykonuje albo wierzy w związane z nimi przesady. Rytuály są tajemnicze i intrygujące, a przez to tym ciekawsze dla próby poznania naukowego.

Obserwacja środowiska sportowego pozwala stwierdzić, że rytualizacja dotyczy nie tylko samej ceremonii, ale też funkcjonowania poszczególnych zawodników – zwłaszcza w okresie okołostartowym. To skłoniło do podjęcia badań, a także dyskusji nad miejscem/rolą rytuałów w przygotowaniu mentalnym i fizycznym sportowców.

Do udziału w badaniach zaproszono 62 piłkarki nożne biorące udział w rozgrywkach polskich lig. Wypełniły one kwestionariusz ankiety RwS – „Rytuały w Sporcie”. Celem badań było poznanie okołostartowych zachowań rytualnych zawodniczek i ich drużyn. Pytania dotyczyły m.in. również subiektywnie odczuwanego związku rytuałów ze spodziewanym wynikiem sportowym. Analizy wyników badań własnych potwierdziły istnienie rytualizacji okołostartowego funkcjonowania piłkarek. Zakres, różnorodność i wielość znaczeń rytuałów realizowanych przez poszczególne zawodniczki/drużyny podkreśla znaczący wymiar tego interdyscyplinarnego fenomenu.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: rytuały, sport, piłka nożna, psychologia sportu, przygotowanie mentalne

Sport, or more broadly—physical activity—is an interesting area for research. Carrying out a proper analysis of such complex phenomena, concepts, and issues requires an interdisciplinary perspective. In discussing research methods in sport psychology, we must mention the need to design precise diagnostic tools, but also the need to cooperate with representatives of other sciences, and to use the achievements of those sciences (including medicine, biochemistry, physiology, sociology, anthropology, pedagogy, or cultural studies). An example of such an “interdisciplinary” phenomenon that requires examination (and is interesting from the point of view of the theory and practice of sport psychology) are rituals performed by athletes.

Rituals are an inseparable element of every culture, an element which is only understood by a particular social group. They are relatively persistent behaviors which are repeated under certain circumstances, and in the history of societies they are most often associated with the religious/spiritual sphere. Today, rituals are increasingly secular. For those who perform them, they carry a particular importance, both individual and social. They inspire a sense of inner strength and social cohesion and they strengthen integration. Owing to their uniqueness and complexity, the issue of rituals is studied by representatives of various sciences. Rituals are not only interdisciplinary, but also universal: they are a natural element of each community’s life, regardless of the variety of ritualized practices or of their place and time (Maisonneuve, 1995; Gajda, 2004; Labbate, 2011; Mazurkiewicz, 2011a). This also applies to sports. Some disciplines with a long history and traditions have deeply-rooted rituals. Every sports show is

perceived as a spectacle. Symbolic ceremonies, defined by specific rules, acquire a ritualistic function—just like all athletes' careers. Athletes, as individuals and/or as a team, exhibit a wide spectrum of ritualized behavior that take on special significance prior to the start of the game. Sometimes, they also have a religious import.

Such rituals holistically affect the physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of sport. First of all, rituals reduce tension and fear, which is important for many players. For many, they are an anxiety valve, a buffer against stress and a sense of helplessness. The world of sport is defined by changeability, unpredictability, and emotionality. It happens that scores in sports sometimes depend not only on the players themselves, on their skills, but on luck, coincidence, and chance. Repeated rituals are therefore an element that can restore the closest thing to a sense of security and stability. When used by a team, they contribute to a sense of cohesion. They restore or build a sense of control, though one that is often illusory. In reality, there is no causal relationship between the performance of the ritual and the result of a particular action (Maisonneuve, 1995; Lipoński, 2004; Burke, 2006; Schippers et al., 2006; Rudski et al., 2007; Brevers et al., 2011, as cited in Womack, 1992; Maranise, 2013; Rutkowska et al., 2016).

Research cited in the literature on the subject suggests that women are more superstitious than men. Their ritualized practices tend to be different than those of men, and the meaning bestowed on them takes on a different nuance (McGinnis et al., 2009; Brevers et al., 2011). Bearing in mind the particular challenges of women's sport, and the challenges faced by players—especially those who practice sports stereotypically perceived as male disciplines—it is worth undertaking an analysis of ritualized behavior, for example, in a group of female football players. Football (soccer) is associated with patterns of male behavior. During sports training, stereotypical images of femininity must therefore be confronted with the requirement of being aggressive, strong, and resilient. For some women and girls, this becomes a major challenge; it is often so challenging that they cannot cope with it and give up sports altogether (Guillet et al., 2006; Jeanes, 2011; Stirling et al., 2011). Nevertheless, women's football is popular and many woman and young girls play it professionally (Bergier, 2006). We need interdisciplinary research to better understand the unique nature of women's sports, especially in the area stereotypically perceived as male disciplines. This will facilitate professionalization and improve the quality of training, from the perspective of both the players and the coaches. One of these interesting aspects is the issue of rituals. Hence, the purpose of this study was to analyze selected aspects of ritualized behavior among female football players in Polish leagues.

Material and method

A group of 62 football players aged 15–27 years ($M = 19.94$ years, $SD = 3.58$), with 1–12 years' professional experience ($M = 4.98$ years, $SD = 2.90$) took part in the study. They were players of Polish league teams from various divisions (premier league: 15 people, 1st league: 5, 2nd league: 33, and 3rd league: 9). The study group included 10 female football players who were called up to the Polish national team.

During the study, each player filled out a questionnaire, which was called “Rituals in Sport” and was developed for the purposes of this study. The tool allowed us to gather information on ritual behavior connected with female football players' matches. The analysis covered the occurrence and type of individual and team ritualized practices before, during, and after the game, the origin of the ritual, the consequences of performing/failing to perform the ritual, and the subjectively felt relationship between the ritual and the final score of the match (probability of success/failure).

It is worth noting that the actual research was preceded by a pilot study, also carried out among female footballers. The subjects were familiarized with rituals performed by various athletes. Afterwards, they were asked to list their pre-match rituals regarding clothing, sound, taste, smell, appearance, gestures, and others. These categories were isolated based on our observations of the sports community and an analysis of media reports and literature on the subject. The results obtained during the pilot study confirmed the existence of this phenomenon among football players and provided valuable insights which were useful in the construction of an appropriate research tool: the “Rituals in Sport” survey questionnaire. First of all, we extended and specified the time range of possible ritualized behaviors. The final version of the tool, therefore, encompasses the entire time period prior to and during the start as well as prior to, during, and after the match: 12 hours before, immediately before, during, immediately after, and up to 12 hours afterwards.

Table 1

Summary of pilot study results with categorized responses

Category	Examples (original spelling)
Food	<p>I eat spinach and sunny-side-up eggs before a match.</p> <p>I always have to drink Pepsi before a match.</p> <p>I drink a glass of magnesium about 12 hours before a match.</p> <p>My lunch before a match must be a pasta dish.</p> <p>I drink coffee before the team gathers for a match.</p> <p>I drink energy drinks.</p> <p>I eat a “3bit” bar.</p> <p>I always have scrambled eggs for breakfast on the day of a match.</p> <p>For breakfast, I eat a roll, jam, and a banana.</p> <p>I eat chocolate.</p>
Behaviors	<p>I always kneel on my right knee before entering the field.</p> <p>When entering the field, I pick a piece of grass, put it in my socks, kneel on my right knee, and cross myself.</p> <p>The day before a match I try to go to church, pray for the match and health for everyone.</p> <p>I enter the field last.</p> <p>I always imagine before the match how it might go.</p> <p>I never go back to my room when I forget something!!</p> <p>When I enter the field, I pick some grass, cross myself, and put the grass inside my shirt.</p> <p>I always think about a loved one before entering the field.</p> <p>When going to a game I take the same seat on the bus.</p> <p>Whenever I enter the field I cross myself 3 times.</p> <p>When I enter the field I cross myself.</p> <p>After greeting the opposing team, we don’t make a shout in the middle of the field, the eleven of us, but we go to the bench and the whole team together with the coaches and only then do we make the shout.</p> <p>A shout before entering the field and on the field before the whistle:</p> <p>I high-five the coach.</p> <p>I always do warm-ups with the same person.</p> <p>A trusted person must have my silver ring.</p> <p>I always cross myself and high-five all the girls before entering the field and the group shout is very important.</p>
Appearance	<p>I shave my legs before a match.</p> <p>I put make-up on my eyes.</p> <p>I do my hair in a bun.</p> <p>I fix my hair.</p>

Clothing	I do my hair so that it doesn't bother me. I never put on match shirts for the warm-up. I carry a medallion in my socks. I always put on the left sock and the left shoe first. I always have the same jersey number. I wear a lucky t-shirt underneath. I always tie my football shoes twice. I have to wear leg warmers. I never put on my shin pads in the locker room. I always wear my favorite T-shirt. I don't go to the match without a hair band. Always the same undershirt. I never wash my shoes after winning a match. I always put on the same underwear. I always put on the right shoe first.
Music	I listen to reggae music on match day. hip hop music, clubbing, reggae. I listen to the song by Mezo-Prayer. I listen to music from the "Team of Champions" album.
Smell	Before the match, I spray myself with Adidas perfume (never another one). I use my "match" perfume. Perfume immediately after going to the locker room after the warm-up.

The "Rituals in Sport" questionnaire consists of 17 items. The first questions concern opinions on rituals performed—generally—in the sports community. The following items refer to the female footballers' own rituals. They are designed for people who declare having/performing rituals. The next questions refer to the type of rituals and the time they are performed. Answers are presented in the table with five or more pre- and post-match periods. The next items regard the specifics of the rituals, the usefulness of performing them, the possible consequences of not performing the rituals, and the frequency and origin/genesis of the rituals. We also included questions asking the players to rate (on a 0%–100% scale) the probability of success vs. failure in the event of performing/not performing a ritual. The questionnaire also contains an item that allows for the diagnosis of the durability of rituals and the factors which would affect a change in rituals. The last question regards the intensity of the need/urge to perform a ritual (on a scale of 0–10; where 0 means "completely unnecessary" and 10 means "very necessary"). In our research, the "Rituals in Sport" questionnaire was accompanied by a metric form.

This paper presents a fragment of research material collected through the "Rituals in Sport" survey.

Results

The first stage of the analysis was to verify which of the surveyed athletes admitted to having their own—individual and/or team—ritual. Then, the different types of rituals were analyzed in separate time periods: before, during, and after the match.

Out of the 62 footballers, 50 reported having individual rituals, while 43 follow team rituals. There are 8 players in the study group who did not report having any individual or team rituals.

Analyses of the respondents' answers are presented below, first regarding individual rituals, then team rituals.

Figure 1

Individual Rituals Performed by Players 12 Hours Before Games

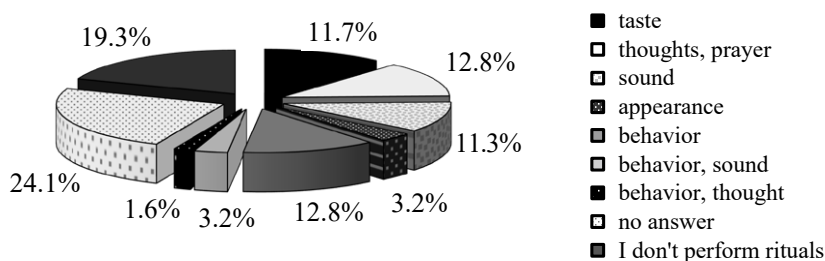


Figure 1 presents individual rituals performed by players up to 12 hours before a game. Nearly 13% of the respondents admitted to thinking about rivalry, the course of the upcoming match, their successes, concentration, ideas, and prayers. Eight girls/young women have their own routine pre-match practices (“behaviors” category; for example watching a game on TV, going to church,¹ getting enough sleep, washing their shoes, and avoiding alcohol²). Two women combine behavior with sound (packing their things or playing with the ball while listening to music), and another respondent combines behavior with thoughts (rest with prayer). One in ten female football players declared that they have sound-related rituals (listening to motivational or relaxing music). The same number of subjects perform taste-related rituals (controlling their diet or making sure to

1 Going to church was classified in a different category than prayer. It was assumed that what is important to the players may be not only prayer, but also the place and atmosphere of the church.

