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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE POETRY
OF KAZIMIERA ILLAKOWICZ

by Rev. Thaddeus M. Swirski

Thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies
as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Ph.D. in Slavic Studies

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
Ottawa, Canada, 1979

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TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM KAZEMIERA

"2.11.71

Poznan Gajowa 4MB

Gracious Father Master:

Your letter was unfortunately delayed because for the last few years I became half blind and am not able to do anything for your essay which you need. I am sending what I can.

I am giving you a list of my works (bibliography) and the addresses of people in the United States who know my works (she continues to list a few names and addresses in English). Mrs. Kolman who was in Poland has some of my books. Unfortunately I can't read and can write very little. Some friends in the U.S.A. could help you (again she lists some names and addresses in Polish).

Sorry that I cannot help you because of glaucoma but I am giving you advice to contact the friends of mine in the United States.

Please forgive me for writing bad. Of course, more books of mine are in the Polish library in London.

Best wishes for 1971.

Kazemiera."



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Reverend Thaddeus M. Swirski was born April 26, 1930, in Warsaw, Poland. He received Absolutorium in Philosophy and Theology from the Academy of "Hosianum" (Higher Seminary of Philosophy and Theology) in Olsztyn, Poland, and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in 1954. He received the Master of Arts degree in Slavic Languages and Literature from Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, in 1966. The title of his thesis was The Moral Value of Russian and Polish Women as Presented in the Works of Pushkin and Mickiewicz.

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INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation two major religious elements in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz are studied: the concept of God as reflected in specific attributes revealed in her poems, and the relationship between man and God as reflected in her poetical prayers.

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, born in Wilno, Poland, in 1892 and living today in Poznań, is a poet relatively unknown outside her native country in spite of her numerous publications. In a long and prolific literary career of over fifty years, she has published fifty volumes of poetry, collections of sketches and memoirs, books of children's verse and fiction as well as translations of literary works. From a total of approximately 2000 of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' published poems, about 280 deal with religious topics. From these religious poems, approximately 90 poems concerning man's relationship with God, as well as poems reflecting the concept of God in prayer, have been selected as the basis for this study. Few critical references can be found concerning Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' religious poetry. One paragraph concerning the religious aspects of her poetry appeared in a newspaper article by Piotr Grzegorzczak at the time of the publication of Wiersze wybrane (Selected Poems), and Zbigniew Pędzinski furnished a critical introduction to her

Wiersze religijne (Religious Poems). But in general, the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iżakowicz has received practically no critical attention from scholars.

The methodology used in interpreting the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iżakowicz is that of close textual analysis of her poems within the framework of Christian doctrine. Also, biographical and historical sources have been used to elucidate the central meaning of her poems. In order to make her poems accessible to an English-speaking audience, approximately ninety poems representative of her religious poetry have been translated by the author of this thesis.

In order to provide the English-speaking reader with basic background information about the poet, the first chapter presents a brief summary of the life of Kazimiera Iżakowicz and gives some perspective on the cultural and historical background of her literary career. This includes information about 1) the influential, intellectual movement known as Young Poland (1890-1918); 2) Polish literature between the First and Second World Wars (1918-1939).

Attention is then given to an examination of the technical aspects of the poetry of Kazimiera Iżakowicz.

These poems fall into distinct categories: those that are primarily religious in intention and which employ traditional forms and those that use religious motifs unconventionally; and those which are not primarily religious, but which use religious elements for the purpose of clarifying or intensifying the meaning of the poem.

It is then shown that, although in a very general sense Kazimiera Iłkiewicz was a product of the complex cultural and political of the early twentieth century, she was quite original and independent in her poetic achievement. One of the major differences distinguishing her from many of her contemporary artists and intellectuals was her strongly developed religious sense and her acceptance of traditional Roman Catholic belief which can be traced to her conventional religious background and upbringing.

The second chapter analyzes the concept of God as perceived in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz. It is shown that, in this poetry, her ways of conceiving of God are not limited to those associated with Catholic dogma or doctrine, or with any other religion. While conventional religious concepts provide a basis for her thought, they also function as a springboard for a plunge into an inward and immediate experience of what might be called the "unknowable." It is here that her own psychology, her own psychic reality, dominates her conceptualization of God.

The study of the concept of God in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is divided into two parts: 1) the general concept of God and 2) the persons of the Holy Trinity. The first section is further divided according to the types of attributes ascribed to God by the poet. A large group of poems is analyzed in which the poet gives special attention to those attributes to which she attaches important personal meaning, regardless of the significance accorded those attributes in conventional theological analysis. It is through her treatment of these attributes that the poet reveals much of her own religious psychology, for although all attributes of God derive ultimately from a system of Christian belief, they are self-actualized via the inward or psychic experience of the poet. The psychological attributes she bestows upon God are projections of her own intellectual and emotional state, thus mirroring her personality and character, her psychic reality.

In this chapter are also treated the poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz that deal with God in His triune nature: as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here the emphasis is clearly on Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity. With a few exceptions, the poems in this group concentrate on the Son of God, in attributes related specifically to the events in the chronology of His life and death, and in miscellaneous attributes unrelated to

these events. The great emphasis on Christ in her poems supports the thesis that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' religious outlook is Christocentric. The fact that the poems about Christ tend to personalize her relationship with Him supports the proposition that God is conceived of in very personal terms, often projecting the poet's psyche. After the analysis of the place of Christ in the poems, attention is given to those relatively few poems that deal with the first and third persons of the Holy Trinity.

The third chapter analyzes prayer in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. Many of her poems are prayers, or have prayer-like qualities, and it is through them that she exemplifies a particular means for communicating with God or a saint and provides insight into her personal religious feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.

The first category, popular prayer, includes those poems that are classified as either speaking for, or identifying with, the feelings and needs of particular groups of people, or people in general.

The second category, personal prayer, includes poems that express the personal, private feelings and concerns of the poet herself, or of a persona she adopts for the purpose of communicating certain religious concepts.

The third category contains those poems classified as non-prayers or anti-prayers. This is an unusual group

that uses the language and ideas associated with prayer in order to make statements that are deliberately not prayers.

Finally, there is a small miscellaneous category of poems which imply the language of prayer but have no evident religious intention.

In the Summary and Conclusions, the overall significance of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz's religious poetry is evaluated, and the nature of the religious experience itself as it is manifested in her poetry.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF THE RELIGIOUS POETRY OF KAZIMIERA IŁŁAKOWICZ

1. The Life and Works of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz was born August 6, 1892 in Wilno, Poland, into a family of modest economic means. Her widowed mother earned a living by tutoring children of wealthy families and died when Kazimiera was about four years old. Before she reached her twelfth birthday, her literary career was already beginning to take form. She herself admits that what first drove her to express herself through poetry was a feeling of loneliness and boredom.¹ Perhaps, too, she was also drawn to imitate her sister who had published some poetry under the name of Barbara Zan. Whatever circumstances may have contributed to her initial poetic outpourings, her obvious literary bent was evidenced at a very early age in the children's game known as "rhyming secretary." The first poem which she wrote was entitled "Wiersz o kwitnących jabłoniach,"

¹ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Niewczesne wynurzenia, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1958, p. 9.

"Blossoming Apple Trees."²

By the time she was four years of age, both her parents had died. Subsequently, her foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Plater, arranged for her education and drew up a broad cultural and religious academic program for her to follow. Religious instruction was an integral part of this program. The poet writes in her memoirs, "As did the other children adopted by the Plater family, I studied catechism regularly."³ It should be noted that these foster parents were from a very well known aristocratic background. Some of their relatives were members of the hierarchy of the church so that the family's contacts with the clergy were frequent and close. In addition to an uncle who was a bishop, Archbishop Jałbrzykowski of Wilno was among their close friends. No doubt the family's attendance at devotions and its observance of holidays and traditional celebrations played an important role in the development of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' personality. In her memoirs she devoted many pages to the description of such activity and events, including religious practices and celebrations during her early childhood in the Plater

2 S. Podhorska-Okołów, "Z tajemnic poetyckiego rzemiosła," Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, "o swej twórczości," Wiadomości Literackie, no. 61, p. 87.

3 Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Trazymeński zajac, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1968, p. 17.

family.⁴ She mentions the fact that Mrs. Żabina, with whom she temporarily lived after her parents' death, had a strong religious background and had desired to be a nun at one time. Upon the death of this good woman, Kazimiera was adopted by the Platers. Above all, the memoirs stress her great love for Sophie, Mrs. Plater, whom she cherished and respected as her own mother. Sophie's kindness and generosity naturally exerted a great influence on the poet.

The Plater family also financed Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' secondary and higher education, including her stay at Oxford, 1908-1909, where she studied English Philology. Of her educational experiences, particularly influential were her years of study at Jagiellonian University in Kraków where she was one of the few women studying Polish philology. She received the "absolutorium" in 1914 (equal to the bachelor's degree) from that university.

Whether the poet was a practicing Catholic during her university days is uncertain. However, from her memoirs we do know that she sometimes considered herself a socialist. During the period of her Oxford and Kraków studies, she imbibed the atheistic outlook of her

⁴ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Niewczesne wynurzenia, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1958, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Trazymeński zajac, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1968, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Ścieżka obok drogi, Warszawa, Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Rój, 1930.

contemporaries which subsequent religious experiences caused her to repudiate as is evidenced in her memoirs and poetry.

During World War I she served as a medical aide in the Russian army. In this capacity she met many wounded and dying soldiers who were trying to solve the enigma of suffering and pain. Regardless of the nationality or religious affiliation of the wounded soldiers, their suffering provoked the question: "Why does God permit this agony?" It must certainly have stimulated her search for an answer to this question from God.

In 1918, after the war, Kazimier Iłkiewicz returned to independent Poland, settling in Warsaw. In the same year she was accepted into the diplomatic service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, serving chiefly as a cultural attache'.

Eight years later, on May 18, 1926, Marshal Joseph Piłsudski engaged her as his private secretary. She held this position for nine years (1926-1935).

The intertwining of her life with that of Piłsudski is of interest. She first met him in 1911 while she was studying at the Jagellonian University in Kraków. During that period she resided in a boarding house managed by Ursuline Nuns. At the same time her sister Barbara lived in an apartment with Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Piłsudski where

she assisted with household duties. Kazimiera Iłłakowicz sometimes visited her sister and so became known to the Piłsudski family.

As Marshal Piłsudski's secretary, one of her duties entailed answering much of his correspondence. She replied to 250,000 letters in nine years, thus averaging approximately 35,000 letters a year! Amid such activity, however, she continued writing poetry.

During this period she was often called upon to lecture on Poland at embassies abroad. Addressing The American Committee in Geneva in 1932, she underscored the fact that she had been deeply involved in the affairs of Poland which, during her own lifetime, had undergone tremendous historical changes. She succinctly summarized the impact of these changes upon her life. The generation to which she belonged, she stated, had lived through three different epochs: captivity, fight and struggle, and freedom:

The three lives my generation lived instead of one made me acquainted from the inside with three psychologies: the psychology of the captive, the oppressed-- the psychology of the revolutionary; the fighter, the militant, the psychology of the sovereign, independent ruling individual. I have lived my life in full measure, an abundant portion of each experience has been dealt out to me. The diverse vicissitudes of the three epochs of my generation have brought me the most manifold experiences. I have been forbidden to speak my own language at school. I have been forbidden to learn the history of my own nation. I have lived in fear of the conqueror's police. I have helped to

hide revolutionaries; when the Great War broke out I went out with a flying ambulance--and lived in the dugouts of the Russian army, the army of the oppressed, thus being given the opportunity to observe the slow disintegration of that gigantic body. The return to my country was effected just before its resurrection--Those of you who have been born free can hardly realize what it is to break one's bonds.⁵

In the course of this address, Iłłakowicz pointed out the fact that after gaining independence, there was the difficult and more prosaic work of reconstruction, changing the "radiant countenance of the liberated captive" from the "contemplative to the active, from the mystical to the productive." She related her eager and energetic participation in this work, her consciousness of "how much depends on our every movement, our every word," of the strain which makes the face change from the "round and smooth" into the "set, eager face of the responsible breadwinner." This intense love for country, dedication to freedom, and revolt against injustice and sensitivity to suffering is the source of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' poetry.

The same address also provides a dramatic illustration of the characteristically religious mode of expression of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' social consciousness. She began by confessing that she felt at first inadequately equipped

⁵ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, The Curse of Babel, The American Committee in Geneva, 1932, pp. 12-14.

to say anything really significant to the brilliant assembly she was facing:

While I was reflecting in this manner my eye fell upon the letter that had brought me the invitation to come to Geneva and I saw that the stamps on the envelope bore a forgotten image which I had last seen at some Scripture lesson in my childhood. The image represented the DOVE OF PEACE. And while I was looking on this ancient symbol there thronged upon me a great multitude of images. . . . [Images converging upon the central image of the Tower of Babel, which becomes for her the symbol of the contemporary human "predicament." The curse of misunderstanding--she concludes:] When in a place far away from here the Dove of Peace brought me his message, I felt a passionate curiosity whether by any chance the people assembled at Geneva after the Great Flood, were not occupied in trying to find the words which are to break the evil spell of Babel, the confusion of tongues, the cause of unintelligibility.⁶

Following Marshal Piłsudski's death in May, 1935, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz wrote a memoir of him. In the preface to it she euphorically states that she is not interested in writing about the Marshal's political interests, but that she wants to present to the reader what a personable man he was:

This memoir hopes to reflect an image of the Marshal as a simple personable man, not as a famous military figure. There are no political ramifications to this portrait.⁷

⁶ Ibid., pp. 4-10.

⁷ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Ścieżka obok drogi (A Path Near the Road), Warszawa, Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Rój, 1939, p. 14.

This book presents Pilsudski as a patriotic devoted commander-in-chief of the Polish armed forces, as a hard working, kind hearted, sensitive, intelligent man with a good sense of humor.


With the outbreak of World War II, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz sought asylum outside of Poland as did numerous others associated with the ministry. During the war years--1939 to 1947--she lived in Rumania and Hungary, supporting herself by teaching Russian, German, and English while remaining in touch through underground correspondence with the situation of her native country and with that of her countrymen serving in the various branches of the Allied Forces.

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz mentions in her memoirs that, while tutoring the children of wealthy Hungarian and Rumanian families, she told them Bible stories and reminded them to observe God's commandments and behave themselves properly as Christians.

I told them clearly that they should behave themselves and avoid sin. They often saw me praying. In the fables which I recounted to them I used religious motives.⁸

At this time, when she was lonely and longing for her native land, she frequently visited churches and spent

⁸ Iłłakowicz, Niewczesne wynurzenia, p. 68.



many hours in prayer. The churches were to her the externalization of her faith in God. One of these which enshrined a painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa had a special meaning for her as a place where she could find peace and feel close to her own country. In her memoirs she describes the Franciscan Church and the cloister in which stood a beautiful statue of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Her frequent visits to the statue of Saint Francis were not inspired merely by an aesthetic sense but by the desire for a "peace environment." Saint Francis' dedication to the poor parallel her own response to poverty and suffering, and encouraged her to follow his religious philosophy of life.

During this period, she turned to God for the fulfillment of her personal needs. At the same time she was intensely involved in writing poetry. Many of her poems incorporate prayers for the pilots and soldiers who died fighting in the Polish Armed Forces with the Allied Armies.

After World War II she was refused permission by the pro-communist government to return to her homeland. It was not until 1947 that she was allowed to return to Poland where she settled in the city of Poznań in which she resides to this day.

Shortly after Kazimiera Iłkiewicz returned from

abroad, a single volume of poetry, Wiersze wybrane (Selected Poems), was published in 1949 by Władysław Bąk with a foreword by Wilhelm Szewczyk. This volume of selected poems encompassed chronologically all she wrote from 1912 to 1949. It included certain religious selections marked by a blend of lyricism and religious fervor. They had been published in Złoty wianek (Golden Wreath) in 1927 and exhibit on the part of the poet a maturer recognition of the concept of God and of the relation between man and God. Three typical poems were included: "święta Barbara i myszy" (St. Barbara and Mice); "Powieść małżonki świętego Aleksęgo" ("A Story of St. Alexis' wife"); "O świętym biskupie Wulframie, o miedzianowłosym rybaku i o dzieciach w topieli" ("Bishop Wulfram, a red-headed fisherman, and children in danger of drowning").

In the postwar 1950's, Iłłakowicz' poetry was published only in the Catholic press, especially in Tygodnik Powszechny. In 1954, a new volume of poetry entitled Poezje (Poetry) was published by Pax Publishing House which included selections of her poems written during the years 1940-1954.

In 1955, a volume of her collected religious poems, Wiersze Religijne (Religious Poems), was published by Albertinum Publishing House in Poznań, with Zbigniew Peździnski's excellent introduction. This volume demonstrates the fact,

that religious questions and themes became a source of poetic inspiration, which remained throughout her life. These questions and themes are concretised in 282 poems dealing chiefly with the concepts of God and prayer. Approximately 90 of these poems are studied in Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation.

Ta jedna nić (This One Thread), a collection of religious poems printed by the publishing house of Saint Adalbert appeared on the literary scene. This volume included some of Iłłakowicz' earlier religious poems as well as several more recent ones. Finally in 1972, two volumes of her collected poems were published. They include a total of more than 1000 pages.

Thus, more than half a century marked by two world wars and by political, social, and cultural upheavals had elapsed between the publication of her first and last poems. Written against the backdrop of this constantly shifting social and cultural perspective, Iłłakowicz' works reflect changing currents of thought and changing situations.

In the course of her long and prolific literary career, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz received numerous literary awards. Among these were the literary award of the city of Wilno in 1930, the State Literary Award in 1935, and the Pen Club Award for translation in 1954. In 1956 and 1967, she received the literary award of the city of Poznań for

her total literary work. Her creative achievement was also recognized in 1967 by the Polish Ministry of Culture and Art which conferred upon her a special award in recognition of her total literary achievement.

2. Historical and Cultural Perspectives

A. Young Poland

Since every literary figure is a product of the time in which he/she lives and is consciously or unconsciously affected by its historical and cultural currents, an overview of the social situation in Poland at the turn of the century (1890-1918) is appropriate.

According to Czesław Miłosz, Modern Polish literature begins with the generation that emerged from adolescence around 1890. At that time the term "Young Poland" was coined and applied to some intellectuals who were also variously described as "decadents" or "modernists."⁹

These men revolted against the assumptions of the Positivists and their utilitarian ideal. In so doing, they were following in the footsteps of those French writers whose literature marked a return to Romanticism while they at the same time rebelled against the Establishment and

⁹ Czesław Miłosz, The History of Polish Literature, Toronto, Ontario: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1969, p. 322.

denounced naturalism in prose as advocated by Emile Zola in The Experimental Novel. These French writers allied themselves with political extremists and held that Western civilization was disintegrating.

A few energetic individuals whose primary interest was in poetry and philosophy were responsible for the Young Poland movement. Chief among these innovators was Stanisław Przybyszewski. Przybyszewski was a prolific writer in German, and Polish. His works include poems-in-prose, novels, and psychological dramas. Most of these works are more interesting as illustrations of his philosophical views than as literary masterpieces.

Przybyszewski published his celebrated manifesto "Confiteor" in Life on January 1, 1899. This "art for art's sake" doctrine was viewed by many as an invitation to license. His contention that only art is capable of creating value and that it is the only accessible absolute was extreme. Unfortunately, many of his followers felt themselves called to uncontrolled spiritualism and individualism.¹⁰ Yet under the banner of this slogan, prose and drama as well as poetry flourished.

Zenon Przesmycki who wrote under the pen name Miriam and published the literary magazine called Zycie

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 332.

(Life), was another innovator. It was he who introduced the works of the French symbolists--Charles Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarme and Laforgue--to the Polish-speaking world. He was a poet of considerable merit, yet his name will be remembered not so much for his personal literary accomplishments but for his rediscovery of Cyprian Norwid (1821-1883). It was in Przesmycki's review Chimera that Norwid's poetry was published. This magazine was not only an organ of the Young Poland Movement, but also a vehicle for Przesmycki's translations of foreign authors.

A third precursor of Young Poland was Antoni Lange, a leading personality in Warsaw literary circles. A translator of outstanding talent, he introduced the Polish public to Czech, Hungarian and modern Greek poets as well as to the work of the French symbolists and to those of Edgar Allan Poe.

In contrast to the work of the three Young Poland literary figures already mentioned is that of Leopold Staff, a humanist, philosopher, and poet whose output as translator and editor ranges from Friedrich Nietzsche to Saint Francis of Assisi, the Greek Sophists and Old Chinese poetry.¹¹ Also mentioned are Kazimierz Tetmajer and Jan Kasprawicz, known in the Young Poland literary group as one of the famous religious poets who frequently used religious motifs in his work.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 343.

His poems published between 1901 and World War I differ in tone from that of Young Poland, but he employs a vocabulary and metrics similar to theirs. L. Staff served several generations as a model poet, excellent craftsman and a dedicated humanist--a major influence in the shaping of Polish poetry.

Bolesław Leśmian (1879-1937) was a highly talented linguistic experimenter who elaborated a distinctive mode of poetic expression. Several of the poems of Kazimiera Illakowicz which employ fantasy, symbolism and fairy-like characters are similar in subject. Undoubtedly, the poet most popular with the Young Poland poetry reader was Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer whose mellow verses best projected the feelings and yearning of his time.

Prose of Young Poland also reflect the spirit and stance of the movement. Among novelists worthy of mention are Stefan Żeromski, Władysław Reymont, and Wacław Berent.

Żeromski's novel Homeless People (Ludzie bezdomni), presents a picture of the intelligentsia of the 1890's who felt guilty because of their educational superiority. This novel reveals a deep social concern with its realistic pictures of poverty and privation. It won support from socialistic partisans but was condemned by Right Wing

partisans.

Awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1924 for his epic four-volume novel The Peasants (Chłopi), Władysław Reymont praised primitive passions and peasant vigor. This novel illustrates the then widely held view that "the village signified the unapped resources of the nation, the gauge of the future."¹² The language of the novel is highly poetic; its descriptions of nature and the agricultural community are both beautiful and authentic.

Last of the triumvirate of novelists to be mentioned here is Wacław Berent (1873-1940). His most characteristic work is Próchno (Rotten Wood, 1901), which gives full expression to the decadence in art and life toward the end of the nineteenth century. The setting is Berlin; the characters are cosmopolitan artists, journalists, and self-styled philosophers who share a dreary decadence, weakness of will and skepticism. In their desperate endeavor to escape earthly reality, they attempt to find their salvation in the "art for art's sake" philosophy.

In contrast to this work is the novel Living Stones (Żywe kamienie, 1918), whose setting is an unidentified medieval town. Highly stylized in language, its prose,

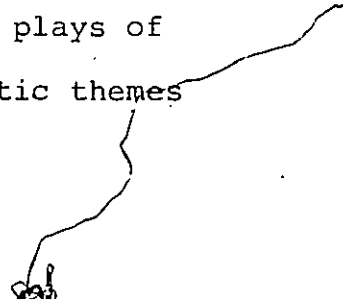
¹² Ibid., p. 370.

like so much of what Young Poland produced, is marked by an excessive use of poetic elements.

The Polish theater of this period was strongly influenced by continental playwrights whose works were translated into Polish. Among these were the Scandinavians Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg; the Germans Hermann Sudermann and Gerhart Hauptmann; the French writing authors Maurice Maeterlink and Edmond Roslaud; and the English writers Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw, and William Butler Yeats.

Standing head and shoulders over other Polish playwrights was Stanisław Wyspiański, the reformer of the Polish theater. One of the most original figures of Young Poland, Wyspiański's verse plays (especially The Wedding (Wesele), Liberation (Wyzwolenie), Warszawianka (Varsovienne), November Night (Noc listopadowa), and The Curse (Klatwa)) were an ideological assault on the gentry tradition and the Polish intelligentsia. These plays portrayed a new vision of Polish history and of the nineteenth century struggle for national liberation. Those plays which depicted contemporary life in Poland dealt with familiar Polish problems. As a result of Wyspiański's genius these problems took on a new life and acquired a new force of expression.

This period left another valid contribution to the Polish theater; this was naturalistic drama. The plays of Gabriela Zapolska are imitations of the naturalistic themes



and methods of George Bernard Shaw. This influence can be seen in her two successful dramas, Mrs. Dul'ska's Morality (Moralność Pani Dulskiej, 1907), and Miss Maliczewska (Panna Maliczewska, 1912), both about women.

Other important playwrights were Tadeusz Rittner and Karol Hubert Rostworowski who wrote religious drama. A third author, Włodzimierz Perzyński utilized the "slice of life" technique and wrote comedies that explored the hypocritical morality of the middle class.

Not only literature but philosophy and criticism occupied some of the best minds of Young Poland. Many of its leading figures were searching for answers to the meaning of life and sought them in the philosophers who offered some hope to the individual. Among these were Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche: "The first, because he advised the individual to withdraw from the infernal circle of immutable determinism; the second, because he reclaimed the individual as a self-sustaining entity creating values in a universe without metaphysical sanction."¹³

Other philosophers who stimulated independent thinking were Max Stirner, Eduard von Hartmann, Henri Bergson and Soren Kierkegaard. These together with Feuerbach, Marx, and

13 Ibid., p. 325.

Engels give a slight impression of the contradictory philosophical currents in which Polish intellectuals were caught up.

Apart from these influences from the continent, the movement was shaped by native writers. Chief among these was Stanisław Brzozowski. The most important of his philosophical essays were gathered in the volumes Idées (Idee, 1910); Studies on The Romantic Crisis of European Consciousness (Głosy wśród nocy, 1912); and Diary (Pamiętnik, published posthumously).

