

JOLANTA DUDEK has made interpreting complex twentieth-century poetry into something of a speciality. Her approach to interpretative criticism is basically phenomenological. After completing a doctoral thesis on the post-war poetry of K. Wierzyński at the Jagellonian University in Cracow (where she graduated), Jolanta Dudek was a Rawnsley Student at St. Hugh's College, Oxford, where she wrote a second doctoral thesis comparing the mature poetry of Wierzyński and Yeats. Her recent habilitation thesis at the Jagellonian University — where she teaches — seeks to reveal the extent to which the poetry of Czesław Miłosz has been inspired by English poetry (W. Blake and T. S. Eliot in particular) as well as by the writings of European philosophers and religious thinkers. Other poets whose work has been explored by Jolanta Dudek include: T. Gajcy, J. Przybóś, M. Jastrun, S. Grochowiak and Z. Herbert.

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**ARS POETICA VILLELMI B. YEATS
ET CASIMIRI WIERZYŃSKI
INTER SE COMPARANTUR**



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JOLANTA DUDEK

**THE POETICS OF W. B. YEATS
AND K. WIERZYŃSKI:
A PARALLEL**



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Tadeusz Sławek

Gerald Stone

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Introduction

In the present study, the author's aim has been to draw a parallel between two artistic phenomena 'situated' (so to speak) in two recognizably distinct – albeit European – cultural traditions. These two phenomena are two poems – Yeats's *The Tower* and Wierzyński's *Piąta pora roku*. The author hopes that such a parallel will not only contribute to a better understanding of the poetry of Yeats and Wierzyński, but that – indirectly – it will also serve to shed some new light on the work of other European poets writing in the twentieth century.

The two poems chosen for analysis and comparison are – in the present author's opinion – poems which are 'representative' (so to speak) of the poetry of their authors, but which so far have defied complete and satisfactory analysis. Both were written at periods during which their authors – Yeats and Wierzyński – are now generally considered¹ to have been at the height of their 'creative powers'. It so happens that both poets were 'then' in their sixties².

The method of analysis is based largely on the work of Roman Ingarden (*O dziele literackim / Das literarische Kunstwerk*), Erich Auerbach (*Mimesis*) and – to a lesser extent – that of Kazimierz Wyka and Georges Poulet. The analysis of both poems has been carried out with particular reference to:

1. The function of the following themes – the poet; nature; creation; imagination; poetry; "unity of Being".
2. The concept of a speaker (or 'protagonist').
3. The structure of a lyrical monologue.
4. The use of poetic myths, symbols and images.

The fact that Yeats and Wierzyński 'inherited' or 'were born into' two recognizably distinct and independent literary (and cultural) traditions would seem to rule out the possibility that one poet may have 'influenced' the other to any significant extent³. If, then, there are – as the author of the present study hopes to demonstrate – significant similarities between the work of the two poets, these are to be explained rather by the existence of a 'deeper' – European – literary tradition (Romanticism) which links the

¹ By serious scholars.

² When Wierzyński (1894 – 1969) made his *début* as a poet, Yeats (1865 – 1939) was well into his fifties.

³ Cf. R. Wellek, *The crisis of comparative literature* [in:] R. Wellek, *Concepts of criticism*, Yale U.P., New Haven/London 1971.

two apparently unrelated literary (and cultural) traditions in which the poems of Yeats and Wierzyński are firmly 'embedded'. The hypothesis that there is just such a greater, European Romantic tradition has been vigorously and convincingly⁴ defended by René Wellek.

The author of the present study shares the opinion of a number of English – speaking⁵ and Polish⁶ scholars who believe that Romanticism as a literary tradition is still very much alive in the twentieth century. As a 'way of thinking' about man, art and the world, Romanticism – the author believes – is still present in the 'living memory'⁷ of many twentieth-century poets – including those who have ostensibly 'cut themselves off' from the Romantic tradition. This, however, can only be demonstrated by making comparative analyses of individual poems. Comparisons such as these⁸ must be carried out at three levels:

1. Within the context of the work of the individual poet.
2. Within the context of the (national) literary and cultural tradition into which the poet was 'born' and which he 'inherited', so to speak.
3. Within the (as yet somewhat hypothetical) context of a broader, European literary and cultural tradition.

The author believes that such 'international' comparative analyses – if properly carried out – can serve only to further our understanding – at a 'national' level – of the work of the poets chosen for comparison. The author hopes that the 'beneficiary' of the present study will be Kazimierz Wierzyński, whose poetry – in the author's opinion – has been misunderstood (and consequently 'undervalued') by many of his fellow countrymen to an incomparably greater extent than was ever the case with Yeats.

⁴ In the author's opinion.

Cf. R. Wellek, *The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History and Romanticism re-examined* [in:] R. Wellek, op.cit.

⁵ Cf. F. Kermode, *Romantic image*, London 1971.

Cf. N. Frye, *A Study of English Romanticism*, New York 1968.

Cf. *Romanticism. Vistas, instances, continuities*, Ed. D. Thorburn and G. Hartman, Cornell U.P. 1973.

⁶ Cf. M. Dłuska, *Studia i rozprawy*, Kraków 1972, vol. III.

Cf. M. Janion, *Gorączka romantyczna*, Warsaw 1975.

Cf. M. Tatara, *Dziedzictwo Słowackiego w poezji polskiej ostatniego półwiecza: 1918 – 1968*, Wrocław 1973.

Cf. T. Weiss, *Romantyczna genealogia polskiego modernizmu. Rekonesans*, Warsaw 1974.

Cf. C. Zgorzelski, *Od Oświecenia ku romantyzmowi i współczesności*, Kraków 1978.

⁷ To use Ingarden's term (*żywa pamięć*). Cf. *O poznawaniu dzieła literackiego* [in:] R. Ingarden, *Studia z estetyki*, vol. I, Warsaw 1957, p. 65.

⁸ Cf. R. Wellek and A. Warren, *Teoria literatury* (Theory of Literature), Ed. M. Żurowski (trans. M. Żurowski, I. Sieradzki, J. Krycki), Warsaw 1970, Part I: chapter V.

Cf. H. Markiewicz, *Zakres i podział literaturoznawstwa porównawczego and Badania porównawcze w literaturoznawstwie polskim* [in:] H. Markiewicz, *Przekroje i zblżenia, dawne i nowe*, Warsaw 1976.

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The author would like to express her gratitude to the Oxford D. Phil. supervisors of the present thesis – Dr. Gerald Stone and the late Prof. Robert Auty – for their constant help and encouragement. Thanks are also due to Dr. György Gömöri, Dr. John Kelly and Prof. Tadeusz Sławek for much valuable advice. A special word of thanks is due to St. Hugh's College, Oxford, where – as a Rawnsley Student – the author was able to spend three years exploring the riches of English poetry.

Part Two

K. WIERZYŃSKI: Piąta pora roku

I

Wierzyński included *Piąta pora roku* in a collection of poems entitled *Tkanka ziemi*. When this collection was published – in 1960 – Wierzyński was sixty-six years old and – as an émigré – had already published two collections of poems which, taken together, can be considered to mark a turning-point in the evolution of his poetry. These are: *Korzec maku* (1951) and *Siedem podków* (1954). In these collections Wierzyński's poetry has been renewed and has been shorn of the patriotic rhetoric of his wartime poems¹.

The main themes treated in *Korzec maku* and *Siedem podków* are: the poet, poetry and art. The *leitmotiv* of Wierzyński's poetry – earth – also makes its re-appearance in these two collections. Towards the end of his life Wierzyński wrote as follows about this *leitmotiv* in his poetry:

Ziemia jest trwaniem pośród przemijania życia i jednością pośród różnorodnego świata. Ziemia unosi mnie jak religia ponad doczesność i jak religia przedłuża chwile mego istnienia. Była, zanim tu przyszedłem, i zostanie kiedy stąd odejdę. W melancholii ludzkiego życia nie znam nic radośniejszego niż ta myśl, która za każdym uświadomieniem przemawia do mnie jak nie znana przedtem nowina².

The earth endures in the transience of life and it brings together the variety of the world. It is the earth which raises me above the ephemeral and, with religion, it lengthens the brief span of my existence. It was there before my coming and it will be after I have gone. In the melancholy of human existence I know of nothing as joyful as this thought: every time it surfaces in my mind it appears as news never heard before.

¹ Cf. Jolanta Dudek, *Liryka Kazimierza Wierzyńskiego z lat 1951 – 1969*, Wrocław 1975.

² Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Cygańskim wozem*, London 1966, p. 8.

The collection of poems entitled *Siedem podków* – preceding the collection entitled *Tkanka ziemi* – contains a poem entitled *Mowa i ziemia*, the theme of which is the link between poetry, earth, the native speech and the biography of the protagonist-poet. The problem of man's multiple union or alliance with earth is the principal theme of the poems collected in *Tkanka ziemi*. This collection opens with a poem entitled *Piąta pora roku*. In this poem the poet returns to the theme treated in *Mowa i ziemia* – namely the link between the poet, his art and his native soil. In *Piąta pora roku*, however, this problem is seen in the Romantic categories of eternity and memory (imagination). This accords with the view of the anonymous Polish author of an article entitled "O idei i uczuciu nieskończoności" (1818) that:

...piękno w poezji ukazując nam kształty skończone, ocuć w nas przecież, również jak piękno w malarstwie i snycerstwie, uczucie nieskończoności powinno³.

Beauty, in poetry, presents to us finite forms but it should also awaken us to a sense of infinity, as should the beauty of painting and of sculpture.

It also accords with the view of F. Schelling – a philosopher held in esteem by the Polish Romantics – that nothing can be a work of art which does not in some way represent something eternal⁴.

By virtue of its versification, style, structure and genre, *Piąta pora roku* – one of Wierzyński's most representative poems – is firmly rooted in that Polish poetic tradition which has its origins in the poetry of the great Romantics (in particular that of Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki) and which is still very much alive⁵. Wierzyński's immediate poetic predecessors, who can be considered to have acted as a 'link' between his generation and the Romantic tradition of Polish poetry (A. Mickiewicz, J. Słowacki, Z. Krasiński, C.K. Norwid) are: the playwright Stanisław Wyspiański⁶ and the poets Leopold Staff⁷ and Bolesław Leśmian⁸.

³ Quoted by C. Zgorzelski, *Od Oświecenia ku Romantyzmowi i współczesności*, Kraków 1978, p. 161.

⁴ Cf. F.W.J. Schelling, *Podstawowe założenia filozofii sztuki*, [in:] F.W.J. Schelling, *System idealizmu transcendentnego*, trans. K. Krzemieniowa, Warsaw 1979, p. 366:

"Dziełem sztuki nie jest nic, co bezpośrednio lub przynajmniej w odbiciu nie przedstawia czegoś nieskończonego".

⁵ Cf. C. Zgorzelski, op.cit., chapter IV. Cf. M. Janion, *Gorączka romantyczna*, Warsaw 1975, p. 142: "Związane jest to niewątpliwie z wyjątkową rolą, której nie da się z niczym i z nikim innym porównać – jest on ciągle i stale – i zapewne tak już pozostanie na zawsze – 'pierwszym z Polaków', 'największym człowiekiem polskim'".

Cf. M. Tatar, *Dziedzictwo Słowackiego w poezji polskiej ostatniego półwiecza 1918 – 1968*, Wrocław 1973, esp. Chapter III. Cf. M. Dłuska, *Legenda wieczności* [in:] *Studia i rozprawy*, Kraków 1972, vol. III. Cf. J. Dudek, op.cit., pp. 58 – 90.

⁶ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Kurhany*, 1938.

⁷ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *O Leopoldzie Staffie* [in:] *Cygańskim wozem*, ed.cit.

⁸ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *O Bolesławie Leśmianie*, Warsaw 1939.

Piąta pora roku is also firmly set in the inter-war 'Skamander' period of Wierzyński's poetry⁹. Like most of the poetry Wierzyński wrote as an émigré (i.e. in the years 1951 – 1969), *Piąta pora roku* seems to be a mature synthesis of the main artistic trends of those of the poet's contemporaries who belonged to the 'Skamander' group of poets – the linguistic virtuosity of Julian Tuwim (who made use of the natural prosodical and stylistic tendencies of colloquial Polish); the extraordinary emotional tension of the patriotic poems of Antoni Słonimski; the poetry of cultural tradition (*poezja kultury*) of Jan Lechoń and Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz; the 'rococo' predilection for small objects of everyday use and the subtle humour of Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska.

This post-war synthesis and further refinement of the basic artistic tendencies of the Skamander poets would seem to have been foreshadowed by the poetry which Wierzyński wrote between the wars (1919 – 1939). During this period Wierzyński was already perfecting the metrical and stanzaic forms which he had inherited from the Romantics. In doing so, he made abundant and ingenious use of colloquialisms¹⁰ and of European as well as national poetic images, myths and themes.

In the highly condensed and relatively short lyric poems he wrote as an émigré (1951 – 1969), Wierzyński seems to have put into practice the theories – concerned mainly with dramatic and epic poetry – which were expounded by Mickiewicz and Mochnacki.

II

The diversity of genres to be found in *Piąta pora roku* is characteristic of longer Romantic works – the ballad, the Romantic epic poem, Romantic drama. Here dramatic, lyric and epic elements 'overlap'. The poem's enveloping structure and the central scene (with the protagonist's dead parents) are dramatic in character. The poem begins *in medias res* with the protagonist's mind encompassing in the space of an instant (*Ptaka przeleciał przede mną, ptak ...*) the most important moments of his own past. It ends with the protagonist addressing the poem's listeners.

The time of *Piąta pora roku* is internal. Two overlapping rhythm patterns can be distinguished. These correspond to the cyclical time of nature and to the instantaneous, pulsating time of the human memory, in which the past blends with the present and the not too distant future.

The space of *Piąta pora roku* is also internal. The Carpathian landscape – observed from various angles and points in space – corresponds to the cyclical time of nature, appearing as many as four times. This landscape – like cyclical time – functions as a fluctuating background and as a link between four clearly designated spatial points: a

⁹ Cf. J. Dudek, *Liryka...*, loc.cit.

¹⁰ Cf. M. Dhuska, *Studia i rozprawy*, ed.cit., vol.III.

room in a cottage or chapel (at the beginning and at the end of the poem); mountain-tops; the other world.

These points in space, which are distinct from the cyclical continuum, mark the principal stages of the protagonist's life. The instantaneous (i.e. most recent) past – the background to which is the room in the cottage or chapel – occupies the three stanzas of the poem's opening section. The more distant past (Stanzas 4 – 14) corresponds to the first stage in the protagonist's life, associated with people and with the Carpathian countryside. This period ends with the protagonist meeting his dead parents and with a vision of the other world (Stanzas 12 – 14). The central part of the monologue (Stanzas 15 – 19)¹¹ is concerned with the present, the 'action' taking place on the mountain-tops. The last fragment is addressed to the poem's listeners and is concerned with the future (Stanza 20) – this future being related, as it were, to the recent past of the poem's opening section. The poem opens and closes with the image of villagers gathered for an evening's singing and conversation – a *wieczornica*. An important difference, however, is that at the end of the poem the internal ritual (Stanzas 1 – 3) acquires as it were an intersubjective dimension, with the poem's listeners waiting for the apparition of the Spirit of earth (Stanza 20).

III

The poem's enveloping structure and the central scene (with the protagonist's dead parents) constitute its dramatic 'axis' and are intimately linked with the folk-Slavonic-cum-mythical-ritualistic stylization which permeates *Piąta pora roku*. The Slavonic stylization functions as a literary allusion. The image with which the poem opens and closes – that of the *wieczornica* – not only refers directly to a village custom (that of villagers gathering in the evening in order to talk and sing together) but also refers indirectly to the oral traditions of Slavonic folk literature:

Ptak przeleciał przeze mnie, ptak,
I drzwi zostawił otwarte,
I tego wieczoru o zmroku
Zeszły się we mnie pory roku
Żywe i martwe.

Jedna była młodzieńcza, wesola,
Jeszcze śni mi się, jeszcze mnie woła
(Ach, pusty śmiech, niedorzeczność!),
Druga była żarliwa, gorąca,

¹¹ I consider the line *Czemu nie śpiewa?* – coming after Stanza 18 of *Piąta pora roku* – to be the equivalent of a stanza. I therefore count it as Stanza 19.

Czerwoną wargą jeszcze mnie trąca,
 Trzecia – jesienna, czwarta – zimowa,
 A piąta – śmierć i wieczność.
 Zeszły się i mrucały coś w ucho wieczory
 (Bachanalie, gorzkie żale, nieszpory?),
 Nie wiedziałem co znaczy niejasny ten śpiew,
 Płynął czas i odmiany i ja z nimi razem,
 Zachodziły mnie zewsząd swym krajobrazem
 Aż weszły mi w krew¹². (Stanzas 1 – 3)

The poem's finale ...

Więc wyznam wam ostatnią troskę,
 Śpiewajcie ją jak chłopską piosnkę
 I kiedy świat się w zmierzchu ściemnia,
 Zamknijcie okna, spuście story,
 Niech tam gromadzą się wieczory
 I gdy powróci z pola ziemia,
 Niech swoje ciężkie zzuje buty
 I kurz otrzepie z nich przysuty,
 Niech się położy, odpoczywa,
 Szczęśliwa albo nieszczęśliwa,
 I niech potoczy się jabłuszko
 Pod siennik jej, pod łóżko. (Stanza 20)

... is also a clear allusion to Mickiewicz's drama entitled *Dziady*, in which a major role is played by the stylization of the ancient ritual custom of calling forth the Spirits of dead ancestors on one night of every year. In Mickiewicz's drama the ritual takes place in a dark cemetery in a remote part of Lithuania. The ritual (*Dziady*) is intended to alleviate the lot of the dead by means of prayer and food¹³. The leader of the ritual (the *Guślarz*) – accompanied by those present, singing in chorus – opens the second part of Mickiewicz's drama with the following words:

¹² I quote from the text of *Piąta pora roku* to be found in: Kazimierz Wierzyński, *Poezje wybrane 1951 – 1964*, ed. M. Dłuska, Kraków 1972, pp. 107 – 110.

An English translation of the poem (entitled *The Fifth Season* is to be found in: Kazimierz Wierzyński, *Selected Poems*, New York 1959, pp. 42 – 45. The usual cautions apply.

¹³ Cf. S. Pigoń, *Do źródeł Dziadów kowieńsko-wileńskich* [in:] *Studia literackie*, Kraków 1951. Cf. Wierzyński's poems entitled *Litwa jesienna* and *Dziady* [in:] *Poezje zebrane*, London, pp. 140 and 488.

Zamknijcie drzwi od kaplicy
 I stańcie dokoła truny
 Żadnej lampy, żadnej świecy!
 W oknach zawieście całuny!
 Niech księżyc jasność błada
 Szczelinami tu nie wpada¹⁴.

Close the chapel's heavy door,
 Stand around the coffin's head;
 Let no candle-glimmer bore
 Through the windows, shrouded
 dead.
 Let no moonbeam pierce the
 black,
 Falling through the telltale crack.
 (transl. G.R. Noyes)

It is to these words of the *Guślarz* that the finale of *Piąta pora roku* alludes. The Spirit called forth in Wierzyński's poem turns out to be the Spirit of earth. In Mickiewicz's drama (at the end of part II) the most important Spirit to appear is that of the poet Gustaw, who had committed suicide. Gustaw's Spirit comes (*Dziady*, part IV) in order to re-enact the drama of his life (the story of his misfortune in love), to which there are three parts – the hour of love, that of despair and that of caution. Like Gustaw, the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* experiences a symbolic death and a symbolic return to this world in the course of a dramatized tale:

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
 A jednak trwam znów ...

The basic difference between Gustaw and Wierzyński's protagonist is that the latter is at one and the same time the organizer of the ritual (i.e. the *Guślarz*, as it were) and its main participant (i.e. Gustaw, as it were). The Spirit which Wierzyński's protagonist would seem to invoke (in his capacity as *guślarz*) is the Spirit of earth. It would seem that the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* returns to this world not in order to expiate sin (as Gustaw does) but in order to nourish – with song (which becomes transformed, it seems, into an apple) – both the Spirit of earth and the living who participate in the ritual.

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* sees the whole of his life through the 'prism' of a mysterious spiritual union or link with the natural environment of the land of his childhood (Mickiewicz's *kraj lat dziecinnych*), with its community of living and dead. In his monologue there are echoes of: the monologue of Gustaw, lover of Maryla (*Dziady*, IV)¹⁵; the *improvizacja* of Gustaw-Konrad, fighting with God for the fortunes of his nation (*Dziady*, III); the émigré's nostalgia for the land of his childhood – the *kraj lat dziecinnych* of the epilogue to Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. It is, however, the tone of the

¹⁴ Cf. Adam Mickiewicz, *Dzieła poetyckie*, Ed. T. Pini, Nowogródek 1934, p. 129.

¹⁵ Cf M. Dłuska, *op.cit.*, vol. III, p. 131:

“... fotywn przewodni powracającej panoramy kraju, oglądanej aż czterokrotnie z różnych perspektyw, pociągają za sobą konsekwencje stylistyczne. Czarnoksiężska latarnia ukazuje go kolejno – w barwach pamięci, pod tchnieniem śmierci, w miłości i żalu, a wreszcie w barwie nadziei: w nieśmiertelności słowa”.

protagonist that dominates the monologue of *Piąta pora roku*. This is the tone of a man who is faced with death and eternity and who is filled with a deep love for earth – the ‘tissue of our existence’ (*tkanka naszego istnienia*)¹⁶, our common homeland and the mother of all people and Spirits.

Piąta pora roku is therefore first and foremost the utterance of a mythical ‘son of (the goddess) Earth’ – a telluric being whom the Romantics conceived of as being in intimate spiritual and physical union with nature. As a mythical son of Earth, Wierzyński’s protagonist is also the conscience of nature – mother of people and Spirits. This would seem to explain the mysterious expansion of his consciousness, which encompasses ‘all things living and dead’ (*wszystkie sprawy żywe i martwe*) – plants, animals, landscapes, people and Spirits.

Wierzyński’s belief that all living things are intimately linked with the earth which they inhabit was that of the (great) Polish Romantics – in particular Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Norwid. It was also that of the literary critic Maurycy Mochnacki, who in a famous essay entitled *O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym* (1830) wrote:

Człowieku! Imię twoje ziemia. Z ziemi ciało twoje – choć z czterech stron świata przyniesionej, wschodu, zachodu, północy i południa. W ziemi mieszkanie twoje, czyż się w ziemię nie obrócisz? Czyż nie ma ziemi w naszych kościach? Czyż we krwi naszej nie płynie żelazo, – metal, tak głęboko w łonie ziemi gniazda swoje mający? A złoto i inne kruszce – czyż nie są dla nas lekarstwem, trucizną? ... Czyż zioła i rośliny ziemskie z różnych nas nie wyleczają niemocy? Czyż źródła, cudownymi uzdrawiające skutkami, nie sączą się ze skalnych zdrojowisk? – Jakiż kres położyć tym związkom z każdej nieledwie strony, z każdego względu...¹⁷

Man! Your name is earth! Your flesh comes from the earth – from its four corners, East, West, North and South. You live on the earth and will you not turn into it? Are not our very bones of earth? Does not the iron flow in our blood, an ore, nestling deeply in the bowels of the earth? And gold, and other ores – are they not both our poison and our cure? Do not herbs and other plants of the earth provide remedies for diverse complaints? And streams, capable of effecting miraculous cures, do they not flow out of rocky watercourses? Is there any end to these bonds, which link us on every side, from every point of view?

The corollary of this belief (common to the Romantics) in the basic affinity or unity of all being and in the supremacy of spirit over matter is the idea of the Great Chain of Being – held in common by the European Romantics. Mochnacki and Słowacki interpreted this idea in the categories of evolution (cf. Słowacki’s *Genezis z Ducha*). Accord-

¹⁶ Cf. the poem entitled *Tkanka ziemi* [in:] K. Wierzyński, *Poezje wybrane*, ed.cit., pp. 143 – 144 (*Selected poems*, ed.cit., pp. 25 – 26 – ‘Tissue of Earth’).