2 When discussing research results and collected data, specific examples of the respondents' answers are cited in parentheses in order to create a given category of responses.

eat light). Two women indicated routine practices related to their appearance (washing their hair or shaving). Nearly a quarter of those surveyed did not respond to this question. Figure 1 also includes the group of players who do not have individual rituals (12 people, or nearly 20% of the study group).

Figure 2

Individual Rituals Performed by Players Immediately Before Games

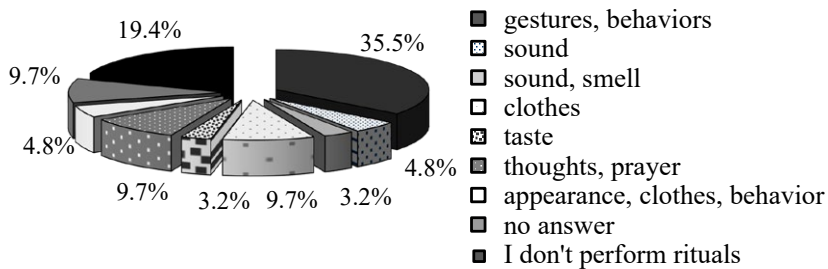


Figure 2 presents the respondents' answers regarding individual rituals performed immediately before a match. Nearly 40% of the subjects (N = 23) perform rituals related to gestures or behavior (mainly crossing oneself when walking onto the field, entering the stadium in a specific order, in a single file, or starting with the right foot). Six players admit to performing rituals connected with clothing (putting on the same or favorite T-shirt, shoes, or underwear). The same number of respondents say that prior to a game they devote themselves to prayers or thoughts about the course of the match, preparations, and goals. Three women combine attention to appearance or clothing with specific behavior (chewing gum, fixing one's hair, putting on a specific piece of clothing, or making the sign of the cross). Two players indicated activities related to eating a particular dish or snack immediately before the match. One in ten respondents did not answer the question about ritualized behavior.

Nearly 70% of the surveyed players declared that they do not perform any rituals during matches (most of them do admit to having individual rituals). Five players have rituals related to clothing (underwear, a personal top underneath the team jersey, the same number, or an armband). Three subjects' rituals entail caring about their appearance (fixing one's hair pins or styling one's hair). Five female footballers perform gestures (mainly the sign of the cross—for example, after a goal is scored—or touching the goalpost just before defending a penalty kick). The same number of players perform rituals in the category of "thoughts" (discipline control, focus, or composure). Almost 5% admit to complex rituals

combining specific behaviors, appropriate clothing (chewing gum, wearing an armband, making victory gestures, or putting on one’s favorite jewelry—even if disallowed by the regulations), and focus.

Figure 3
Individual Rituals Performed by Players During Games

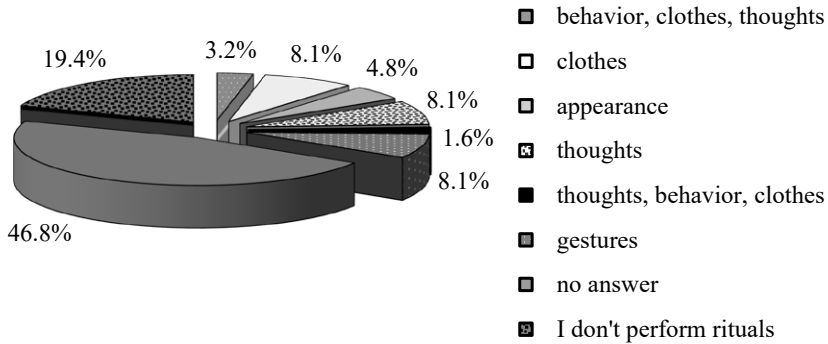


Figure 4
Individual Rituals Performed by Players Immediately After Games

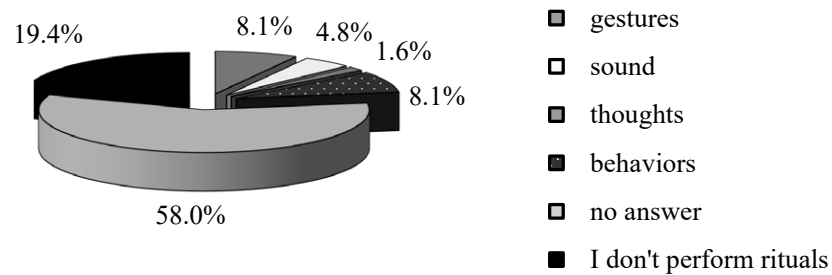


Figure 4 presents statements regarding behavior immediately after games. Most of the respondents (nearly 63% of whom declared following individual rituals and less than 20% of whom do not perform individual rituals at all) do not enact rituals after matches. The remainder includes subjects with rituals focused on specific behaviors (N = 5; ice-cold shower, cooling one’s legs, taking a bath, or going out for a beer) and gestures (N = 5; performing the sign of the cross or shaking hands with other players). Three players listen to music (in Figure 4 their answers are classified under “sound”). One footballer analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the performance and wonders what could be improved after the match (“thoughts” category).

Figure 5

Individual Rituals Performed by Players 12 Hours After Games

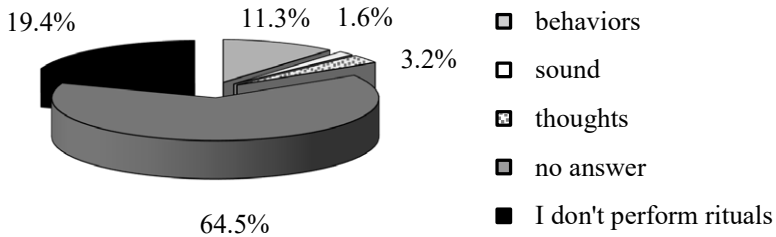


Figure 5 presents the opinions of the respondents regarding individual rituals performed up to 12 hours after a match. Nearly 80% of them do not follow such rituals. One in ten respondents has a certain behavior (rest, recuperation, going to the swimming pool, sleeping or going to sleep early, and socializing). One player reported resting while listening to music, and two others have routine thoughts (analyzing mistakes).

Similarly to the results on individual rituals, the survey findings on team rituals are presented below. The following analyses also include a group of 19 players (nearly 31% of the entire study group) who do not have or do not perform team rituals.

During the 12 hours preceding a match, 11 players perform team rituals (Fig. 6). Those who enact specific behaviors rest, make sure to sleep longer, avoid alcohol, and talk to other players from the team through a social networking site (“motivate/mobilize”). Two listen to music as part of team rituals, and a further two players avoid shaving/depilation.

Figure 6

Team Rituals Performed by Players 12 Hours Before Games

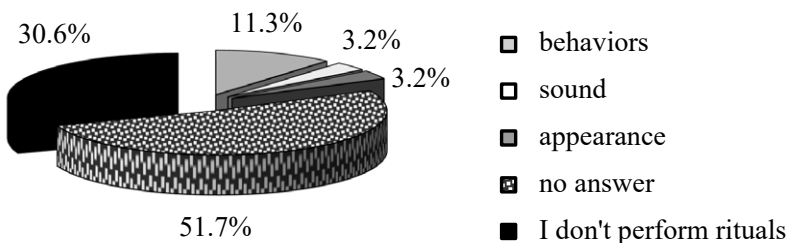


Figure 7

Team Rituals Performed by Players Immediately Before Games

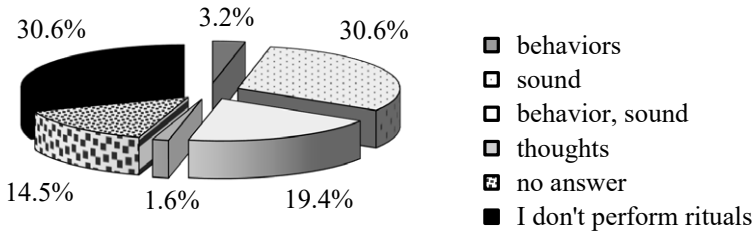
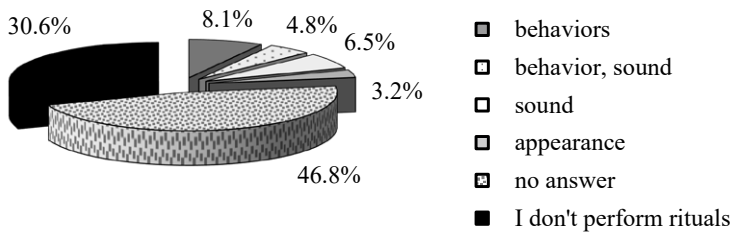


Figure 7 presents the players' declarations regarding their performance of team-specific rituals which take place immediately before the game. Almost one-third of respondents perform rituals related to sound (a team shout is one of the most popular rituals, and listening to music is also mentioned). Rituals related to both sound and behavior are also relatively common (nearly 20%). This category includes arranging the team in a circle and shouting, hi-fiving each other and using other motivational slogans, shouting as a team in specific places (on the sideline and on the field), picking grass from the turf, and crossing themselves. Two players mentioned team-specific behavior (conversing together, warm-ups, or a specific, pre-arranged entrance onto the pitch). One player listed focus as a team ritual.

Figure 8

Team Rituals Performed by Players During Games

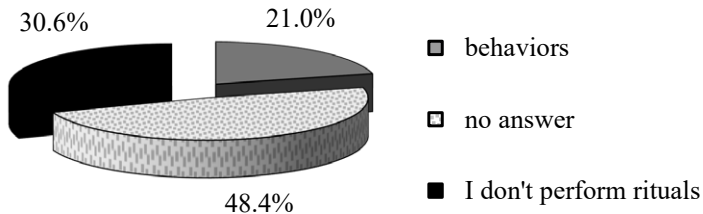


During matches, players with team rituals relatively most often (nearly 10% of the respondents) engage in team behavior such as conversation, motivating each other, or specific jumps/starts. Three players combine such behavior with sound (including shouts and high-fives). The answers of four subjects were included into the "sound" category (cheers), and two other respondents' answers are in the "appearance" category (for example, wearing identical armbands).

The examined players who perform team rituals immediately after games (Fig. 9) perform only characteristic behaviors. The answers included bathing, exchanging thanks, shaking hands, hugging, dancing joyfully, silence after losing a match, and going out for a beer.

Figure 9

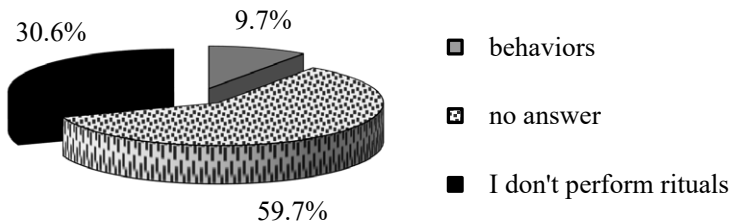
Team Rituals Performed by Players Immediately After Games



One in ten respondents admits that they engage in team-specific behavior up to 12 hours after the end of games (Fig. 10). This category includes sum-up meetings with the coach, resting together, recuperating, going to the swimming pool, celebrating together after a victory, and social gatherings.

Figure 10

Team Rituals Performed by Players 12 Hours After Games



Another issue that was analyzed was the origin of these rituals (Fig. 11). Nearly half of the respondents claimed that they created the rituals themselves. Ten players do what the rest of the team do; eight of them helped establish the details of the ritual. Among the respondents, one in ten women indicated that they had been inspired by other athletes. Nine subjects do not know the origin of their rituals. One player claims that the origin of her rituals is a combination of her and the team's influence (in Figure 11, the category marked as "other").

