Przekładaniec, special issue, "East–West. Tansactions" 2/2022, pp. 67–90
doi:10.4467/16891864ePC.22.011.16931
www.ejournals.eu/Przekladaniec

MICHAŁ KUZIAK
https://orcid.org/ 0000-0002-7926-5268
University of Warsaw
m.kuziak@uw.edu.pl

TWO ECONOMIES: ADAM MICKIEWICZ'S *PAN TADEUSZ* AND JANE AUSTEN'S *MANSFIELD PARK*

Abstract

The article presents the vision of economy as husbandry inscribed in Adam Mickiewicz's narrative poem *Pan Tadeusz*. This vision opposes the modern liberal economy, which shaped capitalism in the first half of the 19th century. The issue is discussed in the context of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, as well as Mickiewicz's own economic views, as presented in his journalistic writing and his Paris lectures. Both literary texts depict landed estates at the beginning of the 19th century: in a historically Polish territory and in England. In the latter case, we are dealing with an outline of the perspective of transitioning from traditional economy to the modern bourgeois model (connected with the colonial expansion); in the former – with an attempt to transpose traditional economy to the level of myth and with eschewing development towards capitalism.

Keywords: Adam Mickiewicz, Jane Austen, economy, modernity, Romanticism, *Pan Tadeusz*

"Money is not wealth, it isn't even a sign of wealth.
Capital is only a tool of certain power."
(Mickiewicz 1955: [XI, 323])

I

Stanisław Ossowski writes:

> Aristotle distinguished two disciplines: the study of agricultural estate management (οἰκονομία) and the study of chrematistics (χρηματιστική), the accumulation of wealth. Estate management was studied extensively in the ancient world and during the Renaissance by Hesiod, Cato the Elder, and Alberti; modern political economy – despite its name – is chrematistic" (Ossowski 1962: 23).

It is crucial to bear this difference in mind in order to understand the specific economic discourse in *Pan Tadeusz.* In his polemic against Mickiewicz and Romanticism, Jan Nepomucen Miller emphasizes the author's unmodernity, his avoidance of the trends that would overtake and change Europe in the first half of the 19th century. Citing a line from the epic ("This happy country, confined and simple") he asks, "could a new Poland be built upon this world's confinement and simplicity?" (Miller 1926: 96).[1] Referencing Miller, Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński also draws attention to Mickiewicz's Parisian encounters with capitalism and to the authors who described it (Żeleński Boy 1957: 43). Using an economic lens in my comparison of the Polish national epic to an English text of the same period – Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* – I will offer both a criticism of Mickiewicz's work as well as an analysis of the economic model contained within it. This exercise suggests that Mickiewicz constructs what may be called "economy of Polishness," or – to put it more cautiously – an economy which constitutes one of its sources.

As its *Epilogue* attests, *Pan Tadeusz* was created in the context of both modernity's beginnings and the end of the world of the Polish gentry. In an attempt to hold off this process, the action, set shortly before 1812, takes on mythic timeless for cultural reasons that cannot be limited to the catastrophic defeat of Napoleon's Russian campaign, but also include broader

[1] „Czyż na ubóstwie i ciasnocie tego świata można i należy budować nowe życie polskie?" For all quotes from *Pan Tadeusz*, I use Bill Johnston's excellent translation (Mickiewicz 2018), hereafter only indicating the page numbers [Translator's note].

civilizational processes. We know that the poet reconstructs Soplicowo using an understanding of community based on *Gemeinschaft* rather than *Gesellschaft,* a modern social order (Waśko 1995: 64). But how does this relate to economics itself?

Returning to the two branches of economics mentioned above, it should be added that both operate within broader world views. Cicero, for instance, considered the economics of estate management – my primary topic of interest – to be the study of morality. Today, bearing in mind Max Weber's study of the role of the Protestant work ethic in the growth of capitalism (Weber 2010: 31), we should of course remember that the liberal economic thought upon which capitalism is based is likewise rooted in morality. Liberal economy was treated by Adam Smith as part of moral philosophy dealing with choice and motivation. Mickiewicz, as we will see later, saw the matter differently; liberal economics wase anathema to his moral sense.

Pan Tadeusz and *Mansfield Park* depict life on country estates at the start of the 19th century in Central Europe and England, respectively. These novels can therefore be seen as case studies in which economics provides an essential – if sometimes concealed – context. Both works offer a similar point of departure: a vision of estate-keeping strengthened by a conviction about agriculture's fundamental importance. Each work portrays idleness and silenced work on the estate in a comparable way. Austen's novel, however, hints at the new economic possibilities that would supplant the physiocratic model as the 19th century progressed. With great subtlety, *Mansfield Park* anticipates the birth of the *homo economicus*, gestating in this case on the aristocratic estate. This process reveals itself in the way certain landowners acquire an interest in money and its accumulation. It is apparent in the promise of making a fortune independent of one's birth (Ossowska 1985: 90) and it is manifest in the new generation, focused on getting rich as quickly as possible.

