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Developing Polish Studies in the United States

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Jerzy R. Krzyżanowski (U.S.A.)

DEVELOPING POLISH STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES

I happen to belong to the generation most adversely affected by the war. With no hard statistical figures at my disposal at the moment, I can only assume that we have been decimated, and memorials all over the country and abroad confirm that fact beyond any doubt. Thus my autobiography may serve as a testimony of a survivor who decided to make it up for the irretrievably lost years and succeeded to a certain degree.

Born in the city of Lublin in 1922 I followed the routine educational path until the outbreak of the war interrupted my study a year before my high school graduation. At school I was deeply involved with the scouting movement, and received the Eagle Scout badge in 1939. As a boy scout I took active part in the defense of Lublin, and stayed there until the schools closed. With learning facilities unavailable for the duration of the German occupation I started working as an auto mechanic, at the same time getting more and more involved in the clandestine activities of the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*) which eventually brought me to the point of joining an AK guerilla unit in the Lublin district. After July 1944, when the Soviet and Polish forces under the Communist command entered Lublin, I enlisted in the Polish Army but not for long – the Soviet authorities, hostile to former AK soldiers, arrested and imprisoned me first in a camp in Poland, and then, together with thousands of fellow AK soldiers, deported me to the Soviet Union. I was allowed to return home only at the end of 1947, thus having lost eight invaluable years of my education. Not entirely though. The experience I gained was to stay with me for the rest of my life, providing inspiration for many of my works in the years to come.

Immediately after returning to Poland I resumed my education, and having obtained a high school diploma in 1948. I enrolled at the University of Warsaw in the Department of Polish Philology. In the Fall of the same year I married Elżbieta Gabryela Kuraszkiewicz, and started a full time job

with Czytelnik publishing company. The job requirements made it impossible to obey the rules of a newly introduced „Socialist discipline of studies” at the University which strictly requested that a student could miss no more than three lectures or seminars in a semester. As a result I was dismissed from the University, and only in 1955, when studies for working adults were introduced, I was able to resume my study and to complete it in 1959. I received my M.A. degree after presenting a master thesis on Joseph Conrad and the Polish literary tradition. I defended it successfully before a committee made by Professors Jan Zygmunt Jakubowski and Zdzisław Libera, and received the top mark on my diploma. Throughout my study period I continued to work full time as associate editor in Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, among other functions becoming one of a four-man team forming a nucleus unit of the first Polish encyclopaedia published after World War II (*Mała Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN*, 1959). Later on, at my own request, I was transferred to the literary section of the editorial unit and assumed responsibility for entries in literature. When work resumed on an enlarged edition of *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN* (13 vols., 1962–1970), I received assistance from Mr. Jan Wojnowski, who took care of edited Polish literature entries, while I maintained editorial control over the World Literature section.

In my last year of study I met Professor Francis J. Whitfield (1916–1996), then chairman of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California (Berkeley), who came to Poland looking for an instructor in charge of organizing a new, intensive course of Polish at that Department. After a series of consultations and having reviewed several candidates, Professor Whitfield extended to me an offer to come to Berkeley for one year, and I accepted it gladly.

I came to Berkeley in mid-October 1959, and the very next day after my arrival I started working with my small group of students: two graduate students and one undergraduate, in an experimental course based on the most modern concept in American language teaching, the audio-visual method. The course consisted of 10 contact hours a week earning the students 10 credit hours, much more than they could receive in a regular language instruction class. Following the initially developed pattern for a lesson I modified and expanded it according to the needs. After two semesters of rigorous study the students were able to understand, speak, and write Polish on a level usually achieved in two years of regular class instruction. It was a successful experiment.

Among the faculty of the Slavic Department at Berkeley in the academic year 1959–1960, there were several distinguished Polish scholars: Professor Emeritus Waław Lednicki (1891–1967) whom I met a year before in Warsaw, Dr. Jadwiga Maurer (b. 1932), and Mr. Michał K. Pawlikowski (1887–1970), all of whom welcomed me friendly and warmly. Professor Whitfield

had just completed his and Kazimierz Bulas' *English-Polish Dictionary* (1959), and enlisted the help of Professor Lawrence L. Thomas for a forthcoming *Polish-English Dictionary* (1961); occasionally they both asked for my advice on some fine points of contemporary Polish vocabulary. Many more Polish scholars were at Berkeley, either regular faculty members in other departments, or visiting scholars from different academic disciplines. I met many of those fine people who formed a closely tied Polish community there. Among the current visitors there were Professors Roman Ingarden, Stanisław Helsztyński, Paweł Horoszowski and scores of others, some of whom I had known and worked with on the encyclopaedia in Warsaw. Taking part in various academic and communal activities I delivered two public lectures: on Henryk Sienkiewicz and California at Oakland Community Center (attended by Professor Lednicki, among others), and on the contemporary Warsaw scene at the Polish Club in San Francisco. At the same time I was officially inducted into Slavic Honorary Society *Dobro Slovo*, with due pomp and ceremony taking place at the Berkeley campus.