Figure 11
Origins of the Rituals

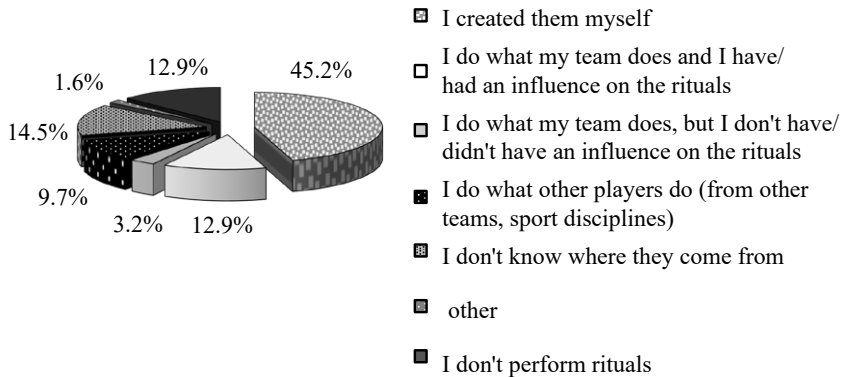
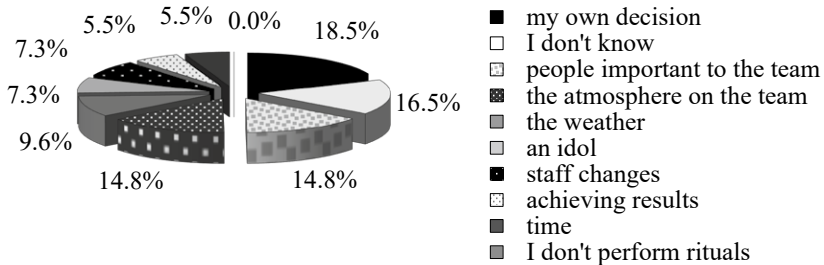


Figure 12 presents the factors which may affect possible changes to existing rituals. Relatively speaking, the highest number of players indicated that any change to the existing rituals depends solely on them.

Figure 12
Factors which may induce possible changes to rituals



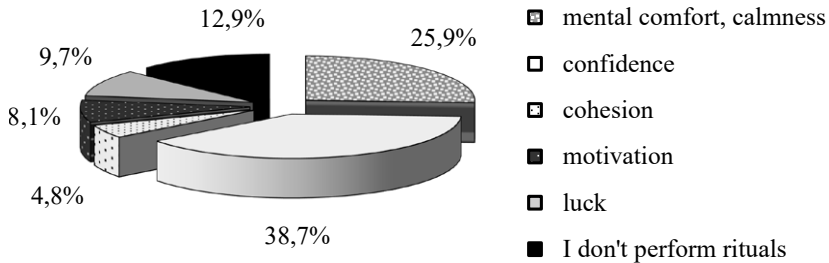
The players also mentioned the importance of the team as an element that impacts changes in the pre-match routine. According to eight players, people who are important to the team (the coach or the captain) can also significantly impact changes to team or individual rituals. The same number of women reported a substantial impact of the atmosphere in the team (conflicts). The respondents also mentioned the impact of idols they admire, personnel changes that led to new rituals or to the end of existing rituals.

The female athletes were asked about the consequences of performing the rituals and their answers were categorized (Fig. 13). In the case of

seven respondents who submitted complex answers, the first answer was included in the analysis, and assumed to be the main one. According to the subjects, the use of rituals translates primarily into higher self-confidence (a sense of readiness, faith in one's own abilities, and confidence in being well-prepared—mentally prepared as well). It also provides psychological comfort and peace. Within this category, the following answers were given: calmness, inner quiet, distraction from everyday matters, focus, a sense of security and happiness, improved mood translating into a better attitude on the pitch, and an awareness of doing something more likely to make the match a success. For one-tenth of the players, performing a ritual is linked with success on the field: it brings luck, guarantees better performance, increases the chances of winning, and provides a belief in success. Five players treat the ritualized practice as a kind of motivator. In their opinion, the ritual motivates and readies them to fight—also in moments which are more difficult for the player. Three football players can discern positive consequences from implementing rituals for team cohesion. In their opinion, rituals strengthen the sense of unity within the team and provide a sense of support.

Figure 13

Consequences of Performing the Rituals

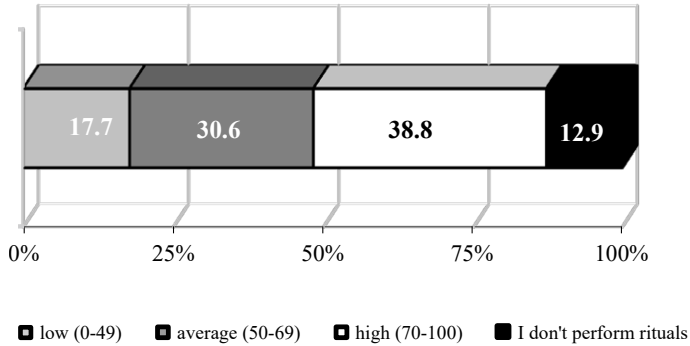


The respondents indicated the probability of success after completing rituals on a 100-point scale. The average value of their answers was 56.28 (SD = 29.63). The distribution of all indications was categorized (Fig. 14). The individual values chosen by the players were classified into three categories according to their similarity to the distribution of results on a 10-point scale.

Nearly 40% of the surveyed players assess the probability of success after a pre-match ritual as “high” (one-tenth of the subjects indicated the maximum—100 points). Approximately 30% of the players rated the relationship between ritual and success as “low” or did not notice one at all (seven women marked the lowest score—0 points).

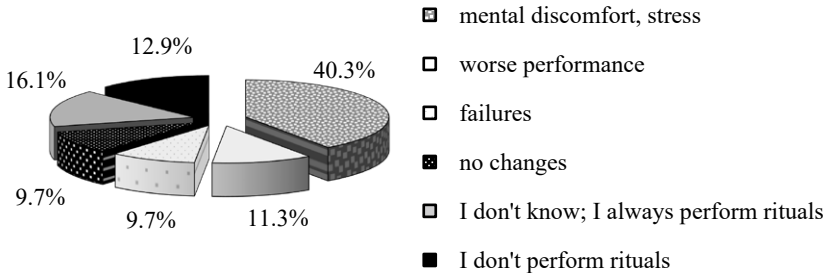
Figure 14

Subjectively Felt Likelihood of Success Associated with Performing a Ritual



One in ten female players participating in the research was of the opinion that there are no consequences of not performing a ritual (Fig. 15). For over 40% of the respondents, the failure to perform a ritual is associated with an increase in mental discomfort and/or feelings of stress. In the same category of responses, players also mention fear (before the game), anxiety, nervousness, indecision, dissatisfaction, depression, loss of concentration, malaise, loss of confidence, and feeling lost. One player wrote that “she is not herself.” Another respondent reported is that in such circumstances she gets the impression that something remains undone and then feels “not fully in the game.” Approximately 10% of the athletes studied links the non-performance of a ritual with a worse game (“I play badly,” “the game does not go like it should”). A comparable number of players think that failure to perform a ritual is related to the results on the field: defeat or failure. Six respondents do not see any negative consequences. Over 15% of the women say that ritual behavior is permanently built into their pre-match routine, and therefore this problem does not concern them. It is worth adding that in the case of two footballers who provided multiple answers, the first (main) statement was included in the analysis.

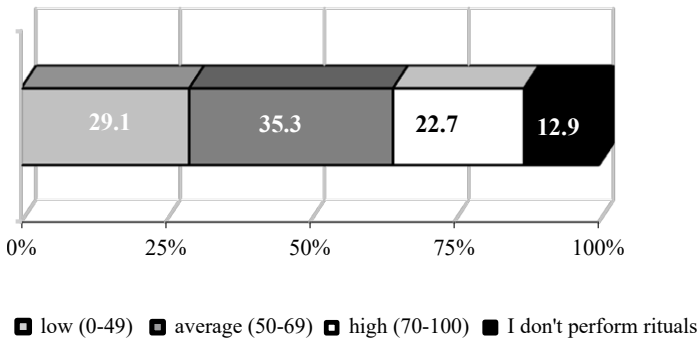
Figure 15
Consequences of Not Performing a Ritual



As with the procedure presented in Figure 14, we carried out an analysis of the subjectively estimated probability of losing a game in the event of a failure to perform a ritual. The average value of all answers was 48.46 (SD = 30.99).

Approximately 30% of the respondents rated the relationship between a game which was lost and a failure to perform a ritual as low (seven players selected 0 points: they do not see such a relationship). Over 20% are convinced of the impact of not performing a ritual on failure in sport. Five players indicated 100 points, thus assessing this relationship as very high.

Figure 16
Subjectively Felt Likelihood of Losing a Game Associated with Performing a Ritual



Discussion

The authors are aware of the many aspects and complexity of the issues presented in this study. This research is an analysis of a section of the problem which intends to draw the attention of the sports community (especially of coaches and sport psychologists) to the importance of rituals. The authors aim to inspire discussion on the quality, content, and desirability of rituals performed by athletes. So far, this topic, especially in the Polish literature on the subject, has been addressed rather incidentally. Meanwhile, sports rituals require a thorough interdisciplinary analysis. It seems that in sports psychology there are currently no clear theories or practical guidelines regarding such practices. It is believed that religious rituals in particular can be of vital importance in the process of psychological counseling, psychotherapy, or even life-coaching (Maranise, 2013). The link between ritual and the religious sphere brings another conclusion and grounds for further research. Which rituals can have a beneficial effect? How can they be verified? At the same time, this highlights the need to take into account the spiritual side when working with a player.

Our findings allow us to conclude that performing rituals is common among footballers. Among the 62 players in the study, only 8 do not perform any rituals. This is in accordance with the research cited in the literature; in a group of Belgian athletes, over three-fourths perform specific ritual behaviors (Brevers et al., 2011). Our subjects most often use both individual and team rituals immediately before the game. Relatively often, individual rituals are performed 12 hours before a match. It is worth noting that as the amount of time before or after a match increases, the frequency of rituals decreases.

Religious rituals (prayers or crossing oneself) are popular among the respondents. There are also behaviors that can be interpreted as an element of psychological preparation which ensures individual control of tension (relaxation, mobilization, focus, and ideas). Unfortunately, these are not common (prevailing) strategies. The rituals used are behavioral and/or cognitive. In many cases, their relationship with superstitions and folk beliefs should be emphasized. The responses to questions about the consequences of performing or failing to perform a ritual, as well as the relationship between the ritual and the probability of a particular outcome in sport, seem to confirm this. It is important that the players associate the fact of performing or failing to performing a ritual with a specific psychological aspect/condition/characteristic of performance (relaxation, comfort, stress, coherence, or motivation).

There are suggestions in the literature that the higher the subjectively perceived value of rituals is, the younger and the more involved the player

is, but also that there is a negative correlation with their assessment of their competences/preparation, and a direct correlation with the strength of the opponent they must confront. However, the mediating variable is the increase of tension. The loss of a sense of control, generating more tension, strengthens the need to do something that will restore the feeling of being in charge of the situation. By performing a specific ritual, a player may have the (irrational) belief that they are doing something that will to some extent increase the likelihood of achieving the intended result. The ritual acts like a placebo, boosting the effectiveness of action, and for some athletes it even becomes a strategy for coping with stress (Van Raalte et al., 1991; Foster et al., 2006; Schippers et al., 2006; Rudski et al., 2007; Brevers et al., 2011; Rutkowska et al., 2016). This justifies an interpretation of the rituals as a specific (alternative) part of physical and mental preparation for sports competition (Brevers et al., 2011).

