

Julian Pulikowski (1908–1944) — the Polish Leader
in Comparative Musicology and Enthusiast
of Folk Song Research

Piotr Dahlig



Julian Pulikowski (born on 24th May 1908 in Zgorzelec (Görlitz), died on 14th September 1944 in Warsaw), belongs to the second generation of Polish musicologists. His father, Roman Junosza Pulikowski, born in Lvov (now Lviv), worked as a cello player in Hannover Opera from 1910, and small Julian with his mother, Zofia Pulikowska, née Siemianowska, lived and was educated in Germany and Austria until 1934. He studied musicology in Vienna between 1926 and 1930, but attended lectures, as usual in those times, also on art history, psychology and philosophy. Among his teachers were the professors: Robert Lach, Robert Haas, Guido Adler, Wilhelm Fischer, Egon Wellesz, Rudolf Ficker, Alfred Orel, Josef Strzygowski, Julius Schlosser, Karl Bühler, Heinrich Gomperz, Karl Reininger. Joseph Marx taught Pulikowski piano and composition.

In 1929–1930, he worked as a volunteer in the Music Department of the Viennese National Library. There he discovered folk songs with Polish texts written down in 1819 during the first officially organized action of collecting folklore in Austria. The report about this discovery, sent in 1929 to *Kwartalnik Muzyczny* [*Musical Quarterly*] edited by Adolf Chybiński in Lvov (the place of Pulikowski's father's birth), started the 15-year-long friendship between both professional musicologists. In 1932 Pulikowski received his Ph.D. from Vienna University, on the basis of a dissertation entitled *Geschichte des Begriffs Volkslied im musikalischen Schrifttum. Ein Stück deutscher Geistesgeschichte*. Then, in Preussischer Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, he prepared this dissertation for print and, in 1933, he published it in Heidelberg, a centre of German Romanticism. This book, the most extensive work of this kind in Europe, presents socio-historical analyses of the concept of folk songs in different countries and the whole of Europe, including hundreds of definitions which shaped the study of ethnic and folk traditions on our continent. It is worth adding that the early definition of "ethno-musicology" (ethnomusicology), as formulated by Klyment Kvitka in the Ukraine in 1928, and introduced by Łucjan Kamieński between 1934–1939 in Poland, was focused on the analysis and classification (typology) exclusively of folk songs; thus the early subject of ethnomusicology was music *as* culture. The concept of music *in* culture is rather a later tendency that appeared in the second half of the 20th century.

We owe it to Adolf Chybiński that Pulikowski eventually came to Poland in 1934 and we can now call him a Polish musicologist. Overburdened with work in Poland, he sometimes complained of hard work to Chybiński in the late 1930s, reminding the latter melancholically of an offer of work he had received from Vienna Library. Chybiński encouraged him first (1929–1930) to write and send reviews of musicological literature and to look in Western sources for the Polish dances of the 16th and 17th centuries. Then Chybiński procured for him a one-year grant from the Fund of National Culture which enabled Pulikowski to work with Wilhelm Heinitz in the Phonetic Laboratory at Hamburg University between the autumn of 1932 and the autumn of 1933. From November 1933 till March 1934, he worked in Berlin continuing his research on early Polish dances. He had just published his book *Geschichte des Begriffs Volkslied...*, which, however, was not distributed in Germany. Being a member of the leftist organization “Vorwärts”, and a person of Polish descent (though he spoke German much better than Polish), he became something of a *persona non grata* in Germany under Hitler. Stanisław Kot, a historian, professor of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow (Julian Pulikowski’s uncle) and Chybiński intended Pulikowski to take a position in the National Library in Warsaw, hoping that he would organise the music collections there. Pulikowski came to Poland in March 1934 (the first letter from Warsaw to Lvov is dated March 22nd), and received the Polish citizenship (on 30th May 1934). Then he organised a music exhibition in the National Library (May–June 1934), which led to the establishment to its Music Department (1st July 1934). From then on, Pulikowski was the head of the new department. His co-workers were Wanda Rudzka and, since 1938, Józef Chomiński, one of the greatest Polish musicologists.

