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Dostoevsky in Polish Post-War Humanist Reflection*¹

I.

The dynamically developing Polish Dostoevskyology of the Interwar Period was slowed over the next two decades by history and politics: first the Nazi occupation, then Stalinist communism, which pushed Dostoevsky (and research on his work) into the Polish scientific ‘underground’. During the war, references to the Russian author appeared in our literature only sporadically. And this happened, of course, only in texts written outside the occupied country. It is necessary to recall the work *Mickiewicz, Dostoyevsky and Blok* (1942) by Waław Lednicki, a pioneer of Polish Russian studies in the United States, whose book is absent from the bibliographies of contemporary researchers.

A reflection on Dostoevsky’s place in post-war Polish literature and science must begin with a reminder that research on the legacy of the author of *The Brothers Karamazov* developed in two strands, which cannot be subjected to similar periodization. Constantly present and free from ideological and political pressures in émigré literature, it endured limitations typical of all communist countries, especially in the Stalinist era. Ryszard Przybylski did not hesitate to state at the beginning of the 1960s that “Dostoevsky’s topicality lies [...] in the fact that he is still a ‘devil’ for 20th-century Marxism”.² However, the writer’s political convictions did not constitute a significant obstacle, as evidenced by Polish émigré Dostoevskyology, convictions which in the nineteenth century blocked his “path to Poland”.³ Young Poland (1890-1918) ‘forgave’ the author

* Translated by Joanna Artwińska.

1 The presented sketch is a significantly expanded version of the text written with Andrzej DE LAZARI, “Достоевский в польской литературе, литературоведении и философской мысли с 70-х лет XX века”, *Достоевский. Материалы и исследования*, № 20 (Санкт-Петербург: Нестор-История, 2014), с. 25-43.

2 *Mówi Ryszard PRZYBYLSKI, Współczesność*, No. 23, 1964, p. 7.

3 Janina KULCZYCKA-SALONI, “Dostojewski w Polsce”, *Miesięcznik Literacki*, No. 3, 1972, p. 41.

of *The Devils* his anti-Polish phobias, and the Interbellum (1918-1939) proved that a Polish writer and reader can appreciate the artistic value and psychological depth of the artist's works, disregarding his, in fact infrequent, chauvinistic deliriums. This does not mean, however, that the problem has completely disappeared from the research horizon, only that the way of looking at it has changed.

The direction of reflections on Dostoevsky's Polonophobia, though with a shift of focus from a Polish to a universal perspective, was set before the war by Jerzy Stempowski in his essay *Poles in Dostoevsky's Novels*, which is still valid today. Here he stated that the sources of the writer's reluctance towards Poles should be found in the attempts by the Polish exiles whom he met at the Omsk *katorga* to explain torment rationally. And torment, according to folk-Russian belief, as an immanent part of human fate, must remain inexplicable. This proud and incomprehensible attitude essentially separated Poles from Russian convicts. Nevertheless, not everyone was convinced by this interpretation. Waclaw Grubiński, also a victim of Soviet-Russian repressions, fitted this "Polish" attitude almost perfectly. He looked at the work of the Russian writer, similarly to Joseph Conrad, with the eyes of a Western European rationalist who rejected Russian "hysteria"⁴, into which he also incorporated philosophical irrationalism. Accusations of Polonophobia and, consequently, aversion to Dostoevsky's work will also appear in Jan Lechoń's *Diary*, in *Wartime Notebooks: France, 1940-1944* by Andrzej Bobkowski, in essays by Władysław Folkierski and Lucjan Lewitter.

The problem of Dostoevsky's attitude towards Poles bothered (and still bothers) contemporary Polish researchers. Małgorzata Świdarska, using the instruments of imagology, 'internationalized' the problem that had so far been closed within the borders of Polish Dostoevskyology. She published a book in German in which she analysed Dostoevsky's portrayal of Poles from the 'imagistic' point of view.⁵ Marek Wedemann, in turn, studied the earliest Polish reception of the author of *Poor Folk*, in the half-century from the appearance of his debut novel until the end of the 19th century, when a strong 'pro-Dosto-

4 Waclaw GRUBIŃSKI, "Polscy 'panowie' Dostojewskiego", in W. GRUBIŃSKI, *O literaturze i literatach*, (Londyn: Stowarzyszenie Pisarzy Polskich, 1948), s. 101-103.

5 Małgorzata ŚWIDARSKA, *Studien zur literaturwissenschaftlichen Imagologie. Das literarische Werk F.M. Dostojewskijs aus imagologischer Sicht mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Darstellung Polens* (München: Biblion Media GmbH, 2001); she continued her research, examining the place of ekphrasis in the writings of the Russian author: M. ŚWIDARSKA, "Ekfrazja w powieści *Idiota* Fiodora Dostojewskiego jako sposób konstruowania kulturowej obcości", *Slavia Orientalis*, No. 2, 2003.

evsky' position emerged among many Young Poland authors. The author does not give a direct answer to the provocative question posed in the title of the book: *"A Polonophile or a Pole-Eater"*, but he 'revises' beliefs about a fundamentally negative Polish attitude. The Russian writer was viewed positively by Polish opinion as a 'humanitarian', but also as a victim of tsarism, and therefore somehow like one of 'their own'. The mediation of Russian liberal criticism had a decisive influence on this specific reception.⁶

2.

Polish emigration, to a large extent heir to the literature of the Interwar Period, continued to show interest in the Russian genius. It was in London that Stanisław Mackiewicz's first Polish monograph on Dostoevsky was written. The London *Wiadomości* began to print its fragments in 1950, while the book had already been published in English (*Dostoyevsky*, 1947) and was received enthusiastically in England.⁷ It can be rightly assumed that the Polish author 'aided' himself with materials from Leonid Grossman's 1935 work *Жизнь и труды Ф.М. Достоевского*,⁸ later used by the researcher in a fictionalized biography of Dostoevsky, whose Polish translation was published in 1968.⁹ Mackiewicz seems to have drawn many facts about the writer's life, previously unknown to Polish researchers, from these materials. The first attempts to publish the book in Stalinist Poland were unsuccessful, but as early as in the 'post-thaw' year of 1957, after Mackiewicz's return to Poland, it also found its way to domestic readers. They found in it a surprising portrait of both a great writer and a flawed man. Mackiewicz focused on the biography, integrating it into a wide panorama of the Russia of Nicholas I and Alexander II. In the 'living' narrative about the writer, the author does not hide his feelings, emphasizes the writer's ridiculousness and sins, and does not even refrain from repeating rumors, in-

6 Marek WEDEMANN, *Polonofil czy polakożerca? Fiodor Dostojewski w piśmiennictwie polskim lat 1847-1897* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010). The problem of Dostoevsky's "Polonophobia" was also re-discussed by Jacek UGLIK, "Polacy w powieściach i publicystyce Dostojewskiego", *Przegląd Powszechny*, No. 11, 2004; and Jacek UGLIK, "Образ поляков в романах в публицистике Достоевского", *Toronto Slavic Quarterly*, No. 37, 2011.

7 Stanisław MACKIEWICZ, "Rzecz o Dostojewskim w *Wiadomościach*", *Wiadomości*, No. 34 (229), 1950, s. 4.

8 Леонид П. ГРОССМАН, *Жизнь и труды Ф.М. Достоевского: биография в датах и документах* (Москва-Ленинград: Academia, 1935).

9 Leonid GROSSMAN, *Dostojewski*, translated by S. Pollak (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1968).

cluding the worst (following Strakhov) about the rape of a little girl. But at the same time, he discovers extraordinary secrets of genius, and finds perhaps the most beautiful linguistic formulas for the work of a writer who “wanted to be a Russian writer [and] became a universalist through his relationship with the Gospel”.¹⁰ Mackiewicz proposes an innovative reading of Dostoevsky’s works (*The Village of Stepanchikovo*) and opens up new perspectives for the Polish reception of Dostoevsky at the time. Mackiewicz’s monograph is a very uneven book. Next to almost crude fragments there are revealing passages, an impression fully corroborated by the similarity of his interpretative attempts with Josif Brodski’s later readings.¹¹ They both see Dostoevsky as a writer fighting for the soul of man. Mackiewicz’s book, its English version, was highly appreciated by Stempowski, who shared several views on the Dostoevsky’s narrative technique.¹² He sees in it a reference to the tradition of the folk novel, the great progenitor of which was Daniel Defoe, followed by Eugène Sue.¹³ Perhaps this remark was related to Mackiewicz’s penetrating thesis that Dostoevsky was able to combine in his novels the poetics of the tabloid romance with the poetics of the evangelical parable.

Reflecting on the book by Mackiewicz, who after all was both a journalist and a writer, forces one to pay attention to the special place that the opinions of his literary ‘successors’ occupy in analysing Dostoevsky’s work.¹⁴ What is more, without taking them into account, our Dostoevskyology would be much poorer. In the Interwar Period, the best works on the author of *The Devils* were created not in the offices of literature researchers, but on the writing desks of Andrzej Strug and Teodor Parnicki. After the war, almost all the great émigré artists wrote about Dostoevsky. In Poland, an important book was written by Adolf Rudnicki; earlier an essay appeared by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (a portrait

10 Stanisław MACKIEWICZ, *Dostojewski* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1957), s. 79.

11 Josif BRODSKI, “Dlaczego Kundera myli się co do Dostojewskiego?”, translated by Adam Zagajewski, *Zeszyty Literackie*, No. 3, 1996, s. 102.