¹⁷ Cf. Maurycy Mochnacki, *O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym*, Kraków 1923, pp. 15 – 16.

ing to Mochnacki, evolution in nature progresses from non-organic nature to the spirit, which is the hidden cause of matter:

Tak wszystko się uduchownia w naturze; wszystko zmierza ku temu, co żadną nie jest rzeczą, i przedmiotem rozbioru być nie może, – do myśli, do pojęcia, które samo siebie pojmuje, rozumie. Patrzmy na świat: któż przodkuje wszystkim jestestwom? – Człowiek – Któż jest człowiek? – Ostatnie ogniwo łańcucha stworzeń. Przeto jest częścią natury, częścią jednej całości. Człowiek ma myśl, ma pojęcie. Zatem i natura tę myśl mieć musi – z samej konieczności i konsekwencji logicznej tego rozumowania. Myśli ona naszą myślą i sama siebie naszym pojmuje rozumieniem. W człowieku jako częście całości swojej przychodzi do refleksji¹⁸.

... Myśleć jest to żyć. Życie nasze od tego punktu się zaczyna... Natura jest, bo myśli, duch jest częścią natury. I natura z tej tylko jest przyczyny¹⁹.

Everything in nature becomes spirit; everything aims at what is immaterial and cannot be analysed: a thought and an idea which embraces and understands itself. Look at the world: who is it who leads all creation? Man! But what is man? The last link in the chain of creation, therefore a part of nature, a part of one totality. Man thinks, he comprehends; nature also must be able to comprehend: this reasoning makes it logical and necessary. Nature thinks the way we think and comprehends itself with our own intelligence.

It is reflected in man as a part of the whole... To think is to live: our life begins at that point. Nature exists because it thinks, spirit is a part of nature and the only reason for nature's existence.

It would seem that this belief in man's intimate spiritual union with nature (man being nature's consciousness) and in the idea of the Great Chain of Being is interpreted by Wierzyński in the way it was interpreted (on the one hand) by Mochnacki (op.cit.) and Słowacki (op.cit.) and (on the other hand) by Mickiewicz (in *Dziady*)²⁰. *Piąta pora roku* is the expression of the mystical experience – similar to that of the ancient ritual in *Dziady* – of the protagonist's union with the elements (earth, fire, air and water), non-organic nature (mountains), plants, animals and the great community of personal Spirits²¹. Among the members of the community of Spirits are: the Spirits of the protagonist's dead parents; living people seen as Spirits (the shepherds); the inhabitants of the protagonist's Carpathian homeland – raftsmen, peasants, woodcutters, cowherds;

¹⁸ Cf. Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 25.

¹⁹ Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 26.

²⁰ Cf. M. Janion, *Romantyzm polski wśród romantyzmów europejskich* [in:] *Studia romantyczne*, Ed. by M. Żmigrodzka, Wrocław 1973, p. 44.

²¹ Cf. M. Janion, op.cit., p. 32.

the listeners of the protagonist's monologue; the Spirit of earth, represented (as in the title-poem of *Tkanka ziemi*) as a tired farmer – or, more probably, a farmer's wife; the personifications of the seasons (these being also stages in the protagonist's life) which participate in the internal phase of the ritual (Stanzas 1 – 3).

In the finale of *Piąta pora roku* the protagonist therefore appears as the leading Spirit of the great community of the living and the dead (i.e. as an inspired poet) and also as the leader of the ritual (cf. the *Guślarz* in Mickiewicz's *Dziady*). He appears to invoke that Spirit which he considers to be the most important of all – the Spirit of earth – in order to nourish it, not (as ancient custom demands) with milk, honey and grain, but with song, which 'materializes' into ... an apple (*jabłuszko*).

IV

The ritualistic stylization present both in the finale of *Piąta pora roku* and in the poem's opening section reveals another of the poem's 'layers' or 'strata', so to speak. This is the Greek myth about the eternal, cyclical rebirth of life on earth – the reconciliation of earth and man, gods and people. Seen through the 'prism' of the Greek myth, *Piąta pora roku* appears to be an account of the Dionysian ritual, which had as its aim the spiritual renewal of the individual through contact with nature and with the human community. This Dionysian dimension would seem to be foreshadowed directly by the third stanza of the poem's opening section:

Ptak przeleciał przeze mnie, ptak,
I drzwi zostawił otwarte,
I tego wieczoru o zmroku
Zeszły się we mnie pory roku
Żywe i martwe.

Jedna była młodzieńcza, wesola,
Jeszcze śni mi się, jeszcze mnie woła
(Ach, pusty śmiech, niedorzeczność!)
Druga była żarliwa, gorąca,
Czerwoną wargą jeszcze mnie trąca,
Trzecia – jesienna, czwarta – zimowa,
A piąta – śmierć i wieczność.

Zeszły się i mruzczały coś w ucho wieczory
(Bachanalie, gorzkie żale, nieszpory?),
Nie wiedziałem co znaczy niejasny ten śpiew,
Płynął czas i odmiany i ja z nimi razem,
Zachodziły mnie zewsząd swym krajobrazem
Aż weszły mi w krew.

Obszyłem się liśćmi, porosłem górami,
 Paliły się we mnie ogniska pastuchów:
 Pod drzewem, w deszczu, przykryci workami,
 Podobni byli do duchów.

Spąłem na siennych, wygrzanych polanach,
 Gałęzią chojar kołysał mnie niski,
 Budziły mnie sarny, kobiece w kolanach,
 Skacząc jak wodotryski.

Z Węgier kotliną opasłe woły
 Porykując sły za ratajem żydowskim,
 Poganiacze w południe rozkładali toboły,
 Pili coś, gryźli. Pachniało czosnkiem.

W sadach czerwionych, w kotłach miedzianych
 Warzyli chłopci czarne powidła,
 Krzyczałem w tłumie jak ja zakochanych:
 "Młodości, podaj mi skrzydła!"

A w zimie sosny leśnym wyciosiem
 Spuszczano z hukiem po śnieżnym korycie,
 Siekiery stękały topornym odgłosem
 Na gołej czaszce, na szczycie.

Kiedy zelżało, karpacki parobek
 Spychał je w rzekę i skuwał na tratwy:
 Płynęły sosny po chleb, na zarobek,
 Nie łatwy, bracie nie łatwy.

I znów szły wiosny i lata powoli
 Wiatr jabłka strącał jesienne i sliwy
 I pędził chmury w doli, niedoli
 Szczęśliwej i nieszczęśliwej.

Szedł ruch za ruchem, ruchome odmiany
 Ludzi i roślin, i skóry zwierzęcej,
 Doczesne pory i czas powikłany,
 Wszystko co żyło i jeszcze coś więcej.

(Stanzas 1 – 11)

The 'self-portrait' indirectly sketched by the protagonist at the beginning of *Piąta pora roku* seems to have traits which are not only those of Mickiewicz's *Guślarz*, Mickiewicz's Gustaw-Konrad and the mythical 'son of Earth', but also those of the Cory-

phaeus of the Graeco-Christian ritual, who is in mythical union with the deity (cf. *Ptāk przeleciał przeze mnie, ptāk...*). The role of the Bacchantes taking part in the ritual singing is played by the personifications of the seasons and the 'animations' of evenings.

The cultural syncretism which is characteristic of Wierzyński's poetry and of *Piąta pora roku* and which consists of linking Slavonic pagan traditions with the traditions of Christianity and Ancient Greece (*Dziady* – Bacchanalia – *gorzkie żale* – *nieszpory*) derives from (European and Polish) Romanticism and modernism. In the field of cultural syncretism Wierzyński's immediate predecessor is Wyspiański, who clothed the heroes of Ancient Greece in Slavonic costumes and brought them to the banks of the Vistula. *Skamander połyska / Wiślaną światłąc się falą* – wrote Wyspiański in his visionary drama entitled *Akropolis* (1904), in which Biblical characters and characters taken from Polish history mix with Greek mythical heroes. In 1920 Wyspiański's words became the motto of the 'Skamander' group of poets²², to which Wierzyński belonged in his youth. It is Wyspiański's work and that of the Romantics (Słowacki, Krasiński, Norwid) that is responsible for the continual renewal in Polish poetry of the parallel between Greek and Polish history on the one hand, and between Greek and Polish poetry on the other.

The Dionysian myth present in *Piąta pora roku* is common to Wierzyński and to European and Polish literature (and art) of the turn of the (nineteenth) century²³. F. Nietzsche – author of *The Birth of Tragedy* – was of course largely responsible for the revival of this myth in European culture. However, the interpretation of the Dionysian myth made by Wierzyński in *Piąta pora roku* is as original as that which he made in his first collection of poems, entitled *Wiosna i wino*. In a study entitled *The Dionysian and Apollinian antinomy in Kazimierz Wierzyński's early poetry*²⁴, Tymon Terlecki makes the following observations:

1. The Dionysian myth is only indirectly present in *Wiosna i wino*, its main manifestation being the joyous atmosphere of ecstatic enthusiasm for life and the visible world which pervades the volume²⁵.

2. In *Wiosna i wino*, however, this Dionysian atmosphere has already been 'sacralized' in the spirit of the Christian Renaissance (St. Francis of Assisi). Wierzyński's Dionysus is mainly a god of all-embracing love, the great leveller of the world²⁶. In Terlecki's view, this 'sacralization' of the Dionysian myth in Wierzyński's early poetry is characteristic of the manner in which Nietzsche's ideas were received in Poland – and in particular by Leopold Staff:

²² Cf. Jan Lechoń, *Przemówienie na pierwszym wieczorze literackim "Skamandra" [in:] J. Zacharska, Skamander*, Warsaw 1977, pp. 108 – 110.

²³ Cf. M. Głowiński, *Maska Dionizosa [in:] Młodopolski świat wyobraźni*, Ed. M. Podraza-Kwiatkowska, Kraków 1977.

²⁴ [in:] *For Wiktor Weintraub* (essays in honour of W.W.), 1975.

²⁵ Cf. Terlecki, op.cit., pp. 526 – 527.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 524.

"The Christianization is to a great extent specifically Polish. The Polish variant of Nietzscheanism (with the almost exclusive exception of Stanisław Wyspiański) manifested a tendency towards disarming or neutralizing it. Many aspects of Nietzsche's ideology, especially the anti-Christian, anti-social and anti-egalitarian, were toned down. In Wierzyński this feature can be traced directly to the man who initiated him in poetry, Leopold Staff. Following the inclinations of his lyrical temperament, Staff achieved a surprising blend of Dionysus with Francis of Assisi. (He was a congenial translator of the *Fioretti* and an enthusiastic interpreter of Saint Francis. Staff saw in the Umbrian saint the forerunner of the Renaissance, the Christian embodiment of the Renaissance concept of life)"²⁷.

3. The other authentically Nietzschean motifs of the Dionysian myth which are present in Wierzyński's early poetry are the idea of eternal recurrence²⁸ and the belief in the intimate union between Dionysus and nature²⁹. In the opinion of Terlecki, this particular 'concurrence' with the Nietzschean myth would seem to prove yet again that Wierzyński's interpretation of the Dionysian myth was coloured by Polish poetic tradition:

"The link with the idyllic tradition of Polish poetry seems more convincing however; the rural character of Polish symbolism represents a specific trait within the framework of the European movement of the same name"³⁰.

4. According to Terlecki, Wierzyński's Dionysus in *Wiosna i wino* is a god of poetic inspiration and ecstasy who nevertheless does not cause the protagonist to lose his *principium individuationis* – i.e. his distinct lyrical 'ego'³¹ – entirely.

5. At the end of his study Terlecki notes that there is an absence of Dionysian disorder³² in the structure of the early poems. The versification, style and 'represented world' – permeated with the atmosphere of Dionysian enthusiasm which is to be found in Wierzyński's early poems – have been subjected to the rigours of a rational, Apollonian structure. A balance has been kept between the musical (sound) and image qualities of the poems, and also between direct and indirect lyricism.

These observations lead Terlecki to conclude that in his early poetry, Wierzyński achieved a synthesis of Apollonian and Dionysian elements. According to Nietzsche, this synthesis is characteristic of Greek tragedy. In the words of Terlecki:

"*Toutes proportions gardées*, Wierzyński's early poetry seems to be fundamentally another example of such a reconciliation, such a resolution of opposites and the final victory over them. It is a paradoxical union of *hybris* – excess, exaggeration – with *sofrosyne* – the quality of restraint and the wisdom of moderation, self-awareness and self-control. It is the resolution of two tensions, one centrifugal and the other centripetal.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 523.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 530.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 534.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 536.

³¹ Ibidem, pp. 533 – 534.

³² Ibidem, p. 527.

tal, one disintegrating and the other concentrating, focusing. This fact defines the originality of the poetic phenomenon and explains perhaps its almost unconditional acceptance by the reading public"³³.

V

If the version of the Dionysian myth to be found in Wierzyński's early poetry – as presented by Terlecki – is compared with the version to be found in *Piąta pora roku*, it can be seen that:

1. The only genuinely Nietzschean element of the interpretation of the Dionysian myth which is found in Wierzyński's poetry is the idea of eternal recurrence (eternal return) and the cyclical rebirth of nature. This idea is to be found in a poem devoted to Nietzsche and entitled *Przypomniał mi się Nietzsche* (from the collection *Tkanka ziemi*)³⁴. In this poem the recurrence of all phenomena is symbolized by migratory birds. In *Piąta pora roku* the motif of the bird appears twice. The first time it evokes a vision of the cyclical recurrence of natural phenomena. The second time it suggests the Nietzschean-Dionysian aspect of the theme of eternity – the 'fifth season' – which is examined in the poem. However, the bird in *Piąta pora roku* is not only the migratory bird of Nietzsche's poem³⁵ but also – as will be shown – the bird of Polish Romantic poetry.

2. The interpretation of the Dionysian myth which is found in *Piąta pora roku* has been coloured (and made more profound) by the great Romantic myth of the spiritual unity of man and nature. Here allusions to the Dionysian myth 'coexist' with allusions to Polish Romantic poetry. The latter reveal that as an émigré, Wierzyński became fully conscious of the Romantic sources which inspired his own lyric poetry and that of his predecessors Staff and Leśmian. This 'process' can already be seen at work in the poems Wierzyński wrote between the wars (*Wolność tragiczna* – 1936, *Kurhany* – 1939). In a lecture entitled *O Bolesławie Leśmianie* (1939), Wierzyński drew attention to his outstanding predecessors' links with Romanticism³⁶. It is therefore difficult to believe that Wierzyński had not traced Staff's fascination with St. Francis of Assisi back to Mickiewicz and that he was not familiar with Mickiewicz's lecture of 19th March 1844, where we read³⁷:

³³ Ibidem, p. 532. Terlecki does not attempt to suggest that Wierzyński achieved the synthesis of Apollonian and Dionysian elements in his early poetry by a conscious application of Nietzsche's ideas. Indeed, Terlecki insists that it is he – the critic – who is applying Nietzsche's ideas in order to interpret Wierzyński's poetry. It would seem that the Nietzschean 'yardstick' could also be used in order to interpret the poetry of W.B. Yeats and many of the European Romantics, including Mickiewicz. The poetry of Mickiewicz is notable for: musicality; imagery; emotional dynamism; a rational structure; the 'overlapping' of lyrical, epic and dramatic elements; continual oscillation between excessive egotism and a strong feeling of community with other people.

³⁴ Cf. Terlecki, op.cit., p. 522

³⁵ Loc.cit.

³⁶ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *O Bolesławie Leśmianie*, ed.cit.

³⁷ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Cygańskim wozem*, ed.cit., p. 14: "Na wzgórzu schody i złożony napis na bramie:

Powiedziałem już dawniej z innego powodu, że rozum ludzki nie dokáže niczego w tym przedmiocie, że tylko sam chrystianizm, sięgając jedną ręką dalej w niebo, a drugą zagłębiając w tajniki przyrodzenia, potrafi wydobyć na jaw nasze związki z królestwem zwierząt i jestestw nieorganicznych. Chrystianizm to, a nie kto inny, i nie przez co innego, jak przez miłość doszedł także tajemnicy niewolnictwa między ludźmi, a doszedłszy znalazł sposoby je zniszczyć. Filozofowie nie przyczynili się do tego... Chrześcijaństwo rozwinęło najdalej uczucia moralne. Księgi chrześcijańskie pełne są przykładów głębokiej sympatii zwierząt ku ludziom pobożnym i nawzajem. Czytam w brewiarzu, że gdy Św. Antoni umarł na pustyni, lwy wykopały dla niego w nocy jamę, w której go towarzysze pochowali. Kiedy Św. Antoni Padewski mówił, zwierzęta nastawiały uszy, i ryby nawet przyplływały do niego. Nie dziwimy się temu. Ta siła, co nasze zmysły i dusze otwiera na dźwięk głosu natchnionego, ten promień niewidomy, co przechodzi przez słowo dotykalne, daje się odczuć i duchom niższym. Św. Franciszek Seraficki, ów wielki cudotwórca, z jakąż miłością mówił o zwierzętach: braciszkami, siostrzyczkami swymi ich nazywał! A was to gorszy, że uczyniono wzmiankę o duchu zwierząt³⁸.

I said before, for a different reason, that human intellect counts for nothing in this: only Christianity itself, stretching one hand out towards heaven and the other to the mysteries of nature, can disclose our bond with the animal kingdom and the kingdom of inorganic spirits. Only Christianity, for reason of love and none other discovered the secret reason for slavery among men and, having found it, found the means to destroy it. Philosophers had no hand in this... Christianity has done most to further morality. Christian writings are full of examples of the love of animals for men of religion and, in turn, man's love for them. My breviary tells me that when St. Anthony died in the desert, he was buried by his companions in a grave which lions had dug for him during the night. When St. Anthony of Padua spoke, animals pricked up their ears and even fishes swam towards him. This should come as no surprise. The force which opens our senses and our souls to an inspired call, that invisible ray pervading the tangible word, can be felt by lower beings. St. Francis of Assisi, the great miracle maker, spoke of animals with love: called them his brethren and sisters! Yet you are shocked to hear me speak of the spirits of animals!

Collège de France. Dwa dni przed wigilią Bożego Narodzenia r. 1840 Mickiewicz wszedł po tych stopniach, aby wygłosić pierwszy swój wykład. Był profesorem literatur słowiańskich, ale wykladał swoje idee o nowym świecie "odrodzonej moralności i wolności".

³⁸ Cf. Adam Mickiewicz, *Dzieła prozą*, Ed. T. Pini, vol. IV: *Wykłady o literaturach słowiańskich*, Rok Czwarły 1843 – 1844, p. 148.

It is enough to read Staff's preface of 1910 to the *Fioretti* to realize to what extent the twentieth-century Polish fascination with St. Francis of Assisi was conditioned by the Romantic belief in the mysterious unity of all creation:

Dusza ludzka stworzona jest dla słońca, wiosny i wesela. Mówi o tym nieomylny instynkt tej książki, cała w niej nieświadoma sobie niewinność poszukiwania ścieżek wyzwolenia. Zauważono, że najczęstszym w niej słowem jest: Radość. Wnikanie w najgłębsze tajemnice zachwytem myśli i zapamiętaniem się duszy oddaje ona równoważnikami radośnie upajających woni, światła i słodyczy. Cudowny ten materializm wrażeń wykwita ze związku zmysłów uduchowionych i ucieleśnionej prawie duszy Boskim kwiatem niepomowanej, nienagannej jedności Tajemnicy³⁹.

The human soul is made for the sun, the Spring and gaiety. The unerring instinct of this book indicates it, and its unselfconscious innocence searches for a path to freedom. It has been noted that the most frequent word in it is: joy. The penetration of the deepest mysteries by a soul engrossed in the search is represented by the sensual equivalents of fragrance, light and sweetness. A union of senses pervaded by the spirit with a soul on the point of becoming material comes into flower, a mystery beyond understanding.

Staff's words also reveal the link between the Polish Romantic fascination with St. Francis and the idea – common to all European Romantics – of the future reconciliation of all creation, the great spiritual transformation of individuals and the renewal of all mankind which is achieved by people who are inspired – who are artists in all they do. This idea was proclaimed by Mickiewicz in his Paris lectures. In support of his views, Mickiewicz frequently cites the Gospels, F. Schelling, J. Boehme, Saint-Martin and Polish Romantic poets and philosophers:

Schelling, największy z filozofów niemieckich, ogłasza teraz w Berlinie swoją długo tajoną doktrynę, której pierwiastki znajdujemy w poetach polskich. Utrzymuje on, że chrystianizm dotąd przeszedł tylko dwa stany, dwa okresy swojego zawodu. Pierwsza z tych epok była, jak ją nazywa, epoką Świętego Piotra, to jest epoką wiary silnej,

In Berlin, the greatest German philosopher – Schelling – has announced the creed which he has long cherished in secret and whose elements are to be found in the writings of Polish poets. Schelling maintains that Christianity – so far – has passed through no more than two periods or stages. During the first stage, which he calls the era of St. Peter, faith

³⁹ Cf. Leopold Staff, *Franciszkanizm* [in:] *Programy i dyskusje literackie okresu Młodej Polski*, Ed. M. Podraza-Kwiatkowska, Wrocław 1977, p. 693.

samoistnej syntetycznej, która trwała do VI albo do VII wieku. Nastąpiła po niej epoka Świętego Pawła, czasy rozpraw i doktryn, obejmujące resztę wieków średnich i protestantyzmu. Teraz, wedle Schellinga, mamy ujrzeć epokę Świętego Jana, epokę entuzjazmu i miłości. Doktryna ta pokazała się dopiero przed kilku miesiącami, a wiadomo wszystkim, że sławny autor Irydijona rozwinął był ją już poetycznie w symbolach⁴⁰.

was strong, spontaneous, and syncretic. That era continued until the 6th or 7th Century. It was followed by the era of St. Paul, a period of theological disputation, which took in the rest of the Middle Ages and the Reformation. According to Schelling, we are now about to enter the era of St. John, a period of love and fervour. It is only months since Schelling published his creed, yet we know that the author of Iridion had developed those ideas earlier in symbolic form.

Seen in the light of Mickiewicz's youthful 'poetical manifestos' (*Oda do młodości*, *Romantyczność*) and the lectures he gave later as professor at the Collège de France, the poetical 'manifesto' of the Skamander group – so often criticized for its 'vitalism'⁴¹, its 'lack of poetic ideas'⁴² and its *programofobia*⁴³ – can be seen to contain an idea common to all the Polish Romantics and also to W. Blake, P.B. Shelley and W.B. Yeats (*Unity of Being!*) – namely the belief in the coming of the 'New Jerusalem', i.e. an age of enthusiasm, love and creation.

This Romantic idea of 'universal love'⁴⁴ was taken up by the young poets of newly independent Poland – Tuwim, Lechoń, Wierzyński – who, following in the footsteps of some of the 'Młoda Polska'⁴⁵ writers (Stanisław Brzozowski, an excellent critic and philosopher, author of *Legenda Młodej Polski*; Leopold Staff, a Symbolist poet who discovered and sang the secrets of everyday life and who translated the *Fioretti* of St. Francis and the works of Nietzsche; Stefan Żeromski, author of *Uroda życia* and the extremely important lecture *Literatura a życie polskie* (1915); Stanisław Wyspiański, author of the drama *Wyzwolenie*; Adolf Dygasiński, author of the novel *Gody życia*) discarded the national – martyrological interpretation of Romanticism, thus preparing the way for the treatment – by themselves – of the most 'Romantic' myth of the great Romantics – the myth of the fundamental unity and future reconciliation of all being.

In his *Słowo wstępne* to the first issue of the magazine *Skamander* (1920) – published just one hundred years after Mickiewicz's 'manifesto' poems *Oda do młodości* (1820) and *Romantyczność* (1821) – Horzyca wrote:

⁴⁰ Cf. Mickiewicz, *Wykłady...*, Rok Drugi 1841 – 1843, ed.cit., p. 320.

⁴¹ Cf. A. Nowaczyński, *Skamander polyska, wiślaną świetląc się falą* – 1921 [in:] J. Zacharska, *Skamander*, ed.cit., pp. 162 – 173.