Relying only on the irrational relationship between ritual and success, magical thinking, or referring only to subjective feelings related to the performance or non-performance of a ritual can, unfortunately, have disastrous consequences (e.g., in situations where a player destroys or loses a favorite piece of clothing), especially at the level of sports training. This is not tantamount to questioning the legitimacy of creating a pre-match routine. The field of modern sports psychology is so broad that simple rituals should not constitute an essential element of mental preparation. Whereas ritualized relaxation training, imagination training, concentration-boosting exercises, or elements of the pre-match routine (such as the preparation of equipment and health behaviors) fit into the standards of such preparation, a number of football players' behaviors described in our analysis are rather a substitute for such procedures (disallowed jewelry, additional clothing items, or specific snacks). This especially applies to those rituals which are not only up to the player to perform. These can rather be a supportive, short-term intervention strategy.

The players' statements on the consequences of performing or failing to perform a ritual can also be read as a projection, which suggests the need for specific psychosocial competences, and an intuitive understanding of one's own needs and/or weaknesses. For a sports psychologist and trainer, a detailed scrutiny of these opinions may be one of many guidelines enabling a better diagnosis of a player's training needs and a more precise adjustment of their mental training program.

It seems advisable that simple rituals, which can, as it were, supplement deficits in psychological preparation, give way over time (for example, during work with a sports psychologist) to proper, mature attitudes and behaviors expected from an athlete, to thoughts and emotions which are conducive to a successful sports career, and to knowledge about oneself,

one's abilities as a player, and as a person. According to this interpretation of the content of rituals, the importance that players attribute to them can become a valuable starting point for further work on mental preparation among athletes.

According to our findings, it can be seen that one in ten female footballers claims that her rituals are inspired or borrowed from other players, including those who practice other disciplines (than football). The literature contains reports which reveal that many players (even from childhood) duplicate and adopt as their own the ritual behavior of sport stars—both contemporary and those from the past (Mazurkiewicz, 2011b). Perhaps, therefore, it is worth conducting a more thorough study of this phenomenon, taking more into account the issue of the origin of rituals.

Another issue requiring in-depth analysis is the comparison of the ritualized practices of men and women, sports students, highly qualified players, and representatives of individual and team sports. In the context of our considerations and the resulting doubts, it seems valuable to conduct research on rituals encompassing a diagnosis of individual determinants of rituals—especially the players' psychosocial resources. Analyses of the conclusions and data of such studies, in particular an analysis of the relationship between rituals and selected psychological variables will allow the formulation of guidelines for both the athletes themselves and for sports coaches and psychologists.

Conclusions

Rituals are an interesting, often intriguing and even magical side of sport competitions. They are basically a permanent element of every ceremony. It is also an important element of the players' functioning. The ritualization of their behavior is visible throughout one's entire sports career, but especially during the pre-match period. Some rituals fit into the standards of mental preparation. Others are a signal for an individual or a team which triggers specific mental states, as they provide a specific sense of security or control over the situation. The results of this study show only a fraction of the story of ritual in women's football. The universality and variety of the rituals performed, the meaning bestowed on them, the consequences that the players associate with them, and finally their origin are only selected aspects that are worth subjecting to in-depth interdisciplinary examination. This study is a voice in the discussion on the place and meaning of rituals in the mental preparation of athletes. It is also an attempt to draw attention to the need to learn about such complex issues which are relevant from the perspective of sports psychology and require the use of theory and practice from other sciences.

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Religious Motifs in Polish Contemporary Art Using the Crucifixion: An Outline of the Problem

ABSTRACT

Sacred motifs have a long tradition in art and ample figurative representation. They have been present in the visual arts for numerous reasons, from the need to identify faith to artistic expression based on commonly-known truths and stories saturated with meaning. In the art of the twentieth century, Christian motifs were often an excuse to speak about the world, its threats and fears, and the human condition. Polish artists frequently availed themselves of religious symbols and systems in the post-war era, and during the political transformation of the 1980s, they became a way to articulate uncertainty, expectation, and hope for change. Today, the religious trope is a pretext for artistic commentary on religion, social problems, and internal issues of the creators themselves. The article explores the causes and the nature of artistic practice rooted in Christian iconography in Polish contemporary art, with a particular emphasis on the motif of the crucifixion.

KEYWORDS: crucifixion, iconography, contemporary art

STRESZCZENIE

Motyw religijny w polskiej sztuce współczesnej na przykładzie ukrzyżowania. Zarys problemu

Motywy sakralne mają w sztuce długą tradycję i bogatą reprezentację figurálną. W plastyce były obecne z różnych pobudek, od potrzeby identyfikacji wiary po możliwość artystycznej ekspresji bazującej na powszechnie znanych prawdach i historiach nasyconych treścią. W sztuce XX wieku motyw chrześcijański bywał wielokrotnie pretekstem do wypowiedzi o świecie, o jego zagrożeniach, lękach, o kondycji człowieka. W Polsce po znaki i układy religijne sięgano w sztuce niejednokrotnie w czasach powojennych, a w okresie przełomu politycznego lat 80. stały się one sposobem wyrażania niepewności oraz oczekiwania i nadziei na zmiany. Także dzisiaj motyw religijny stanowi pretekst do różnorodnych wypowiedzi artystycznych, które dotyczą religii, problemów społecznych oraz wewnętrznych przeżyć samych twórców. Artykuł

zarysowuje powody i charakter przekazów plastycznych opierających się na ikonografii chrześcijańskiej w polskiej sztuce współczesnej, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem motywu ukrzyżowania.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: ukrzyżowanie, ikonografia, sztuka współczesna

It is not about stylization or aesthetization, modern kitsch or the illegible gibberish of form jumbled up with content. This is about what we leave behind for those who will judge us for our work. They will probably see our story in our art. They will infer our faith from our paintings and sculptures. (Rodziński, 2005, p. 62)

Contemporary artists use religious motifs fairly often to express themselves in both sacred and profane spaces. Reasons for incorporating sacred iconography in artistic concepts may be spiritual, e.g., the desire to exercise a larger point about life with reference to an evocative and universally resonant symbol. There are also more prosaic motives, such as breaking into public awareness and making an easy debut in the world of art through controversy. In Polish contemporary art, the problematics of religious symbolism (mainly Christian) seems even more interesting because it has often served as a sign of independence and hope in post-war history. It was particularly important in the seventies and eighties, when it was perceived as a message of shared identity and aspirations. The dynamic changes after 1989, however, shook the emancipatory context of the religious trope and, in many contemporary artworks, it is rather linked to criticism of the Church than to its liberating lineage.

The changing approach to drawing on Christian symbols stems from various factors. We can include among them the contemporary widespread access to information about religion, faith, and the Church, which evokes the need to discuss them with the help of easily identifiable signs. This need often involves the use of radical means of expression, the assumption being that a controversial message has a greater impact. Contemporary changes in defining one's own freedom and civic liberty against the background of a strong tradition of the Church in Poland are not without significance here: if they are expressed in a casual treatment of religious themes, this happens with the understanding that religion is important for most Poles, and therefore the artistic power of Christian emblems is also significant.¹ After all, the cause of controversial art alluding to religious

1 Regardless of the assessment of the idea and the works of art themselves, it is worth mentioning the social discontent and media discussions around Dorota Nieznańska's *Pasja* [*Passion*] or Maurizio Cattelan's *La Nona Ora*.

symbolism may not necessarily be related to issues of faith, but rather to a sort of natural rebellion: the younger generation, growing up in the era of global media and the values that they propagate, rebelling against the older generation, clinging to tradition and rituals.

Often, the problematic presence of a religious symbol in Polish contemporary art should be read in the context of the history of the world, the country, and the church, but also through the lenses of possible meanings which are hidden within the religious motif. Such a motif may be used for spiritual reasons or in a social context, or in the tradition of art. Biblical scenes or truths of the Christian faith were, after all, the heart of many works of art, and thanks to the Church's powerful role in history in general, the Christian symbol is recognizable to most viewers. As a carrier of meanings understood by a general audience, sacred motifs have become an attractive means of expression in art, but it is worth remembering that it also has the potential to moderate reactions to art. In the eighteenth century, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter, the first director of the Royal Academy in London, urged students to choose a religious theme for their paintings:

Strictly speaking, indeed, no subject can be of universal, hardly can it be of general, concern; but, there are events and characters so popularly known in those countries where our Art is in request that they may be considered as sufficiently general for all our purposes.... Such too are the capital subjects of Scripture history, which, beside their general notoriety, become venerable by their connection with our religion.... There must be something either in the action or in the object in which men are universally concerned, and which powerfully strikes upon the public sympathy. (Reynolds, 1771, pp. 47–48)

The preference for certain subjects in art based on their potential to captivate the interest of viewers—and thus, the chance to cultivate empathy—has been stressed since the dawn of culture. And so, for example, the question of passion as a subject worth taking up in art perfectly fits with the statements of Aristotle, who, in *Poetics*, presents suffering as a prominent constituent of the tragedy. He defines pathos, which he also calls one of the means of persuasion (serving to move the listeners), a “destructive or painful action, such as visible deaths, torments, woundings, and other things of that kind” (Aristotle, ca. 335 B.C.E./1987, p. 33). These two quotes can be summarized in the opinion of the French academic theorist André Félibien, who wrote about the need for a lofty subject in *L'Idée du Peintre Parfait*, as cited in Tatarkiewicz:

Painting requires something grand, stimulating and extraordinary, something which can surprise, please, and instruct; that thing is what is called grand taste: it is this which makes ordinary things beautiful, and beautiful things sublime and marvelous. For in painting, grand taste, sublimity, and marvelousness are one and the same thing. (1970, p. 377)

Today, when an artist seems to be solely responsible for their art, before himself/herself and the audience, in a time when art patronage and commissioning no longer influences artists' creativity (mostly), using a religious symbol should have another, preferably valid, reason. This reason may be a commentary on various matters conveyed by means of a sacred motif; it may also be a reference to the centuries-old tradition of representation in painting, sculpture, or graphics. But an artist may also engage with sacred iconography because of the most obvious desire of the artist to confront: firstly oneself, by taking up a subject which has been thematized in art for generations, and secondly, this grand topic, which carries a lot of meaning. Importantly, there is also an opportunity for catharsis, which may occur when studying a motif with a great semantic capacity.

One of the most frequently used sacred iconographic motifs is the crucifixion. Artists utilize the symbol of the cross or the motif of the crucifixion because it invites many interpretations and is easily recognizable. In the twentieth century, Expressionist painters, some of whose more dramatic works revolved around the despair and grief of war, were particularly willing to deploy this symbolism. In his *White Crucifixion* from 1938, Marc Chagall depicted Christ dressed in a *tallit* and surrounded by scenes of pogroms and persecution of Jews. Thus, Christ's suffering is linked with the suffering of the Jewish people through the motif of the crucifixion (Bażanowska, n.d.). In a lithograph from 1945, Oskar Kokoschka portrayed Christ tearing himself away from the cross with one arm to offer himself to hungry children. The transverse shoulder of the cross bears the inscription: "In Memory of the Children of Europe Who Have to Die of Cold and Hunger this Xmas."² The 1923 work, *Jesus With a Gas Mask*, by George Grosz, depicts Christ holding a cross in his hands and wearing military boots and a gas mask. The inscription to this print says, "*Maul halten und weiter dienen*" ["Shut up and obey"], which probably refers to stigmatizing the bourgeoisie, who, by cultivating the religion of peace, downplayed the signals of danger and failed to prepare themselves and the nation for war (Jacob, n.d.; Vallen, 2003).

2 See <https://www.albrightknox.org/artworks/19463-memory-children-europe-who-have-die-cold-and-hunger-xmas> (Retrieved August 29, 2018).