Brzozowski had firm faith in unlimited human possibilities. His initial inspiration came from Nietzsche, but was modified by his study of history. In his opinion, the future belonged to a philosophy that would recognize human struggle through labor against the forces of nature as the basis of freedom. He contended that the image of the world which man possesses at a given moment is always a reflection of the state of technology at that given moment.¹⁴

Brzozowski the philosopher was equally as well known as a literary critic. As can be expected his estimate of literature was conditioned by his philosophical stance. Two of his contemporaries, Ignacy Matuszewski and

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 377.

Wilhelm Feldman, were equally influential.

Matuszewski, long-time editor of the Illustrated Weekly, was the most distinguished literary critic of the period. Author of Słowacki i nowa sztuka (Słowacki and the New Art, 1901), he presented a well-articulated, penetrating study of Juliusz Słowacki (1809-49), the great Polish romantic poet. This work aimed to underscore the connections between Słowacki and the Young Poland and Young Europe movements. According to Manfred Kridl, "He clearly explained the essence of the new literary movement, its literary genealogy, its points of difference with the preceding period, and its artistic values."¹⁵

Wilhelm Feldman (1868-1919), was the editor of the progressive democratic monthly Krytyka (Critique), published in Kraków. Two of his works went through several editions. These were Współczesna literatura polska (Contemporary Polish Literature, 1902), a survey of the authors and works of the era of positivism and Young Poland, and a second book devoted to contemporary literary criticism. Both books were used frequently as text books, but did not bring any new elements into literary criticism.

No effort has been made to include other than the

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 465.

most representative poets, novelists, philosophers, and critics of Young Poland. To go into greater detail is impossible in this dissertation.

In summary, one can indicate the major characteristics of neo-romanticism which is reflected in the Young Poland Movement. Its basic and negative characteristics are a lack of unifying principle or program and a disparagement of urban culture. It is a movement running counter to materialism, rationalism, industrialization, mechanization of life, utilitarianism, and the involvement of the masses in art. It is a form of isolationism, a polarization of society, an absence of goals and ambitions. It exalts loneliness as a mode of existence and exhibits an excessive interest in the metaphysical and a turning away from the crowd in order to direct attention to the ego. From these characteristics ensue egocentrism, subjectivism and individualism as well as a demonstrated hatred for the commonplace.

In direct contrast to the concerns and artistic tenets of the Young Poland Movement are those which occupied Polish writers in the period between the first and second World Wars, during which Kazimiera Iłkiewicz emerged as a promising poet.

It can be said that Young Poland embraced

Romanticism in reaction to the Positivist utilitarian ideal. At first it was represented only by small groups of Bohemians, "decadents" who preached the "art for art's sake" doctrine. It was, however, a somewhat chaotic movement, its members sometimes being drawn in one direction, again in another. Desperately groping for a satisfying philosophy of life which would offer hope to the individual they turned to such philosophers as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Max Stirner and Eduard von Hartmann, who stressed the role of the unconscious. Some members entertained the views of Bergson and Kierkegaard, others were drawn to the ideas of Marx and Engels. Their minds were bombarded from all sides by conflicting and, each in its own way, attractive "isms".

All, however, were unanimous in believing that the most important and sacred thing in one's existence was the life of the individual mind. This belief brought new life into poetry, new themes into drama, a new social awareness into the novel, a new vision of Polish history.

B. Polish Literature Between the First and Second World Wars (1918-1939).

The period between the two world wars saw the restoration of independence to Poland in 1918. This not only marked a turning point in Polish history but also gave free.

reign to a long-awaited upsurge in the arts and in literature. This period, however, was no more uniform in its literary character than the previous period. Old currents existed side by side with new trends. At times they merged, at times they conflicted with each other; again they influenced each other.

New themes in literature became the subject matter of the writers of the older generation: Wacław Berent wrote the novel The Living Stones (Zywe kamienie) already mentioned; Stefan Żeromski, the novel Before the Spring (Przedwiośnie); Stefan Gałeczki (Andrzej Strug), the political novel The Yellow Cross (Żółty krzyż, 1933); Bolesław Leśmian, a collection of lyric poems The Meadow (Łąka, 1920); and Leopold Staff, The Color of Honey (Barwa miodu, 1936).

The younger generation, however, soon dominated the literary scene. These were young people whose debut was made during or immediately after the war. Perhaps most exciting to them was the domain of poetry which boasted a plethora of literary groups, strongly worded manifestos, programs, and short-lived literary magazines. Formists, Futurists, Expressionists, led by the Kraków avant-garde, attracted wide-spread attention in old Kraków.

Lyric poetry dominated the literature of the first decade and its gifted representatives won wide acclaim. The most prominent group was known as the Skamander poets,

their name being derived from that of their own review which first appeared in January 1920.

The magazine Skamander carried this declaration:

We want to be poets of the present, and this is our faith and our whole "program." We are not tempted by sermonizing; we do not want to convert anybody, but we want to conquer, to enrapture, to influence the hearts of men; we want to be their laughing and their weeping.¹⁶

Jan Prokop in Liryka Polska quotes William Horzyca who published the group's credo in the first edition of Skamander:

The kingdom of spirit is a kingdom of this world. We know that the greatness of art does not appear to subjects, but in the forms through which it is expressed, in that most light and illusive game of colors, of words transforming a rough experience into a work of art. We want to be honest workers in that game, through our efforts hidden under frivolous shapes. . . . We resolutely believe in the sanctity of a good rhyme, in the divine origin of rhyme, in revelation through images born in ecstasy and through shapes chiseled by work.¹⁷

These poets introduced into their verse words taken from everyday life, colloquial, idioms, and an urban selling. They, however, were attached to Polish poetry of the past, especially to the Romantics as is evidenced by their nature

¹⁶ William Horzyca, Skamander, No. 1, January, 1920 (Program of Skamander Group) quoted by Jan Prokop in Liryka Polska, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1971, pp. 308-310.

¹⁷ Ibid.

poetry but at the same time they were cosmopolitan, open to both Russian and French influences.

This group included men of strong individuality whose alliance with Skamander differed in length of time. Among them was Julian Tuwim, in whose poetry dreams and devils play a prominent part. (Certain of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's poems reflect a similar interest.)

Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, a "poet's poet" had less appeal for the general public. His Dionysiads (Dionizje, 1922) was, perhaps, the only truly expressionistic volume of poems published in Poland after World War I.¹⁸ His subject matter was taken from such diverse sources as the myth of Dionysus and the writings of the German Stefan George and the Frenchman Jean Cocteau.

Not to be underestimated among the Skamander poets were Antoni Slonimski, Kazimierz Wierzyński, and Leszek Serafinowicz (Jan Lechoń was his pen name).

In addition to the Skamander group was a small group of Revolutionary Poets. Some writers praised the Russian Revolution and Marxism. Among them were Bruno Jasiński and Władysław Broniewski.

Two rather loosely defined movements, one of the

¹⁸ Miłosz, History of Polish Literature, p. 390.

1920's and the other of the 1930's, are known respectively as the First Vanguard and the Second Vanguard.

The First Vanguard members gave themselves the name of "Formists." As poets and artists, they stressed pure form as the essence of art; thus, in painting their movement led to a deformation of represented objects. Tytus Czyzewski (1885-1945), a poet-painter, published his Pastorals (Pastorałki) in Paris in 1925. In these naive Christmas carols he gave an avant-garde treatment to motifs from Old Polish poetry. In these simple literary creations he united age old folk material with original experimental metrics. Several of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' religious poems utilize the same material but present it in more conventional metrics.

In contrast to the poetics of the Skamander group was that of another Vanguard clique led by Tadeusz Peiper, founder of a literary review, The Switch (Zwrotnica) which he edited in the 1920's. He and his collaborators Julian Przyboś and Jan Brzękowski objected to the lyrical quality of Skamander poetry, derided inspiration and valued the ability to convey an emotion by translating it into equivalent images--the "objective correlatives" of T.S. Eliot, whose intellectual approach to poetry was similar to theirs. They valued emotional reticence and

compactness of expression. These three poets and their followers were identified as "The Switch."

The Second Vanguard of the 1930's was made up of numerous individuals and disparate groups whose solidarity was based on a shared intellectual climate although they did not band together in any common program. But they all felt independent of the Skamander group, since they believed its optimism was no longer a reasonable attitude in the face of the seriousness of the then current political and economic situation. Indeed, to some of the Second Vanguard poets, caught up in a vision of doom, the term "catastrophism" has been applied.

Among the poets more or less associated with the Second Vanguard were Adam Ważyk, Mieczysław Jastruń, Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, and Józef Czechowicz. These shared no ideology, however some were closer to Skamander in spirit and technique, some were distant; some were politically on the Right, some on the Left.

More clearly defined groupings could be found among the contributors to the Warsaw review Quadriga (Kwadryga, 1926-1931) who held pacifist views and criticized Skamander for its lack of committed engagement and its complacency.¹⁹

¹⁹ Pomirovski, Nowa literatura w nowej Polsce, p. 70.

In 1931, a group of students at The University of Wilno founded a little literary review, Zagary. These students best exemplified the contradictory strivings of the younger generation. It was to them that the term "school of catastrophists" was given. They were ambivalent in their attraction to Marxism and their preference for a metaphysical frame of reference. The three original founders of this group were Tedor Bujnicki, Jerzy Zagórski and Czesław Miłosz.

Polish poetry of the war and post-war period owed a great debt to the Second Vanguard.

The wave of political and social criticism was evident in the thirties in works such as Nałkowska's The Boundary Line (Granica), and more indirectly in Kordian and the Boor (Kordian i Cham) by Leon Kruczkowski (1900-1962), and by the Przedmieście (Suburb) group of the writers who specialized in novels written in a journalistic style documenting the plight of the working class. The new vein of criticism also was responsible for an epic strain of fiction set in the immediate past such as the account of manners and morals, Nights and Days (Noce i dnie), by Maria Dąbrowska (1889-1965) as well as the psychologically based stories of Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz and Maria Kuncewiczowa. In Ferdydurke Witold Gombrowicz (1904-1969), one of the foremost innovators in twentieth century Polish prose, held moral and social conventions up to ridicule. Expressionism dictated

by the need to express new ideas and emotions, was also the core of the work of Bruno Schultz (1892-1942), who came close to surrealism in his perception of provincial Jewish life, Cinnamon Shops (Sklepy Cynamonowe) and The Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass (Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą). But the foremost exponent of experimentation was Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (1885-1939), a painter, art theoretician, playwright (about thirty experimental plays), philosopher and a prose writer--perhaps the most penetrating intellect of the inter-war years.

This sense of imminent disaster, this total threat to civilization troubled the writers who emerged in the thirties and devoted their works to moral and ideological investigations of various forms. In poetry, these moral investigations took a despairing turn in the works of Józef Czechowicz (1903-1939), a more reflective vein in the poetry of Mieczysław Jastrun (born in 1903) and gave way to comic expression in the work of Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński (1905-1953). In fiction, the exploitation of moral themes was predominant in the works of Jerzy Andrzejewski (born 1909) and the psychological studies of Adolf Rudnicki (born in 1912). Literary journalism also

assumed an important role in the literature between the wars, as is evidenced in such writers as Tadeusz Boy-Żelenski (1874-1941), a brilliant writer and translator of the French classics, and the reporting of Melchior Wańkiewicz (1892 to 1974) and Ksawery Pruszyński (1907-1956). In this period, literature gave expression to a variety of ideas and engendered a variety of forms. It was obsessed with an urgency to search for new idioms of expression, directions which lead literature to the ranks of social and artistic progress.

Like any artist who is truly an individual creator, Kazimięra Iłkiewicz cannot easily be placed in any particular movement. She was, it is true, always aware of--and sometimes involved in--the historical events that shaped the destiny of Poland. Throughout her career her poetry has reflected a great sensitivity to the significance of historical events, especially as they affect religious belief and point of view. On the other hand, her poetry has never identified itself with any literary movement beginning or ending with these events. This does not mean that she was completely detached from what was going on around her. Early in her life she was influenced by nineteenth-century Romanticism and the Young Poland Movement. Later on, she bears a somewhat tangential relationship to the Skamander group.

In summary, the restoration of independence to Poland in 1918, ushered in a long-awaited upsurge in the arts and literature. This period, however, had no uniform literary character. Old currents and new trends existed side-by-side.

The younger generation soon dominated the literary scene and soon proliferated literary groups, published manifestos, and edited a variety of magazines. Formists, Futurists, Expressionists, Surrealists, all vied for a following.

The greatest interest was in lyric poetry. The foremost poets were the Skamander group who reacted strongly against imposing the duty of patriotic service on writers. They modernized poetic devices, chose contemporary themes, injected into poetry an urban element--the landscape of the modern city, its beauty and its ugliness. Rhythmic structures became more complicated than the traditional metric patterns. Rhymes became more difficult, unusual, and unexpected.

Various avant-garde cliques came into prominence; the only thing they had in common was a determination to thoroughly reform poetry.

In the mid 1920's, a new novel began to come into its own. Experimentation was carried on within a broadly

defined conception of poetry and was concerned chiefly with structure and style

This period saw the rise of the First and Second Vanguard. The first group opposed Skamander and under the leadership of Tadeusz Peiper enunciated a new theory "Art for Contemporary Life."

The Second Vanguard had a more pessimistic outlook and held a darker view of the world than did other of their contemporaries.

Much social and political criticism emerged in the 1930's, and many novels were written to draw attention to the plight of the working class.

3. Technical Aspects of the Religious Poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz

Although the main purpose of this study is the examination of religious elements in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, it is still the case that the data is being examined, not as theology, but as poetry. It is therefore relevant as well as enlightening to devote some attention to a consideration of those aspects of the poetry of Kazimierz Iłłakowicz that are purely technical, to see what the general characteristics of her poetry are, and

what particular aspects of her technique can be identified as uniquely hers, as well as to see whatever relationship can be established between the formal aspects of her poetry and its content.

In this section of chapter 1, the basic data of ninety religious poems are subjected to a brief analysis in terms of genre and theme, and then twenty-five of this ninety, selected at random, are subjected to close analysis in terms of stanza form, rhyme and meter, tropes and other figures, and the functions of verbs, nouns and adjectives. Tables are provided to facilitate acquaintance with this discussion.

Of the ninety religious poems of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz which provide the basic data for this dissertation, the great majority are lyrics, that is, short poems expressive of a single idea, emotion, or perception. Even in the few longer poems that develop their subjects more completely, there is a high degree of lyrical expressiveness, so one might say that on the whole the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz is of a lyrical character; she does not write epics, or dramatic verse, or discursive philosophical poems. Rather, she is concerned with the quick, effective expression of feeling, trying to capture it in a brief but forceful image, instead of trying to explain or analyze it. Her short poems, which are in the great majority, often are

built on a single image; her longer poems are to a great extent constructed of images strung together. These qualities of her religious verse are also known to characterize her non-religious verse.

Poems containing no more than thirty lines comprise the majority of the ninety poems under consideration. However, there are fourteen poems in this group that contain more than thirty lines. Seven of these have fifty or more lines. This entire group includes two hymns, a Mass, a litany, four long narratives containing lyrical elements, one shorter such poem, three prayers, and two miscellaneous poems.

Nine additional poems contain between twenty-one and thirty lines. These are mostly prayers or lyrical narratives. If these poems of medium length are added to the first group, there are still only twenty-three poems out of one hundred that are more than twenty lines long. The remaining seventy-seven can be classified as lyrics, whether the individual poem is a prayer, or the fragment of a saint's life in which a single emotional response is evoked, or merely the brief expression of an idea or feeling in which religious elements are present. The best indication that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' religious poems are for the most part short lyrics is the fact that forty-nine poems out of the ninety contain twelve lines or less.

As far as thematic content is concerned, these poems can be broken down into three main categories:

1) those poems that are primarily expressive of traditional religious belief and feeling, often employing conventional forms (e.g., hymns and prayers); 2) those that deal with traditional religious themes and concepts but are in fact not conventional in their treatment or in their ideas (e.g., the "non-prayers"); and 3) those that are not primarily about religious subjects but which nevertheless employ religious images and ideas as a way of clarifying or intensifying a statement or a feeling.

The first category can be broken down as follows: 14 prayers to God or a saint, 10 short lyrics, 4 long narratives, 4 short narratives, 3 hymns, 1 mass, 1 litany, and two miscellaneous poems. This category contains, therefore, thirty-nine poems.

In the second category there are two main divisions. The first division consists of those poems that can be called "prayer-like lyrics." They are "prayers" that either do not address God or a saint at all, or, in addressing God or a saint, do not pray for things that are normally associated with serious prayers (such as the prayer to Saint Cecelia that asks relief from unwelcome music). These are not really prayers in essence, but they do show some of the characteristics of prayer. The second division of the

unconventional poems can be called "non-prayers," even perhaps "anti-prayers." Here the usual expectations of what a prayer is are reversed. Such a poem is "Na Gromniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"), which contains the following lines:

. . . And do not pray, Most Holy Maiden,
 Star of the fortunate, brief dying one,
 for me protection or happiness,
 do not pray, Aurora of Grace, do not
 shield, only - mention.

There are 15 "prayer-like lyrics" and 6 "non-prayers" within this second category. There are, in addition, 16 short lyrics of an unconventional sort, as well as 4 short narratives and one lyrical monologue. Altogether 42 poems make up this second category.

The final category consists mainly of short lyrics, seventeen in all, and includes as well two miscellaneous poems, making a total of nineteen poems.

Stanza

In discussing stanza arrangement the fact that the sample of selected poems numbers twenty-five must be temporarily disregarded because one of these poems, "Hymny do Duchu świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"), consists of three separate, self-contained sections which do not share the same stanza arrangement. Thus, for this discussion only, the sample will be treated as if it contains twenty-seven

poems.

There are three basic kinds of poems in the sampling. First is the poem that consists of only one stanza, and in which the stanzas are of equal length. Third is the poem that consists of more than one stanza, and in which the stanzas are of unequal length.

The first group contains six poems, varying in length from four lines to fourteen lines. They all employ rhyme, but the variety of rhyme schemes can be indicated by the fact that the shortest poem, "Połów" ("Fishing") employs a simple scheme, aabb, whereas the longest, "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales") employs a complex, irregular rhyme scheme, abacdddebceaba.²³ Besides "Połów" ("Fishing") only one other single-stanza poem, "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in a Cage"), employs a regular rhyme scheme, aabbcc. The remaining three poems, all rhyming irregularly, are "Duch i ciało" ("Spirit and Body"), with eight lines; "Stworzenie" ("Creature"), with nine lines; and "Modlitwa" ("Prayer"), with twelve lines.

The second major group comprises sixteen poems out of the total of twenty-seven. They are enumerated here in order of number of lines per stanza.

20-23 For this poem, and others, weak rhyme is not distinguished from identical or close rhyme. See the section on rhyme for further discussion.

One poem, "Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"), uses a two-line stanza. It contains eight stanzas rhymed aa, bb, etc.

Three poems use a three-line stanza. One of them, "Bóg jest także z nimi..." ("Seeking God"), containing six stanzas, also rhymes aaa, bbb, etc. The third, "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), is exceptional, because in addition to its four three-line stanzas, it contains an extra single line. Its rhyme scheme is aaa, bbb, ccc, dde, e.

Eight poems use a four-line stanza. The rhyme scheme abab is used for all of them. Six of them contain four stanzas; they are "Odtrącona modlitwa" ("Spurned Prayer"), two sections of "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"), "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste..." ("I Walk Behind You, Christ"), "Tuż obok Boga" ("Near to God"), and "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke"). One of them, "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer"), contains three stanzas. Another, "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"), contains two stanzas.

Three poems use a six-line stanza. One of them, "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), has nine stanzas rhyming aabccb. Another, the middle section of "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"), has three stanzas, rhyming ababcc. The third, "Niechby ta jedna nić..." ("Let It Be That One Thread..."), consists of two

stanzas, and uses a complex irregular rhyme scheme:

ababcc dxdede.²⁴

The last in this group of sixteen poems with stanzas of equal length is "Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa" ("Funeral of Jesus"), which contains two stanzas rhyming aabbcca addefef.

The final group of the twenty-seven consists of five poems containing stanzas of unequal length. "Modlitwa o śmierć" ("Prayer for Death"), has three stanzas of twelve, eight and ten lines respectively. Despite this irregularity, it has a fairly regular rhyme scheme: ababccddeeff, gghhijj, kllkmnnnoo. A second poem, "Na Gromniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"), has two stanzas of eight and fifteen lines respectively. It also contains a fairly regular rhyme scheme: aabbcbcb, ddeeffgxghhigib. A third poem, "Do świętej Cęylii" ("To Saint Cecilia"), has stanzas of six, four and two lines respectively, rhyming somewhat irregularly: abaaac, bded, ce. The fourth poem in this group, "Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów" ("Before Christ of the Fathers of Saint Francis of Salesii"), has two stanzas of nine lines and three lines, and three lines, rhyming irregularly: axabbacdc eed. The

²⁴The symbol "x" denotes a word which does not rhyme with any other in the poem.

last poem, "Modlitwa za lotnictwo" ("Prayer for the Air Force"), contains three stanzas of eight, eight and four lines respectively, and rhymes irregularly: aabbxcxcx, dedefgfg, xhxh.²⁵

Two very brief conclusions may be drawn from this analysis: 1) Kazimiera Iłkiewicz shows a preference for poems with stanzas of equal length, usually four stanzas of four lines rhyming abab, although sometimes the rhyme scheme is irregular or uncertain; 2) there is some degree of correlation between inequality of stanza length and irregularity of rhyme scheme.

An examination of twenty-five of her religious poems selected at random yielded interesting data about Kazimiera Iłkiewicz' choice of stanza forms, rhyme and meter. (These poems are included in Appendix 2).

Six of the selected poems are one stanza in length varying from four to fourteen lines. Only two of the six employ a standard rhyme scheme. "Połów" ("Fishing"), utilizes the aabb structure while "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in a Cage"), employs the rhyme scheme aabbcc. The four other one-stanza poems utilize a more complex, irregular rhyme

²⁵ The words denoted by "x" in this example might be considered as rhyming exceptionally weakly. They are "nakryl-eskadre" and "wyznacz-ojczyzny." In the statistical analysis of rhyme they are counted as non-rhyming words.

scheme as in "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales"), which rhymes abacddebceaba.

Sixteen poems of more than one stanza employ a variety of stanza forms... "Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"), is written in rhyming couplets; "Bóg jest także z nimi. . ." ("God Is Also With Them"), is in triplets. Of those written in triplets "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), is exceptional because in addition to its four three-line stanzas, it contains an extra single line. Its rhyme scheme is aaa,bbb,ccc,ddd,e.

Eight poems are written in quatrains. The rhyme scheme abab is used in all of them. Three poems use a six-line stanza. Of these "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), is made up of nine stanzas rhyming aabccb. One poem, "Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa" ("Funeral of Jesus"), contains two stanzas of seven lines each rhyming irregularly aabbcca addefef. "Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów" ("Before Christ of the Fathers of Saint Francis of Salesii") is composed of two stanzas, the first containing nine lines, the second, three. They rhyme irregularly.

Two conclusions can be drawn from Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' choice of stanza patterns: 1) She shows a preference for stanza of equal length, usually four stanzas of four lines rhyming abab; 2) there is some degree of

correlation between inequality of stanza length and irregularity of rhyme scheme.

Rhyme

Five categories of rhyme-relationship that can be identified in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz: 1) perfect rhyme, 2) "poetical" rhyme, 3) close rhyme, 4) weak rhyme, and 5) no rhyme.

The first class, perfect rhyme, is that for which the spelling indicates absolute identity of pronunciation of the pertinent sounds. In monosyllabic words, these would be the vowel and the final consonant or consonant cluster, for example: "szlak-krzak," "wzwyż-krzyż."²⁶ In multisyllabic words, the pertinent sounds would be the vowel of the penultimate syllable, the consonant or consonant cluster which follows this vowel, and the final vowel or vowel-plus-consonant, for example: "skraju-raju," "husarzy-rozzarzy." "wonne-pozgonne." Of the 423 lines of poetry that make up the sample, 143 (33.8%) are in perfect rhyme relationship with at least one other line in the same poem. This includes rhymes that result from repetition of the same word.

²⁶ All examples are from the twenty-five poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz selected for analysis.

The second class is the "poetical" rhyme, a concept elaborated by Gięrgielewicz when he says that "certain vowels which are considered different in normal speech are treated in rhyming as identical. This can be said in Polish of the vowels 'i' and 'y' in a stressed position . . ." ²⁷ According to this definition, these pairs would be accurate rhymes: "oczyści-ziści," and "świcie-wycie." Other rhymes that would fit into the class as defined by Gięrgielewicz would be "chciało-umiała," "najbardziej-pogardzi" and "nimi-przeklętymi-ziemi." Presumably also such rhymes as "brzeg-rzek" would be considered "poetically" accurate, although it is the consonant similarity which is in question, rather than the vowels. A total of 28 lines of the 423 fall into this class, or 6.8%. Thus, 171, or 40.4% of the total number of lines in the twenty-five selected poems can be considered as partaking in either identical or "poetically" perfect rhyme.

The third category of rhyme-relationship is that which is very close, and yet not identical or poetically perfect. These include such pairs as "motyli-chylim," "pacierzu-pancerza," and "krótka-łodkę." Altogether, 101 (23.9%) of the lines under consideration use this close

²⁷ Mieczysław Gięrgielewicz, Introduction to Polish Versification, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970, p. 114.

rhyme.