⁴² Cf. T. Peiper, *Poeci bez idei poetyckiej* – 1928 [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 178 – 184.

⁴³ Cf. K. Irzykowski, *Programofobia* – 1934 [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 156 – 162.

⁴⁴ Cf. J. Tuwim, *Manifest powszechnej miłości* [in:] *Dzieła*, vol. 5: *Pisma prozą*, Warsaw 1964.

⁴⁵ *Młoda Polska* (1890 – 1918) is the Polish counterpart of European Modernism and Symbolism.

Nie chcemy przeoczyć zła, ale miłość nasza jest nad wszelkie zło silniejsza: dlatego kochamy dzień dzisiejszy niezachwianą, pierwszą miłością, jesteśmy i chcemy być jego dziećmi. A dzień ów nie jest dniem siedmiu plag, lecz i dniem narodzin nowego świata... wierzymy iż królestwo ducha jest królestwem z tego świata, że nim będzie, być musi... Lecz raz jeszcze rzucając dawne hasła, świadomi jesteśmy, żeśmy o sto lat starsi, że słowa nasze są inne, choć brzmienie to samo, że nadeszły inne czasy, które w starym symbolu ujrzyć pragną i muszą – nową treść... ale chcemy zdobywać, zapalać serca ludzi, chcemy być ich uśmiechem i płaczem;... Wierzymy w zesłanie ducha Bożego na dusze, ale także i w pracę w tym duchu i wierzymy, że tą tylko drogą rzetelnej i sprawnej twórczości zbudować potrafimy kościół nowej sztuki, jaki się nam marzy, przybytek pojednania szczytów z dolinami, i obudzić pieśń, co iść będzie z ust do ust, z serc do serc, jak dobra wieść, jak radosne witanie poranka”⁴⁶.

We do not wish to ignore evil but our love is stronger: that is why the present is our first, unswerving love. We are children of the present and we are willing to be its children. The present day is not the day of the seven plagues but the day on which a new world is born... we believe that the realm of the spirit is of this world, will be of this world, must be of this world. While repeating the old call, we are well aware that we are older by a hundred years and that our words are different although they sound the same. Our times are different: we want, and we ought to find new meaning in the old symbols... but we still want to conquer and to fire the hearts of men, we wish to be their laughter and their tears... We believe that the Holy Ghost descends into the souls of men but we believe also that mankind has a task to fulfil with its aid. We know that only an earnest and skilful effort can build the church of new art we dream of, an ark of the covenant between the heights and the depths. Only such magnitude of effort will be able to awaken poetry which will spread throughout the land, from man to man and from heart to heart like good news and a happy welcome of the morn.

In *Piąta pora roku* the first and second seasons of the year embody – as it were – the enthusiastic atmosphere of Wierzyński's first collections of poems – *Wiosna i wino* (1919) and *Wróble na dachu* (1921) – together with the fervour of his later poetry:

Jedna była młodzieńcza, wesoła,
jeszcze śni mi się, jeszcze mnie woła

⁴⁶ Cf. *Słowo wstępne do Skamandra* [in:] J. Zacharska, op.cit., pp. 105 – 107. See also Zacharska's remarks on the authorship of the Skamander 'manifesto' (p. 259).

(Ach pusty śmiech, niedorzeczność!),
 Druga była zarliwa, gorąca,
 Czerwoną wargą jeszcze mnie trąca ...

(in Stanza 2)

This joyful Dionysian-Franciscan tone is explicitly associated with Mickiewicz's *Oda do młodości* (cf. the Skamander 'manifesto' penned by Horzyca):

Krzyczałem w tłumie jak ja zakochanych
 "Młodości, podaj mi skrzydła!"

(in Stanza 7)

We can therefore say that in *Piąta pora roku* there has been a significant 'shift in emphasis' by comparison with the youthful 'self-portrait' sketched by the protagonist of *Wiosna i wino*, who describes the atmosphere of his lyric poetry and himself as 'Renesansowo-helleńsko-dzisiejszy'⁴⁷ (cf. *szumi w mej głowie*). Paraphrasing this definition, we may describe the atmosphere of *Piąta pora roku* as 'romantyczno-renesansowo-helleńsko-dzisiejszą'. The allusions to (great) Romanticism in *Piąta pora roku* show that it was this poetic tradition that proved to be Wierzyński's most important and lasting source of inspiration.

3. In the opening section of *Piąta pora roku* the vision of a Dionysian procession – consisting of people, plants, animals, seasons and the young poet himself – together with the motifs of camp-fires, sleep on forest clearings, leaping roe-deer (reminiscent of Bacchantes dressed in deer-skins – *Budziły mnie samy, kobiece w kolanach/ Skacząc jak wodotryski*) and also the interpretation of the Dionysian ritual as one which gives man the experience of the eternity of existence and the feeling of his own immortality – all this taken together seems to be reminiscent of the Christianized version of the Dionysian ritual which is to be found in an 'adaptation' of Greek mythology entitled *Bajeczna starożytność* – a well known book written by the eminent scholar Tadeusz Zieliński⁴⁸:

"... boskie natchnienie owładnęło sercem Tyrezjasza; zaczął głosić o nowym bogu Bakchosie-Dionizosie, synu Zeusa i Semeli. Odślonił on ludziom znaczenie tajemnego związku rodziców boga: Zeus żył w rozterce z Matką-Ziemią, wyrwawszy ludzkość spod władzy jej praw, pod którymi żyła przedtem na

Divine inspiration descended onto Tiresias and he proclaimed the new god Bacchus-Dionysos, son of Zeus and Semele. He disclosed to people the secret of the god's parents' union: the discord between Zeus and his mother the Earth goddess, from whose domination he had, by giving it the power of

⁴⁷ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 30.

⁴⁸ Cf. T. Terlecki, *The Dionysian and Apollinian antinomy in Kazimierz Wierzyński's Early Poetry*, ed.cit., p. 520. Cf. T. Zieliński, *Bajeczna starożytność*, Warsaw 1957, pp. 21 – 22.

równi z innymi stworzeniami, i wprowadziwszy ją na drogę rozwoju umysłowego. Lecz na tej drodze nie ma spokoju duchowego i dlatego Zeus zrodził rozjemcę – Dionizosa. Został on wychowany daleko, wśród nimf góry Zeusowej; teraz wraca do rodzinnego miasta swej matki i niesie mu cenny dar – swe misteria, z nimi zaś pojednanie z Matką-Ziemią. On rzuci hasło – i zbiegną się jego czciciele, bachanci i bachantki, na święte polanki ojczystych gór, aby choć w ciągu kilku dni żyć tam wedle praw Matki-Ziemi; będą nocowali na zielonej murawie, będą spędzali dni w wesołych korowodach, przy dźwiękach szalonej muzyki – tympanów, cymbałów i fletów. Ogarnie ich nieokiełznany zachwyty, wyda im się, że dusza oddzieli się od ciała i żyje własnym, niewymownie szczęśliwym życiem, że ta ich dusza ma swój własny byt i jest niezniszczalna, że nie zginie, gdy ciało w proch się rozsypie. Bóg ześle na swych bachantów i bachantki cudowne błogosławieństwo: odziani w skóry jelenie, z tytsem zamiast broni, staną się nietykalni dla przyrody i dla ludzi. Sama Matka-Ziemia będzie ich karmiła i poila, dając im mleko, miód, wino, gdzie i ile zapagną”.

reasoning, snatched mankind, which up till then had been her subject together with all the rest of creation. The state of discord was responsible for spiritual disquiet and to obviate it Zeus conceived Dionysos the mediator. Dionysos had been brought up in a far away country among the nymphs of Olympus; but he returned to his mother's native city bringing the precious gift of his mysteries and, with them, reconciliation with Mother Earth. When he calls his worshippers the Bacchantes will come down to the clearings in the mountains to live there, only for a few days, according to the law of Mother Earth. They will sleep in the green sward and spend the day in happy cavorting to the sound of the wild music of drums cymbals and flutes. Under a spell of unbridled rapture they will feel their souls leave their bodies and attain an independent and inexpressibly happy existence, indestructable, imperishable even when the flesh turns into ashes. The God will send them his thraumaturgic blessing. Clothed in deer skins, with thyrsus in place of arms, they will be inviolable to man or beast. Mother Earth herself will provide them with food and drink: as much of milk and wine as they will wish for.

4. The dark, tragic pole of the Dionysian myth – absent in Wierzyński's early poetry – is also to be found in *Piąta pora roku*. The 'price' of – or condition for – spiritual rebirth through contact with the earth and with the community of the living and the dead is the protagonist's symbolic death:

Wiem. Dawno już doszczętnie wymarłem
A jednak trwam znów.

(Stanza 16)

This dark pole of the Dionysian myth is foreshadowed in the poem's opening stan-

zas by the motif of *gorzkie zale* – a Lenten service which anticipates Christ's passion. In *Piąta pora roku*, however, this dark pole may well be fused with the favorite myth of the Polish Romantics, namely the Eleusinian myth – the story of Demeter and Persephone interpreted as being about the future spiritual rebirth of mankind through the suffering of individuals and of nations. At the beginning of the twentieth century this interpretation of the myth made its appearance in Wyspiański's visionary drama entitled *Noc listopadowa*, the theme of which is the unsuccessful 1830 uprising against Russia.

Demeter's farewell to Persephone (who returns to Hades) takes place in the autumn. In *Piąta pora roku* the protagonist's parents come to him at about the same time of the year (late autumn-early winter) in order to take him to the other side of life – *w głąb, w tajemniczy obszar*.

VI

By means of an internally celebrated Dionysian-Eleusinian ritual – i.e. by means of rebirth after symbolic death – the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* achieves that superhuman state of visionary ecstasy – “life in death, death in life” – which is sought by the protagonist of Yeats's *The Tower*, stylized as the hero of the myth of the Grail.

The mystical vision of the unity of all being together with its accompanying emotional atmosphere belongs to the lyrical ‘axis’ of *Piąta pora roku*. As a son of the Earth, as the embodiment of the earth's self-awareness, as the leader of the ritual chorus, as the leader of the great community of personal spirits and as a visionary poet, the poem's protagonist reveals to his listeners the secret of life and of eternity, which is conceived of as being the last stage in the cycle of transformation undergone by the existence of nature and man. The apple (*jabluszko*) which rolls under the bed of Earth would seem to symbolize immortality – acquired in the garden of the Hesperides by Hercules (one of the heroes of Mickiewicz's *Oda do młodości*).

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is therefore not only the leader of a Graeco-Slavonic-Christian ritual, but – like the protagonist of Yeats's *The Tower* – a Platonic inspired poet, revealer of the truth about the world and man. The symbol of this inspiration is the bird, which causes the sudden expansion of the protagonist's consciousness to cosmic dimensions. This bird not only heralds the eternal cycle of birth and transformation of the Nietzschean myth but also brings to mind the birds of the Romantic poetry of Norwid and Słowacki:

1. In part III of Norwid's long poem entitled *Pięć zarysów* the bird symbolizes the idea of metempsychosis: after death the hearts (i.e. spirits) of the most sensitive men transmigrate into the bodies of birds, whereas those of the less sensitive must inhabit plants and minerals:

The motif of fire which accompanies this mystical bird (=God) in Słowacki's poem becomes an element of the outer world – absorbed by the protagonist's memory – in *Piąta pora roku*:

Obszyłem się liśćmi, porosłem górami
Paliły się we mnie ogniska pastuchów: (in Stanza 4)

This prosaic transposition of the motif of fire – the attribute of the inspired poet – points to a reinterpretation of the sources of poetic inspiration by Wierzyński. In *Piąta pora roku* inspiration comes simultaneously from two directions – from the earth (fire) and from the sky (bird). The distinction between earth and sky is thus blurred somewhat. The bird and the fire function both as realistic elements of man's everyday environment and as symbols of creation. This 'mystery of everyday life' (tajemnica codzienności) was cultivated by Wierzyński from his very beginnings as a poet (cf. *Tryptyk o dzieciach* in *Wiosna i wino*)⁵¹. As an émigré, he reinterpreted the most fantastic and ecstatic imaginations of the Romantics (which were nevertheless dear to him)⁵² in the same manner.

4. The bird of *Piąta pora roku*, which evokes a vision of the land of the protagonist's childhood, is also related to the angel – the guardian Spirit of the earthly homeland of the (Polish) Romantics. Such a transformation of a bird (the stork – which in the Polish countryside is still spoken of as the guardian of the homestead where it chooses to build its nest) into an angel occurs in Słowacki's metempsychic epic poem entitled *Król Duch*, woven around motifs from Poland's prehistoric and mediaeval past.

The narrator of this poem is the Spirit Her (=the mythical Er of Book X of Plato's *Republic*) who chooses to be reincarnated in successive Polish rulers, legendary, mediaeval and mythical:

On potem w duchów świętych tajemnicy
Najgłębszej – zasiadł przecudowną chatę
Na szmaragdowych łąkach, przy Kruszwicy,
Nad którą boże dwa twory skrzydlate
Jak dwa posągi wiejskie okolicy
Stały ... A gniazdo ich, mchami brodate,
W ogniu komina ponad chaty czołem
Księżycem zdało się – a ptak aniołem⁵³.

⁵¹ Cf. J. Dudek, op.cit., pp. 30 - 38.

⁵² Cf. *O Moim Genjusz* [in:] K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 475. Cf. *Dziady*, ibidem, p. 488. Cf. *Narodziny z ptakami*, ibidem, p. 500.

⁵³ Quoted by K. Wyka, *Thanatos i Polska*, Kraków 1971, pp. 112 – 113. Cf. J. Słowacki, *Dzieła wszystkie*, ed. J. Kleiner, t. XVII, Wrocław 1975, p. 117.

The Polish Romantics held that every nation as well as every man had its own Guardian Spirit (or Angel). In another well-known poem by Słowacki we read:

Anioły stoją na rodzinnych polach,
I chcąc powitać lecą w nasze strony⁵⁴.

In *Król Duch* the protagonist's Slavonic homeland is described as follows:

Kraina pełna zamków i kościołów
Z niebem związana wstęgami aniołów.

In almost every Polish landscape painted by the Symbolist artist Jacek Malczewski (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) – in whose work Romantic, Dionysian and Franciscan motifs are fused with motifs from Polish folklore (as in Wierzyński's *Piąta pora roku*) – there are angels, complete with colourful, 'full-size' wings and having the beauty of country girls⁵⁵. The angels accompany a young man on his earthly peregrination (Tobias series). The paintings symbolize human life conceived as a never-ending journey (cf. Tobias's journey to the home of his father). The angel is therefore associated with life, death, youth, old age and eternity.

Malczewski's paintings entitled *Autoportret z Tobiaszem i Parkami* (1912) and *Portret Feliksa Jasińskiego* (1903) would seem to constitute an iconographic parallel to the situation outlined by Wierzyński at the beginning of *Piąta pora roku*⁵⁶. In *Autoportret z Tobiaszem i Parkami*, which is a Symbolist self-portrait, the artist – posing as Tobias the elder – can be seen sitting with hands joined as for prayer (in the manner of St. Francis). Before him (to the right) stands a boy – Tobias the younger – holding up to his father's face a fish which he has already begun to cut open. Behind Tobias the elder stand three plain-looking country women who represent the Parcae. Behind Tobias the younger stands a beautiful young woman with wings who functions at one and the same time as: the Archangel Raphael; a supernumerary member of the Parcae – holding with one hand the thread/fishing-line (to which the fish is still attached) and in the other a sharp instrument; the Muse; the Angel of Death. This symbolic scene has similarities with that imagined by Wierzyński in the opening section of *Piąta pora roku*. Here the protagonist – lost in meditation – is visited by five symbolic beings. Four of these are the personifications of the seasons, which also function as Muses, Parcae, Bacchantes and participators in the ritual:

⁵⁴ K. Wyka, op.cit., p. 109.

⁵⁵ Cf. K. Wyka, op.cit., chapters 9, 10, 11.

⁵⁶ According to Kazimierz Wyka, Malczewski's angels can also be seen to be related to the Parcae, the Furies and the Chimeras. According to the poet Jan Lechoń (a friend of Wierzyński) Malczewski's angels can also be seen to be related to fauns. Cf. *Jacek Malczewski* [in:] Jan Lechoń *Poezje*, Warsaw 1973. Cf. another of Malczewski's paintings entitled *Piosnka jesienna*, which depicts a young man dressed in what appears to be a soldier's greatcoat in the company of a girl holding in her hands a dead swallow (symbolizing death and the approach of winter).

Jedna była młodzieńcza, wesoła,
 Jeszcze śni mi się, jeszcze mnie woła
 (Ach pusty śmiech, niedorzeczność!),
 Druga była żarliwa, gorąca,
 Czerwoną wargą jeszcze mnie trąca
 Trzecia – jesienna, czwarta – zimowa,
 A piąta – śmierć i wieczność.

The four seasons reappear in Stanza 12:

(...) i legły u nogi
 Jaskółcze wiosny, bukowe lata
 I jesień sowa i zima brodata.

Here the fifth season is not further defined. Its 'emissary', however, would seem to be the bird – released perhaps only a short time ago. This fifth character would seem to fulfil the functions of both the angel and Tobias the younger in Malczewski's painting.

The hypothesis that the fifth character (season) in the opening section of *Piąta pora roku* is linked with the bird – emissary (which [she] may well have just released) would seem to find some support in the second of Malczewski's paintings mentioned above. In the painting entitled *Portret Feliksa Jasińskiego* we see the head (in profile, facing left) of a bearded man who – against the background of a winter landscape – is looking at a bird – a kingfisher – which is being held by a straw doll. The doll, which has a wreath of flowers on its head, represents Marzanna – the Slavonic deity of winter. In conformity with ancient custom, this doll is ritually drowned at the end of winter each year in order to herald the coming of the spring.

In Slavonic folklore, the kingfisher (which – significantly perhaps – was more likely to be seen in Wierzyński's Sub-Carpathian countryside than in other parts of Poland in its frontiers between the two World Wars) heralds earth's rebirth in the spring. In the poetry of Słowacki, the kingfisher (*halcyjon*) often makes its appearance and is at times compared to an angel. In Żeromski's historical novel entitled *Popioły* the kingfisher (*zimorodek* – the bird's common name in Polish, cf. *zima* = winter, *rodzić* = give birth to) heralds changes in the characters' lives⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ Cf. K. Wyka, op.cit., pp. 145 – 147. Cf. also Wierzyński's poem entitled *Psalm o wierzbach*, in which the kingfisher is associated with the Carpathian spring (*Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 525). This symbolism of the kingfisher – the favourite bird of the European Romantics – has its origins in Greek mythology. The blissfully happy couple Alcyone (daughter of Aeolus, king of the winds) and Ceyx (son of the Morning Star) are punished for their presumption by the gods (Hera and Zeus), who cause Ceyx to be drowned. When Alcyone out of grief throws herself into the sea, the gods take pity on their victims and change them both into birds, calming the seas once a year (before and after the winter solstice) in order to allow them just enough time to build their (seaborne) nest and hatch out their eggs. The kingfisher has therefore come to symbolize: extreme happiness, which – because it is accompanied by a sense of blind self-sufficiency – is short-lived and ends in disaster; the fragile union of the heavens and the earthly elements (and hence fragile spiritual and material fertility); peace and tranquillity which is fragile.

In Wierzyński's poem entitled *Alviano* the bird has Franciscan -Dionysian associations. Here St. Francis appears to be at one and the same time a deity of nature and a bird preaching to fellow birds. The theme of the 'sermon' is the unity of all creation⁵⁸:

Co on wam opowiadał,
Ptaki i Alviano,
Że słyszy jak w gęstej wiośnie
Trawa musuje i rośnie
Nad Umbrą zaczarowaną?

Że ręce ma z bluszczu,
Że oblatuje wesoły
Rozkołysane drzewa,
Gardłem zielonem śpiewa
I mieszka w nich, jak dzięcioły?

Że mówić można do ostu
I pisać na wodzie wspomnienia
I wszystko to ktoś zrozumie,
Wiatr mu powtórzy w szumie,
Bo wszystko – z jednego stworzenia?

Co on wam mówił? Powtórzcie,
Winnice, oliwki, zające,
Że można modlić się w ptakach,
W liściach, mchu i widłakach,
I że można się modlić niechcący?

What dewy sermons did he preach
That made you birds of Alviano
End a spring note to hear him teach

How hint of green becomes a blade

Of grass in Umbrian carpets laid?
And did the ivy ask him how
To wreath upon a sap-filled bough,

The leaves pretending they were birds,

Joining their music to his words?
Did choruses from other trees
Contribute on an April breeze?
I know he spoke with purple thistle,

Wrote songs on recollection's water

And taught the winds a milder whistle.

–As you birds did, they understood,

For we are one in the wide wood.
What did he tell you as you grew?
The leafy vines and olives knew
– Even the stricken leaping hare
Who all unknowing shook with prayer.

(transl. Livingston Welch)

Cf. the entry *alcyon* in: J. Chevalier, *Dictionnaire des symboles*, Paris 1973, vol. I, pp. 37 – 39.

Cf. the entry *Ceyx* in: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 1979.

⁵⁸ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 437. Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Selected poems*, ed.cit., p. 17.

It can therefore be no great surprise that in *Piąta pora roku*, the bird turns out to be an 'emissary' of the Spirits of the protagonist's dead parents, who would seem to be latently present at the beginning of the poem and who function as guardian Spirits in that part of the protagonist's inner space which is occupied by the fifth season. These guardian Spirits would seem to 'correspond' in their function to the doll holding a kingfisher, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias the younger in Malczewski's painting.

The 'represented world' of *Piąta pora roku* – like that of Malczewski's paintings – is composed of both realistic and fantastic elements. As a poet, however, Wierzyński has greater freedom for manoeuvre between the two poles of realism and fantasy, since the objects represented by the poet are 'schematized' – i.e. are imaginal skeleton-structures (*schematy wyobrażeniowe*) which are to be 'actualised' by a process of 'concretization' (to use Ingarden's term – *konkretyzacja*)⁵⁹ in the listener's or hearer's mind – to a much greater extent than those represented by the painter. The objects, events and situations represented in *Piąta pora roku* have been 'schematized' in such a way as to allow them to be 'actualised' in the listener's mind in one of three ways – realistically; fantastically; both realistically and fantastically. In Wierzyński's poem, the *oscillation* between the two poles of fantasy and realism which is so characteristic of Romantic works has therefore been replaced by the *coexistence* of fantasy and realism⁶⁰. The poet achieves this by the use of allusions, suggestions and words having multiple meanings, as well as by the 'prosaic transposition' of anything out of the ordinary and the 'materialization' of abstractions.

In *Piąta pora roku* Spring – like Summer – has a human psychology, being 'youthful', 'gay' and 'smiling/laughing'. Spring's attitude to human Spirits is – as in the case of the other seasons – that of a tame animal:

(...) i legły u nogi

Jaskółcze wiosny, bukowe lata

I jesień sowa i zima brodata.

Spring is also described as being *jaskółcza* (an adjective formed from *jaskółka* = swallow). Taken together, these characteristics attributed to Spring may lead the reader in the following 'directions':

(a) The reader may imagine Spring as a Slavonic or Greek nymph (or Muse) whose head is wreathed not in flowers – which would have been the 'normal thing' – but in swallows. Thus reconstructed, Spring would be a fantastic creation reminiscent of the Goplana (a nymph) of Słowacki's *Balladyna*.

(b) The reader may stay with the second image of Spring (cf. Stanza 12) and inter-

⁵⁹ Cf. Roman Ingarden, *O Dziele Literackim*, Warsaw 1960, Part II: chapters VIII and IX, Part III: chapter XIII. This work also appeared in German under the title *Das literarische Kunstwerk*.

⁶⁰ Cf. K. Wyka, "Pan Tadeusz". *Studia o poemacie*, Warsaw 1963.

pret the epithet *jaskółcza*. as one evoking the swallows which habitually migrate to Poland in the spring⁶¹.

(c) The third possibility is a combination of the two possibilities already discussed.

