Treason and Conspiracy at the Polish-Ukrainian Border—Sava Chalyi/Sawa Czały

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The historically documented folk figure of Sava Chalyi (d. 1742) is connected to the Haidamak uprisings of the eighteenth century. He first appeared alongside the early stages of these peasant revolts, not their climax—specifically, the siege of Uman and the massacre that took place there in 1768. The literary echo of these events has undergone significant transformations between Ukrainian and Polish literature on the one hand, and Russian literature on the other.[1] In the case of Sava Chalyi, this transfer has occurred in only one direction, from the Ukrainian to the Polish. It is a transfer that is quite complex, insofar as it also involves a transfer from folklore to higher literature, with Ukrainian epic folk songs becoming transformed into Polish art ballads. However, little attention has been paid by relevant scholars to the migration of the Sava Chalyi story from the literature of Ukraine to that of Poland.[2]

The reasons for this migration are complex: On the one hand, East Slavic folklore was commonly picked up in Polish literature, particularly during the Romantic period. In this regard, one need only mention the well-known "Ukrainian

1 Cf. Woldan 2016.

2 Ievhen Rykhlyk (1929) was the first to investigate this topic ninety years ago. Decades later, Roman Kyrchiv (1965) examined it in a different context. Other relevant works pass over the story of Chalyi, e.g., Herrmann 1969. George Grabowicz (1983) also neglects to mention Chalyi in his contribution to the ninth International Congress of Slavists.

school" in Polish Romanticism. On the other hand, the Haidamak uprisings represent a common historical heritage, a heritage that experienced a reappraisal during the Romantic period. The last of these uprisings, in 1768, represents the final major conflict between Poles and Ukrainians, at least while Old Poland, the *Rzeczpospolita obojga narodów* (the Polish-Lithuanian *Commonwealth of Two Nations*), still existed. This tragic conflict left its mark in the historical consciousness of both nations.[3] This earlier conflict took on a new meaning, especially after Poland's defeat in the November Uprising against the Russian Empire of 1830–31. Polish émigrés, exiled to France, accorded the failure of Polish-Ukrainian conciliation a major role in their reflections on history (one example being the prophecies of Wernyhora,[4] which first became popular among these exiled Poles). The assimilation of the Sava Chalyi narrative into Polish literature also falls into the post-1831 period.

It is noteworthy that the literary processing of the Haidamak rebellions began half a century earlier than the historic one. Historiographically, examinations of the Haidamak uprisings only begin to appear in the second half of the nineteenth century, which is when the first major texts on this topic were written.[5] It is in this context that the first scientific works about Sava Chalyi appear, works still based strongly on folkloric traditions and, therefore, they portray an exaggerated heroism.[6] It was only later that these embellishments were rectified by V. Antonovych and V. Shcherbina on the basis of previously undiscovered documents.[7] However, the legend of Sava Chalyi had already appeared in the first published folklore collections more than half a century previously.[8]

3 "In Polish historical consciousness, the Cossacks … and, most obviously, the bloody events of 1768 which presaged the first partition, were closely associated with the decline and fall of the Polish state." – Grabowicz 1983: 174.

4 These prophecies were given by a legendary figure, half Pole and half Cossack, and deal with Poland's decline and rebirth; they were first written down before 1800 and played a particular role in Polish historic consciousness until World War II. – Cf. Makowski 1995.

5 Cf. Mordovtsev 1884, Rawita-Gawroński 1899.

6 Cf. Skal'kovskii 1845 and 1846.

7 Antonovych 1897, Shcherbina 1891.

8 The oldest evidence of the Sava narrative in folklore is placed significantly earlier than the published editions that circulated in the early nineteenth century. Mykhailo Vozniak (1922) already found such a story in a handwritten collection of songs from around 1760.

Returning to Sava Chalyi and his biography,[9] his date of birth is unknown; as a young man he entered the Cossack militia of Prince Czetwertiński, but later (in 1734) he defected to the rebellious peasants under their leader, Verlan. With Verlan's band of raiders, he robbed merchants and took part in various plundering raids. After the uprisings were suppressed, the Polish commander Malinowski announced an amnesty for the band's ringleader and offered their members the possibility of serving in the Polish army. In 1736, Chalyi pledged an oath of allegiance to the *Rzeczpospolita*. From this point in time, he led successful campaigns against his former comrades and persecuted the Haidamaks. From 1737 onward, Sawa stood in the service of the crown. He was promoted by Hetman Józef Potocki to colonel in the latter's private Cossack militia, and was invested with two villages. He undertook raids and pilfering skirmishes on Zaporozhian territory, in which he sacked a number of winter storage sites and burned a church down. It was this last misdeed that seems to have been the straw that broke the camel's back: the Cossacks swore revenge. Led by Hnat Holyi, a former comrade-in-arms, a small troop attacked Chalyi's farmstead in the village of Stepashky. Chalyi was killed; his wife was able to escape with their infant son.

