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Ferocious Enemies and Noble Heroes: Images of “Us” and “Them” in Polish American Textbooks (until the 1930s)*

SUMMARY

Ethnic schools had an important role to play in propagating profiles of “ideal” heroes and members of society among immigrant communities. Consequently, it was often the role of school course-books to inform pupils of the messages adults wanted to transmit to the younger generation. In this paper the author attempts to describe contents of various textbooks used in Polish-American parochial schools. Invention of national mythology and simplification of facts was necessary to facilitate the memorizing process as required. But to form group solidarity one also had to identify common enemies. Various textbooks published in the U.S.A. before World War I did not help immigrants’ children to acculturate to their American realities. Being very didactic, they focused mainly on Polish realities and Polish history. Only after World War I did an American presence become more visible in books used in the first grade. In thirties Felicians predominantly used textbooks written in the U.S.A., mainly by S. M. Cyryla (Magdalena Tobaka). The heroes they presented were characterized schematically, and the ideals found therein were alien to Polish-American children. *Polska* by S. Mary Cyryla, was the book on which this analysis was based. The image of Poles and “other” nations is surprisingly defined in black and white. Foreign nations are depicted as cruel, monstrous, villain, pagan, barbaric, etc. “Us”, the Poles, are seen as brave, just, good, wise, honest, faithful, etc., they “have loved faith, country, and language” etc. Cyryla’s textbook tried to engender feelings of community by dividing the world into “us” and “them”, thereby provoking antagonism towards “them.” Polish personality traits were very much in keeping with the images and self-stereotypes which Polish society had about itself. In constructing a positive and ideal self-image, it was useful for “others” and “strangers” to be depicted as “enemies”. “They” were described negatively by their religion and, more often, by their “spirit,” “intellect” and “behavior”.

KEY WORDS: ethnicity, second generation of migrants, education, ethnic and national stereotypes, Poles, U.S.A.

Words are actions
(Wittgenstein, 1980: 94)

History and historical memory have always played a very important role in the processes of formation of group identities (Bodnar, 1992; Kammen, 1997). The past has often been used or reinvented to construct a common group imagination. Eric Hobsbawm (1983: 1–14, quote 9) discusses three overlapping types of invented traditions: “a) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or membership of groups, communities (be

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they real or artificial), b) those establishing or legitimizing the status of an institution or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the in-culcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviors.”

Ethnic schools had an important role to play in propagating profiles of “ideal types” of heroes and members of ethnic communities among immigrants. Consequently, school coursebooks often made pupils aware of the messages adults wanted to transmit to the younger generation (and may therefore fall under headings a) and c) as described by Hobsbawm above) (Conzen, Gerber, Morawska et al., 1992: 24–26; Kula, 2002; Morawska, 1994; Ossowska, 1973: 11–12). In this paper I will attempt to describe the contents of various textbooks used in Polish-American parochial schools. According to Florian Znaniecki (1990: 124–129, 144–148) hero-worship remains an essential element of identity construction and national identity. Invention of national mythology and simplification of facts to facilitate the memorization processes is required.

Furthermore, in order to form group solidarity one also had to identify common enemies. *Nowy elementarz i pierwsza czytanka dla polskich szkół parafialnych Stanów Zjednoczonych Północnej Ameryki* introduced children to the alphabet. Alphabetical sentence formation came next. A six or seven year old child would read under the letter ‘P’: “Prussians are enemies of Poles” (*Nowy elementarz i pierwsza czytanka*, 1921: 50).

