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## Galician neomessianism

The article presents the idea of neomessianism, created in the circles of Polish intelligentsia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Galicia – a part of the Polish territory that was subsequently annexed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Galician neomessianism referred to the messianic philosophy of Polish Romantics: A. Mickiewicz, J. Słowacki, J.M. Hoene-Wroński and A. Cieszkowski, simultaneously transforming the themes of Romantic messianism, adapting them to the sociopolitical realities of Poland enslaved until 1918 and rebuilt in the interwar period. The article discusses the views of S. Buszczyński, S. Szczepanowski, W. Działowski, K. Odrzywolski, A. Boleski, A. Górski, A. Chołoniewski, W. Lutosławski and J. Braun. It also includes reflections on the specificity of Galician neomessianism and its difference in comparison with Romantic messianism.

**Key words:** messianism, Galician neomessianism, romanticism, modernism, Polish philosophy

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the positivist paradigm of the perception of the world collapsed, the consciousness of the Polish people of that time noticeably returned to the Romantic thought,<sup>1</sup> which lasted almost until Poland regained independence (for this reason this trend in the culture of that time was sometimes defined as neoromanticism)<sup>2</sup>. It was an immanent ingredient of a new ideo-cultural formation, dated for the years 1890-1918, called the Polish modernism or Young Poland (a term from 1898 coined by Artur Górski) by historians of the Polish culture. The return concerned mainly the conception of art (first of all literature but also the Romantic worldview, especially its individualistic tones and historiosophy).

A particularly interesting thread in the Polish modernism seems to be the idea of the rebirth of the Romantic philosophy of history. It was manifested

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<sup>1</sup> Por. T. Weiss, *Romantyczna genealogia polskiego modernizmu. Rekonesans*, Warszawa 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Por. M. Brahmer, *Edward Porębowicz (1862–1937)*, „Rocznik Towarzystwa Naukowego Warszawskiego” 1938, s. 238. Porębowicz is attributed with the introduction of the term „neomessianism”.

directly in the reference to the messianic thought. It is possible to indicate three reasons for this phenomenon. Firstly, the analyses of the Cracow historical school resounded in the Polish society (the so-called “Stańczycy” faction: Walery Kalinka, Józef Szujski, Michał Bobrzyński and Stanisław Smolka), depreciating the value of the Polish nation and attributing the loss of independence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to its vices. It was accompanied with the popularisation of loyalist attitudes towards the Austrian partitioner. To a large extent modernist messianists opposed this faction by apotheosising the history of Poland, indicating the contribution of the Polish nation to the general history, characterising it as the chosen people, summoned to play the leading role in the history of mankind. Secondly, not all Polish people at that time accepted the positivist criticism of the Romantic ideology, according to which the successive independence uprisings stemmed from political illusions and mythologized wishful thinking. Neoromantics showed the need for irrational myths and ideas to function in the social order, which was fully satisfied by the concept of messianism. Thirdly, the key categories for romanticism such as “nation”, “the soul of the nation”, “the mission of the nation”, “the historical mission” or “the national martyrdom”, during the positivist impact of the cult of fact did not become devalued at all. During the time of the crisis of positivist thought, during modernism and later in the independent Poland, they manifested themselves as tools which properly served the description of the future historical diagnoses and forecasts for the Polish society<sup>3</sup>. They defined their own specific interpretations of the sense of the social world, deprived of sacral themes characteristic of romantic messianism. All these elements led to the creation of a new historiosophic type of reflection, on the one hand, referring to the Polish romantic tradition and answering to the challenges of the age, on the other. In this post-romantic philosophy of history, the principal category was still the nation seen as a kind of spiritual being, located in the metaphysical order of history. The most important issue was the “soul of the Polish nation”, manifesting itself in the culture and performing the messianic calling mainly on the moral and political planes. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, this reflection became so visible and characteristic that the whole intellectual phenomenon already at that time was hailed to be neomesianism<sup>4</sup>. The

<sup>3</sup> Por. *Zarys dziejów filozofii polskiej 1815–1918*, red. A. Walicki, Warszawa 1983, s. 275 i dalej; J. Skoczyński, J. Woleński, *Historia filozofii polskiej*, Kraków 2010, s. 366 i dalej.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. W. Feldman writes about neomesianic groups in *Piśmiennictwie polskim ostatnich lat dwudziestych*, t. 1–2, Lwów 1902; L. Kulczycki mentions neomesianic currents in: *Współczesne prądy umysłowe i polityczne*, Kraków 1903, s. 34; S. Brzozowski mentions Polish neomesianism in: *Legenda Młodej Polski*, Lwów 1910, s. 232; A. Grzymała-Siedlecki entitled one of his articles about contemporary literature *Neomesjanizm*, „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1912, nr 38.

views of its representatives clearly influenced the consciousness of Young Poland. Admittedly, “they could have been included [...] neither in the history of literature, nor in the circle of clashing ideologies at that time, nor only in the scope of the Polish philosophical, religious or pedagogical thought. Their existence was not completely limited to any of these disciplines, as they simultaneously marked their presence in each of them”<sup>5</sup>. Moreover neomessianism was a multigenerational phenomenon, which even more influenced the historical awareness of Polish people at that time and their perception of the social world<sup>6</sup>. It has to be stated that this phenomenon was also present in the inter-war thought.

The rebirth of Polish neomessianic ideas in modernist garb, interestingly, occurred in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, first of all in Galicia. Numerous thinkers of the time inspired by the Romantic vision of history were connected with Cracow and Lviv – the two most relevant centres of the Polish culture in the Imperial and Royal Austrian partition, which is why the whole group came to be called “Galician neomessianists”<sup>7</sup>. The remaining Polish territories under the Prussian and Russian partition, the neomessianic thought did not manifest itself so distinctly. It is difficult to find the reasons for this status quo in an unambiguous way. However, it has to be underlined that at that time the Polish culture thrived in a spectacular way in the territory of the Austrian partition, which was supported in this respect by the favourable policy of the Austro-Hungarian authorities<sup>8</sup>.

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Galician neomessianism was not a uniform group in terms of ideology, nor was it a one-generational phenomenon. Assuming the criteria of temporal frames of the biographies of particular authors referring to the messianism of the romantic age, it is possible to extract its three-stage picture since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century till the end of the 30s in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The key authors in the first stage of neomessianism were: S. Buszczyński, S. Szczepanowski and W. Dzieduszycki.

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<sup>5</sup> K. Ratajska, *Neomesjanistyczni spadkobiercy Mickiewicza*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2010, s. 14.

<sup>6</sup> I allude to neomessianism related to Galicia in: L. Gawor, *Filozofia w Galicji. Wprowadzenie*, „Galicja. Studia i materiały” 2016, nr 2, red. S. Kozak, tom monograficzny „Filozofia w Galicji”, red. L. Gawor, s. 15–16.

<sup>7</sup> Tamże, s. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Tamże, s. 12 i dalej.

The earliest of the authors, writing already in the period of positivism was **Stefan Buszczyński** (1821–1892; *Znaczenie dziejów Polski i walk o niepodległość* [The importance of the history of Poland and fight for independence], 1882; *Słowiańska sprawa. Polska i prawa narodów* [The Slavic cause. Poland and the rights of nations], 1884; *Obrona spotwarzonego narodu* [The defence of a slandered nation], 1882–1890), a historian and a member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences PAU in Cracow, known domestically and in Europe mainly for his famous book published in 1867 in Paris *La Décadence de l'Europe*, not translated into Polish until 1895. His views included mainly the characteristic messianic thesis of the special historical calling of the Polish nation, which strongly opposed the vision of Poland created by the Cracow historical school (presented in the so-called “Teka Stańczyka” (“Stańczyk’s Portfolio”)). Buszczyński resolutely opposed the unfavourable and critical image of the Polish people shown in the Cracow publications of the Stańczycy faction. Particularly, he saw as “the defamation” of the Polish nation the fact that it was attributed with the main blame for the collapse of statehood and the Polish Republic becoming enslaved by partitioners. He thought that such an evaluation of the Polish nation is untrue and completely inadequate in relation to historical facts, which unequivocally indicate that, in his opinion, the Polish nation is endowed with qualities, predisposing it to play a leading role in the history of times. This historic vocation of almost supernatural nature is manifested in the preservation and rebirth of the highest ideals of mankind in the form of truth and the most noble political and moral rights, lost in the recent times by all the nations. Only the Polish people who went down in the previous history as those who in the name of love and freedom made biggest sacrifices, are the chosen people, who, through moral “revolution”, consisting in implementing in the social life of mankind the ideals of justice, peace, well-being, and, first of all freedom, can offer a fresh historic start. From Buszczyński’s perspective, the fact the Polish people are “chosen” has no religious undertones as he does not highlight its historic sufferings and experienced wrongs; it is only the expression of a specific universal sensitivity in terms of cultivating “the Gospel of nations”, promulgating “the freedom of law and human rights”,<sup>9</sup> which can be proved by its dramatic historic fate. The Polish sensitivity to maintaining law and order and following the innate human rights makes the Polish people the most predisposed to organise their governmental institutions according to the project created by Buszczyński, “The main laws of the basic Code, or the Constitution” (“Główniejszych praw zasadni-