12 Jerzy STEMPOWSKI, “Stanisław Mackiewicz o Dostojewskim oraz kilka uwag o biografach literackich”, w: Jerzy STEMPOWSKI, *Klimat życia i klimat literatury. 1948-1967*, selected and edited by J. Timoszewicz (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1988), s. 34.

13 Stanisław BACZYŃSKI, *Literatura w ZSSRR* (Kraków-Warszawa: Wydaw. Literacko-Naukowe, 1932), s. 45 in a book written in the early 1930s noted that Dostoevsky “restored to crime the right of citizenship in ‘serious’ literature”.

14 This remark does not apply to Polish writers alone; it is worth mentioning the excellent essays by André Gide, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, or by Albert Camus.

of the writer, combined with a reading of *The Idiot*);¹⁵ and Bogdan Wojdowski published a sketch entitled *The Myth of Shigalev*,¹⁶ inspired by Camus's adaptation of *The Devils*, in which he emphasized the political acumen of the writer in presenting revolution, quite a courageous act in Poland at the time.

It is actually difficult to identify an important author in Polish émigré literature who did not refer to Dostoevsky. The writer appears in various ways in essays (Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, Czesław Miłosz, Aleksander Wat, Józef Czapski, Józef Wittlin), in diaries (Lechoń, Witold Gombrowicz, Bobkowski, Herling-Grudziński), in fictionalized accounts of Polish prisoners of the Gulag (Stanisław Swianiewicz, Waclaw Grubiński), which significantly related to *Notes from a Dead House*. And most of all in *A World Apart*. For Herling-Grudziński was undoubtedly the Polish writer who reached most deeply into Dostoevsky's work. The sources of this interest can be found in the biographical experience of the Polish writer. In a Soviet labor camp, he read *Notes from a Dead House*,¹⁷ in which he found a vision of Russia as the eternal Dead House, and in relation to this book he wrote his work on the "different world" of the camp.¹⁸ Herling-Grudziński contrasted Dostoevsky's literary account of spiritual degradation with *The World Apart*, which shows the spiritual development and victory of man over the system, over human weakness and physicality. It is paradoxical that *Notes from a Dead House*, the articulation of fatalistic Russian determinism, liberated in the Polish writer a heroic view of fate, history, and the place of man in it.

The problems which broke into the mind in the Soviet labor camp recurred in all of Herling's works. In his short stories (*The Wings of the Altar*), in essays (*The Second Coming, Specters of Revolution*), the Polish writer, in a lively dialogue with the great Russian, searched for answers about the essence of humanity. He tried to solve the 'mystery' of Dostoevsky, analyzing both his life and his work with equal attention, usually supporting one with the other. He showed the transformation of Dostoevsky's personal experiences into great literature. He also revealed his quandaries, his giving into the temptation of despair, but also his fanaticism, atheism and sectarianism. For Herling saw Dostoevsky as a religious writer who gave himself up to constant doubt and stubbornly returned to his 'accursed questions'.

15 Jarosław IWASZKIEWICZ, *Petersburg* (Warszawa: Państw. Instytut Wydawniczy, 1976).

16 Bogdan WOJDOWSKI, *Mit Szigalewa* (Warszawa: Szkice, 1982).

17 In the Polish translation published under the wrong title *Wspomnienia z domu umarłych*; see Roman ZIMAND, "Martwy dom żywych ludzi", w: R. ZIMAND, *Czas normalizacji. Szkice czwarte* (Londyn: Aneks, 1989), s. 115-116.

18 See Tadeusz SUCHARSKI, *Dostojewski Herlinga-Grudzińskiego* (Lublin: UMCS, 2002).

The significance of Dostoevsky in Herling's work turned out to be so remarkable that Tadeusz Sucharski devoted an entire monograph to this problem. In it, he focused on examining the "space of resonance" (using the concept of Vladimir Toporov) in Grudziński's works, an approach which reveals many-sided connections with the work and person of the Russian writer. By pointing to the similarity of their prison and camp experience and the shared formula of "searching for the man in man", Sucharski tries to indicate a common metaphysical plane, similar efforts to find a way out of an alley devoid of transcendence. Nowhere else in Polish literature, he also argues, does intertextual space accommodate the articulation of national historiosophies.

In his texts on Dostoevsky, Sucharski mainly concentrates on the inspiring importance of his heritage for Polish writers. He is not interested in the question of 'impact'; not disregarding *Stoffgeschichte* in the least, he tries to seize inspirational or inspirational-polemical forms of Dostoevsky's presence in Polish works, to find ideological grounds for dispute. Apart from Herling, these will also include the writings of Miłosz and Gombrowicz.¹⁹ Miłosz's path to Dostoevsky was a complicated one. The poet-professor did not create a book about the Russian author because he was afraid that it would be a "book of distrust", the source of which was the writer's "fervent Russian millenarism and messianism".²⁰ The reluctance, however, was accompanied by admiration for the Russian writer's defense of the faith in the evangelical Christ, denied by the Russian intelligentsia, which had been "infected" by the scientific worldview adopted from the West. Miłosz searched for the quintessence of Dostoevsky's thoughts in *Notes from the Underground* and *The Grand Inquisitor*. His reflections were initiated by the essays *The Land of Ulro*, in which the poet attempted a description of the relationship between the writer's work and Western religious imagery. He showed in Dostoevsky's work the antinomies of the European thought of 'the age of reason'; he also emphasized the nationalist shallowness of his views, as defiance of attempts to humanize God

19 Tadeusz SUCHARSKI, "Zbrodnia i kara w literaturze polskiej – recepcja, polemika, inspiracja", w: T. SUCHARSKI in collaboration with Mirosława MICHALSKA-SUCHANEK (pod red.), *Dostojewski i inni – literatura, idee, polityka: księga jubileuszowa dedykowana profesrowi Andrzejowi de Lazari* (Katowice: Śląsk, 2016), s. 155-208.

20 Czesław MIŁOSZ, *Abecadło Miłosza* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1997), s. 99. Such a book from Miłosz's writings was created by his researchers: Czesław MIŁOSZ, *Rosja. Wzdrzenia transoceaniczne*, Vol. 1: *Dostojewski – nasz współczesny*, selected by B. Toruńczyk and M. Wójciak, edited by B. Toruńczyk, introduction by C. Cavangh (Warszawa: Zeszyty Literackie, 2010).

was linked by Dostoevsky with messianic faith in a Russian God.²¹ However, the author of *The Land of Ulro* noticed a similar messianic inclination to national heresy in Mickiewicz and Dostoevsky: Konrad in *Forefathers' Eve*, comparing God to the Tsar, resembles Shatov, who believes in Russia and does not believe in God. But in Mickiewicz's theodicy, Miłosz found the answer to the danger of succumbing to the logic of Ivan Karamazov's thought, the consequence of which would be acknowledging the universe as absurd. The poet's journalistic texts turned out to be an important supplement to his opinions about the Russian writer.²² In them he emphasized that both messianisms, Polish and Russian, were (are) a consequence of the collective nature of both nations. Miłosz's understanding of the revolution, of which Dostoevsky was hailed a prophet, is also extremely interesting. The poet emphasizes its religious aspect, i.e. choosing a man-God in place of God-man. He also explains the paradox of the universality of the writer confined after all to internal Russian problems. According to Miłosz, this results from the specific situation of nineteenth-century Russia, which, lagging behind Europe, absorbed problems known in the West for centuries.

Miłosz's extremely inspiring, perhaps even controversial, reflections on Dostoevsky sparked lively comments. The first one was made by Lucjan Suchanek who highly appreciated the connection Miłosz established between Dostoevsky and Swedenborg.²³ In the struggle of the Polish poet with Dostoevsky's "accursed questions", Elżbieta Mikiciuk read his disagreement with the existing order of the world, which is counterbalanced by the poet's belief in apocatastasis.²⁴ Sucharski, in turn, emphasized Miłosz's ambivalent attitude to Dostoevsky's "heresy". The poet was close to Dostoevsky's own theologically heretical efforts to 'restore' God from before the breakthrough of the Enlightenment;

21 Tadeusz SUCHARSKI, "Miłosz i 'herezje' Dostojewskiego", w: Małgorzata CZERMIŃSKA and Katarzyna SZALEWSKA (pod red.), *Północna strona Miłosza* (Gdańsk: Nadbałtyckie Centrum Kultury, 2011), s. 215-228.