1. Background: Dilemmas of Polish-Ethnic Education in the U.S.A.

The state legislation required compulsory education, and one of the aims of American educational institutions was to draw immigrant children away from ethnic ghettos, slums and streets. The system was designed to Americanize newcomers and teach the children merits of regularity, punctuality, patience, silence and self-control (Kaestle, 1983: 98; Walaszek, 1997: 5–33; Berrol, 1995: 31–38; Akers, 1901; *Seventeenth Annual Report*, 1906: 42; Berrol, 1985: 352–353; Perlman, 1988; Walaszek, 1993: 43–59; Bodnar, Simon, Weber, 1982: 96; Morawska, 1996: XIV; Smith, 1985: 72, 27; Mormino, 1986: 33, 109; Tyack, 1974: 104, 229, 233; Smith, 1969: 523–543; Cremin, 1988; in the 20th Century similar paternalistic control methods were aimed at adult workers, cf. Gutman, 1977: 5–6). Accordingly, Poles had to follow the system of compulsory education as well, although to begin with they did not appreciate the value of education as a means of achieving social mobility. “Among our Polish workers there are many who believe that school is a necessary evil. They push their children in to work, preferring low but immediate income,” lamented a commentator in 1902 (Zenon, 1902: 4; Letter to M. S. Szymczak, 1931). Migrants had the option of sending their children to either public or private schools (Walch, 1996: 23–36, 53–66; Dolan, 1985: 263, 268–273; Berrol, 1995: 33; Galush, 2000: 397 – many remarks and comments reported within are based on Prof. Galush’s findings). The former type of educational establishment transmitted American (“Yankee,” as it was known by the ethnic) patriotic messages. Their curriculum was based on a protestant interpretation of morality which ignored problems of ethnicity and for many Polish migrants it was a challenge (Galush, 2000: 397; “Męczeństwo dziecka...”, 1900: 745–746; Blejwas, 2002). Children of “new immigrants” often encountered open disdain in public schools. The weekly *Głos*

Polek wrote that in these public institutions: “A poor Polish child starts to believe [...] that his own nationality is secondary and meaningless, and in the end he is ashamed of it” (about other groups cf. Mangione, 1972: 209; Berrol, 1995: 43–45; Cowan and Cowan, 1989: 86–88; Praszalowicz, 1986: 126; C. Suárez-Orozco and M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001: 69–74; “Matka Polka”, 1913: 1–2). Thus, parochial schools were formed to meet legal requirements and to preserve the culture of the younger generation, and parochial instruction dominated in Polonia communities (incidentally, since the Third Plenary Synod in Baltimore in 1882 the Catholic hierarchy obliged local parishes to establish and organize schools) (Praszalowicz, 1988: 221, 260). The first Polish school opened in Panna Maria in Texas in 1858; in 1887 they had risen in number to over fifty and by 1921, there were 511 schools catering for 220,000 students (2/3 of all school children), and in 1930, 560 schools had opened with 272,286 students (Galush, 2002: 410–412; Miąso, 1970: 230–232, 266; Praszalowicz, 1988: 218–221; Kuznicki, 1978: 435–436; Praszalowicz, 1986: 127–131, 152–156; Groniowski, 1981a: 158; Zimmerman, 2002: 1383). Nuns, in particular Felician sisters (who had been brought to Wisconsin in 1874 by Rev. Józef Dąbrowski) soon undertook teaching duties. Felicians became the dominant religious order in Polish-American communities, teaching in most Polish ethnic parochial schools – in the year 1909 they ran 40% of all Polish schools, a figure which had increased to 42% by 1919. They served as teachers, developed curricula, wrote textbooks (Miąso, 1970: 112–114; Kuzniewski, 1978: 411; Galush, 2000: 398–400, 407; the development and changes of parochial schools is presented by D. Praszalowicz, 1986: 127, 146, 156–171; Praszalowicz, 1988: 226; Kuznicki, 1978: 439; Radziłowski, 1996: 73–74).

Polish commentators have noticed various deficiencies in the parochial school system (Dunikowski, 1893: 46; Groniowski, 1981b: 49; Galush, 2000: 408). In an effort to attract Polish children, the secular camp (for discussion on ideological struggles within American Polonia cf. Brożek, 1977; Kantowicz, 1975; Parot, 1981; and more recently Cygan, 1998: 209–220) tried to introduce the Polish language to public schools, thereby weakening the influence of religious education. Such political and ideological conflict had existed since the year 1896, when Michał Kruszką worked to include Polish language to the public school curricula in Milwaukee (Groniowski, 1981a: 159–160; Zenon, 1902: 4). Rev. Piotr Wawrzyniak, the Polish nationalist politician who visited the U.S., deeply and bluntly criticized Kruszką’s policy: “To instruct Polish children in schools other than parochial ones is to betray both Polish and Catholic interests” (“Ks. szambelan Wawrzyniak w Chicago”, 1896a: 4). He predicted the outcome of such a policy in foreboding terms: “not only would Polish parochial schools loose [...] not only would children [...] not learn to praise and love God, but they would lose all sense of national identity.” Thus, sending Polish children to public schools constituted a severe sin on the part of the parents (“Ks. Szambelan Wawrzyniak”, 1896a: 5; Groniowski, 1981a: 160–161; “Kwestia szkolna w Milwaukee”, 1896: 3; “Dzieci polskie a szkoły”, 1902: 4; Piotrowska, 1904; Groniowski, 1981b: 50–51; “O język polski w szkołach, 1906: 1; Galush, 2000: 410–412; conflicts occurred later as well – cf. Piotrowska, 1908; Kuzniewski, 1975: 9–10; Osada, quoted after Groniowski, 1981b: 49; “Poglądy Najprzew. o Generała” 1896: 3). Although parochial schools had strong defenders, it could hardly be claimed