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<sup>9</sup> Por. K. Daszyk, *Polski Tocqueville*, wstęp do: S. Buszczyński, *Ameryka i Europa. Wybór pism*, Biblioteka Klasyki Polskiej Myśli Politycznej, Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej, Kraków 2013, s. IX.

czego Kodeksu, czyli Konstytucji”),<sup>10</sup> which was intended to be the legal spine of state organisation of all nations in Europe, allowing the Polish nation to lead “the represented will of united nations” promulgated in the very project.

**Stanisław Szczepanowski**’s thought, in turn, resounded much louder in Galicia (1846–1900; *Nędza w Galicji* [Indigence in Galicia], 1888; *Idea polska wobec prądów kosmopolitycznych. Aforyzmy o wychowaniu* [The Polish idea in the face of cosmopolitan currents. Aphorisms about education], 1904). In his works, the distinguished economic and political activist in the province tried to reconcile the romantic ideas with the positivist call to organic work. In his opinion, the historic process perceived in romantic categories is fulfilled by great nations implementing their mission. Such a historic mission consists in leadership in the field of culture by creating the highest model of man, specific for a given culture. After the past eras of a knight, courtier, gentleman, now is the time to show the role of a citizen. According to Szczepanowski, it is the Polish people who are most gifted to achieve this task. However, such a talent is only of potential character, as he notes, since the Polish nation, admittedly is endowed with significant moral instinct and spiritual force (bravery, will to act, fervour, emotionality, egalitarianism, home rule, democratism),<sup>11</sup> but with little realism in the practical spheres of life, which was one of the reasons for the loss of independence by Poland. These premises led the economic activist to create a Galician pedagogical programme, aiming at the rebirth of the Polish national spirit by education, which instills practical virtues such as prudence, reasonability, hard work and knowledge. This attitude explains Szczepanowski’s approval of the positivist idea of organic work as a movement concurrent with his educational ideal, especially in propagating the idea of frugality as a necessary material basis and patriotic duty.

In Szczepanowski’s he above mentioned educational ideal should consists in the moral transformation of the Polish people first individually, and then nationally: “the basis of the whole activity is the transformation of an individual. A noble and brave individual transforms the society. A transformed society becomes a historic force and transforms national and international relations”<sup>12</sup>. The consequence of this individualism derived from moral romanticism should not be only regaining the independence of the country but, what is most im-

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<sup>10</sup> S. Buszczyński, *Upadek Europy* [w:] tegoż, *Ameryka i Europa. Wybór pism*, Biblioteka Kłasyki Polskiej Myśli Politycznej, Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej, Kraków 2013, cz. IV, s. 158–215.

<sup>11</sup> S. Szczepanowski, *Idea polska wobec prądów kosmopolitycznych* (pierwodruk Lwów 1901), wstęp i wybór tekstów S. Jedynek, Lublin 1988, passus pt. *Sila duchowa Polaków*, s. 33–50.

<sup>12</sup> Tamże, s. 103.

portant, playing the role of a great nation, the guide for the humankind to a just and perfect future.

Polish leadership in history stems mainly from the fact that during the dramatic vicissitudes of the Polish nation, it managed to retain such qualities of its nature as love for freedom, equality, brotherhood, justice and faith. Szczepanowski strongly underlines that such qualities simultaneously have a universal dimension but were to a large extent lost by other nations. In this sense, “our national Gospel” cultivated in the Polish tradition is the heritage of old general truths and “if we are the chosen people, it is only because we have this universal thought in a mature form in advance [nowadays – L.G.]”<sup>13</sup>. At this point the basic element of Szczepanowski’s neomessianism is manifested, namely, the belief that the Polish nation has a universal moral and political mission.

**Wojciech Dzeduszycki**, in turn, (1848–1909; *Mesjanizm polski a prawda dziejów* [Polish messianism and the truth of history], 1900–1902), a philosophy lecturer at the Lviv University, a man of letters and a politician, represents the neomessianic current with the focus on its strong Catholic roots. As a consequence, he criticised the Polish romantic messianism, which was, in his opinion, a current of intellectual lawlessness, located too remotely from the Christian faith. Such figures of messianism as “suffering and death, supposed to be the inevitable fate of the Polish nation”, “Poland as the Christ of nations”, “coming of the era of the Holy Ghost, playing a decisive role in the liberation of Poland from the yoke of the partitioners”, “the belief in the unique protection of the Polish nation by providence of the Holy Virgin” are unjustified blasphemy or heresy with regard to Catholicism. That is why he ignored those threads in Cieszkowski, Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Krasieński, which did not comply with the orthodox interpretation of Catholicism. His exceptionally sharp criticism was directed at Towiański, whom he attributed with the introduction into the history of Poland the heretically reinterpreted principles of the Christian faith, e.g. the perception of Poland as a collective messiah<sup>14</sup>.

On the other hand, he stressed the historically universal role of the idea of moral good (included in the nation and the fatherland). It is the Polish nation that is the depositary of this idea despite the defeats not spared by history; they still constitute the chosen people as they are driven by fervent devotion to the Catholic religion, singled out and called upon to cultivate it in Europe and in the world. This thought constitutes the essence of Dzeduszycki’s views: “it is not possible to compare Poland to Christ or to await miracle or the hope of

<sup>13</sup> Tamże, s. 100.

<sup>14</sup> W. Dzeduszycki, *Mesjanizm polski a prawda dziejów* [w:] tegoż, *Dokąd nam iść wypada? & Mesjanizm polski a prawda dziejów*, Biblioteka Klasyki Polskiej Myśli Politycznej, Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej, Kraków 2011, s. 528–541.

imminent resurrection of the fatherland, resulting from the sudden collapse of countries or the Napoleonic cult or heretic attempts and mysticism, confronting Catholicism with any new Polish revelation. But there is the conviction that Poland's task is to introduce into history political and social morality – that it is our nation's providential calling<sup>15</sup>. As a result, the primary historic mission of the Polish nation is solely practicing the evangelical principles, being faithful to them, often in defiance of what is preached or what is fashionable in other countries, through which it is possible to implement the morally pure messianism, full of Christian faith, deprived of apostatic illusions and hypocrisy. “Let Poland strengthen its spirit. Its task is a great endeavour, if it wants, it will be great for the mankind and in history great will be its merit and glory [...]. Polish people, beware of political lawlessness in order to ultimately win and you will become a great nation among other nations”<sup>16</sup>.

Dzieduszycki's reflections is, on the one hand, the criticism of millenaristic and “martyrdom” threads of messianic romanticism; on the other, it constitutes an exemplary exploitation of the theme of the historic mission of the Polish nation. Its calling consists in the cultivation of the true Catholic faith among nations of the world. This particular thought was referred to by other, later representatives of Galician neomessianism: Górski, Lutosławski, Koneczny, Zdziechowski and Braun.