22 Cf. the statements collected in the volume C. MIŁOSZ, *Rosja...*, Vol. 1: *Dostojewski – nasz współczesny: Dostojewski dzisiaj; Źródła leżą w zachodniej Europie. Wywiad* (Cz. Miłosz answers the questions of Z. Podgórzec); *Dostojewski; Dostojewski badał choroby ducha. Wywiad* (C. Gawryś and J. Majewski talk to Czesław Miłosz); *Diagnoza niedostateczna. Rozmowa o rosyjskiej historii, literaturze i polityce* (S. Frołow talks to Cz. Miłosz).

23 Lucjan SUCHANEK, "Fiodor Dostojewski w ocenie Czesława Miłosza", w: Marian BOBRAN (pod red.), *Fiodor Dostojewski w setną rocznicę śmierci* (Rzeszów, 1985), s. 60-68.

24 Elżbieta MIKICIUK, "Dostojewski Miłosza", w: Andrzej DUDEK (red.), *Idea i komunikacja w języku i kulturze rosyjskiej* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2011), s. 475-484.

his reluctance was aroused by Dostoevsky's messianic-nationalist heresy, that is, by the attempt to 'Russify' God.

Quite different problems touched Gombrowicz. He started 'playing' with Dostoevsky already in his debut *Memoirs of a Time of Immaturity*.²⁵ For Gombrowicz simply 'played' with the Russian artist more than he wrote about him. Yet, in one of the journal entries he presented his understanding of the figure of "nebular" Raskolnikov, inscribing it into the concept of an "interpersonal church" with its obligatory "mirror conscience". The hero, who is aware of the expected reaction of the "co-members" of the "church",²⁶ succumbs to this "conscience". Such a view aroused opposition from Herling, who argued that *Crime and Punishment* must not be read as a story of a criminal's adaptation to codes of conduct adopted by the community, but as a work "about the conscious need to attach one 'self' to an absolute and unchanging value".²⁷ Herling questions "interpersonal self-sufficiency", believing that there is a metaphysical sanction which Gombrowicz rejected.²⁸

3.

Dostoevsky returned to the official culture of People's Republic of Poland with the 'rehabilitation' of metaphysical and experimental literature in the late 1950s. But until the fall of communism, Polish Dostoevskyologists had to deal with censorship pressure, with the awareness of possible interference. Nevertheless, the most important achievements of the period of the thirty years 1957-1989 in the reflection on the Russian genius, collected and summarized by Jerzy Kapuściak,²⁹ will certainly remain in the Polish humanities forever. It was initiated by the national edition of Mackiewicz's monograph.

Its publication was accompanied by discussions in the 'thaw' cultural and literary press (*Po prostu*, later *Współczesność*). The monthly *Znak* significantly enriched the analysis of Dostoevsky's work. The press articles were inspired by

25 Jerzy JARZĘBSKI, *Gra w Gombrowicza* (Warszawa: PWN, 1982), s. 23-88.

26 Witold GOMBROWICZ, *Dziennik 1957-1961* (Kraków: Literackie, 1988), s. 199.

27 Gustaw HERLING-GRUDZIŃSKI, "Dwugłos o sumieniu Raskolnikowa", w: G. HERLING-GRUDZIŃSKI, *Godzina cieni. Eseje*, selected and edited by Z. Kudelski (Kraków: Znak, 1991), s. 88-89.

28 Włodzimierz BOLECKI, *Ciemny Staw. Trzy szkice do portretu* (Warszawa: Plejada, 1991), s. 40; T. SUCHARSKI, *Dostojewski Herlinga-Grudzińskiego...*, s. 162-163.

29 Jerzy KAPUŚCIK, "Próba syntezy. Fiodor Dostojewski na warszacie polskich badaczy w ostatnim trzydziestoleciu", *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, No. 4 (325), 1994, s. 125-141.

emerging scientific works devoted to Dostoevsky's place in the world of nineteenth-century philosophical ideas,³⁰ primarily by Andrzej Walicki and Ryszard Przybylski. The national stagings of his novels also played an important role, as did the Soviet adaptation of *The Idiot* by Ivan Pyriev. In his review, Ernest Bryll was indignant at the author's reduction to the role of a critic of bourgeois morality and the "cult of money".³¹ The poet-reviewer objected, though not directly, to the stripping of Dostoevsky of metaphysical depth, which was an approach typical of the epoch of vulgar Marxism. It was in *Znak* where Zbigniew Żakiewicz began his long-lasting 'adventure' with the Russian writer.³² Here also published Fr. Tomasz Podziawo, 'provoked' by the theses of Żakiewicz and Walicki. His sketch on the religiousness of Dostoevsky was one of the earliest texts in the People's Republic of Poland on this subject³³ and, additionally, written by a priest.³⁴

The works of Walicki and Przybylski were major milestones in the Polish reflection on Dostoevsky. Walicki, a historian of ideas, did not write a separate book about Dostoevsky, yet he frequently returned to the writer's ideas in his works. In the publication *Personality and History*,³⁵ Walicki included a crucial sketch, *Dostoevsky and the Idea of Freedom*, while in his work devoted to the Slavophilic trend in Russian thought, he analyzed the idea of *pochvennichestvo*,³⁶ fundamental to Dostoevsky's historiosophy, which Andrzej de Lazari would later develop. In this book, Walicki showed Dostoevsky as a profound thinker, a researcher of the "dialectics of one's own will" – leading from the personal enslavement of Kirillov and Raskolnikov to the totalitarian reality of Shigalev and the Grand Inquisitor.

30 Zbigniew ŻAKIEWICZ, "Dostojewski na tle prądów filozoficznych epoki", *Znak*, No. 7-8, 1960, s. 1019-1025. In this essay, the author referred to the recently published book by Andrzej WALICKI, *Osobowość a historia: studia z dziejów literatury i myśli rosyjskiej* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1959).

31 Ernest BRYLL, "Z Dostojewskim polemiki", *Współczesność*, No. 4, 1959, s. 5.

32 Zbigniew ŻAKIEWICZ, "W świecie pozornej wolności", *Znak*, No. 5, 1959, s. 619-627.

33 Earlier, texts were written by Jan DOBRACZYŃSKI, "Poszukiwania nadczłowieczeństwa", in J. DOBRACZYŃSKI, *Wielkość i świętość. Eseje* (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1958) and Aleksander ROGALSKI, "Dostojewski – Homo religiosus", w: A. ROGALSKI, *Profile i preteksty* (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1958).

34 Tomasz PODZIAWO, "Dostojewski (Uwagi dyskusyjne)", *Znak*, No. 12, 1959, s. 1590-1594; PODZIAWO, "Czy Dostojewski był filozofem?", *Znak*, No. 73-74, 1960, s. 1026-1028.

35 Andrzej WALICKI, *Osobowość a historia: studia z dziejów literatury i myśli rosyjskiej* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1959).

36 Andrzej WALICKI, *W kręgu konserwatywnej utopii. Struktura i przemiany rosyjskiego słowianofilstwa* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1964).

Along with Walicki's work on the transformations of Russian Slavophilism, the readers were presented with the best Polish monograph on the work of the Russian genius – *Dostoevsky, and the "Accursed Questions"*. The term "monograph" may seem exaggerated to a meticulous reader, because Przybylski covered in it Dostoevsky's works 'only' from *Poor Folk* to *Crime and Punishment*, so there was no room for reflection on his greatest works. But its importance, even from a contemporary perspective, seems absolutely fundamental; Przybylski's book "radically changed the situation"³⁷ in the Polish view of Dostoevsky's legacy. The thesis of his work, emphasized by the author, that the author of *Crime and Punishment* "was the only writer of the 19th century who with such determination defended the idea of the Christian harmony of the world", resonated very strongly. Przybylski's book was a reaction to the most popular (and 'crude') methods of analyzing Dostoevsky at the time: either "naive biographism", for which the only key to his writings was to look for incentives in the writer's life, or "naive sociology";³⁸ which explained everything by the repressive system of the tsarist state. Przybylski looks at Dostoevsky as a writer rooted in romanticism, seeking opportunities for the moral re-education of man. Not only does he inscribe this search in the antinomy of modern man, but also looks for "the genealogy of our present day" in Dostoevsky's work.³⁹ The author emphasizes primarily religious and ethical problems. He emphasizes the fundamental influence of Pushkin, Byron, Schiller, Lermontov; reads him in the context of 19th-century European philosophy: the Young Hegelians (Stirner, Feuerbach), Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, utopian socialism; and finally emphasizes the importance of the tradition of Russian religious thought. He also evokes the heritage of Nil Sorsky, Tikhon Zadonsky, Paisius Velichkovsky, as well as the Eastern Orthodox patristics of Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite and Maxim the Confessor. The history of ideas is intertwined with hermeneutics and the art of interpretation. Przybylski's scientific discourse is close to an essayistic formula, which makes it possible to locate the monograph in the vicinity of the *belles-lettres*.

