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Title: Conradian intellectual feast in Lublin

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It all started early in the morning on the 20 July with our visit to the Lublin cemetery to light a candle on the grave of Karol Zagórski, Conrad's cousin. It was raining heavily and the scholars flocked densely around the grave while Professor Wiesław Krajka was impressively telling the story of the untimely death of doctor Zagórski, the difficult financial situation of the widow and his two daughters Aniela (the would-be translator of Conrad) and Karola. Then the unusual multinational group moved to the Castel Museum where in front of the monumental Jan Matejko's painting *Union of Lublin*, the official opening took place. Professor dr hab. Stanisław Michałowski, Rector of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University greeted all the Conradian scholars very heartily. The inaugural plenary lecture was delivered by Carl Schaffer who moved deftly between America and Europe tracing Conrad's and Flannery O'Connor's representations of displaced Poles.

After the sightseeing (Holy Trinity Chapel, among others) we had some pleasant time in restaurants and cafés on the main square of the Old City where we dined and in convivial atmosphere fondly reminisced about previous conferences (Kaoru Yamamoto, Yumiko Iwashimizu, Brigida Pudełko, Anna Szczepan-Wojnarska, Richard Ambrosini and Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech vividly recalled former Conrad's symposia and debates in Lublin). Besides we discussed our teaching experience, differences in reception of Conrad in Japan, China, India, Italy and Poland, not to mention the recollections of our personal initiation into the fascinating maze of Conrad's works.

The conference proper started on the 21 June at the University venue in two parallel sections. The scholarly proceedings were composed of papers on various aspects of Joseph Conrad's life and works (Conrad's Polish and East-Central European aspects and contexts were one of the focuses of the symposium). On the first day there were delivered, among others, most engrossing papers on the fact and fiction in the lives of two Poles, Captain Joseph Conrad and Admiral Juliusz Ripper (who both faced typhoons), by Majda Šavle; on the contemporary Bulgarian reception of Conrad, by Margareta Grigorova and Petza Tsoneva; on the intertextual aspects of *A Personal Record* and *Almayer's Folly*, by Richard Ambrosini; on contemporary recycling of the figure of Conrad in the fictions of Vargas Llosa, Vasquez, Sebald and Salman Rushdie, by Nathalie Martinière; and on Polish and English translations by/of Conrad, by Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech and Anna Szczepan-Wojnarska.

In the evening we were invited to the historic Kościuszko's Manor, originally dating from the eighteenth century, for a luscious informal banquet. The ancient mansion is picturesquely situated in the Uni-

versity Botanical Garden among rare plants, blooming flowers and lily ponds. With a glass of wine Professor Krajka invited all conference participants to take full advantage of the multinational get-together as well as the breathtaking landscape.

On the third day we could listen to the absorbing presentations on Conrad's relatives (e.g. Leon Syroczyński) by Lilia Omelan, on Conrad's works ("Amy Foster" by Wiesław Krajka, Maria Paola Guarducci, and Joanna Mstowska; "Typhoon" by Jana M. Giles, *Nostromo* by Agnieszka Setecka; "The Tale" by Kyoko Imagawa, among others).

On the fourth day we could engross ourselves in the analyses of Monika Majewska on Conrad and Tolsoy, Rafał Szczerbakiewicz on Conrad and Stanisław Lem, Adam F. Lausch-Hołubowicz on Conrad and Achebe, Brygida Pudełko on Conrad and May Sinclair, and Yumiko Iwashimizu on Conrad's misogyny in *Chance*, among others. We were also enthralled by the visually sumptuous presentations on Conrad and René Magritte by Kaoru Yamamoto and the power of illustrations by Frank Förster.

On the last day we could listen, among others, to the gripping essays on supernatural and the spectral in "The Black Mate" and "The Inn of the Two Witches" by Jacek Mydla and Agata Łukasiewicz, respectively, as well as speeches on the maritime tradition in *The Shadow Line* by Kenji Tanaka, on the abiding virtues in Conrad and the philosophy of the *I Ching*, among others. The conference was closed by Claude Maisonnat who once again revealed to us Marlow's narrative underhand games.

All in all, there were more than forty scholars from all over the world (Italy, Switzerland, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Poland, Great Britain, the USA, India, China, Japan, Iran, among others).

Unfortunately some Conradians could not participate but their papers were read out. Thus we had a good opportunity to listen to the papers of Joanna Skolik, Stephen Brodsky, Peter Vernon, Anna Brzozowska-Krajka, Evelyn Chan, Merry M. Pawlowski, and Susan Bhatt.

However, this was only the first part of the conference held in Lublin. It was followed by the second part—the study tour to Ukraine (24-29 June) with two outgoing sessions: in Lviv and in Zhytomyr. Similarly to the long tradition of Conrad symposia in Lublin (the first conference took place in 1991) there is a tradition of a post-conference study tour. They have been organized either to Ukraine or Poland—this year the participants had a chance to follow Joseph Conrad's footprints in Ukraine: they visited Lviv/Lvov, Berdychiv/Berdychiev, Zhytomyr and Terekhova. Their sojourn was accompanied by two academic sessions connected with the author of "Prince Roman."

On 25 June, the scholars from Poland, Italy, Germany, France, Turkey, and the United States took part in the academic session co-organized by the Ivan Franko National University, Department of World Literature of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Lviv and the University and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. It was opened by Professor Yaroslav Harasym, Vice-Rector of Lviv University, who not only highlighted Joseph Conrad's uniqueness as a writer, but also he acknowledged the great impact that Conrad has had on English as well as world literature. The second speaker was Mr. Włodzimierz Sulgostowski, the Consul of General Consulate of Poland in Lviv, who, on the other hand, noticed that the session devoted to the writer with Polish and Ukrainian roots is a great chance to make the dialogue between Poland and Ukraine possible. Then the Deputy Dean for International Cooperation of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Professor Olha Ivashchyshyn, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Faculty, and Professor Wiesław Krajka read out the letter from Mr. Martin Schulz (President Schulz acknowledged Conrad conference as great cultural initiative and granted the event the Honorary Patronage of the European Parliament).