I could not have come to the United States at a more opportune time to work in Polish studies. Virtually nonexistent between the wars as a result of the lack of interest in Poland on the American part, and even bigger lack of educational drive among the local Polish community, Polish studies failed to take off at the time American universities expanded. Before that the situation used to be so hopeless that Henryk Sienkiewicz, reporting on the Polish communities in America in 1878, wrote that „just as Poland disappeared, so will this same, sad fate inevitably befall her children who, today, are scattered throughout the world.” Forty years on, in 1918, only a slightly less pessimistic views were expressed by Florian Znaniecki (1882–1958) in his study on Polish peasants in America. There was, of course, a Polish college, Alliance College in Pennsylvania, established by the fraternal organization, Polish National Alliance, in 1912 and closed after more than seventy years of service in early 1980s, but it hardly could change the overall absence of that language and culture in Slavic studies. Major universities, such as Columbia in New York or University of California at Berkeley, offered a few courses in Polish in the 1920s but focused mainly on Russian in their Slavic programs. It was only on the eve of World War II that the University of Wisconsin in Madison, at the request of the local Polish community, did invite a Polish scholar, Professor Witold Doroszewski (1899–1976), for a position in Polish language; after a year he had been replaced by Professor Józef Birkenmajer (1897–1939), who taught courses in Polish literature, but his early return to Warsaw (where he was killed during the September campaign) prevented expansion of that ambitious project.

The post war years saw little change in the overall situation. New arrivals from Europe hardly qualified for university positions, and appointments such as Manfred Kridl's (1882–1957) at Columbia or Waclaw Lednicki's at

Harvard (later at the University of California, Berkeley), were quite exceptional. Slavic studies had been dominated by the Russians, and Russian only was offered at major universities in the United States. It all changed dramatically in the aftermath of launching the Russian *Sputnik* in 1957. A sudden realization of the Russian superiority in armaments and space research alerted the public opinion, and resulted in a dramatic expansion of Slavic studies, including so called „second Slavic” languages and literatures, among them Polish. Federal and state funds got easily available, and many foundations, corporations and private companies contributed substantial funds. Almost every other of the bigger universities started a Slavic program, and new faculties and teachers were eagerly sought after, to meet ever larger numbers of students entering the field.

Early in the 1960s Polish studies were well represented all over the United States. Let me briefly list some of the names I remember from personal and professional contacts at that time.

Among the senior faculty there were Wiktor Weintraub at Harvard, Aleksander Schenker at Yale, Harold Segal at Columbia, Zoya Yurieff at New York University, Joachim Baer at Princeton, Mieczysław Giergielewicz at the University of Pennsylvania, Edward Czerwiński at SUNY in Stony Brook, NY, and Eleonora Korzeniowska at SUNY, Buffalo, NY, providing Polish instruction at the East Coast. Further down to the South, Magnus J. Kryński chaired the Slavic Department at Duke University. Its closest neighbor, the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, has established a Polish program with Madeline G. Levine in charge.

In the midwest, there was Sigmund S. Birkenmayer at Pennsylvania State University (he was the son of late Józef Birkenmajer, and the first Kościuszko Foundation fellow to be brought over from Poland after the war), Maria Kuncewiczowa (later replaced by Tymon Terlecki) and Zbigniew Gołąb at the University of Chicago, Xenia Gąsiorowska and Edmund Zawacki (recipient of the first American Ph. D. in Polish literature at Harvard) at the University of Wisconsin, Zbigniew Folejewski at the University of Illinois, and William Edgerton at Indiana University, while I was in charge of Polish at the University of Michigan. Jerzy Maciuszko taught at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, Edmund Ordon at Wayne State University in Detroit, Rev. Zdzisław Peszkowski at St. Mary’s College in Orchard Lake, Michigan, and Frank Mocha at the University of Pittsburgh. Almost every one of them had some supporting staff, instructors and teaching assistants, altogether a fairly large group of people involved in teaching Polish language and literature. There were, of course, numerous specialists in related areas, such as linguistics, history, political science, sociology, geography, etc.

The University of California at Berkeley hired Czesław Miłosz after I left there, and for the next twenty five years he had been the senior rep-

representative of Polish studies at the West Coast. The only other institution there to offer Polish was located at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, where Maciej Radziwiłł was in charge of a large body of instructional staff.