II

Mansfield Park was first published in 1814, shortly after the action of *Pan Tadeusz* and both works present an economic model (Williams 1973: 112). Nonetheless, the country estate as a system is in each work framed by different world views. While the first line of Mickiewicz's epic introduces the

reader into a symbolic universe of Polishness, the opening of Austen's work assumes a purely economic perspective. I quote:

> About thirty years ago Miss Maria Ward, of Huntingdon, with only seven thousand pounds, had the good luck to captivate Sir Thomas Bertram, of Mansfield Park, in the county of Northampton, and to be thereby raised to the rank of a baronet's lady, with all the comforts and consequences of a handsome house and large income. (Austen, 1814/2008)

If wealth defines man, it is of crucial importance to the gentler sex, too. The prevailing economic system affects women with particular acuteness, since they become the property of their husbands (and as we will read later, England suffers from a surplus of beautiful women and a deficit of rich men to marry them [Szumlewicz 2017: 25]). It follows, then, that a man's attractiveness corresponds almost exclusively to his aspirations and financial means. While money has a symbolic role in *Pan Tadeusz*, Austen portrays a world in which money is both an agent with the ability to unite and divide, and a barometer against which everything can be measured (Wilkes 2013: 81).

Austen writes a novel about her heroine's sentimental education. Much like French realists from Stendhal to Balzac and Flaubert, she unites an emotional history with an economic outlook, thus creating a specific type of *Bildungsroman* for a society structured around money.[2] The novel focuses on a heroine, marginalized in two, if not three ways: she is a woman, a poor relative, and she is guided by an inner sense of morality and sensitivity.

It is common knowledge that the Industrial Revolution was well underway in England at the start of the 19th century (Wallerstein 2011). Austen, however, seems to take no notice of this fact in her fiction; she glosses over the economic difficulties stemming from England's colonial rivalries with the French and Napoleonic Wars (the latter topic is likewise ignored in *Pan Tadeusz*). Just as the Industrial Revolution was accompanied by urbanization, industrialization along national lines, and the development of city life, it also meant the exploitation of workers by their employers, the impoverishment of the lower classes (Austen's novel takes place during the time of the Luddite Movement), and increased taxation. These problems also affected the countryside, as the wartime grain embargo forced English farmers to end

[2] The Polish reader will be convinced of this fact after reading the London scenes of Julian Słowacki's *Kordian*.

foreign trade. Only the landed gentry enjoyed abundance and the possibility of increasing their fortunes (Macaulay Trevelyan 1961: 444).[3]

In Austen's novel, there is talk of estate modernization, which might be deemed a threat to traditional estate-keeping (Jones 1997: 100). Mansfield Park continues to function thanks to an economy of wealth accumulation – we might refer here Ossowski's quote, cited above. As Edward Said demonstrates in *Culture and Imperialism*, this economy found its strength in colonial exploitation (Said 1993: 87); England's economic fate and prosperity hinge on the fortune of the colonies, a fact hidden within the novel itself. The reader only learns that Sir Bertram's plantation in Antigua has fallen into disorder and he must return to restore order.

With the exception of Sir Bertram, the novel's heroes lead lives of idleness (Nardin 2003: 122).[4] To an extent, gentry life in *Mansfield Park* – centered around socializing and pastimes like equestrianism – seems timeless. However, Austen also describes idle, profligate youths. These representatives of a new generation exploit the capital of their elders (we read about their faddish habits) and shirk traditional values; they are all too happy to be slaves to passing fashions. In *Mansfield Park*, there is a discourse about work linked to a sense of morality, rather than work itself; women are the main actors in the novel because they knit. Sir Thomas belongs to the ruling –rather than productive – class.

A specific ethos of development is inscribed in Fanny's story. As Said writes,

> Austen takes pains to show us two apparently disparate but actually convergent processes: the growth of Fanny's importance to the Bertrams' economy, including Antigua, and Fanny's own steadfastness in the face of numerous challenges, threats, and surprises. (Said 1993: 85)

Above all, Austen portrays a world in which the eldest sons (through primogeniture) inherit fortunes, titles, lands, and seats in parliament, while

[3] Macaulay Trevelyan writes: "The war proved a source of increased wealth to the landlords and of prolonged calamity to the wage-earner, it was a gamble to ' the middling orders of society': it made this merchant a profiteer, like old Osborne in Vanity Fair, and that other, like poor Mr. Sedley, a bankrupt." (Macaulay Trevelyan 1946: 467). It is worth noting that this work dubs Jane Austen an illustrator of English society at the start of the 19th century. See also (Salmi 2008), chapter "Industrialization: Economics and Culture."

[4] As I have indicated, the ethos and order of work in the novel is formed by a colonialism which remains hidden.

everyone else must struggle. Some succeed in their efforts, others fail. *Mansfield Park* anticipates an economy of competition, which might be expressed by the (decidedly unladylike) metaphor of gambling. At the start of the 19th century, primogeniture resulted in a weaving of traditional and modern practice. Sons of the minor gentry who did not receive an inheritance could join the clergy – a vocation that allows for idleness – or the navy, the pride of the Empire and the basis of its colonial success.

As I have already suggested, Austen describes a world in which wealth generates happiness and position, or, to paraphrase one of the heroines, a world that respects honest people of abundant means. Interpersonal relationships take on an economic character; money, we realize, is its most common topic of conversation (Scheuermann 2009: 15). One might even conclude that the wealthy belong to a higher species – while strivers do not – and economic distinction thus becomes anthropological. Education, valuable social ties, ability (especially in terms of rational skills like shrewdness and forward thinking), diligence, precision, frugality, bravery, and the nerves for risk-taking matter most.