The fourth category is weak rhyme. This consists of some degree of similarity in sound, whether of vowel or of consonant sounds or combinations of the two, which can be labeled under the general heading of "assonance." The words are clearly not rhymes, but they share sufficient similarity in sound to suggest an intentional harmony. Sometimes the degree of assonance is a subjective matter for the individual reader. Obvious assonance is found in such pairs as "mroku-dokąd," "urośnie-ognia," and "wychować-wydoleć." But it may be disputed whether assonance is present in such pairs as "sprzysięgło-pokleklim," or "reszta-przepaść."²⁸ In the poetry of Kazimiera Iłzakowicz, the great majority of weak rhymes show strong assonance in the stressed vowel, less in the consonants, and least in the unstressed final vowel. Typical of this pattern are "wertepach-ślepe," "niska-Stadnicki" and "skutków-lutni." The distinction between close rhymes and weak rhymes is sometimes blurred, but in general it could be said that a close rhyme needs the change of only one phonetic element to become an exact rhyme (e.g., "nowy-głowę"), whereas a weak rhyme would require the change of more than one phonetic

²⁸ These pairs are counted in the statistics as weak rhymes.

element, as in "wertepach-slepe." Weak rhymes occur in 132 lines, a total of 31.2%. Thus, it is seen that 233 lines, or 55.1% of the total, partake in "imperfect" rhymes.

The final and least important category consists of those lines from the sample that do not rhyme with any other line in the poems in which they appear. There are 19 such lines among the 423, or 4.5% of the total.

It can be concluded from this statistical survey that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is a rhyming poet, but that the majority of her rhymes are imperfect according to usual poetical standards. She is concerned with maintaining harmony of sound in her verses, but does not make a great effort to achieve perfect identity of sound. In this connection it should be pointed out that a chronological survey of her rhyming patterns yields the fact that the number of imperfect rhymes increases in the course of her career.

Other Harmonic Devices

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz makes free use of alliteration and internal assonance to achieve felicity of sound. Of the two, alliteration plays a much lesser role. While it can be perceived in nineteen of the twenty-five poems under analysis, it is used rather sparingly, and most of the time

3

is not very obvious. However, there are some few examples of rather insistent alliteration, as this from "Na Gromniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"):

wiszący nad woskiem gromnic,
przez las kołący i wyjące wilki,²⁹

and this sequence of words in "Niechby ta jedna nić..." ("Let It Be That One Thread..."): "zycia żyło/ żywe."

These examples of alliteration are not typical of the poetry of Kazimiera Iłakowicz. Such patterns occur perhaps once in a poem, occupying only a few of the total number of lines. This is not the case with patterns of internal assonance, however, which occur with considerable frequency. Of the sample twenty-five poems, only three do not show some degree of internal harmony of sound. Usually it is similarity within one line, or between adjacent lines, of vowel and consonant combinations. This stanza from "Odrzucona modlitwa" ("Spurned Prayer"), shows how a harmonious structure of a sound pattern can be established by the use of internal rhymes and assonances as well as final rhymes:

Chcę wybłagać opiekę i łaskę
pokornymi, cichymi słowy
u Dziewicy, co złotą przepaske
ma wkoło głowy.³⁰

29 Ta jedna nić, p. 47

30 Wiersze Religijne, p. 23.

Several sounds, besides the rhyming ones, are repeated; the most important, showing very deliberate internal assonance, are -ymi and the repeated w, l and o in "złota," "wkoło," and "głowy."

Unlike the use of identical rhymes, which as has been noted seems to have decreased as the poet developed, the use of internal rhyme and assonance has remained quite constant over the years. "Odrzucona modlitwa" ("Spurned Prayer") is an early poem (1917-18). The following stanza is from "Dwie Twarze" ("Two Faces"), written in 1957:

Ty, którego światłością żywią się Zbawieni,
zabliźnij gorzyc życia, zmyj upokorzenie,³¹
a na schyloną głowę daj pokory wieniec.

Rhythm

It is more difficult to arrive at clear-cut conclusions about the rhythmic aspects of the poetry of Kazimiera Iłakowicz than it is about the aspects of rhyme and assonance. Not only is Polish prosody not subject to water-tight classification, but the poet herself is notoriously independent in her attitude towards conventional metrical theory.

According to Giergielewicz,³² five basic classes of

31 Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

32 Giergielewicz, Introduction to Polish, pp. 16-111..

Polish metrical practice can be distinguished. These are the following: 1) syllabism, which depends on syllable count at the fundamental metrical determinant; 2) syllabotonicism, in which the metrical basis is a combination of syllable and accent (or foot); 3) tonism, in which the only metrical basis is the accent (or foot); 4) "irregular" verse, which is relatively free of metrical uniformity but still bears some relationship to one of the three traditional systems; and 5) "free" verse, which is not tied to any of the traditional systems of versification.

Although numerous difficulties in classification are presented by the poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz (for example, one stanza of a poem may be quite regular in its metrical scheme, while a second may be irregular), one can roughly group the twenty-five poems under examination as follows: syllabic--1, syllabotonic--7, tonic--3, irregular--12, free verse--2.

A chief difficulty in the classification of these poems according to traditional categories results from the fact that, even when she is apparently following a particular system, Kazimiera Iłkiewicz will create variations that, so to speak, deny the poem full citizenship. A good example is "Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"). This poem is put into the syllabic category because it shows a high degree of

isosyllabism--eleven of its fourteen lines have fourteen syllables--and because every line contains a distinctly articulated anticadenzza and cadenzza created by a caesura. But even though each of the 14-syllable lines has its caesura in exactly the same place (after the seventh syllable), a characteristic of rigid syllabism, it must be recognized that the syllabic system is not being followed precisely: four of the lines have thirteen syllables and one has twelve. Nevertheless, there is no category other than syllabic in which to place this poem. It is further from any of the other four types of metrical approaches than it is from syllabism.

Other examples of syllabotonicism are not as regular, but it is worth noting that the system is still evident in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz as late as 1957, as is seen in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), published that year. Like other examples, it does not conform to the syllabotonic system as much as either "Odtrącona modlitwa" ("Spurned Prayer") or "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke").

Tonism is to be found in three of the sample poems. The most effective example, perhaps, is "Modlitwa" ("Prayer"):

1	sS	sS	sSs	
2	sS	sS	sSs	
3	sS	sS	ssSs	
4	sS	sS	sSs	
5	Ss	sSs	Ss	
6	sSs	Ss	Ss	
7	Ss	sSs	Ss	
8	sSs	(S)ss	Ss	(sS sSs sSs?)
9	Ss	Ss	Ss	sSs
10	sS	sS	sSs	
11	sS	sS	ssSs	
12	Ss	Ss	Ss	

The fact that seven of the twelve lines have the same number of syllables (seven) might argue for this poem being classified as syllabotonic rather than tonic, but when almost half of the lines of a poem do not conform to syllabic regularity, it might more justly be argued that syllable count was not uppermost in the poet's mind. On the other hand, all but one of the twelve lines have three accents (including what is taken as an obligatory stress on the first syllable of "niemiłosierne"). So the pattern of tonism is rather strong. What is most interesting about the technical aspects of this poem is the ninth line, with its unmistakable four stresses. A glance at the text shows that this line could easily have had seven syllables and three stresses, rather than nine and four, because a word is repeated. But it is just this repetition of "biegna, biegną" ("run, run"), that distinguishes Kazimiera Iłłakowicz as a poet, not a versifier, for the additional stress in the line reinforces its emotional content. Being contrary to expectations, it calls special attention to

itself, which is the purpose of the poet.

Twelve of the twenty-five sample poems fall into the "irregular" category; that is, they belong to no particular system, although parts may echo one or another system. The class is too large and diverse to be discussed here in any detail, but an example may illustrate what is to be found in the irregular verse of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), which has nine 6-line stanzas, shows no uniformity of either syllable count or accent pattern. The first stanza, for example, has lines of 13, 13, 9, 15, 15, and 8 syllables; the second has 18, 14, 11, 14, 10, and 6. Similarly, the first stanza's six lines have 7, 5, 3, 5, 6, and 3 stresses, while the second has 7, 6, 4, 5, 4, and 6. In spite of the regular rhyme scheme (aabccb except for the final stanza, which contains some unrhymed words), "Pacierz ranny" shows virtually no metrical uniformity. There are, however, several places in which it is clear that the poet intends that a feeling of regularity be perceived. In the first stanza, for example, the lines:

We śnie po gwiazdach stąpałam jak po złotych kamiakach,
teraz się dzień otwiera, a raj na rygle zamyka...³³

show not only rhyme, but a parallel swing between anticadenzas

33 Wiersze Religijne, p. 68.

and cadenza, with a caesura coming after the third foot in each line--reminiscent of syllabic poetry. In the fifth stanza there is a very strong pattern of tonic repetition between two rhyming lines, 3 and 6:

między Skorpionem, Łuczniakiem i Lwem!...
 ...Poznałam, dzwigałam, walczyłam, wiem.³⁴

The final class, consisting of poems written in free verse, contains "Połów" ("Fishing") and "Na Gramniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"). The extreme range of both syllable count and number of feet puts both poems far from any system. "Połów" ("Fishing"), for example, shows the following pattern:

sSs Ss Ss ssSs Ss sSs
 ssSs sSs sSs Ss Ss sSs Ss
 Ss Ss Ss sSs ssSs sSs Ss
 ssSs Ss sS sS sSs Ss Ss Ss

Since metaphor is the figure of speech most common to poetry, it is worthy of note that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz does not rely heavily on metaphor for the production of poetic effects, although, as the following breakdown shows, there are several poems in which metaphor is used rather frequently. The twenty-five poems can be divided into six classes according their use of metaphor. Two poems contain no metaphor; two others contain implicit metaphors;

³⁴ Ibid., p. 69.

three poems contain a single controlling metaphor; eight contain a single non-controlling metaphor; two poems contain two metaphors; and eight poems contain several metaphors. By approximate count there are 110 examples of metaphor in the twenty-five poems.

Within these same poems there are fewer than twenty-five examples of synecdoche and metonymy. Thirteen poems contain no example of those figures of speech; seven have one example; three have two; two alone contain more than two.

Symbolism, on the other hand, is a marked element in Kazimiera Iłzakowicz' religious poetry. It is quite natural that poetry which is religious in intention should make considerable use of familiar symbols (e.g., cross, thorns, wings) traditionally associated with Christian belief. Therefore, it is not surprising to find 195 examples of symbolism within the twenty-five poems. This means that for each poem there is an average of 7.8 symbols. In only one poem no symbol is employed. Approximately ninety, or one-half, of all the symbols, are unmistakably religious in meaning. Of the remaining ninety, most reveal their religious meaning only through interpretation based on their context, provided by either the title or other ideas, or by both.

Imagery is the vital and distinctive substance of the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. It is so rife that it is futile to attempt to make a listing of the separate images. Their variety and originality are self-evident. The images engage the reader's interest and understanding at a level of apprehension beyond the merely rational. They also fulfill a purpose typically associated with lyric poetry by arousing responses be- longing to the realm of inner feeling than to that of any intellectual system.

Repetition for emphasis and for the creation of melody is found in twenty-one of the twenty-five poems with anaphora appearing in about half the poems in the sample. Ellipsis is used in thirteen of the twenty-five. Its use at times adds to the obscurity of some passages but more frequently it produces an original effect.

When all the aspects of literary technique employed in these religious poems are examined and evaluated, it is evident that on the whole Kazimiera Iłłakowicz remains basically within the confines of conventional poetic practice. She has not experimented to any great extent, nor can her use of stanza form, rhyme, meter, figures of speech and choice of vocabulary be considered highly unusual. Nevertheless, in much of her poetry she shows a strong effort at individuality and inventiveness, and a

well-developed sense of the possibilities of using poetic devices in fresh and interesting ways in order to enhance the effectiveness of her communication with her reader.

It is well to remember that, although in her use of metaphor and symbolism, she does not attempt to achieve any unusual effects, she does show a high degree of originality in her use of imagery. It is in the area of imagery, in such poems as "Do świętej Cecylii" ("To Saint Cecilia") and "Tuż obok Boga" ("Here Beside God"), which are very obscure in part, that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz comes closest to displaying unmistakable independence from the traditional techniques of poetic literature.

Appendix 2 contains tables which give concrete examples of types of rhyme and percentage of typing rhyme utilized in the twenty-five selected religious poems. (See Tables I and II).

Table III indicates the distribution of the number of lines in these poems while Table IV lists metaphors employed in them. Table V lists the symbols Kazimiera Iłłakowicz used.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has been concerned with providing a background to the study of the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. First, a summary of her life and literary

accomplishments was presented. A mention was made of her ancestry, education, war-time experience, diplomatic service, exile and return to her native land. Her literary works and the awards they merited were indicated. Then an overview of the historical and cultural movements of the period her lifetime spanned was presented. This section of chapter 1 was broken down into two subdivisions: Young Poland and Polish Literature Between the First and Second World Wars.

The last section of the chapter was devoted to a consideration of the technical aspects of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz' religious poetry; data has been provided from a sampling of twenty-four lyric poems which were analyzed, and additional data being provided in five tables contained in Appendix 2.

It was shown that although Kazimiera Iłlakowicz was not a member of any literary clique, certain of her poems bear a resemblance to those of Bolesław Leśmian since they employ similar subject matter, fantasy and symbolism. In like manner, certain of her poems resemble those of Julian Tuwem.

Her's has truly been a quest for religious certitude, possessed as a child, lost as a young woman, tried by fire

during two world wars, attained through suffering, exile and privation:

Love of country and love of God shine through her poems which express every mood and longing of the human heart.

Cosmopolitan rather than provincial, she can take her place among those who have made genuine and lasting contributions to the literature of her native land.

She is both Catholic and catholic since her poetry expresses universal themes and brings for the universal emotional responses.

Very little serious critical material has been written about Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' poetry. What has been written appears to be brief articles in popular periodicals. According to critic Marta Wyka, it would be a very difficult task to write a critical biography of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz because of the diversity of her life situations, her various roles of student, poet, government official, teacher of languages, citizen of the world.

M. Wyka, however, points out that Iłłakowicz is considered a peculiar and unusual poet who was completely independent of political societies and cultural and literary cliques, although the poet was well aware of the

types and kinds of poetry being written by her contemporaries.³⁵

Bogusław Kaczyński states that she was well aware of the contemporary literary trends as well as their exponents because she had the opportunity to meet many famous writers, personalities and artists. Kaczyński remarks:

Stephen Żeromski, Artur Rubinstein, Paul and Sophia Kochański and most importantly, Karol Szymanowski. Szymanowski is important because of his musical contribution towards her collection of children's rhymes. At that time she did not care or have knowledge of his musical endeavors as far as her work was concerned, as he was not yet famous.³⁶

He quotes what Kazimiera Iłłakowicz said of herself:

I didn't feel that I had anything in common with the literary people, even during the census they put my occupation as "Government Official" I care about that statement because as an officer I was the first woman to occupy such an important position in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.³⁷

Mieczysława Buczkówna is of the opinion that Iłłakowicz had an affinity to Bolesław Lesmian, although she remained completely free from his influence.

35 Marta Wyka, Kultura, no. 30, 25 lipca 1976.

36 Bogusław Kaczyński, Kultura, September 28, 1973, no. 43, p. 1-4.

37 Ibid.

M. Buczkówna cites the contrasting treatment of natural objects by the two poets. This critic also points out Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' affinity to Juliusz Słowacki and Adam Mickiewicz in her use of patriotic themes and the romantic approach to literature as revealed in poems having to do with the personification of fanciful, eerie subject matter. Buczkówna recognizes a gradual maturing process in the life and writings of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz because her later poems reveal a more realistic acceptance of the world with its problems, sufferings, and frustrations.³⁸

Wilhelm Szewczyk's postscript to Wiersze wybrane (Collected Poems) accentuates Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' originality and stability, her independence of literary groups, schools, and imitations. He stresses the literary influence of Maria Konopnicka and Bolesław Lenartowicz on her.³⁹

W. Szewczyk is a second rate Marxist critic, he considers the religious element of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz' poetry as serving only a decorative purpose and as a reflection of the traditional Polish religion which he does

³⁸ Mieczysława Buczkówna, Literatura, May 13, 1976, p. 3.

³⁹ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz (Posłowie Wilhelma Szewczyka), Wiersze wybrane, Łódź, Wydawnictwo Władysława Bałki, 1949, p. 271.

not consider deeply significant.⁴⁰ On the contrary, unusual and commonplace themes are often employed by Kazimiera Iłkiewicz as a point of departure unlocking in the poet's experience, expressions of deep religious significance. The development of fundamental religious elements in her poetry is treated by the author of this thesis in the second and third chapters.

Modern Polish literature can be proud of such distinguished literary critics and authors of the history of Polish literature as Aleksander Bruckner, Juliusz Kleiner and leading literary historians as Julian Krzyżanowski, (1892 to 1976), author of studies in Old-Polish and vernacular literature and of a history of Polish literature as well as Kazimierz Czachowski, an author of Polish contemporary literature (1935-1937).

Aleksander Bruckner recognizes in her poetical works, "feminine lyrics" deep patriotic feelings and a lot of art.

Julian Krzyżanowski supports Aleksander Bruckner's appraisal of the poet.

40 Ibid., p. 275.

CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE RELIGIOUS POETRY OF KAZIMIERA ILLAKOWICZ

In this chapter, the religious poetry of Kazimiera Illakowicz will be analyzed in order to determine the chief quality of her concept of God. The main presumption of the study will be to determine that notwithstanding many conventional characteristics, it is nevertheless a personal, individual concept of God, reflecting the poet's own psychology limited to the precepts of Christian doctrine. First, her concept of the general idea of God will be analyzed in terms of three categories: the theological, the theological/psychological, and the psychological. It will be shown that the poet's main interest in God falls upon psychological attributes, that is, attributes which exhibit a relationship between God and man.

Second, her concept of the persons of the Holy Trinity will be analyzed. It will be demonstrated that she expresses comparatively little interest in the first and third persons of the Trinity--the Father and the Holy Spirit--but a great deal of interest in the second person: Jesus Christ. Her concept of Christ will be discussed according to a division based on: 1) attributes seen in the

chronological order of the life of Christ, and 2) attributes that do not fit into a chronological scheme.

Approached from a psychological point of view, the selected poems will be seen as revealing, whether consciously or unconsciously, the inner feelings of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz about God and, more importantly, about herself in relation to God.

It is very important, when studying Kazimiera Iłkiewicz's concept of God, to remember that she is not a theologian, but a poet. That her primary purpose is not the articulation of doctrine or dogma, but the creation of works of art. Consequently, when she uses religious motifs and images, they are used in the same way that secular ones are: in the service of her poetry.

Two main facts derive from this. First, her poetry almost never attempts to explain religious concepts, or even to examine them; religious concepts appear as constituent elements of feelings or perceptions. At times, though a single religious allusion may occupy only a brief portion of a poem, it is the key image, the central idea around which is structured the essence of the work. A case in point is "Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluz" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"). In the first seven stanzas, neither God, nor eternity, nor love is mentioned, yet God

and love appear in the last stanza and constitute the point of the poem.

And during the dark nights, under this heaven
made of steel
a bright lamp of love, the unseen God burns.¹

Normally Kazimiera Iłłakowicz gives more than such a brief mention to specific religious images: but when she does, they are not explained any more than they are in the poem cited above.

The second main fact that derives from Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's being a poet and not a theologian is that her concept of God as expressed in her poetry does not always comply with that contained in traditional worship and belief.

In conceptualizing her idea of God, she often treats this concept in an unorthodox manner; for example, in "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ") she says,

The crowd smells of blood and pus,
garbage covers Your path.²

The idea of Christ walking among lepers and unclean people is conventional and has Biblical authority; but the language and imagery are the poet's own and original, revealing more

¹ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Wiersze religijne, 1912-1954, Albertinum, Poznań, 1955, p. 160. Cited hereafter as Wiersze religijne.

² Ibid., p. 128.

to the reader about Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's individual psychology than about the religious concepts themselves.

As with the Trinity, so with her concept of God in general; the poet depends upon conventional concepts. The attributes of God extolled by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, for the most part, are derived from the teachings of the Church. These attributes, when they are discussed in the body of this chapter, may be arranged into three categories:

1) theological, 2) theological/psychological, 3) psychological. The terms "theological" and "psychological" are allowing for a distinction between those attributes of God (theological) that are relevant to God as a self-contained Being (e.g., eternity) and would exist whether man existed or not, and those (psychological) that are relevant to His relations with man (e.g., His forgiving nature). The attributes labelled "theological/psychological" are those that have meaning both when God is considered in the abstract, and when He is considered in relation to mankind (e.g., His omniscience).

This categorizing of attributes is especially useful in connection with the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz; for it helps to clarify the nature of her thinking and feeling about God. As will be shown, the poet places great importance on what are termed psychological attributes. It is in this area particularly that insight is gained into the

personal psychology of Kazimiera Iłzakowicz herself. Those attributes that are psychological reflect her own personal attributes and give insight into her personal psychology, for, although derived from Catholic dogma, they are self-actualized via inward or psychic experience.

It is to this psychic reality or experience that the psychological attributes of God belong; and her relationship to God, and His relationship to her, are actualized by means of it. God is Kazimiera Iłzakowicz' ego idea; and it is to this ideal that she responds. The relationship is one of the self seeking Self. Its development is in terms of I-Thou, Kazimiera-God, human nature-divine nature, relative-absolute, imperfection-perfection, particular-universal, knowing-unknowing. It is built on the basis of intuition and introspection, for God is unknowable except through intuitive knowledge, or what is called revelation. If the question is asked, why is this or that attribute of God psychological, the answer is simply that it is a psychological attribute of the poet. God's psychological attributes as they are seen in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłzakowicz are mirrors of her personality and character. They are projections. As such they afford insights into her concepts of herself as well as her concepts of God.

In the following discussion, the strictly theological attributes of God will be taken up first, then those

that share both theological and psychological characteristics, and finally those that are psychological in the sense that has already been explained. As noted earlier, the poet's treatment of the Persons of the Holy Trinity will be discussed separately. The first half of this discussion is concerned with the "general" concept of God, outside His triune nature.

God's eternality is given significant emphasis in the poetry of Iłłakowicz. In "Ekstaza" ("Ecstasy"), it is the "Immortal One" only who could know about Himself and not "give pain."³ And it is the awareness of the eternal painlessness of God's existence and self-knowledge that provides the poet with a reason for welcoming, as she says, the freeing of "the essence of the soul from the block of envied clay."⁴ The immortality of the soul is possible only because God is eternal. So it is clear that in "Niechby ta jedna nić" ("Let it be That One Thread"), although God is not mentioned by name, it is God's eternality that permits the "deathless love beyond the grave"⁵ to exist. All the threads but one will be broken when the

3 Ibid., p. 67.

4 Ibid., p. 67.

5 Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Ta jedna nić, Księgarnia sw. Wojciecha, Poznań, 1957, p. 203. Cited hereafter as Ta jedna nić.

poet dies. The "one thread" is the metaphor for the poet's eternal love:

When it will be necessary to go
 into the far darkness,
 let it be that one thread
 remained of me.
 Let the entire remainder break off
 and fall into an abyss.

--let this one last forever
 resounding, although blind.
 But for those, who lived their life
 most vitally
 --deathless love beyond the grave
 will not ignore.⁶

In "Nocą" ("At Night"), it is "God the highest, who does not die,"⁷ who places the children's toys upon the knees of the Mother of God when they are asleep. It is implied that at night the Christ-child will play with them. In this poem the fact that God is eternal is stressed, perhaps to assure the children that their toys, which they share with the Child, will not only be there for them tomorrow when they wake up, but will exist forever—eternal toys of eternal children of an eternal Father/God. The same kind of comfort exists for Major Stadnicki, whose grave is kept by Master Bochenko.⁸ Who will keep the grave after Bochenko himself is dead and gone? Perhaps no one; perhaps like the other

⁶ Ibid., p. 203.

⁷ Wiersze religijne, p. 32.

⁸ Ibid., p. 160.

soldiers' graves this one too will fall into neglect. But in the end this is of no importance, for

. . . during the dark nights, under this
heaven made of steel
a bright lamp of love, the unseen God
burns.⁹

Whatever happens to his body and his grave, the soul of Major Stadnicki will live eternally, like God.

In the poems just discussed, "Niechby ta jedna nić" ("Let it be That One Thread"), "Nocą" ("At Night"), and "Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"); Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is using the concept of God as an eternal Being in a way that makes that concept meaningful to herself and to others on a personal level. This is very characteristic of her religious poetry. As has been noted, the idea of an eternal and immortal God is a theological concept--an article of faith. But for the poet, the concept has little meaning unless it has a direct application to life, to the experience of men, women and children, and also to what happens to them after death. For the poet, if there were no eternal God, there would not be even a single thread between life and death. In psychological terms, it could be said that the poet takes advantage of the theological concept of eternity of God

⁹ Ibid., p. 160.

to strengthen her own hold on life, to fulfill her wish to live forever.

The theme of God's eternity, so significant in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, is also evidenced in the work of her Polish contemporaries. For example, Rev. Paweł Heintsch, in his poem, "Modlitwa" ("Prayer"), dwells on the immortality of God as reflected in the experience of silence.

I tremble, like stars above me
 Although quiet drones in my ears
 That I would hear a God when He approaches
 me
 Who is stillness, quieter than silence

You are immortal
 I will turn into dust for heaven's sake
 Allow my words to be passed on
 Bells of my funeral.¹⁰

An appreciation of creation leads another contemporary poet, Mieczysław Braun, to perceive God's eternity and infinity as reflected in the experience of searching for God's presence in the poem "Rozmowa" ("Conversation").

From every corner you manifest your eternity
 And from all things you breathe forth infinity--
 Now I know,
 Where to seek Your Presence.¹¹

¹⁰ Rev. Paweł Heintsch, Niepowrotne Godziny, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, 1959, p. 43.

¹¹ Andrzej Jastrzębski and Antoni Podsiad, z Głębokości: Antologia polskiej modlitwy poetyckiej, Warszawa, Instytut Wydawniczy Pax, p. 664.

Another theological attribute found in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is that of the omniscience of God. This attribute is stated directly in "Bóg w swym niebie dobrze wie" ("God in His Heaven Knows Well"); but it is narrowed to a very particular and unusual application: God knows the secret feelings of a violin:

I was broken. Glued. The musician took me--
pressed me to the bow. I give forth a sharp tone,
here beside this melody of old, so heavenly,
which melody was played on the violin of Paul
Kochanski.