That was truly a „Golden Age” for Polish studies in the United States. It lasted for nearly three decades and began to decline only in the early 1990s; with American political interest and financial support for Slavic studies dwindling, the majority of senior faculty were either deceased or retired, their positions either abolished altogether or filled by some junior faculty with only secondary interest in Polish. An overall decrease of interest in Slavic studies followed. Only a few universities maintain the hard core of Polish courses and pursue their educational goals in that field.

At the end of the academic year 1959–1960 I received an offer from the University of Michigan to teach Polish at the Slavic Department there, and since my wife was able to join me in the meantime, I accepted it and moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I assumed the position of Visiting Lecturer for the next academic year. The local faculty consisted of Russian and Czech specialists only, but the Polish community outside the university were numerous and lively. Among the new acquaintances there was a world famous physico-chemist, Professor Kazimierz Fajans (1887–c.1970), who offered me a copy of his book *Kwentykułowa teoria wiązania chemicznego* (1961), recently published in Warsaw, and having learned about my work for PWN, remarked in jest that he recognized only two types of encyclopaedias: the good ones, listing his name, and the bad ones – without it. Our *Mała Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN* qualified in that first category.

After one academic year the University extended my contract for the next year, adding to my duties a new course in Polish literature which was attended mostly by graduate students in Russian who had to study another Slavic literature. At the same time I enrolled at a Program in Comparative Literature pursuing the doctoral degree.

That new situation – the extended job offer and a resumption of study – required yet another extension of the validity of my Polish passport which had been issued by the Ministry of Higher Education in Warsaw. To my dismay and disappointment the Ministry denied my request and ordered me to return home immediately. Since my study represented the highest priority I refused and decided to stay, continuing my doctoral program and teaching full time.

The University of Michigan always has had the reputation of being among the finest in the country, and the faculty there, professors and colleagues, confirmed it fully. The post of chairman of the Slavic Department went at that time to Professor Deming Brown, a specialist in American-Russian literary studies, and later on, when I completed my course work, he served as the chairman of my doctoral committee of five distinguished scholars on the Comparative Literature Program. I was also honored to take seminars with Professor Austin Warren (1899–c.1970), the world renowned

scholar, who, together with Rene Wellek co-authored a *Theory of Literature* (1942). In one of his seminars, attended by ca. 25 students representing about the same number of countries, Austin Warren asked for some striking examples of onomatopoeic effects in poetry, and he was greatly pleased when I recited in Polish Julian Tuwim's „Lokomotywa,” easily recognized by every student in the international class.

At the end of my course work I was pleasantly surprised seeing my name on a list of new members of a Honorary Society Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most respected organization of the kind, established in 1776. The society recognized the scholastic achievements of students who completed their studies with perfect grade records, and there were only a few foreign names on the membership roll. As a token of that life long distinction I received a miniature golden key with my name engraved on it. Much later, in 1976, the International Social Science Honorary Society Delta Tau Kappa awarded me its prestigious membership for my publications.

In one of my papers in an American literature course, taken with Austin Warren, I discussed the character of General Golz in Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, identifying him as General Karol Świerczewski. I submitted it for publication to *The Polish Review*, a quarterly of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America. When it appeared in print in 1962, it got two completely different kinds of reception: while some members of the Polish community objected to the publicity given to a Communist general, the American scholars considered it an important discovery, and included my article in their standard reference works on Hemingway (e.g. Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway. A Life Story*, 1969, p. 621, 672). It was my first American publication and it turned out to be a successful one.

My interest in American literature has always been strong. Ever since I started reviewing new publications for a monthly *Nowe Książki* in the mid-1950s, I had focused on American authors whose works had been entering the Polish book market at that time with great public applause. On the eve of my departure to the United States I started a series of articles on contemporary American writers for *Wiedza i Życie*, a journal published by Wiedza Powszechna publishers in Warsaw and continued it for a while sending my contributions from California and Michigan. So when the publishing house invited me to write a book on a related topic I proposed a study on Ernest Hemingway who happened to spend some of his early years in Michigan. When our youngest son, Daniel, was born in 1962, we packed the entire family into a new station wagon, and left for the Upper Peninsula, the scenery of some of Hemingway's most memorable stories such as *Big Two Hearted River*. It was a kind of a literary field research project, a family project, as it were, helping to have my book written in the most realistic terms. And it succeeded too.

The word about my forthcoming book must have spread in Warsaw, for I was asked by the editors in Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy to prepare and provide with an introduction a collection of Hemingway's short stories to be published in a popular series „Biblioteka Powszechna.” The first edition appeared in 1962, and was reprinted several times in the years to come (6th edition 1976). Next year Wiedza Powszechna published my critical study *Ernest Hemingway* (1963), which got many positive reviews.