A strict, patriarchal system ruled the capitalist world taking shape in England at the start of the 19th century. Just as it found strength in religion (Griffin 2002: 126), it reacted against the French Revolution and the atheistic tendencies of Jacobinism (Macaulay Trevelyan 1946: 471). According to its work ethic, wealth and poverty are earned (an example of this can be found in Fanny's parents). Thus, the values of the new capitalist world are naturalized. Writing about this phenomenon, Weber emphasizes the role of Protestantism in the development of a model of the professional virtues that would prove crucial to capitalism's development, i.e. the vision of a rational market and the glorification of earning wealth (Weber 2010: 76).[5]

Austen embeds her novel with various coincidences that played a critical role in the creation of English capitalism; for example, the novel is set at the end of the enclosure period. And, just as the English process of modernity and industrialization hinged on the choice of the landed gentry to take on bourgeois values (Braudel 2014: 84; Osterhammel 2014: 995), Austen portrays a meeting of bourgeoisie and aristocratic values.[6] At the same

[5] For a critique of Weber, see Ossowska 1985: 196.

[6] As Bertrand Russell notes, the aristocracy tried ("half-consciously") to impede the rise of the bourgeoisie until the start of the 19th century (Russell 2001: 56). Russell also describes the later differences in the genealogy and interests of both strata: The relations of the landowning class with the mill-owners were, for the most part, political rather than social.

time, *Mansfield Park* confirms the gentry's overriding distaste for bourgeois professions. Sir Bertram, through his opposition to theatrical performances and retreat from London life, expresses a certain resistance to modernity.

It is worth remembering that by the second half of the 18th century, the previously mentioned *homo economicus* had already made his debut in European thought. For this reason, the expanding bourgeoisie had already attained its own, particular philosophical anthropology, centered on economic talent and its related traits. And thus, the modern world was born, with its emphasis on individualism, liberty, and Jeremy Bentham's principle of utilitarianism. The latter philosophy explores the human desire for happiness, usually of a hedonistic character; Bentham likewise noted that competition is a social mechanism of particular importance.

Tomasz Buksiński describes the emergence of *homo economicus*:

> The bourgeois ethic bases itself on a new theory of morality. Its most important virtues include honesty in business dealings, responsibility for one's words and actions, frugality, financial and professional stability, and shrewdness. Or, to put it differently: egoism, the ability to look after one's interests in a calculated, premeditated way, far-thinking rationalism, a concentration on one's distant future, and a reliance on oneself. These virtues are not values in and of themselves, but rather a means to an end: wealth (Buksiński 2001: 196).[7]

In the *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith concludes that the economy operates according to natural laws independent of individual will; man is driven by a self-interested desire to accumulate wealth (hence his skill for exchange

They had a common interest in suppressing disturbances, but on most points their interests diverged. There was an import duty on raw cotton which the manufacturers resented. The duty on grain increased the price of bread, and therefore the cost of keeping a labourer alive; the extra wages which this obliged the manufacturer to pay ultimately found their way into the pocket of the landowner in the shape of rent for agricultural land. The manufacturer desired free trade, the landowner believed in protection; the manufacturer was often a nonconformist, the landowner almost always belonged to the Church of England; the manufacturer had picked up his education as best he could, and had risen from poverty by thrift and industry, while the landowner had been at a public school and was the son of his father. (Russell 2001: 82). See also Ossowska (1985: 322 and especially 334.) The scholar links the coexistence of aristocratic and bourgeois models with: the consequences of primogeniture (which forced the sons of noblemen to move to cities and engage in trade), the aristocratic domination of the wool trade, England's naval power (and the relative weakness of its army), and the role of the middle class in colonial expansion.

[7] He shows the dark reverse of this in mid-eighteenth century England, a reality absent from Austen's novel.

and trade), rather than a concern for justice. The author turns his attention to reaping the greatest reward for the least of effort, he notes the modern division of labor, and specialization, increasing qualifications. He sees competition as a creative force. In his view, these properties are generated by the market, with its demand for ever intensifying production and continuous global growth. The core value of Smith's system can be found in work and trade. The *homo economicus* makes rational decisions, as an investor, producer, and consumer. Convinced that the "invisible hand of the market" harmonizes individual pursuits (while addressing governmental support and defense of the market), Smith inscribes the latter into the social system that makes individuality possible. Predating Smith, John Locke emphasized this social component in his study of property.

Examining Bentham's utilitarianism, John Stuart Mill concludes that pleasure is not man's only source of happiness – Mill points to spiritual and intellectual growth, altruism, and an interest in the public good (a topic Smith covered in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, as did David Hume, who emphasized the primacy of feeling over reason).[8] Mill concludes that while man cannot be reduced to his economic needs, moral impulses usually take on less importance.

The modern, philosophically justified economic thought taking shape in Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century could be summarized as an imperative to accumulate wealth. Austen's novel foreshadows "disinhibition," a phenomenon described by Peter Sloterdijk in *The Crystal Palace* (it should be obvious that Sloterdijk recognizes the long term, negative consequences of this process). "Disinhibition" requires: the support by religious institutions, colonial expansion, efforts in the hope of a comfortable life, and as is the case with Sir Thomas, the monetization of human existence (Wilkes 2013: 96). The plot of *Mansfield Park* remains open to the future and modernity (as I have already mentioned, the theme of estate modernization is subtly woven into the work; Rushworth is a promoter of modernity, at least in its architectural form), as well as real and symbolic transfers from the countryside to urban culture. The novel likewise voices a protest against urbanization– the town is a hotbed of sin and, as I have mentioned, the Bertrams abandon London and return to their country estate (Jones 1997: 94).[9]

[8] Sedláček draws attention to the two-sided, seemingly contradictory nature of Smith's views (Sedláček 2015: 207).