A renowned activist of Galician neomessianism in this generation was also **Kazimierz Odrzywolski** (1860–1900), being under the strong influence of Szczepanowski. He neither wrote a lot, nor often spoke publically, but exerted a marked influence on many young people with his personality, and, first of all, the passion which allowed him to popularise the views of his mentor and a friend and to fervently defend Mickiewicz's messianism. In this field he won acclaim as the initiator of publishing Mickiewicz's lectures in the form of free supplement to “Słowo Polskie” [The Polish word] in Lviv (1898), being its co-founder. Before death, he prepared the conception of the creation of “Odrodzenie” [Rebirth], a journal propagating Towiański's messianism; he subsidised the publication of *Historia Polski* [History of Poland] by Waław Sobieski and Stanisław Zakrzewski – a work which showed the native history apologetically, contrary to the interpretation of the Cracow historical school (the Stańcycy faction). The subsequent authority of neomessianic thought – Wincenty Lutosławski stresses that he undertook studies on neomessianic thought under the direct influence of Szczepanowski and Odrzywolski<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Tamże, s. 638–639.

<sup>16</sup> Tamże, s. 541.

<sup>17</sup> Por. K. Ratajska, *Stanisław Szczepanowski i Kazimierz Odrzywolski – wyznawcy i spadkobiercy wieszczego testamentu* [w:] *Neomesjanistyczni spadkobiercy Mickiewicza*,

Another prominent author of neomessianic writings at that time, **Andrzej Boleski**, was an avid supporter of Towiański's philosophy, a Polish philologist, a publicist, and, after WWII, a professor of Polish Studies at the University of Łódź (Baumfeld, 1877–1965; *Andrzej Towiański. Dwa odczyty* [Andrzej Towiański, two lectures] 1904; *Towiański i towianizm. Zarys chwili i postaci* [Towiański and Towianism. An outline of the time and figure], 1908; *Polska myśl mesjanistyczna* [Polish neomessianic thought], 1910). He studied at the Jagiellonian University, after the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century he moved from Cracow to Warsaw.

Boleski was impressed by Towiański's powerful charm. The last of the above mentioned works focuses specifically on the propagation of the rebirth of Towiański's and Cieszkowski's thought as the most creative Polish messianists of the romantic period. In this spirit he attempted to interpret romanticism as a historiosophic turning point in history when the transformation starts to proceed from the era of Christ (an individual) to the Spirit (humankind). The Polish messianism, in his opinion, is the best expression of this point in history, while the Polish nation is the primary factor to introduce this change of historical course. Polish people are "the finest of all Christian nations, because they accepted the Word of God with feeling and heart and not with reason, as other nations more or less did"<sup>18</sup>. Polish people additionally possess an instinctive ability to differentiate between the external Church (institutionalised, official, sluggish to act) from the internal Church (a synonym to "pure faith"). Often in this context, referring to master Towiański, he wrote that only the latter Church is a guarantee of the unification of individual powers of spirits with the idea of free Poland<sup>19</sup>. In this way Boleski in his views was close to the ideas advocated by the revolutionised Catholic modernism.

The magazine from Lviv "Odrodzenie" (1903–1906) played an important role for the early messianistic current in Polish modernism. The magazine's programme policy, presented in the first issue as its credo, seems to be quite symptomatic: "we believe that the mission of the Polish nation is to embody Christ into the history of mankind by building a society based on freedom and the brotherhood of peoples [...]. We believe in the superiority of the spirit of the Polish Nation over other nations and the superiority of its idea, while for its servants a heavier burden of responsibility than for any other sons of this

s. 71–81; także *Zarys dziejów filozofii polskiej 1815–1918*, red. nauk. A. Walicki, Warszawa 1983, s. 281–282.

<sup>18</sup> A. Baumfeld, *Andrzej Towiański. Dwa odczyty*, za: *Spór o mesjanizm* [w:] *Spór o mesjanizm. Rozwój idei*, wybrał, oprac. i wstępem zaopatrzył A. Wawrzynowicz, Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, Warszawa 2015, s. 355.

<sup>19</sup> Tamże, s. 361.



earth”<sup>20</sup>. In this approach, there is a close connection of the idea of the Polish nation’s mission to cultivate the Christian faith, devotion and heroic deeds in the name of political and social order. This credo set the general tone of the texts published in the magazine, usually full of references to the thought of Mickiewicz and Szczepanowski<sup>21</sup>. The published authors included: K. Odrzywolski (texts and obituaries), A. Boleski (Baumfeld), T. Pannenko, J. Doliński, A. Górski and W. Sikorski (later the Commander in Chief of the Polish Armed Forces and the PM of the Polish government in exile).

The younger generation of neomessianists appeared in a very specific period for Poland, during WWI and just after the war, when Poland regained its independence and began to rebuilt its national identity. Under these circumstances many texts were written with the feeling of fulfilment of historic justice, the intervention of Divine Providence, the triumph of “the national soul”, but also concern for the near and remote future of the country. The messianic idea of national rebirth was fully manifested in A. Górski and A. Chołoniewski.

**Artur Górski** (1870–1959; *Monsalwat. Rzecz o Adamie Mickiewiczu* [Monsalvat. About Adam Mickiewicz], 1908; *Ku czemu Polska szła* [Whither Poland was headed], 1916), a leading Young Poland publicist and an acclaimed literary critic, an enthusiast of Polish national history, stressed that Poland succumbed in the past to the vector of force but was always faithful to the Christian ideals of morality, being directed by the vector of values. In this sense it was an 18<sup>th</sup>-century oddity in Europe and that is why it was touched by the historic tragedy. However, it kept in the living tradition of its nation the conviction that the most essential issue is the defence of “a certain type of life and man, based on individual responsibility towards God and native laws, adopted voluntarily”<sup>22</sup>. Individual freedom, the political independence of the state and the Catholic religion – the indicators of the Polish nation – are, according to Górski, the cardinal guidelines and conditions for the development of any true man, “a noble type, co-creator of his own duties and rights, a free citizen of the country and a free citizen of the world”<sup>23</sup>. It is also related to the universally significant features of the Polish nation, preserved throughout the ages, e.g. pride, dignity, attachment to republican principles, nobility and patriotism. Moreover, the Polish people are distinguished by the unique understanding of the fatherland not as a governmental institution or a transnational empire but as a spiritual and cultural community. This reflection over the

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<sup>20</sup> *Credo*, „Odrodzenie” [Lwów] 1903, z. 1, s. 2–3.

<sup>21</sup> Por. K. Ratajska, *Neomesjanizm w kręgu lwowskiego „Odrodzenia” i warszawskiego Legionu* [w:] *też*, *Neomesjanistyczni spadkobiercy Mickiewicza*, s. 89–101.

<sup>22</sup> A. Górski, *Ku czemu Polska szła*, Kraków 1918, s. 173.

<sup>23</sup> *Tamże*, s. 248.

Polish national character led Górski to the conviction about Poland's historic greatness, based on the implementation of evangelical values, which, contrary to other countries, especially the neighbouring ones, required mercy, peace, tolerance and prohibited taking advantage of military victories and political leverage. Admittedly, respecting the moral vector resulted in Poland's suffering, but also intensified the human aspect of the Polish nation. As a result, the Polish nation is the chosen people and a moral role model for the whole Europe. Their historic role consists in being a nation which is a paragon of virtue, devoted to the Christian faith, presenting how to shape the attitudes of "soldiers of freedom" and to build "a free race on a free soil"<sup>24</sup>.

On the one hand, Górski in his writings opposed positivist ideology, criticising its loyalist attitude towards the partitioners, ignoring romanticism, especially the romantic call for the struggle for national liberation. An example of this criticism was the poem *Monsalwat*, which described Mickiewicz's ideas to the Polish readers of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially his conception of metaphysical rooting of human beings and the heroic call directed at them, particularly concerning the duties regarding the fatherland. In this case Górski once again introduces the theme of the historic vocation of the Polish nation: "still for two thousand years there has not been a nation in Europe which had a bigger vocation than us to cast into life the flashes of lightning of just spirit since Poland has to live up to its calling, which had located it between the West and the East as a nation of spiritual freedom for the East and the evangelical breath of love for the Roman spirit of the Western culture"<sup>25</sup>. Within this framework it is possible to locate the radical disagreement of Górski with the Stańczycy faction and the Cracow historical school, the views of which he strongly opposed in the work entitled *Ku czemu Polska szła*, a glorification of the history of Poland with the focus on the role of the Polish nation throughout history.