With my class work done and examinations passed, all that remained was the completion of my doctoral dissertation. In consultation with Dr. Margaret Schlauch from the University of Warsaw, who wanted me to return to Poland and to start teaching American literature, I focused my research on one of the most influential among American critics and novelists, William Dean Howells (1837–1920), since he presented a fascinating case for a comparative literature student as a writer who implemented some European literary theories and principles into his novels and criticism, following in particular the methods provided by two 19th-century Russian writers – Turgenev and Tolstoy.

It should be remarked here that the situation of a lecturer in Polish studies in America, even at a time favorable for Slavic studies, was by no means easy. Enrollment kept on a critical level, so in order to be fully employed the instructor had to be able to teach something else, in most cases – Russian. Initially teaching some Russian language classes I gradually moved up to teaching survey courses in Russian literature, and after taking a few advanced courses in that subject, eventually I was able to teach classes for graduate students as well. My knowledge of the subject matter, acquired in the process, permitted me to discuss those two Russian novelists in my dissertation, and to prove how their views, theories and writing methods were reflected in the works of Howells, who openly admitted his debt to those Russian masters. A combined knowledge of the two literatures helped me to further my research for the dissertation.

It is a common joke among American academic circles that besides getting Ph.D. (philosophy doctor) degrees, a large number of doctoral candidates end up with an A.B.D. „degree” (All But the Dissertation). And indeed, all sorts of circumstances, from an inability to write to other job opportunities, contribute to the fact that only a proportion of those students complete and defend their respective dissertations, and receive the highest academic degree granted in the United States. (There is no *Habilitation* process, and „professor” is an academic rank but not a degree). Only hard work and perseverance prevented me from joining the ranks of „A.B.D.'s.”

My contract with the University of Michigan was renewable every year, but in 1961, when the reunification of our family was still not certain, I could not decide whether I would be able to stay for another year, unless our children, whom we had left in Poland, could be with us. Hence

the University started searching for my replacement and hired Dr. David Welsh, a fairly well known translator of Polish literature, to replace me in 1963. When our family affairs had been cleared up, I had to start looking for another position elsewhere, since I did not want to end up staying in Michigan as a typical „Russian teacher” only. Good fortune helped me once more.

Professor S. Harrison Thomson, founder and promoter of Slavic Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder, happened to be looking for a person who could further develop a rudimentary program in Polish that had been running there for several years, and he called with an offer. I decided to visit and to meet him first before committing myself not only to a program I had not known anything about, but also to a completely new physical environment of a mountain state. After a short visit I accepted his offer and signed a contract for the position of Assistant Professor. In the Summer of 1963 we left for Colorado.

I started there with a Russian and Polish Summer School organized jointly by the University of Colorado and the University of Kansas, with faculty from both universities participating in teaching, and students from both institutions taking courses for credit. One of the professors who came to Boulder that Summer was the chairman of the Slavic Department from Kansas, Heinrich A. Stammler, a specialist in Russian intellectual history, and a man with vivid interest in Polish. Later on, when an early winter set in, problems begun to occur to become more and more persistent.

Those problems happened to be twofold. First of all, Professor Thomson was just about to retire, and handed over the leadership of his favorite project to a non-Slavic faculty member appointed by the University administration. Secondly, but no less importantly, there was the physical factor of altitude. Boulder is located at 10,000 feet (ca. 3,000 m) above the sea level, and not everybody adjust to it easily. Thus when Professor Stammler offered me an Associate Professor position at the University of Kansas I accepted it, and the next summer we moved down to the Great Plains.

My tenure at the University of Kansas began with my appointment as director of the Colorado-Kansas Summer Institute for Slavic Studies, with emphasis one Polish. After a six-week session our students were able to present an impressive costume show to celebrate Poland’s Millenium. Getting high accolades from the university community. It was a good start, and for the next three years, 1964–1967, I managed to develop a fairly strong Polish program, getting support not only from the Slavic Department but also from my Polish colleagues and friends at the campus – Professors Anna Cienciąła, Jarosław Piekalkiewicz, Paweł Szeptycki and others. The friendly and relaxed atmosphere there permitted me to complete and defend my dissertation titled „Turgenev, Tolstoy and William Dean Howells: Transition in the Development of a Realist” (1965). With my Ph.D. securely behind me I was able to devote more time to meet the requirements for a junior

university faculty whose career is guided by the old adage „publish or perish.” Beginning in 1963 I started writing articles and reviews for the Polish monthly *Kultura*, and, at the same time, continued my publications in English. I was fortunate enough to discover some unpublished letters of Henryk Sienkiewicz to his American translator, Jeremiah Curtin, and submitted my discovery with a critical introduction to *The Polish Review* (1965) for publication. I also joined several American Slavic academic associations, including the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America. That in turn permitted me to attend their meetings and congresses at which occasions I presented papers and established close working relationships with many of my professional colleagues.