Sava Chalyi's son is historically much more well-documented than his father and is sometimes confused with him. Sawa Caliński Józef (ca. 1736–1771)[10] grew up in his Polish stepfather's house, who turned the boy into a Pole. Caliński's activities are marked by the last three years of his life when, as a young man, he led a very successful fight for the Confederation of Bar against the Russian troops in Poland, making him a legend in his own lifetime. In May 1771, Caliński was badly wounded in a battle and fell into the hands of the enemy. He died shortly thereafter. Unlike his father, Sawa junior was neither a defector nor a traitor, and he did not die as a result of a conspiracy, but fell while fighting for his political beliefs.

Sava's Transfer from Ukrainian to Polish Folklore

The first written account of Sava's story in Ukrainian folklore can be found in Mykhailo Maksymovych's famous collection *Malorossiiskiia Piesni* (Little Russian Folksongs, 1827). Bearing the title "Duma o Kazakie Savie" (*Duma*[11] of the

9 An overview of Ukrainian and Russian historical studies on the biography of Chalyi is found in Rychlyk 1929: 66–67; for Polish works cf. Korduba 1938.

10 Cf. Szczygielski 1994.

11 A duma is a kind of epic song.

Cossack Sava), it is quite close to a ballad, with its division into twenty-one four-line stanzas,[12] and ballads were a popular genre during the Romantic era, even in Slavic literature. The ballad's plot is mostly told in the form of dialogues, which is characteristic of this genre. These can be broken down into the following sections:

1. Sava returns home from a spree with the Poles in Nemyriv;
2. Suspicious things happen around his farmstead;
3. Sava writes letters while his wife rocks the child;
4. He sends a maid to the cellar to fetch horilka, beer and wine;
5. The avengers, who have broken into the house, ask about Sava's riches;
6. While fighting with them, Sava is killed;
7. His wife flees through a window, a maid hands her the little child;
8. Sava's son plays the kobza.

Sections 3 and 4 do not really promote the active storyline; instead they serve the function of slowing down the plot progression. Sava has drinks brought from the cellar three times to entertain his uninvited guests, something typical of both folkloric poetry and fairy tales. While the boy is still in a cradle in section 2, by section 8 he is already an independent young Cossack playing the kobza, undoubtedly a sign that the legend originally spread as a folksong: the legacy of Sava lies in the continued existence of his legend.[13]

Sava's historic betrayal is barely mentioned in this ballad; it is assumed that this is already well-known. The question of the source of Sava's riches is alluded to midway in the text: "What have you taken, enemy son, from the Cossacks' goodwill?!"[14] Clear references to a conspiracy, however, are found in the steps leading up to Sava's murder. The conspirators first pretend to be guests, then tell their host to say goodbye to his wife and child, and finally demand several times

12 Rykhlyk sees the breakdown into 4-line stanzas with a line length of 8 or 6 syllables as a constitutive factor in the folkloristic Sava narrative – cf. Rykhlyk 229: 68. However, he does not consider that the so-called "Galician variant" of the narrative does not have a stanza structure and contains long lines of more than 10 syllables. This circumstance is probably due to the differences between the folkloric forms of song and epic.

13 For Rykhlyk, the last section is not part of the basic Sava narrative and seems to have been mechanically adopted from other songs – cf. Rykhlyk 1929: 70. However, this does not explain the possible meanings latent in this section.

14 «Що ты нажив, вражій сыну, зъ козацъкои ласки!» – Maksymovych 1962: 36.

that Sava reveal where his riches are hidden. But this, too, is just a pretext to disguise the actual purpose of the visit—revenge for his having turned traitor. Accordingly, in Ukrainian folklore, the story pivots around the conspiracy against Sava and his murder. The hero is at least partially justified throughout the process. He is portrayed as a defenseless victim who is given no chance by his avengers. His real offense, defection to the Polish enemy, is only hinted at; uninformed readers might consider the conspiracy as a form of common robbery.