On the other hand, Górski, despite being called a eulogist of modernism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, objected to the Young Poland, especially to its decadentism. He called it "a great bankruptcy of ideas", "twisting the wings and dragging them on the ground. Wings, sometimes incredibly beautiful, but unable to fly"<sup>26</sup>, stressing the modernists' unacceptable failure to think about Poland's liberation and being retired into the shell of their own art. He was an advocate of the struggle for national liberation, justified not by messianic and

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<sup>24</sup> Tamże, s. 299.

<sup>25</sup> A. Górski, *Ton mesjański w duszy...*, „Życie” 1899, nr 7, s. 131, za: K. Ratajska, *Monsalwat Artura Górskiego* [w:] tejże, *Neomesjanistyczni spadkobiercy Mickiewicza*, s. 136.

<sup>26</sup> Za: *Młoda Polska / Artur Górski – życie i twórczość*, <https://mloda-polska.klp.pl/a-8468-2.html> (dostęp 25.09.2018).

metaphysical premises but a reasonable voice calling for activism and a dynamic attitude to life, which was so socially important since Poland regained independence during the years of the Great War.

Górski's views were clearly influenced by romantic messianism but limited only to stressing heroic attitudes in regaining political independence by Poland and the historic mission of the Polish nation, revealing evangelical values and socio-political ideas of freedom for the peoples of Europe, necessary at the brink of a new, after-war era. An undertone of realism seems to be particularly striking in the neomessianism of the author from Cracow. Although he is an advocate of a wildly optimistic vision of the national history, he realises that the Polish nation has many defects, which is why, in circumstances allowing the dreams of independence to come true, he appeals to make utmost sacrifices but also to act prudently, with cold calculation and everyday toil.

One of the most famous and typical neomessianists from the beginning of the Second Polish Republic was **Antoni Chołoniewski** (1872–1924; *Duch dziejów Polski* [The spirit of the history of Poland], 1917; *Po odparciu najazdu bolszewickiego w r. 1920* [Upon repulsing the Bolshevik invasion in 1920], 1920; *Państwo polskie, jego wskrzeszenie i widoki rozwoju* [The Polish state, its resurrection and prospects of development] 1920), a recognised publicist and the author of numerous historical works dedicated to the history of Poland. His most important work, *Duch dziejów Polski*, was based to a large extent on a few central ideas referring to the messianic tradition, however, in a selective manner<sup>27</sup>. The work includes themes concerning the chosen people, the advantages of the Polish nation over other ones and the conception of the historic mission of the Polish people. The apologetic presentation of the history of Poland is structured around the above motifs, which also prove the necessity of the missionary activity of the Polish nation. Chołoniewski applies those messianic elements in a specific way by removing the religious context, since, in his opinion, the significance and role of the Polish people in history is not the fulfilment of God's plans. The fate of the Polish nation is the expression of the Spirit of the Times, a transcendent factor, which is deprived of sacral character. In his manner, Polish people's mission was devoid of the religious dimension and became the historically moral obligation of preserving universal values: tolerance, self-determination, renouncement of violence and, first of all, freedom. The Polish nation managed to cope with the task, despite defeats and numerous sacrifices, and to retain such a deposit, to hand it over to the post-war Europe, allowing it to rebuilt itself on a strong and new axiological

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<sup>27</sup> Por. L. Gawor, *Neomesjanizm A. Chołoniewskiego* [w:] *Romantyzmy polskie*, nr specjalny „Rocznika Historii Filozofii Polskiej”, red. A. Dziedzic, T. Herbich, S. Pieróg, i P. Ziemiński, Fundacja Historii Filozofii Polskiej, Warszawa 2016, s. 315–326.

foundation<sup>28</sup>. In this sense, the Polish nation, the chosen people, severely treated by the fate, fulfilled its historic mission.

The chialistic aspect of messianism was transformed by the author in a peculiar manner. Chołoniewski in his vision of history completely “fails to notice” – in the historiosophic prospection of the Heavenly Kingdom – the idea of moral, economic and social well-being implemented thanks to the religious spirit. This utopian messianic thread is transformed by him into a manifestly secular dimension and strongly rooted in the social and political reality of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The above thread takes the shape of independent Poland, liberated from the yoke of the partitioners in the short term; in the long term, he sees mankind organised according to moral and political principles, the revelator, depositary and advocate of which was, and still is, the Polish nation<sup>29</sup>.

Chołoniewski’s views do not include the crucial messianic motif of the martyrdom of the Polish nation and the expected miraculous gratification. The works by the Polish publicist are completely deprived of the aura of elevated passionism; they are rather soaked in a commonsensical approach to facts and realism in the evaluation of the social and political situation of that time, but also the assessment of tasks the Polish nation was supposed to achieve<sup>30</sup>. In this respect, it is characteristic of Chołoniewski’s thought to show some residue of positivist reflection over society, especially in the form of national pedagogy.

Following in the footsteps of the positivists, Chołoniewski considered national pedagogy to be an avenue of transforming the national consciousness in order to intensify social bonds, the feeling of tradition and the belief in the nation’s own strength. Indeed, such was the educational message of *Duch dziejów Polski*. Simultaneously, he gave pedagogy more specific tasks of political and economic character, related to issues of the organisation of Polish statehood. It can be seen especially when he writes about Piast and Casimir the Great whom he considers to be the patrons of Poland, the constructors of the economic foundations of the state. “These two symbols have permeated the content of Polish history”<sup>31</sup>. They are the medium of social virtues: governance of the common good, forethought, ingenuity, multiplication of all types of goods. These utilitarian advantages laid the foundation for the Polish state and

<sup>28</sup> A. Chołoniewski, *Duch dziejów Polski*, wyd. II rozsz., Tow. im. S. Buszczyńskiego, Kraków 1918, rozdz. *Duch dziejów Polski na tle chwili dzisiejszej*, s. 144–152.

<sup>29</sup> Tamże, rozdz. *Wyprowadzenie Europy*, s. 123–138.

<sup>30</sup> This thesis can be defended by political journalism texts by the Polish author, particularly historical brochures commissioned by the Polish government in the first years after the war: A. Chołoniewski, *Państwo polskie, jego wskrzeszenie i widoki rozwoju*, Biuro Propagandy Wewnętrznej, Warszawa 1920; *Obrachunek stuletni*, Biuro Propagandy Wewnętrznej, Warszawa 1921.

<sup>31</sup> A. Chołoniewski, *Duch dziejów Polski*, s. 98.

they should still mark the “guidelines” for Polish social and economic life<sup>32</sup>. His words comply with the positivist ideology: “Poland abounds in land, resources and the driving force [labour force – L.G.]. It only needs as much as possible work and education, on which the future of our nation depends”<sup>33</sup>.

Moreover, a characteristic programme of moral and civil education of the Polish nation emerges from Chołoniewski’s remarks. The programme consists in propagating the spirit of “the cardinal principle that there is no existence full of dignity for humankind without the possibility of self-determination”<sup>34</sup>; the acts passed by the Commission of National Education provide that “a history teacher will call neither politics [...] nor heroism this which is low cunning, meanness, treason, violence, invasion or appropriation of property belonging to others”<sup>35</sup>; the teacher should be instilled with ideas of social egalitarianism and patriotism common for the whole Polish society,<sup>36</sup> and is also aware of the necessity of improving the mental culture of the Polish people. This programme, explicitly referring to the concept of “organic work or grassroots work” should be implemented by means of many tools of social policy, a necessary agricultural reform, striving for a high level of primary education and higher education and rebuilding multifarious, autonomous cultural and social institutions of non-governmental character<sup>37</sup>. Its aim is to intensify the intellectual and also economic activity of the Polish people, on the whole to contribute to the conscious creation of the Polish nation’s present and future.

From the above description it is possible to outline the profile of Chołoniewski as a historiographer – an apologist of Poland, attributing the rank of the chosen people to the Polish nation, which plays an incredibly important role in history; at the same time a level-headed observer of the time in which his fatherland regained independence, aware of the challenges brought by the historic moment. As a result, his views are a peculiar blend of messianic missionarism and positivist work in order to restore a simple “down-to-earthness” for the Polish people.