The appearance of these books by Walicki and Przybylski should be perceived as a great intellectual event, which in many respects determined further Polish studies on Russian thought and literature, including, of course, the works of Dostoevsky. One could say, to paraphrase the author of *Poor Folk*, that all

37 M. R. PRZYBYLSKI, *Współczesność*, No. 23, 1964, s. 7.

38 Tomasz BUREK, "Horyzont Dostojewskiego", *Twórczości*, No. 10, 1965, s. 115.

39 Mówi Ryszard PRZYBYLSKI, *Dostojewski i przeklęte problemy. Od Biednych ludzi do Zbrodni i kary* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1964), s. 32.

contemporary Polish researchers of his work “came out from under the coat” of Walicki and Przybylski, remaining, of course, also under Bakhtin’s ‘cloak’.

In the introduction to the book on the “accursed questions”, Przybylski promised a second volume, but due to problems with censorship, he could not “keep his word”. He tried to fill this severe deficiency with an elaborate chapter on Dostoevsky in the two-volume *History of Russian Literature* edited by Marian Jakóbec (1971), as well as with sketches on the “accursed questions”, personified in literary heroes (Stavrogin, Kirillov). In 1972, Przybylski published an article entitled “Stavrogin’s Death” (which resulted in the intervention of the USSR Embassy) in *Teksty*, which twenty-four years later, together with an essay by Maria Janion, “Is Stavrogin a Tragic Character?”, found its way to the book *The Stavrogin Case*.⁴⁰ These are the two most famous, but also mutually exclusive, Polish interpretations of Stavrogin’s personality. For Przybylski, Stavrogin is a Russian Don Juan, changing his worldviews one by one, and unable to believe in any idea. Without concealing his reluctance, the essayist calls him a “blasé, pubertal contestant”⁴¹ and argues that Dostoevsky personifies in the protagonist of *The Devils* the typical Russian ideological life of people who sell their freedom in exchange for nothing. A somewhat similar, though less categorical conclusion was reached by Stefan Chwin, who, in Stavrogin’s creation, tried to find the writer’s “diagnosis and warning”⁴² against the newly shaping spiritual reality. For Maria Janion, the hero of *The Devils* is an immoralist who reveals the “modern quality of tragedy”. Having departed from God, he leans under the weight of freedom and evil, feeling the experience of “empty transcendence” as well as of a painful yet “empty sense of guilt”.⁴³ It is worth mentioning a valuable attempt at a completely new look at Stavrogin, especially in the context of his suicide, proposed by Halina Chałacińska-Wiertelak. In her opinion, in the suicidal props considered to be objects of blasphemy, one can see, paradoxically, instruments serving to realize the sacred mystery. In this way, *The Devils* becomes a great metaphor of the birth of the most important symbol of Christianity, the cross.⁴⁴

40 Maria JANION, Mówi Ryszard PRZYBYLSKI, *Sprawa Stawrogina*, afterword by T. Komedant (Warszawa: „Sic!” cop., 1996).

41 Mówi Ryszard PRZYBYLSKI, “Stawrogin”, *Teksty*, No. 4, 1972, s. 37.

42 Stefan CHWIN, “Dlaczego Kain nie chce ‘stać się dzieckiem’? Rozmowa o *Biesach* Dostojewskiego”, w: Maria JANION and Stefan CHWIN (pod red.), *Dzieci* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Morskie, 1988), s. 97. The same volume contains an essay by Stefan CHWIN, “Stawrogin i dziecko”, s. 40-71.

43 Maria JANION, “Czy Stawrogin jest postacią tragiczną?”, w: M. JANION and S. CHWIN (pod red.), *Dzieci...*, t. II, s. 78.

44 Halina CHAŁACIŃSKA-WIERTELAK, *Культурный код в литературном произведении*

Following the excellent book by Przybylski, another audacious monograph on Dostoevsky's work and life was published by the philosopher and poet Bohdan Urbankowski. It was entitled *Dostoevsky – The Tragedy of Humanisms*. The title of the book as a whole in fact echoes the title of one of its chapters devoted to the mutual relations between art and Dostoevsky's philosophy. Thus one could look for some original 'axiological' suggestions, emphasizing, and rightly so, the 'importance' of this chapter. In the first part of the book, the author analysed the relationship between life and creativity, focused his attention on the erotic aspects of life, expanding the group of *dramatis personae* shown by his predecessors. In the writer's personal life, in an undisclosed crime, while distancing himself from 'literary gossip', he nevertheless sees "artistic material".⁴⁵ But the value of the book is revealed in the subsequent parts, which prove Urbankowski's considerable mastery of structural analysis. The author shares his observations on the method of creating "supernarratives", or "works of higher order, containing several worlds simultaneously".⁴⁶ He calls Dostoevsky's writing "the technique of superimposed photographic films";⁴⁷ he also mentions polyphony, yet omits Bakhtin(!). The most valuable fragments of the book are devoted to Dostoevsky's worldview, an emphasis which clearly reveals the influence of Andrzej Walicki, Urbankowski's scientific mentor. He reconstructs the writer's thought on the basis of all his works – both artistic and journalistic. He also reaches for fragments that have not been translated into Polish. Urbankowski interprets Dostoevsky's outlook, his concept of human alienation (above all ontological) as a consequence of "the world falling away from God",⁴⁸ in the context of German philosophy (mainly Marx and Feuerbach). According to Urbankowski, the tragedy of human existence is determined by man's being torn between the world of God and the earthly world, and Dostoevsky looks for opportunities to overcome alienation and reintegrate into humanism. "Humanism" in the title of the book takes the plural form, because Urbankowski views the literary output of the author of *The Idiot* as a battlefield of three models of humanisms: utopian, Promethean (romantic) and Christian. But he will not find the expected solutions in any of them. Therefore, in the view of the researcher, Dostoevsky is a Christian humanist who suffers a philosophical defeat, but is victorious as an artist.

(Poznań: Wydaw. Naukowe UAM, 2003), c. 88.

45 Bohdan URBANKOWSKI, *Dostojewski – dramat humanizmów* (Warszawa: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1978), s. 99.

46 *Ibidem*, s. 100.

47 *Ibidem*, s. 117.

48 *Ibidem*, s. 171.

At the beginning of the 1970s, innovative methods of analysis appeared in full force in Polish Dostoevskology. These were represented by Halina Brzoza and Halina Chałacińska-Wiertelak. The former, using the instruments of the structural method,⁴⁹ tries to penetrate the principles of revealing the immanent worldview and inner aesthetics of Dostoevsky's novel. She tries to discover the "principle of principles", not only present in all of the writer's works, but actually consolidating their substance. She sees poetics as the carrier of the "worldview system of the work"⁵⁰ and undertakes a critical discussion with the concept of Mikhail Bakhtin's "polyphonic novel", with his thesis that the structural model of a work combines, on the basis of counterpoint, various ideas, "various aspects of the represented world". And she argues that in each of Dostoevsky's works, one can find a "static" system of certain values 'translatable' into various forms of literary concretization,⁵¹ such as characters, events and motives. Therefore, she sees in Dostoevsky the precursor of the 20th-century aesthetics of dissonance, not only in literature, but also in art, as evidenced by the dodecaphonic technique in music. The polemic with Bakhtin does not, however, question his concept, but only attempts to extend it. Brzoza treats the writer's philosophy as a project of "hermeneutical anthropology", although she emphasizes that the essence of this work cannot be encapsulated in even the most universal formula. The researcher continued her reflections on the worldview of the author of *The Devils* in a book devoted to the specificity of the relationship between Dostoevsky's "methodological rules" and existential thought and philosophical hermeneutics.⁵² However, Brzoza's inspiring research seems to be characterized by too frequent "escape" from "scientific and philosophical control" when she tries to combine the anthropological thought of the fathers of the Orthodox Church with the existentialism of Heidegger and Camus, with the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, and with the art of Tadeusz Kantor.

Halina Chałacińska-Wiertelak, probably most closely affiliated with the holistic concept of culture, tries to combine phenomenological and semiotic orientations.⁵³ She studies a literary work, situating it in a network of cultural

49 Halina BRZOZA, *Dostojewski – myśl a forma* (Łódź: Łódzkie, 1984); H. BRZOZA, *Достоевский. Просторы движущегося сознания* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DAM, 1992).

50 *Ibidem*, c. 208.

51 *Ibidem*, c. 211

52 Halina BRZOZA, *Dostojewski. Między mitem, tragedią i apokalipsą* (Toruń: Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1995), s. 15.