A quite similar version of the Sava narrative can be found in Iakiv Holovats'kyi's large collection *Narodnyia piesni Galitskoi i Ugorskoi Rusi* (*Folk Songs of Galician and Hungarian Ruthenia*, 1878). The author was told the story by a blind singer in Zolochiv, that is, in Galicia—far from the scene of the Haidamak rebellions.[15] This means that the Sava narrative was also solidly situated in West Ukrainian folklore by 1878. Holovats'kyi does not specify when he recorded the text, but it was certainly long before he published it. The author undertook fieldwork in Austrian Galicia while still in his youth. This transcription is also strophic, but has only fifteen stanzas and is, therefore, much shorter than the variant recorded by Maksymovych. The relatively short length of the verse lines (7–9 syllables) points to their song-like character.

The narrative handed down by Maksymovych, with its dramatic insertions and echoes of the art ballad genre, was taken up by Polish folklore collectors. Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki included it in his collection *Pieśni ludu Białochrobatów, Mazurów i Rusi znad Bugu* (*Songs of the White Croats, Mazurians and the Rus at the Bug*, 1836), under the title "O Sawie" ("About Sawa") and also identifies its source, Maksymovych's collection. It is a faithful transcription of the text in Latin script according to the rules of Polish orthography, a practice customary in Galicia in the first half of the nineteenth century. The transcription is conspicuous in that it follows phonetic principles, in contrast to Maksymovych, who for the most part uses historic orthography (cf. "*w kincu stola*" in Wójcicki, "в концѣ стола" in Maksymovych). Otherwise, this version is an exact copy of the Ukrainian original, which serves to integrate it into the collection: a Ukrainian song that is also part of the folklore of the regions mentioned in the collection's title.

More interesting still, however, is the so-called "Galician variant" of the Sava narrative, which can be found in the famous collection *Pieśni polskie i ruskie ludu Galicyjskiego* of Wacław z Oleska (pseudonym of Wacław Zaleski, *Polish and Ruthenian Songs of the Galician Nation*, 1833); this earliest Polish record in

15 «Записана отъ слѣпца лирника Фомы Зеленчука въ Золочевском Уѣздѣ». – Golovatskii 1878b: 10.

Latin letters also reflects a Ukrainian text. It is surprising that Sava Chalyi shows up in Galicia: although he came from Podolia, his part in the Haidamak uprisings took place much further east than that. Apparently, his figure was so popular nevertheless that he also found a place in the folksongs of the West Ukrainian Galicians. This corresponds to the lively presence of the Haidamak uprisings in Galician literature in the first half of the nineteenth century.[16]

Zaleski's variation on the Chalyi narrative was not given a title, but is referred to as a text accompanied by music.[17] The strikingly long lines (14 syllables, with a break after the 8th) are not divided into verses and have paired rhymes. On the one hand, this is reminiscent of folkloric epics, but it is also similar to the syllabic tradition of Polish poetry on the other. In terms of the plot, this variation deviates only slightly from that handed down through Maksymovych: upon his return home, Sava learns that his wife has given birth to a son; he sends a servant, not a maid, to the cellar for the drinks; before he is back, the avengers have already surrounded the house; it is the maid who helps his wife escape, handing the newborn baby through window.

Strikingly, the text extends further than the end of the plot—one third of the narrative consists of rhetorical questions about the whereabouts of his treasures, posed to Sava as he lies in his own blood.[18] An allusion is also made to the historically documented destruction of a nearby church: "You should not have robbed a church, Sir Sava!"[19] In the description of Sava's funeral in the final lines, folkloric images are linked to those of Christian burial ceremonies: a Ukrainian owl brings the murdered man's burial shroud ("Many people saw the Ukrainian owl / bringing the burial shroud to Sir Sava.")[20] and then all of the church bells in the village start ringing ("All the bells in the village rang for Sir Sava.")[21] This reference to Christian burial rites may also serve to indicate the hero's moral exoneration.[22]

16 Cf. Woldan 2017.

17 "Z muzyką" – z Oleska 1833: 502.

18 Rykhlyk explains this break in the action's logic by stating that these questions were added later – cf. Rykhlyk 1929: 73.

19 "Oj ne bulo, pane Sawa, cerkow rabowaty!" – z Oleska 1833: 503.

20 "Hej baczyly mnohi lude wkrainsku sowoczku, / szczo prynesla panu Sawi smertelnu soroczku." – z Oleska 1833: 504.

21 "Zadzwonyły panu Sawi razom we wsi dzwony." – z Oleska 1833: 504.