The most prominent representative of Galician neomessianic thought in the already rebuilt Polish Republic was **Wincenty Lutosławski** (1863–1954; *Nieśmiertelność duszy. Zarys metafizyki polskiej* [Immortality of soul. An outline of Polish metaphysics], 1925; *Posłannictwo polskiego narodu* [The mis-

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<sup>32</sup> Tenże, *Początki dziejów naszych. Ich linia przewodnia*, „Biblioteka Pogadankowa”, Warszawa 1923.

<sup>33</sup> Tenże, *Państwo polskie, jego wskrzeszenie i widoki rozwoju*, s. 42.

<sup>34</sup> Tenże, *Duch dziejów Polski*, s. 115.

<sup>35</sup> Tamże, s. 102.

<sup>36</sup> Por. tamże, s. 75–81.

<sup>37</sup> Zob. tenże, *Państwo polskie, jego wskrzeszenie i widoki rozwoju*, rozdz. *Odbudowa życia*, s. 43–55.

sion of the Polish nation], Warsaw 1939; *Metafizyka* [Mataphysics], 2004<sup>38</sup>). He was a lecturer of philosophy at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow and, in the inter-war period, a professor at the Stephen Batory University in Vilnius. His views evolved from research on Plato (he was recognised all over the world as the author of the so-called stylometry – a method of determining the chronology of works by the Greek philosopher), through metaphysical reflection, to neomesianism.

Metaphysics in Lutosławski's understanding was the result of human mind, striving to shape the whole knowledge into one unity, thus attempting to reach the essence of existence. Building a uniform edifice of knowledge is possible, in his opinion, only rationally and intuitively; sensory cognition refers only to the phenomenal sphere. Obtaining this unity of knowledge, organised in a deductive set of concepts, proceeds twofold. The first one is the exploitation of a reservoir of knowledge created by traditional science and the previous accomplishments of philosophy, the other one is cognition occurring by way of individual intuition. As a consequence, the subject of metaphysics should be constituted by various elements, from strictly scientific knowledge, through philosophical theses obtained through subjective intuition and bold hypotheses eliminating blank spots of science, to religious truth of revelation.

According to Lutosławski, in the development of metaphysics, two alternative systems were elaborated to integrate human knowledge: idealism and materialism. Also it is possible to indicate their two respective characteristics: monism and pluralism. Lutosławski interpreted the previous accomplishments of metaphysical knowledge in terms of idealism-pluralism (spiritualism). In this approach, the cognitive subject (exclusively a member of an intellectual elite – a creator, a philosopher at best) constructs a metaphysical axiomatics consisting of four axioms. First, existence is of spiritual nature; the world of sensory perception, in turn, i.e. the material reality, concerns only the phenomenal sphere. Second, there are many types of spiritual beings (pluralism). An individual being is a monad, which (contrary to Leibniz's theory) possesses the possibility of mutual communication, giving the illusion of the existence of the external world. The third axiom refers to the description of man as a being consisting of body and soul, where the soul is a primary monad creating self and the body is an inferior monad, identical with the phenomenal (material) form of man. The fourth axiom consists in the intrinsicity, freedom and immortality of the spiritual monad (the human soul).

Such a world of materialness constitutes an ordered hierarchy of beings. The top is the Supreme Monad identified with God, while the lowest position

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<sup>38</sup> The unpublished text was prepared for publication and provided with footnotes and an index by Tomasz Mróz, Drozdowo 2004.

is taken by the monad-atom, the smallest particle of the phenomenal world. These beings are eternal and subjected to constant evolution (through reincarnation – contrary to Darwinian evolution which proceeds from “bodies”) as a result of the possession of free will by human souls.

After experiencing a mystical contact with God (in 1903), Lutosławski significantly strengthened the role of faith in his metaphysical deliberations. He endowed the Supreme Monad with qualities possessed by the Christian God. It is God who takes the responsibility for the hierarchy of pluralistic beings and for the evolution from “spirit”: God is the almighty and all-powerful Providence.

According to Lutosławski, metaphysics understood in this way, expressed in pluralistic materialism, a hierarchy of particular beings and evolution from “spirit”, found its fullest expression in Polish messianism. Combining his metaphysical views with messianism, especially in Słowacki’s and Mickiewicz’s version, he started to promulgate “the national philosophy”, especially during his stay at the Vilnius University<sup>39</sup>. According to this philosophy, Poland is a separate and a highest category of being in the hierarchy of nations – the highest form out of any and all social associations. Among other nations, the Polish people have, the most advanced feeling of metaphysical national spirit, not without the help of Providence. “National awareness as introduced into the life of humanity by the unique experience of the Polish nation has not been awoken yet in many countries”<sup>40</sup>. It manifests itself in the awareness of the importance of the development of human spiritual values, especially brotherhood and freedom, which refer both to individual existence and the national collective life. For this reason, the Polish nation, most highly ranked in the development of mankind, has to fulfil a special historic mission regarding humanity. Its task is to transfer the revelation given by God in the writings of seers and the heroic deeds of its sons dying in the defence of the highest values. The Polish nation through its historic fate has to show other nations what the national bond is, what moral perfection consists in, what ideals should be followed by humanity, what the aim of its development is and what it was called for. The rebirth of humankind should be based on those premises. “If Polish messianism was commonly recognised, it would create a political union of peoples, an social union and cooperation of classes, a religious union of all Christian denominations in a truly Catholic Church, with a hierarchical form of government, ultimately

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<sup>39</sup> Its full programme was presented by Lutosławski in the article *Filozofia narodowa*, „Przegląd Filozoficzny” 1934, z. 4, *Odczyty polskie na zjeździe filozoficznym w Pradze 1934 roku*, s. 362–269.

<sup>40</sup> Tamże, s. 364.

resolving the conflict between faith and knowledge, between religion and science<sup>41</sup>. The deepest sense of history, the significance and the mission of the Polish nation lies in the implementation of this task.

Lutosławski's neomessianism, was not too popular a conception among his contemporaries. His views, combining original themes of the people chosen by Providence, its moral and political restitution, historic mission for the sake of humanity with metaphysical foundation, can be seen as the last great system of messianic philosophy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>42</sup>.

Also other authors could be included into the group of Galician neomessianists. Such authors, writing at the turn of the centuries, in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and later, in the twenty-year inter-war period, were connected with Cracow through studies, temporary residence or work. The most famous ones are: the leading representative of Catholic modernism, Marian Zdziechowski (1861–1938; *U opoki mesjanizmu. Nowe szkice z psychologii narodów słowiańskich* [At the foundation of messianism. New sketches about the psychology of Slavic nations], 1912); a strong critic of the findings of the Cracow school and an apologist of Polish history, Jan Karol Korwina-Kochanowski (1869–1949; *Trzy odczyty o Polsce* [Three lectures about Poland], 1917; *Polska w świetle psychiki własnej i obcej* [Poland in light of its own psychology and the foreign one], 1920) and the author of the historical synthesis, *O wielości cywilizacji* [About the multiplicity of civilisation], Feliks Koneczny (1863–1949; *Polskie Logos a Ethos. Roztrząsanie o znaczeniu i celu Polski* [Polish logos and ethos. Deliberations over the significance and purpose of Poland], 1921). Their writings messianic themes were not put in the foreground; however, it can be easily noticed that their texts include passages characteristic of thinking along the lines of messianic models<sup>43</sup>. The figure of

<sup>41</sup> W. Lutosławski, *Mesjanizm jako polski światopogląd narodowy* [w:] *Spór o charakter narodowy filozofii polskiej. Antologia tekstów 1810–1946*, red. S. Piróg, Warszawa 1999, s. 412.