[9] The often covert (though Smith-influenced) representation of a movement towards a new capitalist economy in Austen's works is described in (Ellis 2005: 415 ff. An intriguing

III

While a member of the Philomath Society (1817–23) at the University of Vilnius, Mickiewicz read Adam Smith's *The Science of Political Economy* (its first Polish translation was published in Vilnius in 1811, but the Philomaths would have read French translations); he understood the basic premises of the modern, liberal economy and was able detect its importance for his captive nation. Indeed, Smith offers a vision of a society that self-regulates, grows prosperous, and develops by virtue of its economic activity. To students living in a conquered, underdeveloped country, the idea of economic freedom may have proven quite appealing. After 1832, however, Mickiewicz took a radically critical stance towards liberal economics; this shift is related to his experience in the disastrous November Uprising and the start of his exile in France. Expressing his belief that France could offer nothing to the Polish cause, Mickiewicz writes: "In my belief, France is Athens in the time of Demosthenes; she will shriek, change speakers and leaders, but she can't heal, because cancer has taken her heart."[10] In the same letter, he offers messianism ("we ought to aspire to something religious and moral, not the financial liberalism of the French") and political evangelism ("a gospel of nationality, morality, and religion, a disdain for budgets") [XV, 17] as both a Polish answer to European thought and a way of salvation from the horrendous situation into which Poland had fallen.[11]

In a sense, a response to the poet's thinking can be found in the words of Judge Rivet in Balzac's *Cousin Bette*. He calls the Poles "[m]en who want to set Europe on fire (…) who want to ruin commerce and merchants for the sake of a country which they tell me is full of bogs and Jews, not to speak of Cossacks and serfs, – species of wild beasts falsely classed as human beings" (Balzac 1888: 145). The 1830s and 1840s informed Mickiewicz's

case study was made by James Thompson, when he compared Austen's works to later, modern sociological concepts. *Mansfield Park* is read alongside Durkheim and Weber and their ideas of early modernization. Thompson focuses particularly on the question of authority as it transforms from a traditional model based on inheritance and charisma to a modern model of competence and rationality (Thompson 2015: 19).

[10] „Francja podług mnie są to Ateny za czasów Demostenesa; będą wrzeszczeć, odmieniać mówców i wodzów, ale się nie uleczą, bo rak toczy ich serca" [Translator's note].

[11] „naszemu dążeniu należałoby nadać charakter religijno-moralny, różny od finansowego liberalizmu Francuzów"; „ewangelią narodowości, moralności i religii, wzgardy dla budżetów" [Translator's note].

conclusion that modern economics was little more than a show of rational egoism and instrumental rationality. Mickiewicz's critique – drawn from Christian and Socialist perspectives (that latter is especially apparent during his editorship of the radical French-language newspaper, *La Tribune des Peuples*) – accompanies a larger discourse questioning the rule of law. His 1832 work, *The Books of the Polish Pilgrim* (*Księgi pielgrzymstwa polskiego),* prosperity and business become a golden calf, worshiped throughout Europe and the modern economic valuation of the rich and poor is read as a perversion of Christian morality; in the Bible, of course, the self-interested money lender traditionally represents negative values.

The Books of the Polish Pilgrim establishes an alternative economic idea, purportedly rooted in early Polish history. In the article "Concerning the People's Struggle for a New Tax System," Mickiewicz criticizes modern economists (the encyclopaedist brothers and politicians) and the materialist economy of governments that ignore the common good (this theme will later appear in an article in *La Tribune des Peuples* [Taxes and Socialism] (Stefanowska 2000). The work heralds the creation of a new, voluntary economy for Poles and by Poles; independent of fiscal power, it serves the community. Polemicizing the liberal concept of private property that makes a man the master of his property, Mickiewicz claims in his Parisian lectures that the ancient Slavs employed a different concept of property, one that might be considered analogous to contemporary French thinkers, who, in turn, were influenced by German philosophy. Because of their unique (eco-critical, to use a contemporary term) relationship with religion and nature, the Slavs assumed that "to own property was a sin. This is the basis of all Slavic law: a man cannot take land" [XI, 305]. We learn that ancient Slavs could only inherit tools and, further, that the youngest son is his father's heir. Although Mickiewicz is forced to mention the transition to feudalism, he casts this movement in an idealistic light, dubbing it a continuation of an economic model based on common ownership with privileges for exceptional service. It would, he claimed, degrade as a result of foreign influence.

Drawing his argument to a close, Mickiewicz portrays Slavs as the victims of the modern economy and forecasts its demise. To this end, he emphasizes that societies cannot be organized around economies alone. He proclaims, "Luckily, economic concepts did not take an effect there [in the Slavic lands – M. K.]: given its innate materiality, the very principle of political economy is anathema to the Slavic people" [XI, 323]. The professor-poet was perturbed by the divide of economics and morality; the

Slavs, he believes, understood why unethically acquired property offers no benefit to its owner. He suggests, "the Slavic people do not have an economic presence nor an administrative history, nor do they possess any of the resources deemed valuable by the present political economy" [XI, 324]. Here, Mickiewicz attempts to draw attention to a different, Slavic, spiritual form of capital. He is convinced that contemporary economists "do not understand yet what is valuable, what is capital"[XI, 416]; ignorant of practice, they theorize. In their wisdom, they proclaim that it is good to be wealthy but offer no valuable advice for the poor. The lecturer concludes that they "resemble the priests who one and all said, 'oh poor man, die!'" [XI, 416]. It bears noting that this view is characteristic of the last two lectures of the cycle; in the first two, Mickiewicz investigates material wealth among the Slavs. The critique shown here would later appear in an unpublished article for *La Tribune des Peuples* ["On French Diplomacy"] which analyzes the mercantile character of the English and French diplomatic attempts to imitate them [XII, 318], centered on the latter group's new belief that only the stock exchange can bring wealth.[12] The bourse is, after all, "the most sacred altar to egoism; every day the blood of innocents is spilled there, turning profit with its rise!" [XII, 170].