The crowd does not know, claps noisily, foams with
excitement.

However, God in His heaven knows very well that I
am gritting my teeth.¹²

The violin is making an ironic comment on the ignorance of concrete audiences; they cannot distinguish between a beautiful tone and an unpleasant one. But God, who knows everything, knows this too, and shares even this small joke with the violin. What better evidence of His omniscience? In this humor is a happy note of self-affirmation. God's awareness of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's inmost feelings is lightheartedly underscored by inference. There is a deeper level of humor, too, for does she not hear the violin and know its feelings just as God? Here is an unconscious projection of a mutuality of relationship. But it is impersonal; God is far away.

¹² Wiersze religijne, p. 151.

The attribute of omniscience is also in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces") where the poet, addressing God, says, "O You, who knows what will be and prophesied what happened,"¹³ and in "Powitanie śmierci" ("Greeting Death") where the poet says that only God knows, understands, the poet's feelings of total acceptance of death.¹⁴ That God knows the past, the future- and her inmost feelings reflects His omniscience. But that she knows that God knows, indirectly leads some intuitive omniscience back to her and reflects again, within the psychology of the poet, a dynamic relationship, though an impersonal one.

Reference to God's omnipotence is made in at least three of Iłkiewicz's poems. The image of the burning bush associated with Moses seems to have special meaning for her. It is God's power revealed in the Biblical episode that suggested the title and subject matter of the poem "Krzak gorejący" ("Burning Bush") to her. Here she exclaims, "If God started the spark which burns and consumes me, / may He be blessed for that."¹⁵ The image occurs again in "Chodzę Za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ"), when the poet cries out for a miracle to occur, for the real meaning and

13 Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

14 Wiersze religijne, p. 24.

15 Ta jedna nić, p. 217.

value of Christ's divine nature to be made manifest to the apostles:

I follow You, Christ,
I will never be weary,
when hurrying in this race,
which You won over death.

The greedy crowd is surrounding You
deaf, blind and cripples
Behind Your apostles
You cannot be seen at all.

The crowd smells of blood and pus,
garbage is covering your path.
Oh where is the God of Moses
where is the burning bush!

I am following You Christ,
over Your whole earth,
but not with those who are clean,
but with lepers!¹⁶

She is also asking God to manifest Himself to her, to exercise the divine paradox of giving her life by means of burning and consuming, yet not destroying her. Or, if she is consumed, it is a death that precedes life, for according to St. Luke (20:37) what Moses demonstrated with the burning bush episode was that the dead can be raised.

In a poem commemorating those condemned to death, "Bóg jest także z nimi" ("God is Also With Them"), God's omnipotence is specifically conceived of in terms of a fundamental theological paradox, that life can come

16 Wiersze religijne, p. 128.

from death:

. . . God, as a seed from fire,
flutters over them every day,
will embrace and fertilize them

And sprouting with thick flowers,
with wings, storm, happiness
will shake the entire world.¹⁷

Again, God's omnipotence is specifically conceived of in terms of a fundamental theological paradox, that life can come from death. It is evident that psychologically, Iłłakowicz accepted the fact that the surrender of the ego to the fire of annihilation is required for the emergence of spiritual perception. The psychological paradox parallels the theological one--they are both in a sense mysteries. Iłłakowicz accepts the pain of the fire, convinced that fire, even after death, will bring forth the life of the spirit.

God's uniqueness and self-sufficiency are themes used sparingly in Iłłakowicz's poetry since these attributes are generally associated with an impersonal God. The poet was deeply imbued with the idea of a personal God with whom she had a personal relationship. In the poem "Stworzenie" ("Creature"), Iłłakowicz recognizes that God is not in need of companionship.

17 Ibid., p. 150.

My Lord and my God
 alone and full of glory,
 but man in time, in a net of causes
 and effects,
 gazing into an eternal flood.
 Into a full sea--who knows,
 how many similar rivers flow . . .
 In glory my Lord and my God . . .
 And I on a lyre, so indeed--on a lyre
 in time, upon water am singing.¹⁸

As his creature, the need for companionship is on her side. But she can only relate to Him and understand Him in terms of her own being. She realizes that she cannot have knowledge of God beyond the bounds of knowledge of herself. As His creature, she accepts her limitations.

This attitude towards God's self-sufficiency is reflected quite clearly in the Offertorium section of the poem, "Msza Maryjna na Matkę Boską Zielną" ("Mass in Honor of Mary Mother of the God of Herbs"), where the poet asks,

What can man return to You,
 O Lord Our God?
 A heart torn in half,
 which You know so well?¹⁹

There almost seems to be a slight touch of resentment here, as if the poet were saying, "You have everything already; You are complete. We can offer You nothing but our suffering, and You already know that." It would appear from the implications of "Stworzenie" ("Creature") and "Msza Maryjna"

18 Ta jedna nić, p. 202.

19 Ibid., p. 52.

("Mass in Honor of Mary") that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is happier when she is contemplating those attributes of God that have some direct bearing on human existence and human experience. God conceived of as alone and self-sufficient is remote from man. As far as the poet is concerned, this conception is not a subject she can write about convincingly, for she cannot relate to what she cannot understand.

God as Creator is a subject far more congenial to the poet. She envisions Him as responsible for the existence of everything. This conviction is expressed in "Bóg jest także z nimi" ("God is Also With Them"), which has already been cited. She calls Him "God Creator," the designer of the world in "Kain i Abel" ("Cain and Abel"). In "Stworzenie" ("Creature"), she speaks of God from the point of view of one of His created beings. Expressing wonder at the vastness of creation, she exclaims:

Into a full sea--who knows,
how many similar rivers flow . . . 20

Then, speaking for herself as one of God's creatures, she thanks Him for having made her different from the rest of creation, and yet part of it. She is a particular creation, a poet, partaking of the universal creation. This idea is

beautifully expressed in the lines:

And I on a lyre, so indeed--on a lyre
in time, upon water am singing.²¹

In the union of the conscious personality with the unconscious part of the psyche, Kazimiera Iłakowicz feels whole. A similar sentiment is expressed in the prayer-like lyric "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"), in which the poet wishes that God will consider her worthy to be called a poet, and will call her to eternity in that role, "a lyricist in the choir of angels."²²

It is abundantly evident that the poet delights in attributing to God the character of a Living Being,²³ a person to whom she can relate who is a tangible Presence, as in "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"):

If I ever meet You, Lord, in my own home,
not in Your Eucharist, a thing most holy
and sweet,
not the projection of Your thought, a
great person,
however You, Eternal One, for whom I am
waiting²⁴

It is this concept of God with which the poet feels

21 Ibid., p. 202.

22 Wiersze religijne, p. 65.

23 For a discussion of God as a living, or actual, Being, see Xavier Leon-Dufour, Dictionary of Biblical Theology, trans. P. Joseph Cahill, New York, Desclee Company, 1967, p. 186-187.

24 Wiersze religijne, p. 65.

comfortable; not the remote One who is alone, but the Living Being who recognizes the poet, values her poetry, and nominates her "a lyricist in the choir of angels."²⁵ This is the God who is somewhat anthropomorphized in the sense that, like human beings, He breathes. It is His breath that creates a star in "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke"); this image of a breathing God appears also in "Śmierć świętego Hilarego" ("The Death of St. Hilary"). Bishop Hilary breathes weakly as his servants sleep. But then he asks, "Is the night silent?" and the voices of the spirits answer:

Yes, silent--as the breath of God.²⁶

This image seems to have particular significance for Kazimiera Iłakowicz, for it appears in another place, this time in a poem of a rather serious emotional nature. "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" (For This Save Me After Death!) states a sharp difference between the ugly realities of life on earth and the peace of life after death. It is God who makes the difference. It is God's breath that will accomplish the miraculous metamorphosis that in turn will signal the freedom of the poet from the ugliness and unhappiness of earthly concerns:

25 Ibid., p. 65.

26 Ibid., p. 76.

may the hatred of that which I see,
 what I am and what has happened to me,
 be reborn again in the breath of God
 as in music the bitter branch of the
 willow.²⁷

The association of breath with life in God is not only a poetic concept but is also, in psychological terms, a revelation of the limited human understanding of which the poet is conscious.

To Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, God is not only the Creator of life, He is also the Sustainer of life. In "Wierzę w cuda" ("I Believe in Miracles"), she answers those who deny the possibility of miracles. She can testify to the reality of miracles, she says, because she is the witness to her own continued existence:

... every day with me a miracle happens
 stamped into the earth, mixed with everyday garbage,
 draws me out the might of God and keeps me saved in
 His hand as a live rose in a bouquet.²⁸

Clearly it is not mere existence that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is claiming for herself here; it is a special existence as an individual, a poet, a "live rose in a bouquet." God not only created her a poet, but also sustains her in that position. Of course, in the word "saved" there is the implication that she is saved in a spiritual sense as well-- she is assured, at least here, of her salvation.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 163.

²⁸ Wiersze religijne, p. 82.

The recognition of God's Providence, which is so closely allied to His Sustaining of life, is expressed not only in the poem just cited but also in two poems in which she begs for God's protection of Poland and its military forces. The first, "Modlitwa o pokój" ("Prayer for Peace"), is a dream poem in which Iłkowič expresses not the reality of a situation but rather what in her fantasy she would like the situation to be:

I stepped between swords,
staring into huge auroras,
I was shielded by God's providence
and the name of my country.²⁹

"Modlitwa za lotnictwo" ("Prayer for the Air Force") implores Divine Providence for military success. One more personal note is the poem "Tęsknota i miłość" ("Longing and Love"). Here Iłkowič expresses hope in God's Providence when in pain and loneliness she wonders if her love will cause her destruction. If such should be the case, she hopes that her death will be only temporal and that eternal life with God will await her.

If I will drown in this love,
If I will burn in this loneliness,
when I awaken, God upon me
instead of day, will dawn.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

³⁰ Ta jedna nić, p. 215.

The concept of God as Lord, the Sovereign of creation, is emphasized in several poems in which it is seen in conjunction with other already discussed attributes such as omnipotence and omniscience.

In the poem "Gromnice" ("Candlemas"), she speaks of "God of the bees" and "God of deer and wild pigs." Occasionally, however, she relates God's role as Lord more directly to herself. The recognition of the ultimate authority of God over the course and meaning of her life is expressed in two lines from "Odejście" ("Going Away"):

Don't be jealous of my simple dress . . .
The gale of God will destroy my beauty, anyway.³¹

It is reiterated in "Stworzenie" ("Creature") in which the "creature," Kazimiera Iłłakowicz herself, recognizes the power of the Lord over her destiny.

The well-known modern poet, Rev. Jan Twardowski, similarly acknowledges God as Creator in his poem

"Suplikacje" ("Supplications"):

O God, for the one hundredth holy time strong and
smiling,
You created a parrot, a garden snake, a striped zebra.
You ordered the squirrel and the hippopotamus to live.
You, with the whiskers of beetles, tickle theologians.
Today, when it is so sad and stuffy and dark,
Smile upon me.³²

31 Wiersze religijne, p. 113.

32 Rev. Jan Twardowski, Wiersze, Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, Poznań, 1959, p. 5.

The last strictly theological concept of God dealt with is that of God as Savior and Final Destiny of life.

Iłkiewicz perceives God as the source and final cause of redemption, and redemption in turn as the final goal of mankind. Later the role of the Person of Christ will be discussed in this connection; but in the poems under consideration at this point, God is being treated in His more "general" nature. The Christian's wish for redemption is expressed clearly in the poem, "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death!"):

may the hatred of that which I see,
what I am and what has happened to me,
be reborn again in the breath of God
as in music the bitter branch of the
willow.³³

The last two lines provide an excellent example of imagery. The poet's life on earth has been unpleasant; she sees herself as unclean and sinful. She is bitter; consequently, the metaphor is the bitter willow branch because just as that bitter branch can be made into a wind instrument (such as a flute) to produce beautiful music, so, by means of the breath of God, her bitter self can be made into something beautiful. The destiny she wishes for is to be transformed like the flute. Only God can bring this transformation about. The poet also wishes to be reborn in

³³ Wiersze religijne, p. 163.

the breath of God--that is, in a sense she wishes to become part of God, who is her Destiny, just as He is the Destiny of everything else that is a part of Him: music and willow branches included.

The same desire to achieve a final destiny with God is expressed in "Bóg i milczenie" ("God and Silence"). The poet compares herself with the chaos out of which God created the world; she seems indeed to be living a purposeless life, "without any connected motive," and symbolizes her sense of personal chaos by means of the metaphor of a string of pearls that has order but no meaning. All of this is preparing for

the moment
when God with one powerful Word
will unbind my silence.³⁴

That is, the meaningless string of actions of which her life is made, which amount to the silence of chaos, will gain meaning and voice when God chooses to announce the poet's destiny--which is the destiny of forever being at one with God. This fundamental motive of God as Final Destiny is seen in even more dramatic terms in "Niektórzy" ("Some of Them"), where it is not merely the pointlessness of a single person's existence that will change when God speaks the powerful Word, but rather the sinfulness of the

34 Ibid., p. 83.

lives of many people who are "dying, black from sins";³⁵ God represents the Final Destiny even of those who blaspheme against His truth:

. . . after death You gather all of us to Yourself.³⁶

This attitude toward the attribute of God as the Final Destiny of man's life is typical of the thinking of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz. She chooses to perceive God not as the Punisher of Sins, but as the Merciful One. God is good; the final destiny of man is with God, not with Satan; therefore it also must be good. And she implies that even the sinful person will achieve this destiny.

In summarizing Kazimiera Iłkiewicz's response to the theological attributes of God reflected in her poetry, it can be said that while she assents intellectually to God's omniscience, sovereignty, uniqueness and self-sufficiency, she does not exhibit a personal, emotional poetic response to them inasmuch as these attributes are associated with an impersonal God. Those attributes which imply and/or involve a personal relationship to God such as Creator, Sustainer of Life, Providence, Living Being, Omnipotence, Final Destiny of Life, evoke an intense, warm

35 Ta jedna nić, p. 145.

36 Ibid., p. 145.

response which is enveloped in arresting imagery and metaphoric language.

The concept of God is in no way unorthodox. She conceives him as an almighty, eternal, immortal Being, Creator of heaven and earth, in accordance with the church's statement in the Apostle's Creed and in Scripture.

It has already been shown that Iłzakowicz, in writing of God as man's Destiny, tended to see Him as a merciful, rather than as a punitive God. When one turns to examine the remaining two classes of attributes she assigns to God, the theological/psychological and the psychological, it is not surprising to find that the poet continues to emphasize God as merciful and loving toward man, rather than as angry or punitive. That God is merciful is a theological commonplace. It is a psychological attribute as well as a theological one because the only way in which man can meaningfully discuss or even contemplate mercy is in relation to man. It is a concept which man sees specifically in relation to himself, and which is applied by man through his own experience.³⁷

That Kazimiera Iłzakowicz approves of mercy for everyone, including sinners, is clearly evident in "Modlitwa

37 "In the religious sphere . . . belief that formulas are true can never wholly take the place of personal experience," William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, New York, Longmans, Green, 1902, p. 347.

za nieprzyjaciół" ("A Prayer for Enemies"). In the midst of war, of occupation and invasion by the most brutal of enemies, a patriot like Kazimiera Iłkiewicz might be expected to call down God's wrath upon those who are destroying her country, even her own life. But instead she asks God's mercy on the Germans as well as on the victims of the Germans:

Have mercy, God, upon the Germans!

Lord! . . .

Upon those projecting fury and terror,
upon those locked in prisons,
upon those awaiting freedom
behind the barbed wire of camps . . .

. . . Upon the innocent and their families
have mercy, God, upon the Germans.

.

Upon those who hate, have mercy, God.³⁸

This attitude is in compliance with what the poet considers most important of God's commands: Love thy neighbor. It, is very revealing not only of her own psychology, but of her basic view of the nature of God. Yet this view, despite whatever traditional doctrinal elements go into it, is ultimately a subjective one insofar as she has made it her own. As Carl Jung says, "Every psychology has the character of a subjective confession."³⁹ "A Prayer

³⁸ Wiersze religijne, p. 159.

³⁹ C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, trans. W. S. Dell and Cary F. Bayned, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1933, p. 118.

"for Enemies" shows how deeply religion connects with the psyche of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz and a belief in a merciful God. For if she were not sure that God is merciful, she then would have no divine example by which to explain and justify (perhaps rationalize?) her own attitudes. She can feel the need for mercy for the enemy because her religion has taught her that this is God's way; and having internalized this commandment to the point where she herself is capable of desiring such mercy, she can then feel free to call upon God to grant her wish, knowing that it is His wish too. It is very interesting that in the poem she mentions the innocent, the suffering along with those "projecting fury and terror," whom she also says are "bent before false gods." Thus she includes both the innocent and the guilty in the same general prayer for God's mercy--because God's mercy is infinite and extends to all, not just to a few. The infinitude of God's mercy is seen also, rather curiously, in the poem "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales"), which will be taken up in the next chapter. It should merely be noted here that the "gales," personified as spirits destructive of nature, are also therefore "enemies," but even enemies are deserving of God's mercy. A process of identification takes place here. She identifies with the divine model as the idealized image of herself. To love, to

show mercy, is to affirm life as God, the Creator of life affirms it.

Another attribute of God which is both theological and psychological is that of God as a Just Judge. The poetry of Kazimiera Iłzakowicz does not overemphasize the concept of divine justice. The poet is much more concerned with ideas of mercy and forgiveness than she is with punishment and retribution. In one poem in which God's judgement is specifically mentioned, "Na Polskie groby w Budapeszcie" ("Upon Polish Graves in Budapest"), the poet speaks on behalf of dead soldiers:

You placed them, Lord, in an even line,
as dropped swords and folded shields;
however, they will all come with us at Your
judgement
and equally with us they will testify before
You.

O, permit them to rest without reminiscence
and longing. . . .⁴⁰

The request is a simple and compassionate one: let the dead soldiers, Polish patriots, lie peacefully in their graves. This can be taken, by implication, as a more profound request that at the time of judgment, God will judge mercifully. The phrase "equally with us" suggests that Kazimiera Iłzakowicz wants God to know that she puts herself in the

40 Wiersz religijne, p. 146.

same class as the soldiers, and is saying, in effect, "As You judge me (and the people like me--i.e., devout Christians), so You should judge these soldiers." In this sense, then, "judgment" becomes practically equivalent to "mercy."

A more difficult use of the concept of God as Just Judge appears in "Do Madonny Pocieszenia" ("To the Madonna of Consolation"), where the speakers of the poem are poor farmers who "overslept the most beautiful day." They feel helpless in their poverty; whatever has happened to them is not really their fault: they are not guilty of anything for which they feel they should be held responsible:

We didn't ask for the loan which we have to
pay today,
we did nothing wrong to anyone--and we did
no damage . . .
O, Mother of Consolation, don't give us up to
the Judge.⁴¹

It is, of course, very unlikely that "the Judge" is anyone but God, in which case this particular sentiment seems contrary to the attitude about God's mercifulness that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz expresses in most of her poetry. The farmers are afraid of judgment. Since the lines quoted are the concluding lines of the poem, the poet has precluded any explanation or commentary about the farmers' fears. Are

⁴¹ Ta jedna nić, p. 38.

they justified? Would God punish them for "sins" that they do not think they have committed? It would seem that here the poet is allowing the reader to conclude that the farmers, with their unsophisticated notions of right and wrong, guilt and punishment, are not discriminating between divine and earthly justice. Indeed, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz seems to be whispering assurance that, since they are innocent farmers, they are certain to be judged mercifully, especially if their fates are in any way affected by the Mother of Consolation.⁴² One might go further and suggest that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz would expect God to be merciful to them even if they had actually done wrong. That is the message of most of her poetry in which the attribute of God's mercy appears.

The question of God's mercy is involved in the next attribute of which God is both theological and psychological: His omnipresence.⁴³ The connection between His being

42 From the point of view of the psychology of the poet, this can be taken as a probable projection of her own unconscious fears. As Carl Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 142 states: "Everything that is unconscious in ourselves we discover in our neighbors."

43 "God is everywhere," according to R. P. Pègues, *Catechism of the "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Aelred Whitacre, London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1931, p. 5. According to Paul Tillich, in Alexander J. McKelway, *The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich*, Richmond, Virginia, John Knox Press, 1964, p. 278, "In the certainty of the omnipresent God we are always at home."

everywhere, and His mercy is an obvious one if a leap of the imagination is made: if God is in everyone, then He is part of everyone; if He is part of everyone, then everything that happens to any person is also happening to Him; therefore, it is only natural that God should be merciful to all, for this means simply that He is being merciful to Himself. This may sound like sophistry, but for Kazimiera Iłlakowicz it is simply poetic truth. It is a personal, not a remote God with whom Kazimiera seeks communication. This is abundantly clear in several of the poems that have already been examined, such as "Stworzenie" and "Przy spotkaniu," and in poems specifically about Christ. For Kazimiera Iłlakowicz, God is most beloved and understood when He is closest to human nature, when he sympathizes with mankind and individuals, when he is present everywhere, as seen in "Bóg jest także z nimi" ("God Is Also With Them"):

God is also with them . . .
God is also with the condemned
near the same, the same earth.⁴⁴

She feels closest to God when she can experience harmony of feeling in the relationship. God loves everyone. Iłlakowicz finds love answering love, which reinforces her feeling of identification with God. To the extent that she has suffered, and perceives herself as a suffering person,

44 Wiersze religijne, p. 150.

she can experience also a sense of identification with "them," the condemned. But God's presence is not limited only to those who suffer, who are condemned, whether justly or unjustly. The poet cannot limit Him only to the "good" people, the "nice" people. If He is God, then He is everywhere, not just in those places and with those people that are identified as desirable. He must also be identified with the undesirable. He is part of the guilty as much as He is part of the innocent. This is a consideration espoused in "Bóg jest wszędzie" ("God Is Everywhere"):

You can't comprehend it: God is everywhere,
 in each mysterious and terrible ceremony.
 He is called forth not only by prayer and incense,
 but also by the gallows and the executioner.
 God is in the judge who judges unjustly,
 and also in the witness who swears falsely.
 He cannot absent Himself. Therefore it frightens me,
 Because if He is in St. Peter, so He is--in Judas!
 If He is in the Jew innocently murdered by Germans,
 so also is He in those Germans! . . . And I
 wonder
 about truth and falsehood, about punishment and crime,
 and in each little particle I discover God every
 day.⁴⁵

In the recurring discovery of God every day, one can find the psychological principle of attention at work. That is, we pay attention to that which is uppermost in importance in our minds, whether it is a need, a desire, a wish or a belief. For Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, the belief that God is everywhere is strong, important and constant.

⁴⁵ Ta jedna nić, p. 218.

Another interpretation of the idea that God is everywhere is in the poem, "Szukanie Boga" ("Seeking God"). The opening lines suggest that the poet has suffered disillusionment with the conventional pieties and imagery of religion:

I, vagabond, am seeking You on a rough pathless
road
through windy nights⁴⁶

In the lines:

You run like a wolf in empty spaces
a bird of prey, a quiet owl⁴⁷

Iłakowicz presents a God that reflects her own spirit, that answers her own needs, the needs of a person who at this moment feels about herself that she is a dark, brooding, animal-like vagabond. She says that she has been "taught the prayers of a child," but it is not clear that the God who is visualized in those prayers is not the God with whom the poet can communicate at this time. A child is innocent and sees God very simply: a pretty portrait on the wall, perfectly formed features surrounded by a halo, dressed in white, flowing robes. On this night, in this troubled mood brought on by who knows what sorrowful experiences, Kazimiera Iłakowicz feels with great intensity the truth that the same god appears in St. Peter and in Judas. Here

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 193.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 193.

she expresses basically the same idea, but in much more powerful and personal language:

In someone's face, destroyed by syphilis,
 You will flush instantly . . .
 Then again You will appear in a rose or a lily.

You fall like thunder upon innocent heads,
 You break rafts flowing with wheat . . .
 How can I find You in childlike prayer?⁴⁸

The last line of the poem suggests that the poet is momentarily experiencing an inner imbalance of the psyche. She has lost the sense of God's presence, which leaves her feeling incomplete and lacking in harmony.

It is likely that the two poems just discussed, "Bóg jest wszędzie" and "Szukanie Boga," are the most clearly representative of the concept of God as understood by Kazimiera Iłkiewicz; for her, His omnipresence is of the highest importance, and so is the implication of that fact; that He is as much present in the worst of human creatures as He is in the best.

So far in this study of the concept of God in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, those attributes of God which can be labelled either "theological" or "theological/psychological" have been examined. It has been shown that for the most part, she does not exhibit a personal relationship with God when dealing with His strictly

48 Ibid., p. 193.

theological attributes (e.g., His eternality). It has been further shown, that both theological and psychological attributes elicit from the poet a more intense and personal response. For example, God's omnipresence is a concept that occupies a central position in the poet's thinking, reflecting not only her conscious struggles with the question of her relationship with God, but the complexities of unconscious (and perhaps at times conscious) identification with God and the projection of her own needs and desires onto Him.

Turning to a consideration of the psychological attributes of the poet's general concept of God, it can be said that it is in this area that the most personal aspects of the poet's interrelationship with God and the deepest insights into Iłzakowicz as a human being are revealed.

Research has proved that as the human person advances in years, his/her concept of God undergoes development changes. He no longer remains only a transcendent figure but He is conceptualized as a more personal reality. That such a change took place in the poet's conception of God is revealed in the poem "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting").

If I ever meet You, Lord, in my own home,
 not Your Eucharist, a thing most holy and sweet;
 not the projection of Your thought, a great person,
 however You, Eternal One, for whom I am waiting
 --O rather increase the width of my wings unlimited,
 O be pleased to crowd my body into the rhythm of
 my song
 and for me, a winged word, flaming music,
 nominating me a lyricist⁴⁹ in the choir of angels.