<sup>42</sup> For more about Lutosławski's messianism see: M.N. Jakubowski, *Wincenty Lutosławski – mesjanizm* [w:] tegoż, *Ciągłość historii i historia ciągłości. Polska filozofia dziejów*, Wyd. UMK, Toruń 204, s. 323–330; T. Mróz, *Poglądy filozoficzne Wincentego Lutosławskiego jako synteza polskiego mesjanizmu* [w:] *Wincenty Lutosławski – oblicza różnorodności. Materiały z III konferencji poświęconej W. Lutosławskiemu*, Drozdowo 2006; P. Kusiak, *Mesjanizm Wincentego Lutosławskiego i jego społeczno-polityczne implikacje*, „Przegląd Religioznawczy” 2014, nr 3, s. 64–75.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. in this respect for example: J. Krasicki, *Eschatologia i mesjanizm. Studium światopoglądu Mariana Zdziechowskiego*, Wyd. Wiedza o Kulturze, Wrocław 1994; S. Konstańczak, *Nurt neomesjanistyczny w filozofii polskiej końca XIX wieku*, „Słupskie Studia Filozoficzne” 2008, nr 7, s. 36–38; K. Wołodźko, *Nędza, wielkość i wyobcowanie mesjanizmu*, „Pressje” 2012, teka 29, s. 256–258; J. Bartyzel, *Jan Karol Kochanowski*, Organizacja Monarchistów Polskich, oficjalny serwis internetowy (dostęp 22.09.2018); L. Gawor, *Psychodzieje Jana Karola Kochanowskiego-Korwina* [w:] tegoż, *Polska myśl historyzoficzna I połowy XX wieku*, Wyd. Uniwer-



Wacław Mutermilch is also worth mentioning (he published under the pseudonyms Mileski or Bojomir; 1872–1940; *Mesjanizm polski a kościół katolicki* [Polish messianism and the Catholic church], 1916; *Na przelomie dwóch epok* [At the turn of two eras], 1916; *Polska filozofia narodowa* [Polish national philosophy], 1927) – a propagator of Hoene-Wroński's and Cieszkowski's philosophy, the founder and publisher of the Cracow journal "Logos. Wydawnictwa Poświęconego Idei Mesjanistycznej Polskiej" (1916–1917), and after moving to Warsaw after the Great War – the co-founder of the Messianic Institute<sup>44</sup>.

Incidentally, it can be added that an essential element of Polish inter-war neomessianism, originated beyond Galicia, was the activity of a group promulgating romantic messianic thought in the Messianic Institute named after Hoene-Wroński operating in Warsaw in the years 1919–1933: the mathematician Paulin Chomicz (1873–1949), the translator and poet Czesław Jastrzębiec-Kozłowski (1949–1956), the writer and translator of Wronski's works into Polish, Józef Jankowski (1865–1835; *Klucz odrodzenia narodo-wego albo o uprawie sumienia* [The key to the national rebirth or about the cultivation of conscience], 1918) and Jerzy Braun (1901–1975; *Hoene-Wroński a Polska współczesna. O nowy ład w świecie cywilizowanym* [Hoene-Wroński and the contemporary Poland. For a new order in the civilised world], 1932; *Kultura polska na bezdrożach. O nowy kształt polskiej kultury narodowej* [Polish culture going astray. For the new shape of the Polish national culture], 1936; *Zagadka dziejowa Polski. Próba historiozofii* [The historic riddle of Poland. An attempt at historiosophy], 1938), the most interesting figure from this circle.

Braun in his early years was related with the Galician Cracow, where his interest in messianic thought was born. In 1929 he moved to Warsaw and continued his work there on neomessianic issues. Hoene-Wroński heavily influenced his intellectual formation. Braun became not only an avid supporter and promulgator of his views but also on the basis of the reinterpreted "philosophy of absolute", he offered his own historiosophic conception, which is popularised in the Warsaw journal "Zet" (1932–1939), which he himself established, and in the Hoene-Wroński Association (1933), publishing, among others, the philosophical journal "Wronskiana" (1939).

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sytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2005, szczególnie s. 61–63; L. Gawor, *Neomesjanizm Feliksa Konecznego*, „Lumen Poloniae” 2012, nr 2, s. 97–114.

<sup>44</sup> Por. *Spór o mesjanizm. Rozwój idei*, wybrał, oprac. i wstępem zaopatrzył A. Wawrzynowicz, Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, Warszawa 2015, s. 391. He presented the Project of the Mutermilch Messianic Institute in the Warsaw magazine that he himself was the editor of: „Pochodnia” 1919, nr 2, s. 127–128.

Braun's messianism has the character of a rationalistic conception assuming the oneness of being and knowledge. An essential element was the assumption of God's existence – the absolute being and the creator of knowledge. After Wroński, Braun claimed that "philosophy of absolute" discovers laws of being simultaneously valid in the chromatic (earthly) and achromatic (transcendent) reality. The most important law is the principle of creativity, applicable for the Absolute and the other dimensions of being. With reference to humanity, this principle becomes history- and culture-shaping activity independent of Providence. Moreover, this activity is of eschatological nature since it set the purpose of human existence: spiritual-moral transformation into practicing Christian values and the requirement of intellectual cognition of the world, which in practice entails shifting from "faith" to religious "certainty". As a result, man will be able to return to God, to his immortality and finally to divinisation.

From this perspective, Braun stresses the unique role of nations, each of which is called to fragmentary historic mission. The Polish people, in his opinion, have a special place among other nations as they are a nation which by means of its history and political solutions shows the developmental direction not only to Europe, suffering from the crisis, but also for the whole humanity. Such ideas, born in Poland, as federation of countries, union of churches, the unity of national culture (a synthesis of "high" culture with the folk one) and faithfulness to Christianity can directly lead to the rescue of Western civilisation which faces the threats of fascism and communism. On the other hand, the synthesis of power (state) and freedom, implemented in pre-partition Poland, is a role model for overcoming this 20<sup>th</sup>-century European antinomy into the direction of "an ideocratic culture", in which spirit prevails over matter. In this context, Braun creates a prospective vision that Poland will lead Europe, by building a powerful "Catholic apostolic empire" based on the above principles.

This picture of history is supplemented by Braun with a certain metaphysical resonance, formulated in the years of occupation, i.e. the concept of unionism, which is a call to implement a general moral reform of politics and socio-economic systems with the effort being undertaken by all nations of the world. "Native to Poland, unionism is both universal and international". It is a programme of radical transformation of man and entails "a union of a man with a man, a union of work and culture, a union of a man with the nation, a union of nations in humanity, a union of everybody with Christ, a union of man and humanity with God" (*Unionizm*, Warszawa 1999). The idea of unionism complements Braun's messianic thought<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> Por. B. Truchlińska, *Jerzy Braun, czyli dzielność rozumu twórczego* [w:] *Filozofia polska. Twórcy, idee, wartości*, Ston 2, Kielce 2001, s.177–186.

Other neomessianists of that time from beyond Galicia include Ludwik Posadzy, operating in the Great Poland (1878–1939; *O posłannictwie narodów europejskich. Pomysły do filozofii dziejów Francji, Niemiec i Polski* [About the mission of European nations. Ideas for the philosophy of history of France, Germany and Poland], 1909; *Odrodzić Polskę w Chrystusie* [To revive Poland in Christ], 1928) or the Mazovian, Mieczysław Geniusz (1853–1920; *O polską myśl narodową i państwową* [For the Polish national and state thought], 1920), who prove that neomessianic thought in the inter-war period spread over the whole Second Polish Republic.

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The opinions of contemporary researchers concerning the modernist Galician neomessianism vary considerably. They oscillate from the focus on the distinction and significance of this phenomenon in the culture of Polish modernism to the negation of its occurrence in Young Poland<sup>46</sup>. Taking a stand in this discussion, it may be only concluded that there were numerous texts written and published since mid-80s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which explicitly, casually though, referred to many ideas of Polish romantic messianism; a fact that cannot be easily ignored. The existing literature of this type constitutes a sufficient premise to put forward a strong thesis that a separate current of neomessianism, apart from others, was present in the Polish culture of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>47</sup>. This conviction does not exclude the significant question, leading to the conclusion of the present text: is neomessianism a simple continuation of messianism or rather a separate ideological formation? To put it differently: how much of the classic messianism is included in neomessianism?

The answer to this question should begin with defining the notion of “messianism”. Referring to Józef Ujejski, the first historian of Polish messianism (*Dzieje polskiego mesjanizmu do powstania listopadowego włącznie* [The history of Polish messianism including the November Uprising], Lviv 1931), Andrzej Walicki suggests that messianism should be understood as a 19<sup>th</sup> century current of thought on the borderline of religion and secular socio-political and philosophical thought related to the religious, not always orthodox, idea of

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<sup>46</sup> A diversity of opinions in this regard is observed by K. Ratajska in the introduction to: *Neomesjanistyczni spadkobiercy Mickiewicza*, s. 11–13.