Each of these 'choices' or 'paths' is accompanied by a mood of gaiety and light-heartedness.

The most conspicuous 'contour' of the 'represented world' of *Piąta pora roku* – like that of Malczewski's paintings – is its 'everyday' and autobiographical aspect, made up by the protagonist's personal experiences and objects and events reminiscent of those known to the reader in everyday life. There are, however, several dimensions to this 'everyday' aspect of the poem's 'represented world'. The protagonist-poet's life and his links with people and with his native Carpathian landscape are shown through the following 'prisms', so to speak:

1. The 'prism' of an archetypal premonition of inevitable death, accompanied by the hope of attaining a complete vision of truth – cf. Stanza 15:

Teraz tu słyszę, czego nikt nie słyszy,
I widzę rzeczy na skroś i spod spodu
I pełny jestem śmierci jak ciszy
I pełny wieczności jak chłodu.

2. The 'prism' of mythological and Biblical motifs.
3. The 'prism' of Polish folklore.
4. The 'prism' of Romantic poetry.

VII

The most ambiguous motif of *Piąta pora roku* is that of the bird – an element of the poem's 'nature' background; a symbol of the eternal recurrence of phenomena; the envoy of eternity and death; a symbol of inspiration; a 'relation' of the Muses, the Parcae and the guardian Angel-Spirit; a symbol of nostalgia (home sickness); a symbol of the unity of heaven and earth. The motif of the bird is the poem's main semantic and thematic link (nature – eternity – imagination – art).

It can therefore be no accident that in the opening section of *Piąta pora roku* the bird is linked with song and blood – the words *ptak*, *śpiew* and *krew* being the only one-stress verse endings in the entire poem. This association of the bird with song and blood leads us to yet another meaning of the symbol. Like the bird in Part III of Yeats's *The Tower*, the bird in *Piąta pora roku* would seem to symbolize 'living truth' – equated with the words uttered by the inspired poet and with the poet's 'inner truth', which is either a reflection of or a synonym for absolute truth.

⁶¹ Cf. "Legenda wieczności" [in:] M. Dłuska, *Studia i rozprawy*, ed.cit., vol. III, p. 156.

Such an expressive theory of the inspired words of⁶² saints, great philosophers and poets is to be found in Mickiewicz's Paris lectures (*Wykłady o literaturach słowiańskich* – 1844 – lectures VII and VIII). Like Plotinus's theory of creation (discussed in connection with Yeats's *The Tower*), Mickiewicz's theory would appear to assume that every creator strives to achieve unity of intuitive thought, the creative act and the result (i.e. the work of art). Another tenet would appear to be that the inspired word reaches the hearer's (or reader's) soul – on which it 'acts' directly – without being distorted in any way. For Mickiewicz, therefore, the inspired 'word' has the following characteristics⁶³:

1. It is a reflection of the word of God (promień słowa Bożego⁶⁴. – i.e. it is partial revelation (*objawienie cząstkowe*)⁶⁵.

2. It is an expression of the human soul⁶⁶.

3. It has two aspects – spiritual and material. Both aspects form an indissoluble whole (cf. the human body and soul). The force which binds both aspects together is love, which is found in man and is the source of life, creation and inspiration – the divine element of the world:

“Słowo jest to ciało i duch stopione
razem ogniem boskim znajdującym się w
człowieku... Słowo jest to cały czło-
wiek”⁶⁷.

The word is the flesh and the spirit made
one by the heavenly fire present in
human nature. The word is the whole
man.

4. Mickiewicz compares it to an 'airborne ball of fire' (*lotna i płomienista kulka*)⁶⁸. Indirectly, therefore, it may be associated with a bird. This would certainly seem to be the case in *Piąta pora roku*.

⁶² The meaning of Mickiewicz's term 'word' is complex. 'Word' may mean: 'God's revelation to man'; 'God'; 'the inspired work of art'; 'inspired action'; 'the inspired man'; 'the basis of being'.

⁶³ I have chosen only those characteristics which are relevant to my analysis of Wierzyński's poem.

⁶⁴ "Ale jeżeli ciężko otrzymać Słowo, promień Słowa Bożego, jeżeli w niewielu tylko epokach dano światu widzieć organa tego Słowa, ciężko też je przyjąć" (Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok Czwarty, p. 150).

⁶⁵ "Zastanawiając się nad wewnętrzną pracą naszego ducha, moglibyśmy już przyjść do niejasnego poznania Słowa Bożego, bo każdy z nas ma w sobie iskrę Bożą, ma swoje Słowo Boże, i wszystkie nasze dzieła są Słowami cząstkowymi" (ibidem, p. 148).

⁶⁶ "Pisarze i artyści, wynętrzając się w poezji albo w sztuce, czynią nie co innego, tylko dogadzają potrzebnie udzielania się naszym duchom" (ibidem, p. 130).

⁶⁷ Ibidem, pp. 132 – 133.

⁶⁸ "Dla przekonania się, ile w tem prawdy, dosyć będzie, jeżeli każdy zastanowi się, co się z nim dzieje w tych rzadkich chwilach, kiedy miłość silna, szczerza i czysta, kiedy uczucie patriotyczne albo natchnienie boskie każe mu mówić. Jakiś ogień wewnętrzny zapala się natenczas w głębi naszego jestestwa, przebiega nagle po wszystkich żyłach, przejmując, roztopia niejako całą naszą organizację, i z tak roztopionego człowieka duch jego, ciągnąc pierwiastek, (...) tworzy tę lotną i płomienistą kulkę, którą nazywamy słowem, która wylatuje z nas, nie rozłączając się z nami, która zdaje się znikać, a jednak trwa tak długo, jak duch, co ją wydał, to jest – bez końca" (ibidem, p. 132).

5. The voice of the inspired poet is a 'current of life and strength' (*prąd życia i siły*) which penetrates the listener's soul directly⁶⁹.

6. Undoubtedly influenced by the Gospel, Mickiewicz equates the word with 'spiritual power' (*moc duchowa*) – the essence of which is love – and with food (bread)⁷⁰. Mickiewicz thus considers the inspired word to be a source of both spiritual and material (biological) life⁷¹:

"Moc to słowo, które się już urzeczywistnia, wchodzi w życie, daje żywotność, karmi"⁷².

7. As an expression of the power (*siła/moc*) of the spirit, the inspired word is also equated with action and work. All work is *wyłączenie czucia i mocy*⁷³.

8. The inspired word is an act (*czyn*), insofar as it is a combination of (good) intention and inner strength (*intencja i siła połączone w jednym duchu*)⁷⁴.

9. The word is therefore 'holy' (*święte*) and has creative power⁷⁵.

10. Every man who is inspired is a real author (*sprawca*)⁷⁶.

11. Every man who is inspired is also the 'word incarnate' (*słowo wcielone*)⁷⁷.

12. All human works (*czyny*) which are the result of inspiration are 'partial words'⁷⁸ (*słowa cząstkowe*).

⁶⁹ "...bo z dźwiękiem głosu tych mężów bożych wszedłby w nas taki prąd życia i siły, że duch nasz zdołałby zaraz uchwycić wewnętrzne znaczenie tego dźwięku, pojąć ich pragnienie Boga, zawarte w wyrazach, a wyrazy te natychmiast umysł nasz przekładałby sobie na francuskie" (Ibidem, p. 134).

⁷⁰ Cf. Note 68. "Mówiliśmy o cudowności słowa żywiącego, o duchu stającym się pokarmem" (ibidem, p. 139).

⁷¹ "Ewangelia powiada, że człowiek żyje nie tylko chlebem, ale i słowem Bożem. Odwołując się do Ewangelii, można rzec śmiało, że, jeżeli gdzie objawia się niedostatek i głód duchowy, to pewno tam zabrakło słowa Chrystusowego. Ewangelia rozszana była po świecie na zasitek ducha ludzkiego. Skoro zaś zważymy wpływ ducha na stan fizyczny człowieka, odkryjemy i prawdziwą przyczynę nędzy materialnej, która w istocie nie jest niczem innym jak tylko następstwem nędzy moralnej – a wtedy, łatwo da się nam pojąć i ta jeszcze cudowność słowa, jego działalność na ciało, jego pożywność (...) bo niezawodnie słowo może nakarmić" (ibidem, p. 136).

⁷² Ibidem, p. 136.

⁷³ "Praca zaś podług Hezjoda jest to wyłączenie czucia i mocy" (ibidem, p. 137).

⁷⁴ "Intencja i siła połączone w jednym duchu, stanowią czyn. Ten, kto taki czyn spełnia, jest prawdziwym autorem. *Auctor*, w języku łacińskim, znaczy sprawcę, człowieka, przez którego rzecz jaka zostaje nie napisana, ale sprawiona, i który pomnaża *auger*, zbiór rzeczy, mających byt w czynie. Takie sprawowanie rzeczy, taka realizacja daje razem człowiekowi powagę, władzę istotną" (ibidem, pp. 141 – 142).

⁷⁵ "Rzecz ta, z siebie niezmiernie ważna dla wszystkich nas, Słowian, dotyka szczególnie. S ł o w i a n i e wychodzi na to, co lud s ł o w a. Lud ten zachowuje dotąd czystą tradycję znaczenia słowa, do którego zawsze przywiązuje pojęcie świętości i mocy twórczej" (ibidem, p. 131).

⁷⁶ Cf. footnote No. 74.

⁷⁷ "Z doktryn nic nie wynika: doktryna jest to sposób widzenia jednego człowieka (...) Rzeczą, nie mogącą się sformułować, trwać, żywą, działającą, jest sam człowiek, słowo wcielone. Tego to człowieka przeczuwają i zapowiadają poeci polscy; człowieka, który *śród głosów mylnych, wśród wrzasków tysiąca, / Uchem duszy rozpozna przeznaczeń kół grzanie, / Wskoczy w rydwan wyroków i zajmie siedzenie, / I po czasie przejedzie jako Przeznaczenie*" (Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok Drugi 1841 – 1842, p. 320).

⁷⁸ "... bo każdy z nas ma w sobie iskrę Bożą, ma swoje Słowo Boże, i wszystkie nasze dzieła są Słowami cząstkowymi. Co to jest ten błysk, w którym artysta pojmuje od razu cały zarys, cały pomysł swojego dzieła? Błysk ten jest tego dzieła Słowem" (Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok Czwarty, p. 148).

Mickiewicz's theory of the inspired 'word' can therefore be seen to be concerned with (inspired) thought, speech, acts, works and people. It is also intimately related to Mickiewicz's conception of the Slavs as people who are naturally receptive to the inspired word (i.e. revelation)⁷⁹ – their name (*Słowianin* = Slav) being traditionally considered to be derived from the word *słowo* (=word) – and to his conception of the language of the Slavs⁸⁰ as an organic being (*jestestwo organiczne*) which:

“przeszedłszy przez wszystkie stopnie niższe swojego bytu zachowało w sobie razem życie roślinne, zwierzęce i ludzkie, a każde z nich w dojrzałym rozwinięciu i zupełnej całości”⁸¹.

This language has both a human and a divine dimension. It is at once an expression of the inspired spirit and an 'image' or 'voice' of nature, conceived as an organic whole⁸².

It would seem that in many of the poems he wrote as an émigré, Wierzyński alluded to this 'theory' or rather 'mythology' of the inspired 'word' which was elaborated by Mickiewicz. In *Mowa i ziemia* (in: *Siedem podków*, 1954) the protagonist's native language – equated in turn with: the earth's whisper; the earth's song; the protagonist's unhappy fate; the protagonist's love 'sown in blood' – is his inseparable travelling companion. In a poem entitled *Tuwim* (in: *Tkanka ziemi*) the Polish language is equated with nectar-rich clover, the poet – Tuwim – being equated with a spring, the water of which refreshes his native tongue, people, plants and animals. In a poem entitled *Poezja* (in: *Sen mara*, 1969) poetry is described as 'immaterial matter' – equated with love – and is also associated by the protagonist with the 'immaterial matter' of the Romantics⁸³, i.e. with electricity. In this poem the inspired word – the 'fiery word' – is described variously as a 'grain', as 'light' and as 'conception'.

In *Piąta pora roku* the inspired word, symbolized by the bird – cf. Mickiewicz's 'airborne ball of fire' – is associated with the song of nature and with the protagonist's

⁷⁹ “Nazwa ‘Słowianie’ oznacza więc, w interpretacji Mickiewicza, nie lud posiadający słowo, lecz lud oczekujący Słowa. Słowo zaś, słowo objawione, zawsze wciela się w wielką jednostkę o szczególnych uzdolnieniach charyzmatycznych (‘Bóg nie ma innego sposobu przemawiania do ludzi: musi obrać człowieka’)”

– A. Walicki, *Filozofia a mesjanizm*, Warsaw 1970, pp. 276 – 277.

⁸⁰ “... Słowianie wszystkie zasoby umysłowe złączyli w ten jeden olbrzymi pomnik. Język słowiański, tak dawny, jak Indyan i Germanów, żyje dziś jeszcze w ustach osiemdziesięciu milionów ludzi” (Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok Pierwszy, p. 23).

⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 9.

⁸² “Można by powiedzieć, że cały ten ogromny język, jakby odlany z samorodnego kruszcu bez żadnej mieszaniny, wytrysnął i rozwinął się z jednego słowa (...) Są w nim obadwa pierwiastki boski i ludzki – składa się on niby z dwóch języków, które rozwijają się razem, jeden, zstępując od rzeczy niewidomych i wyższych do rzeczy widomych i niższych, drugi, wznosząc się ze świata materialnego w świat duchowy. Ten sam podział znajdujemy w Genesie, gdzie Bóg jednym jestestwem sam daje nazwiska, drugich nazwanie zostawuje człowiekowi. (...) Ze wszystkich języków słowiański rozległością swoją najwięcej odpowiada ogromowi natury” (ibidem, pp. 23 – 24).

⁸³ Cf. *Cztery toasty pewnego Chemika na cześć istot promienistych* [in:] A. Mickiewicz, *Dzieła poetyckie*, ed.cit., pp. 107 – 108.

blood. The association *ptak – śpiew – krew* would therefore seem to point to the life-giving force of the inspired word, which at the end of the poem becomes an apple (i.e. a form of nourishment) – cf. once again Mickiewicz's 'airborne ball of fire' and the inspired word as bread.

Mickiewicz's theory, according to which the inspired word is equated with 'God', 'inspired man', 'action', 'work', 'thought' and defined as the maximum concentration of inner feeling and strength, would seem to explain why in *Piąta pora roku* the description of poetic ecstasy takes the form of a description of consciously undertaken activities and why this description gives way to (or develops into) inner action:

Obszyłem się liśćmi, porosłem górami,
Paliły się we mnie ogniska pastuchów:

The fact that Mickiewicz equates the inspired word with the inspired man would also seem to throw light on the suggestion – found in the last part of *Piąta pora roku* – that the protagonist's dead parents appear to see him as being possessed by the bird, their emissary:

Przypominają mi nagle, że ptak
Przeleciał przez mnie, ptak,
I drzwi zostawił otwarte
Na góry moje, na drzewa,
Na wszystkie sprawy
Żywe i martwe.

Czemu nie śpiewa?

VIII

Another motif (after those of the bird, the Muses and fire) which is linked with inspired poetry in *Piąta pora roku* is that of sleep on the warm, dry grass of forest clearings (*na siennych, wygrzanych polanach*). This motif is also concealed in the poem's Carpathian background. It belongs to the sphere of the Dionysian myth present in the poem and is also linked with the Romantic concept of the inspired poet.

In Polish Romantic lyric poetry the state of ecstasy – reminiscent of Dionysian inebriation⁸⁴ – is commonly represented as a state (intermediate between contemplation and action, sleep and consciousness) in which the poet becomes dispossessed of his body and encompasses (with his spirit) the earth, rising above it in order to reach the

⁸⁴ Cf. *Mania twórcza* [in:] T. Zieliński, *Po co Homer? Świat anyczny a my*, Ed. A. Biernacki, Kraków 1970, pp. 308 – 316.

invisible world. The perception of reality which accompanies this state of ecstasy is far superior to that which accompanies consciousness. Vision therefore often gives way to interior action and lyric monologue is often replaced by narration. This is the case, for example, in Mickiewicz's poem entitled *Widzenia*. The protagonist of this poem – like that of *Piąta pora roku* – encompasses with his spirit the whole visible and invisible world. He feels the movements of the entire universe within himself and meets face to face with God and the Angels:

Dźwięk mię uderzył – nagle moje ciało,
 Jak ów kwiat polny, otoczony puchem,
 Prysło, zerwane anioła podmuchem,
 I ziarno duszy nagie pozostało.

I zdało mi się, żem się nagle zbudził
 Ze snu straszego, co mię długo trudził.
 I jak zbudzony ociera pot z czoła,
 Tak ocierałem swoje przeszłe czyny,
 Które wisiały przy mnie, jak łupiny
 Wokoło świeżo rozkwitłego ziola.

(...)

Teraz widziałem całe wielkie morze,
 Płynące z środka jak ze źródła, z Boga,

(...)

I mogłem latać po całym przestworze,
 Biegać, jak promień przy boskim promieniu
 Mądrości bożej; i w dziwnym widzeniu
 I światłem byłem, i żrenicą razem.

(...)

A w środku siebie, jakoby w ognisku,
 Czułem od razu całe Przyrodzenie.
 Stałem się osią w nieskończonym kole,
 Sam nieruchomy, czułem jego ruchy;
 Byłem w pierwotnym żywiołów żywiole,
 W miejscu skąd wszystkie rozchodzą się duchy,
 Świat ruszające, same nieruchome⁸⁵:

In *Piąta pora roku* – as in Mickiewicz's *Widzenie* – the protagonist's inner vision gives way to inner action. In Wierzyński's poem the motifs of sleep on forest clearings (*na siennych, wygrzanych polanach* – cf. Stanza 5) and the protagonist's ascent to the mountain-tops (cf. Stanza 16) correspond in Mickiewicz's poem to the motifs of sleep and the protagonist's flight into eternity. The two visions differ basically in that the

⁸⁵ A. Mickiewicz, *Dzieła poetyckie*, ed.cit., p. 68.

vision of Wierzyński's protagonist is dominated by earth, whereas that of Mickiewicz's is dominated by heaven. That of Wierzyński's protagonist is furthermore a retrospective vision of (the protagonist's) life, which is nearing its end. This would seem to explain the fact that in *Piąta pora roku* heaven is shown from a terrestrial standpoint. It would also seem to explain the absence of God, with Whom Mickiewicz's protagonist becomes united. In *Piąta pora roku* Mickiewicz's God and Angels have been 'replaced' – so to speak – by the protagonist's native Carpathian landscape and by the Spirits of his dead parents. It is the latter – and not Angels – who control life on earth and whom the winds and seasons obey (Stanza 12). It is to them – not to God – that the protagonist is accountable for what he creates. It is from them that he inherits the earth, people, plants and animals of his native Carpathian homeland:

Bo przyszli potem z daleka umarli,
 Łokciem o lasy jodłowe się wsparli,
 Patrzyli wokół – a ziemia szeroka
 Drobną im rzęsą zawisła u oka,
 Wiatr stanął w miejscu, stanęły drogi
 W białym spokoju, i legły u nogi
 Jaskółcze wiosny, bukowe lata
 I jesień sowa i zima brodata.

I rzekł mój ojciec do matki mojej,
 Dym odpędzając pod koniec wojny:
 “Nie bój się, wszystko się tak uspokoi
 W śmierci wieczyście spokojnej”.

I wzięli mnie. Wiedli w głąb, w tajemniczy
 Obszar, gdzie nic się z tej ziemi nie liczy,
 Gdzie wiosnie, latu, jesieni i zimie
 W innym języku nadano imię.
 Gdzie niezliczone, zawile odmiany,
 W jeden zrównały się czas odwikłany,
 Który też ustał, – tyle, że sprzęta
 Opustoszałe po zgiełku mrowisko, –
 I dokonało wtedy się wszystko:
 Ostatnia pora otwarła się. Piąta

Teraz tu słyszę, czego nikt nie słyszy,
 I widzę rzeczy na skroś i spod spodu
 I pełny jestem śmierci jak ciszy
 I pełny wieczności jak chłodu.

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
 A jednak trwam znów, i łokciem o góry
 Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
 I patrzę, synów mych szukam, czy który
 Obszył się liśćmi i porósł lasami,

A może stoi przy ogniu pastuchów
 I pójdzie śladem, co został za nami,
 I znów powtórzy przyrodę tych ruchów
 Gdy zgrzane życie porami gęstymi
 Dyszało w słońce i szło do księżycy,
 Gdy we mnie ciekła krew mojej ziemi
 A w matkach mleko i w sosnach żywica.

I rzekł mój ojciec: "Jeszcze go prowadź,
 Bo ludzkie oczy z żalu w nim bledną".
 A matka: "Nie masz tu czego żałować,
 Śmierć i życie, to jedno."

I tak mi mówią, tak pocieszają,
 Że nic nie przepadło, że nie zapomną
 Jak cień mój w tamtym przesunął się kraju,
 Że gospodarkę objąłem ogromną,
 Sienne polany i woły węgierskie,
 Zapach powideł, zimowia niebieskie,
 Sosny masztowe i biedę w Karpatach,
 Cały dobytek, który się splatał
 Z ludzi i roślin i skóry zwierzęcej,
 I nawet mówią mi jeszcze coś więcej,
 Przypominają mi nagle, że ptak
 Przeleciał przez mnie, ptak,
 I drzwi zostawił otwarte
 Na góry moje, na drzewa,
 Na wszystkie sprawy
 Żywe i martwe.

Czemu nie śpiewa?

Więc wyznam wam ostatnią troskę,
 Śpiewajcie ją jak chłopską piosnkę
 I kiedy świat się w zmierzchu ściemnia,
 Zamknijcie okna, spuśćcie story,
 Niech tam gromadzą się wieczory

I gdy powróci z pola ziemia,
 Niech swoje ciężkie zzuje buty
 I kurz otrzepie z nich przysuty,
 Niech się położy, odpoczywa,

Szczęśliwa albo nieszczęśliwa,
 I niech potoczy się jabłuszko
 Pod siennik jej, pod łóżko.

(Stanzas 12 – 20)

IX

The vocation of the inspired poet is to fathom the secret of heaven and earth and to reveal it to others. The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is called upon to do just this by his dead parents, who remind him that: *...ptak/Przeleciał przeze mnie .../I drzwi zostawił otwarte/...Na wszystkie sprawy/ Żywe i martwe*. They also ask him why the bird does not sing: *Czemu nie śpiewa?*

The conception of creation and art which is implicit in the scene with the protagonist's dead parents becomes easier to grasp when it is seen in the light of (creative aspects of) Mickiewicz's conception of expressive art, as set out in his Paris lectures. Mickiewicz's theory of expressive art may be summarized as follows:

1. Art is related to religion⁸⁶. Indeed, art would seem to be a kind of religion.
2. The secret of art is creation⁸⁷.
3. The artist finds 'models' for his creation in an ideal land of personal Spirits. According to Mickiewicz, this land of personal Spirits corresponds to Plato's sphere of ideas⁸⁸.
4. Art is therefore a kind of 'invocation of Spirits', as it were – an expression of a directly experienced vision. According to Mickiewicz, the function of art seems to be both expressive and epistemological:

⁸⁶ Cf. A. Mickiewicz, *Wykłady o literaturach słowiańskich*, Rok III i IV, ed.cit., p. 127: "Dla niektórych ludzi sztuka jest jeszcze jednym sposobem praktykowania religijności, jakiego trzymać się śmieją".

⁸⁷ "Sztuka nie jest także przypomnieniem rzeczywistości: tworzy przedmioty, których nikt nigdy nie widział" (ibidem, p. 127).

⁸⁸ "Skądże więc wziąć wzór, ideał arcydzieła? Ideału tego nie ma gdzie indziej tylko w krainie duchów. Niektórzy filozofowie starożytni, Pytagoras, Platon wiedzieli o tem – wszyscy wielcy artyści to czuli, teoretycy dzisiejsi poczynają domyślać się tego" (loc.cit.).