Here Iłkacowicz personalizes her concept of God as Gift-Giver. She wishes to see God in person, not only in the Eucharist nor in the projection of His thought. It is His capacity of a Living Being, or an "actual" not "metaphysical" person, that He will understand her wish for a special gift and be willing to give it to her.

God as Giver of Gifts is seen also in "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"). Here He has no clear character or personality, but He is there to grant the poet's plea although the things she desires are not typical ("darkness and silence, / and power so mysterious, / not to be heard").

In "Modlitwa o pokój" ("Prayer for Peace")⁵⁰ the emphasis falls once more upon God as One who answers requests. The nature of the gift is unrelated to any theological attribute of God. Its value depends on the person who requests it. In this poem Iłkacowicz is solely

49 Wiersze religijne, p. 65.

50 Ibid., p. 100-101.

concerned with the satisfaction of her needs, her prayers for peace. The same concern with the needs and desires of human beings is seen in "Modlitwa (I)" ("Prayer [I]"). It begins by addressing God, "A silent night, Lord, grant us before daylight,"⁵¹ but in the next stanza shifts totally to addressing the Blessed Virgin Mary ("A good night plead for us, Mother of God"),⁵² appealing to those qualities that specifically characterize the Mother of God--pity, forgiveness, maternal protection. Thus, with the emphasis placed on the result of prayer, on the needs of the one who prays, the theological attributes of God recede. From the psychological point of view, the balance in the relationship between God and man becomes weighted on the side of man.

In "Powitanie śmierci" ("Greeting Death"), death is a gift from God. Instead of being dark and dreadful, death here is like a "light, bright, comfortable cradle," a multi-colored rainbow."⁵³ The final metaphor shows how completely Kazimiera Iłłakowicz accepts the concept of death as a special gift from God:

51 Ibid., p. 24. The poem is so designated to distinguish it from another with the same title, which is designated "Modlitwa (II)".

52 Ibid., p. 25.

53 Ibid., p. 24.

You are at my lips, like an expensive bowl
in the hands of an angel carried from God
through the mercy of the most holy Mother--
from God.⁵⁴

The idea of death as a gift of God and an assurance of peace confirms the impression that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz conceptualized God as a merciful Judge. If she had not the strong hope and expectation of mercy and redemption, death would be something fearful.⁵⁵

An additional poem that shows God as the Giver of the gift of death also exhibits another psychological attribute of God, that of the Source of Peace. This is "Śmierć" ("Death"):

Death in God's hands shines
as a gentle, white lamp;
my feet walk slower,
my wings embrace drowsiness,
my heart has closed its eyes
and the scent of violets is wafted,
and someone from on high speaks
to the heart: "Quieter . . . Quieter . . ." ⁵⁶

That death ultimately is in God's hands is both a theological and a psychological fact; but the quality of an individual's death, which is the subject of the poem, is a strictly psychological matter. The poet does not expect God

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵⁵ This life-affirming attitude on the part of the poet suggests Jung's point that religious teaching of a life hereafter agrees with a positive psychic hygiene. Cf. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, p. 112.

⁵⁶ Ta jedna nić., p. 216.

to take this responsibility. In this sense we see the poet revealing mature self-reliance and a trust in her own nature. The stress is placed upon the poet's feelings about her imagined death; it is not God as the author of death, but God as the Source of Peace who speaks the words "Quieter . . . Quieter." This poem echoes the thought that Rev. Paweł Heintsch expresses in "Pokój" ("Peace"):

I think of death with peace.
I think of it with joy
Because God has said
That He wants to be my friend.

The path to death is not far away.
Indeed, it is close at hand.
"Come, my son,
The Father bids me,

"Let me embrace you."
I hurry with great haste
To that moment
That I may kiss
Lord, your most holy pierced feet.

Happiness accompanies me
At each step
Since with His pierced hand
God has placed peace into my heart.⁵⁷

Iłzakowicz's poem "Tęsknota i miłość" ("Loneliness and Love") is a good example of how a single poem can work two ways in its religious purposes: 1) to draw attention to a particular theological attribute of God--His eternality, His lordship over the universe, and 2) to personalize, individualize, the human being's experience to show God as

57 Heintsch, op. cit., p. 168.

displaying a psychological attribute, i.e., as the ultimate source of peace for the poet. Perhaps here, as in "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"), there is an incipient conflict between two motives in the poet, for an element of selfishness enters in, as if God's purpose for existence is to provide comfort for this one individual. This motive would seem to conflict with the poet's favorite saying, "Love thy neighbor"; but then according to St. Matthew, did not Christ say, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"? It is, therefore, not wrong to love oneself, to ask of God some special attention. And it is theologically sound to assume that, in His role as Lord of the Universe, God is as much capable of wanting to provide the comfort of peace for one human being as He is for all of creation. "Tęsknota i miłość" is a very self-centered poem, but the poet's concept of God is not diminished because of this fact.

The patriotic prayer, "Na Polskie groby w Budapeszcie" ("Upon Polish Graves in Budapest") also conceives of God as the Source of Peace--"O, permit them to rest."⁵⁸ This prayer is not for the poet herself but for others for whom the poet feels compassion and pity, and even a sense of obligation, since they died in an effort to save something that she herself held dear. Again, as

⁵⁸ Ta jedna nić, p. 146.

with other attributes that are psychological rather than theological, the emphasis falls more upon the needs of man than on the nature of God.

Another psychological attribute, God as Love, is seen in a second poem which also deals with the graves of soldiers: "Grob majora Stadnickiego w Kluz" ("The Grave of Major Stadnicki in Kluz"). The theological attribute of eternity in this poem has already been pointed out, but it should be emphasized that the fact of God's eternity per se may not be any source of comfort to a man. But taken in connection with love, the fact of God's eternal existence then becomes extremely meaningful, for love is what relates God and man. Man shares in the prospect of eternal existence, because God loves him. Hence the comfort that is intended in the last two lines of the poem:

And during the dark nights, under this heaven made
of steel,
a bright lamp of love, the unseen God burns.⁵⁹

When Kazimiera Iłkiewicz sees God, He is being fitted into a general concept which by now has been shown to be typical of her thinking; that is, He is consistently perceived as loving, merciful, kind, forgiving, etc. One can see that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz constitutes her perception of God in her own image; she is not a punitive or angry

59 Ibid., p. 160.

person, and the God she writes about rarely is given attributes that suggest a punitive or angry divinity.⁶⁰ Thus it is natural that when Kazimiera Iłkiewicz uses the attribute of Father of mankind when writing of God, this figure is also a kindly rather than a stern one as He is revealed in a poem already discussed: "Nocą" ("At Night"):

And who opens the box at night?
God the highest, who does not die.
The Lord God eternal places the colored toys
until morning
on the knees of the Mother of God, the Queen,
on a blue mantle, on a dress so pure.⁶¹

Here God is not named "Father," but it is clear that the relationship established between God and the child who sleeps is that of father and child. God is the loving guardian with whom the toys of the sleeping child can be trusted. There is nothing potentially disappointing to the child, because the toys will be back in their proper place when she awakens in the morning. God is to be trusted; He is like a father; He loves His child. (As, of course, He

⁶⁰ The possibility that this sort of attribution follows a general human tendency receives support from a study by Uma Guha, "The Concepts of God and the Ghost in Children," in Indian Journal of Psychology, Vol. 18, 1943, p. 133-137. Guha interviewed 365 subjects from five different religious backgrounds. Analysis of their responses revealed that the concept of ghosts were based on fear and hostility, while the concept of God was based on pleasant associations, on goodness of power but not of evil.

⁶¹ Wiersze religijne, p. 32.

loves the Christ-child who is present in the poem by implication.)

The concept of God as loving Father is related to another, more general attribute of God: One who cares, One who can be trusted to provide comfort, guidance, protection. This is stated very simply in "Pokusa świętego Wincentego Ferreriusza" ("The Temptation of Saint Vincent Ferrerius"):

When Vincent Ferrerius became weak,
troubled by temptation which looked like fruit
covered with gold,
St. Dominic appeared to him,
stretched his hands to him and promised him
God's help.⁶²

The specific conditions under which St. Vincent is being tempted are of no importance; the whole poem relies entirely for its final effect on the fact that God's help is available for the potential sinner. Not only does God judge mercifully after a sin is committed, but He also cares enough to try to help people before they sin, to keep them from sinning. Similar interest in the concept of a God who cares is shown in the poem "Miłość" ("Love"), where, in addressing someone she loves, the poet says that it would be good to remember "the eternal heart, which is full of care about us."⁶³ That is, people must ultimately be willing to put their faith in the love of God. She compares a human

62 Ibid., p. 77.

63 Ta jedna nić, p. 210.

being to a bird who closes his eyes, and "builds his nest in the holy hand . . . of God."⁶⁴ The point of the whole poem is that love between human beings will always suffer from imperfections, whereas a loving trust in a loving God will result in one's receiving the protection of "the open right hand of God."⁶⁵

The concept of God as Protector is stated explicitly in "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"). Here the poet speaks of the difficulty of existing in a world--a "cage"--in which there is no calm, where the soul is disturbed by the complexities of human activities and involvements. She wishes she were able to return to a state of peaceful silence, to a simple (perhaps childlike) way of perceiving her relationship with God:

I want to be silent; I want to think
"Under Your Protection."⁶⁶

The poet is feeling trapped and upset by life and wants to return to a state of mind that permitted her to take comfort in the prayer that speaks of God as Protector. Here it would seem that she seeks God as a father whom she was once able to call upon for help, but now for some reason she cannot, or at least it is much more difficult to do so than

64 Ibid., p. 210.

65 Ibid., p. 210.

66 Wiersze religijne, p. 150.

it was when she was a child and said her innocent prayers with complete faith that they would be answered. One can see here how close religious belief or practice can be paralleled to psychological activity. To partake of God's love and protection is a normal religious activity; to internalize this love and protection as a feeling of security within is a psychological activity. In "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"), psychological turbulence is indicated; the poet is caught in a situation she does not understand. In this confusion, she is uncertain about how she relates to God. It is a frightening thought to consider that perhaps she can no longer depend on her conception of God as a loving protector. If this is the case, then perhaps the image of the wolf is, whether consciously or not, created by the poet as a symbol of what she fears--the dehumanization that could be brought about by her separation from God.

Another contemporary poet, Kazimierz Piekut, also treats the theme of God's protective love in a poem entitled "Asperges Me" ("Sprinkle Me") in which he expresses trust and dependence in his plea for God's loving protection of his family after his death.

When for the last time daybreak will flash, /
 I will give my eyes forever to eternal dream.
 Take my children into your custody, Lord,
 And to my widow give peace and home.⁶⁷

Although the theme of God's loving protection is common to both Iłkiewicz and Piekut, the latter lacks the clear expression of the deep internalization of the feeling of childlike dependence which Iłkiewicz strives to recapture in "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"):

I cannot free myself, I cannot raise myself up
 I cannot return from noise to silence
 The calm within me is disturbed, the soul
 within me is wounded.
 I want to be silent, I want to think "Under
 Your Protection."
 And the heart flutters and the blood is beating,
 pounding
 There was a Spirit, and now in the cage a wolf
 snaps his teeth in the night.⁶⁸

The final psychological attribute to be studied is that of God as source of pleasure. This attribute is not typical of those that appear in Iłkiewicz's poetry. In "Nad niewiedzą" ("Upon Ignorance"), she seems to contemplate the thought of God as a source of pleasure in itself.

Every love has died,
 every grief has turned to stone,
 and nothing is pleasant anymore
 except God.⁶⁹

67 Jastrzębski and Podsiad, op. cit., p. 690

68 Wiersze religijne, p. 150.

69 Ibid., p. 130.

Usually Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is seeking God's assistance in the solving of particular human problems or in finding a way of withdrawing from them. Here, however, she seems to be finding satisfaction in the mere fact of His existence, without feeling the need for Him to answer prayers. God alone, and only God, is a source of pleasure. This poem is almost opposite in feeling from "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"); yet one sees that the same basic psychological concept of God is at work in both poems. He is not an object of fear, but of love; when Kazimiera Iłłakowicz seems emotionally disturbed and thinks the world is a cage, this feeling is accompanied by a sense of separation from God because God represents peace, serenity, psychic unity. In "Nad niewiedzą" ("Upon Ignorance"), the poet does not exhibit the same sort of deep disturbance as is revealed in "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"), but rather seems to have reached a point of realization of the vanity of earthly desires. Only God is left--"nothing is pleasant anymore except God"⁷⁰--and she feels at peace with Him. They are at peace with one another; she is no longer in a state of separation.

In summary it can be said that it is in connection with the psychological attributes of God referred to in her

70 Ibid., p. 130.

religious poetry that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz most definitely reveals her personal relationship with and response to the general concept of God. As long as the concept of God is tied to theological attributes, such as eternity or omniscience, the poet displays little of her own sense of a personal relationship. She reveals most of her own individual psychology when she is free to conceive of God directly in terms that relate specifically to here as a human being. The psychological attributes of God, then, are those that show Kazimiera Iłłakowicz in a sense "creating" God in the particular image that satisfies her individual feelings and needs, her own psychology. It is worth noting, however, that the God of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is still, without any question, fundamentally the God of traditional Christianity. She may invent an idea about god, such as His giving man a gift of death, or in "Powitanie Śmierci" ("Greeting Death"): but she does not invent characteristics, attributes or concepts that are in conflict with orthodox Catholicism.

Before turning to a discussion of the concept of God as He is perceived in the Person of the Holy Trinity, it should be noted that in the preceding discussion it became clear that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, in her poetic employment of the general concept of God, attributed to Him characteristics which can easily be identified as belonging to God as Father. In theology, when God is considered in His

one-ness, not as a triune divinity, He is, of course, endowed with fatherly characteristics since He is the Creator of the human race. It is therefore quite natural, and theologically correct for the poet to attribute to God the character of Father even when she is not specifically contemplating His role as a Person of the Trinity.

On the whole, when Kazimiera Iłłakowicz deals with specific attributes of the Persons of the Holy Trinity she pays comparatively little attention to any member of the Trinity except Jesus Christ. God as the Father of Christ is hardly mentioned in her poetry; and the Holy Spirit, although receiving somewhat more attention, is not mentioned very often. It is the Person of Jesus Christ in whom Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is most interested. For this reason, the major part of the following portion of this chapter will treat of the figure of Christ in her poetry.

For the purpose of following a familiar order of presentation of material, the attributes of Christ will be considered as they appear in the chronological order of His life as recounted in Holy Scripture, with other attributes that do not fit directly into a chronological scheme commented upon later. In the course of the study, a distinction will be made, as it was with the general concept of God, between theological and psychological attributes. It should be recalled, however, that even strictly theological

attributes of God are perceived by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz as having direct relevance to human concerns and human wishes. In this connection it should be remembered that, according to Catholic teaching, Christ is both divine and human; therefore, that Iłłakowicz should see His attributes from a human, personal point of view is only natural.

One of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's short lyric poems, "Podobny światłu" ("Like a Light"), briefly summarizes the life of Christ and characterizes the poet's view of the meaning of His life as it applies to her:

You rise and set
 like a light,
 You appear like a child in a manger,
 as a little Jewish boy in the workshop,
 in the face which Satan saw in the desert,
 in the wreath of thorns which was lifted up for the
 irony of the crowd . . .
 You set and You rise like the moon,
 and I--I disappear and then rise again when
 You are victorious.⁷¹

This poem provides an excellent example of the way in which the poet chooses certain specific images to convey her particular feeling of identification with aspects of Christ. He appears in different ways and different places, in various stages, so to speak, of His career on earth. The poet feels also the sense of experiencing a variety of identities, of Christ's appearing and disappearing first in

⁷¹ Ta jedna nić, p. 185.

one form and then in another. She too has experienced innocence, and then temptation, and then agony of emotional suffering. But since she identifies with Christ and understands that He suffered like a human being although having a divine nature, she is able to transfer His victory over darkness to herself, to participate in it as He wishes all human beings to do.

Considering the attributes of Christ first as they are chronologically recounted in the New Testament, it can be said that Jesus as Son of Mary is a theological and psychological attribute which appears very frequently in poems about the Blessed Virgin--for example, "Na Gromniczną" ("The Purification of our Lady")--but less frequently in poems that are specifically about Christ. Even the birth of Christ tends to be treated more as an event related to the Holy Mother than to Christ, as we see in "Wspomnienie o Bożym Narodzeniu 1943" ("Reminiscence About Christmas 1943"). Although the "Child most beautiful"⁷² is mentioned, the poem concentrates on the figure of the "little girl, Mother of Christ."⁷³ In "Po świętach" ("After the Holidays"), the scene of the birth of Christ is discussed by an old man who is disappointed that the scene is represented

72 Wiersze religijne, p. 149.

73 Ibid., p. 149.

by nothing but plaster figures.⁷⁴ Here there is no particular concern with attributes of the Christ Child, but rather with the attitude of an old man toward custom and change.

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz develops the concept of the Christ Child a little more fully in two other poems, but even here the emphasis on His characteristics is not very strong. In "Sierotka" ("A Little Orphan"), the two main persons are the orphan and the Virgin Mary, whom the orphan sees one wintry day on the village green. The orphan, who is wearing two coverings, removes one:

"Take, bright Queen
for the Child a dress,
because He is all stiff from frost!"

The Mother will
warmly wrap Jesus . . .
The little orphan remained
in one shirt.
"Stay, little orphan, in the service of
Jesus!"⁷⁵

The poet establishes a relationship between Christ and the orphan through the orphan's ability to sacrifice her own warmth in favor of that of the Child on whom she takes pity. Thus, the orphan is demonstrating that her nature is at one with His, and so is quite naturally chosen by Jesus as a servant, which is, of course, an incomparable honor. A similar story is told in "Kolęda Marianny" ("Carols of

74 Ta jedna nić, p. 156.

75 Ibid., p. 127.

Marianne") in which the servant of a family, Marianne, gets in trouble with her master and mistress by feeding a poor boy in the kitchen. It is very interesting that Kazimiera Iłakowicz, in describing the boy, gives him characteristics and qualities that are not appealing:

. . . there are some holy children;
they smell like flowers in the wood,
and they sing like birds . . .

Paul is not like them;
once he destroyed a decorative plate
and also two bottles of juice.

He didn't have shiny golden locks
and there was nothing pretty about him.
He never washed his curly head
and all of his clothing was full of dirt.

He didn't experience miraculous revelations,
and didn't even foresee the future⁷⁶

But this makes no difference to Marianne. Even though she knows that his presence caused her difficulty, she decided that she will continue to feed him as long as she is working in that kitchen. Like the little girl in "Sierotka" ("A Little Orphan"), Marianne gains the reward of her self-sacrifice and pity and generosity. She sets the table for the boy, and then:

76 Ibid., p. 151-152.

No one knows how he came, through the door or
through the wall;
Marianne looks and is not able to say a word:
There is somebody shining sitting at the vigil
dinner.
The angels covered the table with white cloth and
with hay.

Is that little Paul dressed in dirty clothing
Or maybe that's the One before whom people prostrate
on their faces?
The whole kitchen is filled with the smell of
foreign roses;
Marianne kneels down quietly and her eyes fall
half-shut . . .
O miracle!⁷⁷

Jesus has appeared to her in person. The similarity of this poem to "Sierotka" ("A Little Orphan") is very clear; in both the kindness of a poor person toward someone poorer than herself is rewarded by Jesus. Here the focus of the interest is not upon the specific attributes of Jesus as God, but upon a human Jesus and a human girl who is gaining a reward by behaving in a Christ-like way. Like the infant Jesus, little Paul in his human capacity can give nothing to anyone; he is in need of help, an object of pity. Yet Jesus is able to give rewards and provide comforts for human beings who follow Him by imitating His actions. This, of course, is a fundamental Christian concept, basic to the teaching of Jesus: "Whoever receives one such little child for my sake, receives me."⁷⁸

77 Ibid., p. 155.

78 Mark 9:36.

It, however, is doubtful if little Paul is intended to be taken as representing Jesus as a child; Paul is a child perhaps about ten years old; but the Jesus who replaces him at Marianne's table is a full-grown Man. As has been noted, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's religious poetry does not concern itself very much with the figure of Jesus as a Child; in fact, the emphasis is placed much more strongly on the Holy Mother, who is seen as holding and protecting the Infant. The rest of the time Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is writing about Jesus as a full-grown Man. In that period of His life she concentrates almost fully on the events of the Crucifixion. As noted above, she does mention in "Podobny światłu" ("Like A Light") the "little Jewish boy in the workshop" and "the face that Satan saw in the desert"⁷⁹; but images from the early life of Christ are uncommon in her poetry.

One of the most powerful images of Jesus Christ, however, does come from the pre-Golgotha period. It is the theological and psychological attribute of Jesus as the friend of the sick, the unclean and the poor seen in "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ"):

79 Ta jedna nić, p. 185.

I follow You, Christ,
 I will never be weary,
 when hurrying in this race,
 which You won over death.

The greedy crowd is surrounding You
 deaf, blind and cripples . . .
 Behind Your apostles
 You cannot be seen at all.

The crowd smells of blood and pus,
 garbage is covering Your path.
 Oh where is the God of Moses,
 where is the burning bush?

I am following You, Christ,
 over Your whole earth,
 but not with those who are clean,
 but with lepers!⁸⁰

There is a similarity between this poem and those about the orphan and the servant-girl already cited; but here the message about Jesus's identification with the poor, the "have-nots" the "dregs" of humanity, is much stronger. Here the people are ugly and unpleasant; they are greedy, unclean; they are looking for a miracle from the God of Moses to cure them and purify them. Possibly the apostles symbolize the hierarchy of the Church for Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, who at the time she wrote this poem was so emotionally upset by the sad plight of the poor that she identified with the downtrodden and underprivileged. For Iłłakowicz the question is, "Am I among the clean or the unclean?" She seems to see herself

80 Wiersze religijne, p. 128.

here as unclean, as identified with the lepers; but she recognizes the important Christian paradox that it is the lowly who are closest to God. The apostles are the "clean" ones, but they are not fulfilling their function as intermediaries of Christ. The crippled and infirm people are just as greedy as the apostles are for a look at Jesus, but they are sick and they know they are sick: they know how deeply they need a miracle to cleanse them. Out of the greater intensity of their need for Jesus, they are in a sense closer to Him than the apostles are. It is this recognition that makes the poet say that she wishes to be "not with those who are clean, / but with lepers."⁸¹ As a human being, the poet is depending upon the love and mercy of God as He appears in the Person of the Son. She loves Him because she recognizes His goodness--not in abstract theological terms, but in human terms. The power of His evident goodness transfers itself to her, so that she becomes a follower perfectly willing to be counted among the lepers of the world. She is not proud; she is humble, and in this humility she is closer to God. Psychologically, one might suggest that her sense of her own unworthiness makes it easier for her to see a relationship between Jesus and the Poor, and to identify with both of them.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 128.

A similar mood and images are evoked in "Silniejsza niż moja niewiara" ("Stronger Than My Disbelief"), in which the poet states that her love for Jesus is stronger than her lack of faith. She withholds all her potential requests in favor of her one wish, to follow in Christ's footsteps.

My love is stronger than my disbelief,
it follows the pilgrim's path, it tries to reach
Your footsteps on the story paths of Palestine.
This way passed thousands whom You fed,
O you prophet without church, victorious without an
army,
carpenter's apprentice . . . O Christ, Son of God.

From the burden of my guilt, from stupidity, from
treason
my day is dying like the days of the Palestinians.
They--always requested. For me there is no need
of miracles.
I need only one thing: Your footsteps . . .

Let Him appear to me like a clear word,
let Him speak through the colors on the dusty paths,
let Him deafen me with a blaring sound to reach in a
simple way, softly
to my disbelief which is more lonely than my love.⁸²

Again, as in "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ"), we see the poet wishing for nothing more than to be a follower of Christ. Her "disbelief" is a typical doubt in the strength of her own faith. She is poor in spirit rather than in material things. She calls upon Jesus to speak to her from the "dry paths" so that she can, by following Him on His path, lose her "disbelief which is more

82 Ta jedna nić, p. 186.

lonely than my love,"⁸³ and gain the spiritual richness communicated by the sound of His voice, the sound of His footsteps. These are all she needs for confirmation of her faith--no miracles. The humility of this prayer is typical of the poet.

Two other poems mention the attribute of Christ as friend of the poor, the sick, the undesirable "dregs" of humanity. These are "Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów" ("Before Christ of The Fathers of St. Francis of Salesii"), in which Christ, "whiter than fresh chalk," protects even those who dwell in dirt, ugliness and perversion;⁸⁴ and "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), which recalls Christ's words to the thief on the cross, promising him eternity in Paradise.

"Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces") is an especially interesting poem in that it joins together the poet's concern with Jesus as friend to the poor and undesirable to her concept of Jesus as the crucified God/Man. The crucifixion of Christ is a historical fact with major theological implications for Christians. It has deep psychological meaning as well, for through this act man is believed redeemed. The poem is primarily a prayer that the speaker of the poem is making to Christ on the Cross, a prayer that asks for both

83 Ibid., p. 186.

84 Wiersze religijne, p. 114.

spiritual reform and for redemption in the afterlife:

Let the empty suffering desires be purified with
 grace,
 let my evil be transformed and become goodness,
 let the dry leaves produce fruit with no
 difficulties.