22 Rykhlyk refrains from interpreting these images: in his opinion, they are merely set pieces, as are often found at the end of Polish and Ukrainian folk songs – cf. Rykhlyk 1929: 74.

This addendum, which underlines the ballad's dramatic character, is of great importance for the judgment of Sava: Sava is not a defector, he is a wealthy robber who has plundered his own land and amassed a great fortune. The conspirators are thus not coming to take revenge, but to rob him: "The Cossacks came to rob Sava."[23] Although Sava has committed a sacrilege by destroying a church, the Christian bells—together with the heathen birds—provide him his funeral cortege and contribute to his absolution. There is no longer any mention of treason. From the short dialogue between the murderers and their victim it is not made clear why Sava must die; only a reader familiar with the Sava tradition would know the connotations of the conspiracy against him.

The popularity of this "Galician" variant of the Sava narrative, with its special inflections, is also supported by the fact that it is included, albeit in a Cyrillic version, in Holovats'kyi's collection from 1878, although the source mentioned is Zaleski's transcription.[24]

Of particular interest is a variation of this "Galician version" found in the aforementioned collection by Wójcicki (his collection contains even two Sava tales!). This one, however, is a Polish translation and takes the form of a ballad, with stanzas of four to eight lines and dialogue passages (in which the person who is speaking is called "Sawa" or "Sawicha") which emphasizes the dramatic character of the narration. Striking in contrast to the Ukrainian model is the hero's lamentation, which has been inserted by the translator: Sava, lying on the ground in a pool of his own blood, laments not only his fate, but he prays and commends his soul to God. He is, thus, clearly stylized as a penitent sinner: "But Sir Sawa weeps and lies on the ground: / and he prays and commends his soul to God the Lord."[25] With this version, which the collection's publisher no longer calls a Ruthenian *duma*, but now just a historic song,[26] we actually find the first treatment that goes beyond the mere adoption of a folkloric text. The anonymous translator from Ukrainian not only translated the original tale, but also revised it. This variation—which is no longer the folkloric text, strictly speaking—stands at the transition between the adoption of texts from folklore by editors and their literary paraphrasing by authors. In this Polish appropriation, Sava's redemption is more thorough than in the original Galician variant. The list of his thefts is shorter, any reference to the church desecration is absent, and no mention is made ei-

23 "Pryjichaly kozaczeńki Sawu rabowaty." – z Oleska 1833: 503.

24 Cf. Golovatskii 1878a: 18.

25 "A Pan Sawa płacze sobie leżący na progu: / i modli się, i poleca duszę Panu Bogu." – Wójcicki 1976: 28.

26 "duma ruska", "piesń historyczna" – Wójcicki 1976: 299–303, 26–29.

ther of Sava's treason or his having become a renegade. Instead, the penitent sinner prays in his final hour, with all the bells ringing at his funeral.

Shifts in Polish Romantic Fiction

The first adaptations of the Sava legend by representatives of Polish Romanticism also appear in the 1830s. In 1838, a "Duma o Sawie Czałym Kozaku" (Duma on Sawa Czały, the Cosack) was published by Adam Pieńkiewicz. As is apparent from its subtitle ("Based on a Little Russian sketch")[27] it is close to the original from the collection by Maksymovych. But this version not only paraphrases the original, it also places new emphases on different aspects of the story. From a formal point of view, the model's literarization has also now become clear.

The four-line stanzas follow the trochaic meter typical of Polish verse and have an alternate rhyming structure; the regular meter and stanzas suggest the genre of the ballad. As for the sequence of the plot, Pieńkiewicz initially follows Maksymovych's model. However, he expands the conversation between Sava and his murderers to emphasize Sava's guilt and thus to provide a motive for the subsequent revenge. Here, the betrayal Sava has committed for the sake of money is described explicitly: "Where is the gold / that the enemy pays you, / so you, villain, betray your Cossack brothers."[28] Instead of pursuing a common cause—not mentioned in detail here—with his Cossack brothers, Sava let himself be dazzled by the Poles' gold. This is why he cannot buy his life back now with his treasures, which is what he would like to do. An example must be set so that other Cossacks do not come up with similar ideas: "As an example for our compatriots, / you will pay for blood with blood."[29] The last stanza makes the matter of why Sava has to die clear from the narrator's perspective. It is the just reward for someone who has sold out his brother: "Sooner or later, that will be / the lot of anyone / who, instead of spilling blood for a man, / sells his brother."[30]

The author modifies the model to make it clear to his reader that the murder of Sava is a punishment; Sava is also negatively judged from a patriotic-moral

27 "Ze szkicu małoruskiego"– Pieńkiewicz 1838: 152.