In later times, the crucifixion remained a capacious literary medium, also capable of expressing the situation of twentieth-century man, entangled in various social mechanisms, human weaknesses, and passions. This motif was taken up by both believers and non-believers. It became an “attractive” means of communication for “engaged art”—globally (Neo-figurative art) and domestically (e.g., the Wprost group)—as it responded to the needs of the trends that focused on the evocative and expressive power of images. The religious motif, as a traditional symbol which can be understood by a general audience, was consistent with the idea delineated by Zbylut Grzywacz, co-creator of the Wprost group:

In order to make the experience of a painting intense, we must often refer to a symbol; let it be reclaimed again and again, let it be more than just a trigger that recalls the story of myth. A statement that boils down to a recollection of archetypal ideas is just as threatened by lifelessness as a painting prematurely locked into an aesthetic formula. (Gorządek, 2006)

Engaged art which used the sacred motif understood its potential, independent of any professed faith. One of the most famous figurative painters of 20th century, Francis Bacon—who often revisited the motif of the cross and the crucifixion—said,

You may say it’s a curious thing for a nonreligious person to take the Crucifixion, but I don’t think that that has anything to do with it.... I haven’t found another subject so far that has been as helpful for covering certain areas of human feeling and behavior.... [In painting the Crucifixion] you’re working then about your own feelings and sensations, really. You might say it’s almost nearer to a self-portrait. You are working on all sorts of very private feelings about behavior and about the way life is. (Sylvester, 1987, pp. 44–46)

However, in Polish history, the symbol of the cross, as well as other religious symbols, with a particular emphasis on themes related to the Passion, became an expression of social feelings during martial law. The independent cultural exhibitions held at that time were, in many respects, bound up with the religious sphere, for instance, because of the venues, which were both private spaces, but often churches as well. In an interview with Agnieszka Gralińska-Toborek (2012), Zbylut Grzywacz recalled, “There was a boycott of official exhibitions, so we participated in church shows.” And to the question about the participants of these exhibitions, he answered, “As an unbeliever, I attended masses and sometimes did so with tears in my eyes. ‘Let us offer one another a sign of peace’ then sounded like a sign of the Solidarity movement, and not necessarily a sign

of reconciliation with the Lord” (Gralińska-Toborek, 2012). The artists, looking for a language understandable to a broad audience, used patterns that were both clear to everyone and particularly significant in the Polish context, as they were connected with Polish tradition, mentality, and religiosity. In addition, they had already been used in art to communicate the difficult subject of war, as exemplified by the work of Antoni Rząsa or Władysław Hasior. Then and during the Solidarity struggle, the symbol of the cross and the figure of the crucified Christ were used to portray the complicated situation of the people and the country. The cross was synonymous with undeserved and cruel torture inflicted on the innocent, but it was also a symbol of a temporary condition that would end in a triumph of justice (Rogozińska, 2002b). Paintings from the martial law period expressed the artists’ anger and their rebellion and disagreement with the times, while concurrently delivering a message to the nation, bringing comfort, and sometimes simply evoking a feeling of community. The *Symbol of the Cross* exhibition held at the Church of Divine Mercy in Warsaw in 1983 is an example of combining both religious and social themes during this period. It featured a lot of interesting works of art in which the cross opened the way towards other—not solely religious—considerations. Jerzy Kalina, creator of the *Last Supper* installation displayed at the exhibition, reminisces:

The *Symbol of the Cross* exhibition was a very notable meeting of many artists.... The idea became more crystallized during the “retreat seminars” for which we gathered in Laski. There, we met with Father Salij, for example, who told us a lot about the cross: he not only spoke about its extensive symbolism, but we also had very long, lively discussions at the intersection between the sacred and the profane. (Kalina, 2006)

Paintings, sculptures, and drawings employing the symbol of the cross and the motif of the crucified Christ have been created by such artists as Władysław Paciak, Leszek Sobocki, Andrzej Bielawski, Eugeniusz Mucha, Maciej Bieniasz, and Jerzy Duda-Gracz. Critics and commentators on the political situation and on culture in Poland have noticed the pervasive presence of religious symbols and references to sacred iconography during the Polish transformation and just before it. At that time, it aroused curiosity and understanding, but also bewilderment. Today, however, it can be evaluated differently. Danuta Wróblewska, in an interview with Wiesława Wierzychowska, noted that

we just had to return to some imagery, which means we had to use some iconography that would be completely different than the previous one, but one that was commonly and unambiguously felt The foreigners

thought that we went insane then and lapsed into bigotry. They could not understand that if you break with one convention, you must find another. The only thing that could fully counter a language destitute of meaning was Christian themes. (Gralińska-Toborek, 2005, p. 192)

Sacred motifs, which were frequently explored at that time, served as a starting point for both good artwork and some that would not necessarily go down in art history books, although as Stanisław Rodziński observes,

it was in those years that the artists saw the need to discover religious motifs; “cornered by history,” they saw and discovered them when the escape from the religious universe was obvious. If these inspirations were genuine, they resulted in a many valuable works. If religious iconography was a symbol, perhaps rather a symbol of political anger or an opportunistic ploy, it resulted in art, which we will browse like old postcards and posters, as mere documents of the fight for independence. (2005, p. 51)

In times of independent culture, in many cases, there was no doubt that religious symbols were meant to allude to contemporary Polish history. In other cases, it was more personal. Often, both attitudes converged in one work of art. One example is the paintings of Edward Dwurnik from his *Cross* series³. In his work from the late '70s, the figure of the crucified Savior either united a community lost in the “only right” system or was depicted as an outright victim of the communist regime. In *Christ Outside the City* from 1979, the cross marks the place of prayer meetings. A group of people keeping watch by the cross, kneeling and praying, find themselves surrounded by outlined silhouettes of militia officers. In turn, in the painting entitled *Christ on a Car* from 1979, a publicly humiliated Christ is driven through the streets of the city, assisted by militia and soldiers. Naked, hung on a cross made of a frame, stripped of human dignity, he is displayed in this demeaning ride in a militia or military vehicle with an open top. Christ is also represented as an innocent, undeserved victim in the paintings of Dwurnik from the '90s. In *Christ in the Square* from 1991, the dark silhouette of a man hung on a cross occupies the central part of the painting. The cross, with a special shape (an amalgam between St. Andrew's cross and a double cross), is set on a flowered square of something like a small-town marketplace. Onlookers have gathered by the floral decoration to watch Christ like a monument or some local attraction. “For Edward Dwurnik, the starting point in painting the Passion is not faith in Jesus God-Man, but a meditation of himself, a common man on

3 See <http://www.dwurnik.pl/cykle.php?ID=21> (Retrieved August 29, 2018).

existential suffering,” Dominik Łuszczek sums up this aspect of the artist’s work. As he goes on to explain, “this meditation inspired by the philosophy of Joseph Beuys has a christomorphic character: I am Christ, I am suffering” (1998, p. 54).

Łuszczek’s insight also encapsulates the art of Zbylut Grzywacz, which often incorporated religious motifs, and the symbol of the cross appears in his work on various themes, such as in the *Abandoned* series, referring to the story of Mary Magdalene (Rogozińska, 2010).⁴ This series, dating from the 1970s, was mostly based on the trope of a woman embracing/lying at the foot of a cross/pole/man (arranging his arms as if he was hanging on a cross). In some paintings, a dressed/naked woman is on an empty street or indifferent pedestrians pass by her. Sometimes she has accessories, like a bag with banknotes and food vouchers. She is desperate, despairing. She is embracing the cross/non-cross, as if she was seeking help, hope, or forgiveness. Perhaps she is holding the cross/crucified Christ to stay with her? “However, only in *Abandoned VII* are the efforts of contemporary Magdalene successful. She undergoes transformation and starts to resemble the body of the Savior” (Rogozińska, 2010, p. 113). The scene of the crucifixion is also linked to paintings under the joint title *Stretched*. *Stretched* (1972–1973), *Stretched II* (1974), and *Stretched III* (1975–1981) depict a figure holding a banner as if the human silhouette was stretched between its spars. In *Stretched II*, the hero of the painting, with his back to us, ripped his torso out of the exertion of stretching the shaft, and revealed his insides, from which the spine “was removed,” in the artist’s words, “like from a filleted fish” (Rogozińska, 2010, p. 109). In *Stretched III*, the banner oozes drops of blood. “The martyrdom of the *Stretched*,” explains Renata Rogozińska, “does not emerge ... as a model of Christian bravery and holiness ... on the contrary, it is futile, completely useless, and, in addition, deprived of a higher purpose” (2010, p. 113).

We can mention many interesting works of art which were created in this period of a kind of suspension, but also of development in Polish culture, and which allow for broad interpretations and a prompt reflection on history, in particular the history of Poland, and on oneself. Let our last example of an artwork drawing on religious symbols be Eugeniusz Get-Stankiewicz’s *Do it yourself* from 1977, illustrating a different use of the cross trope. It consists of elements suggesting a DIY project: canvas, a simple wooden cross in the center, a small figure of the crucified Christ

4 See also Rogozińska, R., *Zbylut Grzywacz, Brunon Tode, Jerzy Stajuda. Niebo w błocie [Zbylut Grzywacz, Brunon Tode, Jerzy Stajuda: Sky in Mud]*. In *W stronę Golgoty. Inspiracje pasyjne w sztuce polskiej w latach 1970–1999 [Towards Golgotha: Passion inspirations in Polish art, 1970–1999]*. Poznań: Księgarnia Św. Wojciecha.

on the right side of the cross, and a hammer and three nails on the left. At the bottom, the artist wrote the title: “do it yourself.”

Decades after the creation of the above-mentioned art, the overtones and character of artistic projects which include an association with religion and which address social issues is often quite different. The controversial exhibition, *Irreligion: Non-sacred morphology in Polish art*, presented at the Atelier 340 Museum in Brussels in 2001 and 2002, seems to echo these modern changes. This exhibition, protested by church institutions and Catholic circles, among others, seems to be an expression of today’s need to answer the question about the presence of the Church and God in the everyday human sphere, in social life, in Poland, and beyond. And although undoubtedly some of its exhibits may have aroused objections, they voice the difficulty of finding oneself in a world in which certain values have lost their stable foundation and stopped regulating everyday life. The exhibition included works with various references to contemporary problems of religion, the Church and church institutions, e.g., referring to the issue of displaying faith in the media and politics—Adam Rzepecki’s image of the Mother of God with a moustache (Kuryłek, 2013, p. 15)—or kitsch in sacred art and simulation of faith—Robert Rumas’s religious figures immersed in colored liquid (Sienkiewicz, n.d.; Ziarkiewicz, 1995, pp. 60–66).⁵ The title, *Irreligion*, which is connected to Colin Campbell’s theory of non-religiousness (Campbell, 1983), was to be understood, according to the words of the exhibition curator, Kazimierz Piotrowski, as follows:

Irreligion, or more appropriately an irreligious attitude, is an attitude towards religion which asks questions about the foundations of religious doctrine that is the cultural bonds of the individual more than contesting the existence of the objects of faith. (Szyłak, n.d.)

Among the exhibits were artworks using the symbol of the cross. One of them is Grzegorz Klaman’s installation, which consists of a human brain inserted in a cross-shaped glass container, from the *Emblems* series. According to the artist, the Emblems “provoke discussion about the place of faith and the open body” (Interview, 2012). On another occasion, as cited in Sabor (2003), he stated that he presents the body (parts), which “while losing its symbolic meaning, becomes subordinated to medical knowledge, which is a form of exercising control over it. It is either a shell

5 I think that in the context of this exhibition and the controversial artistic projects using religious symbols, it is worth suggesting the reading of S. Rodziński’s *Czy artystycie wszystko wolno?* [*Is the Artist Free?*] in Rodziński, 2005.

onto which meanings are being inscribed or meat which is being processed.” Another example from the exhibition which employs the symbol of the cross is Leszek Knaflewski’s *Couple* from 1990, showing two roots topped off with crosses “like a couple of lovers” (also resembling two wavy swords), arranged on a white shroud/sheet (Wasilewski, 2014). As Marek Wasilewski (2014) writes, “It was a poetic and multivalent question about the boundaries of privacy and intimacy crossed by religious institutions.”