that they prevented language assimilation (Laudyn, 1914: 26–32; Shpak Lissak, 1989: 135; Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research: 6; *Pamiętniki emigrantów*, 1977/1: 203; *Przyjaciel Dzieci*, 1917: 1). Nonetheless, Polonia generally avoided sending children to public schools, as they lacked Polish language instruction (Laudyn, 1914: 20, 24, 26–32, 32–33, 41; Groniowski, 1981b: 49–50). The Polish Women’s Alliance in America (PWA), which propagated modern child-raising practices in the spirit of tolerance and according to modern pedagogy and psychology (Galush, 1990: 5–8, 10, 16; Radzialowski, 1981: 174; Brożek, 1977: 67; Olszewski, 1967: 21; “Obowiązki członkini Związku”, 1913; “Matka reformatorka społeczna”, 1916; “Czego nam nie dostaje?”, 1913; “Rola kobiety w społeczeństwie,” 1913; “Dobre rady dla matek,” 1913), at the same time supported parochial schools (“Uwagi”, 1916; Groniowski, 1981b: 49–50; “Matki Polki strzeżcie”, 1914), and their nationalistic education (“Matka Polka”, 1913; Karłowiczowa, 1938: 192–193; “Uczmy dziecię kochać ojczyznę”, 1913). In 1915, in “Children’s Corner”, PWA weekly wrote: “Be proud of being Polish because Poland has given great men to the whole world, both in times gone and today. An interesting description of how small boys today go to war: they escape from their parents’ homes to fight against enemies of their homeland – Poland” (“Dział dla dzieci”, 1915). PWA propagated a program of nationalistic education since 1913 (*Pamiętnik 30-letniej rocznicy*, 1928: 315) and declared: “Let’s save Polish youth” (*Głos Polek*, 1922b, 1922a, 1926; also Fejös, 1991: 518; Cohen, 1990: 54; Kostianen, 1990: 109). Ethnic communities also tried to improve educational standards, programs and quality of teaching staff (Kuznicki, 1978: 443, 446–451; Groniowski, 1981b: 49).

2. Textbooks

Returning to the image of the world and the group’s self-image as propagated in textbooks (Kelly and Kelly, 1992: 688), it is evident that through their depiction of “strangers” adults provided children with interpretative maps. But what did these maps say about Poland, Poles, and America?

2.1 Poland and America in School Textbooks from 1880–1920

Textbooks used in Polish elementary schools were a combination of those used in Poland and in America (Galush, 2000: 402–403; Praszalowicz, 1986: 163; Brożek, 1977: 149), with new books gradually appearing over the year.

The most broadly used textbook was *Druga książka do czytania* [*Second Reader*], which was reprinted in numerous editions. It featured moralistic stories and poems accompanied with information about nature, animals and silhouettes of the first Polish rulers (Mieszko the I, Bolesław Chrobry, Bolesław Krzywousty etc.), with only a few pages devoted to the U.S. and its territory – including presentation of George Washington and the war of independence (*Druga książka do czytania*, s.a.). Another popular textbook based on a similar format was the *Third reader* (*Trzecia książka*, 1910, 1st ed. 1889; Chojnacki, 1991: 232). More sophisticated linguistically, the book described nature, Polish grammar, the history of Jagiellonian Kingdom and the Polish-Lithuanian Republic. Only 7.8% of its content dealt with America (its discovery, geography, Indians, and... “Propa-

ganda of faith in America”). *Czwarta książka* [*Fourth Reader*] (also often reprinted) (*Czwarta książka do czytania*, 1889) followed the established structure, containing more detailed texts, including essays about 18th and 19th century Poland, a detailed Polish grammar and geographical descriptions. A mere 10% was devoted to the U.S.A. (nature, history, heroes). To illustrate the extent of this disbalance, the book narrated the story of American War of Independence in six pages, whereas the Bar confederation (a colorful, but by no means crucial 18th century episode in Polish history), was described over seven pages. Particularly interesting, however, was “The true story of an American” – the rags to riches biography of Horace Greeley, which informed children that “Horace Greeley represents the most beautiful example of what a person can achieve through a love of science and hard work, with God’s help” (*Czwarta książka do czytania*, 1889: 248).