53 Halina CHAŁACIŃSKA-WIERTELAK, *Idea teatru w powieściach Dostojewskiego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Archiwum

contexts. This is also how she reads Dostoevsky's novels, in which she seeks (or listens to) the resonance of other artistic forms. She is especially sensitive to the 'theatricality' of the scenes in his novels. The author of *The Idiot* significantly helped the researcher to develop the scientific *modus operandi*, which in her work on "comparative orientations of an artistic text" she defined as: "a hermeneutic concept of universal semiosis within one cultural supercode of the Mediterranean culture circle".⁵⁴

An important trend in Polish Dostoevskology in the 1970s is research on the literary reception of the Russian writer. This could be considered as ideologically 'neutral' as the structuralist or phenomenological attempts to read Dostoevsky. Telesfor Poźniak analysed Dostoevsky's significance for the Russian symbolists who, after years of 'purgatory', reintroduced him to Russia's literary salons.⁵⁵ There were also books on Dostoevsky's place in the work of Polish writers. Ludmiła Jazukiewicz-Osełkowska⁵⁶ in a very competent publication revealed the importance of the Russian artist for the work of Stanisław Brzozowski, the greatest Young Poland advocate of Russian literature, and the much more complicated attitude of Stefan Żeromski towards the author of *The Idiot*. The conclusion of Polish Dostoevskology of the 1970s is a great "inventorying", in the positive sense of the word, a publication by Franciszek Sielicki, which presented the reception of the classics of Russian prose in the Interwar Period.⁵⁷ Sielicki published a sketch about the presence of Dostoevsky in prose, criticism and the theater of that period already in the early 1970s, but he had to wait several more years for a book, in which this article was contained (next to an analogous reflection on the place of Tolstoy, Turgenev, Gogol, Chekhov and Saltykov-Shchedrin). It was the culmination of a truly

Czesława Miłosza, 1988); H. CHAŁACIŃSKA-WIERTEŁAK, *Komparatystyczne orientacje tekstu artystycznego. Próby interpretacji dzieł kultury rosyjskiej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Archiwum Czesława Miłosza, 2007).

54 Галина ХАЛАЦИНСКА-ВЕРТЕЛЯК, *Культурный код в литературном произведении: Интерпретации художественных текстов русской литературы XIX и XX веков* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2002).

55 Telesfor POŻNIAK, *Dostojewski w kręgu symbolistów rosyjskich* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1969).

56 Ludwika JAZUKIEWICZ-OSEŁKOWSKA, *Fiodor Dostojewski w twórczości Stanisława Brzozowskiego i Stefana Żeromskiego: studium porównawcze* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Archiwum Czesława Miłosza, 1980).

57 Franciszek SIELICKI, *Klasyki dziewiętnastowiecznej prozy rosyjskiej w Polsce międzywojennej* (Warszawa: Państw. Wydaw. Naukowe, 1985).

Benedictine work, thanks to which the researcher of the Polish reception of Dostoevsky from its beginning until the end of the Interwar Period obtained invaluable capital. In Sielicki's book this researcher will find a reliable, almost 'complete' list of critical works, artistic texts by Polish artists tracing any echo of Dostoevsky, as well as details on the stagings of his works. However, this work has a classically 'influence-ological' character, lacking reflection on the purpose of this "influence".⁵⁸

The jubilee year of the centenary of Dostoevsky's death confirmed the writer's victorious presence in Polish culture. A special issue of *Znak* devoted to the writer was published, including a *Dostoevsky Today* questionnaire. It was answered by outstanding Polish writers (Miłosz, Andrzejewski, Różewicz, Terlecki, Hertz, Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz, Pasierb, Żakiewicz) and researchers of literature (Janion, Przybylski). The questions of the survey made it possible to reveal one's emotional attitude: from the declaration of essential alienation (Rymkiewicz), through indifference (Andrzejewski), to unquestionable admiration (Przybylski). But they also provided an opportunity to engage in discussions on anthropological and theological issues, and made it possible to reveal the topicality of the issues raised by Dostoevsky. Two years later, *Literatura na świecie* (1983) devoted a special issue to the writer. The University of Lodz organized a great jubilee conference *Fyodor Dostoevsky – Thought and Work*, at the same time publishing a book with a collection of conference sketches.⁵⁹ A similar conference, which also resulted in a publication, was organized by the Pedagogical University in Rzeszów.⁶⁰ The anniversary is also referred to in a book by Rudnicki, even in its very title: *One Hundred Years Ago, Dostoevsky Died* (published beyond the reach of censorship).⁶¹ It should be seen as the culmination of Dostoevsky's constant presence in Rudnicki's work. Reflections on Dostoevsky's work are accompanied by records of the hot days in Poland after the August breakthrough. The brilliant idea of combining both trends of reflection certainly stems from the belief in

58 Among the works published in the 1970s, one should also mention the popular science brochure by Józef SMAGA, *Fiodor Dostojewski* (Krakow: Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1974). Much more important were his introductions to the editions of the Russian author's novels in the National Library: *Crime and Punishment* (1987, 1992) and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1995).

59 Olga GŁÓWKO (pod red.), *Fiodor Dostojewski – myśl i dzieło. W setną rocznicę śmierci pisarza* (Łódź: Uniwersytet Łódzki, 1981).

60 Marian BOBRAN (pod red.), *Fiodor Dostojewski w setną rocznicę śmierci* (Rzeszów: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Rzeszowie, 1985).

61 Adolf RUDNICKI, *Sto lat temu umarł Dostojewski* (Warszawa: Przedświt, 1984).

the topicality of Dostoevsky's thought, which can help in understanding a complicated reality.

In 1981, Danuta Kułakowska published her first book, *Dostoevsky: Dialectics of Unbelief*, and six years later her second publication appeared.⁶² These are subsequent works devoted to the worldview of the Russian writer, primarily his Orthodox Christology and historiosophy. Kułakowska, relying on Marxist methodology (although she is also close to sociological geneticism), criticizes Bakhtin's thesis about the lack of causality in the writer's novels. Not concealing her religious indifferentism, she doubts the 'truthfulness' of Dostoevsky's faith, noting rather its dependence on the writer's historiosophical ideas. In him, Kułakowska sees an artist who "brilliantly anticipates the barely outlined antinomies of a rapidly secularizing consciousness";⁶³ that is afraid of the consequences of rejecting Christ's teachings and envisions human life at its own risk, which Herling called "liberation from superstition". The author notes that the writer's protagonists "talk about God' but do not 'talk to God";⁶⁴ and therefore she tries to point out the core of Dostoevsky's thoughts. She places in it the alternative of religion and atheism (not in the sense of opposition, but of a dialogue), of Christ and the Antichrist, or, better yet, the principle of "without Christ" and "with Christ". It is in this antinomy that the author sees the dialectical essence of the writer's Christology, which takes a 'negative' or 'positive' dimension, but the qualification is by no means evaluative. Kułakowska thus opposes the approaches that by definition depreciate the "positive content of atheism".⁶⁵ She analyzes the novel incarnations of "negative Christology" (Raskolnikov, Stavrogin, Ivan Karamazov), with a significant differentiation of atheistic attitudes, and less original personifications of "positive Christology" (Sonia, Myshkin, Alyosha, Zosima). She argues that Dostoevsky's atheism is not so much "a negation of God, but a questioning of the moral and [...] philosophical consequences of religious creationism".⁶⁶ Kułakowska returned to the issue of the dialectics of faith and unbelief (need and impossibility) in her book on Dostoevsky's "antinomies of humanism". She focused 'only' on *The Brothers Karamazov*, seeing in this work the writer's last attempt at achieving a synthesis of humanism, anthropocentric by nature, with a Christian, and therefore

62 Danuta KUŁAKOWSKA, *Dostojewski. Antynomie humanizmu według Braci Karamazowów* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1987), z. 1/4.

63 Danuta KUŁAKOWSKA, *Dostojewski: dialektyka niewiary* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1981), s. 27.

64 *Ibidem*, s. 89.

65 *Ibidem*.

66 *Ibidem*, s. 224.

theocentric, vision. The importance of Kułakowska's books was emphasized by Kapuściak, who pointed out that the author's religio-logical approach allows the reader to see both elements of the novelist's worldview: soteriological and heretical, or, to put it more subtly, non-canonical.⁶⁷

Dostoevsky's faith is unquestioned by Anna Rażny, who looks for its reflection in the writer's work. In the book *Fyodor Dostoevsky. The Philosophy of Man and the Problems of Poetics* she rejects the concepts which attribute an autonomous character to poetics (Bakhtin, Tynianov, Vinogradov) and declares that she perceives the universals of humanity as superior to the universals of form. Thus, she subjects the writer's work to an evaluative interpretation, using mainly Ricoeur's hermeneutics, phenomenology (Husserl, Scheler), existentialism (Kierkegaard) and its Christian variant (Marcel). For Rażny, there is no value outside of Christianity, and there is no truth outside of Christ. Therefore, she tries to convince the reader that the philosophy of man and the philosophy of values of the writer "have an eminently Christian character".⁶⁸ She identifies the one Christian 'truth' of Dostoevsky with the 'one' human truth expressed by the philosophers supporting her interpretations. Dostoevsky is a Christian writer for the researcher, so she does not notice any philosophical conflicts in his work, or inconsistencies in his worldview. The author also referred to the philosophical anthropology of Fr Józef Tischner, who in *Philosophy of Tragedy* (1990), showing man's attitude to the truth and crime, also referred to Raskolnikov's experience. But his attitude to the truth was fundamentally different from that of Anna Rażny.