Recalling the various projects that were exhibited in Brussels, it is worth pondering on the words of the curator, who, in defense of the idea of the show, claimed that although this art may be challenging to interpret, it is an expression of the significance of religion in Poland (Nie chciałem wojny, 2001). When asked about the motivation of the artists presenting their work in Brussels, he noted, “[the artists] have shown a Polish phenomenon because they still deal with religion, while their colleagues in the West do not do that anymore. Even when they provoke, it means that religion is still important for them. Our culture has not yet become secularized.”

In this context, it is worth recalling another exhibition which explored the aspects of faith and religion, albeit in a different way. In 2013, the project *The Dangerous Liaisons: Contemporary Polish Video Art in the Face of Faith, Religion, and the Church* was presented at the Center for Contemporary Art at Ujazdowski Castle. The exhibition presented the works of Ada Karczmarczyk, Kobas Laksa, Leszek Knaflewski, Katarzyna Kozyra, Karol Radziszewski, and others. The curators, while reiterating that the invited artists shared “an awareness of the impact of education in a Catholic culture on all areas of life,” also pointed out that, although

the influence of the Church and religion has been subjected to very sharp and critical analysis in art for years ... it seems that today, along with the progressing secularization of society, criticism is often replaced by dispassionate observation, bearing the characteristics of a documentary or of journalism. (O.pl, 2013)

At least some of the exhibition artworks—often calling on the language of satire and pastiche—comment on a certain, often stereotypical, image of the Church and religion that emerges from media coverage, as well as from the superficial proclamations of some believers. The artwork based on the conventions of documentary film, which ostensibly cast the artist aside, challenging the viewer to interpret the images in their own way, have a similar commentary character (however, it should be remembered that it is always the artist who delineates the boundaries of interpretation). Exhibits such as Ada Kaczmarczyk’s film based on the convention of

a music video presenting footage from a mass, Katarzyna Kozyra's documentary *Looking for Jesus*, or Kobas Laksa's record of a project of scattered flowers in *Spycifestum*, may also intrigue the audience because they enter the multifaceted issues of faith/religion/the Church using a non-traditional language of forms from the medium of film, which is relevant to our times, and its various possibilities (the music video or the documentary) (Plewicka, n.d.). It induces the viewer to find their own interpretation, but also poses the danger of a shallow level of appeal due to the attractiveness of the picture and the associations with easily digestible television productions.⁶

A socially or politically engaged discourse which refers to religious symbols is one—but not the only—manifestation of contemporary interest in Christian iconography. The abovementioned examples of art incorporating the symbol of the cross and the crucifixion may or may not contain elements of the artist's spiritual experience. However, the majority of artists often use religious themes for themselves: the quintessence of their work is then the confrontation with the theme and with the *sacrum* inherent within it. This approach is valid today, but it is also connected with centuries-old tradition, and with the works that artists of previous generations left behind, works about which we are certain or we believe that they were created for the authors themselves and in relation to their faith. Stanisław Rodziński's crucifixions have a very personal, intimate, focused quality; they refer to his own thoughts, and at the same time, they are set in a metaphorical Polish landscape. Figures of Christ, Mary Magdalene, Mary—immersed in darkness or emerging in an intense color from a dark background, often scratched out in a layer of thick paint, rough, shiny, or, conversely, matte—seem to be the result of a long, difficult path, seeking the truth and discarding the irrelevant. Under the guise of harsh succinctness, they hide unnamable feelings. Even if there is a figure known from the history of Poland or the Polish Church—such as John Paul II or Jerzy Popiełuszko—standing near the cross, the artist's paintings still seem to be a story about his

6 It is also worth taking note of other interesting exhibitions touching on the sacred sphere in Polish contemporary art, such as the *Sacrum Art Triennial* held at the Municipal Art Gallery in Częstochowa (see *The 6th Sacrum Art Triennial 2006: Problem Exhibition – In the Face of Evil*, Municipal Art Gallery in Częstochowa, 2006 and *Community – Compassion – Empathy: The 9th Art Triennial of Sacrum* Częstochowa 2016, Municipal Art Gallery in Częstochowa, Częstochowa 2016); exhibitions of the Gallery of Contemporary Sacred Art at Praczkni House in Kielce (<http://www.dompraczkni.pl>); and the exhibition *Towards Sacrum – art/non-art* at Galeria Gardzienice in the Monastery of the Dominican Church in Lublin from 2012 (http://www.kul.pl/wobec-sacrum-sztuka-nie-sztuka-wystawa_art_37108,1338411600,6.html). In this context, it is also worth seeing works from the exhibition at the Warsaw Zachęta entitled *In God We Trust* from 2013 and articles devoted to it (official event website: <http://zacheta.art.pl/pl/wystawy/in-god-we-trust>).

own attitude to certain outlooks and destinies than an interpretation of the nation's history. In an interview with Marek Karwala, Stanisław Rodziński talked about the difficulty of confronting a grand subject:

Quite early, when I was still studying, I started painting religious paintings that were an attempt at my own interpretation of faith. Such attempts are always extremely disconcerting, because both the painter himself and the viewer may arrive at the belief that everything has already been said in this respect. How does one paint the crucifixion or the *pieta*, when it was already done brilliantly many years ago? Well, it seems to me that I was then subconsciously convinced I would like to do it again, but in my own way. This is a dangerous task and I have learned that lesson many times. (Karwala, n.d.)

The author's own interpretation of an iconographic motif, or perhaps more—of the religious, human, historical sense of this motif—was/is the goal for artists such as Jerzy Nowosielski, Krzysztof Bucki, Jacek Waltoś, Andrzej Okińczyc, Jacek Sempoliński, Stanisław Kulon, Stanisław Cukier, Stanisław Białogłowicz, Grzegorz Bednarski, Tadeusz Boruta, Antoni Cygan, Adam Brincken, Jerzy Fober, Grzegorz Stachańczyk, Kinga Nowak, Magdalena Siejko, and many others (Rogozińska, 2002). In each of their attempts, the reason for “dealing with” the sacred theme may be/is different. Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak (2004), writing about Grzegorz Bednarski's paintings inspired by the works of Valdés de Leala, notes, “[Bednarski] had to face both pressure and the impression of tradition ... he had to, as it were, reflect them in the mirror of his own existential and religious experiences, and in the mirror of his artistic aspirations and skills.”⁷ Jerzy Fober, in turn, explains:

I am looking for this important cause, i.e., the subject, the essence of the problem that I want to convey. For example, The Resurrection of Lazarus: it was not the story from two thousand years ago or illustrating it that was important for me, but the issue of death and liberation from it. Crossing to the other side and then returning from it and living with this awareness. Such a thing is not going to happen to any of us because no one has been on the other side. This problem is universal, contemporary, and relevant to every person, so it is always important for me to find this reason. (Gieldoń-Paszek, 2009)

On the other hand, in an interview entitled *My Meeting with the Crucified*, Jacek Sempoliński, the author of dynamic, expressive crucifixions, had this to say on the subject:

7 See also Rogozińska (2002a).

It engrossed me completely. Finally, the great religious art of the past spoke to me—the works of Giotto, Michelangelo, El Greco, Titian—as my chance.... I decided that in the whole drama of my personal life, I had found the only permanent foothold. This has a theological connotation, but I care less about those. Probably, the main reason for my conviction is the dual nature of Jesus, who was both God and man. Because I can't stop being human, this person in the Holy Trinity is my greatest support. He is for me. God the Father is a more abstract order of being. Here is reality. (Górnicka-Zdziech, 2011)

These few statements of artists taking up the sacred motif which are cited above outline the essence of this personal confrontation with a grand subject. The final effect of encounters with the Christian symbol can be as varied as artistic paths, from minimalist styles to elaborate compositions which are rich in meaning, references, and metaphors. Personal struggles with Christian motifs as saturated as the crucifixion, provided they are the basis for one's own thoughts and inner conflicts, offer a chance to touch the sacred, which is not so much connected to the form of the motif, but to entering its content, much deeper than could be inferred from the arrangement of the figures on the surface. After all, as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel wrote about Passion themes in *Lectures on Aesthetics*,

for here the subject is provided precisely by God in the opposite of his triumph, in the abasement of his limitless power and wisdom.... It is God who suffers insofar as he is man, confined within this specific limitation, and so his grief does not appear as merely human grief over a human fate; on the contrary, this is an awesome suffering, the feeling of an infinite negativity, but in a human person as his personal feeling. (Hegel, 1835/n.d.)

An artist who engages with a big theme takes it on for its sake as much as for himself/herself, and the image becomes a personal image. We can deduce only from the artists' comments cited here that someone who incorporates a symbol that is important to the public must resolve the dilemma of whether their concept fits the chosen symbol. It is then important to be able to ask oneself whether a given message corresponds to a symbolism as powerful as sacred iconography? Do some ideas not convey trivial, banal content under the guise of a weighty theme? The artist therefore faces this existential question, which should probably be asked at the birth of each piece: "What for?" If the answer makes sense, there is a chance to avoid the effect which plagues a great deal of quasi-critical, quasi-engaged, quasi-declarative artworks, where a flimsy idea is sometimes illustrated with too powerful a symbol that is incompatible with the content.

However, at the same time, perhaps art in the face of a sacred symbol need not always be so prudent and faultless by design? For many, a symbol such as a cross alone grants the right to error, on the condition that there are important premises for its use in the work. An important feature of such art can then be the value of the work and the arduous struggle: with oneself, one's faith, God, the sacred, tradition, history, or with the awareness of the many meanings of the motif. Often, a very personal statement in art is bound up with a process that can be as important as the final result. And the trace of this process, which mostly remains on canvas or stone, can ultimately be as important to someone as it was for the creator.

Let me finish this outline of religious symbols in Polish contemporary art with the words of the artist whose statement begins this article. Stanisław Rodziński, in *My Sketchbook*, sharing with the reader his thoughts on the essence of art—great, religious, sacred—or the creativity of his friends, conveyed two thoughts that, in my opinion, summarize well the difficult topic of the sacred symbol and contemporary references to it. The first thought is that “important works are those that, while preserving the necessary comprehensibility, respect the audience, but also do not release them from thinking and from feeling more complex phenomena” (Rodziński, 2005). And the second thought, which, I think, fits with each of the motives for using the sacred motif mentioned in this paper, is as follows:

The point is not to paint religious images. The point is also not that the refusal to paint should make the artist worse or show a lack of spirit. Rather, when undertaking the effort to create paintings that are a token of our faith, and often a sign of our indifference towards God, to do it truly, within our limits, our broken words and thoughts, which are often the prayer of the modern man. (Rodziński, 2005, p. 52)

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About Women who “Busied Themselves
with Brigandage”: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska
and Barbara Rusinowska, Forgotten Lady Robbers
from the 15th Century

ABSTRACT

Historiographic sources contain the memory of two 15th-century female robbers: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska. The former was the wife of Włodek from Skrzynów of the Swan coat of arms, who lived in Barwałd Castle in the area of Zator and reigned terror in the whole region. We are concerned here with a peculiar phenomenon, that is, a husband–wife duo of robbers, and the fact that they were both of noble birth only spices up this story. Barbara Rusinowska, who was active in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, was also from a noble family. She attacked manor houses and merchant wagons, and her characteristic trait was her men’s attire. Both bandits were finally captured and executed. The article introduces the life story of these women and compares various (often contradictory) information about their brigandage that has survived in ancient chronicles. In the nineteenth century, Rusinowska became the heroine of a stage drama written by Aleksander Ładnowski.