<sup>47</sup> A totally different issue is the creation of a synthetic image of neomessianism, at least by determining the common ideas and themes for all the pertinent statements. In this respect the original concepts by neomessianists were inspired mainly by the thought of Mickiewicz and Cieszkowski; admittedly, they are of extremely diverse nature.

millenarism (chiliasm), bringing the utopian prospective vision of the God's Kingdom on earth (i.e. leading humanity to social and moral perfection). The concept of the mission of the chosen people was often combined with making sacrifices and martyrdom and the requirement to undertake active missionary and practical activity in order to implement the prophesised (revealed) future<sup>48</sup>. In a similar vein, messianism is characterised by Paweł Rojek, from a younger generation: "firstly, messianism propagates the necessity of radical transformation of the world in the spirit of Christianity, secondly – it accepts the existence of historic mission of nations and, thirdly – it recognizes the values of collective suffering"<sup>49</sup>. These three ideas, in his opinion fundamental ingredients of messianic thought he calls millenarism, missionarism and passionism.

The above two definitions of messianism concern its canonical, so to say, formula, regarding the aspect of religiousness as a constitutive quality of thought. At the same time the authors of these terms clearly notice that the very structure of messianic thinking is much richer and often takes different forms from its departure point, which is especially seen in the idea of millenarism.

Walicki writes then that messianism "is not [...] only or, first of all, a form of religious awareness [...]; we can apply the term 'messianism' also to philosophical and political doctrines which are not motivated by religion and which are related to the religious messianic prototype only in a purely external way, and which see history only as secular, while the tasks which they set for their advocates, are justified by them by referring to human nature, immanent historic laws or the autonomous choices of these or those values"<sup>50</sup>. Rojek deplores the fact that although the millenaristic thread in messianism is of key importance, "unfortunately, with time, messianism came to be identified mainly with [its] two last ideas",<sup>51</sup> i.e. missionarism and passionism.

The above conclusions may lead to distinguishing, as Walicki suggests, "strict messianism" including, apart from all the above mentioned elements, explicit religious references and "metaphorical messianism",<sup>52</sup> i.e. such constructs which do not include millenarism in its pure religious form (although it can take even a secular form), while the other elements of messianic thought take only forms of "messianic aspects" or "messianic tendencies" of particular ideologies<sup>53</sup>. Applying these criteria to both researchers of Polish messianism, Mickiewicz is the only actual messianist as he fulfils all the conditions of

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<sup>48</sup> A. Walicki, *Filofia a mesjanizm. Studium z dziejów filozofii i myśli społeczno-religijnej romantyzmu polskiego*, PiW, Warszawa 1970, s. 17–21.

<sup>49</sup> P. Rojek, *Mesjanizm integralny*, „Pressje” 2012, teka 28, s. 21.

<sup>50</sup> A. Walicki, dz. cyt. s. 22.

<sup>51</sup> P. Rojek, dz. cyt.

<sup>52</sup> A. Walicki, dz. cyt., s. 17

<sup>53</sup> Tamże, s. 22.

“strict messianism”, whereas Wroński is only a millenarist; Cieszkowski, the advocate of millenarism and missionarism lacks passionism to meet the criteria of a “strict messianist”; Norwid, in turn, a millenarist and passionist, lacks the element of missionarism<sup>54</sup>. The commonly perceived as messianists representatives of the so-called national philosophy<sup>55</sup>: Gołuchowski, Kremer, Trentowski and Libelt were not true messianists either, as they were only missionarists. As a result, all Polish authors associated with romantic messianism, except for the national seer, represent in their views only messianic tendencies, and are messianists only in the “general” sense of this word<sup>56</sup>.

From this point of view, messianism of the modernist era did not have in its ranks any representative of the “strict messianism”. Young Poland authors from this circle are representative of the “metaphorical messianism”. However, it has to be underlined that they referred to the messianic themes from the Romantic period not directly and not uncritically. It would be difficult to show “whole” borrowings from the ideological ancestors in given neomessianistic authors. In the words of a researcher of this period: “Young Poland’s messianism, despite numerous references to Romantic philosophy, has a peculiar character and was critically oriented towards some threads of Romantic messianism, e.g. the concept of innocent victim or the concept of Poland as the Christ of nations”<sup>57</sup>. Another researcher stresses that “in neomessianism the ‘martyrly’ elements are criticised, we also deal with greater pragmatism with regard to the implementation of the God’s Kingdom on earth. It is not only a blurry vision of the absolute time, of common brotherhood, peace and prosperity but often specific postulates of socio-political or political reconstruction”<sup>58</sup>. Neomessianism therefore is not a simple continuation of Romantic messianism. It has its spirit but brings totally new ideological constructs.

Within modernist messianism there is no figure of national “martyrdom” derived from the suffering of Christ. Also the element of “a victim of suffering” as the prerequisite and the motif of preparation for the mission can be seen only to some extent<sup>59</sup>. If the motif of “national suffering” appears at all, it is not in the

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<sup>54</sup> P. Rojek, dz. cyt., zob. tabela, s. 27.

<sup>55</sup> Por. A. Walicki, dz. cyt., s. 6, 29.

<sup>56</sup> According to the discussed criteria, Słowacki is a “metaphorical messianist” as he possesses missionarism and passionism, but the idea of “evolution of the spirit” has nothing in common with millenarism. Separate research has to be conducted in reference to the presence of the thread of “God’s Kingdom on earth” in Krasieński, undoubtedly, an advocate of passionism and missionarism; see J. Skoczyński, J. Woleński, *Historia filozofii polskiej*, s. 270.

<sup>57</sup> A. Zawadzki [w:] M. Hanczakowski, M. Kuziak, A. Zawadzki, B. Żynis, *Ilustrowane dzieje literatury. Od antyku do współczesności*, Wyd. Park, Bielsko-Biała 2003, s. 284–285.

<sup>58</sup> R. Łętocha, *Mesjanizm, neomesjanizm, apokaliptyzm*, „Pressje” 2012, teka 28, s. 67.

<sup>59</sup> R. Padół, *Filozofia religii polskiego modernizmu*, Wyd. Literackie, Kraków 1982, s. 187.

metaphysical context, but only on the historical plane, showing faithfulness to Christian values manifested by the Polish nation, which loftily and proudly suffers in some historical moments for its relentless faith (Dzieduszycki, Górski, Zdziechowski, Koneczny, Lutosławski, but also Braun). Special focus was given to the bitter historic experiences, regardless of whether the Polish nation was at fault or not, scarring the national fate with truly tragic moments (Buszczyński, Chołoniewski, Kochanowski, Szczepanowski).

This perspective seems to be evaluated favourably, as may be seen in the outlines of Polish history, written by Galician neomessianists with a flair for history (Buszczyński, Górski, Chołoniewski, Kochanowski, Koneczny). All of them are of apologetic character and confront their optimism with the pessimistic analyses of national history in the approach of the Cracow historical school. In their interpretation, historical sufferings, culpable or not, contribute even more to the historic wisdom of the Polish nation, thus constituting its unique leading role in history. Hence the martyrlly “messianism of a victim” is here replaced by “messianism of will” expressing the readiness to undertake moral and political activity. The messianic idea of passionism in the context of Young Poland was pushed to the background, and almost vanished. In this way, especially in the approach of Szczepanowski, Odrzywolski, Chołoniewski and Górski, the pragmatic context of Cieszkowski’s messianism was implemented in a totally different socio-political situation.