Władysław Dyniewicz and his publishing house printed textbooks as well (Kłosowski, 1984: 193–194), which “reflected a growing recognition of a specifically American environment after 1900”, noted historian William Galush. The Primer *Elementarz obrazkowy czyli pierwsze zasady pisania* (1907, as quoted in Galush, 2000: 405) combined ethnic and American themes. The letter “K” stood for Columbus (Polish spelling *Kolumb*) and Polish-American hero Kościuszko; letter “L” for Abraham Lincoln; under “M” *Murzyn* (African-American) was shown. The last part of the book included moral tales about the necessity of obedience, dignity and overcoming difficulties, all of which clearly corresponded with the American cult of individualism. Other stories talked about the 4th of July, Thanksgiving and New Year. Similar, if not identical, texts could be found in another reader – *Elementarz dla szkół ludowych w Ameryce* [s.a.]. To quote Joshua A. Fishman, it might be said that both books presented a program of “biculturalism”, representing an attempt at creative and positive participation in the values and behaviors of both the country of origin and the country of settlement (Fishman, 1967: 179).

In *The third reader* published by Dyniewicz in 1911, Polish subject matter again dominated over its American counterpart (*Trzecia czytanka dla szkół polskich*). 46% of a 352-page book described Polish history, geography, patriotism etc., with 14.7% concentrating on American people, geography, history (including a list of American presidents), information about Poles in America and finally “a few words about football”. The nationalistic and conservative John Smulski Publishing House competed with Dyniewicz. The *First reader* printed by this house (*Czytanka pierwsza dla szkół polskich*) from 1899 consisted of seven parts and 101 small chapters devoted to prayer, virtues and noble behavior and animals (goose, goats, hawks, horses etc.). The drama of moralistic stories was all set in the countryside and no chapter evoked anything of the American surroundings or reality (*Czytanka pierwsza dla szkół polskich*, 1899; Galush, 2000: 404).

Felician Sisters often used *Children’s Friend* textbook (*Przyjaciel dzieci czyli trzecia książka do czytania dla młodzieży*, 1892: 196–8, 204, quoted in Galush, 2000: 404). Galush presents it as a small version of encyclopedia. Later editions of the book introduced some changes and in doing so reflected their American surroundings much more accurately. 20 pages dealt with U.S. history (discovery, English colonies presented as the ideal asylum for religious refugees; the American revolution was presented as a result of British oppression; Kościuszko, Pułaski, Niemcewicz were described as heroes of the American revolution with Washington portrayed as the country’s liberator). The texts in-

roduced broadly recognized American virtues (dynamism, lack of fear, individualism) – “Attitudes valued by the larger society were transmitted in the ancestral tongue to socialize the youngsters into the novel environment. The sense of being in the United States was evident even in titles” (Galush, 2000: 406; *Przyjaciel dzieci*, 1892: 200). Felicians’ *New reader* (*Nowy elementarz i pierwsza czytanka*, 1921) from 1921 evoked America as well. The letter “T” accompanied pictures of a needle (*igła*), a turkey (*indyk*), an Indian and *izbę* (which literally means a room in a peasant cottage; the picture, however, showed an elegant middle class sitting room with a fire place, rocking chair and pictures on the walls); the vowel “O” was illustrated by a picture of a ship (*okręt*). The second part of the textbook (on p. 27) contained a dialogue about “a banner,” in which children were reminded to “love” both Polish and American banners. The following edition of *Nowy elementarz* continued in this vein, including stronger elements from the American reality (*Nowy elementarz i pierwsza czytanka*, 1921: 8, 49, 50).

After World War I, the American presence was more visible in textbooks. *The First Polish Lessons*, by Felician nun Sister Vladimira from 1937, contains the lines: “Oh, wonderful Homeland! America is my Homeland” (Vladimira, 1937: 43, 17). In another book dating from 1935 (Cyryla, 1935a) all the stories were set in America and sentiments towards the Old Country were absent.

Thus, it seems that between 1870 and 1930, readers for the first four grades made significant efforts to highlight the fact that students were born and lived in America.

2.2 Textbooks from Thirties: “Us” and “Them”

What was the image of Poland, Poles and other nations offered to Polish children in America in the thirties?

It has already been stressed that references to “the others” are essential for formation of a group identity (Conzen, Gerber, Morawska and al., 1992: 21; Nowicka, 1990: 5, 7, 16, 28). Categories “we” and “they,” “us” and “strangers” belong to the most important descriptions of social reality. Only images and references used with regard to Poles, their neighbors and members of other nationalities will be referred to (including references and characteristics of historical figures, heroes, rulers etc.).