At the same time, in the autumn of 1934, he started teaching comparative musicology, musical paleography and music theory at Warsaw Music Conservatory. His first lecture — about comparative musicology — was held on 6th Oct., 1934. His talk, dedicated particularly to Asian Music, was a novelty in Poland; Pulikowski used the set of records (*Demonstrationssammlung*) which was produced by Phonogram Archives in Berlin.

Doctor Pulikowski recognized his basic personal task in Poland, which was — to initiate field research and recordings of folk songs in Poland. Directly after his arrival in Poland in the spring of 1934, he could not yet know of a similar initiative of Łucjan Kamieński launched in 1928 in the western part of Poland. Pulikowski found patterns for such activities in Austria (1908–1912), where the documentation had been prepared by local teachers from primary and secondary schools, and collections of folk songs served as an illustration of the multinational Austrian monarchy. Pulikowski drew on this approach also in the late of 1930s, when he appealed, in the atmosphere of prevailing ethnocentrism, also for the study of national minorities.

From July 1934, he took part in discussions about the project of the Institute of Folk Song Research in Warsaw. This project, fueled by enthusiasm for state structures and institutions, resulted in the modest but important Central Phonogram Archives founded on 30th April 1935. This event can be regarded as the starting point for systematic field recordings led by Pulikowski. His group of collaborators numbered at least 23 persons recording songs in different parts of Poland. In order to popularise methods of recording folk music, he visited Krzemieniec, where post-graduate education was systematically organized for music teachers. The most efficient in field research among Pulikowski's colleagues was Tadeusz Grabowski (1909–1940), the author of two interesting articles on folk terminology in the song repertoire in the Cashubian region and about his own experiences with field recordings in Poland.

As mentioned above, field recordings in the interwar period were already conducted (from 1928) by Łucjan Kamieński, professor of musicology at the University of Poznań, and his students. Kamieński concentrated on two regions — Greater Poland and Cashubia, whereas Pulikowski's ambition was to cover all the territory of Poland. He himself conducted field research only in the region of Podlachia (eastern Masovia) in September 1935 and was particularly interested in the borderland between distinct song forms with stanzas and ritual vocal forms with accumulated verses. In fact, both West- and East-Slavonic musical and textual properties of folk repertoire co-existed or interacted on such interesting borderlands.

From the technological viewpoint, the method of recording on wax cylinders (1935–1939) used by the Pulikowski's team was then already out of date in Europe. Edison's phonograph and cylinders were being replaced by disc records and microphones in the late 1930s. The sound quality of the latter is incomparably better, as demonstrated by the 2009 release of a set of records from the Recordings of the Phonographic Commission of the Czech Academy, with folk music recorded in 1929–1937 thanks to the co-operation of folklorists, musicologists, and, of course, folk singers and musicians *and* the French company Pathé.

After his arrival in Poland, Pulikowski was also planning to establish a department or institute of musicology at the Warsaw University. This initiative, eagerly supported by Adolf Chybiński, was eventually carried out in the last academic year before WWII (1938–1939). Still, already much earlier, from the autumn of 1935, he held open lectures in musicology in the Dept. of Humanities at Warsaw University. (After the death of the Polish Marshal in May 1935 this university had been named the Józef Piłsudski University).

Not much older than his listeners, Pulikowski had some linguistic and cultural problems with assimilating in Poland. His marriage and the birth of his two sons took place already in Warsaw. One of his students, Józef Klukowski, still in the 1960s successfully taught musical folklore at music schools from notes taken during Pulikowski's lectures. A long-lasting result of the lectures of the author of *Geschichte des Begriffs Volkslied...* was an increased interest in non-European folk, ethnic music and classical Asian music in Poland. He advocated the significance of folk songs for culture analyses and the study of music history. Such an opinion had a political resonance in the Polish society, which was still largely stratified. But his main field of action was the struggle for musicology at Warsaw University, the more so as his lectures in the Music Conservatory were regarded as "too scientific". He was planning a full musicological curriculum which would coordinate historical and systematic disciplines: this project included acoustics, aesthetics, sociology of music and comparative musicology, alongside music history and the little known musical paleography. The study on folk music in Poland, which he had planned, was able to advance only to the level of pure documen-

tation (nearly 5.000 wax cylinders and about 20.000 songs or instrumental pieces collected in the Central Phonogram Archives of the National Library gathered between 1935–1939). His activity in the area of documentation foreshadowed the All-Polish Action of Collecting Musical Folklore of 1950–1954.