Sztuka zatem jest pewnym rodzajem wywoływania duchów, jest operacją tajemniczą i świętą... Sztuka nie jest i nie może być innem, jak tylko wyrażaniem widzenia⁸⁹.

Art is the invocation of spirits, an activity both mysterious and holy...

Art is not and cannot be anything other than an expression of a vision.

5. The artist's talent is a 'thread' which links the poet with the invisible world:

"I cóż to jest talent artysty? To, co nazywamy talentem, darem nieba, co artyści czują w sobie, a czego nie starają się dosyć pojąć, nie jest niczym innem, jak tylko spójnią, łączącą ducha artysty ze światem niewidomym: jest to przywilej stykania się z krainą duchów. Poeta polski, Malczewski, powiada:

I drży nić, którą serce do nieba związane:
To kropla słodkiej rosy spadła po niej w ranę⁹⁰.

The thread that joins the heart to heaven trembles as the drop of sweet dew falls from it into the wound

6. Mickiewicz gives the name *cudowność* (= the wonderful/ the marvellous/ *le merveilleux*) to the inspired poet's (characteristic) feeling that he has close links both with the 'land of Spirits' and with nature. He considers this *cudowność* to be the essence of poetry:

Każdy utwór poetycki ma w głębi siebie to życie organiczne, tajemne, nazwane po szkolnemu cudownością, które wznosząc się w miarę jak wzrasta zakres utworu, w wierszach i piosnkach przebija się tylko na kształt lekkiego tchnienia z krain wyższych – w epopei i w dramacie przybiera już widomą postać bóstwa⁹¹.

Every poetic work has in its depths an organic, secret life which can be called, in simple terms, a sense of wonder. Its level rises with the scope of the poem: in simple lines and songs it is only a light breeze from higher regions, in an epic or a drama it takes on a numinous form.

7. Mickiewicz considered that the Slavs have an inborn feeling for *cudowność*.. In his opinion this feeling has its source in the 'virgin', austere and continually changing natural environment of the Slavonic homelands. Mickiewicz also believed that Slavonic oral literature is permeated with *cudowność*:

⁸⁹ Loc.cit.

⁹⁰ Loc.cit.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 66.

Lud słowiański całe życie opowiada i opiewa, co się dzieje pod ziemią, w powietrzu, na niebie... Sztuka wysiła się na tysiące sposobów dla obudzenia w duszy mieszkańców Zachodu uczucia cudowności – u nas dosyć na to samej natury. Ta dziewicza, wspaniała, dzika natura, co z każdym dniem przybiera nowe wdzięki i nową grozę, ma w sobie razem coś niezmiernie świętego i przejmującego strachem ⁹².

The life of Slav peoples is all storytelling and a celebration of what happens in the bowels of the earth, in the air and in the firmament of heaven... Art makes infinite efforts to awaken a sense of wonder in the mind of Western man but we have it in our nature. Our intact, wild nature is full of splendour, altering from day to day, taking on a new attraction and a new dread, carrying something holy and yet awesome.

8. According to Mickiewicz, the poetry of the Slavs is characterized by 'earthiness' (*ziemskość*), by its reluctance to outstep the bounds of nature (*pozostawanie w granicach przyrodzenia*)⁹³ and by the continual presence of birds, plants and animals. The birds and animals are often able to speak.

9. In Mickiewicz's opinion, Polish poetry is distinguished from other Slavonic poetry by its gaiety, joyfulness, joviality and also by its dramatic tendency (contrasts, oppositions)⁹⁴.

10. Mickiewicz felt that Slavonic drama ought to take its inspiration from the cult of the dead (cf. *Dziady*), which – in his opinion – is common to all the Slavonic peoples⁹⁵. Slavonic drama, he thought, ought to be a synthesis of all the poetic 'elements' (*żywioty*) – i.e. genres – dramatic, lyric and epic. It ought also to take the reader to the 'supernatural world' (*świat nadziemski*), thus evoking a feeling of *cudowność*:

Z tego cośmy powiedzieli można wnosić, jak trudno jest napisać dramat słowiański, któryby obejmował wszystkie żywioty poezji narodowej, nigdzie nie ukazujące się tak licznie i tak rozmaicie.

It follows from what we have said that it is exceedingly difficult to write a Slav drama which would contain all the elements of national poetry in all their variety and multiplicity. That drama

⁹² Ibidem, p. 129.

⁹³ Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok I, p. 52.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 9 and 52.

⁹⁵ "Wiemy z historii i mitologii, że oddawanie czci umarłym stanowiło ważną część dawnej religii słowiańskiej, i Dzień Zaduszny był obchodzony ze wszystkich świąt najuroczyściej" (Mickiewicz, op.cit., Rok III, pp. 66 – 67).

Dramat ten powinienby był być lirycznym i przypominać uroczę dźwięki pieśni gminnych – powinienby naśladować opowiadania ... powinienby przytem przenosić w świat naziemski⁹⁶.

ought to imitate the fables of story-tellers and take us into the world of the supernatural.

11. Mickiewicz urges authors of drama to follow in the footsteps of Slavonic (peasant) story-tellers (*bajarze*). These *bajarze* identify themselves completely with the heroes of their tales. The main events are 'acted out' before the listeners:

... autorowie dramatyczni mogliby wziąć bardzo użyteczny przykład z bajarzy gminnych, z wieśniaków słowiańskich, opowiadających bajki. U żadnego ludu niemasz powieści tak bogatych, tak dziwnych, i pewnie żadna publiczność nie słucha tak ciekawie, z takim natężeniem uwagi, jak ta drużyna, co otacza biednego chłopka, prawiącego bajkę w swojej chacie ... Bajarz prawie zawsze sam występuje w zdarzeniach opowiadanych, odgrywa część swojego dramatu. Czasem daje do zrozumienia, że co się stało najważniejszego to on zrobił i bez niego nicby nie było – czasem bardzo prostym sposobem porusza nagle swoich słuchaczy⁹⁷.

... dramatic authors should follow the example of village story-tellers and the Slav peasant fables. No people have stories as rich and so wondrous. It is unlikely that there exists any audience prepared to listen with as much curiosity and such a degree of attention as a group listening to a peasant telling a story in his cottage ... the story-teller is, almost invariably, a protagonist in the happenings, he plays a part in his own drama. Sometimes he indicates that it was he who was responsible for the most weighty event and that without him none of it would have taken place. On other occasions by simple means he suddenly moves his listeners.

Mickiewicz goes on to recall the well-known Slavonic tale about a fiery bird:

Wielu Polakom i Rosjanom musi być znana ta bajka gdzie bohater jej idzie szukać cudownego ptaka i znajduje tylko jedno jego pióro zgubione w przelocie, które miało taki blask, że kiedy je wniósł do izby, cała izba oświeciła się jak od pochodni⁹⁸.

Many Poles and Russians are familiar with the tale of a hero in search of a wonder bird, who finds one of its feathers lost in flight but shining so brightly that the room lights up as by torchlight when it is brought inside.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, p. 66.

⁹⁷ Ibidem, p. 68.

⁹⁸ Loc.cit.

Mickiewicz's conception of art as a form of religion and cognition would seem to explain why in *Piąta pora roku* the themes of eternity and nature are intimately linked with the theme of poetry.

Similarly, Mickiewicz's conception of the poet as a mediator between the 'land of Spirits' and the visible worlds (i.e. nature and people) would seem to explain why in *Piąta pora roku* the Spirits of the protagonist's dead parents not only act as their son's guide in the spiritual world but also make him possessor of the Carpathian landscape and inquire about his activities as a creator.

Mickiewicz's conception of *cudowność* – the source of which is the Slavonic 'natural environment' – would also seem to throw light on the role played by the Carpathian landscape, the personifications of the seasons and the 'personification' of earth in *Piąta pora roku*. Indeed, the personification of earth (at the end of the poem) may even be a slightly jocular allusion to Mickiewicz's assertion that art is an invocation of Spirits (*sztuka jest pewnym rodzajem wywoływania duchów*).

Mickiewicz's remarks about Slavonic drama would seem to go a long way towards illuminating the structure of *Piąta pora roku*, in which dramatic, lyric and epic elements coexist, so to speak.

The dramatic elements present in the poem are: the ritual stylization (Dionysian-Eleusinian ritual/ *Dziady*) which permeates the entire poem (cf. the beginning, the end, the scene with the protagonist's dead parents).

Lyric elements are: the images of the Carpathian landscape, of which there are four different versions in the poem⁹⁹; these constitute the poem's refrain, as it were, and serve to stylize the poem as a dithyramb¹⁰⁰ in honour of earth and as a 'peasant song' (*chłopska piosnka*):

Więc wyznam wam ostatnią troskę
Śpiewajcie ją jak chłopską piosnkę.

The image of the Carpathian landscape, people, plants and animals is seen from a terrestrial (Stanzas 4 – 11) and eternal (Stanzas 12, 16, 18) standpoint. It is also seen through the 'prisms' of: the joyful experience of the unity of all being (Stanzas 4 – 11); despair at the loss of this unity (Stanza 12); love and nostalgia (Stanza 16); hope (Stanza 18).

This recurring image of the protagonist's Carpathian homeland also – indirectly – introduces the mythical theme of the cyclical recurrence of phenomena. The poem's main epic element is the protagonist's story – told in the face of death, so to speak – of

⁹⁹ Cf. "Legenda wieczności" [in:] M. Dłuska, *Studia i rozprawy*, ed.cit., vol. III (tables of recurring motifs in *Piąta pora roku*).

¹⁰⁰ "Dytyrambowy charakter *Piątej pory roku* daje diametralnie różny obraz postępowania rytmicznego i melodycznego. Właściwie należałoby każdą część utworu traktować osobno. Da się jednak i tutaj na tle różnorodności dostrzec pewne wytyczne ogólne ujednociające całość. W każdym razie wyróżnić trzeba część ściśle zwrotkową od części strofoidalnych". (M. Dłuska, op.cit., vol. III, p. 149.).

the part of his past life which is organically linked with his Carpathian homeland and its living and dead inhabitants.

Mickiewicz's description of the *bajarze* as story-tellers who partly narrate and partly enact their tales would seem to fit the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* – *qua* narrator – admirably.

Mickiewicz's Romantic suggestion that poets should seek inspiration in peasant fairy-tales (*baśni ludowa*) calls for an examination of *Piąta pora roku* through the 'prism' of fairy-tales. The poem's finale contains three fairy-tale motifs – that of the magic bird, that of the magic apple and that of the sleeping hero (or heroine) – earth in the guise of a peasant [woman]]¹⁰¹. It is for earth that the bird sings and the apple rolls.

In *Piąta pora roku* these fairy-tale motifs have (already) undergone a considerable transformation. The extent of this transformation can best be gauged by referring to Leśmian's *Klechdy sezamowe*, with which Wierzyński was almost certainly familiar¹⁰². These are fairy-tales woven around motifs taken from the *Arabian Nights*¹⁰³. In Leśmian's tale entitled *O pięknej Parysadzcie i o ptaku Bulbulezarze* there is, together with the beautiful princess Parysada, a magic bird – Bulbulezar – which tells fairy-tales with a human voice and which has the wings of a peacock, the neck of a swan, the beak of a stork, the claws of a vulture and the eyes of a swallow (its appearance therefore parallels the multiple significance of Wierzyński's symbol). In Leśmian's tale there is also a singing tree (*Dąb-Samograj*) and a magic spring (*Struga-Złotosmuga*).

In *Piąta pora roku* these last two motifs have been replaced – so to speak – by that of the rolling apple. The motif of the apple – taken from Slavonic folklore¹⁰⁴ – would also seem to be capable of being interpreted as a motif from Greek mythology. The personification of earth, which in the finale of *Piąta pora roku* goes to lie down on her/its bed and for which the apple is destined, would seem to be reminiscent of the sleeping heroine of fairy-tales. Wierzyński's singing bird would seem to 'correspond' to both the talking bird and the singing tree of Leśmian's tale. This perhaps explains why the song of Wierzyński's bird appears to be transformed into an apple. The motif of the singing tree is therefore only apparently absent in *Piąta pora roku*. It is in fact latently present. Wierzyński's 'tree', however, would seem to possess characteristics which are first and

¹⁰¹ The question as to whether (in the poem's last stanza) earth is personified as a man or as a woman is left open by the poet. In Polish, the gender of the noun *ziemia* is feminine. Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Selected Poems*, ed.cit., p. 45. Here the translator has personified earth as a man. Cf. M. Dłuska, op.cit., vol. III, 136.

¹⁰² Leśmian's *Klechdy sezamowe* were first published in 1913. Cf. Footnote No. 8.

¹⁰³ Cf. R. Zimand, "Preliminaria do Klechd Leśmiana" [in:] *Studia o Leśmianie*, Ed. M. Głowiński and J. Stawiński, Warsaw 1971.

¹⁰⁴ "Motyw jabłka (jabłuszka) nie jest typowym motywem baśni i pieśni ludowych w rodzinnych stronach poety (Podkarpacie za Lwowem, okolice Stryja). Jest natomiast szeroko znany jako motyw słowiański. Już Żegota Pauli (*Pieśni ludu polskiego w Galicji*, Lwów 1838) przytaczając piosenkę polską osnutą na motywie jabłuszka (s. 3 – 4, pieśń nr 1), dodaje w odsyłaczu, że motyw ten zna poezja ludowa serbska, polska w różnych okolicach i morawska. Przeoczył folklor słowacki i rosyjski. W rosyjskiej literaturze ludowej motyw jabłuszka, i to właśnie motyw jabłuszka toczącego się (...) jest szczególnie rozpowszechniony i uważany za typowy" (M. Dłuska, op.cit., vol. III, p. 134).

foremost those of the apple tree of the Hesperidian garden¹⁰⁵. Its fruit would seem to promise immortality.

The analogy between the singing bird and the tree bearing magic fruit – suggested by the song's transformation into an apple – may be traced to the Romantic motifs of the bird and the tree as analogues of the poet. The motif of the bird as an analogue of the poet is a traditional one. The tree is a favourite Romantic analogue for: the literary work conceived as an organism; national poetry conceived as an organism; the national poet organically inked with his homeland and with his native cultural tradition. The motif of the tree is used in these three senses by the Polish Romantic critic Moch-nacki¹⁰⁶.

In a poem entitled *Owoce* (in: *Rozmowa z puszcza*, 1929) Wierzyński compares the poet to an apple-tree:

Wiersze się we mnie jak wielkie

Jabłka czerwone kołyszają¹⁰⁷.

The poet is often compared to a bird in Wierzyński's poetry¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. T. Zieliński, *Bajeczna starożytność*, ed.cit., pp. 184 – 187.

Cf. J. Parandowski, *Mitologia*, Warsaw 1972, pp. 198 – 199.

CF. "Na razie jest to sumarycznie i w całości biorąc liryka, czysta i stosowana liryka. Na razie jest to tylko ogród rozkoszy i ogród katuszy. Stanowczo już nie 'wróble na dachu', ale co nieco kolibry i pawie na drzewie z rajskimi jabłkami, choć w niejednym już dostrzega się szpony i sępią siłę uskrzydlenia" (A. Nowaczyński, op.cit., p. 171).

Cf. passages on Dionysus in: R. Graves, *The Greek Myths*, Penguin Books 1980.

Cf. the entry *Dionysus* in: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed.cit.

Cf. the entry *Dionysus (Bacchus)* in: J. Chevalier *Dictionnaire des symboles*, ed.cit.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Moch-nacki, op.cit., pp. 37, 54, 132, comp. footnote No 120.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 133.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. ibidem, p. 509:

Ptak

Nie podchodźcie do mnie za blisko,

Nie płosźcie mnie,

Jestem ptakiem.

Moje ziemskie wirowisko,

Koło moje pod gwiazdami,

Imię moje i śpiew mój –

Zapisane Zodiakiem.

Jeśli co stąd zabieram,

To w lotkach moich powietrze:

Waszego mi trzeba oddechu,

Bym wolny, niedostrzeżony,

Oblatywał dalekie me strony

Na akwilonskim wietrze.

Co daję wam za to?

Ruch mój wysoki,

Podróż za gwiazdę skrzydlatą

I los wasz w mojej zapisany podróży.

Nie podchodźcie do mnie za blisko,

Jestem ptakiem.

The fairy-tale suggested by Wierzyński in the finale of *Piąta pora roku* is therefore jocular in character. It is as it were an abbreviated, synthetic fairy-tale in which transformed motifs from Greek, Slavonic and Oriental fairy-tales coexist harmoniously with motifs from Romantic poetry. Set as it is in the ritual of *Dziady* – evoked as an literary allusion – the fairy-tale causes the ritual to take on the atmosphere of a Franciscan Nativity-play – an atmosphere of light-heartedness and naive *cudowność*. In the finale of *Piąta pora roku* the protagonist would therefore appear to assume an attitude of jovial detachment towards the Romantic poetic tradition so dear to him. He does not detach himself completely, however, for the pose of ‘naive poet’ – which he would seem to assume consciously – can be traced to Schiller’s myth about the naive and the sentimental poet. Schiller’s ‘sentimental’ (i.e. Romantic) poet – having become conscious of all the oppositions which are to be found in the world – strives to re-create the unity of all beings by means of imagination and art. In doing so, he hopes to regain or restore that unity which is the ‘natural environment’ of Schiller’s naive poet. As a Romantic ‘naive’ poet, the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is therefore an inspired poet who creates the myth of the restored unity of all Being.

Schiller’s myth about the naive and the sentimental poet is linked with the ‘pastoral’ current in European Romantic poetry. In *Piąta pora roku* the protagonist’s attitude of naive poet, which is linked with the Dionysian-Franciscan myth and which dominates the protagonist’s past and future, would seem to be a modern counterpart to the ‘pastoral’ current in the poetry of the great Romantics (including Słowacki and Mickiewicz)¹⁰⁹.

The last part (Stanzas 17 – 20) of *Piąta pora roku* would seem to enrich Mickiewicz’s conception of art (as set forth in the Paris lectures) by the addition of an idea taken from Mickiewicz’s *Dziady* (Part III) – namely the idea that art is a human form of eternity:

Ja czuję nieśmiertelność, nieśmiertelność tworzę.

This idea would seem to be common to the European Romantics and Symbolists. It is certainly dear to Wierzyński¹¹⁰.

Z mego lotu się wróży.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the *pasterki* in the poetry of Mickiewicz and Słowacki, and the images of nature in Mickiewicz’s *Pan Tadeusz*.

Cf. K. Wyka, *Pan Tadeusz. Studia o poemacie*, ed.cit. Cf. J. Kleiner, *Słowacki*, Wrocław 1969.

Cf. J. Kleiner, *Mickiewicz*, vols I and II (parts 1 and 2), Lublin 1948.

¹¹⁰ “Dziś jest poza tymi wrotami. Nasz umysł i nasza wyobraźnia nie ogarniają tamtych obszarów ani ich trwania a język określa je słowami absolutu, jako nieskończoność i wieczność. My żyjący tu, na ziemi, w nieustannym lęku przemijania, też staramy się utwierdzić nasze istnienie i stworzyć własną doczesną wieczność, na podobieństwo tamtej, zaświatowej. Jeśli coś przetrwa pomiędzy nami, przejdzie z pokolenia na pokolenie i żyje tak przez stulecia, mówimy, że odbywa drogę wieczną. Przy drodze tej stoją pomniki naszej sławy, dzieła naszej pracy, symbole naszej miłości, niby straż naszego istnienia. Im bogatszy jest ten szpaler, tym łatwiej nam kroczyć tamtędy i tym dalej prowadzi nas droga. Teraz zajął tam miejsce Lechoń. Dzieło jego przetrwa między nami, przejdzie z pokolenia na pokolenie i prowadzi nas będzie jako symbol obcowania z wiecznością” (K. Wierzyński, *Cygańskim wozem*, ed.cit., pp. 157 – 158).

Cf. “Sztuka dla sztuki nie jest absurdem, jest warunkiem rozwoju. To tyle co człowiek dla samego siebie. Człowiek musi istnieć dla siebie aby zaistniał dla innych. Im więcej bogactwa zgromadzi w granicach swojej

X

The idea that art is a human form of eternity is formulated by Mickiewicz's Konrad – an inspired poet – in his *improvizacja* (*Dziady*, part III). In the mouth of Konrad, this idea is an expression of the Promethean attitude of a man who – in a one-sided dialogue – challenges the Almighty. In *Piąta pora roku*, the central part of the protagonist's monologue (Stanza 16) would seem to be a transformation, as it were, of Konrad's *improvizacja*. Here motifs from the *improvizacja* are fused with motifs from other Romantic works – in the main from other works by Mickiewicz and Słowacki.

Wierzyński's protagonist is accompanied by the very motifs which in Konrad's *improvizacja* are associated with inspiration – namely those of: song; the Muse; the bird (wings); fire; sleep; flight (the discarding of the body in order to rise up above the earth); the spiritual encompassing of the past and the future; the journey to the 'land of Spirits'. The 'mania' (i.e. inspiration) of Wierzyński's protagonist – like that of Romantic poets – is composed of all four kinds of (Platonic) 'madness'¹¹¹. It is therefore:

1. A Dionysian 'inebriation' which permits the experience of the unity of all beings.
2. A poetic 'frenzy' sent by the Muses.
3. An Apollinian 'prophetic' madness (the motif of the apple carrying with it the promise of immortality – i.e. that of the protagonist-poet's song).
4. The 'madness' of the lover – 'conferred' not by Eros, but by St. Francis of Assisi and (it will be argued) by Prometheus.

Whereas the past of Wierzyński's protagonist would seem to be coloured by the Dionysian myth, his present would seem to be coloured by the myth of Prometheus. Wierzyński's treatment of the Promethean myth¹¹² in *Piąta pora roku* is similar to his treatment of the Dionysian myth:

1. Wierzyński 'reinterprets' the Promethean myth by fusing it with the Dionysian myth. In *Piąta pora roku* the emotional and intellectual attitude which is complementary to the Dionysian attitude would seem to be represented not by the Apollo of

osobowości, tym staje się cenniejszym społecznie. Sztuka bez rozpracowania własnych celów jest śmieciem,

jak człowiek bez rozbudowy wewnętrznej jest pozycją statystyczną. Sztuka musi mieć prawo do samoistości, bez niej nie wejdzie w obręb dobra powszechnego" (ibidem, p. 92).

Cf. *Księga Cudów* [in:] K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., pp. 552 – 553.

¹¹¹ Cf. T. Zieliński, *Mania twórcza* [in:] op.cit.

¹¹² "Za wytrwałość żagli pośmiertnych (...) Słowa te lecą ku nam poprzez całą beznadzieję bytu wprost z nieulętkłego serca poety i dźwięczą szczególnie bliskim nam echem. Ich prometejski odgłos łączy się z najwyższym lotem poezji polskiej, jeśli zgodzimy się na to, że w sumarycznym skrócie najważniejszą jej treścią był właśnie opór przeciw wszelkiej ludzkiej i boskiej przemocy, walka z ziemskim i nadziemskim wrogiem, wierność sprawie, dla której się żyje i za którą się umiera (...) Pomoc, jaką niosła poezja, była jedynym wyzwoleniem osaczonego ducha. Poświęcił jej wszystko i we wszystkim zaufał, w swej sile i słabości" (K. Wierzyński, *O Bolesławie Leśniamie*, ed.cit., pp. 32 – 33).

Nietzsche's version of the myth but by Prometheus – the lone benefactor of men, whose superior he is by virtue of his 'titanic' nature¹¹³.

2. In Wierzyński's interpretation, the 'common denominator' of both myths seems to be a Franciscan-Romantic feeling of solidarity between Spirits, people, plants, animals and (the) earth (cf. Stanza 18).