Felicians predominantly used textbooks written in the USA, mainly by S. M. Cyryla (Magdalena Tobaka) from Chicago, who had studied both history and history of art in Poland and written broadly about education (Hilburger, 1946), Polish grammar (Cyryla, 1935a, 1936b, 1939c, 1940a, 1940b; other cited in: Hilburger, 1946: 73), prayer books (Cyryla, 1936a, 1938a), the history of Catholic Church (Cyryla, 1933b), dramas (Cyryla, 1930b, 1938b; other cited in Hilburger, 1946: 94), translations etc. (Cyryla, 1930a, 1933a, 1935c, 1935d, 1937, 1939b, 1941).

Czytanka dla V klasy by S. M. Cyryla, introduced Polish patriotism in Polish surroundings with a lack of American context. Characteristics of heroes were schematic, and the ideals therein presented were alien to Polish-American children (Galush, 2000: 413–414; Cyryla, 1939a: 27). S. M. Cyryla herself said: “God created us as Poles and we should and must remain as such,” even if “politically we are Americans”. She further stated that Polish schools “should remain shrines of Polish spirit” (Cyryla, 1930a: 2–3, 6).

Polska. Podręcznik do nauki dziejów ojczystych dla młodzieży szkolnej, by S. Mary Cyryla, a book for fifth grade children is the text on which this analysis is based (Cyryla, 1934, 1935b; Hilburger, 1946: 72–97; Galush, 2000: 413–414). The image of Poles and “other” nations which the book creates is surprisingly clear.

2.3 Images of Neighbors and “Strangers”

Nations and nationals mentioned in the book are: Germans/Teutonic Order, Austrians, Tartars, Turks, Muscovites/Russians, Swedes, Ruthenians/Ukrainians, Pruthenians, Pechenegs, Lithuanians, Jews, Valachians, Czechs and Slavs. The numbers in parenthesis below refer to the volume and then page number of the book.

Throughout the text, Germans were largely seen as “enemies” (1, 6), or even “eternal enemies” (1, 108) of the Poles. In 19th century, they were described as “cruel” (2, 56), aggressors who oppressed the Poles: “Germans often attacked Polish lands to rob and destroy” (1, 6); when invading, Germans would take “whatever they could” (1, 14) and characteristically were seen as “deceitful”, “eager”, “false”, “vicious” (2, 15) and “unthankful” (1, 93). The German queen Ryxa was an “abominable criminal”, a “bad and wicked woman” (1, 10). Knights of the Teutonic Order – “canailles” (1, 33), “keen” (1, 52), “captious” (1, 52), “nefarious” (1, 60), “greedy plunderers” (1, 40), “started to attack and rob Polish lands” (1, 28), “did not hesitate in attacking Polish lands” (1, 40) etc.; they were also “false Christians,” who “did not care about God’s glory but about the treasures of Polish lands, wealth and carnal pleasures” (1, 27); the baptism of Lithuania “made them very sad” (1, 46).

Muscovites/Russians were “dogged” “enemies of Poland [and] cruel” (1, 108, eight other references), “barbarians” (2, 15), “vindictive” (2, 48), who “persecuted the holy faith” (2, 30). Grand dukes of Moscow and tsars were “despots” (1, 79), “tyrants” (2, 21) and “barbarians” (2, 15). The Emperor Alexander I was referred to as a “Neron” (2, 15). Ivan the IV – of course – was “Terrible” (1, 66), who “ordered that people be beheaded for pure fun. Sometimes while talking with his subjects, he nailed their feet to a floor with a stiletto” (1, 65–66). Tsarina Catherine the Second was “a monster in human’s body” (1, 99), “shameless criminal” (1, 99), “eager” (1, 100), “nefarious” (1, 101) and “craven” (1, 101).

The prophet Muhammad, in turn, was “an enemy of civilization and culture” (2, 41), and Turks were largely characterized as “enemies” of Poles. Their image did not differ greatly from that of Muscovites. Turks were “pagans,” “ugly pagans” (1, 93), who “hated Christians” (1, 50, 78); they were “cruel” (1, 51), “deceitful” (1, 55) and “attacked Poland to conquer the country” (1, 27). Tartars were mentioned less frequently, but were labeled as “savage” (1, 80), “barbaric” (1, 57), “ugly”, “deceitful” (1, 29), “cruel” (1, 30, five times), “pagans” (1, 29), and were once described as “a horde of dashing Satans” (1, 30)! Again, they were “fierce enemies” of Poland (1, 80) who were “attacking,” “robbing” and “plundering Polish lands” (1, 57), etc. The monotony of derogative opinion with which Turks and Tartars were depicted subdued only once (1, 50), when Cyryla characterized them as... “warriors”, an adjective with some positive connotations.