The range of Pulikowski's activities was wide — library work, collecting music manuscripts, books and notes, lectures in the Music Conservatory and at Warsaw University, the organization of a national project of recording folk songs and instrumental music. No wonder that, after publishing his book on the history of folk song concepts, he could not find time to develop empirical analyses strictly connected with music and musical traditions. Had he had more time, he would certainly have further studied the topic of early Polish dances. However, the pressure of time and new tasks resulted in his concentration on proposals for how musicology should function and what kind of musicological studies could contribute to the cultural life and consciousness of the whole society. The social practicability of musicology as demanded by Pulikowski was combined with his highly ideological vision of folk song traditions. Like some other Polish intellectuals, he still believed in the possibility of a “renaissance” of folk culture, or, in fact, of peasant culture, the more so — as 70% of the population in interwar Poland still lived in villages. The unusual eagerness and high ambitions typical of Pulikowski did not make his national and state-oriented projects more feasible. Still, his organizational and didactic merits in promoting musicology and folk song research in Poland are unquestionable.

A separate chapter in his life and activities was the time of German occupation. He accepted a position in Staatsbibliothek Warschau, collaborating with the German management. However, he importantly contributed to the safeguarding of Polish collections. Sometimes he pleaded for arrested Poles, assisting most probably in the release of some Polish intellectuals and artists from concentration camps (e.g. Bohdan Korzeniowski, an outstanding theatre historian, was released from Auschwitz). These facts became publicly known later, but under the occupation he was accepted neither by Poles (because of his collaboration with the German management of Warsaw's libraries) nor by Germans, because five years of his intensive and positive work

in Poland made Germans suspicious toward him. He was not allowed, for instance, to continue research work after 1939 in spite of the fact that he mainly wanted to cooperate with the Deutsches Volksliedarchiv in Freiburg.

In June 1944, aware of the German plans to leave “burnt land” behind on their retreat, he began to secure the most precious collections of the National and University libraries, including thousands of wax cylinders. He concealed all the material heritage in the cellars of an apparently safe building with extremely thick walls (in Okólnik Street). Unfortunately, after the Warsaw Uprising (1st August–2nd October 1944), the troops of the Brandkommando, which had the task of burning down all valuable things of cultural significance in Warsaw, discovered the hidden boxes and, after pouring petrol on them, set them on the fire in November 1944. Pulikowski himself was shot dead while helping the Polish soldiers to dig trenches.

Polish librarians, who, after the war and loss of collections, complained of not too good cooperation with Pulikowski, and who rightly opposed the centralization of the most precious collections initiated by him, contributed to the reserved and critical opinions about this isolated musicologist among librarians. In a note from 1945 published only in 1958, Chybiński wrote that with Pulikowski’s death Polish musicology had suffered the greatest imaginable loss. On the other hand, if Pulikowski had survived the war, he would have had no chance to stay and work in Poland after 1945. Besides, he had evacuated his family to Vienna in May–June 1944.

When Professor Zofia Lissa founded the musicology at Warsaw University in 1948, the institutional base of this department had already been laid by Pulikowski’s efforts in 1936–1938. This fact was passed over for political reasons. Today, the Institute of Musicology at the University of Warsaw has its seat exactly where Julian Pulikowski was working; the address — Krakowskie Przedmieście 32 is the same.

Summarizing, we can say that Pulikowski’s book, published in 1933, still preserves its value for the history of musical ethnology and sociology. His articles from the Polish period of his life emanate a sincere enthusiasm for

musicology. His resolution to initiate and support field research remains a good example for the future generations of ethnomusicologists.

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We can note an increased interest in this many-sided personality, not only among musicologists, in the late decades of the 20th century:

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