A dozen or so years after her work, a publication by Halyna Kryshstal, a Ukrainian researcher, who also writes in Polish, appeared. The author reflects on evil, treated as "one of the fundamental themes of Dostoevsky's work",⁶⁹ from the perspective of moral theology. In this sense, she reflects on metaphysical, physical, and moral evil. She considers man's relationship to God, to himself, and to society. Kryshstal examines the sources, manifestations and consequences as well as the forms of overcoming evil. In the subtitle, she described her book as "a theological and moral study". And almost in the fashion of a preacher, she argues that evil can only be overcome by immersion in Christ. She recalls perhaps the most famous sentence by Dostoevsky that "if there is

67 Jerzy KAPUŚCIK, *Próba syntezy. Fiodor Dostojewski na warsztacie polskich badaczy ...*, s. 130.

68 Anna RAŻNY, *Fiodor Dostojewski. Filozofia człowieka a problemy poetyki* (Kraków: UJ, 1988), s. 135.

69 Halina KRYSHSTAL, *Problem zła w twórczości F. Dostojewskiego: studium teologiczno-moralne* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 2004), s. 15.

no God, everything is permitted”. According to the author, there is no morality without God, either.

Concurrently with Rażny’s work, in the same year 1988, Andrzej de Lazari’s book *Pochviennichestvo. On Research on the History of Ideas in Russia*⁷⁰ was published. The author proposes a radically different interpretation of the Russian writer’s legacy from that of Anna Rażny. For the author, the main category on which the views of the *pochvenniki*, including Dostoevsky, are based, is romantic ‘nationality’ (*народность*). In this category, de Lazari discerns the foundations of their historiosophy, aesthetics, and even religion. He claims that ‘nationality’ transformed Orthodoxy into a historiosophical category for Dostoevsky. De Lazari also published an article about the Russian genius in the 4th volume of the Russian-Polish-English lexicon *Ideas in Russia* (of which he was the initiator and editor). His article was supplemented in the same volume by sketches of the Polish Eastern Orthodox priest Henryk Paprocki and the Russian scholar Konstantin Isupov. The inclusion of three parallel texts results from the ‘postmodern’ formula of the lexicon, which presupposes several, even contradictory, interpretations of a specific ‘idea.’ The formula works perfectly, as evidenced by the sketches, in reflection on Dostoevsky’s thought.

Other books published in the 1980s. include a publication by Barbara Stempczyńska, a highly original one in Polish Dostoevskology, on Dostoevsky’s interests in painting. The author, inspired by a synthetic trend in Soviet literary studies postulating the study of typologically identical or similar ideological and aesthetic phenomena in the art of the word and visual arts of a given epoch, attempted to reconstruct the writer’s artistic sympathies, revealed in his journal and letters. From Stempczyńska’s book, the reader will learn that the

70 The book was published in Russian under the title *В кругу Федора Достоевского. Почвенничество* (Москва: Наука, 2004). In addition to this book, Andrzej DE LAZARI has published the following works on Dostoevsky in Russian: “Григорьевские мотивы в Речи о Пушкине Ф. Достоевского”, *Revue des Études Slaves*, vol. LIX, fascicule 4, 1988; “Категория народности у Достоевского и в эстетике соцреализма”, *Русская мысль*, № 3789, 1989; “Достоевский как идеологический авторитет в политической борьбе наших дней (о категории ‘всечеловечности’)”, *Dostoevsky Studies. New Series*, vol. 2, No 1, 1998; “Категории народа, народности и всечеловечности в мировоззрении Федора Достоевского и его духовных наследников”, в: *XXI век глазами Достоевского: перспективы человечества* (Москва: Грааль, 2002); “Тегельянство в почвенническом восприятии”, *Dostoevsky Studies*, vol. 8, 2004; “Достоевский как зеркало ‘консервативной революции’”, *НГ Религии*, 2004, No 18; “Культурная запрограммированность Достоевского, его героев и исследователей его творчества”, в: *Sub specie tolerantiae. Памяти В.А. Туниманова* (Санкт Петербург 2008).

writer not only valued supreme artistry, but he also favored paintings that expressed universal truths, with high moral ideals, free from socio-political bias.

The beginning of the 1990s marks an extraordinary development of Polish Dostoevskology as ideology ceased to restrict researchers and several works appeared with surprising new methodologies. The dominant hermeneutics is usually accompanied by a history of ideas, and the works are often interdisciplinary. In 1992, the book by Telesfor Poźniak *Dostoevsky and the East* was published. Even before this publication, the author was an unquestioned authority in Polish Russian studies and an expert on the works of the Russian writer. In his next book, the researcher dealt with the philosophical themes of Dostoevsky (accompanied by Nikolai Danilevski and Konstantin Leontiev) concerning the East. He analysed the place of the Asian-Koranic, Byzantine, and biblical myth, and finally the significance of Jewish problems in Dostoevsky's thought. He also paid attention to the cardinal importance of the political issues of that epoch in its evolution ("Constantinople must be ours!"). For the researcher, the Russian writer is undoubtedly a great one, a late romantic thinker, "a personality formed on the border of Slavic-Orthodox and Oriental cultures";⁷¹ but also "the spiritual father of Russian messianism, xenophobic nationalism, especially of anti-Semitism."⁷²

The issues of religious historiosophy and messianism of the author of *The Devils* were also researched by Michał Bohun, who convincingly showed how alien to Dostoevsky was the world of Western values (rationalism, Catholicism). He revealed the origin of the writer's hope for the redeeming character of Eastern Orthodoxy, traditional Russian culture with its "otherworldly ideal", which will open up "the path of humanity to the Kingdom of God".⁷³ The problem of evil, the *unde malum* question, and finally the "inversion of ethical concepts" are the key themes of the works of the outstanding philosopher and historian of philosophy, and at the same time the eminent essayist Cezary Wodziński. He first published the book *The Saint Idiot. A Project of Apophatic Anthropology* devoted to the phenomenon of *yurodstvo*, often referring to Dostoevsky, and concluding his reflection on the writer in the essay *Trance, Dostoevsky, Russia, or on Philosophizing with an Axe*. In brilliant form, the author asks bold questions that are not at all those of an 'ordinary' researcher.

71 Telesfor POŹNIAK, *Dostojewski i Wschód: szkic z pogranicza kultur* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1992), s. 140.

72 *Ibidem*, s. 100.

73 Michał BOHUN, *Fiodor Dostojewski i idea upadku cywilizacji europejskiej* (Katowice: Śląsk, 1996), s. 130.

He refers to Russian thought, in which he emphasizes a very serious attitude to metaphysics, already lost in the West. He does not conceal his dislike of Dostoevsky's "Slavic hysteria", but after all, perhaps a little helplessly, he concludes that without him "nothing is possible".⁷⁴ Unlike Miłosz, who read Dostoevsky in the context of Western thought taken too seriously by the Russians, Wodziński does not go beyond Russia. He sees the foundations of the writer's thought in the *Raskol*, which infected the Russian universe with chaos. From that moment on, Russian spirituality took on the character of a *kblyst* trance. The *Raskol*, as Wodziński proves, led to "a profound loss of the ability to discern that the axe is for chopping wood rather than for chopping old women".⁷⁵ That is why he proposes a sensational reading of the work of Fyodor Mikhailovich [...] Raskolnikov in the context of a world turned upside-down, which is a consequence of the *Raskol* as inherent in Russian spirituality, and which leads to the loss of any ability to discern good and evil. Wodziński believes that Dostoevsky tries to restore this forgotten skill; he looks for an "other world", for the world of the *Raskol*; he is a perfect exponent of spiritual chaos, but also of the desire to find a way out of the impasse. And he "strives after grace with an axe". "Who but Dostoevsky dared to attempt such a test?"⁷⁶ – asks Wodziński. Who but Wodziński would dare such an interpretation?

Bohun and Wodziński do not exhaust the list of Polish philosophers who undertake research on Dostoevsky. Jacek Uglik and Marian Broda have earned their prominent place on it. The former, in his reflection on the "tragedy of man",⁷⁷ concentrates on the writer's conviction about the dangers of the degeneration of the human personality, about the threat to the social order posed by Western philosophical ideas (rationalism, materialism, atheism). The author, however, adopts a current axiological perspective, which does not allow to equate atheism and evil. Thus, he does not perceive the writer as a dialogic thinker, and he overlooks polyphony in his works, because he is incapable of transcending the borders of Eastern Orthodoxy and meeting the Other. Therefore, he emphasizes in the title the tragedy of man being a result of the imposition of one-dimensionality by Dostoevsky, who wanted to ridicule 'fatal' ideas: for or against God, which for the author, who defends Western philosophy, means diminishing and humiliating the status of dramatic existence. Broda,

74 Cezary WODZIŃSKI, *Trans, Dostojewski, Rosja, czyli o filozofowaniu siekierą* (Gdańsk: Fundacja Terytoria Książki Wydawca, 2005), s. 5.

75 *Ibidem*, s. 6, 59.

76 *Ibidem*, s. 121.