During one meeting we discussed the lack of teaching materials for Polish, so I suggested to Professor Sigmund S. Birkenmayer for the two of us to cooperate in writing a textbook for students who advanced beyond the rudimentary basic material provided in the only available Polish grammar written by Professor Teslar years before, originally intended for British soldiers, which had become badly outdated by 1960s. In a couple of years we selected and edited several short stories, poems, and drama fragments, provided them with the necessary vocabulary and grammatical comments, and published it as *A Modern Polish Reader* (1966). It was favorably received and reprinted in 1970 and 1978, respectively. But I knew I needed to publish a study in literature to be considered a full-fledged scholar in the field. And so I started research on Władysław Stanisław Reymont, who despite his Nobel Prize had been almost totally forgotten in the United States after the initial success of his *Peasants* translated into English in 1924.

There were, of course, teaching and administrative duties to be taken care of first, and one of them was an assignment to take a group of Colorado-Kansas students in Russian to Finland, and to expose them for six weeks to European environment without necessarily sending them directly to the Soviet Union where they would have been exposed to more than they bargained for. In the summer of 1965 we went to a small town near Helsinki, and for the duration of the study period we spoke only Russian without losing our American identity in front of the locals. It was an interesting experiment which, among other things, made it possible for me and my family to travel extensively in Western Europe after the closing of the course, and to return to Kansas with new energy for teaching and research. After some delays on the part of the editors, my study, entitled *Wladyslaw Stanislaw Reymont* (1972), was published in the Twayne's World Authors Series, opening for me a possibility for promotion, since it was considered an equivalent of the European academic *Habilitation*.

I may add here that the editors of the Polish section in the series, Professors Adam Gillon and Ludwik Krzyżanowski, enlisted more than twenty potential authors in a plan of introducing Polish writers into that widely

distributed publishing project. Unfortunately, only a few managed to complete their respective volumes, writing on Jan Kochanowski, Adam Mickiewicz, Cyprian Norwid, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Władysław Stanisław Reymont, Józef Wittlin, Maria Dąbrowska, Jan Parandowski, Witold Gombrowicz, and contemporary Polish poets. Nonetheless wide gaps still remain to be filled.

In New York I met Professor Leon Twarog, the chairman of a Slavic Department at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, who asked me whether I would be interested in creating a doctoral program in Polish literature at the O.S.U. Since possibilities for expansion beyond basic survey courses in Polish literature at Kansas were slim I accepted his offer, and in the summer of 1967 we moved once more in an easterly direction. We could not possibly realize at that time that Columbus, Ohio, was destined to become our permanent home for the decades to come.

Building a doctoral program from scratch was no easy job and quite a challenge. There had been some instruction in Polish at the O.S.U. before, consisting of a few and far between courses on the elementary level, and none in literature. Aware of the situation I requested the library holdings to be brought up to a level adequate with the new project, and I was fortunate enough to find both financial support and professional expertise to meet my demands. Professor Twarog provided substantial funding, while Slavic bibliographer Feliks Jabłonowski went to Poland to buy basic collection of books, texts, literary history and criticism, to meet research needs of would be candidates for the degree. At the same time the O.S.U. qualified for a special federal program that supplied current Polish publications for a number of years to come. In a few years the Polish holdings at the university library grew considerably, reaching impressive numbers of thousands of titles, not only in literature but in humanities in general, as well as in related areas.

I continued my publishing activities, and on the strength of my bibliography I was promoted to the rank of a full Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures in 1970. My publications continued in the decades to come, and resulted in a number of works edited with my introduction (Adam Mickiewicz, Henryk Sienkiewicz, and some contemporary authors), as well as in a great many articles, contributions to academic congresses and meetings, entries in encyclopaedias, reviews, translations etc.

My literary research has been basically in the history of modern and contemporary Polish novel. A significant number of my publications have been on Henryk Sienkiewicz and his work. Closely associated with a new translation of his *Trilogy* into English (1991–1992) I edited *The Trilogy Companion. A Reader's Guide to the Trilogy of Henryk Sienkiewicz* (1991), a collection of critical essays on the theory and practice of translation, with maps and glossaries intended for the American reader whose knowledge of 17th-century Poland may be inadequate. My work on Sienkiewicz was re-

warded with an honorary membership of the Henryk Sienkiewicz Society in Lublin (1990).

I have written analytical articles and essays on many Polish writers, beginning with Jan Kochanowski and Adam Mickiewicz, but focused my research on modern and contemporary authors including Jerzy Andrzejewski, Tadeusz Konwicki, Rafał Malczewski, Włodzimierz Odojewski, Bolesław Prus, Władysław Stanisław Reymont, and many others, publishing in both Polish and English, in periodicals and academic journals in Poland as well as in Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, the United States, and Yugoslavia. I have also published ca. 40 articles and reviews on the general subject of Polish literature at large.