28 "Gdzie jest złoto, / Co wróg tobie płaci, / Abyś zdradzał, ty niecnoto, / Twych kozaków braci?" – Pieńkiewicz 1838: 154.

29 "Dla przykładu zaś rodakom, / Krwią za krew zapłacisz!" – Pieńkiewicz 1838: 155.

30 "Prędzej, później, tego czeka / Taka to zapłata, / Kto, zamiast krew lać za człeka, / Zaprzedaje brata." – Pieńkiewicz 1838: 156.

viewpoint—he is someone who has betrayed and sold out his brothers.[31] This point of view, here presented by a Polish author attempting to put forward a rationale for the Ukrainian struggle for their cause, can be generalized in both directions, as the last stanza shows. This is the reward for any traitor, no matter whether Ukrainian or Pole. This clear rejection of treason, according to Rykhlyk, is related to Pieńkowski's general political belief in Polish-Ukrainian accord, in which the betrayal of either partner was unacceptable.[32] Concentrating on the protagonist, as a negative example of fraternal behavior, is sufficient reason not only to drop the conspiracy's background, but also the rescue of Sava's wife and son—they are unimportant aspects for the example being set by the Sava tale.

A few years before the appearance of this ballad, in which Sava is stamped a traitor, August Bielowski (1806–1876), a well-known representative of the Lviv Pan-Slavic group *Ziewonia* (the name of a Slavic deity), modified the Ukrainian model in another way. His ballad "Sawa" (1834) consists of twenty-two four-line stanzas, these again with an alternate rhyming structure in trochaic meter. While the plot also follows the known model quite closely, there is a significant deviation in the last section: Sava's wife does not flee with the small child, but invites her husband's murderers to a banquet: "With not a worry, the young woman / calls to the servant: / 'Come with me, we want to live comfortably, / happily and cheerfully.'"[33] And after they have plundered and burned down the farmstead, this woman finds herself in the company of the head of the robbers, together with Mykita, the man who killed her husband: "In the midst of the horde the lyre is played, / the drunken mob leaps about; / But at the head of the dance / is Mykita with Sawicha."[34] Now another form of betrayal has been introduced: the young woman, apparently was also part of the conspiracy against her husband and is also a traitor. Sava appears as a victim of this conspiracy,[35] murdered for his treasures, not as punishment for his treason. It is unclear where Bielowski found this variant of the Sava narrative, but it seems unlikely that he in-

31 For Kyrchiv, one reason for a positive reception of this paraphrase of the Sava narrative is that the act of treason is emphasized – cf. Kyrchiv 1965: 70.

32 Cf. Rykhlyk 1929: 79.

33 "Młoda żona niestrwożona / Woła ku czeladi: / 'Chodźcie ze mną, żyć przyjemno, / Weseli i radzi.'" – Bielowski 1962: 280.

34 "Między zgrają kobzy grają, Skacze czerń popita; / A na przedzie rej im wiedzie / Z Sawichą Mykita." – Bielowski 1962: 280.

35 For Kyrchiv, this positive portrayal of the protagonist is a reason for evaluating Bielowski's treatment negatively – cf. Kyrchiv 1965: 58.

vented it himself.[36] Commenting on this duma, he writes, "our people sing various songs about Sava, each quite different."[37] In West Ukrainian folklore, a woman who betrays her lover is found in the Dovbush tradition—it is conceivable that this was a source of contamination in this text.

This pattern of using other sources had at least one other adherent in the Polish tradition of transcribing Ukrainian folklore namely Wiktoryn Zieliński. In 1841 he published a poem entitled "Ataman Sawa. Duma Ukraińska" (Ataman Sawa, Ukrainian duma), which due to its length (54 stanzas of 6 lines each) combines several storylines. In the first part (verses 1–12), Sava, a proud *ataman* and dreaded ringleader in the fight against the Haidamaks, has evil forebodings about his wife while dining with friends in Niemirów. In the second section (verses 13–16), she receives her lover at the distant farmstead. In the third section (verses 17–25), while Sava is on his way home, his ride through the night is disturbed by evil omens. In the fourth section (verses 26–34), the Haidamaks attack the farmstead, kill Sava and abduct his wife. In the fifth section (verses 35–42), the leader of the Haidamaks, who is also the lover of Sava's wife, ties her to a tree in the middle of the forest as punishment for betraying her husband. In the sixth section (verses 43–48), Sava is mourned and buried by his people. And in the seventh and final section (verses 49–53), Sava's wife suffers a gruesome death—she is eaten by wolves, and birds of prey pick at the remains of her body. In the final stanza, the narrator lets the 'veil of forgetfulness' drop over his characters.