In an article for *La Tribune des Peuples* called "The Meeting of the National Assembly," the poet sets out to extoll the value of labor, although the work transforms into a polemic with liberal economics: "I am of the belief that the earth, natural resources, and even capital itself possess limited, dependent value; that the only true wealth is work, from which credit generates life […]" [XII, 118].[13]

[12] It should be noted that Mickiewicz admired England's colonial power (their mercantile character, he writes, allowed them to rule Europe. At the same time, he recognizes their "national consciousness" and a phenomenon I detect in Austen's novel: the coexistence of the elite and the middle class and even the influence and ennoblement of the latter, which might "lead to the merchant hand forgetting its daily habit of deceit" [XIII, 319]. For more on Mickiewicz's thoughts of his *Tribune des Peuples* phase, see (Przychodniak 2001).

[13] As a reviewer pointed out, Mickiewicz uses positive analogies about banks; wealth is a capital of good that guarantees eternal life.

IV

Pan Tadeusz could be read as a testimony to the principles of estate management. Undoubtedly, it operates as a polemic against the economy of wealth accumulation. A trace of the author's distaste for Smithian economics might be seen in his invention of Buchman, a character "who'd learned how an estate ought to be run// By studying foreign books. He managed well [Book 7, 228]."[14] At first glance, the plot of the Polish epic seems to mirror that of *Mansfield Park*. Mickiewicz's work, also a Bildungsroman with a romance plot, displays the daily rhythms of a traditional community (*Gemeinschaft*) as it attempts to regulate its own symbolic economy. Nonetheless, a harmonious blend of infatuation and family politics –rather than money – hold sway over erotic entanglements. Certainly, Jacek Soplica's story complicates such an assertion; at Soplica's behest, the negotiations for Zosia's hand necessitate the payment of a dowry. Still, it is safe to conclude that this money has a wholly different meaning than it does in Austen's work. Here, it resolves a question of honor, the debt of a guilty party, as Telimena calls it, emphasizing that Zosia cannot be bought.

During the epic, the modern economy of exploitation is beginning to encroach on Soplicowo. Crucially, it becomes clear that these changes are brought by outside forces: we read about merchants and ruling politicians who instigate the razing of Polish/Lithuainian forests, as well as taxes paid to Russians. Refusing to give in, Captain Rykow says that the old (longed-for?) order is destroyed by corrupt, Russian practices. The discussion of a purse to bribe the Russians after the battle is one of the few instances in which money appears in the epic. Other mentions include a monetary reward for finding Major Płut, the Judge's habit of paying taxes on time, and Zosia's dowry. Within the passage treating the Judge's philosophy of civility, a vision of the monetization of reality – a process at odds with the Judge's moral outlook– appears on the horizon:

> … These days, to ask who someone is, is wrong.
> His line, his life, his deeds? No matter, so long
> As he's not a spy – or isn't without a penny.
> And just as Vespasian wouldn't smell the money

[14] „Z ksiąg obcych wyuczył się gospodarstwa sztuki/ I dóbr administracją prowadził porządnie" [Translator's note].

> Or ask its source or from whose hands it came,
> A person's birth and ways are all the say,
> Provided he's important, and it shows;
> People prize friends as money's prized by Jews.[15]

On the other hand, money sometimes becomes a means to achieve Polish ends as Father Robak persuades the Count to pay for an army in the Duchy of Warsaw (money is also discussed in the context of reparations for peasants after the destruction of the hunt, just as Gerwazy mentions his savings and Stolnik's treasure).

I return once more to the Paris lectures. Mickiewicz claims:

> In Poland in the time of the fall of the Commonwealth, money was considered beneath the dignity of a nobleman to the extent that the last nobleman of the old sort, still steeped in its superstitions and traditions, the famous Prince Radziwiłł, the richest man in all of Christendom, went around in a tattered, patchy cloak, which he exchanged with the first better nobleman he saw. [XI, 319]

Money was unknown in old Poland, claims the professor-poet. A money-based economy necessitates a system in which value, subjects, and relations are abstracted and alienated. As Georg Simmel writes:

> The philosophical significance of money is that it represents within the practical world the most certain image and the clearest embodiment of the formula of all being, according to which things receive their meaning through each other, and have their being determined by their mutual relations. It is a basic fact of mental life that we symbolize the relations among various elements of our existence by particular objects; these are themselves substantial entities, but their significance for us is only as the visible representatives of a relationship that is more or less closely associated with them. (Simmel 2004: 127)

Money belongs to (and strengthens) the logic of liberal economics, as discussed above. It electrifies the process of wealth accumulation and creates a means of exchange. Reinforcing the exchange-value formula at the expense of the use-value formula (thereby replacing relations of quality with

[15] Dziś człowieka nie pytaj: co zacz? kto go rodzi? // Z kim on żył, co porabiał? każdy gdzie chce wchodzi, // Byle nie szpieg rządowy i byle nie w nędzy. // Jak ów Wespazyjanus nie wąchał pieniędzy // I nie chciał wiedzieć, skąd są, z jakich rąk i krajów, // Tak nie chcą znać człowieka, rodu, obyczajów! // Dość, że ważny i że się stempel na nim widzi, // Więc szanują przyjaciół jak pieniądze Żydzi" [Translator's note].

those of quantity), it demands (and co-creates) appropriate social ties of an institutional character (ex. the law), all the while developing individualism and promoting a rational outlook.[16]

In his description of the temporal break at work in Mickiewicz's epic, Stanisław Pigoń evokes the various phenomena that impoverished the Polish nobility. He draws attention to the nobles' wastefulness and their inability to properly manage their estates, as well as international market conditions and financial, often politically-influenced regulations that made estate management difficult (Pigoń 2001: 25). Characteristic for Mickiewicz, the threat to Soplicowo comes from outside the community – it is generated by invaders, who appropriate the estates of their political rivals (although Wojski also mentions card playing that results in losing a fortune). Mickiewicz fails to address here the international financial market or its impact on Polish agriculture within the global context.