A number of my articles discussed American, English and Russian literatures, including numerous translations from and into either language, but I also wrote extensively on the history of the Home Army and related subjects, mostly for Polish periodicals published in England and France.

In 1968, I started regular reviews of Polish and Russian fiction for the journal *Books Abroad* (later renamed *World Literature Today*) and I have been doing that for the next three decades. A collection of my previous articles and essays either written in Polish or translated from English, was published as *Legenda Samosierry i inne prace krytyczne* (1987) in Warsaw, but political conditions at that time resulted in heavy censorship. I only succeeded in prevailing on the editors to mark the passages eradicated in the printed text with brackets. In spite of those interferences the book got very good reviews from Polish critics ranging from the leading literary monthly *Twórczość* to the Communist party newspaper *Trybuna Ludu*. Many years later my publications earned me, among other honors, an Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Polish Republic, awarded by President Lech Wałęsa in 1995. That was a precious addition to a number of high military decorations awarded by the command of the Home Army for my service in its ranks during the war.

In my instructional activities at the O.S.U. I proposed and implemented first two basic courses in Polish literature, poetry and prose, gradually building up some more advanced courses and seminars. A number of graduate students in Russian enrolled to learn the required second Slavic literature, and eventually some of them changed the focus of their studies and became full-fledged candidates for a degree in Polish literature. At the same time, we advertised our new program in professional journals and bulletins, attracting potential students from all over the country. In my plans, though, I had to be pragmatic. A degree in Polish literature alone did not secure a teaching position at an American Slavic department, since most of them have been totally dominated by Russian studies; thus I directed my students toward a compromise, namely comparative Russian-Polish topics. And although I supervised the dissertation of my first doctoral candidate in

Russian literature in 1971, gradually my students presented and defended dissertations such as „Leo Tolstoj's *War and Peace* and Stefan Żeromski's *Ashes. A Comparative Study*” (Zenon Kuk, 1972), „The Life and Literary Activity of Sergej Aleksandrovic Sobolevskij: The Discovery of a Missing Link” (Donald Pruitt, 1975), „Russian Literature in Polish Literary Criticism: 1918–1932. A Documentary Study” (Michał Barszap, 1977). There were also dissertations on Polish literature only, such as „Structuralism-Humanism: Janusz Sławiński and Polish Literary Methodology” (James Roney, 1981) or „Binary Opposition as the Compositional feature in the Works of Wacław Iwaniuk” (Sandi Mayevski, 1984), as well as some in Russian literature. I also supervised thirteen M.A. theses in the Department.

Serving a member of doctoral committees in the Department I also had the rare honor to be on a committee granting a honorary degree to the living legend, Professor Roman Jakobson (1896–1982), rightly considered to be „the father figure” of Slavic studies in the United States after World War II. I also had the privilege of introducing Czesław Miłosz when he lectured at the O.S.U., and meeting Isaac Bashevis Singer who spoke fluent Polish with me and my wife. It was a real pleasure to host there a number of distinguished specialists in Polish studies, including Professors Karol Estreicher, Aleksander Gieysztor, Norman Davies, Gotthold Rhode and many others. Very many visitors from Poland kept coming to the Ohio State University, and as a Polish representative of the Slavic Department I had the occasion of meeting and taking care of them.

A group of O.S.U. students organized a Polish Students' Club late in the 1960s. With my wife's help I supervised and advised on its activities which soon grew in scope and eventually led to the foundation of a thriving community Polish American Club of Columbus, Ohio.

In the mid-1980s, a new project was conceived at the Slavic Department with a goal to facilitate language instruction for students engrossed in their professional responsibilities in their respective fields of study. Instead of enrolling in regularly scheduled language classes, a student could thus enroll in Individualized Instruction which would permit him to take a virtually unlimited number of credits at his own free time, i.e. without attending classes and just taking control tests and examinations after mastering each learning unit. Enlisting the help of my former student, Dr. Deborah W. Roney, a young graduate student, Zbigniew K. Mirski, and my son, Daniel, as a graphic artist, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, I embarked upon that new project in the summer of 1982. According to the terms of the grant we had to complete instructional materials covering Elementary Polish I and II, and Intermediate Polish I and II, within one academic quarter, i.e. in ten weeks time. Those materials, 20 learning units covering 28 lessons in *First Year Polish*, a textbook by Professor Oscar Swan, normally used in classroom instruction, equalled 4 quarters (1 aca-

demical year) of regular instruction, and could be mastered by a diligent student in one quarter time. They were supplemented by directions and answer keys for the instructor, as well as audio tapes recorded on cassettes. Altogether they amounted to 916 pages in 4 volumes.