And now, today--it is not the hour of death--this
 please tell me,
 You who promised a dying good thief
 when You were on the cross, on the edge of
 eternity:

"Truly, even TODAY you will be with me in
 Paradise."⁸⁵

Here Kazimiera Iłkiewicz has placed herself in the same class with the "good thief"; that is, one who has done wrong but who believes in Christ and thus, she hopes, will be in Paradise with Him. This is the same sort of identification with Biblical characters that was noted in "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ"), where the poet chooses to allow herself to be identified with lepers. This identification is very important to an understanding of the poet's religious attitudes, for she always chooses the lowest of people as representing herself in relation to God. She does not claim to be pious, or to have given rich gifts to the church, or to have performed all her duties and obligations and thus "deserve" salvation. Rather, she claims to be low, evil, spiritually weak, in need of grace. It is her hope, as she says in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"),

⁸⁵ Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

that her evil will be transformed into good through the grace of the Crucified Jesus.⁸⁶ The concept of Jesus here is clearly similar to the concepts that have already been discussed: He is merciful. He loves His flock, especially the weakest and the lowest, as He loves the thief on the cross. The title of the poem, "Two Faces," can be interpreted in several ways. The two faces can be those of Jesus and the good thief, the Savior and the saved. Or perhaps they are the faces of the thief and the poet, both sinners in need of salvation. Or maybe they are the faces of the poet and of Jesus--facing each other in a sense, in the reciprocal relationship in which the divine being and the human being meet on common ground, the humble Savior wearing a crown of thorns and putting on the poet-sinner's "bowed head a humble garland."⁸⁷

The face of the crucified Savior appears again in "Nienawidzić nie będę" ("I Will Not Hate"). The point of this poem is very clear: the poet is speaking as a person who does not wish to hate others, who wants to love even those who may be her worst enemies, and who promises Christ that she will not hate them. Her example is Christ Himself

86 Such insistent claims may indicate a process of rationalization on her part, in order to unconsciously justify a feeling of guilt for lack of effort.

87 Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

who will not hate the people who kill Him. Nothing, she says, will make her hate others.

. . . . Not even in thought, not even in deed,
 not even in word.
 not even openly, not even secretly,
 --I promise You, tortured head . . .
 . . . So help me thus, Redeemer.⁸⁸

This is almost a cry for help from the poet who asks Christ to transfer to her some of His power to forgive.

The identification between the speaker of the poem and Christ is very clear not only in this poem, but also in a somewhat more difficult one, "Niesświęta męka" ("Unholy Passion"). Here the poet compares her "passion" to Christ's and realizes that, in fact, no real comparison can be made at all. The quality of Christ's agony and its meaning are much greater than any suffering she can experience:

On the way of my pain I didn't find, God,
 footsteps of Christ's blood;
 upon my crown of thorns, resting on my open
 wounds,
 there was not even a branch from the thorns
 on His head;
 the hidden blows struck with force upon my
 back
 were not like the flagellation of Jesus'
 passion.⁸⁹

Perhaps here the poet reveals some degree of jealousy that her passion, her suffering, as bad as they are, do not have the deeper meaning of Christ's passion. In the

88 Wiersze religijne, p. 119.

89 Ta jedna nić, p. 214.

acknowledgment of the greater pain suffered by Jesus there is perhaps some envy that her pain could never equal His. Is it a waste of feeling and spiritual commitment for a human being to suffer her own kind of crucifixion and not have it really mean anything--". . . on my Golgotha was emptiness"⁹⁰--or does the poem simply recognize that, no matter how great a human being's suffering may be, it cannot compare with the passion of Jesus because, as the title puts it, it is an "unholy passion"? The possibility of envy is supported by another reference to the crucifixion. In "Bóg szczęśliwych" ("God of the Fortunate"), the line, "Never with agony did God come down to me,"⁹¹ suggests a kind of jealous disappointment; but it is difficult to tell if Kazimiera Iłakowicz intends the reader to think that she is speaking for herself or for some other person whose voice she is reproducing for the sake of the poem. At any rate, she would seem to be reaching for an inner personal adjustment adequate to make room for the wholeness and perfection of Jesus while maintaining her own value.

Since Kazimiera Iłakowicz is primarily a poet and neither a theologian nor an interpreter of religious ideas, one should not expect that she would approach religious

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 214.

⁹¹ Wiersze religijne, p. 67.

concepts with consistency in her point of view. In her concept of Jesus Christ, as in her concept of a non-personal God, she is more concerned with making a poetic image than in stating a theological truth. Thus her treatment of Jesus carries a very strong element of her own personality; in fact, she will use already established aspects of the character of Jesus and the events in His life, not because she wishes to examine them, but because they shed light on her own feelings and problems. All this is clear in many of the poems that have already been examined. For example, in "Niesświęta męka" ("Unholy Passion") it is clear that the emphasis is not so much on attempting to understand the nature of Christ's sacrifice, but rather on understanding the nature of her own. In this sense, the Crucifixion becomes a metaphor. It is through a realization of this fact that one can understand the significance of another poem about Christ's death, "Porzucił mnie Pan mój" ("My God Has Forsaken Me"). The meaning of the title is clear enough: the poet is borrowing for herself the last words of Christ on the Cross, identifying with Him by speaking His words, and addressing them to Him in an echo of the way He addressed them to His Father. The poem begins,

I have no peace now since . . . Bleeding and
perspiring
Jesus appeared to me on His way to Golgotha.⁹²

Then it describes the scene on the way to Golgotha. The speaker of the poem is not identified, but she mentions seeing Veronica, Miriam, Salome, Magdalene, the Holy Mother, Christ Himself carrying the Cross, and the soldiers mocking Him. This all has a powerful effect on the speaker, but the effect is expressed almost entirely in the description of the scene itself; then the final lines repeat the opening lines. The speaker is haunted by the vision of the scene en route to Golgotha. The terrible sights, especially of "my Lord full of wounds, with drying blood on His lips,"⁹⁴ cannot be wiped away, they are with her forever. So she feels the intensity of the agony of the Crucifixion. The speaker's reaction comes a little close to despair, as well, if the title is interpreted fully, for the death of Christ is taken as a forsaking of His follower. What is there now for her? She has no peace. By implication, one can assume that the faithful Christian in this circumstance of near-despair

92 Ta jedna nić, p. 188.

93 Ibid., p. 189.

94 Ibid., p. 189.

eventually realizes that the Lord has not actually forsaken her--any more than the Father has forsaken the Son at the Crucifixion. The poem itself ends on a despairing note, but the reader knows that this is not the end of the story; Jesus has not forsaken humanity.

Inasmuch as in "Porzucił mnie Pan mój" ("My God Has Forsaken Me") the speaker is present at the scene of the events, we assume that the poet intends us to understand that it is a persona, not the poet, who is speaking the lines. A similar poem is even more clearly intended as a dramatic monologue. This is "Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa" ("The Funeral of Jesus") in which the speaker is Mary Magdalene. She has been watching events connected with the death of Christ. The procession carrying the dead body of Christ has come to the place of burial:

. . . They walked there, where Joseph of Arimathea
 had indicated,
 where in the cool rock were set forth fragrant
 salves,
 where in the silence it is possible to weep and wail.
 But I, Magdalene, knelt down by the wall.
 I will go no farther with the funeral procession,
 because I know that tomorrow, upon the opened
 grave,
 I will see my living Lord.⁹⁵

Here the tone is quite different from that of "Porzucił mnie Pan mój" ("My God Has Forsaken Me"), for the Magdalene is

95 Wiersze religijne, p. 116.

able to take an optimistic view of the events she sees. After all, she is certain in the knowledge of the Resurrection, and regardless of how much sorrow she might feel upon looking at the body of the dead Christ, there is no suggestion of despair. In fact, very little of the painfulness of the painfulness of the scene in "Porzucił mnie Pan mój" ("My God Has Forsaken Me") is present in "Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa" ("The Funeral of Jesus"). What the speaker of the former poem will always remember are pictures of agony, torture and blood; but Mary Magdalene speaks of the fact that:

The little olive tree bent down, the
palm was swaying.⁹⁶

In other words, the scene in the latter poem is a scene of peaceful sadness. The two poems, read together, take the reader through the varieties of emotional experience that can be associated with the final events of Christ's life and death: the agony felt by an observer, a reflection of Christ's passion; the calmness after His death, knowing that the pain of the Crucifixion is over; and the quiet joy of the faithful follower of Jesus, knowing that tomorrow He will rise, and understanding as well the significance of that Resurrection to every individual human being, especially sinners like Mary Magdalene herself, who were and

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 116.

are the particular recipients of Christ's mercy.

In "Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa" ("The Funeral of Jesus"), we see an aspect of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz's treatment of the theological concept of the resurrected Lord. By focusing on Mary Magdalene, the poet has emphasized once more one of the most important characteristics of her concept of God-- that is, the humanity of Jesus revealed through a relationship with a particular human being with whom both the poet and the reader can readily identify. The possible self-identification of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz with Mary Magdalene is suggested in another poem in which the concept of resurrection is present. This is "Miejsce, gdzie padnę" ("The Place Where I Will Fall"). The following lines,

Not even stained glass,
not even silken curtains,
will strengthen me when I weaken,⁹⁷

suggest that a life of luxury perhaps of luxurious sin, will provide no safeguard against weakness and death. At the end of the poem Iłłakowicz makes an implied comparison between an admirer and Christ:

To him all my life I went . . .
You, who guided me between the good and the
bad,
at least on this place rise up finally
visible!⁹⁸

97 Ibid., p. 126.

98 Ibid., p. 126.

The title, "The Place Where I Will Fall," suggests both a bed where the sinner "falls" into sin and the deathbed. The man with whom she in the beginning had a Platonic relationship was of no help to her after their relationship deteriorated into eroticism. The resurrected Christ, as has been noted, appears also in "Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste" ("I Follow You, Christ"). There is also an echo of the Resurrection in "Śmierć śpiewaka" ("Death of a Singer"), a difficult poem which seems to deal with the cruel death of a character who represents the beauty and freedom of creativity, perhaps the creative urge, at some time, of the poet herself. Iłakowicz writes, "The singer died closed within me."⁹⁹ This death is a cause of despair:

Today or tomorrow there will be a
hard winter, today or tomorrow . . .
a little later--or sooner--
My singer died and will not rise
from the dead!¹⁰⁰

There is considerable force in the final lines. Unlike so many of the poems of Kazimiera Iłakowicz, in this one there is a sense of hopelessness, which she consciously reinforces

99 Kazimiera Iłakowicz, Wiersze zebrane, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 72.

100 Ibid., p. 72.

with the implied comparison with Christ as if to say that, in her present state of mind, there is no comfort to be found in Christ's resurrection because the singer (whatever he is meant to represent or symbolize) is dead permanently. In this particular poem Iłakowicz expresses no hope in the comfort of the Son of God. This is quite unusual, for in the group of poems in which the crucified Christ appears or is referred to, Kazimiera Iłakowicz typically suggests a full sense of identification and sympathy with the fundamental symbol of suffering and sacrifice.

Beyond her treatment of Jesus Christ directly in terms of the events of His life and death, Kazimiera Iłakowicz also includes in her poetry certain attributes of Christ as He relates specifically to mankind. The most important of these is the central role of Christ as Savior of mankind. This is, of course, a basic theological attribute of Christ. Indeed, it is the foundation of Christianity. Therefore, the image of Christ as Savior can be envisioned, if not directly, then always by implication, whenever His name is mentioned or heard by anyone familiar with Christianity. And so it is with the poems of Kazimiera Iłakowicz; that is, whenever she even as much as mentions Jesus, no matter what the context may be, the reader automatically recalls, consciously or unconsciously, His role as Savior. In a number of the poems already discussed,

such as "Miejsce gdzie padnę" ("The Place Where I Will Fall") and "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), it has been evident although the poems might have been dealing mainly with the concept of Christ as the Crucified Lord or the Resurrected Lord, His role as Savior was clearly present and contributed to the meaning of the poems. The poet does not, as a rule, mention the specific role of Savior outside a context in which events of His life or death are mentioned. However, in "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death!"), the poet makes a direct appeal to Jesus as her own personal Savior, mentioning only this particular attribute of Christ, and no other.

In this poem, the poet makes a prayerful petition for a reward of salvation after death. She has been forced to be civil to people who are stupid; she has been looking at ugliness all her life on earth; she has come to the point of hating what she sees including herself. But, she says, she has done all these things for Jesus, and thus prays that He will save her after death.¹⁰¹

A similar motif is found in "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer"), in which the poet again asks that the Savior help her to escape a situation in which she hates herself:

101 Wiersze religijne, p. 163.

I am involved more deeply, because I know no
other way . . .
Everything in me and around me--unclean.
I am only reaching out my hands in a crowd:
O Christ!¹⁰²

This is not, perhaps, a cry for theological salvation after death, but rather for psychological salvation here on earth; she seems to be asking Christ to help her in the sense that only through Him will she be able to cure herself of the uncleanness that she feels. In considering the way in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz conceives of Christ in His attribute as Savior, it is important to note that she gives expression to both ideas: theological and psychological salvation. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind in the sense that His sacrifice offers to earthly sinners the possibility of eternal salvation; but He is also the Redeemer in the sense that a belief in Him helps the sinner in his difficult conditions on earth. Christ's love extends here and now to people who need it; one can reach out for it, as the speaker does in "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer") and have hope that Christ's love will be returned

¹⁰² Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Poezje, Warszawa, Pax, 1954, p. 158.

now, in life, while there are still struggles to go through and pain and sorrow to be experienced.¹⁰³

The love of Christ as a psychological attribute is expressed by Kazimiera Iłkiewicz in a poem that, unlike those that have been discussed so far, mentions Him in a very lighthearted way. This is "Przy Tobie, Chryste" ("Near You, Christ"), which is obviously meant to be thought of as a musical poem because of its subtitle: "Motet."

Nothing is necessary for my heart
near You;
shine for me when it is dark
melody.
With an unearthly, light scherzo,
link together the melody and the heart.¹⁰⁴

Here the poet develops a concept of Christ that makes Him appear almost romantic, as someone who can satisfy with His love the longings of the poet's heart as if He were actually a piece of beautiful, lighthearted music that could be sung and could bring beauty to the poet's heart like a melody. The poet emphasizes the special quality of His love by using the word "unearthly." Her heart has perhaps been captured

103 The need for psychological salvation is expressed in terms of her dynamic urge to reach out in her inner struggle for goodness and wholeness. She has something to give and is able to give just as Jesus has--for a constructive, dynamic relationship. Cf. Rollo May, Love and Will, New York, W. W. Norton, 1969, p. 146.

104 Wiersze religijne, p. 151.

before by earthly romance, but now "nothing is necessary for my heart / near You."¹⁰⁵

Some of the poems in which Jesus is mentioned as the source of love have already been discussed, such as "Nienawidzieć nie będę" ("I Will Not Hate"), in which Christ's love is the example that permits the poet to love others; and "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death!") which suggests that the love of Christ is what motivates the poet to withstand unpleasantness, her love for Him being a way of reciprocating His love for her, for all of humanity. This is implied rather than stated directly in the latter poem, in the idea of the poet's hatred being reborn "in the breath of God / as in music the bitter branch of the willow."¹⁰⁶

In "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke"), the poet appeals to the love of Christ as a means for overcoming evil:

Black smoke over us,
black smoke . . .
Weaken, Jesus, the arm
of the bad people.

Out of Your kindness tie them
with a silver ribbon;
if they wish to do mischief,
let them fail.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 151.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁰⁷ Ta jedna nić, p. 148.

It is interesting and very typical of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz that she does not appeal to an avenging God to overcome evil; there is no desire to destroy the enemies, only to tie them up in a silver ribbon out of kindness. Christ is love, and omnia vincit Amor. Later in the poem, after God is asked to "breathe a star" into the black smoke, the poet concludes:

For this star
we will forgive everything. 108

The star is Jesus Himself placed in the black sky by God the Father. For the sake of Jesus, by means of His example of love and kindness, even those who suffer evil are willing to forgive. 109

Several other attributes of Jesus Christ are found in scattered fashion in several other poems. "Modlitwa dziecka" ("Prayer of the Child") is a sort of model prayer for children, with some parts to be said in the morning, some in the evening. Among the evening prayers is one called "Przeproszenie" ("Apology"):

108 Ibid., p. 148.

109 Her response to Jesus' love rests on a firm basis of human-heartedness in these "love" poems. She experiences the love of Christ as both personal and universal, and responds to it in a positive way within the totality of her psychic structure. Cf. Rollo May, op. cit., p. 158.

I was a bad child, and insulted You,
 O good Jesus. If it is necessary I will do
 some kind of penance . . . Jesus . . . Mommie . . .
 please forgive me. I will correct myself
 tomorrow.¹¹⁰

Here we see the concept, which is more psychological than
 theological, of Christ as one who may punish for sins.¹¹¹

The same attribute is seen in "Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów"
 ("Before Christ of The Fathers of St. Francis of Salesii")

where the speaker prays to Jesus for mercy on behalf of a
 child who is helpless; if He must punish anyone, let the
 punishment fall on those who deserve it: "For our sins will
 punish us according to Your will."¹¹²

The idea of Christ as one who punishes is not com-
 mon in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. As has been
 pointed out, she is much more likely to attribute to Christ
 qualities such as mercy, love, kindness, forgiveness. This
 is especially the case in poems that deal with personal
 matters, where the poet addresses or contemplates Christ in
 connection with her own individual experiences and feelings.

¹¹⁰ Ta jedna nić, p. 9.

¹¹¹ This is a psychological attribute assigned to
 Jesus from the view of Jesus as human operating in the
 relative world of duality. He may will to reward, or He
 may will to punish; this is contrary to the doctrine of
 Aquinas that God permits punishment for sin but does not
 will it. Cf. R. L. Patterson, The Conception of God in the
 Philosophy of Aquinas, London, George Allen and Unwin,
 1933, p. 334.

¹¹² Wiersze religijne, p. 114.

An important contrast to these attributes is seen not only in the poems just discussed in which Christ is one who punishes sin, but also in a patriotic poem, "Modlitwa za lotnictwo" ("Prayer for the Air Force"), in which Christ's help is asked on behalf of those who are defending their country.

Christ, You who feed the birds, know the number of
butterflies,
I bow my head as low as your nailed feet.
You were merciful to the herbs, roses and vineyards
.
Show them [the pilots] the way, Christ, and appoint
the day for them,
grant them a joyful and healthy life
And grant that, for the country,
their death will not be in vain. 113

What is unusual about this prayer is that it asks support from Christ for those who are engaged in killing. In one poem Kazimiera Iłłakowicz mentions the idea of Christ as the one who watches over little animals, insects and flowers, and Christ as one who "shows the way" to pilots who are fighting to kill and be killed. Of course, patriotic feelings are what govern the poem and give it its meaning; consequently, there is not much difficulty in explaining why the poet would call upon Christ in this way. It is, nevertheless, unusual that the concept of Christ should appear in such different ways in a single poem. The religious effect

113 Ta jedna nić, p. 172.

is perhaps diminished or confused by this contradiction, but the poetic effect is to strengthen the idea that Poland is innocent and in need of protection as are the birds and the butterflies.

The final poem to be considered in this study of the concept of Christ in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz is "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus"). Since almost each line of this long poem lists a particular attribute of Jesus, not every attribute can be mentioned here. One very important one, however, is given at the beginning of the poem. This is the idea of Jesus as the one Person of the Holy Trinity with whom the average human being can feel complete communication and understanding:

With God the Father, of Whom we are afraid, unite
us;
About the Holy Spirit, Whom we cannot comprehend,
explain to us.¹¹⁴

Jesus is conceived of as the intermediary between the other members of the Holy Trinity and mankind. This is possible because He himself partakes of human attributes although He is also divine in nature. The rest of the Litany emphasizes that Jesus is easy to understand and that He is full of mercy, mercy that extends even to those that are classified as sinners:

114 Ibid., p. 13.

Because the unbeliever sometimes is closer to You
than the pious, we love You, Jesus

.....

Because it is possible to confess our most heinous
crime, and You are not scandalized, we love
You, Jesus.

Because You also redeemed the spy, the traitor,
and the renegade, we love You, Jesus.

Because it is possible to leave You and return to
You, we love You, Jesus.¹¹⁵

Here are enumerated attributes of Jesus that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz has always most emphasized: those that are associated with forgiveness that never changes. For example, another verse in the Litany reads: "Because You are the same during day and night, winter and summer, we love You, Jesus."¹¹⁶ Regardless of what changes may occur in the world, in the seasons, among men, Jesus Christ never changes. He is the same always. This means that His love, mercy, forgiveness, kindness are always the same. He is always dependable.

In studying the concept of God in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, only two considerations remain to be made. These are the poet's presentation of the first and the third persons of the Holy Trinity: the Father and the Holy Spirit. As noted above, compared to the amount of attention the poet gives to the Son, Jesus Christ, the

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

attention given to the other two members of the Trinity is extremely limited. In a sense one might say that, after considering the meaning of the general concept of God and the specific character of Jesus, Kazimiera Iłkiewicz has very little left to say about Divinity.

The figure of God the Father, as has already been shown, appears in connection with the concept of God as the Creator and Protector of mankind.¹¹⁷ In this connection, He is only occasionally pictured specifically as the Father of the Son. For example, in "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus"), the poet asks Jesus to unite us "with God the Father, of Whom we are afraid,"¹¹⁸ and again, at the conclusion of the poem prays that "You Who live and reign with the Father" be merciful to us.¹¹⁹ But this concept of God specifically as the Father of Jesus is not developed in the poem. Similarly, in "Modlitwa za biskupa Nankiera" ("Prayer for Bishop Nankier"), the Father is mentioned only briefly as a member of the Holy

¹¹⁷ As is well known, psychoanalytic theory assumes that man's conception of God is derived from his early object relationships. Cf. A. N. Rizzuto, "Object Relations and the Formation of the Image of God," in British Journal of Medical Psychology, Vol. 47, No. 1, 1974, p. 83-99.

¹¹⁸ Ta jedna nić, p. 13.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

Trinity.¹²⁰ In only one poem, "Nocą" ("At Night"), which has been cited earlier, is there an idea of a relationship between God the Father and God the Son developed poetically, when the little girl is told that God will place her toys on the lap of the Holy Mother, the implication being that the infant Jesus will then be able to play with them.¹²¹

The Holy Spirit is mentioned a little more frequently than God the Father. In two poems just mentioned, "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus") and "Modlitwa za biskupa Nankiera" ("Prayer for Bishop Nankier"), reference is made to the Spirit simply as part of a customary appeal to all three persons of the Trinity. The concept of the Holy Spirit is given more attention, however, in two other poems, "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit") and "Zielone Świątki" ("Pentecost Sunday"). The latter poem is rather childlike in tone and describes the decorating of a house with flowers and other growing things on the night before Pentecost Sunday. Various little children are named, and they are told:

120 Ibid., p. 101-102.

121 Wiersze religijne, p. 32.

. . . when the Holy Spirit arises in the morning
 He will find everything orderly and clean,
 He will find every place decorated with greenery
 He will be very pleased--the Holy Spirit.¹²²

Here there is virtually no characterization at all of the Holy Spirit, except for an implication of simplicity and happiness on His part. There is little more said about the nature of the Holy Spirit than there would be about a saint whose day is about to be celebrated in the same way.

"Hymny do Duchy Świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit") is a much more serious poem than "Zielone Świątki" ("Pentecost Sunday"), for it reveals an intense concern on the part of the poet about her relationship with God, specifically with the power over her of the Holy Spirit. In the first of the three hymns she prays to the Holy Spirit to "tread upon my sadness . . . as upon the lake,"¹²³ that is to bring a message of joy and hope to her like the one that Jesus brought to his apostles when he walked upon the water. There is a suggestion that, for Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, the boat in which the apostles are sailing represents the Church itself, and thus when she says,

It will sink, of course it will sink,
 in foam and slime and filth!
 Come upon the water and walk upon it,
 O Holy Spirit!¹²⁴

122 Ta jedna nić, p. 142.

123 Ibid., p. 16.

124 Ibid., p. 16.

she is calling upon the Holy Spirit to restore the Church, which cannot survive solely by means of human agency.

In the second of the three hymns, Kazimiera Iłkiewicz acknowledges the extent to which she has been broken and destroyed spiritually, and, realizing that her destruction is related to her eventual salvation, asks:

How many more rejections are needed,
failures,
before pride crawls out from the soul
at last?¹²⁵

She asks for a sign of hope of her eventual salvation; she wants the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself to her "in three faces, in three burning helmets, / in crosses, swords, banners and birds."¹²⁶ These images of a destructive Spirit coincide with the idea of a necessary destruction of pride within the sinner. It is a paradoxical destructiveness, of course, because of the deepest level when the Spirit destroys it is at the same time making whole.

Paradoxical ideas are continued in the third of the three hymns. The poet realizes that the Holy Spirit has protected her from the devil, but has discovered that her awareness of this protection has come to her, not through conscious effort, but almost unconsciously, in a mystical

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 17.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

way, "With blind sight I am reaching truth."¹²⁷ The final stanza emphasizes the paradox by employing a metaphor of light to stand for the Holy Spirit, but a very elusive light, like that from a twinkling star or a faraway candle in the dark:

When I seek You, You do not manifest Your
light,
when I doubt, You shine in chaos . . .
Destroy, crush, but appear fully,
Holy Spirit.¹²⁸

The Holy Spirit is perceived as both the Destroyer of pride and wickedness and as the Light of Hope. The hopeful aspect of the Holy Spirit is, according to Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, like an elusive light that disappears when one looks for it but shines brightly when one has least hope of finding it. The concluding verses seem to say that she acknowledges the necessity of destructiveness of the Holy Spirit, but wishes for a steadier, less mercurial appearance of the Light of Hope. This poem is typical of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz in her more mystical phases. In the second of the three hymns especially, the poet is portrayed as experiencing the "dark night of the soul." There is the recognition of the necessity for suffering and doubt as a way of eventually finding the light. The Holy Spirit is engaged

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

in the necessary destruction of her spirit, in order to purify her of her pride. When that is done, out of her blindness she will see the truth. But at the conclusion there is at least partly the sense that the poet would prefer not having to undergo such painful and difficult experience in order to see the Light. Let the Light be full, she asks. The possibility of dissatisfaction with having to experience the "dark night of the soul" is supported also by the tone of verses quoted before:

How many more rejections are needed,
failures,
before pride crawls out from the soul
at last?¹²⁹

It is as if the poet were saying that she has two contrary feelings: first, the satisfaction that the suffering of her spirit has resulted in the recognition of the truth; and second, that she wishes that the whole process of illumination would be easier, less demanding; that there be some reduction of suffering, even if the light does not shine so brightly, only sufficiently.