The author portrays a homeostatic, rural universe. It is complete, tested though it is by intrusions, such as: impoverishment, news from the outside world, travel, seemingly foolish attempts to imitate foreign mores, the appearance of Napoleon's army, and the inherently mournful perspective of the *Epilogue*. We see a world strengthened by its traditions and particularities; there is a clearly anti-urban meaning contained within this order. It's of little wonder, then, that the first book of the epic, "The Estate" – in contrast with *Mansfield Park* –illustrates the symbolic order (tradition, Polishness, the sacred) of that world. As we read, "With strong faith and respect for law, there came//Freedom with order, plenty with good name! [V, line 114].[17] Wealth becomes an element of some sort of pre-existing whole and a result of its continuation, rather than a quantity that can be earned or increased; it is not meant to change the world order.

Let's recall that even the Jewish character in *Pan Tadeusz* reveals himself to be a Polish patriot instead of a mere innkeeper or a symbol of the economy of wealth accumulation (as Jews are cast in the Judge's above-quoted lecture on civility), just as his tavern is an ark, one of the symbols of great completeness of the universe (Kępiński 1980: 335). Zosia works in the garden, but she also changes into a nature goddess (Paszek 2000: 71). This

[16] The world of Soplicowo is closed off from relations with the outside world (in contrast with the world of *Mansfield Park*). This is discussed more in Kuziak 2016.

[17] „Dopóki wiara kwitła, szanowano prawa, / Była wolność z porządkiem i z dostatkiem sława!" [Translator's note].

economy – so different from that of *Mansfield Park* – prompts the Soplica family to raise Zosia, a choice that stems from a sense of honor, but also the belief that the community is fostered through mutual responsibility and reciprocity. It does not result from calculating the deed's immediate value, but also its long term effect on the family's reputation and status. The Soplicas' relationship with Zosia might even be called an investment. The epic's climax likewise depicts the triumph of the symbolic order over the economic order: Zosia's marriage to Tadeusz is a union of estates, but it is also a sign of unity and a harbinger of feudalism's end. In Austen's world, love and economics combine in a totally different way: the latter keeps the former in check. The excesses of love lead to catastrophe, both moral and financial.

The Soplicowo estate runs according to a feudal, physiocratic model with agriculture and the unpaid labor of peasants at its base. The antithesis of feudalism is mercantilism, an economic model frequently brought up as a point of comparison (as we see in the Judge's speech about civility). Mickiewicz idealizes the feudal system. The Judge, a guardian of the patriarchal order, is depicted as hard-working, detail-oriented, and hospitable; he likewise proves to be a keen economic planner who pays his taxes (although this is listed as one of his positive traits, one might detect a certain irony in the assertion). Wojski, another patriarchal figure, seems equally industrious (we meet him dressed in a wigmaker's apron). The hierarchy of work and the rule of law function according to a natural order dictated by daily rhythms, the seasonal cycle, and the Christian calendar.[18] Jonathan Crary observes:

> The cyclical temporalities, whether seasonal or diurnal, around which farming had always been based constituted an insurmountable 24/7 set of resistances to the remaking of labor time on which capitalism depended fundamentally from the start (Crary 2015: 63).

Yet, on the whole, labor remains marginalized in the epic; it is discussed in a single exchange about the humane treatment of the peasants who are only required to work until sunset.

Like Austen, Mickiewicz portrays a world dominated by patriarchal rigor. Violations of that order, however, are met with light-hearted lessons and never result in the serious economic consequences that loom over Austen's

[18] We should notice, however, a sense of mythological time in the epic; because seasons overlap and plants blossom and bear fruit simultaneously, the work has a distinctly mythical quality.

universe. Of course, subversions of the social order in *Mansfield Park* are not always met with harsh reprisal. For example, Fanny's refusal of Crawford's proposal –the result of real feelings– is unexpected, but it nonetheless follows the moral principles that regulate the world of the novel.

Mickiewicz inscribes the rhythms of Soplicowo with the signs of economic abundance. The line "Plenty and artistry – both were present here" [Book 11, line 153], perfectly illustrates the relationship between food and drink and the farm's agricultural produce.[19] This topic, like so many others covered in the epic, remains ambiguous. In one instance, it would seem that abundance is a feature of the distant past; in the Epilogue –which destabilizes the story that precedes it – we read about a poor, but sovereign country: "As the world is God's, that happy zone,//Confined and simple, was our own!" [line 79–80].[20] Poverty and reduced status affect the Dobrzyński estate particularly, but these problems also threaten Soplicowo. The work also contrasts abundance with a modern, Russian-influenced preference for austerity:

> But is this custom commonly maintained?
> Alas! New ways have crept into our land.
> What's called 'excess' is spurned by many men;
> They eat like Jews, grudge guests both food and wine,
> Hungarian wine's old-fashioned, so they think –
> Fake Muscovite champagne is what they drink." [Book 12, line,199][21]

Still, yet another view comes to light: the elders take care of their affairs, while the young, fashionable gentlemen do not, living without wasting a thought on their expenses. One might conclude that Mickiewicz judges different sorts of frugality and careless spending according to his own moral code.