77 Jacek UGLIK, *Dostojewski, czyli rzecz o dramacie człowieka* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2014).

in turn, sees the creator of *The Devils* (next to Soloviev and Leontiev) as one of the most important keys to understanding mystical Russia. In the dynamics of Dostoevsky's thought, in the three-phase concept of time running from primordial unity through a state of alienation to developed mature unity, the author tries to find one of the possible historiosophical responses to the 'destiny' of Russia, subjected to a similar rhythm of development. In the final stage, as the author of *The Diary of a Writer* believed, Russia will not only regain internal unity, but will lead to "a general unification of the world and universal love of people".⁷⁸

Anna Kościółek approached Dostoevsky's work in an ecumenical spirit. Her interests focus on *The Diary of a Writer*, but the researcher does not tackle historiosophical problems or controversial issues, which are not missing from the *Diary*, and concentrates primarily on the values of the Christian world of the author of *Crime and Punishment*.⁷⁹ In her next book, Kościółek, as if 'motivated' by Kułakowska's opinion about researchers' lack of interest in *The Diary of a Writer*,⁸⁰ attempted to present it in a monographic manner. It should be remembered here that earlier sketches on the *Diary* were published by R. Łużny,⁸¹ who also significantly contributed to the Polish edition of the work. In her monograph, Kościółek dealt with the genesis of the work and the goals that the writer set for the *Diary*. She systematized the problems raised by him (beauty as an aesthetic and ethical category, Russian everyday life, the Russian people and 'Holy Russia'), making a certain differentiation between the views of the writer-journalist and the writer-artist. An important chapter of the work is based on reading Dostoevsky's artistic texts published in *The Diary of a Writer* (*Bobok*, *The Meek One*, *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*).

Grzegorz Przebinda is also faithful to the spirit of ecumenism. He reads Dostoevsky in the context of the thoughts of Soloviev, but also of Karol Wojtyła, who is his ultimate authority. Przebinda has not published a book on Dostoevsky, but out of his numerous literary and religious sketches about the au-

78 Marian BRODA, *Zrozumieć Rosję? O rosyjskiej zagadce-tajemnicy* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Ibidem, 2011), s. 154.

79 Anna KOŚCIOŁEK, *Człowiek Ewangelii w Dzienniku pisarza Fiodora Dostojewskiego* (Toruń: UMK, 1994); A. KOŚCIOŁEK, *Dziennik pisarza Fiodora Dostojewskiego. Próba monografii* (Toruń: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2000).

80 Danuta KUŁAKOWSKA, *Dostojewski: dialektyka niewiary...*, s. 77.

81 Ryszard ŁUŻNY, "Między publicystyką a beletrystyką, czyli *Dziennik pisarza Fiodora Dostojewskiego*", w: Olga GŁÓWKO (pod red.), *Fiodor Dostojewski – myśl i dzieło...*, s. 3-14; R. ŁUŻNY, "Nad Fiodora Dostojewskiego *Dziennikiem pisarza*", w: *Sprawozdania z posiedzeń Komisji naukowych PAN w Krakowie*, t. XXIII/1 (Wrocław, 1981), s. 34-35.

thor of *The Idiot*,⁸² such a book can certainly be compiled. A manner, free from any confession-homily accents, of looking at Dostoevsky's work was assumed by Dorota Jewdokimow, who considers herself a student of Igor Yevlampijev, a supporter of the monistic model of interpreting Dostoevsky's work.⁸³ Jewdokimow also analyses the Russian genius from this perspective. In the first part of her monograph, the author reflects on the relationship between art and religion, finding in aesthetics an expression of metaphysical beliefs, while in the second part she reflects on the specificity of the relationship between God and man in the novels, journalism and letters of the author of *The Idiot*.⁸⁴

The aforementioned priest, philosopher and translator, Henryk Paprocki, writes about the religious "mystery of man" in his book *A Lion and a Mouse*, the title of which refers to the "favourite" hero of the Russian author. The researcher notices significant similarities in the structure of novel characters. They are based on the dialectic of power (the lion is the subconscious) and weakness (the mouse is the conscience). But in the author's understanding, strength is weakness, and weakness is strength. According to Paprocki, Dostoevsky – the artist builds a new anthropology, the basic element of which is a human being, defined by the author as "a man from the underground", and he fights for the human soul in the modern era which is "deprived of prejudices".⁸⁵ A few years after Paprocki's book, a publication by the Orthodox bishop Szymon Romańczuk *A Writer and God* appeared, containing articles written several dozen years earlier. The sketches, composed largely of quotations from the writings of Dostoevsky (and his researchers, linking the writer with Zosima), genealogically resemble a homily rather than a scientific text. Nevertheless, they

82 Grzegorz PRZEBINDA, "Sołowjow wobec Dostojewskiego", w: G. PRZEBINDA, *Sołowjow wobec historii* (Kraków: Arka, 1992); G. PRZEBINDA, "Historia a dzień współczesny w naszej Europie. Wojtyła czyta Dostojewskiego i Sołżenicyna", *Ethos*, No. 3-4, 2002; G. PRZEBINDA, "Dostojewski o nieśmiertelności duszy i raju pozaziemskim", w: G. PRZEBINDA, *Między Moskwą a Rzymem. Myśl religijna w Rosji XIX i XX wieku* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych "Universitas", 2003).

83 See: Teresa OBOLEVITCH, "Dostojewski jako metafizyk. Próba metarefleksji", w: T. OBOLEVITCH (pod red.), *Metafizyka a literatura w kulturze rosyjskiej. Метамфизика и литература в русской культуре* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II. Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2012), s. 174.

84 Dorota JEWDOKIMOW, *Człowiek przemieniony. Fiodor M. Dostojewski wobec tradycji Kościoła Wschodniego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2009).

85 Henryk PAPROCKI, *Lew i mysz, czyli Tajemnica człowieka: esej o bohaterach Dostojewskiego* (Białystok: Bractwo Młodzieży Prawosławnej w Polsce, 1997).

basically fit into the dichotomous understanding of the attitude towards God: either “the possessed”, i.e. rebels, or “the beautiful”, i.e. those “who followed Christ”.⁸⁶ A slightly different approach to Dostoevsky’s heritage is presented by the Catholic priest Dariusz Jastrząb. He views the spiritual world of the writer through the cultural and theological prism, but in Dostoevsky he sees “an artist first, and then a philosopher or a theologian”.⁸⁷ Therefore, he understands but also appreciates all the antitheses and inconsistencies in the writings of the Russian genius. Despite these ‘contradictions’, Dostoevsky assumes in the eyes of Jastrząb the proportions of a Christian guide. The author does not recognize him as an anti-Catholic thinker; he tries to prove that Christ, whom the writer defended against being reduced to the level of an abstract idea, was for him the real center of the Universe and offered hope for alleviating axiological chaos. A special role in this effort was ascribed by Jastrząb to *The Idiot*.

A few years earlier, an excellent monograph on this novel was published by Elżbieta Mikiciuk.⁸⁸ She analyzed it in the context of Eastern Orthodox spirituality and thought. Contrary to prevailing opinions, she made a courageous attempt to ‘rehabilitate’ the eponymous hero of the novel. The author rejects the dominant thesis about the powerlessness of the “beautiful man” in the world of evil and she brilliantly proves that the evangelical perspective, typical of “icon writing”, is already included in the composition of the novel. The experience of entering the dark side of human existence implies, above all, the desire to find pure beauty. Myshkin must go to the grave not only to be resurrected, but also – to save the world around him (Jastrząb will refer to this idea as well). In her work on the “paschal theater” of the writer,⁸⁹ Mikiciuk argues that Dostoevsky exemplifies evangelical truths in “dramatic action”. Reaching for the philosophy of dialogue, the researcher shows that the evangelical dimension is fully revealed during the meetings between man and man. The fundamental sense of the “paschal theater” is therefore the “passage” (passover) of Dostoevsky’s characters from death to life. Mikiciuk’s book closed the first decade of Polish ‘Dostoevskology’ of the 21st century.

86 Szymon ROMAŃCZUK, *Pisarz i Bóg: Dostojewski, Gogol, Tolstoj* (Białystok: Fundacja im. Księcia Konstantego Ostrogskiego, 2013), s. 37.

87 Dariusz JASTRZĄB, *Duchowy świat Dostojewskiego* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2009), s. 20.

88 Elżbieta MIKICIUK, „Chrystus w grobie” i rzeczywistość „Anastasis”. *Refleksje na temat Idioty Dostojewskiego* (Gdańsk: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2003).

89 Elżbieta MIKICIUK, *Teatr paschalny Fiodora Dostojewskiego. O wątkach misteryjnych Braci Karamazow i ich wizjach scenicznych* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2009).