Encouraged by the success of the project, demonstrated during the next academic year, I undertook its continuation, and in 1983–1984, supported by a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities, I completed materials for Advanced Polish I and II, made of 1240 pages covering the second year of Polish instruction. In the summer of 1984, assisted by Professor Christina Y. Bethin and Dr. Wojciech Wierzewski, I completed a first volume of the third year Individualized Instruction in Polish, *Reading Polish I* to be followed by two more volumes, prepared with Dr. Deborah W. Roney, *Reading Polish 2* and *3*, and completed in 1986 and 1987, respectively. Those three volumes amounted to 2170 pages, bringing up the total to 4326 pages of original materials. The project represented the first American attempt to cover three years of Polish instruction. It met with very good reception and was implemented at several universities and colleges. Later on those materials were used in an O.S.U. Telephone Individualized Instruction course conducted in 1986–1996.

With all my academic activities – teaching, publishing and service – keeping me busy I also tried to find some time for creative writing, which I had begun in the mid-1950s but had to put on hold for a variety of reasons – my university studies, professional work, political restrictions – until time and circumstances permit me to resume it. Deeply involved as I was in the history of the Home Army I was particularly fascinated by the biography of its last Commander-in-Chief, Brigadier Leopold Okulicki (1898–1946), whose tragic story reflected the fate of that patriotic military organization. In the early 1970s, when the pressures of the academe subsided slightly, I had begun research on Okulicki and resolved to write his biography. That would have been a first-ever such biography in Polish studies, since his tragic death in a Soviet prison made him a „non-person” in official publications in Poland, while very little had been written on that subject in emigrè circles. After some indecision I resolved to put it in a form of a *vie-roman-cèe*, which would permit me to substitute my own visions for the missing or unavailable documentation. I submitted a chapter from that book to Mrs. Stefania Kossowska, editor of the London-based Polish literary magazine *Wiadomości*, and was pleasantly surprised when gladly accepted it and printed in the summer of 1977. Another, autobiographical story of mine, was published in the collection of works submitted to a „Józef Wyrwa Competition” in Paris the same year, thus giving me a good start in my creative endeavors. That new line of work resulted in a number of short stories, mostly printed in *Przegląd Polski*, a literary supplement to *Nowy Dziennik* (New York), the largest Polish newspaper in the United States. The number

of my short stories published – but never collected in one volume – exceeds 50 items, some of which were incorporated as subsequent chapters into my novels. For one of my stories I received the coveted Kazimierz S. Vincenz Fund Award in 1984.

I found another outlet for my writings in Germany, where a monthly called *Archipelag* readily accepted my critical essays. I also contributed several historical essays to *Zeszyty Historyczne*, a quarterly published by Instytut Literacki in Paris. I joined the Union of Polish Writers Abroad in 1981, and started my regular contributions to their journal *Pamiętnik Literacki*, published in London.

My first novel *Generał. Opowieść o Leopoldzie Okulickim* appeared in London in 1980, and was very well received by the critics. Stefan Korboński (1901–1989), one of the leading personalities in the Home Army (AK), called it in his review „a monument erected to General Okulicki,” while others reviewed it equally favorably. After the demise of Communism it was reprinted in Warsaw as *Ostatni komendant. Opowieść o Leopoldzie Okulickim* (1990) in a significant number of copies. Unfortunately, its publisher went bankrupt before they were all sold, but thanks to valiant efforts of the AK veterans they could be saved from destruction and distributed throughout the country.

The AK tradition has always been in my mind, and many of my stories, poems, and essays dealt with it, until finally I decided to collect some of more personal reminiscences and impressions, to shape them into a volume devoted to the history of a guerilla unit in which I served during the war. After a thorough research in documents, memoirs, recollections, etc. I completed a well-documented book *U Szarugi. Partyzancka opowieść* (1995), published in Lublin where the topical interest seemed to be the strongest.

At the same time I kept working on collecting literary tributes to the crime of the century, the mass murder of some 15,000 Polish officers at Katyń early in 1940. From an impressive output I selected ca. 140 items in poetry, prose, essays, and journalism, written in 7 languages and published in 14 countries, translated the foreign texts, and published the entire collection under the title *Katyń w literaturze* (1995). A promotion event for that publication was led by Professor Zdzisław Peszkowski, the chaplain of the Katyń family organization, at an official opening of the „Katyń Year 1995” at the Royal Castle in Warsaw (April 3, 1995).