The Swedes were also “fierce enemies of the Homeland” (1, 81), who were, in addition, “unfaithful”, “sacrilegious people”, “cruel” and “greedy” (1, 81–4). Jews were depicted as “ungrateful” (1, 39), “dishonest” (2, 89), “faith persecutors” (1, 39), “money-grabbers” (2, 89); a “misfortune” (1, 39), and a “plague” (2, 88) for Polish lands. When compared with older textbooks, however, anti-Semitic remarks were rather modest (Władysław Dyniewicz’s geography textbook of 1894 introduced Polish territory to children but it also contained information about other nationalities living on former Polish-Lithuanian territories. One excerpt reads: “It is hard to deny that Jews are an economic plague on Galicia, because they exploit unsophisticated Polish peasants and burgers alike [...] In Galicia, the Jew is a form of gangrene in the social body, destroying its health and morality” (cf. Dyniewicz, 1894: 129, 136, 180–181).

Other groups and nations mentioned were a Pruthenian tribe – a “pagan ragtag” (1, 27); Pechenegs – “attacked Poland” (1, 31) and were “captious” and “cruel” (1, 56); Valachians, Lithuanians – a “half savage people” (1, 34), “pagan” (1, 34), yet nonetheless (somewhat surprisingly) – “very brave” (1, 34); they “attacked Polish lands”, (1, 31), “destroyed, murdered”, “robbed” (1, 34, 36). Another group of Polish enemies, Ruthenians, were “cruel” and “treacherous” (1, 31).

Czechs were “Germanized” (2, 32), “alien” (1, 33); Hungarians and Ukrainians – “traitorous”, “cruel” (1, 102, 1, 51, 2, 63, 1, 81). Queen Bona from the duchy of Bari was a “nefarious”, “bad”, “meretricious” woman (1, 62, 65). King Henry Valois, a Frenchman, was “unreliable”, “effeminate” and “accustomed to an easy life” (1, 71). In fact, foreigners were generally referred to as “shrewd” (1, 74), “coaxing” (1, 71, 74), “villainous” (2, 63), “nasty”, “and monstrous” (1, 103). Even Europe as a whole was regarded as “cruel” (2, 14), and “barbaric” (2, 14).

2.4 “Us” – Poles

The book described Poland as a “beloved” (2, 32), “beautiful” (1, 29) “charming” (2, 76), “lovely” (1, 9), “marvelous” (1, 5), “nice” (1, 95), “fertile” (2, 60; 1, 35), “wealthy” (1, 35) country. It was, indeed, “the wealthiest European country” (1, 39), being also “magnificent” (1, 55), “happy” (1, 68), “powerful” (1, 48) and, lastly, “a bulwark of Christiandom” (1, 78).

Polish heroes were most often referred to as “brave” (twenty times), “just” (eleven times), “good” (eight times) and “wise” (seven times). Poles were “honest” (1, 98, 102), “good” (1, 103), “faithful” (2,30) and “heroic” (2, 57) to the extent of being “the bravest” (three references) (2, 7)). Polish rulers and kings were “gentle” (1, 23), “noble” (1, 26), “good-hearted” (1, 11), “educated” (1, 56), “soft” (1, 67), “talented” (1, 64), “thrifty” (1, 37), “experienced” (1, 113), “generous” (1, 49), “wealthy” (1, 11), “happy” (1,16) and “beautiful” (1, 13). They “loved their folk” (1, 38) and “birdsong” (1, 49) and were “protectors of orphans” (1, 42). Peaceful Poles and Slavs “never attacked foreign countries” (1, 6). Since the Middle Ages Poles “have loved faith, country, and language” (2, 15), “they have loved their Homeland more than their children” (1, 22), “have defended their Homeland” (1, 96), “suffered for their country” (1, 101) (three mentions), “the Polish nation is a country of martyrs” (2, 51), for which its citizens give their lives (10 references). Chapters devoted to 18th and 19th century presented