The main part of the meeting was the panel session covering life and works of Joseph Conrad. The following speakers delivered their papers: Professor Olha Bandrowska spoke about the figure of other civilization in Conrad's prose; Doctor Iryna Senchuk discussed the image dimensions of the writer's short stories "The Lagoon" and "Karain: A Memory"; and Doctor Viktoriia Yaremchuk dealt with the cinematic adaptations of Conrad's novels *Nostromo* and *The Secret Agent*. Last but by no means least, was the presentation of Doctor Lilia Omelan who spoke about Conrad-Korzeniowski's Lviv. Thanks to Doctor Omelan's admirable enthusiasm for archives, the participants could learn about several little-known facts from the author's biography, which in particular concern his stay and study in Lviv. Conrad-Korzeniowski was there at least twice—for the first time he came to Lviv with his father in 1867 as a ten year old boy, but only for a short time. His second visit to Lviv in 1873 at the age of fifteen was more prolonged as he stayed at an orphanage run by one of his relatives. After the session at Lviv University the Conradians had a splendid opportunity of putting the theory into practice: they followed Korzeniowski's footprints, guided by Doctor Omelan. It was almost a spiritual experience for the participants of the tour to visit the places related to young Konradek—we went along Szeroka (now Kopernik) Street where, during his first stay in the city, the ten-year-old Konradek lived. We went to Wronowskich (now Kolessa) Street in order to see the building of a former boarding house where Korzeniowski lived during his

second stay in Lviv (the residential house was established for boys orphaned by the 1863 Insurrection by his relative, Antoni Syroczyński). The final destination of the tour was Lviv City Hall where the future writer had attended lectures delivered by university professors.

The next day, the participants left Lviv and set off on a journey to Zhytomyr—a city in the north of the western part of Ukraine and the place where Korzeniowski spent his early childhood. On 27 June we took part in yet another academic session co-organized by Zhytomyr Ivan Franco State University and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University. Professor Petro Saukh, Rector of Zhytomyr University, opened the session—he expressed his joy that the works of the famous British writer of Polish origin, Joseph Conrad, brought together researchers and literary critics from all around the world in the academic dialogue. Then the participants were welcomed by the representative of Consulate of Poland in Vinnytsia. The panel discussion covered issues connected with Joseph Conrad's family as well as his relations with Zhytomyr region. The discussion was opened by Professor Volodymyr Yershov who presented Apollo Korzeniowski—a Polish poet, playwright, political activist. He spoke in detail about Apollo's stay in Zhytomyr in the second half of the nineteenth century. There were two more speakers: Doctor Olesia Bandarchuk gave a presentation on Tadeusz Bobrowski, the guardian and mentor of Joseph Conrad, and his impressions about the inhabitants of Volyn; while Doctor Anastasia Tserkovna-Soloveichyk dealt with the literary image of Volyn. In the second part of the session, the Conradians had a chance to speak on the role of Joseph Conrad in their academic lives. The following participants shared their experience: Richard Ambrosini (Università di Roma Tre, Rome, Italy), Michel Arouimi (Université du Littoral, Dunkirk, France), Frank Förster (Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, Hannover, Germany), Jana Giles (University of Louisiana at Monroe, Monroe, LA, USA), Wiesław Krajka (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland), Claude Maisonnat (University Lumière-Lyon 2, Lyon, France, Emeritus), Annie Keithlinuniverie (Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, USA), Lilia Omelan (The Witelon State School of Higher Education, Legnica, Poland). Professor Ambrosini recalled the first Conrad conference and study-tour, Professor Maisonnat admitted that Conrad infused his whole academic career, Doctor Omelan disclosed that in her adolescence she borrowed Conrad's books from a Lviv library but not all of them were easily available because of the censorship. After the session we joined a tour of Joseph Conrad's footprints in Zhytomyr, guided by Professor Yershov and Doctor Anastasia Tserkovna-Soloveichyk. We visited the theatre where Apollo Korzeniowski's

comedy “For a Pretty Penny” (Dla miłego grosza) was staged in 1859, as well as the gymnasium where Apol-
lo Korzeniowski and Tadeusz Bobrowski studied.

On 28 June, the study tour participants went to Berdychiv—Joseph Conrad’s place of birth. In this town, in the impressive building of the Discalced Carmelites Monastery, Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski Museum was founded. It was financed by Poland’s Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the exhibitions were organized by Warsaw Museum of Literature. Next destination was the neighboring village of Terekhova—in the family estate of Conrad’s maternal grandmother there is another museum devoted to the writer. Both places are a must-see for all the admirers of Joseph Conrad’s works—the museums not only tell the story of the author’s life, but also the story of the rich multinational culture he grew in. Additionally, both museums are excellent examples of Polish-Ukrainian effective cooperation in cultural ventures.

The study tour following the Sixth International Conrad Conference was eventful and informative: both novice as well as experienced Conrad researchers felt encouraged to talk about the life, work and legacy of Joseph Conrad. Thanks to the conference and study tour, we had a perfect opportunity to see

with our own eyes the places connected with Conrad’s background, and in a way, we could understand him and his writings even better. We can’t wait for the next intellectual feast of Conrad specialties in Lublin!

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For more coverage of this conference, please see the Fall 2016 issue of Joseph Conrad Today