KEYWORDS: Barbara Rusinowska, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, robbers, heists, the Middle Ages, chronicles, legends

STRESZCZENIE

O kobietach, które „rozbojem się bawiły”. Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska i Barbara Rusinowska – zapomniane zbójniczki z XV wieku

W źródłach historiograficznych oraz legendach przechowywana jest pamięć o dwóch XV-wiecznych zbójniczkach – Katarzynie Włodkowej Skrzyńskiej i Barbarze Rusinowskiej. Pierwsza była żoną Włodka ze Skrzynna herbu Łabędź, który mieszkał na zamku Barwałd w ziemi zatorskiej i się postrach w całej okolicy. Mamy więc do czynienia ze swoistym fenomenem,

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jakim było małżeństwo zbójników, a dodatkowego kolorytu nadaje tej historii fakt, że były to osoby wysoko urodzone. Ze stanu szlacheckiego pochodziła także Barbara Rusinowska, która działała w Górach Świętokrzyskich. Napadała na dwory i wozy kupieckie, a jej cechą charakterystyczną był męski strój. Obie zbójniczki zostały w końcu pojmane i stracone. Artykuł przybliża dzieje życia tych kobiet, a także zestawia różne (często sprzeczne) informacje na temat ich rozbójniczej działalności, które zachowały się w dawnych kronikach. W XIX w. Rusinowska stała się bohaterką dramatu scenicznego autorstwa Aleksandra Ładnowskiego.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Barbara Rusinowska, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, zbójniczki, napady, średniowiecze, kroniki, legendy

For years, the phenomenon of brigandage has been inspiring poets, writers, painters, sculptors, musicians, filmmakers, theater artists, literary scholars, cultural scholars, and ethnographers, as well as many other representatives of the artistic and scientific communities; the robber has even recently forayed into the world of advertising. However, there is some discordance between the vision of artists and the findings of researchers: the former show a certain tendency to perpetuate the myth of the “noble robber” that is rooted in folk tradition and present in tales and legends, while modern science completely rejects this conceptualization. Admittedly, in older literature on the subject, especially in works from the 1950s, robbery was sometimes viewed as a manifestation of class struggle: the rebellion of the poor and the oppressed against the rich and the satiated (Szczołka, 1952, p. 5; Ochmański, 1950, pp. 193–242). However, a review of the preserved sources, especially the old chronicles, does not substantiate this opinion: all the documented raids on houses, mansions, parsonages, merchant carts, or craftsmen’s workshops had only one purpose: to make the robbers themselves rich, and when it comes to sharing the loot, it was only split between the members of the gang (Kamler, 2009, p. 230; Jazowski, 2007, pp. 53–54; Stuchlik-Surowiak, 2018, pp. 238–240).

The relationship between historical fact and myth or legend becomes even more complicated when a woman is cast in the role of the robber. An even more striking contradiction than that between the images of a ruthless thug and of the defender of the oppressed comes into play: one between the stereotype of a woman as a delicate, virtuous, modest being who is subordinate to a man, devoted to her family, and tied to the home—which has become perpetuated in tradition—and the bloody profession of a robber who plunders, burns, and murders. The motivation is irrelevant, whether it is chasing after wealth or a sense of justice. When a woman takes up brigandage, it does not matter.

Historiographic sources contain the memory of two 15th-century female robbers: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska. The former was the wife of Włodek from Skrzynów of the Swan coat of arms, who lived in Barwałd Castle in the area of Zator and enjoyed notoriety as a plunderer terrorizing the area. Katarzyna also actively participated in his raids, so we are dealing here with an unusual situation, that is, a husband–wife duo of robbers, and the fact that they were both of noble birth only spices up this story (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472).

The few scientific studies which mention Katarzyna provide conflicting information about her ancestry. Contemporary researchers link it with the Słupski family of the Fellowship of Słupia coat of arms (Borgen, 2013, p. 78), or with Hungary (Studnicki, 1994, p. 37; Kiersnowski 1977, p. 44; Putek, 1938, p. 95). Sources regarding the Hungarian background of Włodek Skrzyński’s wife can be found in the medieval *Głogów Chronicle*, which is attributed to the vicar of the collegiate church in Głogów, Kaspar Borgen (Mrozowicz, 2013, p. 10). In this text, a long note, referring to the year 1458, was devoted to Katarzyna, who then as well as

earlier and later ... conducted herself in such a strong and masculine fashion that she stationed her husband as a guard in her castle, and herself with servants accompanying her, she pillaged the inhabitants of other castles. She rode a horse which was armored and equipped with defenses, just like a valiant man. She didn’t spare any opponent. She also plundered the castles and villages of her foes. ... Also, according to the tidings, she robbed merchants and other people on the roads, so that she was feared far and wide There were whispers that there was no bow or crossbow that she could not stretch with her arms without any instruments, which no man could do. (Borgen, 1493/2013, p. 78)

It is difficult to say today to what extent this description corresponds to Skrzyńska’s real life, as it palpably tends toward hyperbole and presents the highwaywoman’s attacks in an almost fairy-tale-like convention. This was likely due to her huge popularity: the author makes it clear that she was the heroine of many stories passed along from person to person. It is no wonder then that she finally morphed into a hero whose strength was no match for any man. It is also worth noting that the traditional model of marriage is completely reversed in the note cited: it is Katarzyna’s husband who acts as a guardian of hearth and home, while she handles the soldiering. In the popular legend, Skrzyńska took on typically masculine traits, because her lifestyle did not fit the canon of behaviors associated with her gender. The only breach in this convention is the passage about the robber’s pregnancy. During that time, “she remained at home until the delivery” (Borgen, 1493/2013, p. 78). Preparing for the role of mother

at home, for some time Katarzyna lived according to the pattern befitting a woman. However, this behavior must have been very unusual for her, since it was remarked on in the *Chronicle*.

We also find mentions of Katarzyna's plundering in Jan Długosz's *Annals*. Compared to the note contained in the *Głogów Chronicle*, Długosz's record is much more substantive, as the author does not deflect into mythologization of the robber's image, although his examples of her actions still place her far from the traditional and customary ideal of womanhood, especially of a married woman and mother. The first mention of Skrzyńska appears in his chronicle under the year 1451 and is related to the criticism of King Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk's reign. As the author writes,

he is urged to lay siege to the castle of Berwald from which the holder and his wife have been living in brigandage, in defiance of the law and the orders of the king... But the king having other things on his mind remains unmoved by the wrongs of his subjects. (Długosz, 1614/2009, p. 118)

If we are to believe the records of the chronicler, Katarzyna carried out some raids herself, without her husband. Such was the nature of an event from in 1457, when a band of knights who had not been paid outstanding wages for fighting in the Prussian War tried to capture the castle in Oświęcim (Putek, 1938, p. 99; Studnicki, 1994, pp. 39–40). Although the royal troops apprehended eight attackers, they managed to climb the top of the tower in which they had been imprisoned, disarm the guards, and take control of the castle. Because there was a risk that others would join them and the castle could no longer be defended, negotiations began, as a result of which the occupiers were released, their horses and weapons returned, and each received two hundred florins. It was, however, the end of the good run for the unfortunate knights, because Katarzyna stood in their path. As Długosz writes, “[she] sent her people, [and] categorically ordered [them] to murder all eight of them and recapture everything that was given them: the horses, weapons, and gold” (1614/2009, p. 320).

Echoes of these events are also to be found in later, Polish-language sources. In the 16th-century *Poland's Chronicle* by Marcin Bielski, there is a mention that “Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, having met them on the road, robbed and beat” the knights returning from the castle in Oświęcim (Bielski, 1597, p. 411). It is worth noting that, unlike in Długosz's record, Skrzyńska is not portrayed here merely as the leader of a band that sends people on attacks: Bielski explicitly refers to her personal involvement. Another difference concerns the fate of the knights, since in the 16th-century chronicle there is no indication of their murder. An even softer version of the incidents that took place in 1457 was recounted by Andrzej

Komoniecki, the author of *Chronography or Żywiec Annals*, written between 1699 and 1728 and covering the period from 1400 to 1728. Interestingly, when compiling the first part of his chronicle (covering up until 1586), Komoniecki abundantly tapped into Marcin Bielski’s book, copying from it numerous and capacious excerpts—often without making any changes (Grodziski, 1987, p. XXVIII). The issue of Katarzyna’s capture of the eight released prisoners is slightly different. Although it bears clear signs of relying on the work of the 16th-century historian, the author from Żywiec changed the original verbs from “robbed” and “beat” to “recaptured” and “stole” (Kominiecki, n.d./1987, p.37). Thus, there is no discussion not only of murder, but even of beating—only of the theft of goods.

This is not the only difference between Bielski’s chronicle and *Chronography*. Under the date 1460, an excerpt with the following text appears in the work of the 16th-century author:

At that time, Bożywoj Skrzyński of the Swan coat of arms from Turzej Góra, north of Dobczyce, wreaked havoc everywhere, against whom Mikołaj Pieniążek from Witowice—the chamberlain and starost of Krakow—set off with Piotr Komorowski and some villagers from Szczyrzyc, to whom the king also sent his courtiers, and drew his munitions, and drove the robber away. (Bielski, 1597, p. 418)

This version corresponds to Długosz’s, which also identified among the villains only Bożywoj Skrzyński by name (1614/2009, pp. 383–384). In Komoniecki, however, the matter becomes much more complicated, because he writes that in 1460 robberies were carried out by “Włodek and Bożywoj Skrzyński of the Swan coat of arms, together with his wife Katarzyna” (n.d./1987, p. 39). This is quite a bizarre phrase, because it suggests that Katarzyna was the wife of both robbers. However, not only the style of this passage from Komoniecki’s *Chronography* raises doubts; a much bigger problem is that he may have confused Włodek Skrzyński, Katarzyna’s husband, with their son, Włodek. It was probably he who took part in the robbery described here, after his father had already died (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472). To corroborate this hypothesis, researchers cite the fact that in 1456 Skrzyńska was released by the king from the duty of military stations and military expeditions, and since the privilege was bestowed on her, and not Włodek, she was probably already a widow (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40).¹ In addition, she was the leader, as we remember, of the raid on the prisoners returning

1 Stanisław A. Sroka, however, suspects that Skrzyński did not die until 1458. See *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, p. 472.

from the castle in Oświęcim. At the same time, one cannot forget that the portrait of Katarzyna in the legend and recorded in the pages of the *Głogów Chronicle* depicts her as an independent woman, not reliant on her husband and acting on her own. Nevertheless, Włodek's absence from the source accounts does not necessarily constitute evidence of his death. What remains unclear is the question of Skrzyńska's participation in the aforementioned robbery of 1460. Neither Długosz nor Bielski make note of the name of a robber; only the Żywiec chronicler does so. Her royal privileges, suggesting that she remained on good terms with the ruler, speak against her plundering campaigns at that time. Her attack on the rebels returning from Oświęcim, i.e., on the king's enemies, further confirms this (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40; Putek, 1938, p. 100). It is therefore appropriate to agree with Józef Putek's statement that robbers could easily be forgiven if "their rogue weapons were used for the advantage and benefit of those who won the robbers over to be their friends and helpers" (1938, p. 100).

Incidentally, it must be added that Komoniecki is particularly concerned with brigandage, because this practice had been a real plague in Żywiec and the surrounding area for many centuries (Stuchlik-Surowiak, 2018, pp. 235–246). Hence, he dedicated a lot of space to this issue in *Chronography*, and perceived it as a socially important and pressing problem. This probably explains why, when describing the Skrzyńskis' plunders, the author does not stop at copying available sources, but tries to supplement the information left by earlier chroniclers—even if this sometimes leads him astray. Clear evidence of the historian's considerable interest in the bandit profession is the fact that the only record under the date 1460 is a reference to the robbery near Dobczyce. Komoniecki wholly omitted other accounts of events occurring that year (Komoniecki, n.d./1987).