Poles as a “persecuted” (three references) people. “The best sons of the Country were dying in the dungeons of dark prison cells” (2, 5). Following the Polish November Uprising of 1831, it was claimed: “All the participants were afterwards hanged or sent to Siberia, where they perished from poverty and hunger” (2, 29). “The best ones died for the Homeland’s freedom, and did so without a whisper” (2, 43). Also quoted were words ascribed to Ludwik Narbutt: “To die for the Homeland is such happiness!” (2, 42). But Poles suffered not only for their country, but also their country’s faith: “The pain caused by the country’s misfortunes was overwhelming” (2, 5); “they were getting tuberculosis” (2, 31), “driven out of their minds” (2, 31): “in the Parliament, Rejtan threw himself on the floor in despair, tore off his robes and cried fearfully: ‘For Christ’s Blood and His Wounds – I beg you not to be Judases! Kill me! Kill but do not kill the beloved Homeland!’ ... Rejtan could not survive his Homeland’s misfortune and disgrace. He lost his mind from despair and died soon after” (1, 102). “Good Poles felt sorrow, cried and lamented over Polish unhappiness [partitions]” (1, 103).

* * *

Sister Cyryla’s textbook tried to raise national sentiment among members of Polish communities (Bystron, 1935). Polish personality traits were very much in keeping with the images and self-stereotypes, which Polish society had about itself. Her narrative belonged to the genre of “mythological discourse”, having no basis in, and formed quite independently of reality (Stomma, 1986: 13–14).

Polska portrayed and judged Poles according to a well established model existing in 19th and 20th Century Polish lands; it reinforced most prevalent self-stereotype of a Pole as a “crazy” patriot, insurgent, heroic martyr, ready to support defendants of just cause, a noble knight whose greatest reward was to die heroically in defence of the Homeland (Janion, 1991; Borejsza, 1991; Tazbir, 1991). All this was in sharp contrast with the values and norms appreciated by American society. Cyryla’s book aimed to raise ethnic pride among children, preparing them to strike back against any prejudices Polonia encountered whilst convincing them of the merits and glories of their nation.

It is hard to disagree with anthropologist Ludwik Stomma’s assessment that “a group’s representations about ‘others’ are representations reflecting negative images of that group’s self-perception” (Stomma, 1986: 25). To construct a positive and ideal self-image while depicting “strangers,” or the “others” as “enemies” was useful. Both images were stereotypical. “They” were described negatively by their religion and, more often, by their “spirit,” “intellect” and “behavior”, whereas Poles were displayed in an unquestionably bright light.

Such was the cultural baggage and interpretative tools provided to children by adults. As for the latter’s reaction, it seems that the second generation so instructed remained rather impervious to such methods (on Hungarian-Americans cf. Fejös, 1991). Immigrant’s children generally preferred to follow the “American way”, aware of the fact that what they had learnt at home was not enough to familiarize themselves with American norms and culture. Most simply experienced aversion to their origins. In fact, those born in America were often ashamed of their European parents and Old Country traditions, taking the opportunity to demonstrate their “American” superiority whenever

they could (Pleck, 1983: 513). It was unsurprising then that national feeling among Polonia's youth weakened after WWI, as did their language (Galush, 2000: 414–416).

* * *

Recent scholarship carried out on the contemporary use of textbooks in Polish-American Saturday schools provides an intriguing postscript. Books used there were published by the Polish Diaspora's Educational organization *Macierz Szkolna* from London, England, formed during World War II by political émigrés. The content and language of the books was deemed not to “meet any standards of teaching Polish as a second language and are thus totally alien to children living in the United States” (Sibiga, quoted after Seretny, 2002: 176–190).

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Adam Walaszek

OKRUTNI NEPRIJATELJI I PLEMENITI JUNACI: SLIKE O »NAMA« I »NJIMA« U
POLJSKO-AMERIČKIM UDŽBENICIMA (do tridesetih godina 20. stoljeća)