The concept of the Holy Spirit in this poem, although it is not examined in depth, is in accordance with catholic doctrines. Basically, the aspect which Kazimiera Iłkiewicz emphasizes is that of a spiritual power which protects man at the same time that it inspires him and

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 17.

tests him. In the final analysis, there is no particular way in which the concept of the Holy Spirit held by Kazimiera Iłkiewicz differs significantly from her concept of God in His other aspects, except for the emphasis on the mystical quality of her relationship to Him. Mystical experience includes the paradox of the breaking down of the soul occurring at the same time as its building-up. That these two events can occur simultaneously--or even that one can follow the other--is a mystery. It is natural that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz should associate with this sort of mystery the more profound mystery of the Holy Spirit, which she represents metaphorically as the elusive appearance and disappearance of the light.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has been concerned with analyzing the concept of God as it appears in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz. In this analysis, the concept of God was first divided under two major headings: the general concept of God and the concept of God as He is manifested in the persons of the Holy Trinity. Under the heading of the general concept of God, three major sets of attributes were posited: the theological, the theological/psychological, and the psychological. It was shown that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz, as a poet, is substantially more interested in

those attributes defined as psychological than she is in those defined as theological. Her concept of God tends to perceive Him as a Being who is involved frequently and in various ways with humankind, not as a remote abstraction defined in metaphysical terms by theologians. Furthermore, it was shown that in the treatment of each of the three major sets of attributes, the personal religious feelings and the personal psychology of the poet were revealed. Under the heading of the Holy Trinity, various attributes of the triune personality of God as perceived by Kazimiera Iłkiewicz were analyzed. It was shown that the major focus of her interest lies in the person of Jesus Christ, with less attention given to God the Father and the Holy Spirit. The attributes she considers were divided into two major groups: those that are related to the chronological events in the life of Christ and those that are connected with no specific event. In connection with both of these groups of attributes, it was seen that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz emphasizes very strongly the concept of a merciful Jesus, just as she emphasizes the merciful attributes of her general concept of God. It was shown in several poems that there is a strong sense of personal identification on the part of the poet with Christ.

In concluding this discussion of the concept of God as it appears in the religious poetry of Kazimiera

Iłakowicz, it is important to emphasize once more the fact that she is a poet and not a theologian. It is true that her upbringing was that of a typical Roman Catholic; as such she was exposed to the traditional, orthodox teachings of the Church. Although a very intelligent and inquiring person, she did not develop any particular interest in the intellectual complexities of theological or metaphysical inquiry. The God that she represents in her poetry is conceived of as He might be by any person with highly developed religious feelings (even mystical), very high intelligence, and a strong creative imagination, but who has not made a systematic intellectual study of religious concepts. Also it should be remembered that her religious poetry is only a part of her total poetic output, that the major investment of her energy is in literary creativity, the expression of feelings and ideas, and not with the examination and analysis of articles of faith per se.

Keeping this caution in mind, one can see from the previous discussion in this chapter that the concept of God in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłakowicz can be easily characterized in two important ways:

First, insofar as the general concept of God is concerned, Kazimiera Iłakowicz is more interested in the psychological attributes of God than in the theological (metaphysical) ones. This means that her view of God

depends on her sense of there being a relationship between man and God, more especially between Him and herself. She tends to see God not as an abstract Being, but as a person. She engages in dialogues with Him, sometimes in prayer, sometimes in merely expressing feelings about herself in relation to Him. She tends often to see Him as a loving Father, one who cares, who forgives, who judges mercifully, who appreciates a joke, who watches over children, who understands human love and human suffering. In so expressing her ideas, she reflects many characteristics of God dealt with conventionally by such contemporary poets as Rev. Paweł Heintsch, Rev. Jan Twardowski, Kazimierz Piekut, and Mieczysław Braun. On the other hand, one does not find a great deal of emphasis, in her poetry, on the purely theological attributes of God, such as His immortality, infinitude, glory, and so forth.

Second, insofar as the persons of the Holy Trinity are concerned, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is clearly most interested--as most Christians are--in the person of Jesus Christ. Indeed, it can be said that her religious poetry is on the whole Christocentric, for it is the qualities associated with Jesus that most interest her, that she can most closely identify with. Jesus serves as a model for her, perhaps primarily because He was capable of suffering, and suffering of one kind or another--physical, mental,

spiritual--is something that Kazimiera Iłakowicz is especially aware that all men and women experience. Out of His deep suffering came those other attributes that Kazimiera Iłakowicz emphasizes in Jesus and feels working within herself: love, pity, sacrifice, identification with the poor and lowly, mercy for sinners, even for enemies. These are attributes that mankind can not only understand, but share; she can all the more readily accept the idea of Jesus as Savior because she recognizes that He is part of mankind. It is this theological and psychological fact that seems to have the greatest force for Kazimiera Iłakowicz--that she partakes of the same substance as Christ. He shares in her humanity just as she shares in His divinity. Thus there is a union and a reciprocity between them that to a great extent governs the emotional and sometimes mystical nature of her religious poetry. Although there is theological authority for the idea of a commonality of substance, it is not from a theological point of view that this concept has meaning for our poet. There is no doubt that the God of Kazimiera Iłakowicz is a Christian God; but He is a God of the poet, not of the theoretician. Her concept of God is built on Catholic doctrine; but it is shaped out of her own inner experience, her psychic reality.

For Kazimiera Iłakowicz it would seem that the need to conceptualize God in the many ways that she does arises

out of a deeper need to ensure herself of a genuine union with God. To establish an integrated "I-Thou" relationship, a person of her complex imagination and complicated unconscious motivations needs to "create" a God close to her ~~own~~ image. Thus He becomes more meaningful; and, through the mysterious workings of the unconscious, she becomes more meaningful in the process.

CHAPTER III

PRAYER IN THE POETRY OF KAZIMIERA IŁŁAKOWICZ

Although Kazimiera Iłłakowicz cannot be classified strictly as a religious poet, since her work covers such a large range of human experience, nevertheless it is evident from the information presented in the last chapter that the poet is very deeply involved in the expression of religious feelings and concepts. But obviously her religious concerns do not stop at the question of examining or determining the nature of God; she is, as many of the poems analyzed in the last chapter show, equally concerned with examining her personal relationship with God. Her approach to God is more subjective than it is objective. As we have seen, she emphasizes the psychological rather than the theological attributes of God--God as He relates to the world and humankind, not just to Himself. And, indeed, much of her religious poetry is concerned not with an effort to subject God to analysis, but rather to subject Kazimiera Iłłakowicz to analysis, to examine her own perceptions, feelings, thoughts, conscience, etc., in order to clarify or at least give expression to the nature and meaning of her own religious experience.

In this chapter the poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz will be analyzed in an effort to arrive at a

further understanding of the poet's perceptions of her relation to God and to herself as a participant in that relationship. Whereas in the previous chapter the emphasis fell upon the "Thou" (God) of the relationship, in this chapter it will fall upon the "I" (Kazimiera). It is in her prayers that the poet reveals most vividly the various and complicated feelings she has as a religious person. Any particular poem on a religious subject might or might not provide the reader with insight into the religious personality and individual psychology of the poet, but a prayer by its very nature must provide this insight. It should be noted, that analysis of the poet's prayers, as was seen in connection with her concept of God, may at times give clues to understanding not only conscious motivations, but unconscious ones as well.

To help clarify the way in which the poet uses prayer as a means of self-expression, a standard definition of prayer, by Friedrich Heiler, will be given as a background against which the treatment of prayer by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz can be viewed. The bulk of the remainder of the chapter will consist of a poem-by-poem analysis of the thirty-seven poetical prayers, basically divided according to whether they are "popular" or "personal" prayers, then subdivided according to the scheme discussed later.

The importance of prayer in the Christian (and other) religion is well known but exactly what is meant by the word "prayer" is a question with many answers. In the final chapter of his work on prayer, Friedrich Heiler compiles a list, which he does not claim is exhaustive, of over thirty-five possible forms of prayer.¹ Because of the multiplicity of forms, it is difficult to arrive at a concept of the genuineness of prayer. In attempting to reach such a definition, Heiler makes a point about motivation: "The effort to fortify, to reinforce, to enhance one's life is the motive of all prayer."² But he continues by saying that motivation is only part of the picture, for in order for there to be prayer, there must be faith in the existence of a Being with whom it is possible to have "spiritual commerce."³ He says, in fact:

1 Friedrich Heiler, Prayer: A Study in the History and Psychology of Religion, New York, Oxford University Press, 1932, p. 353.

2 Ibid., p. 355.

3 Ibid., p. 356.

There are three elements which form the inner structure of the prayer-experience: faith in a living personal God, faith in His real, immediate presence, and a realistic fellowship into which man enters with a God conceived as present.

Every prayer is a turning of man to another Being to whom he inwardly opens his heart; it is the speech of an "I" to a "Thou." This "Thou," this other with whom the devout person comes into relation, in whose presence he stands as he prays, is no human being but a supersensuous, superhuman Being on whom he feels himself dependent, yet a being who plainly wears the features of a human personality⁴

Heiler then goes on to say that prayer is not merely belief in the existence of a personal God, nor merely the experience of the presence of God:

Prayer is rather a living relation of man to God, a direct and inner contact, a refuge, a mutual intercourse, a conversation, spiritual commerce, an association, a fellowship, a communion, a converse, a one-ness, a union of an "I" and a "Thou."⁵

He adds the interesting idea that the communication between "I" and "Thou" is, as he calls it, "a social phenomenon."⁶

That is, "The relation to God of him who prays always reflects an earthly social relation: that of servant or child or friend or bride."⁷ This last point, which shows how human relations act necessarily as a metaphor for God-man relations (which otherwise would have to be expressed

⁴ Ibid., p. 356.

⁵ Ibid., p. 357.

⁶ Ibid., p. 357.

⁷ Ibid., p. 357.

in highly metaphysical language), is the final point in Heiler's summary definition of prayer:

✓ Prayer is, therefore, a living communion of the religious man with God, conceived as personal and present in experience, a communion which reflects the forms of the social relations of humanity.⁸

If one were to apply this definition strictly in an examination of the poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, one would find that not every poetical prayer exactly fits, for many of the prayers are not to God, but to the Blessed Virgin Mary, or to several saints, and also some of them do not very clearly reflect the kind of social relationship which Heiler postulates as a necessary ingredient in the prayer-experience. Nevertheless, for the most part those poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz which are called prayers do contain the basic elements that Heiler has proposed, and many others which are not explicitly called prayers also contain these elements. In the course of the following study, any significant deviation from Heiler's definition will be noted.

Several means of classification are possible in the process of examination and analysis of the poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. For example, as noted in the Introduction, one might classify the poems as to whether they are more or less formal prayers, or prayer-like lyrics,

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 358. (The sentence is italicized in the original.)

or the so-called "non-prayers"; or they could be grouped according to their intention, that is, whether they fall into the category of "popular" prayer or "personal" prayer. Inasmuch as the purpose of this study is primarily to examine the ideas of the poems, it seems more appropriate to classify them primarily according to intention; and then, secondarily, according to characteristics of genre. So the major categories under which the poetical prayers will be discussed will be "popular" and "personal". In "popular" prayer, the poet assumes the role of mediator directing prayers to God on behalf of the needs of particular groups of individuals or subjects of common concern; frequently these prayers closely parallel traditional Christian prayers. Her "personal" prayers deal with subjects directly related to her own personal life while often reflecting as well, an awareness of the common needs established in the category of "popular" prayer. Under each of these categories the characteristics of genre will be subsumed.

From approximately ninety religious poems, of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, thirty-seven can be considered as falling into the general classification of prayers; sixteen are popular, twenty are personal, and one, "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales"), defies classification because it is very unusual. The distinction between "popular" and "personal" prayers is, for the most part, an

easy distinction to make in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz. Her "popular" prayers are those that pray on behalf of people outside of the narrow limits of her own self, though she herself might be included among the group for whom she is praying. These might be prayers for soldiers, or for Poland, or for children, or for all of humanity. Her personal prayers are those which embody her own individual needs as distinct from the needs which she holds in common with humanity at large.

Taking up first the general category of popular prayers, we find that the most common type written by Kazimiera Iłlakowicz is that associated with traditional forms of worship. There are three of these: "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus"), "Msza Maryjna" ("Mass in Honor of Mary"), and "Modlitwa dziecka" ("Prayer of the Child"). The first two are obviously popular prayers since they imitate traditional forms of public worship, and the speaker is "we," not "I". The third, although the speaker is "I", is nevertheless also a popular prayer.

"Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus") follows the form of the Litany of the Saints, traditionally sung by cantor and choir in Roman Catholic churches on St. Mark's Day, April 25. The first five invocations of the traditional litany,

Lord, have mercy on us.
 Christ, have mercy on us.
 Lord, have mercy on us.
 Christ, hear us.
 Christ, graciously hear us,⁹

are closely adapted by the poet:

Jesus, do not wait longer,
 Christ, hear us,
 Jesus, do not wait longer,
 Christ, come down closer,
 Jesus, do not wait longer.¹⁰

We notice at the very beginning that instead of following the usual distinction between "Lord" and "Christ," Kazimiera Iłłakowicz focuses immediately and solely upon Christ. Similarly, she shifts the emphasis of the litany, which traditionally contains the following:

God the heavenly Father, have mercy on us.
 God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
 God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
 Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
 Holy Mary, pray for us.
 Holy Mother of God, pray for us.
 Holy Virgin of virgins, pray for us.¹¹

Rather than addressing each of the persons of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Virgin as is true above, in "Litania ("Litany") Kazimiera Iłłakowicz includes them in the prayer as part of an address directly and solely to Jesus Christ:

⁹ Short Dominican Breviary, Dublin, Dominican Publications, p. 898.

¹⁰ Iłłakowicz, Ta jedna nić, p. 13.

¹¹ Short Dominican Breviary, op. cit., p. 898.

With God the Father, of Whom we are afraid, unite
 us;
 The Holy Spirit, Whom we cannot comprehend, explain
 to us;
 Your Mother, who was a person such as we, include
 Forever in our blood.¹²

And, instead of the invocation of the many saints named in
 the traditional litany, the poet includes them all at once,
 in one line, along with others:

All saints, faraway brethren and foreigners, graft
 upon us.
 Above all and everyone we love You, Jesus!¹³

The intention of the poet is plain: she is borrowing a
 familiar form of public prayer and creating a new prayer by
 shifting the emphasis away from the commonly invoked group
 of divine and holy persons and placing it all upon the
 single figure of Jesus Christ, whom, she says, is loved
 "above all and everyone."¹⁴ The bulk of the remainder of
 the poem is simply a listing, again imitative of the
 standard litany in form, of the reasons why "we" love
 Jesus.¹⁵ It is important to note the significant difference

12 Ta jedna nić, p. 13.

13 Ibid., p. 13.

14 Ibid., p. 13.

15 The reasons can be seen as reflections of her
 personal convictions. ". . . every psychology [mental dis-
 position] has the character of a subjective confession.
 . . . I know well enough that every word I utter carries
 with it something of myself--of my special and unique self
 with its particular history and its own particular world,"
 Carl G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, trans. W.S.

between the intention of this prayer as opposed to the intention of the traditional litany. The latter asks a large number of saints to "pray for us," then asks the Lord to "deliver us" from evil and everlasting death through His passion and resurrection, and then makes a series of positive requests for help and blessings of various sorts, crying, "We beseech You, hear us." The litany ends as it began, with the kýrie eléison. The bulk of the litany of Kazimiera Illakowicz has quite a different intention; the greatest portion of the poem does not place the speakers in the position of asking something from God or the Saints, but rather of giving something to Jesus: love.

Because it is so easy to understand You, we love
You, Jesus.

Because Your truth about what is good and what is
bad does not change, we love You, Jesus.

Because Your anointers, sinful or virtuous, always
lead us to You, we love You, Jesus, etc.¹⁶

The conclusion of the poem returns to the formula of the traditional litany, shifting back to asking rather than giving:

Dell and Carry P. Baynes, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1933,
p. 118.

¹⁶ Ta jedna nić, p. 13.

Be merciful unto us, do not stop loving us, Jesus.
 Be merciful unto us, come down lower, Jesus.
 Be merciful unto us, do not tarry longer, Jesus.
 You who live and reign with the Father, in the
 unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever
 AMEN.¹⁷

It is very important to an understanding of the nature of the religious feelings of Kazimiera Illakowicz to realize the significant difference between the "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus") and the traditional litany which it imitates. Not only is her Christocentrism clearly manifested here, but a particular attitude towards Christ as well. That is, Kazimiera Illakowicz is chiefly concerned with giving expression to her love for Christ and her reasons for that love. The reasons she gives revealing clearly the nature of her religious feelings, for she emphasizes those aspects of Christ that epitomize her own deep commitment to the principle of "love thy neighbor," as we see in the following quotations from "Litania" ("Litany"):

Because the unbeliever is sometimes closer to You
 than the pious
 Because it is possible to confess our most heinous
 crime, and You are not scandalized
 Because You also redeemed the spy, the traitor and
 the renegade, we love You, Jesus.¹⁸

The litany, then, is transformed by the poet from a prayer

17 Ibid., p. 15.

18 Ibid., p. 14.

that makes requests and asks for blessings, to a prayer that praises and gives love. Although it is a "popular" prayer in its form, and in the use of "we," Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is saying something that is closely identified with her as an individual, with her own concepts of religious truth and the meaning of Christ's existence. Where the traditional litany asks God to "lead all unbelievers to the light of the gospel,"¹⁹ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz displays the individuality and sincerity of her religious belief by loving Jesus "because the unbeliever is sometimes closer to You than the pious."²⁰ This "daring" statement seems to be a fundamental article of the faith of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz:

In understanding what the poet has done here, one might consider Friedrich Heiler's commentary on what he calls the "secondary type" of prayer, that is, the type that is "no longer an original, personal experience, but an imitation or a congelment of such a living experience."²¹ The traditional Litany of Saints of the Catholic Church would fit into this category. Of this type Heiler says:

¹⁹ Short Dominican Breviary, op. cit., p. 901.

²⁰ Ta jedna nić, p. 14.

²¹ Heiler, op. cit., p. 354.

The ritual forms of prayer, the cultural hymn, liturgical common prayer as an institution of the cultus, all these types are phenomena of congelation in which the upspringing personal life has been transmuted into objective, impersonal forms and rules. The penetration into their inner meaning may indeed give rise in devout, susceptible souls to new experiences of prayer, their recitation in public or private worship may take place in a devotional mood, but they themselves are not the direct expression of a personal experience.²²

In a sense, "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love Jesus") is an answer to Heiler's criticism, for Kazimiera Illakowicz has consciously and deliberately altered the ritualized liturgical form in order to give expression to more spontaneous and personal feelings and to a more dynamic relationship. Perhaps there is even a certain degree of evangelism in the poetical prayer, for, by creating a litany that might be spoken by "those who love Jesus," Kazimiera Illakowicz may be attempting to communicate to others her feeling that they need to share her particular religious vision which sees Jesus as occupying a special place, "above all and everyone."²³ This can be considered also a personal communication with Jesus, made public by inclusion in a litany, the "we" being an editorial "we." Or it could be merely a spontaneous overflow of feeling in the midst of solemnity, evidencing

²² Ibid., p. 354-355.

²³ Ta jedna nić, p. 13.

the inherent vitality characteristic of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz.

Traditional, liturgical form also governs the shape of "Msza Maryjna" ("Mass in Honor of Mary"). It is constructed out of the major divisions of the Catholic mass: only one section, the Offertorium, differs in any significant respect from the characteristics of the typical mass. This section contains a prayer to the Virgin Mary which can be considered a popular prayer. It comes at the conclusion of the Offertorium:

May the head of the serpent be crushed
by the Queen of God's graces.
O, One who has ascended, be victorious,
deliver us from slavery.²⁴

The idea of the prayer is more typical than that found in "Litania" ("Litany"). However, the opening stanza of the Offertorium, which is addressed not to the Holy Mother, but to God, expresses in a brief way the kind of questioning of the nature of man's relation to God that is frequently to be discovered, explicit or implicit, in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz:

What can man return to You,
O Lord our God?
A heart torn in half,
which You know so well?²⁵

24. Ibid., p. 53.

25. Ibid., p. 52.

The poet is making a very complicated poetic statement here, for behind the image of the petitioner's heart "torn in half" lies the image of Christ breaking bread with His disciples and saying: "Take ye and eat: this is My body." The potential but tentative equation of man and Christ seems perhaps troubling to the poet; the question, "What can man return to You?"²⁶ is left unanswered, and the conclusion of the Offertorium of "Msza Maryjna" ("Mass in Honor of Mary") turns into a typical prayer for the protection of the Holy Mother, as noted above.

In the two poems that have just been discussed, one sees Kazimiera Iłłakowicz using traditional liturgical forms as a basis for expressing original thoughts about religious experience. Of course, the fact that she uses "we" instead of "I" as the speaker of the poems means that she does not intend for them to be read exclusively as personal statements. She speaks as one member of a body of communicants, and presumably feels that the thoughts she has can easily be shared by other members of the Church.

It should be noted also that in these two poems the language is not obscure--these are poems the ideas of which might easily be understood by anyone familiar with the

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52. In terms of the psychology of the poet, it might be said that the question reflects a wish for a dynamic relationship with God--a give-and-take interaction.

traditional prayers of the Church. In the last of the poems that are written in traditional modes there is even a greater simplicity of language. This is "Modlitwa dziecka" ("Prayer of the Child"), which is obviously intended to be a model prayer for children to say. Although the speaker in this case is "I" and not "we," this is still to be classified as a popular prayer since it is intended to be employed by any child, and in fact contains very little that could be considered truly original in thought or intention. Like any prayer that an adult might compose for children to use, it is simple in language and idea, and contains attitudes towards worship that adults are likely to think appealing to children. As an example of the latter, the portion of the prayer called "Confession of Love" says:

You watch over me; God, like both my parents.
 It is impossible to see You. I can't hug You. But
 You know my heart, even if it is invisible to the eye,
 and You know that it [my heart] certainly loves You
 warmly.²⁷

The conclusion of the prayer continues in much the same tone.

After those prayers that follow traditional modes of form and thought, the next significant group of popular prayers consists of those that are related to Kazimiera Illakowicz's attitudes and perceptions about the welfare

27. Ibid., p. 7.

of Poland in times of national danger. These poems are clustered around the years 1936 to 1942, the period when the Nazi threat to the peace of Europe became real, when Poland was occupied by the Germans, and when Kazimiera Iłłakowicz was forced to flee from Poland and seek exile in Rumania. It should not be forgotten that, although she is being considered here as a poet, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz served as an official of the Polish government for many years. Between 1918 and 1926 she was attached to the Ministry of External Affairs; between 1926 and 1939 she was a member of the Defense Ministry; between 1939 and the end of World War II she was among the Polish exiles living in Rumania.

Her attachment to Poland, then, was not only that of an ordinary patriotic citizen. Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, being very close for many years to the center of the Polish government, and also being a very intelligent and sensitive person, was more aware than the average person of the significance of the growing strength of Nazism, and its danger to Poland and to other countries of Europe. Thus it is quite natural that many of her poems should reflect, in this period, not only her patriotic concerns, but also those about the possible destruction of human and religious values in the path of Nazi victories. This seems to be the point of "Modlitwa o pokój" ("Prayer for Peace"), which was

written close to 1936. In 1935, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz had traveled to Italy and Germany on official business, and this poem seems to be a reaction to her visit:

I am returning from an iron fairy tale,
I told my country about it.
The sound of her speech gathered me
into her strong soothing circle,
and I drank--as always--again
magic liquor from her hand.