She did not close the corpus, however. The past decade, which has proved the unflagging popularity of Dostoevsky's ever topical "accursed questions", has resulted in several major publications. It was opened up with an extraordinary book *The New Testament of Fyodor Dostoevsky*, edited by Adam Bezwiński. The author collected in it excerpts taken from the copy of the New Testament left by the writer, which he had marked in some way. In the introduction to this peculiar 'anthology', the editor provided a short review of Polish research, especially that devoted to the "writer's inner world", focused on the inspirational meaning of the Good News.⁹⁰ The group of distinguished researchers has been joined by the youngest generation, boldly declaring their willingness to read Dostoevsky "anew".⁹¹ This is what Marcin Borowski writes, as does Michał Kruszelnicki. This kind of 'revisionism' proves that Dostoevsky's work is still alive and that much can still be found in it. The young authors do not reject the results of the previous studies, but present their own thoughts in dialogue with them. The best evidence of a generational symbiosis seems to be the book edited by Anna Rażny *Fyodor Dostoyevski and the Problems of Culture*, which contains texts by both researchers with significant achievements and novices in the field of Dostoevskology. They share the recognition of the importance of the world of values in reflection on Dostoevsky. Analysing the writer's axiology in the context of contemporary "anti-metaphysical and anti-axiological"⁹² culture, they reach, nevertheless, various conclusions, some of them "situate religion above freedom"; to others freedom turns out to be more important than religion.⁹³

The sphere of the "attitude to values" also comprises a publication by Mirosława Michalska-Suchanek,⁹⁴ devoted to the problem of suicide, which in the writer's time almost achieved the status of an "epidemic". This phenomenon 'forced' the author to outline a broad historical and social background. Against this background, she analyses the characters of suicides created by the author

90 Adam BEZWIŃSKI, *Fiodor Dostojewski i jego Nowy Testament*, w: A. BEZWIŃSKI (prepared and introduced), *Nowy Testament Fiodora Dostojewskiego* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, 2011), s. 16.

91 Marcin M. BOROWSKI, *Obraz „ateisty” w twórczości Fiodora Dostojewskiego w świetle ateizmu współczesnego* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo LIBRON – Filip Lohner, 2015), s. 10.

92 Anna RAŻNY, *Słowo wstępne. Fiodor Dostojewski w kręgu problemów kultury*, w: A. RAŻNY (pod red.), *Fiodor Dostojewski i problemy kultury* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2011), s. 7.

93 *Ibidem*, s. 8.

94 Mirosława MICHALSKA-SUCHANEK, *Samobójcy Fiodora Dostojewskiego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2015).

of *The Meek One*. For the author, Dostoevsky is the first Russian thinker who treated suicide as an ethical problem, though he viewed it ambivalently. In his journalistic writing, he put the blame for the “epidemic” on the spread of ethical indifferentism in Russia, but in his novels he softened this categorical thesis by looking for the causes of suicides in metaphysical space. Recently, another publication by Michalska-Suchanek has appeared, *Fifteen Views of Dostoevsky*,⁹⁵ in which the author, convinced of the “inseparability” of creativity and biography, seems to resume the concept of “living people”. Maybe she even tries to ‘debunk’ the genius. And in each of Dostoevsky’s ‘roles’: that of a man, a writer, a journalist, she looks for the determinants of his work.

To conclude this review, a few remarks on the achievements of the youngest researchers are necessary. Borowski was intrigued by the problem of atheism in Dostoevsky’s work. The author analyses in his book both the way in which the writer created the figures of great “atheists” as well as the “faith” of their creator. He reflects on its specificity from the perspective of contemporary atheistic concepts, highlighting the fundamental differences between the “atheism” of the artist’s time and the atheism of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. He treats his considerations as a “form of a dialogue” between epochs that are very different in spirit. From this perspective, in Borowski’s view, Dostoevsky, who experienced the “hell of doubt”, believed in faith rather than in God and desired to be granted the grace of ‘true’ faith. The indispensability of faith was related to the belief in faith being the foundation of morality. Kruszelnicki, in turn, looked at Dostoevsky’s “accursed questions” from the perspective of the existential current of European thought. The author formulated the research topic in such a way that in the seemingly exhausted research space, he found a sphere that allowed for an innovative reflection on Dostoevsky’s work. In the title “conflict and non-fulfilment”⁹⁶ he found not only the fundamental principle of the writer’s work, but also the main imperative of the behavior of his characters, who seek real life at all costs. Therefore, for the author the image of the passion of Dostoevsky’s protagonists, functions as an externalization of the writer’s problems. An extremely important achievement of the author is absorption into Polish Dostoevskology of the achievements of its English language counterpart, as most of the works cited by Kruszelnicki have not been translated into Polish.

95 Mirosława MICHALSKA-SUCHANEK, *Piętnaście odston Dostojewskiego* (Katowice: “Śląsk” Wydawnictwo Naukowe - Stowarzyszenie Inicjatyw Wydawniczych, 2018).

96 Michał KRUSZELNICKI, *Dostojewski: konflikt i niespełnienie* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2017).

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Janina Kulczycka-Saloni, in conclusion of the above-mentioned essay, postulated the necessity to include Polish Dostoevskology in the worldwide knowledge of the writer,⁹⁷ probably not even supposing how it would develop in the next half-century. The bibliography of Polish works devoted to Dostoevsky,⁹⁸ prepared a few years ago, certainly far from complete, contains several dozen books and several hundred sketches and articles published in scientific journals and in collective works. Therefore, it would be difficult to detect areas resembling “unploughed fallow land”. One can find a very wide spectrum of the problems of poetics, anthropology, historiosophy, religious studies, ethics, as well as issues concerning Dostoevsky’s aesthetic and worldview influence on Polish and world literature. There are works which are more ‘popular’ among researchers, and there are others that attract Poles much less, which does not mean that we could speak of a Polish ‘canon’ of reading Dostoevsky. Maria Janion once declared *The Double* to be the writer’s most important work.

It is worth considering whether Polish Dostoevskology has contributed a ‘new word’ to world research. It is very difficult to provide an unequivocal answer, being aware even of the fundamentally different interpretations of *Crime and Punishment* presented by Gombrowicz and Grudziński, or the essentially different views on Stavrogin. Let us try, however, to outline the potential nature of the Polish contribution. There is certainly an echo of Polish understanding of Russia in Polish texts devoted to Dostoevsky. Miłosz in *Native Realm* argued that “Poles know about Russians what Russians know about themselves, not wanting to admit it, and vice versa”.⁹⁹ However, such ‘knowledge’ usually implies lack of emotional detachment. Our judgments are too often determined by resentments, complexes, and frustrations. It is possible, therefore, that these emotions, hidden in the subconscious, also emerge in the course of research on Dostoevsky. Nevertheless, Polish scholars usually treat this issue with understanding, magnanimously forgiving the writer his nationalistic inclinations in the name of artistic genius. They silence the disturbed patriotic feelings, in some way limiting the ability to

97 J. KULCZYCKA-SALONI, “Dostojewski w Polsce...”, s. 48.

98 Andrzej DE LAZARI, Tadeusz SUCHARSKI, “Bibliografia polskich prac o Dostojewskim po 1970 r.,” в: *Достоевский. Материалы и исследования*, № 20 (Санкт-Петербург: Нестор-История, 2013), с. 582-597.

99 Czesław MIŁOSZ, *Rodzinna Europa* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2001), s. 146.

reveal the 'Polish view'. Yet, one more obstacle or difficulty must be emphasized, namely because of the fact that the Polish thought is basically a-religious, it focuses more on history, and therefore researchers writing about Dostoevsky must perform a transgression *sui generis*.

Things are different with Miłosz, a professor of Slavic literatures at the University of California at Berkeley, Herling-Grudziński, a Polish writer, but living in Italy, and Walicki, a historian of ideas, who, for many years, taught at the University of Notre Dame in the United States. Their 'Polish voice' (although they would certainly not be satisfied with such a definition) undoubtedly influenced the Western perception of Dostoevsky's Russian thought and heritage. Miłosz, Herling and Walicki opposed the Western reading of Dostoevsky, which, on the one hand, under the strong influence of Bakhtin, was completely abstracted from history, from the political views of the Russian genius, and, on the other hand, was widely and thoroughly subjected to psychoanalysis. The historical experience of Polish researchers has enabled the West to see Dostoevsky the *pochvennik*, who created his works on Russian 'soil' (*pochva*). As a result, they offered their Western colleagues an opportunity to better understand Russian reality, processes taking place in it and living ideas. At the same time, they inscribed Russian thought in the evolution of Western thought, showed its 'universal humanity'. In their attitude towards Dostoevsky, two opposing forces coexist but also contend: mental alienation determined by history is accompanied by admiration for Russian philosophical and religious thought, lacking from Polish literature. And it is probably in this symbiotic combination of the universal perspective and the 'Polish view' that the essence and meaning of Polish Dostoevsky studies lie.

Several Polish researchers have followed this path and they continue the studies of their teachers in an open dialogue with them. This thesis is most fully confirmed by the book *Dostoevsky and Others: Literature, Ideas, Politics*. The publication was not only a Polish 'tribute' for the 150th anniversary of the writing of *Crime and Punishment*, but above all a homage and a gift to Professor Andrzej de Lazari (who introduced Polish Dostoevskology to world audiences) on his seventieth anniversary. Many of the authors cited in this sketch have included their essays in this book. By "making the effort to find their own answers to the Professor's¹⁰⁰ 'Russian ideas'", they also prove the continuing topicality and relevance of Dostoevsky's work.

100 Tadeusz SUCHARSKI, "Andrzej de Lazari i idee rosyjskie", w: M. MICHALSKA-SUCHANEK (pod red.), *Dostojevski i inni...*, s. 11.