3. The Promethean myth is therefore only indirectly present in *Piąta pora roku*. It manifests itself in the intellectual and emotional attitude assumed by the protagonist. The name of Prometheus – like that of Dionysus – is nowhere mentioned in the poem. All the conspicuously Greek motifs of the Promethean myth – the bird (vulture/eagle); fire; the son of Earth chained to a cliff on the orders of Zeus – as well as the theme of Prometheus's conflict with God on behalf of men and his subsequent sufferings have been 'reinterpreted' and transformed by Wierzyński (the same may be said of the motifs and main theme of the Dionysian myth). In *Piąta pora roku* the central image of the Promethean myth – that of Prometheus chained to a cliff while a vulture eats away his liver – has been transformed into an image of a Romantic inspired poet leaning on mountain-tops and looking down at the earth below (the symbolic bird having just flown 'through' him):

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
A jednak trwam znów, i łokciem o góry
Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
I patrzę, synów mych szukam...

This quasi-Promethean gesture has a dual significance:

(a) It is a repetition of the gesture made by the protagonist's dead parents (Stanza 12):

Bo przyszli potem z daleka umarli,
Łokciem o lasy jodłowe się wsparli,
Patrzyli wokół – a ziemia szeroka
Drobną im rzeszą zawisła u oka.

(b) It is also an allusion to Romantic iconography and poetry. A well-known portrait of Mickiewicz – painted in St. Petersburg in 1828 by the Polish artist Walenty Wańkiewicz¹¹⁴ – shows the young poet leaning on the Crimean mountain Ajudah and looking in the direction of the sea. The painter was of course inspired by Mickiewicz's sonnet entitled *Ajudah* (one of the *Sonety krymskie*, 1826 – written during the poet's term of 'internal deportation'):

¹¹³ Cf. Footnote No. 105.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Mickiewicz *Dzieła poetyckie*, ed.cit., p. XVI.

Lubię poglądać wsparty na Judahu skale,

Jak spienione bałwany to w czarne szeregi

Ścisnąwszy się buchają, to jak srebrne śniegi

W milionowych tęczach kołują wspaniale.

Trąca się o mieliznę, rozbijają na fale,

Jak wojsko wielorybów zalegając brzegi,

Zdobędą ląd w tryumfie i na powrót, zbiegi,

Mieczą za sobą muszle, perły i korale.

Podobnie na twe serce, o poeto młody!

Namiętność często groźne wzburza niepogody,

Lecz gdy podniesiesz bardon, ona bez twej szkody

Ucieka w zapomnienia pograżyć się toni

I nieśmiertelne pieśni za sobą uroni,

Z których wieki uplotą ozdobę twych skroni¹¹⁵.

I love to lean against Ayudah's face

And watch the frothing waves as on they pour,

Dark ranks close-pressed, then burst like snow and soar,

A milion silver rainbows arched in space.

They strike the sands, they break and interlace;

Like whales in battle that beset the shore,

They seize the land and then retreat once more,

Shells, pearls, and corals scattered in their race.

And so it is, young poet, in your heart.

There passion raises storms, but when you start

Your strains, the whirlwinds harmlessly depart

And sink deep down in pools of memory.

Yet

They leave you songs, which after years will set

As shining jewels in your coronet.

(transl. Dorothea Prall Radin)

Mickiewicz's sonnet opens with an image present in *Piąta pora roku* – that of the inspired poet leaning on a mountain. Wierzyński's protagonist – like that of Mickiewicz's sonnet – is absorbed by (engrossed in) the creative power of nature. Both protagonists detect an analogy between creation by nature and creation by the poet. Wierzyński's protagonist, however, would seem to have carried the analogy further by assuming that poetic creation is as it were a continuation of the creative process of nature:

(...) i łokciem o góry

Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem

I patrzę, synów mych szukam, czy który

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 35.

Obszył się liśćmi i porósł lasami,
 A może stoi przy ogniu pastuchów
 I pójdzie śladem, co został za nami,
 I znów powtórzy przyrodę tych ruchów
 Gdy zgrzane życie porami gęstymi
 Dyszało w słońce i szło do księżyca,
 Gdy we mnie ciekła krew mojej ziemi
 A w matkach mleko i w sosnach żywica.

In *Piąta pora roku* (Stanza 16) the idea that art is a human form of eternity would seem to be capable of being traced to the Romantic philosophy of nature sketched by Mochnacki in his work entitled *O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym*. Mochnacki's 'point of departure' is Schelling's evolutionary and spiritual theory of nature. In Mochnacki's view, literature is as it were a continuation of the creative evolution of nature. Nature attains 'self-awareness'¹¹⁶ in human thought. The thought of a nation finds its expression in literature:

...Literatura wyciągnięciem jest na
 jaśnię myśli narodu. W niej, że tak rzekę,
 czujemy się jak po tętnie¹¹⁷.

...Literature is the thought of the nation
 brought out into the light. We may say
 that in it we feel our heartbeats.

According to Mochnacki, therefore, literature is directly linked with a national community and – indirectly – with that community's 'natural environment'. It is an organic product, rather like a tree. A necessary stage in the spiritual evolution of any man – and especially a poet – is to be 'rooted' in a national community and in nature. Mochnacki describes the development of an individual as a gradual 'spreading out' of his spirit as it encompasses nature, the national community and eventually the whole of mankind¹¹⁸.

This 'spreading out' of the individual Spirit is necessarily accompanied by the grad-

¹¹⁶ Cf. Footnotes Nos. 19 and 20.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 27.

¹¹⁸ "Pierwszy człowiek, jak wszystko z y w i ą c e, z łona natury jeszcze n i e w y ł o n i o n y, spał snem twardym we śnie niewypowiedzianego szczęścia. Powoli zaczął się budzić z tego s n u n a j a w i e i wychodzić duszą, myślą z wszech rzeczy ogółu. Na koniec został szczegółem, istotą r o z u m n ą – jednostką dumającą! Ta jest wielka jeststwa naszego tajemnica. Cóż go dotąd zaszczyca po tylu wiekach obłędnej kolei? Co w nim najpiękniejszego? Oto tęsknica na duszy i boleść na sercu, która je uciska po stracie nieskazitelnego mienia! Oto chęć wyjścia tą samą promienną myślą z ciasnego koła, z okresu j e d n o s t k i, e g o i z m u, samolubstwa – chęć rozszerzenia się, rozprzestrzenienia miłością płomienistą, wszystko obejmującą od końca do końca, we wszech rzeczy jestestwie, w nierozdzielonym całej natury porządku – w tej harmonii, tej cudotwórczej tonice całego świata!..." (Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 30).

○ "Rozszerzenie się ojczystego, rodowitego j a, rozumienie się w jestestwie drugich, ogarnienie wszystkiego rodu ludzkiego we wszystkich czasach tą ognistą miłością, która z nieba na ziemię zstąpiła, – ten kres ostateczny chrześcijańskiej kultury, ten, nie inny, przedmiot historii powszechnej" (ibidem, p. 51).

ual extinction of the individual's 'ego'. Mochnacki illustrates this extinction with the analogy of the tree which lives on by its own partial death:

Jest jakieś drzewo, wspomniane przez jednego z pisarzy kościelnych, które wtenczas zielenieje, kiedy je okrzeują; drzewo to idzie w zapasy z żelazem, śmiercią żyje, krzewi się wycięciem – gdy go już nie masz, wtenczas rośnie¹¹⁹.

There was a tree, mentioned by one of the Church writers, which becomes covered with leaves when cut down; that tree triumphs over steel, lives in death, spreads when cut – when it is no more, it persists in growing.

It is from such an apparently – but only apparently – dead tree that the apple of the finale of *Piąta pora roku* comes:

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
A jednak trwam znów, i łokciem o góry
Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
I patrzę, synów mych szukam...

The bird of Wierzyński's poem (living in the branches of this apparently dead tree) brings to mind another of Mochnacki's images¹²⁰. The 'tree' is deeply rooted in the human community, in the community's cultural tradition and in the community's natural environment or homeland.

It is this very organic link with his native community, its cultural tradition and its natural homeland that the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* would seem to be giving expression to when – against the background of the Carpathian landscape – he imitates the gesture of the protagonist of Mickiewicz's sonnet *Ajudah*. In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, this gesture is a symbol. It is the gesture of a 'Promethean' poet – a visionary and a creator of eternity. It is accompanied by a feeling of solidarity with the past and concern for the future:

¹¹⁹ Loc.cit.

¹²⁰ "Pismo porównywa umiejętność, wiedzę, wiadomość do drzewa. Wielkie w tem rozumienie!! Jako i w innym porównaniu z ziarnem gorczycznem, które wedle wyrazów P a n a, tak wielką łożę puszcza, że się i ptacy na niej chowają. (...) Takim samym rozrasta się kształtem drzewo wiadomości człowieka, tem bardziej narodu, jakby z pnia, który swe korzenie głęboko i szeroko rozpostarł w wiedzy wewnątrz obróconej jestestwa, byt i istotę swoją uznającego..." (ibidem, p. 54).

"Wszelki ród rodowity, historyczny, w historję świata zachodzący, jest jako roślina w patriarchalnej osiadłości; z nasion na ojczystym rozkwita gruncie, a potem za błogosławieństwem nieba w wysokie, cieniste drzewo wyrasta. Stoi mocno i bezpiecznie to drzewo, jeśli sse pokarm z ziemi, jako z piersi macierzyńskich. Korzeniem jego jest przeszłość historyczna. A wszystkie dzieje tego pnia rok rocznie wyrzynające się na nim pierścienie szeroko rozprowadzą!" (ibidem, p. 37).

"Wszystkie razem liście na drzewie, tak długo skamieniałem i niemem, ojczystej poezji zaszumiały. Coś niem wstrząsnęło niewidomą mocą od ziemi do korony, że teraz szeleści, i rusza gałęziami w wiatru powiewie, mruczy, i gada, jakby odczarowane" (ibidem, p. 132).

(...) i łokciem o góry
 Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
 I patrzę, synów mych szukam...

The gesture is also an analogue of Konrad's gesture in part III (*improwizacja*) of Mickiewicz's *Dziady*. Konrad, struggling with God over the fortunes of his nation, encompasses with his arms all 'past and future generations'. In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, the gesture of leaning on mountain-tops expresses the protagonist's Promethean love for the world and for the living and the dead. It expresses the 'spreading out' of an individual Spirit (cf. Mochnacki). The present tense which is to be found in this part of the poem would seem to indicate that the scenery for the ritual which is performed by the protagonist is that of the Carpathian mountains. Here is the meeting-place of the seasons of the year and the Spirits of the protagonist's dead parents. From here there is an extensive 'view' of the past and the future – of people, nature and eternity:

Teraz tu słyszę, czego nikt nie słyszy,
 I widzę rzeczy na skroś i spod spodu
 I pełny jestem śmierci jak ciszy
 I pełny wieczności jak chłodu.

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
 A jednak trwam znów, i łokciem o góry
 Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem...

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* therefore appears to be a heroic Spirit related to the *Król-Duch*, hero and narrator of Słowacki's epic poem of the same name. As a heroic Spirit who has fathomed the secret of life, death and eternity, Wierzyński's protagonist returns to his Carpathian homeland in order to reveal that secret to its inhabitants. His gesture of leaning on mountain – tops is as it were a 'condensation' of the symbolic gestures (also made against the background of mountains) of the Romantic heroes of Mickiewicz (cf. *Do XXX. Na Alpach w Splügen, 1829*) and Słowacki (cf. *Kordian*), who look in the direction of their homeland from the Alps. It is in the Caucasian mountains that the funeral pyre of Her – the hero of (Plato's myth of Er and) Słowacki's *Król-Duch* – is located. Słowacki's Her would seem to be the most Promethean character in Polish Romantic literature, expressing the link between the cultural traditions of Poland and Ancient Greece. This character is also linked with the idea of palingenesis, which was dear to the Polish Romantics and to late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Polish writers¹²¹.

The idea of palingenesis would not seem to be alien to the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku*. He makes his gesture of leaning on mountain-tops as a Spirit who returns to his native land and who (at the end of his monologue) addresses his (living) listeners, for

¹²¹ 'Młoda Polska' (1890 – 1918) is the Polish counterpart of European Modernism and Symbolism.

Cf. The philosophical writings (in English and Polish) of Wincenty Lutosławski. Cf. H. Floryńska, *Spadkobiercy Króla Duchy*, Wrocław 1976.

whom he performs a ritual which is reminiscent of *Dziady*. By his gesture, Wierzyński's protagonist – as a heroic Spirit – also expresses his communion with the great poets of the past and their successors in the future.

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* therefore sees his native poetic tradition (together with his own poetry) as a whole which is organically linked with his native land and destined for its inhabitants. He would seem to view his own poetry and that of the Romantics as a continuation of the creation of nature. The last 'link' of this continuous chain is formed or constituted by transcendental eternity. The protagonist sees eternity as the last in a cycle of changes to which nature and human existence are subject. There is therefore a suggestion that this cycle (spring – summer – autumn – winter – death/eternity) may be repeated.

In Wierzyński's poem entitled *Słowo* (in: *Róża wiatrów*, 1942) this suggestion of the protagonist's rebirth is rooted in the Romantic mythology of the inspired word. Here there is an image of the universe as a tree which has grown out of the 'word'. The various boughs of this tree would seem to correspond to the songs of poets, sung in various languages. The word, being the omnipresent basis of the world, pervades the earth and the poet's interior. Earth, the poet's thought and creation, life and death would all seem to be just various manifestations of the same 'word'. The return to the earth (i.e. death) is therefore a return to the 'word':

Co mi zostało tutaj? Słowo,
Konar z wiecznego ścięty drzewa,
Ciosam zeń skrzypce i na nowo
Jesion w mych rękach szumi, śpiewa,

Co we mnie jest naprawdę? Słowo,
W którym się rodzę jak w kolebce,
I w którym trumnę mam sosnową,
Życie i śmierć powtarzam, szepczę.

What waited my appearance here?
The word,
branch cut from an ancient tree to
which belongs
the violin I fashion for my hands
to play the rustling ashtree of my
songs.

What waits this moment with me
still? The word,
in which my birth, as in a cradle,
sways,
in which, as in a coffin of plain pine

I lie, and tell my first and my last days.

Co tu zostanie po mnie? Słowo
 I w głąb wpuszczone me korzenie,
 Ziemia niech z nich zagada mową,
 Z ziemi powstałem, w nią się zmie-
 nię¹²².

What waits when I have disappeared?
 The word.
 And my green roots explore the dark to
 learn
 the language of the earth that utters me.
 Born of the earth, to earth I shall return.

(transl. Kenneth Pitchford)

In *Piąta pora roku* the concept of eternity would also seem to be indissolubly linked to the mythology of the word. The protagonist's journey into the world of Spirits is described as a journey into the realm of another (eternal) language (Stanza 14):

I wzięli mnie. Wiedli w głąb, w tajemniczy
 Obszar, gdzie nic się z tej ziemi nie liczy,
 Gdzie wiosnie, latu, jesieni i zimie
 W innym języku nadano imię.

For the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku*, the spiritual return to the land of his birth is tantamount to a return to his native poetic tradition and to the 'word' (i.e. to poetic creation). He receives the gift of the word – which is as it were a forerunner of eternity – in the form of a bird (= the analogue of one of the boughs of the tree of life from the poem *Słowo*). In *Piąta pora roku*, the bird is associated with blood, milk, resin (Stanza 16) and the apple (Stanza 20).

By his gesture of leaning on mountain-tops, the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* expresses not only his link with the Great Romantic tradition but also – indirectly – his own interpretation of that tradition¹²³. The gesture 'sets up' – so to speak – the protagonist's 'cultural mythology', in which he and his (Polish) Romantic predecessors occupy a position parallel to that of the Greek Titan Prometheus. It would therefore also seem to confirm the idea – present in the poem – of a parallel and organic development of the universe. According to this idea, the course of the history of mankind, nations, individuals and art is analogous to the process of evolution in nature. This Romantic idea of the parallel development of the universe was formulated by Mochnacki in his essay *O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym*:

¹²² K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., p. 311 – 312. Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Selected Poems*, ed.cit., p. 23.

¹²³ Cf. Footnote No. 112. Cf. H. Floryńska, op.cit., chapters II and III. Cf. J.Kleiner, *Mickiewicz*, ed.cit., vol. II, part 1.

I w rzeczy samej, zdaje się, że natura w każdym człowieku wznawia i niejaki powtarza proces powszechnej formacji wszystkich dzieł swoich, przebiegając przez stopnie i schody pośrednie tą samą drogą od początku ku końcowi. Tryb postępowania jednak, toż w przyrodzeniu, toż w człowieku, toż w historii¹²⁴.

It seems indeed that nature itself starts anew and repeats in every human being the universal process of the creation of all its works, taking the same path and the same steps from the beginning until the end. The essence of the same whether in nature, in man or in history.

Mochnacki believed that mountains, being the first link in the chain of evolution, correspond to the earth's first inhabitants – the Titans:

Pierwsza w dziejach epoka anorganiczna przypomina naturę. Ma ten sam kształt i podobieństwo. Tam w dali niedościgłej postrzegamy kolosalne postacie pierwszych synów ziemi – malarskie figury, grupy patriarchalne. Wielki był człowiek w początkach. Są to niejako skały pierwiastkowej formacji w porządku historycznym¹²⁵.

The first non-organic era in history resembled nature. It had the same shape and formation. We became aware of giant figures at great unattainable distances, the first sons of the earth, figures from paintings, patriarchal groupings. Man in his beginning had greatness in him. Those were the rocks of history, its primeval formation.

Support for the hypothesis that the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* perceives a parallel between Titans (and people raised to the status of Titans, e.g. the great Romantics) and (the) mountains is to be found in Stanza 8 of the poem. Here the mountain-top is described anthropomorphically as a 'bare skull' (*goła czaszka*). Further support for this hypothesis is lent by the (well-known) Polish legend about enchanted knights sleeping in the western Carpathians (in that section known as the Tatra mountains)¹²⁶.

In *Piąta pora roku* the poet would seem to have been endowed with 'superhuman' status¹²⁷. The highest points in the landscape – the mountains and the trees – would appear to be analogues (as it were) of the highest flights of the poet's imagination, which rebuilds the initial unity of all Beings – this in accordance with Romantic conceptions of sublimity¹²⁸:

¹²⁴ Mochnacki, op.cit., p.28).

¹²⁵ Ibidem, p. 31.

¹²⁶ Cf. *Śpiący rycerze* [in:] Kazimierz Tetmajer, *Na Skalnym Podhalu*, Kraków 1976.

¹²⁷ Wierzyński's concept of the superhuman status of the inspired poet has nothing in common with Nietzsche's concept of the *Uebermensch*.

¹²⁸ Cf. W.K. Wimsatt Jr. and C. Brooks, *Romantic criticism*, London 1970.

Przypominają mi nagle, że ptak
 Przeleciał przeze mnie, ptak,
 I drzwi zostawił otwarte
 Na góry moje, na drzewa,
 Na wszystkie sprawy
 Żywe i martwe.

By including himself among the 'Titans' of national poetry, the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* indirectly gives expression to his personal pride. This feeling of pride proceeds from the belief in the 'superhuman' status of the inspired poet and is an important element in the Polish variant of Romantic Prometheanism (cf. Konrad's *improwizacja* in Mickiewicz's *Dziady*)¹²⁹. It must be said, however, that in the case of Wierzyński's protagonist, this pride is expressed discretely and appears to have been deliberately 'played down', so to speak. Wierzyński's protagonist presents himself first and foremost as a son who imitates the gesture made by the Spirits of his dead parents. To this might be added his human fear of death, his attachment to the world, his naive feeling of *cudowność* and his humour. All these factors neutralize any pathos that might otherwise have crept into the poem.

The struggle with God and the feeling of alienation towards the transcendental sphere which are to be found in Mickiewicz's¹³⁰ version of Romantic Prometheanism is absent in *Piąta pora roku*. Wierzyński's protagonist does not struggle with God and does not even reach the sphere in which 'Creator and Nature meet' (*gdzie graniczy Stwórca i Natura*)¹³¹. He does, however, reach the sphere inhabited by the Spirits of the dead.

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* sees the world of eternity as a timeless, motionless, cold sphere – that of an 'alien language' – which is contrasted with the earth (cf. Stanza 14). It is nevertheless a friendly sphere, inhabited by the Spirits of his dead parents. The latter 'mediate', as it were, between the sphere of eternity (which the protagonist has yet to fathom) and nature, people and poetry (cf. Stanza 18):

I rzekł mój ojciec: "Jeszcze go prowadź
 Bo ludzkie oczy z żalu w nim bledną".
 A Matka: "Nie masz tu czego żałować,
 Śmierć i życie to jedno".

The protagonist's journey into the other world resembles in some respects the return of Tobias the younger to the home of his father. As a newcomer to the world of eternity, Wierzyński's protagonist can be said to be 'luckier' than the protagonist of

¹²⁹ Cf. T. Zieliński, *Mania twórcza* [in:] op.cit.

¹³⁰ Ibidem.

¹³¹ Cf. *Dziady*, Część III *Improwizacja* [in:] Mickiewicz, *Dzieła poetyckie*, ed.cit., p. 173. Cf. T. Zieliński, op.cit.

Leśmian's poem entitled *Urszula Kochanowska*¹³². Although in *Piąta pora roku* – by contrast with Leśmian's poem – the world of eternity is not reminiscent of this world, the protagonist is met by the Spirits of his dead parents and not by God (who in Leśmian's poem comes instead of the parents expected by the protagonist)¹³³. From the other world (in *Piąta pora roku*) there is a 'view' of the protagonist's Carpathian homeland (cf. Stanzas 16 and 18). The guardian Spirits of his dead parents urge the protagonist-poet to create. Art would seem to be a man-made link between 'earth' and 'heaven'¹³⁴.

In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, the important Promethean elements found in the poetry of Mickiewicz (Konrad's struggle with God in *Dziady*) and Leśmian (the rejection of God's proposals for eternity in *Eliasz* and *W czas zmartwychwstania*) are absent. For Wierzyński's protagonist Prometheanism would seem to mean not 'resistance to all human and divine constraint – a struggle against the terrestrial and super-terrestrial enemy'¹³⁵ but 'fidelity to the cause for which one lives and for which one dies'¹³⁶. This cause is poetry. The 'superhuman' (and, insofar as the poet writes for his fellow men, the 'human'¹³⁷) function of poetry would seem to reside first and foremost in the realization of the Romantic dream of creating the human equivalent of eternity. This equivalent of eternity would seem to be art, which reconciles the 'depths' and 'heights' of Being. In his lecture on Leśmian entitled *O Bolesławie Leśmianie* (1939) Wierzyński speaks of (Leśmian's) 'myth of extended being' (*leśmianowski mit o poszerzonym istnieniu*)¹³⁸.

XI

Taken as a whole, the structure of *Piąta pora roku* would seem to resemble that of a myth. Its 'prototype' in Polish literature – an epic poem whose structure resembles that of a religious myth – is Słowacki's *Król-Duch*¹³⁹. Słowacki's protagonist (the Spirit Her)

¹³² Cf. Bolesław Leśmian, *Poezje*, Warsaw 1957, pp. 385 – 386.

¹³³ "Nie wstydził się ciepła i czułości, tych prostych a nieodzownych cech wszelkiej poezji, i choć kunszt swego zawodu, jak przystało na mistrza, cenił wysoko, nigdy nie zaparł się serca. Z najzwyklejszych uczuć umiał stworzyć tak wzruszające arcydzieło jak opowieść Urszuli Kochanowskiej o jej przybyciu do nieba" (K. Wierzyński, *O Bolesławie Leśmianie*, ed.cit., p. 34).

¹³⁴ Cf. Footnote No. 110.

¹³⁵ Cf. Footnote No 112.

¹³⁶ Cf. Footnote No 112.

¹³⁷ Although the idea of art for art's sake was dear to Wierzyński (cf. Footnote No 110), he firmly believed – as did the Romantics – that art is for everyone and not simply for the 'chosen few'.

¹³⁸ "Dziś, kiedy nie tylko przed człowiekiem, lecz i przed wielkimi jego wspólnotami stoją pytania rozstrzygające o bycie, to utwierdzenie spodów i szczytów, ten leśmianowski mit poszerzonego istnienia umacnia nas wobec burz i uderzeń" (K. Wierzyński, *O Bolesławie Leśmianie*, ed.cit., p. 38).