But I never abandoned the idea of writing a fictitious work, a novel, close to my own experiences and related to the history of the AK and the problems its soldiers faced when the country was taken over by Soviet and Polish Communists. The editor of *Nowy Dziennik* Mr. Bolesław Wierzbiański, accepted and published it in 1986, thus making *Diana* my debut in the field of fiction. Encouraged by its good reception I wrote and got published by the Instytut Literacki in Paris another novel, called *Banff* (1988), which picked up the theme of the previous one but projected it on a more modern

scenery of Canada in the 1980s. On top of the creative writing I was also busy editing, and in 1982 I published a collection of international contributions to the memory of a Polish writer and journalist, Aleksander Janta (1908–1974), entitled simply *Janta. Człowiek i pisarz*. At the same time, I continued writing short stories as an outlet for my creative interest.

My work earned me a number of biographical entries in many international dictionaries. Chronologically they appeared in: *Who's Who in the Midwest* (11th edition, 1968), *International scholars Directory* (1973), *Who's Who Among Authors and Journalists* (1973), *Dictionary of International Biography* (1973), *The National Register of Prominent Americans and International Notables 1974–75* (1974), *International Who's Who of Intellectuals* (1st ed., 1978), *Dictionary of American Scholars* (vol. III, 7th ed., 1978), *Contemporary Authors* (vol. 37–40, 1979), „*Pamiętnik Literacki*” (t. IV, 1981), *Mały Słownik Pisarzy Polskich na Obczyźnie 1939–1980* (1992), *Who's Who in Polish America* (1996), *Współcześni Polscy Pisarze i Badacze Literatury* (t. IV, 1996).

My academic and creative activities did not prevent me travelling widely. In the United States alone I lectured in 15 states, and in Canada in 3 provinces, while my European lecture tours included England, Finland, Germany, Yugoslavia, and, of course, Poland: my first trip there I made after almost 30 years long absence in 1988, and a next one in 1992. During that visit I had the honor to present a paper on the letters from Siberia written in 1919–20 by my late father, Professor Julian Krzyżanowski (1892–1976). A memorial session held at the University of Warsaw on the centennial of his birthday gathered a large number of guests, members of my family, friends and colleagues from various walks of life, starting from the schools days, all the way to my American years. It was a moving and memorable experience to speak to that distinguished audience in the same historic Pałac Kazimierzowski, where I received my M.A. degree 25 years earlier. Several years before that session, in 1978, I had a chance to renew those invaluable contacts during the 8th International Slavic Congress in Zagreb, where as a member of the American delegation I could meet many of my colleagues from all over the world, including Poland, a country closed to me for political reasons at that time. Now, in the 1990s, I was free to visit it again.

With my activities primarily devoted to teaching and writing it was difficult to find time for public service, and yet I managed to serve as director of a short-lived Association for the Advancement of Polish Studies in the years 1976–1978, organized with the goal of promoting and developing various academic disciplines in the field. Unfortunately, my successor, Professor Sigmund S. Birkenmayer, died shortly after taking the directorship over from me, and its activities ceased shortly afterwards. I also served for two terms on the Board of Directors of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (1983–1986, 1986–1989), but hardships connected with frequent

trips to New York for the Board meetings prevented me from seeking reelection. Much more active was my service as Chairman of the Planning Committee of the Northamerican Studies Center for Polish Affairs (1977–1980). Its work coincided with and supported social and political upheavals in Poland, and it required very frequent meetings and actions all over the United States and Canada in order to meet the challenges of the day and to plan ahead for the future. I was fortunate enough to work on that committee with top Polish scholars in America, Professors Andrzej Ehrenkreutz, Andrzej Kawczak, Jerzy Lerski, Jerzy Wojciechowski, as well as such distinguished colleagues as Waław Bniński, Zdzisław Dziekoński, Jerzy Gonerko, Piotr Harcaj, Aleksander Kajkowski, Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, Kazimierz Plater, and many, many others whose trust and friendship I cherish to this very day. It was perhaps the finest group of individuals ever to assemble in modern times and to work together for an unselfish, patriotic cause. When Poland regained her own voice with the advent of the Solidarity movement I withdrew from the Studium (as it was generally called) but continue to maintain close ties with my good friends of those days.

After Working and teaching Polish in the United States for more than thirty years I took an early retirement in 1991. That, of course, does not impede my writing activities, academic or creative. Indeed, it gives me more time to go on, to continue working on some projects already in progress and to embark upon new ones. I have completed a new novel, *Ariadne* and published it in Lublin in 1998, receiving there Bolesław Prus Literary Award. Now I am working on another one, while some academic challenges appear more and more attractive to me with every year. I can only hope I will find enough strength and time to bring all of them to completion. Making it up for at least 15 years lost to a normal educational process, brutally interrupted by the war and its consequences, seems to be as urgent as ever, and looking back from my vintage point now, I believe I did as much as I could to catch up with the unforgiving demands of time.