The alleged favor of the king, even if it was a fact and not an invention of historians, did not save Skrzyńska from a tragic death. It is not known, however, exactly when she was executed, as sources remain silent on the subject. In Komoniecki's chronicle, there is only a very imprecise mention of Barwałd Castle under the date 1462, in which "Katarzyna Włodkowa, like her husband Włodek before, made a reputation for herself with robbery, for which she was burnt alive by royal order" (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 41). Skrzyńska appears for the last time in the pages of *Chronography* in the entry for the year 1474, but it is equally vague. Remembering Barwałd once again, the Żywiec chronicler adds only that it was "a very powerful castle standing on a high mountain ..., which Włodek Skrzyński and his wife, who once busied themselves with murder ... held" (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 45).

Another point which raises doubt for researchers is the mention of the robber being burned at the stake, because she was a noblewoman

(Studnicki, 1994, p. 40), although this information is also found in the *Głogów Chronicle* with an additional explanation that the direct reason for Skrzyńska’s capture and death was her counterfeiting of coins at the castle in Barwałd (Borgeni, 1493/2013, p. 78; Mońko, 2009, p. 77). According to this record, she was not killed for brigandage, but for a completely different crime. This could explain her losing the king’s favor, shown by turning a blind eye to the raids she organized, and perhaps even reaping benefits from them himself. In addition to fraud and forgery, the literature also suggests a third possibility, albeit unconfirmed, for inflicting the death penalty on Katarzyna: the Hussite heresy (Putek, 1938, pp. 105–107).

What the historical source did not convey, legend added. One of the stories circulating among the populace about Skrzyńska’s death was recorded by a nineteenth-century archaeologist and historian, Józef Łepkowski. The robber is represented here as a bloodthirsty criminal who, like “the eagle seeking out its prey from the towers of Berwald Castle, and sent its mercenary servants to a looting raid” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 109). In this account, King Kazimierz was painted as an opponent of Katarzyna: no longer wishing to tolerate her actions, he “instructed the superior of Lanckoron Castle, who had a good relationship with the Włodków lady, to take her to the court in chains” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 109). However, the cunning robber realized the intentions of the king and resorted to trickery. She invited the prefect of Lanckoron to a feast and “with flattering words on her lips and a kind smile in her eyes, she welcomed her invited guests” (Łepkowski, 1850, pp. 109–110). In fact, she decided get them drunk and later to kill them. But not everything went her way. “When the feast had already lasted a long time, and neither the flattery nor the constantly replenished drink were able to intoxicate the prefect’s mind, she saw her chance and, without dallying, plunged a dagger into her victim’s chest” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 110). The murderous intent, however, failed, as the dagger slipped over the armor hidden under his outer garment. At the prefect’s signal, his armed servants started marching towards the castle, “and soon Katarzyna and her gang were lying tied up on carts being pulled towards Krakow, where the murderer died soon after, burned alive on a stake erected in the city’s market square” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 110). The legend, therefore, reiterates manner of death described in the *Głogów Chronicle* and in *Chronography*. Perhaps Katarzyna did indeed die this way (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472).

The cause and form of Katarzyna’s death are not the only controversies surrounding her; the actual nature of the robber’s occupation also remains problematic. In some studies, there is a tendency to justify Skrzyńska’s actions with economic reasons. In his book titled *On Robbers’ Castles, Heretical Churches and Oświęcim Jerusalem: Sketches from the History of the*

Silesian–Polish Borderland, Józef Putek argues that there is no reason to view her and her husband as common robbers; being leaseholders of castles, they did what vassals like them did in all of the countries of contemporary Europe. They resembled medieval German adventurer-knights, known as “*raubritters*.” The researcher also draws attention to the fact that the couple had to maintain Barwald Castle, and the surrounding villages provided them with only a small income. No wonder that “they succored themselves by what was customary practice in Silesia, by taxing merchant transports and by practices ... which blurred the distinction between a law-abiding and precautionary administrator of the castle and a mere robber” (Putek, 1938, p. 96). He also characterizes the activities of Katarzyna and Włodek Gustaw Studnicki as customary practice, noting that “even magnates with famous names resorted to violence and rape” (Studnicki, 1994, p. 37). Ryszard Kiersnowski elevates the activities of “robbers” to even higher social circles, writing that “even some small Silesian princes could plunder some wealthier merchants on the road. Similar things also happened in other countries” (Kiersnowski, 1977, p. 43). We must agree with the researchers: The robber knights were indeed a phenomenon characteristic of the late Middle Ages and identifiable throughout Europe at the time (Mońko, 2009, pp. 5, 99). However, we should not forget that these “knights,” “magnates,” and “princes” were not women. Therefore, Katarzyna’s case is difficult to consider in the context of accepted norms, because her actions, regardless of whether they were dictated by the necessity of maintaining a castle or an usual desire to gain wealth, completely violated these norms.

Historical information about the other robber—Barbara Rusinowska—is much more scarce. In Bielski’s *Chronicle of Poland*, in a note referring to the year 1505, there is a comment in the margin, “Rusinowska was hanged”, and a brief explanation follows: “In the ... Sejm, some nobles were executed for robbery, Osuchowski and Mysowski were beheaded, and Rusinowska in leather boots with spurs, with a sword, in man’s attire, as she was captured, was hanged” (Bielski, 1597, p. 498).

This information, in a somewhat abbreviated form, was also provided by Komoniecki. Under the entry for 1505, we can read, “That year at the Radom Sejm some noblemen were executed for robbery, and Rusinowska, a lady who broke with them, in boots with spurs, with a sword, in man’s attire captured, so she was hanged” (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 56).

Three major facts draw our attention: that Rusinowska was a noblewoman, that she was hanged, and that she was captured and executed in men’s clothing. The first fact brings some associations with the story of Katarzyna Skrzyńska; the second fact is quite surprising—the death penalty by hanging was considered shameful and, according to

centuries-old tradition, women were not sentenced with it, especially those of noble birth (Mikołajczyk, 1998, pp. 195–196); the third fact arouses curiosity, as a woman in men’s clothing was truly sensational in those days.

The exception, regarding the manner of execution, which was made for Rusinowska is even more remarkable because, according to Bielski, the other robbers—the men—were beheaded. Therefore, they were not treated as common thieves, which was certainly because they belonged to the nobility. In the case of Barbara, the goal was to make an example of and humiliate a woman who did not want to be a woman. At the same time, both chronicles imply that the robber’s male clothing and sword were perceived as even more outrageous than the acts of robbery, since both authors strongly emphasize this fact.

While Rusinowska’s death was recorded in historical sources, little is known about her life. The shortage of facts is compensated by the folk tradition, however, because the nonconforming robber became the heroine of several legends, told especially in the vicinity of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, where she was rumored to have prowled with her band (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 101).

Over the years, Rusinowska’s legend grew in scope and produced many offshoots. Some tales made her into a greedy woman, who was a bandit for the sole purpose of expanding her wealth and set out on a road with a band of rogues to rob merchants. According to other accounts, her initial motivation was the death of her father, Maciej, who was murdered because he interceded on behalf of a peasant being beaten. Rusinowska was also sometimes portrayed as a horse thief, which diminished her robber’s fame (Stankiewicz, 1988, pp. 101–102).

The highwaywoman was also reported to be have initiated a thwarted attack on Słupia. Somehow warned, the city’s residents organized their defenses and the robbers were forced to retreat. Two of them, however, were captured and taken to jail, from where they managed to escape. Stories were told that after some time one of the inhabitants of Słupia recognized one of these robbers among the faithful attending the church fair in Świętokrzyskie. Somebody also spotted Barbara Rusinowska herself praying in front of the altar, inside the temple, dressed in men’s attire. She could not be apprehended, however, because she escaped, having been warned by one of her companions (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 102). Certain motifs found in the legend of Barbara overlap with folk tales of Katarzyna Włodkowa: both robbers were said to imprison enemies in the cellars of their castles (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 102).

In the nineteenth century, the legend about Rusinowska was adapted to the stage thanks to the playwright, actor, and theater director Aleksander Ładnowski. In 1862, he wrote a play entitled *Barbara Rusinowska* or

The Robbers of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains: A Historical Drama in 5 Acts (1862). According to the stage directions, “this story is set at the beginning of the 16th century in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, partly at Rusinowska’s castle, partly at a forest tavern (Ładnowski, 1862, p. 4). This drama portrays Barbara as a cunning woman who does not hesitate to commit crimes and fraud, unscrupulously achieving her ends by any means possible. In the words of one of the characters, she is:

... a woman monster
in want of dignity and humanity
...
One should have no regard
For the gender she has stained
And plunge vindictive iron
into the robber’s chest. (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 61–62)

Barbara, however, is not completely devoid of feelings, because she falls in love with a man who loves someone else. Rusinowska’s confession shows her not as a robber, but as a woman—a romantic mistress capable of the highest ecstasy and every sacrifice. She addresses her beau as follows:

The third month has passed
Since that unfortunate moment,
At which hour I did see you in Krakow
For the first time at the banquet
At the house of Chancellor Łaski;
Your character and endowments—
Humble manner—intellect
Have enslaved mine own heart;
From then on, I was no longer a mistress
of my dreams—or my waking hours;
You were present to me everywhere;
Your image forever chained
To my whole being,
You didn’t allow any other thought
Above this—to live by your side,
Your eyes with a stolen gleam
To shine—like stars have shone for ages
With light borrowed from the sun! (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 68)

However, when talking to her rival, she reveals a completely different side of her personality. Again she is a bandit who will not shy away from any crime; she is even capable of killing her beloved:

Remember my words
That I have uttered:
“I am a woman, who on my way
Will not stand any rival,
Being in a vicious fight
My beloved one shall die!”
Maria, do you understand now?!
Jerzy will die by my hand,
Should he dare to spurn me,
Or if you dare to love that gent! (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 59)

Further events make Rusinowska a tragic heroine, because it transpires that the man she fell in love with is her son, abandoned as a child. Barbara’s husband, whom she had banished years before to indulge in robbery and debauchery, also joins the stage. The man reveals all of the crimes and iniquities of his wife, and then pierces her with a dagger.

Ładnowski’s drama is unquestionably closer to the spirit of the epoch in which it was written than to historical fact. Rusinowska is represented as a romantic heroine, whose rogue nature took the form of a morbid, destructive feeling. However, nothing certain can be said about her real emotional life or about her life in general. The latter of these women left much a more indelible mark on history, although it is also difficult to judge where the facts end and the legends begin. The latter type proliferates, especially in the nineteenth century, an era fascinated by medieval sources. Regardless of the story’s transformations, piling up in the course of history, it is worth attempting to investigate the story of the two robbers, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska, whose lives and exploits do not properly fit within any epoch.

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Publikacje serii wydawniczej „Humanitas. Studia Kulturoznawcze” przygotowywanej przez pracowników naukowych Instytutu Kulturoznawstwa Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie kierowane są do czytelnika zainteresowanego refleksją nad kulturą i religią w zakresie ich źródeł, natury i przemian dokonujących się przez wieki oraz współcześnie.

Celem serii jest wprowadzanie w meandry nauk o kulturze i religii, a także prezentowanie najnowszych badań w tym zakresie. Dlatego w serii tej publikowane są zarówno prace zbiorowe i podręczniki, jak też monografie oraz teksty źródłowe ujmujące kulturę i religię z różnych perspektyw badawczych.

Naukowy charakter serii – gwarantowany przez uczestnictwo w jej tworzeniu kompetentnych badaczy poszczególnych nauk o kulturze i religii – idzie w parze z jej przystępnością dla czytelników stawiających pierwsze kroki w analizowaniu fenomenów kultury i religii.

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W przygotowaniu

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