This narrative's focal point is clearly the betrayal of Sava's wife, who is a member of the Haidamak band and thus part of the conspiracy. However, the motives of the individual conspirators differ: the head of the Haidamaks is Sava's wife's lover, which is why she wants to get rid of her husband. But the Haidamaks, who storm the farmstead with her help, want to take revenge on Sava, since he has killed so many of them ("Do you remember, devilish spawn, / how many of ours you buried, / faithful servant of the Poles? / May the muck of your blood / flow over their graves / to rectify them.").[38] Sava's wife, in turn, becomes a betrayed betrayer, left behind in the middle of the forest tied to a tree;

36 Also Rykhlyk believes that Bielowski based this motif on various other folklore versions – cf. Rykhlyk 1929: 77.

37 "Lud nasz spiewa o Sawie kilka piesni, wcale od siebie róznych" – Bielowski 1962: 280.

38 "A pamiętasz, bisów plemię, / Ileś naszych posłał w ziemię, / Lachom wierny sługa? / Niechajże nad ich mogiłą / Płynie im pociecha miła / Twojej juchy struga!" – Zieliński 1841: 671.

she is called a serpent that the leader does not want by his side ("No snake shall be near my heart..."). [39] It is she who is responsible for Sava's untimely death, because she incited the Haidamaks to attack her husband; this is evident from the funeral lamentations of Sava's companions: "The scandalous deed of a wicked woman / drove the band of murderers on you." [40] Sava, through his death, goes to the afterlife almost a martyr: "You already have a wreath in heaven / … may your soul find peace!" [41] There are no such statements about the wife; while she has also been punished for a betrayal, any of her bones not eaten by wild animals have been scattered in the forest. Drastic descriptions of violence and torture, even in the portrayal of Sava's murder, give the ballad a melodramatic atmosphere. Betrayal and conspiracy, central motives in the Sava narrative, are here shifted to Sava's wife, who has become the protagonist. Treason is punished in any case. But the wife, the main culprit, is also responsible for her husband's death; her punishment as the betrayed betrayer is particularly cruel and even after dying, she is not forgiven.

Another paraphrasing of the Sava narrative, the 1841 "Kozak Sawa" (Sawa the Cossack) by Michał Jezierski, [42] has departed furthest from the original Ukrainian folktale. The plot revolves around a love triangle: Sava, returning from a campaign, learns that a Polish nobleman has kidnapped his beloved, Fedora, and imprisoned her in his palace. Sava decamps with his division, attacks the palace, frees Fedora, and flees with her on his stallion. A sorceress helps him escape his pursuers, who in turn have the sorceress hanged. In a sort of epilogue, the narrator visits the cross that Sava erected on the grave of the sorceress and discovers that she still haunts the site as an owl.

Apart from the protagonist's name, almost nothing remains of the Ukrainian original, but there are considerable echoes of a well-known work by the so-called "Ukrainian School" of Polish Romanticism, Seweryn Goszczyński's *Zamek Kaniowski* (*The Castle of Kaniów*, 1838). This text contains the same triangular constellation of a Polish-Ukrainian competition for a Ukrainian girl, but the narrative ends tragically in this case. In the case of Jezierski's ballad, the plot leads to an adventuresome chase in which the protagonist is able to escape through magical means, a literary model borrowed from motifs in folklore and folktales. The story's open end is balanced by the conclusion, which the narrator arrives at

39 "Ja przy sercu nie chcę węża..." – Zieliński 1841: 673.

40 "Złej niewiasty hydny srom, / Zwiódł na ciebie zbójczy grom, / Młodych zbawił lat." – Zieliński 1841: 674.

41 "Ty już w niebie wieniec masz, / … pokój duszy twei!" – Zieliński 1841: 674.

42 Jezierski 1841: 211–16.

when visiting where the story took place, something also reminiscent of *Zamek Kaniowski*.