The only truly wealthy character in *Pan Tadeusz* is the Count. A noble "since great-great grandfather's day," he grew up in foreign lands and the habits of European civilization are second nature to him. Although we learn

[19] „Łączą się w Soplicowie: dostatek i sztuka." Johnston, *Pan Tadeusz*, 362. It is also worth remembering the deficits of Soplicowo, as Graczyk has noted (Graczyk 1991).

[20] „Ten kraj szczęśliwy, ubogi i ciasny!/ Jak świat jest boży, tak on był nasz własny!" [Translator's note].

[21] „Pytasz, czy wszędzie w Litwie ten się zwyczaj chowa?//Niestety! Już i do nas włazi moda nowa.//Niejeden panicz krzyczy, że nie cierpi zbytków,//Je jak Żyd, skąpi gościom potraw i napitków,//Węgrzyna pożałuje, a pije szatańskie//Fałszywe wino modne, moskiewskie szampańskie" [Translator's note].

of his propensity for enchantment (and disappointment) (Wyka 1963: 284 ff), we never find out where his money comes from – it's possible that he simply inherited it. In any case, his fortune comes from outside Soplicowo and therefore must remain obscure, a secret. What's more, the Count – as a gentleman –disdains bourgeois professions centered on wealth accumulation (Okulicz-Kozaryn 1995: 41ff).

The order of Soplicowo proves to be undermined (or tested?) (Opacka 1998) by agonistic struggles; as we recall, cooperative action is the result of a sudden need to fight the Russians. This example also presents a different sort of rivalry than the competition for wealth presented in Austen's work. The contests (agons) in the epic are connected to symbolic values and dignity, rather than material values. For example, the dispute over the castle is really a fight for dignity, concealed though it is by an economic conflict between the rich Horeszko family and the less wealthy Soplica clan. The Count, although weary of conflict and reluctant to pay legal fees, agrees to Gerwazy's settlement, made in remembrance of family history. Squarely economic and material problems –such as a conflict with peasants over land– receive little attention.

Let us return to the question of idleness. I have already mentioned *Mansfield Park*'s idle generation, whose members take advantage of their parents' fortunes and indulge in romantic excess. As its earliest critics (including the poet Cyprian Norwid) noted, *Pan Tadeusz* also depicts idle characters. This is a pertinent matter, as it draws attention to various sorts of demonstrative idleness contesting the bourgeois work ethic. To some archetypes within the latter framework – such as Benjamin Franklin's conception of the rich and virtuous self-made man – idleness is a curse. Sir Thomas of *Mansfield Park* would seem to reflect this type. Still, it bears mentioning Thorstein Veblen, who, among other things, described idleness as the result of wealth and a source of prestige; for Veblen, it is an investment in one's reputation and a means of building social distinction (Veblen 2009: 77). Austen's novel illustrates a gentleman's (or dandy's) lifestyle –which, as I have shown, is also present in *Pan Tadeusz*– that hinges on an aversion to the bourgeois work ethic (productivity) and undignified professions (i.e. merchants and factory owners). They want power that does not stem from a work imperative. Still, a number of characters try to avoid idleness (Tarpley 2010: 87).

Franklin's view diverged from both ancient philosophy (for Seneca, the Stoic author of the dialogue *On Leisure*, idleness improves work) and Christian tradition (such as mendicant monastic orders). Mickiewicz's thinking

was influenced by these depictions of spiritually-ennobling idleness (Zdrenka 2012: 101). For Mickiewicz, idleness – we might use the old Polish term "active idleness" (*niepróżnujące próżnowanie*) – might have seemed to be a viable way of experiencing the world and relating to others. Active idleness could also be considered a childish fantasy in which life is lived under the sign of the pleasure principle.

V

Writing about Goethe's *Faust*, György Lukács dubbed the work one of the last voices of an age of innocence before an economic frame of reference would hold sway (Lukács 1968: 183). *Mansfield Park* exits from that innocent age and *Pan Tadeusz* attempts to remain within it. Here, we might observe two different economic and cultural imaginations. One direction of Austen's novel will be the economic man of French realism (interestingly, we do not know if Mickiewicz read this development of French literature; we might add that Balzac ringed the demise of the French landed gentry in *The Peasants* and that his cycle of novels offer a harsh portrayal of capitalism (Lukács 1951). Mickiewicz's work would prompt critiques of the Polish country estate, found in Stanisław Brzozowski's *Alone Among the People (Sam wśród ludzi)* just as it would garner its praise; J. M. Rymkiewicz would deem *Pan Tadeusz* a sacred text for Poles with the power to protect them from evil (see *Conversations about the Polish Summer of 1983 [Rozmowy polskie latem 1983]*).[22]

Engaging in a critical discussion of the Industrial Revolution in England and its relationship to the inauguration of a market system, Karl Polanyi explains:

> The transformation implies a change in the motive of action on the part of the members of society; for the motive of subsistence that of gain must be substituted. All transactions are turned into money transactions, and these in turn require that a medium of exchange be introduced into every articulation of industrial life (Polanyi 2001: 44).