SAŽETAK

Etničke škole odigrale su važnu ulogu u propagiranju profila »idealnih« junaka i članova društva u imigrantskim zajednicama. Dosljedno tome, uloga školskih udžbenika često je bila upoznati učenike s porukama koje su odrasli željeli prenijeti mladom naraštaju. U ovom radu autor pokušava opisati sadržaje različitih udžbenika koji su se upotrebljavali u poljsko-američkim vjerskim školama. Izmišljanje nacionalne mitologije i pojednostavnjivanje činjenica bili su nužni kako bi se olakšao proces memoriranja koji se zahtijevao. Ali za oblikovanje grupne solidarnosti bilo je potrebno identificirati zajedničke neprijatelje. Različiti udžbenici objavljeni u SAD-u prije Prvoga svjetskog rata nisu djeci imigranata pomogli pri akulturaciji na američku stvarnost. Oni su bili vrlo didaktični i uglavnom su se koncentrirali na poljsku zbilju i poljsku povijest. Tek je nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata američka prisutnost postala vidljivijom u knjigama za prvi stupanj. U tridesetim godinama časne sestre felicijanke pretežno su upotrebljavale udžbenike napisane u SAD-u, i to one koje je napisala redovnica M. Cyryla (Magdalena Tobaka). U njima su junaci okarakterizirani shematski, a uzori koje su sadržavali bili su strani poljsko-američkoj djeci. Ta analiza temelji se na knjizi *Polska* s. Mary Cyryle. Slika Poljaka i »ostalnih« naroda iznenadujuće je crno-bijela. Strani narodi opisuju se kao okrutni, monstrozni, negativci, pogani, barbarski itd. »Mi«, Poljaci, ocrtni su kao hrabri, pravedni, dobri, pametni, pošteni, vjerni itd., oni »vole vjeru, zemlju i jezik« itd. Udžbenik s. Cyryle nastojao je probuditi osjećaj zajedništva dijeleći svijet na »mi« i »oni«, izazivajući time antagonizam prema »njima«. Osobne značajke Poljaka jako su se poklapale sa slikama i samostereotipovima koje je poljsko društvo imalo o sebi. Stvarajući pozitivnu i idealnu sliku o samome sebi, bilo je korisno »druge« i »strance« ocrtni kao »neprijatelje«. »Oni« su negativno opisani prema svojoj vjeri i, češće, prema svojem »duhu«, »umu« i »ponašanju«.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: etničnost, druga generacija migranata, obrazovanje, etnički i nacionalni stereotipovi, Poljaci, Sjedinjene Američke Države

Adam Walaszek

CRUELS ENNEMIS ET NOBLES HEROS : L'IMAGE DE « NOUS » ET DES « AUTRES »
DANS LES MANUELS POLONO-AMERICAINS (jusqu'aux années 1930)

RÉSUMÉ

Les écoles ethniques ont joué un rôle important dans la diffusion, au sein des communautés d'immigrés, du profil des héros et membres de la société « idéaux ». En conséquence, le rôle des manuels scolaires était souvent d'inculquer aux élèves les messages que les adultes voulaient transmettre aux jeunes générations. Le présent article s'efforce de décrire les contenus de divers manuels qui furent utilisés dans les écoles religieuses polono-américaines. Pour faciliter le processus de mémorisation recherché, il fallait inventer une mythologie nationale et simplifier les faits. Mais, pour cimenter la solidarité du groupe, il fallait également identifier ses ennemis. Les divers manuels publiés aux USA avant la Première Guerre mondiale n'ont pas aidé les enfants des immigrés dans leur acculturation à la réalité américaine : ils étaient très didactiques et concentrés essentiellement sur la réalité et l'histoire polonaises. Il faut attendre le lendemain de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale pour que la présence américaine se fasse plus visible dans les livres consacrés aux jeunes apprenants. Dans les années 1930, les sœurs Féliciennes utilisaient principalement les manuels rédigés aux USA, notamment ceux écrits par sœur M. Cyryla (Magdalena Tobaka). Les héros y étaient campés de façon schématique et les modèles qu'ils véhiculaient étaient étrangers aux enfants polono-américains. La présente analyse se fonde sur le livre *Polska (Pologne)* de sœur Mary Cyryla. L'image des Polonais et des « autres » peuples y est étonnamment mani-

chéenne. Les autres peuples sont décrits comme étant cruels, monstrueux, négatifs, païens, barbares, etc. En revanche, les Polonais (« Nous ») y sont courageux, justes, bons, intelligents, honnêtes, loyaux, etc. : ils « aiment leur foi, leur pays et leur langue », etc. Le manuel de sœur Cyryla s'efforçait de susciter parmi les enfants un esprit communautaire en scindant le monde entre « nous » et « eux », et en attisant du même coup un antagonisme envers « eux ». Les traits personnels des Polonais correspondaient fort bien aux images et stéréotypes que la société polonaise avait d'elle-même. En créant une image positive et idéale de soi-même, il était de bonne guerre de décrire les « autres » et les « étrangers » comme des « ennemis ». « Ils » sont décrits de façon négative quant à leur foi et, très souvent, quant à leur « esprit », leur « intellect » et leur « comportement ».

MOTS CLÉS : ethnicité, deuxième génération d'immigrés, éducation, stéréotypes ethniques et nationaux, Polonais, USA