Sava as a Hero of Ukrainian and Polish Drama

Appearing at the same time as various Polish paraphrases of the Sava story was the first play in Ukrainian literature about our protagonist, Mykola Kostomarov's *Sava Chalyi. Dramatichni stseny* (*Sava Chalyi. Dramatic scenes*, 1838).[43] It is one of Kostomarov's earlier works, dating back to before 1847 when the later historian was still publishing his poems and plays under the pseudonym "Ieremia Halka."

Kostomarov has his hero change sides because of disappointed ambitions: Sava's father Petro is elected hetman, not the popular and youthful hero, so Sava defects to the Poles (with regard to the historical Sava, the position of hetman plays no role). The Polish side, represented by St. Koniecpolski, offers Sava the hetmanship, but on one condition—he has to introduce the Union to Ukraine (this refers to the Church's Union of Brest). But this is not something that Sava will do. Although a traitor in the political sense, he would never be unfaithful to the beliefs of his fathers. Thus, in the depths of his soul, Sava is not a traitor, but remains true to at least one principle of Cossack-Ukrainian identity—the Orthodox Church.

The real traitor in this play is Hnat Holyi, Sava's former friend and comrade-in-arms. He convinces Sava to defect to the Poles, only to discredit him a little later among the Polish rulers as an unreliable partner; on the Ukrainian side, Holyi incites the Cossacks against Sava and they organize a conspiracy to murder him. As soon as Sava is dead, Holyi's intrigues come to light, whereupon he receives his just punishment as well. There are also unfulfilled passions behind Holyi's maneuverings—he has lost out in the competition for a woman, Katerына, who prefers Sava, and thus avenges himself by hatching the plot against Sava.

Sava, however, is a tragic figure[44]—it is no coincidence that Kostomarov's play has five acts, which is reminiscent of the structure of a tragedy. Having committed a grave error, he must pay with his life. There is no way to rectify this error, not even by refusing to support the Union. The conspirators also kill his

43 Halka 1930: 141–84.

44 Shamrai has compared the titular hero of Kostomarov's play to tragic figures in Shakespeare, such as Caesar and Coriolanus – cf. Shamrai 1930: 9.

wife and young son, which proves their brutality and makes the scale of the tragedy greater still.

There is one more Polish voice in this polyphony of interpretations. One of the central texts in Polish literature about the Haidamak uprisings is Juliusz Słowacki's play *Sen srebrny Solomei* (*The Silver Dream of Salomea*, 1843), which as far as the chronology is concerned, is the last significant text on the subject. In its list of characters, there is also one Sawa Caliński, whose name at least indicates that he is Sava Chalyi's son. But here Caliński is not fighting on the side of the Confederation of Bar against the Russians, as is historically documented, but instead takes part in the Haidamak uprisings against Poland, thus moving him closer to his father. Słowacki's Sawa, a Ukrainian in Polish service, is also reminiscent of his father because he then pursues the Haidamaks, his compatriots, with extreme severity, thus helping the Poles defeat the rebellion. In so doing, Caliński is transformed into a committed supporter of the Poles: "This is what I swore!!! That Polish heroism / dispels the Cossack blood [in me – A.W.]! / That the Ukrainian girls will weep / and throw curses and spells against my sword, my horse: / For I will be like the sword of revenge, / the scythe that reaps the meadow…"[45] He also has to become Polish, because only as a Polish nobleman can he win the hand of his beloved lady. George G. Grabowicz has shown that this play is also constructed at the level of its characters, with its mythological structure of opposing pairs.[46] For example, in the play's constellation of figures, there is one Ukrainian who can be regarded as Sawa's counterpart, namely, the defector and conspirator Semenko. He is first a servant of a Polish gentleman, but then changes sides to lead the Haidamaks on their vendetta, as a bloodthirsty avenger with the new name Tymenko. Both of the Ukrainian tactics combined in the single person of Sava Chalyi—defecting to the opposite side and fighting on the Polish side against the Ukrainian Haidamaks—are found in Słowacki's play, but have been split between the two protagonists.

Semenko/Tymenko, traitor to the Poles and defector to the Haidamaks, receives a just punishment: he is cruelly executed, his strategy has failed. Sava Caliński, who fought with all his might for the Polish cause, is rewarded—documents are found that prove his aristocratic blood and so he can marry the woman he desires. Here again the clear rejection of treason and conspiracy, as it seems at first glance, is relativized by the traitor's end, as has been pointed out

45 "Przysiągłem!!! Że kawalerstwo / Polskie wygna krew kosaczą! Że Ukrainki zapłaczą / Na mój miecz, na mego konia / Rzucają klątwy i czary: / Bo ja bedę jak miecz kary, / Kosa ścinająca błonia." – Słowacki 1983: 150–51.