¹³⁹ Cf. M. Tatar: "Struktura mitu religijnego a *Król-Duch* Słowackiego" [in:] *Studia romantyczne*, ed.cit.

systematically reincarnates himself as one or other of the legendary (i.e. prehistoric) and mediaeval kings of Poland. The story of his various 'lives' is intended to reveal the secret meaning of Polish history. Similarly, the story told by Wierzyński's protagonist – a Spirit – about his past life as a poet is intended to reveal the secret of eternity and death.

The narration of Wierzyński's protagonist – like that of Słowacki's – is made in ritualistic circumstances (the ritual of *Dziady*)¹⁴⁰. It is accompanied by a belief in the magic power of the poetic word¹⁴¹. Its purpose is to invoke the Spirit of earth. The 'backcloth' of the mythical narration is a rhythmically (i.e. seasonally – x 4) changing Carpathian landscape¹⁴². The bird heralds the prolongation of this cycle by the addition of a fifth 'season' – eternity. Its second appearance, just before the end of the poem (the first being at the beginning), heralds as it were a new cycle of death and birth and – indirectly – the rebirth of the protagonist¹⁴³.

On quite another – autobiographical – plane, the narration of *Piąta pora roku* tells of events which 'really' happened and in which the narrator took part. The stages in the narrator's life which are outlined in the poem can be seen to correspond to known facts of Wierzyński's biography. In this sense the narration is 'verifiable' and 'authentic'¹⁴⁴. The author of *Piąta pora roku* – Wierzyński – and the poem's protagonist both spent their childhood and early youth in the immediate vicinity of the Carpathian mountains (Wierzyński was born in Drohobycz)¹⁴⁵. The descriptions of the Carpathian landscape which are to be found in *Piąta pora roku* would – in their realistic aspect – seem to resemble that found in Wierzyński's reminiscences set down in a collection of essays entitled *Cygańskim wozem*:

Właściwie świat nadaje się, by chodzić po nim piechotą. Wtedy jest dostępny i namacalny od oczu do podeszwy. Najbardziej nostalgiczne wspomnienia mam ze szkolnych czasów, z wędrówek na Bubniszcze i Urycz, przez Synowódzko na Paraszkę, pod Kałusz, Dolinę, Wygodę. Nagle polany w lasach, kiedy z chłodnego cienia wychodzi się na złotą misę kipiących traw, legowiska sarnie

The world is really designed to be explored on foot. It becomes accessible and tangible to one's eye and one's soles. My most nostalgic memories are those of my school days, wandering over Bubniszcze and Urycz, through Synowódzko to Paraszka, towards Kałusz, Dolina and Wygoda. The unexpected clearings, when one enters into a golden bowl of sward from the cool shade, the

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *ibidem*.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ibidem*.

¹⁴² Cf. E. Cassirer, *Esej o człowieku. Wstęp do filozofii kultury* (An Essay on Man), trans. A. Staniewska, Warsaw 1971, Part Two, chapter VII (myth and religion).

¹⁴³ Cf. Tataro, *op.cit.*

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *ibidem*.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *Kazimierz Wierzyński* [in:] M. Dhuska, *op.cit.*, vol. III.

z wygniecioną pościółką, dzikie maliny wśród pajęczyn, na których rosa nie wysycha do południa, i przełęcze, przełęcze, gdzie wieje mocny wiatr i otwierają się dwa widoki, z prawa i z lewa, spadające w dół, z kucymi wsiami w georginiach i malwach, z dziewanną, z jastrzębiami pod niebem i kwiczołami na jałowcach jesienią. Ach, gdyby można pójść raz jeszcze krętą i żółtą ścieżką, wydeptaną na zboczach przez krowy, albo przez gęste łąki po pas, pod czarne ściany buków i sosen w Karpatach¹⁴⁶.

deer's hiding place with its matted litter, wild raspberries covered with cobwebs dripping with dew till noon and the mountain passes where the wind is fierce and where there are two views, one to the right, another to the left falling down towards villages with their dahlias, mallows and mulleins, with hawks in the sky and thrushes resting in the gorse in the autumn. If only I could walk once more on a twisting yellowy path, trodden by cows descending the slope or through meadows with grass waist high, towards the black wall of beech and pine in the Carpathians.

The author of *Piąta pora roku* was – like the poem's protagonist – a poet who had experienced war, the death of his closest relatives and the hardships of life as an émigré (cf. Stanzas 13 and 14). Both author and protagonist can be described as poets who were 'twice born'¹⁴⁷.

The various stages in the work of Wierzyński's protagonist (and Wierzyński himself) – as a poet – can indeed be seen to 'correspond' to stages in the work of the great (Polish) Romantics: the youthfulness, joyfulness and expansiveness of Mickiewicz's *Oda do młodości* (cf. Stanza 7); the Prometheanism of Part III of Mickiewicz's *Dziady*; the nostalgic, pastoral vision of the land of childhood (*kraj lat dziecińczych*) of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*¹⁴⁸; the mythology of Słowacki's *Król–Duch*.

The autobiographical narration of the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is not simply a relation of facts, but also an attempt to explain them in the universal categories of death and eternity. This universal aspect of the poem is largely responsible for its mythical character. It proceeds from the protagonist's examination of the story of his life through the 'prism' of well-known themes from Greek mythology and Romantic literature¹⁴⁹.

The story of the protagonist's life would therefore seem to be a story of the loss of 'paradise' and its subsequent recovery (by means of art). Such a view of the poet's life – and of human life in general – was held by the European Romantics. The Polish critic

¹⁴⁶ Cf. K. Wierzyński, *Cygańskim wozem*. ed.cit., pp. 5–6.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. W. Weintraub, *Szkic do arykaułu* [in:] *Przebity światem* (various contributors), London 1969, p. 53.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. M. Dłuska, *Legenda wieczności* [in:] op.cit., vol. III.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. M. Tatara, op.cit.

Mochnacki related the myth of the loss of Paradise and the attempts to recover it to the history of the life of every human being as well as to that of mankind as a whole:

Jeden raz w życiu swoim każdy z nas był w raju nim wyszedł z lat dziecińczych; w przeciągu między brzaskiem, świtem, jutrzenką, w rozdziale między wschodem i południem lat męskich...¹⁵⁰.

Once in a lifetime every one of us has been in paradise before we left the world of childhood; between the twilights, the daybreak and the dawn, in a chapter between the sunrise and the noon of adult life.

In Mochnacki's version of the myth of Paradise lost Romantic (Schiller), Biblical and Greek (the story of the Titans and the four ages of mankind) elements are fused in a peculiar and not always consistent manner¹⁵¹. Here the Titans would seem to have come before the human age of Paradise¹⁵². Although the human age of Paradise was notable for the harmonious coexistence of man, nature and God (this external harmony being accompanied by inner harmony¹⁵³, man at this stage of his existence – Mochnacki believed – was able to comprehend nature and (perhaps) God directly (by intuition) but did not know himself¹⁵⁴. Mochnacki compares the next period in the history of man and mankind to sleep. During this period poetic inspiration is unaware of its aims. In Mochnacki's view, this age of ignorance and childhood corresponds to the plant kingdom in the world of nature¹⁵⁵:

A dalej – następujący okres: czyż nie przypada do miary z wegetacją w naturze organicznej? Czasy poetyckiego natchnienia zapachu? Nie sen–li to rzeczywiście? Fantazja włada w tym świecie i jako duch nad ziemią się unosi. Stwarza, czaruje.

Then – the next period: is it not like the vegetation in the realm of nature? Is it a time of poetic inspiration and enthusiasm? Is it not like sleep, a dream? Imagination sways its dominion over the world and it hovers like a spirit over the globe, a creator and a sorcerer.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 28.

¹⁵¹ Like Coleridge, Mochnacki was under the 'spell' of various German Romantic philosophers and writers.

Cf. K. Krzemień-Ojak, *Maurycy Mochnacki. Program kulturalny i myśl krytyczno literacka*, Warsaw 1975.

¹⁵² Cf. Footnote No. 125.

¹⁵³ Following in the footsteps of German philosophers, Mochnacki distinguishes four faculties of the human soul: 'um' (theoretical reason); 'rozum' (practical reason); 'imaginacja' (reflective imagination); 'fantazja' (creative imagination). Cf. Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 43. Mochnacki often speaks of memory as being a separate faculty. Cf. "Największa moc rozumu w dzieleniu, przeciwnie f a n t a z j a części rozdzielone spaja w całość i wszystko totalizuje" (Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 62).

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Footnote 118.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 31.

In *Piąta pora roku* the protagonist's vision of his own youth would seem to be reminiscent of Mochnacki's description of the early stages of man's existence. The childhood and youth of Wierzyński's protagonist are seen as a sleepy vision (cf. Stanza 5) of a Dionysian procession. The 'participants' in this partly realistic, partly fantastic procession are: the protagonist; plants; animals; people; the wind; clouds; the seasons; cyclical time and movement (cf. Stanzas 6 – 11). The participants seem to be united by poetic enthusiasm (cf. *Krzyczałem w tłumie jak ja zakochanych: / "Młodości, podaj mi skrzydła"*) and – it would seem – a degree of ignorance (cf. *Nie wiedziałem co znaczy niejasny ten śpiew, / Płynął czas i odmiany i ja z nimi razem*).

This moving procession of shapes, sounds, smells and colours stops at the moment when the Spirits of the protagonist's dead parents make their appearance. The 'centre-piece' of the protagonist's narration is the partly related, partly enacted scene with the Spirits of his dead parents¹⁵⁶, which encompasses the protagonist's past and present. The protagonist's vaguely defined past is linked with an allusion to war (cf. Stanza 13) and with the protagonist's journey in the sphere of eternity, accompanied by the Spirits of his parents (Stanza 14). Whereas this part of the narration would seem to tell about the loss of 'paradise', the fragment in the present tense (Stanza 15 – 20) would seem to tell about its recovery. The recovery of 'paradise' is equated with the acquisition of secret knowledge and with the return of the protagonist's Spirit to poetry (song) and to his homeland.

This second part of the narration concerning the loss (Stanzas 12 – 14) and recovery (15 – 20) of 'paradise' differs in some respects from Mochnacki's version of the myth. Mochnacki's description of the loss of 'paradise' can be seen as a reflection of Romantic reaction against eighteenth-century epistemological mechanism and empiricism. Mochnacki believed that man consciously destroyed his original spiritual and material harmony when he made the mistake of inquiring about himself and about the world. Man thus chose to tread the false road of knowledge which is based exclusively on the senses and on practical reason. For Mochnacki, the period of 'paradise lost' is one of individual and collective egoism and a false, 'mechanistic' vision of the world¹⁵⁷. The recovery of 'paradise' – i.e. the reconstruction of inner and outer harmony – would for Mochnacki seem to be conditional upon man's choice of the true road of knowledge which is based on intuition and creative imagination¹⁵⁸. This road leads to the spiritual

¹⁵⁶ Cf. M. Tatara, op.cit.

¹⁵⁷ "Mechanizm opanował umysły. Układy oddzielnych nauk odmieniają się przed oczyma naszymi w słowniki technicznych wyrazów i technicznych manipulacji: coraz więcej mnoży się szczegółów, nie powiązanych myślą ogólną; żadnej prawie teorii, żadnego systematu, żadnej całości organicznej (...) Naukę trzeba mieć w sobie, w środku i z nas samych, z jestestwa naszego wszelką wyciągnąć umiejętność (...) Każda umiejętność tak oryginalna, tak pierwotna być musi, jak poezja i poetyckie natchnienie (...) Umiejętność nie jest rzeczą pamięci, ale największą jest sprawą i misterstwem ducha. Najpiękniejsze odkrycia winniśmy naukowemu entu jazmowi i ledwo nie poetyckiej inspiracji, – tej najwyższej filozofii genjuszu" (Mochnacki, op.cit., pp. 57 – 59).

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Footnote No. 157.

transformation of individuals – namely the ‘spreading out’ of the spirit and the extinction of egoism. The resulting vision of the world is that of an organic whole. Paraphrasing the words of the Gospel, Mochnacki writes that man ought to be ‘as wise as a serpent and as innocent as a child’¹⁵⁹ – thus (it would seem) acquiring superhuman status.

For the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* the loss of ‘paradise’ is not the result of choosing a false theory of knowledge, which Mochnacki would seem to equate with man’s departure from the initial sphere of myth. Indeed, Wierzyński’s protagonist never ventures outside the sphere of myth. His dramatized narrative is told from two standpoints – terrestrial and super-terrestrial¹⁶⁰ – which (partially) ‘overlap’, so to speak. When the super-terrestrial standpoint ‘operates’, the protagonist’s initial ‘paradise’ is lost. At the same time, however, the sphere of myth is extended and acquires a super-terrestrial dimension.

The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* has already fathomed the secret of the visible world. By taking part in the life of nature, he has discovered the fundamental principle of life – movement¹⁶¹ – and the fundamental dimension of the visible world – time:

Szedł ruch za ruchem, ruchome odmiany
Ludzi i roślin i skóry zwierzęcej,
Doczesne pory i czas powikłany,
Wszystko co żyło i jeszcze coś więcej.

The loss of ‘paradise’ is linked with the discovery of the world of Spirits and eternity and – *ipso facto* – with the addition of a supersensual dimension to knowledge (cf. *Bo przyszli potem z daleka umarli, ...*). Seen from a terrestrial standpoint, the loss of ‘paradise’ seems to the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* to be the result of historical events.

¹⁵⁹ Mochnacki would appear to be undecided as to the means whereby Paradise is to be regained – by creative imagination, theoretical reason or a combination of both. What is certain in that intuition has a part to play in the process of recovery.

Cf. “Cel historii taki: ‘B a d ż m y j a k o d z i e c i’ ale w u m i e, rozumie w uznaniu siebie samych w jestestwie naszym (...) Naostatek: myśl, że człowiek dąży do o d z y s k a n i a owego stanu, to jest: ‘żeby – jako pismo mówi – gołębią prostotą z węzową ł a c z y ł c h y t r o ś c i ą, czyli innymi słowy, co na jedno wypada, z tego przenośnego rozumienia, żeby u m e m, rozumem, żartkością i przenikliwością swojego dowcipu, toż głębokiem a jasnym samego siebie *pojęciem*, ze wszystkimi dary i dzielnościami cywilizacji, które z tego *pojęcia* wypłynęły, był tak dobry, tak niewinny, tak cichy i natchniony jak ów pierwszy człowiek przed wywołaniem i tułactwem swoim, kiedy go Stworzyciel nieba i ziemi posadził ręką swoją w raj...” (Mochnacki, op.cit., pp. 32 – 34). Cf. Footnote No. 157.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. M. Tatar, op.cit.

¹⁶¹ The images of *natura naturans* link Wierzyński with Leśmian and the Romantics. Cf. “Nature działa bezprzestannie; wszystko, co zewnątrz nas postrzegamy, *dzieje się, staje się*, albo *stało się*, czyli przyszło do skutku przez działanie (...) A tak, ponieważ rzecz, osnowa, przedmiot umiejętności przyrodzenia *jest w ruchu* ponieważ natura jest w ruchu (*naturans*), co z tego wynika? Oto, że i środek pojmowania, zbliżania się do natury, także *ruchomy* być powinien” (Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 53).

Cf. K. Wyka, ‘Pan Tadeusz’. *Studia o poemacie*, ed.cit.

Cf. I. Opacki, *Pośmiertna w głębi jezior maska* [in:] *Studia o Leśmianie*, ed.cit.

Seen from a super-terrestrial standpoint, it seems to him to be the result of the intervention of the Spirits of his dead parents, who come to take him to the next world (cf. Stanzas 12 – 14). In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, the loss of the protagonist's initial 'paradise' has features of a mythical initiation. The 'price' of this further initiation would seem to be the protagonist's symbolic death. (cf. Stanza 16)¹⁶².

The protagonist is initiated by being shown the timeless sphere (in which there is no movement) and by being shown the sources of movement. The latter would seem to be none other than the Spirits of his dead parents, who control the elements (cf. Stanza 12). The secret of the unity of life and death (Stanza 17) which they reveal to him belongs to the sphere of 'paradise regained'. The recovery of 'paradise' would seem to be accomplished by the discovery that external movement and time are 'internalized', so to speak (Stanza 16) and become the 'first cause' as it were of creation and the visible world (cf. Stanza 18). The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* would therefore appear to believe that the sources of eternity are to be found in himself. This is certainly one possible interpretation of Stanza 18.

The protagonist tells the story of the loss and recovery of 'paradise' using a few Biblical and (Greek) mythological themes which have been transformed and fused together. The beginning of the narration (about the loss of 'paradise') brings to mind: a Dionysian procession; the departure from Eden; the journey of Tobias the younger, ending with his return to the home of his parents (Stanzas 4 – 11). The iconographic counterpart to this part of *Piąta pora roku* would seem to be Malczewski's painting entitled *Tobiasz z Aniołami*¹⁶³. The protagonist's journey into the other world in the company of the Spirits of his dead parents and his subsequent return to the land of his birth and childhood bring to mind the following mythological themes:

1. The (guided) descent into and subsequent return from the underworld by Persephone, heroine of the Eleusinian myth:

I wzięli mnie. Wiedli w głąb, w tajemniczy
Obszar, gdzie nic się z tej ziemi nie liczy,

2. The death and rebirth of Dionysus:

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
A jednak trwam znów i łokciem o góry
Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
I patrzę, synów mych szukam ...

¹⁶² Cf. M. Tatar, op.cit.

¹⁶³ Cf. K. Wyka, *Thanatos i Polska*, ed.cit., chapter 8.

For a discussion of the motif of the procession in 'Młoda Polska' poetry see: M. Podraza-Kwiatkowska, *Symbolizm i symbolika w poezji Młodej Polski*, Kraków 1975, pp. 149 – 150.

3. The journey made by Hercules to hell and to the garden of the Hesperides – the apple (Stanza 20) being a symbol of Paradise regained¹⁶⁴.

4. The peregrinations or 'guided tours' made in the next world by Aeneas and Dante.

All these mythological themes have been introduced into *Piąta pora roku* by way of allusion. They have been condensed and transformed to conform with Polish poetic tradition. They have also been subordinated to a theme which would seem to be common to the European Romantics – that of the loss of 'paradise' and its recovery by means of imagination, memory and art. But even this theme has been transformed in *Piąta pora roku*, which begins not with the loss of 'paradise' but with its recovery by the Spirit of the protagonist (Stanzas 1 – 4). It is only later on that the protagonist goes back into the past in order to recall the full story of the loss and recovery of 'paradise'.

The motifs of the protagonist's symbolic death and his rebirth through poetic creation and through his spiritual return to the Carpathian land of his youth are anchored in the poetry of the Polish Romantics. In the nostalgic poems¹⁶⁵ of Mickiewicz (cf. *Gdy tu mój trup*), the protagonist's separation from his native land is equated with death. In Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* the protagonist's return to the 'land of his childhood' by means of memory and poetry is equated with the recovery of health and life (cf. the *Inwokacja* and *Epilog* to *Pan Tadeusz*). Mickiewicz's *kraj lat dziecinnych* corresponds to Mochnacki's 'initial paradise' – i.e. youth.

The image of 'paradise regained' presented by the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is much broader than the image of the 'land of childhood' which is sketched by the narrator of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. The 'paradise regained' of *Piąta pora roku* is as it were Mickiewicz's 'land of childhood' extended to include the community of Spirits (cf. *Dziady*). It is as it were a miniature condensation of the worlds of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* and *Dziady* and Słowacki's *Król–Duch*. It would also seem to be much broader and richer than the rather abstract 'paradise regained' of Mochnacki's essay.

The 'paradise regained' of *Piąta pora roku* is a mythical land located in the Carpathian mountains. In his Paris lectures, Mickiewicz describes the Carpathians as the central homeland of the Slavs¹⁶⁶, the 'ancient stronghold of the Slavs' and the 'principal theatre of Slavonic history'. According to Mickiewicz, it was in the Carpathians (and not at Gniezno) that the mythical Slavonic eagle made its first nest, thus founding the first Slavonic settlement:

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Footnote No. 104.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. M. Dłuska, op.cit.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *Pierwsze wieki historii polskiej*: Księga I: *Słowiańszczyzna od wyjścia jej z Azji do czasów Lecha, Czecha i Rusa, czyli Ruryka* [in:] Mickiewicz, *Dzieła prozą*, Ed. T. Pini, Nowogródek 1934, Tom I.

Środkiem teatru ogólnych dziejów Słowiańszczyzny są Karpaty. Na wierzchołku tych gór – jak powiada poeta – osiedł ptak słowiański i jednym skrzydłem uderzył po Morzu Czarnem, drugim po Bałtyku. Z tamtej strony łańcucha Karpackiego, na rozległych płaszczynach swoich ukazują się nam Rusini i Polacy – z tej, w dolinach u podnóża Alp i Hemus rozmaite ludy, z pomiędzy których Czechy aż w głębi Niemiec stoją, jak przednia straż, posuniona ku Zachodowi¹⁶⁷.

The Carpathians are the historic theatre, the focal point for the Slavs. The poet says that the Slavonic bird stopped to rest on the top of the mountains, its wings spread out from the Black Sea to the Baltic. On one side, Poles and Ruthenians live in the vast plains; on the other, in the foothills and valleys of the Alps and the Balkans live many peoples, the Czechs among them who, ensconced in the German lands, are as an outpost towards the West.

For the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku*, the 'recovery of paradise' – which is preceded by the flight of the bird and which in the poem 'takes precedence' (so to speak) over the 'loss of paradise' – is identified with the return to the 'sacral place'¹⁶⁸ and *illud tempus*¹⁶⁹ of myth as well as to the sources of movement and creation. In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, the myth of the loss and recovery of 'paradise' has been transformed into a cosmogonic myth (i.e. one about the creation of the world):

Wiem. Dawno temu doszczętnie wymarłem
 A jednak trwam znów, i łokciem o góry
 Jak tamci z mego plemienia się wsparłem
 I patrzę, synów mych szukam, czy który
 Obszył się liśćmi i porósł lasami,
 A może stoi przy ogniu pastuchów
 I pójdzie śladem, co został za nami,
 I znów powtórzy przyrodę tych ruchów
 Gdy zgrzane życie porami gęstymi
 Dyszało w słońce i szło do księżycy,
 Gdy we mnie ciekła krew mojej ziemi
 A w matkach mleko i w sosnach żywica.

These lines from *Piąta pora roku* would seem to be reminiscent of Dygasiński's novel entitled *Gody życia*, the end of which is stylized as an Ancient Slavonic 'version' of

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Mickiewicz, *Wykłady o literaturach słowiańskich*, ed.cit., Rok I, p. 9.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. J. Kwiatkowski, *U podstaw liryki Leopolda Staffa*, Warsaw 1966, chapter III (Paradise lost). Cf. M. Tatar, op.cit.

Cf. M. Eliade, *Sacrum, mit, historia*, Warsaw.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. M. Eliade, op.cit.

(the) cosmogonic myth¹⁷⁰. In this novel the Sun-god and the Earth-goddess together beget the Life-god, whom they entrust to the care of the Live-goddess. The Life-god in Dygasiński's cosmogony is the Artist, who embodies love, beauty, Good, truth and creative power. The enemy of Life is the 'black god', creator of evil, death, suffering and disease. Life, using the creative power with which he has been endowed by his father, creates a perfect world (equated with the world created by art) distinct from the 'sub-solar world' which has been 'polluted' by the 'black god'¹⁷¹.

'Life' is also the 'hero' of the cosmogonic myth invented by the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku*. In this cosmogony, however, there is no 'black god'. 'Life's' parents would seem to be the mythical couple made up by the sun and the moon. Life is identified with movement and with the flow of multiform, life-giving creative force (cf. the bird – song – blood – milk – resin – the apple) which permeates the whole of the poem's 'represented world'. It strives to reach its origins, i.e. the sun and the moon (= the super-terrestrial world):

Gdy zgrzane życie porami gęstymi
Dyszało w słońce i szło do księżyca,

This last image would seem to be reminiscent not only of Dygasiński's cosmogonic novel but also Bergson's *élan vital* – a (largely) spiritual¹⁷² force which permeates the

¹⁷⁰ *Gody życia* first appeared in 1902. Cf. F. Ziejka, *Motywy prastowiańskie [in:] Młodopolski świat wyobraźni*, Ed. M. Podraza-Kwiatkowska, Kraków 1976. Cf. K. Wyka, *Thanatos i Polska*, ed.cit.