Additionally, it is striking to see the total lack of mystical and religious atmosphere in modernist messianism; only rarely does it utilise ideas related to God, the providential plan of history or the vision of the future of mankind organised around the principle of Christian faith, except for the conceptions of Dzieduszycki, Zdziechowski, Lutosławski and Braun. The idea of millenarism was transformed and acquired a secular character. Neomessianists’ attention was not drawn by the mystical visions of God’s chiliastic kingdom on earth but the real and specific *hinc ut nunc*, the improvement of the material, political and moral existence of man; millenarism in their approach took the shape of a program of social transformation. This pragmatic dimension of neomessianism was undoubtedly shaped by Szczepanowski, heavily influenced by Cieszkowski<sup>60</sup>. The positivist thought can undeniably be also seen, as stressed by Padoł: modernism, contrary to romanticism, gave messianism a practical orientation<sup>61</sup>. It is necessary to notice also the fact that in the second generation of neomessianists, especially in Górski, and particularly in Chołoniewski, this expectation of historic socio-moral justice, millenaristic in spirit, took the shape of a dream not only about Poland liberated from the partitioners’ yoke

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<sup>60</sup> P. Rojek, dz. cyt., s. 36–37.

<sup>61</sup> R. Padoł, dz. cyt., s. 181.

and the freedom of all nations in the world, but also a call for undertaking realistic actions to regain independence.

On the other hand, missionarism, the third constitutive ingredient of romantic messianism was fully reborn in the neomessianic form at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. The idea of “mission” or “calling” of the Polish nation and its crucial role in the history of the world became the leading motif of the works by the contemporary authors from the neomessianic circle. However, this thread to a large extent became independent of neomessianistic associations (i.e. mainly religious ones). Its core was the apotheosis of Polish history, with the conviction about the Polish nation being chosen to conduct the mission not only in the religious sphere but, first of all, on the moral and political plane, which is commented on by Walicki: “the notion of national mission does not have to be connected with messianism, the idea of mission, a collective or individual one becomes transformed into messianism only when it is seen within soteriologic categories”,<sup>62</sup> when it advocates the creation of God’s Kingdom on earth. Without this idea, missionarism is only a half-concept, although in its deepest stratum it is inspired by messianism. Rojek speaks in a similar tone: it is necessary to notice that the advocates of Polish messianism were not only messianists. For ages Poland was associated with e.g. peaceful conversion of nations, the defence of Christianity from Islam, creating a political system based on freedom, civilising the East and finally the struggle for the liberation of all European nations”<sup>63</sup>. An example of such areligious missionarism in neomessianism is the views of Buszczyński, Szczepanowski, Odrzywolski, Chołoniewski or Górski. Obviously, Galician neomesianists also included thinkers who treated missionarism according to the classic messianic pattern – Dzieduszycki, Boleski, Mutermilch, Lutosławski, Koneczny or Braun.

Neomessianists of the modernist period developed a new model of messianic thinking about the world in comparison to Romanticism. Its basic distinctive feature was the abandonment of treating the history of the Polish nation only in metaphysical-religious categories of passionism. Millenarism, in turn, was preserved only in the shape of a small residue: two inspired visions of the new equitable world based on Christian values created by Lutosławski and Braun. The very idea of chiliasm took the form of secular projects of creating a new moral-political social order. The best preserved aspect in neomessianism was the historic mission of the Polish nation, by losing, however, its solely religious dimension and being enriched with axiological elements form the scope of politics, geopolitics and morality. As

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<sup>62</sup> A. Walicki, dz. cyt., s. 189.

<sup>63</sup> P. Rojek, dz. cyt., s. 39.

a consequence, no constitutive aspect of Polish romantic messianism has its reflection in Galician neomessianism. These two ideological formations are related only in terms of a similar way of thinking, which endeavours to understand the hidden structure of history, to search deeply for history-shaping values and, first of all, to reveal the chosenness of the Polish nation, its exceptionality and role for the fate of the world. Galician neomessianism is a messianism in its general sense; it is mainly a phenomenon which reflects the ideological, social and political reality of Poland at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, loosely referring to the category of messianists of the Romantic era. It is a significant philosophical-religious ingredient of Polish modernism and, simultaneously, a proof of the attractiveness of messianic thought for a generation a few decades younger than the romantic era. After all not only for this generation, as, quite unexpectedly, we can witness now a restitution of neomessianic threads in the Polish national awareness,<sup>64</sup> which deserve to be called “the neomessianism

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<sup>64</sup> “An unexpected return of messianism has occurred in Poland in the recent years” – writes P. Rojek in *Mesjanizm integralnym* (“Pressje” 2012, teka 28, s. 21; por. także „Pressje” 2011, teka 24). Messianism has returned and manifested itself in the debates between its adorners and opponents. According to the former, the contemporary neomessianism “is the discovery of the hidden eschatological dimension under the surface of history and culture [...]. It is a reversal of the perspective in evaluating lost battles and sustained failures. It is the proud waving of the banner of suffering and blood on the ruins of national defeats and massacres” (R. Tichy, *Manifest neomesjanistyczny*, „44. Czterdzieści i Cztery. Magazyn Apokaliptyczny” 2009, nr 2, s. 59). It is a way of reading and experiencing the contemporary world in the feeling of discovery of its true face (por. „Teologia Polityczna” 2006/2007, nr 1). The symptoms of the so-called neomesianism, understood in this way and addressed mainly to the Polish nation can be easily seen in the public sphere of the country, e.g. in the historical politics cultivated in the Fourth Republic of Poland, the cult of John Paul II, hailed the last Polish messianist or in the phenomenon of the “religion of the Smoleńsk people”. The opponents of the messianist narrative of history, in turn, focus their attention on the social harm of reproducing romantic stereotypes in the contemporary times, demanding a practical and rational attitude towards the reality, which is not facilitated by the still pervasive stereotypes of the ‘chosenness’ or the historic mission of the Polish nation (e.g. the fundamentalist faction of Polish Catholicism such as Radio Maryja, promotes the thesis that Poland is the mainstay of Catholicism, which is the last bastion of Christian identity in the unified Europe and has a mission to complete, i.e. to preserve the uncontaminated religion) and the messianic threads of the inculpable suffering of the Polish nation in history and the necessity of making sacrifices perpetuated in historical education and on the cultural plane. In the process of shaping the historic and civil awareness, the young generation is still fed with the “scrap of meat in the form of Poland as the Christ of nations, is brainwashed into ideology which tells them to die for their fatherland” (*Rozum w Polsce wysiada – rozmowa z prof. Joanną Tokarską-Basziar*, „Przegląd” 2014, nr 34, s. 8–13) instead of being educated in the spirit of fulfilling the duty to work hard for the good of the country. In this dispute, ongoing from the beginning of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to a large extent, the seemingly long forgotten dispute between romantics and positivists from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been brought back to life.



of the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. It corroborates the thesis of the fascinating nature of the romantic historic vision and the need for its expression by the subsequent generations, including the contemporary one<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> The presence of messianism in the Polish awareness and the reactions it has evoked for the last two hundred years is clearly proven by texts by the luminaries of the Polish culture, from Kajetan Koźmian to Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz, collected in two volumes *Spór o mesjanizm. Recepcja krytyczna*, wybrał, oprac. i wstępem zaopatrzył A. Wawrzynowicz, Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, Warszawa 2017 (t. I: *Faza reakcji*, t. II: *Faza rewizji*).

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## Neomesjanizm galicyjski

### Streszczenie

Artykuł prezentuje ideę neomesjanizmu powstałą w środowisku polskiej inteligencji w końcu XIX w. w Galicji – części ziem polskich znajdujących się wtedy pod zaborem c.k. Austro-Węgier. Neomesjanizm galicyjski nawiązywał do filozofii mesjanistycznej polskich romanty-

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ków: A. Mickiewicza, J. Słowackiego J.M. Hoene-Wrońskiego i A. Cieszkowskiego. Jednocześnie przetwarzał wątki romantycznego mesjanizmu, dostosowując je do realiów społeczno-politycznych Polski zniewolonej do 1918 r. i odbudowującej się w okresie międzywojennym. W artykule omówiono poglądy S. Buszczyńskiego, S. Szczepanowskiego, W. Działusińskiego, K. Odrzywolskiego, A. Boleskiego, A. Górskiego, A. Chołoniewskiego, W. Lutosławskiego i J. Brauna. Są tu także zawarte rozważania nad specyfiką galicyjskiego neomesjanizmu i jego odmiennością w porównaniu z romantycznym mesjanizmem.

**Słowa kluczowe:** mesjanizm, neomesjanizm galicyjski, romantyzm, modernizm, filozofia polska