46 Grabowicz 1987: 23–60.

by Edward Kasperski.[47] When Tymenko is burned alive, two streams of blood flow from his body, forming the sign of the cross: "A specter haunted me: / And only here, in front of the farmstead, / did it fall into the golden sand, spilling two coral red / streams … which, as it seems, inscribe the most holy shape of Jesus' cross…"[48] At least a partial rehabilitation of the traitor can be seen here and this is the redemption that is most commonly found in Polish variants of the Sava narrative.

Conclusion

What was the appeal of Sava Chalyi for Polish literature? The story of few other figures in Ukrainian history were adopted or paraphrased as often as his, be it in folklore or in fiction. Of course, the Polish Romantics had a general interest in Ukraine—one need think only of the so-called Ukrainian School or the Pan-Slavic oriented Lviv authors in the *Ziewonia* circle—but there seems to be other reasons too, political ones. Sava Chalyi embodies a model of Polish-Ukrainian coexistence that was reconsidered following the lost November Uprising (all of the texts analyzed here were written after 1831), not only by the émigrés in Paris, but also within both countries, Galicia and Congress Poland. In these accounts, treason plays a special role, a role in politics that had been discussed since Mickiewicz's *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828). Sava is not a traitor in the sense of Wallenrod, who furtively goes over to the stronger enemy only to go on to defeat it through treachery. Sava openly changes fronts, defects to the side of the stronger, whether due to the promise of material benefits or because he sees this position to be the right one. This corresponds to the traditional view of the superiority of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic: as a non-Pole in this state, one also had to adopt the Polish ideology. There was only subordination to this hegemony, other political positions did not have equal status.

This idea lost its validity during the Romantic period. Moreover, the catastrophe of the partitions was reconsidered, and reasons were sought for the Polish state's downfall. These could be found in the eighteenth century, not only in the decline of aristocratic democracy, but also in the Polish dealings with their Ukrainian neighbors: Polish obtuseness and Polish rigidity had led to pivotal

47 Kasperski 2012: 390.

48 "Goniło za mną widziadło: / I aż tutaj, pode dworem, na piasek złoty upadło, / Wylawszy dwa koralowe / Strumienie… co zda się piszą / Prześwięte Y Jezusowe…" – Słowacki 1983: 233–34.

conflicts with the Ukrainians, although they would have been ideal allies against the superior forces of the Muscovites.

Against this background, Chalyi's treason was the wrong path to take, even if he is considered positively as a person. This is because he sacrificed the interests of his own people to Polish rationality. Treason is no longer a path to political success; treason is denounced, even if some of the texts incriminate the wife more than the hero. Here, treason leads to conspiracy, which in turn leads to the murder of the protagonist and, ultimately, to a dead end: the two sides are still bitterly facing each other after Chalyi is dead, just as they were at the starting point of the narrative. There would be new Haidamak uprisings, and indeed this happened, as we know from history.

Kostomarov's tragedy also somehow confirms, from the Ukrainian side, this assessment of the person of Sava and the program he represents—he will fail, even if he recognizes his mistake and is not ready to hand himself over to the Poles at every point. The tragedy of someone who switches sides is testimony to the futility of such a political program. This is clear in Słowacki's play as well—the Ukrainian traitor Semenko fails in his Wallenrod strategy against the superior Polish opponent, although he is rehabilitated in death. His opponent, Sava, the Pole of Ukrainian descent who has completely gone to the stronger side, will clearly not succeed with his program, as is expressed by the author in the Wernyhora prophecies at the end of the play.

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Abstract

Sava Chalyi was a historic person from the Haidamaks' uprisings in the late eighteenth century, who defected from the Ukrainian to the Polish side. In the early nineteenth century his story gradually moved from Ukrainian folklore to Polish folklore and fiction. While the initial Polish versions of this tale (word-for-word transliterations into Latin characters) still concentrate on betrayal and revenge, later versions turn out to be paraphrases rather than translations of the original and focus on new topics like Sava's wife, who then became the real traitor. Sava Chalyi is not only a hero of folklore and literary ballads, but has been made the hero of two plays, Slowacki's *Sen srebrny Salomei* (*The Silver Dream of Salomea*) in Polish and Kostomarovs *Sava Chalyi* in Ukrainian literature, both of which continue the theme of betrayal and revenge in new ways.