¹⁷¹ Adolf Dygasiński, *Gody życia*, Warsaw 1948, pp. 138 – 141:

“Bóg Jasny i Dziewa Ziemia, para boska miłosna, wydali na Świat bożycza Życie, dziecię niewinne i czyste, dobre. Natchnęli je miłością, prawdą, otoczyli wdziękami szczęścia, ażeby było piękne, nieśmiertelne. Dali mu za niańkę i opiekunkę boginię Żywą, najlepszą z siostr bogów, o obliczu słonecznym, o spojrzeniu tak czystym, jak pogoda Niebios w poranek letni (...) Alić bóg czarny, wróg odwieczny Słońca, przeciwnik dzieł jego zacięty i wiecznie niechętny, zaczął jasność ciemnościami, rozmnożył głody blade, zimna drżące i niedolę wszelką, chciały podgryzać wąż Życia młodziutkiego. (...) Zło pomieszało się w Życiu z dobrem, wzięło górę i zamieniło krynicę przezystą w kałużę szpetną. (...) Dopiero Żywa, ciężko strudowana daremnym wysiłkiem opieki nad Życiem, załamała ręce i wzniosła głos błagalny do Słońca: (...) A słońce jej odrzeczło: Ja, ojciec, przelałem w życie ogień twórczy. Wiano rodzicielskie wystarcza – jestem pewny – do stworzenia świata nowego, dokąd ani śmierć, ani niedola, ani żadne zło nie dosięgną. (...) Idź, dziewo boska, otwórz Życiu dłoń przezystą bramy nieśmiertelności! (...) Życie zebrało swe siły najlepsze, otrzymane w posagu od bóstwa, i poza światem podslonecznym stworzyło świat własny – cudo nad cuda (...) Pragnienie niebotyczne, marzenia najwznioślejsze, piękność co bóstwo wzór jej stanowi, zamieszkały w tej krainie nowej. (...) Ziemia jest piękna (...) Wdzięki jej jednak nie zdołają sprostać piękności świata, który teraz stworzyły dusze szlachetne, poczuwające w sobie iskrę bożą. Dzieło nowe stworzenia ...”.

¹⁷² Bergson's concept of *élan vital* is open to various interpretations, e.g.:-

“*élan vital* nie jest niczym innym jak świadomością puszczoną przez materię” (Ludwik Chmaj, *O Duszy zamkniętej i otwartej* [in:] “Przegląd Współczesny”, Nr 122 – 123, 1932, p. 8). – “*Élan vital* – to jedno z pojęć konstytutywnych doktryny Bergsona. Jest życiem uniwersalnie czynnym we wszystkich sferach rzeczywistości: w samym akcie tworzenia materii, w rozwoju gatunków, w twórczości indywidualium ludzkiego, w życiu społecznym. Możemy wcielić się w jego nieustającą aktywność i przez sympatię intuicyjną współżyć z jego tętnem – niosącym świat ku stałym niespodziankom i nowościom, stałym poszukiwaniom i wysiłkom” (L. Kołakowski, *Bergson: antynomia praktycznego rozumu* [in:] Bergson, *Ewolucja twórcza*, trans. F. Znaniński, Warszawa 1957, p. XVIII).

whole world, which is the essence of the world and which therefore 'unites' apparent opposites. All visible and invisible 'things' are manifestations of *élan vital* – in *Piąta pora roku*: the bird, song, blood, milk, resin, the apple, people, plants, animals, mountains. This explains why, in the poetical world of *Piąta pora roku*, life and death are one (cf. Stanza 17). The metaphor 'the nature of these movements' (*przyroda tych ruchów*) in Stanza 16 does away with the opposition between the invisible, creative basis of life and the visible world – between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*¹⁷³.

The opposition between life and art¹⁷⁴ is also eliminated in the poem. Life, which is identified with 'lasting' (cf. Stanza 16 – *trwanie*), is also equated with creation. In *Piąta pora roku* 'lasting', 'movement' and 'life' are – it would seem – three ideas which together can be seen to relate to Bergson's philosophy¹⁷⁵. In Stanza 16 'lasting' (cf. Bergson's *durée*) would seem to mean the protagonist's intuitive union with the *élan vital* and its creative evolution. It is also opposed (in accordance, it would seem, with Bergsonian metaphysics) to cyclical time and movement (cf. Stanza 11 – *czas powi-klany*). Another characteristic of Bergsonian 'lasting' (*durée*) is the elasticity of the boundaries between the past, present and future¹⁷⁶ which is to be found in *Piąta pora roku*, where it would appear to have 'replaced' the mythical *illud tempus* of the cosmogonic myth of Wierzyński's protagonist.

The protagonist's dead parents belong to the sphere of the poem's 'Ancient Slavonic' cosmogonic myth. In accordance with the mythical law of universal identity and analogy which 'operates' in the poetical world of *Piąta pora roku* (cf. the protagonist – the bird – song – blood – life – milk – resin – the apple), the protagonist's dead parents would seem to be analogues of – if indeed they are not identifiable with – the sun and the moon (the mythical father and mother of All Being). This would seem to account for their immense size (cf. Stanza 12 – *a ziemia szeroka / Drobną im rzeszą zawisła u oka*). Their child – the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* – would seem to be identifiable with Dygasiński's Lifegod (cf. Stanza 16) and with Bergson's *élan vital*.

It is therefore no great surprise that – at the beginning of the poem – the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* creates himself as a mythical god identifiable with the god Universe (made of the four elements) of Plato's *Timaeus*¹⁷⁷. He 'becomes covered in

Bergson made a strong impact on Polish thinkers and artists in the first forty years of the twentieth century – on Leśmian in particular.

Cf. Bolesław Leśmian, *Z rozmyślań o Bergsonie* – 1910 [in:] *Szkice literackie*, Warsaw 1959.

Cf. J. Błoiński, *Bergson a program poetycki Leśmiana* [in:] *Studia o Leśmianie*, ed.cit.

Cf. W. Rzymowski, *Élan vital na greckim pomniku. K. Wierzyński w nowych granicach świata* [in:] "Wiadomości Literackie", 1930, Nr 38.

¹⁷³ Cf. Footnote No 161.

¹⁷⁴ "Życie jest wszystkim! Nie ma żadnej sztuki!" (K. Wierzyński, *Manifest szalony* [in:] *Poezje zebrane*, ed.cit., pp. 37 – 38.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Bergson, *Ewolucja twórcza*, ed.cit. Cf. L. Kołakowski, op.cit.

¹⁷⁶ "Trwanie jest to ciągły postęp przeszłości, która wgrzyza się w przyszłość i nabrzmiewa idąc naprzód" (Bergson, op.cit., p. 18).

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Plato, *Timaios i Kritias*, trans. W. Witwicki, Warsaw 1960, VII, VIII, IX, XLIV.

mountains' and is 'sewn up in leaves'. A fire burns inside him and a bird flies through him. His whole body is permeated with blood and song and contains all 'living' and 'dead' beings. It brings to mind the image of the tree of life (cf. *obszyłem się liśćmi*) and that of a mountain (cf. *porosłem górami ... Na gołej czaszce, na szczycie*):

Ptaka przeleciał przez mnie, ptak,
I drzwi zostawił otwarte,
(...)
Obszyłem się liśćmi, porosłem górami,
Palily się we mnie ogniska pastuchów;
Pod drzewami, w deszczu, przykryci workami,
Podobni byli do duchów.
(...)
Siekiera stękała topornym odgłosem
Na gołej czaszce, na szczycie.
(...)
Szedł ruch za ruchem, ruchome odmiany
Ludzi i roślin i skóry zwierzęcej,
Doczesne pory i czas powikłany,
Wszystko co żyło i jeszcze coś więcej.

Bo przyszli potem z daleka umarli
Łokciem o lasy jodłowe się wsparli,
Patrzyli wokół – a ziemia szeroka
Drobną im rzęsą zawisła u oka,

In the cosmogonic myth 'set up' by the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku*, Greek ideas about the process of creation coexist with those of the Romantics and Bergson. The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is first and foremost the creator and the soul of the universe. At the centre of this soul there burns a fire, which not only 'illuminates' the shepherds huddled round it, but also transforms them into Spirits (cf. Stanza 3). This inner fire is a Romantic analogue of the protagonist's imagination, endowed with creative force and intuition. The Romantics compared the creative imagination to a lamp which illuminates the universe¹⁷⁸ and which – in so doing – reveals the secret of the universe (in *Piąta pora roku* – movement and life), saturating it with the light of feeling (in *Piąta pora roku* – love, rapture, sadness and *cudowność*) – thus transforming it. The lamp then reflects this world which it has itself transformed. In Mochnacki's essay (quoted above), the analogues of intuitive thought are: 'light', 'sun', 'chandelier/candelabrum', 'lamp' and 'the soul of the world'. Mochnacki describes philosophers (and poets)¹⁷⁹ as 'architects of nature', who seek to fully fathom the secret of man and the

¹⁷⁸ Cf. M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, Oxford 1977.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Footnote No. 153.

universe – i.e. whose goal is inner vision ('seeing oneself with a spiritual eye'). According to Mochnacki, the 'starting point' of the cognitive process is intuition – i.e. entering into one's inner self¹⁸⁰. Mochnacki compares the process of the cognitive approach to the 'inner vision' to the 'building of the world', to the gradual 'spreading out of the spirit' and to the recovery of paradise:

Dla natury trzeba jasności. Tą jasnością, tym świecznikiem przyrodzenia, tą lampą światów – jest myśl człowieka–anioła. Cała natura w niej się maluje jak obraz nadbrzeżnych kształtów w ruchomym strumieniu – jak cień rzeczy na zwierciadle (...) światło jakiegokolwiek, wiedzące że jaśniej, byłoby myślą, pojęciem; byłoby słońcem – duszą świata¹⁸¹ (...) Myślą sporządzamy sobie świat zewnętrzny. Rozumując budujemy gmach przyrodzenia i wszystkie ukazujące się w tym gmachu zjawiska. Prawdziwy filozof, badacz przyrodzenia, jest architektem natury!¹⁸² (...) Jedna linia przez wszystkie lata życia naszego się rozciąga; z początku w ciemnych nienależnych punktach, jak we mgle i w mroku – dalej coraz jaśniejsza, wyraźniejsza; naostatek samą jest jasnością, promieniem, światłem, wewnątrz obróconą źrenicą – widzeniem siebie okiem ducha – 'uznaniem samego siebie w oddzielnym jestestwie' – Otóż zagadka naszego bytu!...¹⁸³

Nature needs light. The thought of man, the angel, provides this light: the candelabrum and the lamp of the world. The whole of nature is mirrored in it, as the forms of the water's edge are mirrored in a stream, as the shadow of an object is reflected in a looking glass (...) Any light, if aware that it shines, would become a thought, an idea; it would become a sun, a spirit of the world. (...) The external world is a creation of thought. We build the fabric of nature and all the phenomena within it by an invention of the mind. A real philosopher and naturalist is an architect of nature. (...) One long line extends throughout our life: in the beginning interrupted, obscured at some points as if in a hazy mist but becoming clearer, and brighter; till, in the end, it becomes radiance itself, a ray, a light, a pupil looking inward so that we see ourselves in the light of the spirit and 'recognize ourselves as a separate being'. That is the mystery of our existence!

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Mickiewicz: "...kiedy tymczasem intuicya (intus itio) daje nam razem i uczuć i pojęć sposób otrzymywania prawdy: intus itio jest to wejście wewnątrz siebie" (Mickiewicz, *Wykłady o literaturach słowiańskich*, ed.cit., Rok III, p. 94).

¹⁸¹ Mochnacki, op.cit., p. 24.

¹⁸² Ibidem, p. 53.

¹⁸³ Ibidem, p. 30.

The imagination of the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* would therefore seem to be reminiscent both of the creative and reflective imagination of the Romantics and of Bergsonian memory¹⁸⁴. It is as it were the 'meeting ground' of matter and spirit – 'life' and 'death'. Its contents, which consist of memories of movements, images and feelings – as well as imaginings – form a dynamic whole. A characteristic property of this imagination is its 'lasting' (cf. Stanzas 15 – 16). Its concentration precedes all creative activity (cf. Stanzas 19 – 20)¹⁸⁵.

The structure of the protagonist's imagination would seem to be an analogue both of the structure of the poem's 'represented world' and of the structure of a universe which has been enriched by the creations of man. The 'layout' of this imagination (so to speak) would appear to be concentric. At the centre there would seem to be the creative principle of the world (i.e. *élan vital* – cf. Stanzas 15 – 16). The centre would appear to correspond to the protagonist's 'deep self'¹⁸⁶. The outer 'layers' of the protagonist's imagination encompass: inorganic and organic nature; the world of Spirits; eternity; literary images, myths and symbols created by the protagonist or transformed by him. These images, myths and symbols are derived from European as well as Polish literature. They are concerned with nature, man's life, the poet, poetry, imagination, creation and eternity.

The protagonist's imagination would seem to be indestructible. It is to this indestructibility that people, plants, animals and Spirits owe their immortality (cf. Stanzas 15 – 18). In this sense the 'represented world' of *Piąta pora roku* is an image of eternity (i.e. of imagination) as well as being its product (cf. Stanza 20).

The imagination of the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* has two emotional 'poles', so to speak. One of these is 'Dionysian' – a yearning for unity with people and nature. The other is 'Promethean' – a yearning for leadership of the human community and for the role of mediator between that community and the world of Spirits. Both these emotional poles are linked by a feeling of 'Franciscan' love for people and the world.

The process of the 'actualization' of all the memories and imaginings which are contained in the protagonist's imagination is 'triggered off' – so to speak – by a sudden shock¹⁸⁷ (*Ptaka przeleciał przede mną, ptak*), which causes a sudden 'ordering' and 'opening up' of the protagonist's imagination, making it host to Spirits. This shock may be equated with the intuitive insight into the secret of one's own life and the world as described by Bergson¹⁸⁸ and the Romantics. In *Piąta pora roku* the secret would seem to be creative 'lasting' (cf. Stanzas 16 – 17).

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Footnote No. 153. Cf. Bergson, *Materia i pamięć* (La matière et la mémoire), Warsaw 1930. Cf. J. Dudek, op.cit., p. 88.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Bergson, *Materia i pamięć*, ed.cit.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. L. Kołakowski, op.cit.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. L. Chmaj, op.cit. Cf. "W krainie życia wszystko odbywa się przez wstrząśnienia" (Mickiewicz, *Wykłady...*, ed.cit., Rok IV, p. 150).

¹⁸⁸ Cf. L. Chmaj, op.cit.

The process of the ‘actualization’ of the contents of the protagonist’s imagination would seem to be identified with the creative process (i.e. the process of cognition and expression)¹⁸⁹. The protagonist’s narration about the fathoming of the secret of life and death becomes transformed into a cosmogonic myth.

The cosmogonic myth ‘set up’ by the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* would seem to be the fullest realization of the tenets of expressive poetics. The structure of this myth is an image of the structure of the protagonist’s imagination, which unites all oppositions and which is identified with the soul of the universe and with eternity.

¹⁸⁹ See above, pages 109 – 112 and 117 – 121.

Michał Anioł

Michał Anioł malował leżąc
Przywiązany na deskach do stropu,
Gdy zatrzęśło freskami, ścianami
I kaplicą i całą Europą.

Spojrzał w dół, w ludzki tłum jak się roi,
Toczy wojny, wyrzyna się, brata,
I odkrzyknął im z góry:
“Spokojnie,
Bo przerwę,
Przerwę Stworzenie Świata”.

(K. Wierzyński, *Poezje zebrane*, p. 509 – cf. *Selected Poems*, p. 11).

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CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing analyses of *The Tower* and *Piąta pora roku* show that – as mature poets – both W.B. Yeats and K. Wierzyński closely ‘identified themselves’ with the ‘native’ Romantic literary tradition which they happened to ‘inherit’ (so to speak). In doing so, both poets became linked by a common European cultural tradition – Romanticism (and Symbolism, its continuation).

Both poets employed the native Romantic ‘forms’ which they chose to inherit (genre, style, versification, structure) in relatively short lyric poems, transforming them in accordance with their own artistic inclinations. The poems of both poets may be described as being extremely ‘condensed’ yet rich in complex meaning, as well as being ‘dramatized’.

Yeats’s poem ‘continues’ the English Romantic tradition of an interior monologue which – in one and the same work – may take the form of a vision, a mythical narration, a meditation or an ‘address’ to a second person (cf. Shelley’s *Epipsychidion*). The monologue of *The Tower* ‘oscillates’ – in characteristically Romantic fashion – between a dualistic and a monistic (spiritual monism) view of the world. Yeats – following in Pater’s footsteps – traces this ‘oscillation’ to its source. In doing so, he discovers (in the works of Plato and Plotinus) the Platonic and Neoplatonic sources of Romantic expressive poetics.

Wierzyński’s poem ‘continues’ – in a relatively short, lyrical form – the Polish Romantic tradition of ‘ritualistic’ drama (cf. Mickiewicz’s *Dziady*) and mythical epic poetry (cf. Słowacki’s *Król-Duch*). The overall structure of *Piąta pora roku* – as in the case of some of Słowacki’s greatest poems – is that of a cosmogonic myth. The ‘ideological infrastructure’ of this myth is the monistic (spiritual monism) pole of the Romantic philosophy of nature (Mochnacki, Słowacki) continued (and modified – Bergson!) in the twentieth century by Leśmian. Wierzyński finds support for such a view of the world in Bergson’s philosophy of nature, in the *Fioretti* of St. Francis of Assisi and in the mythology of Ancient Greece. In *Piąta pora roku*, therefore, Platonism is only indirectly present.

In both poems the ‘represented world’ has been constructed in such a way as to continually express the protagonist’s detachment towards the themes and motifs of Romantic poetry which are dear to the poet. This detachment finds its expression in manifest or hidden irony, which may take the form of: ‘self-mockery’ (Yeats); open or subdued polemics (Yeats); the use of the optative mood (Yeats); a lyrical joke (Wierzyński); the ‘prosaic transformation’ of the loftier themes of Romantic poetry

(Wierzyński); frequent allusions and suggestions (Yeats and Wierzyński); the transference of the 'centre of gravity' of the poem's 'represented world' from the sphere of indefinite transcendence to that of the 'everyday environment'. In Yeats's poem this 'everyday environment' is the landscape and architecture of a district in Ireland (the land of the poet's birth) – Ballylee and its environs – chosen by the poet as a material as well as a spiritual 'homeland'. The 'everyday environment' in *Piąta pora roku* is the Sub-Carpathian landscape in which the poet spent his youth.

The lyric monologue of both poems has been stylized as a strongly rhythmical spoken utterance. Both poems have been written in verse which is free and irregular. In both poems colloquialisms 'coexist' happily with 'hidden' (i.e. inconspicuous) archaisms and regionalisms. Metaphors are invariably 'prepared for' and 'motivated' by the context in which they appear.

The 'represented world' in both *The Tower* and *Piąta pora roku* has a 'multi-dimensional' as well as a 'multi-layer' (or 'multi-level') structure. The most conspicuous 'layer' in both poems is that of the 'everyday environment' (i.e. the 'personal' or 'authentic' layer). The mythical 'layer' – hidden 'below' that of the 'everyday environment' (so to speak) – can in the case of both poems be said to consist of several 'secondary layers' or 'sub-layers' – Greek (Homer and Plato – Yeats; Dionysian – Eleusinian and Promethean – Wierzyński); Biblical and Celtic (Yeats); Slavonic (Wierzyński); Renaissance (Neoplatonism – Yeats; Franciscanism – Wierzyński); Romantic (Yeats and Wierzyński). Each element of the 'represented world' of both poems may be viewed through the 'prism' (so to speak) of any one 'layer' or 'sub-layer' – thus becoming a complex symbol, which is the counterpart of the Romantic 'image' (cf. Kermode). All the symbols (or 'images') are linked by a rational 'axis' which in *The Tower* takes the form of an interior monologue and in *Piąta pora roku* that of a dramatized narrative.

The intellectual 'axis' of the 'represented world' of both poems is the (transformed) mythical theme of the quest for (Yeats) and the finding of (Wierzyński) 'paradise lost'. In *The Tower*, this theme is associated with dialectic meditation, with the Platonic motif of climbing up the hill (or ladder) of love and knowledge and with the quest for the Grail. In *Piąta pora roku* the theme is associated with the gradual intuitive, mythical initiation (reminiscent of the Eleusinian myth and of Dante) into the secret of the (visible and invisible) world (cf. Bergson's 'creative lasting').

Both poets make use of a wide range of emotionality. Yeats's protagonist often speaks about his feelings directly. By contrast, Wierzyński's protagonist is much more 'reserved' and indirect in speaking about his feelings, even going as far as to make use of gestures.

Both poems are permeated by dramatic tension which results from the conflict between a yearning for unity with people and with the visible world (on the one hand), and the need to rebuild inner and cosmic order by means of imagination and art (on the other).

The two poets – Yeats and Wierzyński – are deeply linked by their common, Romantic belief in the capacity of poetry and imagination for creation, cognition and the

reconciliation of opposites. They are also linked by their belief that 'the laws of art are the hidden laws of the universe'. At the end of *The Tower*, Yeats's protagonist shuts himself up in the tower of imagination (a symbol of the Great Memory and the protagonist's own imagination). The protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* begins his monologue by 'repeating' in his imagination the process of the creation of the world.

In both poems, creative imagination is closely linked with memory. The world of imagination is in both poems also equated with eternity. The work of art is at one and the same time an image of and a form of eternity. The 'justification' for this common point of view, however, is not the same in the two poems – Plotinus in the case of Yeats, Bergson in the case of Wierzyński.

Both poets are linked by an expressive approach to poetry and by a conscious inclination to blur the distinction between 'life' and 'art'. *The Tower* and *Piąta pora roku* are both – directly – the 'autobiographical' narrations of a protagonist. Indirectly, the two poems both constitute as it were an *ars poetica*.

In both poems, the protagonist is 'situated' (so to speak) at the centre of the 'represented world'. He is in both poems a 'multi-layer', 'mythologized' personality. His 'super-human' status derives from the fact that he is a visionary who is united with the creative principle of the world and who 'mediates', as it were, between a definite human community and the world of Spirits. This liaison with the human community is much more strongly expressed by the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* than by that of *The Tower*. Wierzyński's protagonist is much more 'natural' than that of Yeats in the manner in which he makes contact with the world of Spirits. Wierzyński's protagonist is visited in 'ritualistic circumstances' by the Spirits of his dead parents. By contrast, Yeats's protagonist himself 'invokes' the Spirits of past inhabitants of the environs of Ballylee. In both poems, however, the invocation of Spirits (cf. the invocation of the Spirit of earth in *Piąta pora roku*) is treated by the protagonist with humorous detachment.

Both protagonists speak on two levels, as it were – one 'human', the other 'super-human'. As 'people', the protagonists of both poems can be seen to be reminiscent of their creators – Yeats and Wierzyński. As a 'super-human' being, the protagonist of *The Tower* is the embodiment of the 'passion' which from time immemorial has filled the Great Memory of the 'soul of the world'. For his part, the protagonist of *Piąta pora roku* is pure imagination, which is the counterpart of the imagination of the 'soul of the world'.

For both protagonists, life is synonymous with creation, which in turn is synonymous with action, cognition and expression. Both protagonists are conspicuous for their complex activity. In *Piąta pora roku*, the creative activity of the protagonist is 'in unison' (so to speak) with the creative impetus of *natura naturans*. The images of nature in Wierzyński's poem – like those in Polish Romantic and Symbolist poetry – are therefore continually 'on the move', as it were. By contrast, the images of nature in *The Tower* are fairly static.