[22] For writing on the two trajectories of development of European civilization, see Sowa (Sowa 2011); as well as articles: (Roszkowski 2014; Milewski 2014), a book (Kizwalter 2014), especially Part Two: and also articles from the volume: (Czapliński 2011), esp. Part Four, "Sarmatism as a Criticism of Modernity" (*Sarmatyzm jako krytyka nowoczesności)*.

As Polanyi notes, this process radically altered the course of world history. A dream of progress changed man and nature into goods, thus destroying older cultural models and the traditional social fabric. Mickiewicz fought to preserve these traditional models, while the characters in Austen's work do little to resist modernity.

Both *Mansfield Park* and *Pan Tadeusz* reveal a patriarchal order (rule by authority); curiously, in both cases, this system is strengthened by specifically absent characters and made to function by unseen work. In each work, this order reveals a different face. Austen's work is closer to Weber's vision of rational, virtuous capitalism supported by an economy of conquest; this system allows for the harmonious union of the old elite (the nobility) and the new (the bourgeoisie) under the banner of austerity and wealth accumulation. For Mickiewicz, the patriarchal order arises from tradition and tolerates eccentricity; its "impulsive" (*mimowolny*) character is threatened by modern mentality. It results in an "economy of survival."

Both books offer different modes of empowerment and thus represent different formulae of the Bildungsroman. Consider Marshall Berman's formulation:

> To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world, and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. Modern environments and experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology: in this sense, modernity can be said to unite all mankind. (Berman 2010: 15)

It would seem that the worlds of *Mansfield Park* and *Pan Tadeusz* are not ready to be destroyed, even as the English estate expands beyond its traditional borders. We notice that adventure means something different in both works. The protagonists of Austen's novel enter the world by becoming rich (even if it is only through inheritance) within a colonial, capitalist system of global exploitation. In Mickiewicz, self-realization comes through war – first at home, then with an external threat, and over inheritance.

Mansfield Park propels towards a modern society and civilization in the making (although it remains a *Gemeinschaft*), while *Pan Tadeusz* veers towards myth and religion. Mickiewicz shows his reader a traditional, feudal estate and Austen prompts a discussion of estate reform. If we recall the distinction between the industrious man and the virtuous man in *The Books*

of the Polish Pilgrim, the first would be Austen's hero (one of them) and the second – that of the Polish poet. They describe the English economy and the Polish, which Smith claims is devoid of industry: "In Poland there are said to be scarce any manufactures of any kind, a few of those coarser household manufactures excepted, without which no country can well subsist" (Smith 1789).[23] Of course, we must remember that the bent of Austen's novel is made all the more clear by the context of *Pan Tadeusz.*

We cannot ignore the fact that this depiction of estate management is particular to Mickiewicz; sanctifying a dying economic model, he supplies an economy of Polishness, a transcendent phenomenon with wider cultural and identitarian implications.[24] Polish fantasies become poetry – the greatest of these dreams is a vision of freedom, writes Andrzej Leder, and the worst is the bitter silence about the estate system and the hierarchy that ruled it (Leder 2014: 16). Following the example of Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre, one might discuss the poet's clearly anticapitalist sentiments, made manifest in his umbrage at the modern drive to calculation and his own melancholy mythologization of the past (Löwy, Sayre 1994).

Nonetheless, an examination of the press circulating in Vilnius and Warsaw in the 1820s and 1830s would identify a growing interest in the modern economy of wealth accumulation. It is a controversial topic: Jerzy Jedlicki, reconstructing period discussions of economic change, indicates the preponderance of physiocratic models of economic thought, the aristocracy's distrust of trade and industry (and, as previously mentioned, a disdain for tasks that had been deemed unworthy of gentlemen), and a politically motivated distrust of government interventionism and negotiations with partitioning powers (Jedlicki 1988: 19). Still, Polish observers were watching what was happening in England. If we read the prospectus of the magazine "The Polish Isis" ("Izys Polska"), the travelogues of Lach Szyrma (Lach-Szyrma 1981), or the writings of Juliusz Słowacki (Weintraub 1977), England seems to exemplify modernity. Reformers bemoaned the lagging conditions of Polish cities and industry (Surowiecki 2014), just as they dreamed of a harmonious union of agriculture, industry, and trade.

[23] See also Stanisław Staszic' *A Warning for Poland* (*Przestrogi dla Polski*; Milewski 2014: 425; Roszkowski 2014: 389).

[24] Of course, we notice a vision of the estate and its host not dissimilar to Ignacy Krasicki's 18th century work, *Pan Podstoli*.

Years later, Bolesław Prus would return to these themes in his novel *The Doll* (*Lalka*, 1890). The aristocrat Tomasz Łęcki, having squandered his fortune and proven incapable of work, tells his guest, Wokulski, "I've been reading Supiński (…) he has brains! …Yes, nations that can't work and save simply must disappear from the face of the Earth" (Prus 1977: 362).[25] This formula – a citation of Jean-Baptiste Say – appears on the title page of *The Polish School of Social Economics*. Coming from Łęcki, it sounds bitterly ironic.

A story similar to that depicted here can be detected in the works of Polish migrants to Great Britain in the 21st century, as they too withstood the modern world's violent clash with Eastern-European Otherness. For them, this often proved to be a bitter, if eye-opening experience with the severities of late capitalism.

Translated by Jess Jensen Mitchell
jmitchell1@g.harvard.edu

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[25] „Czytam właśnie Supińskiego – powiada, witając się z gościem – tęga głowa!… Tak, narody nie umiejące pracować i oszczędzać zniknąć muszą z powierzchni ziemi [Translator's note].

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