. . . I stepped between swords,
staring into huge auroras,
I was shielded by God's providence
and with the name of my country.
Under the vigilance of watchful eyes,
whispers from afar and footsteps near
I saw, closed--the iron
sleeping mouths of dragons.²⁸

The fear of the "iron fairy tale" and the "iron / sleeping mouths of dragons" is obviously the fear of the growing militarism of the fascist countries. But Poland, on her return, offers warmth and comfort. However, the experience was a frightening one, and seems to haunt her, which is why she prays, "O God, fill me with silence,"²⁹ and again "O God, deliver us / from revenge--blind and stupid."³⁰ That is, she is asking God to prevent her from reacting with violent emotion. This is in part a personal response, as well as that of one who is not only identifying herself

28 Iłłakowicz, Wiersze religijne, p. 100.

29 Ibid., p. 101.

30 Ibid., p. 101.

with the people of Poland, but is one who actually speaks for Poland in an official capacity. When she says, "I told this to my country, / told everything I know,"³¹ she is emphasizing the point that this is a popular prayer--that she is praying for peace not only on her own behalf but on behalf of her country, hoping that Poland will be able to avoid having to react to the frightening power of armed fascism.³²

The fundamental credo of Kazimiera Iłkacowicz-- "Love Thy Neighbor"--was put to its most difficult tests during this period of history, for she learned of terror and brutality of a kind that her peaceful nature had never experienced before. That she continued to have faith in her long-standing religious convictions is evidenced in another poem written near this time, "Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół" ("A Prayer for Enemies"), ca. 1937. The intention of the prayer is unmistakable from the very

31 Ibid., p. 101.

32 Insight into the psychological function of prayer of this sort is found in A. T. Welford, "Is Religious Behavior Dependent upon Affect or Frustration?" in Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology, Vol. 42, 1947, p. 310-319. Welford surveyed sixty-three churchgoers, ages 18-25, and asked them to rate the likelihood of their praying in a variety of pleasant and stressful situations. He found that both affect and frustration are related to the need for prayer. He also found a variety of reasons for using prayer, including an active adjustment to a baffling situation, as a means of changing the situation, and as a way of relieving tension.

beginning:

Have mercy, God, upon the Germans!
Lord! . . .³³

Later in the poem the forgiving nature of the prayer is reinforced by the line, "Upon those who hate have mercy, God."³⁴

In evaluating "Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół" ("A Prayer for Enemies") one must take into account that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz was, at this time, experiencing a conflict between opposing convictions: her full awareness of the complete evil of the acts of the Nazis, and her well-developed religious belief in the necessity of Christian forgiveness. Her devotion to God, and especially to the person of Jesus Christ, has already been examined. It is very clear that the one lesson she continually urged herself to learn was the lesson of Christ's forgiveness of traitors, renegades, unbelievers, of His willing identification with the lowest members of the human race, with criminals, prostitutes and diseased persons. This is a theme which repeats itself in her religious poetry. Therefore, there should be no real surprise that she is willing to pray for mercy on the Germans. There may have been a possibility that this poem was intended to be taken ironically, that the

33 Wiersze religijne, p. 159.

34 Ibid., p. 159.

poet makes believe she asks for mercy but in her heart is wishing the opposite. But she denies the possibility of ironic interpretation by asking for mercy on the victim, in the same breath in which she asks mercy upon the criminals. If she means one, she must mean the other:

Upon those projecting fury and terror,
 upon those locked in prisons,
 upon those awaiting freedom
 behind the barbed wire of camps.
 Upon the innocent and their families
 have mercy, God, upon the Germans.

Upon those bent before false gods,
 upon those lying in emptiness and waste. 35

By joining together, as objects of mercy, both the innocent and the guilty, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz shows that she intends for the reader to take seriously her plea for mercy for the guilty. This attitude of mercy toward enemies would not normally be expected from a person espousing such patriotic feelings, toward Poland and the preservation of human values. However, it appears that her religious beliefs penetrated deeper than other attitudes at this time. She had committed herself entirely to a Christian viewpoint, and it must have been evident to her that to be a genuine Christian one must be an entirely Christ-minded Christian. This underlying belief could not be compromised.

Another poem about the same period (ca. 1938) is "Za wszystkich" ("For Everyone"). This also expresses concern over the fascist threat to peace in the world, but its petition is more universal than that contained in "Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół" ("A Prayer for Enemies"). The Virgin Mary is described as unfolding her blue mantle

from China to Spain
over those who are dying without forgiveness,
over those who are cursed,
over those who are sentenced.³⁶

The message is a simple one; it asks the Blessed Virgin's protection for all those suffering in modern wars and invasions. The poet's concern about her own country is made clear in the mention of the Pole who prayed for the Virgin when people were being executed in Valencia during the Spanish Civil War, presumably by the fascists. And so at the conclusion of the poem, the danger specifically to Poland is emphasized, as the protection of the Virgin is invoked:

The rustle of Your gown upon the country
is near, is near.
O Mary, pray in May
for all of us.³⁷

The presence of the Pole in Valencia is symbolically connected to the danger to all of the world, and Poland in

36 Ta jedna nić, p. 41.

37 Ibid., p. 42.

particular, by means of a connected pattern of images. The Pole "celebrated a prayer for You, / Your scapular wrapped around his finger, / O Mary!"³⁸ This image is clearly meant to be connected, in the reader's mind, with the "blue gown" unfolded over the world, and the "vestment upon the country" which is mentioned above in the quotation from the end of the poem.

In view of the attitudes about war and the enemy that have been discussed in the previous poems, it is something of a surprise to find a quite different attitude in "Motłitwa za lotnictwo" ("Prayer for the Air Force"), which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz wrote sometime after actual hostilities had broken out between Poland and Germany. At least, for this one prayer the poet has abandoned her previous total commitment to forgiveness for enemies. In order for this prayer which unmistakably asks for Christ's help in the victory of the Air Force, and the military force as well, to be successful, it must operate on the premise of destruction rather than forgiveness of the enemy. The poem begins by invoking Christ's mercy:

You were merciful to the herbs, roses and
vineyards,
delicate forms, hiding great mysteries.³⁹

38 Ibid., p. 42.

39 Ibid., p. 172.

But the relevance of mercy is perhaps a little questionable. This is not a bloody and revengeful poem; however, the fact that the poet asks for help for the air force must be taken to mean that at this time she was able to accept the necessity of fighting back, knowing that this meant killing others. The poem does not specifically mention destruction, although perhaps it is implied:

May they upon Your firmament
 --weak mortals like something brittle by
 themselves--
 govern over chaotic depths,
 being not frightened.⁴⁰

This part is a prayer to make the air force men fight powerfully and bravely, whereas another section asks that they be saved from hell, and the final lines suggest that the poet's most important concern is not with the amount of damage the air force can do, but rather with the lives and souls of the pilots who are defending their country:

Show them the way, Christ, and appoint the day
 for them,
 grant them a joyful and healthy life
 and grant that, for the country
 their death will not be in vain.⁴¹

What seems to have happened in this poem, despite the sincerity of the religious feelings of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz, her patriotism--perhaps her sense of outrage at Nazi

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 172.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 172.

brutality to her own country--took the upper hand. This poem represents an important fact about the poet: that even a person with as thorough and genuine a commitment to Christian belief as she has, is nevertheless a human being. Her patriotic reactions are normal, and it should be noted that her desire for protection for the air force is not a vindictive desire to punish as much as it is a compassionate desire to protect. Here, for once, it is clear that she is speaking in a voice representing other Poles--a truly "popular" prayer.

Another popular prayer, also concerned with the poet's feelings about the sacrifices of Polish soldiers during World War II, is "Na polskie groby w Budapeszcie" ("Upon Polish Graves in Budapest"). It is a very simple poetical prayer, asking God to give peace to the souls of the deceased:

O, permit them to rest without reminiscence and regret,
and please do not let them relive the sufferings
of the past.⁴²

The concern with suffering shown here is very typical of the poet's work, but without the more complex paradoxes and questionings that are more characteristic of her personal poetry. This poem was written in 1942, when she was an

42 Wiersze religijne, p. 146.

exile from Poland, and her feelings had been deeply affected by an experience that was not uniquely her own, but was shared by an entire people; thus the poem has the quality of being spoken, not on behalf of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz alone, but on behalf of all Poles who wished peace for the souls of their dead soldiers, buried far from home.

The last poem to be considered in this group, written in this particular period, is "Modlitwa" [II] ("Prayer") [II], which was composed in Rumania in 1942. Although this poem fits thematically into the category of popular prayer, it is different from those that have been considered thus far, because it is more a prayer-like lyric rather than an actual prayer. The poem seems to be concerned more with the description of a scene and the evocation of an emotional response to that scene, rather than with making a specific request or any sort of customary religious statement. The poem begins:

To You, Mother of God,
to You through this sorrow,
You bend down over the crossroads,
where holy statues are not found 43

From there proceeds a description of the various barren aspects of nature caused by the war's destruction. Even the telephone poles look like trees stripped of their

43 Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, *Poezje*, Warsaw, Pax, 1954, p. 16. The poem is designated as "II" to distinguish from earlier poem with the same title.

foliage by shells. Yet, even over these "dry" posts, the "poisoned news" continued to come.⁴⁴ The poisoned news is the news of Nazi victory; the holy statues that used to be at the crossroads have been removed. All this news comes

To You, through this sorrow . . .
As You bend down over the crossroads,
Mary, Mother of God.⁴⁵

There is actually no prayer, as such, in this poem, but rather the suggestion of a prayer. The full statement, whatever it might be, is only being implied. Perhaps the poet is saying

Mother of God, whose statues are missing from their customary places, we wish we could speak to You, pray to You, but it is very difficult; the lines of communication are interfered with. Yet this poem is for You.

Aside from the group of poems just discussed, all treating the events of 1936 to 1942, there is a miscellaneous group that also can be classified as "popular" prayer because they deal with subjects and feelings of a more universal nature than those of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz alone. For example, in the poem "Modlitwa" [I] ("Prayer" [I]) the speaker is not "I" but "we":

44 Ibid., p. 16.

45 Ibid., p. 16.

A silent night, Lord, grant us before daylight,
 peaceful breeze among haymakers,
 so that we might be well rested,
 when we awaken.⁴⁶

This begins as a very simple and ordinary prayer which speaks on behalf of ordinary rustic people wishing for peace and rest for themselves. But then, in a way contrary to normal expectations, the prayer gradually changes in purpose:

A good night plead for us, Mother of God:
 may the vagabond not worry about shelter,
 may the vigilant guards fall asleep in
 prisons,
 may absolution be granted to criminals
 and the guilty.⁴⁷

Here the poet has shifted from praying for peace and shelter for the "good" people to a consideration of punishments inflicted on the "bad" although the poem ends on her customary note:

May the path of grace for traitors be safe!
 May the bloody torch of revenge be extinguished
 and, the midnight spy, who fears shadows,
 may forgiveness at last be granted him,
 and may he peacefully fall asleep.

May Your hand bless the silence
 and rock to sleep the tired land;
 Mother most holy and Immaculate,
 cover us with a blue mantle until morning.⁴⁸

46 Wiersze religijne, p. 24.

47 Ibid., p. 25.

48 Ibid., p. 25.

This is a very interesting sort of "popular" prayer, for what Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is trying to do, it seems, is to gain immediately the ordinary reader's sympathy by appealing to "popular" notions of what is desirable: rest for the weary and shelter for the vagabond. But after she creates the good will of those images, she shifts the focus to ideas which perhaps the ordinary person would not normally find desirable, or even acceptable: absolution for criminals, safety for traitors, forgiveness for spies. Thus, she uses the familiar requests of ordinary prayer, popular prayer, as a way of leading into requests that are more individual, more dynamic, more representative of the thinking of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. Of course the asking of forgiveness for criminals, etc., is not in any way opposed to the familiar teachings of the Church; the point is simply that she emphasizes this kind of forgiveness--it is very typical of her religious poetry, and less typical of usual popular prayer. In the final stanza, quoted above, the poem returns to the more usual sort of prayer. We see also in the final stanza the mentioning of the "blue mantle" with which the Mother of God is asked to cover humanity. This image, which occurs here in "Modlitwa" [I] ("Prayer" [I]), written close to 1918, appears several times in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. It was noted above in the poem "Za wszystkich" ("For Everyone"), which was written near

1938. In both poems the "blue mantle" is a metaphor for night--the dark, peaceful time of rest. Also, it represents the protective power of the Mother of God, who watches over the welfare of humankind.

Another poetical prayer with a popular rather than personal approach is "Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów" ("Before Christ of the Fathers of St. Francis of Salesii"). Here again the speaker is not "I" but "we." It is not, however, easy to tell from the poem just who the people are on whose behalf the poet speaks. Whoever they are, they feel guilty of sin, and they remind Jesus, to Whom they are praying, that He, Who was always able to show kindness to dirty, ugly, perverse people, will not allow even the worst person to be hurt. They kneel on the bricks before the figure of Christ in front of the home of the fathers of St. Francis of Salesii--who take in orphans--and pray for protection of "the youngest child."⁴⁹ None of the orphans, they say, was healthy.

For our sins, punish US according to Your will,
but please in this punishment do not make it
painful for him,
because he cannot yet endure.⁵⁰

Although the circumstances and speakers of the prayer are left rather obscure, it is clear that this is an altruistic

49 Ibid., p. 114.

50 Ibid., p. 114.

prayer being said on behalf, not of the speakers, but of the innocent child who, like other orphans, has suffered pain and needs comfort, and perhaps is being left on the steps of the orphanage.

Another miscellaneous popular prayer is seen in "Maria" ("Mary"), a poem dedicated to women named "Mary." Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is here obviously speaking on behalf of these women as she addresses the Holy Mother:

. . . O Mary, Queen of sun and earth, and uncountable stars and five swords of sorrow, which happiness does not change in the heaven, plead the grace of a beneficial and easy death for the bearers of your name on earth.⁵¹

It is a very simple prayer, and "Popular" in the sense that it is spoken in the interests of a group rather than an individual, and by a speaker who represents no one person in particular, but anybody. That is, the prayer does not represent an individual point of view of the poet herself, nor that of any other. It is almost impersonal--there is no "I" or "we."

"Modlitwa za biskupa Nankiera" ("Prayer for the Bishop Nankier") is likewise a popular prayer. It addresses God and asks Him, with the voice of an entire congregation, to make a saint of Bishop Nankier:

⁵¹ Ta jedna nić, p. 35.

We are praying with a brave and sincere prayer
for Bishop Nankier.

.....
We are praying for the seal of holiness for the
canonization of Bishop Nankier.⁵²

The use of "we" here suggests not only a congregation, but all of the Polish people, who appreciate the patriotic martyrdom of the Bishop. But the prayer is not only a prayer of appreciation. The desired canonization, if it were to take place, would also be of direct benefit to those who would then be able to pray to him:

Let him, when he will be saved, send us down little
pieces of his vestments, like ropes
by means of which everyone, even if he is not
worthy,
will be able to achieve holiness, to reach the
hills of Paradise.

Let us pray with a brave and sincere prayer for
Bishop Nankier.⁵³

Among all the poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, "Modlitwa za biskupa Nankiera" ("Prayer for the Bishop Nankier") is one most highly representative of "popular" prayer, for it speaks on behalf of a large number of people, and reflects no ideas or attitudes that are specifically applicable to the individual poet herself. She submerges

52 Ibid., p. 101.

53 Ibid., p. 102.

her own personality here, and merges with "the masses," so to speak.⁵⁴

The three remaining poems that fall into the general category of "popular" prayer are, like "Modlitwa" [II] ("Prayer" [II]) mentioned above, not so much actual prayers as they are prayer-like lyrics. These are "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke"), "Przestroga Ablom" ("Warnings for Abels"), and the final segment of "Do Madonny Pocieszenia" ("To the Madonna of Consolation"), which is entitled "Przespaliśmy najpiękniejszy dzień" ("We Overslept the Most Beautiful Day"). In each of these the element of prayer is not so important as it is in the majority of poems previously discussed in this chapter. That is, the essential meaning of the poem is not in the prayer portion. Though in "Czarny dym" ("Black Smoke"), there are several requests made of God and of Jesus, it is centrally concerned with elaborating a metaphor in which black smoke stands for "the bad people,"⁵⁵ and the star that God breathes into the

54 As far as the individual psychology of the poet is concerned here, the process at work is illuminated by Paul E. Johnson, in his article, "A Psychological Understanding of Prayer," in Pastoral Psychology, Vol. 4, 1953, p. 33-39. He defines prayer as a dynamic experience of harmony within and without that heals conflicts and loneliness in renewing one's sense of belonging to a larger wholeness.

55 Ta jedna nić, p. 148.

"eternal/twilight of smoke"⁵⁶ represents Jesus:

. . . For this star we will
forgive everything.⁵⁷

The use of "we" rather than "I" helps to put this poem into the category of the popular prayers--the poet speaks for all of mankind in requesting God to breathe a star into the black smoke, and in guaranteeing human forgiveness of evil as long as there is a Jesus to be the star in the sky. As noted, the poem is more concerned with the poetical presentation of the star/smoke metaphors, and less with the actual prayer portions.

Another member of this set of prayer-like lyrics, "Przestroga Ablom" ("Warning for Abels"), depends for its poetic effect on "reminding" God that there is a difference between the Cains and Abels of the world. God, in a sense, is being quoted as warning the race of Cain of the dangers of destructive fire. But Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, adopting the voice of those who, unlike Cain, are innocent of wrongdoing, asks God not to forget these innocent ones:

O merciful God, please send a warning to Abels,⁵⁸
who need to be warned against the destructiveness of the
Cains. This is not so much a prayer as it is a prayer-like

56 Ibid., p. 148.

57 Ibid., p. 148.

58 Wiersze religijne, p. 111.

lyric, in which the essential point is not the prayer element itself, but the almost humorous but really serious observation that the innocent people of the world are sometimes the last ones to be warned against danger. This point is clarified in the first few lines, in a form of metaphor in which the innocent Abels are represented by people sleeping peacefully while some unseen danger threatens them:

A noise in the darkness of the cherry and linden
trees
comes from the orchard,
and drags with stones on the heart, on those who
are sleeping.⁵⁹

"Przestroga Ablom" ("Warning for Abels") may have a personal meaning for Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, but the tone of the poem is not a personal one; she seems to be making a point that is applicable to humanity at large, and thus the poem falls into the general category of popular prayer--although, as noted above, it belongs to a subdivision of prayer-like lyric rather than actual prayer.

In the same subdivision belongs the last poem to be considered in the general class of popular prayers. This is the final section, "Przespaliśmy najpiękniejszy dzień" ("We Overslept the Most Beautiful Day"), of a three-part poem, "Do Madonny Pocieszenia" ("To the Madonna of

59 Ibid., p. 111.

Consolation"). Here the speakers are a group of farmers who, having worked very hard and then stayed up during the "long, frozen, dangerous night,"⁶⁰ in order to greet the morning of the day of the Madonna of Consolation, unintentionally fell asleep. They feel guilty for having failed in this duty. They should have been awake in the morning of "the most beautiful day." But they ask forgiveness, and even point out that they lead a troubled life:

And here the bug bites us which will finally kill
us . . .
we didn't ask for the loan which we have to pay
today,
we did nothing wrong to anyone--and we did not
damage . . .
O, Mother of Consolation, don't give us up to the
judge!⁶¹

This poem is another example of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz identifying herself with people quite different from herself. The prayerful lyric, with its emphasis on the relatively simple psychology of the hard-working farmer, expresses sympathy and understanding for those whose relation to God and the Holy Mother is of a very basic, uncomplicated nature. This poem is very different from the searching, analytical poems that express the more personal feelings and ideas of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. It is a popular

60 Ta jedna nić, p. 37.

61 Ibid., p. 38.

prayer not only because it uses "we" instead of "I," but also because it gives expression to feelings and a point of view that can readily be associated with the masses of common people.

In a recapitulation of this study of the popular prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, it is seen that, of the total of sixteen, three are traditional in the sense of being either liturgical in form or sounding like prescribed prayer; six are poetical prayers based on the historical events associated with World War II; one (the poem for Bishop Nankier) is patriotic in the sense of supporting the appeal for canonization of a Polish martyr-patriot; and the remaining six are a miscellaneous group that reflect various ways in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz identified her poetic voice with the voices of ordinary people, giving expression to feelings, needs and wishes that are common to humanity. In the sixteen popular prayers the poet tends to be objective and formal. Her personal relationship to God does not enter, as she speaks for others rather than for herself, or for herself only as part of a group. Her concern for her own people, enemies and sinners alike, is expressed in traditional form and style; reflecting strong feelings of Christian love directed outwardly.

It should be noted that twelve of these sixteen poems can be considered actual prayers in the complete sense

of the word, whereas four of them are more like lyrical poems than like prayers, but, since they contain elements of prayer they belong to a subdivision of prayer-like lyrics. On the whole there is little doubt that most of the poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz satisfy the basic definition of prayer quoted earlier from Friedrich Heiler: ". . . a living-communion of the religious man with God, conceived as personal and present in experience . . ." ⁶² There may be, however, some doubt whether in all of her poetical prayers the poet satisfies the final characterization from Heiler, that this communion "reflects the forms of the social relations of humanity." ⁶³ The kind of relations he means are those of servant, child, friend, bride, etc. Certainly, relationships, such as father-child, are to be found in most of the popular prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, but in a poem like "Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół" ("A Prayer for Enemies") it is difficult to see clearly that any definite kind of "social" relationship between God and the petitioner is established. God, indeed, seems relatively remote and abstract in this poem--the mercy being called for may not be God's mercy, but human mercy. It is almost as if the poet is saying, "Let us humans be forgiving," and God is in

62 Heiler, op. cit., p. 358.

63 Ibid., p. 358.

the poem only for convenience, because merciful feelings are conventionally attributed to Him. This is not to suggest any doubt on the poet's part about the reality of God, and His presence, but only that in the poem itself one does not find evidence for the kind of "social" relationship that Heiler postulates as characteristic of prayer.

The next body of poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz to be studied is that which is classified under the general heading of "personal" prayer. This includes seven actual prayers, eight prayer-like lyrics, and five "non-prayers." The final group of five will be taken up separately after the discussion of the first fifteen. The first fifteen will be discussed in categories according to the thematic content of the poems. Within each thematic category the subdivision of "prayer" or "prayer-like lyric" will be made.

Among her prayers and prayer-like lyrics, the most familiar theme is the desire for salvation--the most important goal of the Christian. In "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces") this theme is very clearly stated, and also themes that are characteristic of other poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz: the feeling of her own unworthiness, the sense of her own loneliness and suffering, the emphasis on Jesus Christ as one who has special concern for the lowly:

O You, who know what will be and prophesied what
happened,
please remove this burning loneliness, nightmare of
my rotten heart,
restore, cleanse, and change it into love.

You, whose light was food for the saved,
heal the bitterness of life, wash away humiliations,
and upon my bowed head place a humble garland.

Let the empty suffering desires be purified with
grace,
let my evil be transformed and become goodness,
let the dry leaves produce fruit with no
difficulties.

And now, today--it is not the hour of death--this
please tell me,
You who promised a dying good thief
when You were on the cross, on the edge of eternity:

"Truly, even TODAY You will be with me in
Paradise."⁶⁴

This is less a cry for help than a plea for an end to suffering; Paradise becomes the equivalent of balance and harmony, a resolution of the inner imbalance and loss of equilibrium felt by the poet. From a strictly psychological view it can be said that the prayer in itself provides some catharsis; talking or writing openly about a problem dilutes emotional stress and tension.

A poem with a similar theme is "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death"), the title of which in itself indicates the main idea of the prayer. However, the idea is treated somewhat differently from the

64 Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

way it is treated in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"). The tone of the first two stanzas is not so much that of a person who dislikes herself and wishes to be transformed into a good person; rather, it is the tone of a person who sees stupidity and ugliness around her and wishes to be saved from it, almost, perhaps, in a snobbish way. The poem reads:

Cast off stupidity,
 give up your rights?...
 Only, Jesus, for You!
 And for this save me after death.

To listen to thoughtless clatter,
 To look at the ugliness of flesh...
 Good! But for that let, in heaven,
 Angelic beauty rock me back and forth!

may the hatred of that which I see,
 what I am and what has happened to me,
 be reborn again in the breath of God
 as in music the bitter branch of the willow. 65

It is as if the speaker is saying that she deserves the reward of heaven because she has endured unpleasant things on earth. This would seem to be contrary to the low self-esteem evidenced in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"). But in the last stanza it becomes clear that the speaker does not really feel superior to those "inferior" people around her. She realizes that her hatred extends to herself, that she is no better than the "stupid" and "thoughtless" people

she has been complaining about. What she wants truly changed is not only the bad qualities that she hates in herself, but also the hatred itself. The metaphor of the "bitter branch" is very effective, for it shows that God works in paradoxical ways: what is bitter (unhappy and hateful) in one existence can become sweet (like beautiful music) in another through the rebirth that God offers; even more, what is bitter has the simultaneous potential for sweetness, but in this case only the breath of God can activate that potential. Here again, as in "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), one can see the desire and need for a balance between the outer and the inner levels of consciousness.

The metaphor of music used to represent salvation occurs in another poem, "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"). This is not so much an actual prayer as it is a prayer-like lyric, the chief idea of the poem being not the request made of God but rather the fantasy of meeting God "in person." But in the part of the poem where the prayer is found, the idea is related to the more fully developed prayer of "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"):

O, be pleased to crowd my body into the rhythm of
 my song,
 and for me, a winged word, flaming music,
 nominating me a lyricist in the choir of angels.⁶⁶

66 Ta jedna nić, p. 198.

The composing of songs for choirs of angels is clearly a metaphor for being at one with God in heaven, yet it is also an idea that has particular earthly significance for Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, who is also praying for the enhancement of her poetical skill. If she ever meets God in her own house, He will make her a better poet, give her winged words and flaming music. One sees, in both "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death!") and "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"), the use of musical metaphors to represent high spiritual achievement and one-ness with God, both on earth and in heaven. One sees also the desire both to retain and "purify" her identity. She wishes to be reborn into a better individual, but also to remain a poet.

In another prayer-like lyric, "Miejsce gdzie padnę" ("The Place Where I Will Fall"), the poet again shows her concern with ultimate destiny. There is relatively little actual feeling of prayer in the major portion of the poem, which simply describes the poet's realistic contemplation of the scene of her own death:

My gaze--hard and desolate--
sees the place where I will fall
unadorned:
without words, without tears.⁶⁷

There is a sadness and regret here, and a deep sense of loneliness: the future will be no different from the

67 Ibid., p. 126.

present--sad, lonely, silent, without even tears. Thus the promise of salvation takes on very great importance. She states that, out of regard for God, and through His teaching, she has been a good person--then she prays for the sight of God at her death, and by implication she prays as well for eternal salvation for herself:

To Him all my life I went . . .
 You, Who guided me between the good and the bad
 at least on this place rise up finally visible!⁶⁸

Just as Jesus rose out of death, let her, at the place where she will fall, see the resurrected Jesus and have assurance of her own eternal life--like His.

In the poems just discussed it has been seen that the most conventional of the subjects of Christian prayer, the desire and supplication for eternal salvation for oneself, has been given expression by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. As might be expected in typical Christian prayer, this desire is coupled with the desire also for the achievement of certain important earthly goals: to be good, to be in communication with God, to stop hating oneself and others. In a sense, the doctrine of Christian salvation is used by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz as a short cut to find release from her inner discontent. In assurance of future salvation, her psychological salvation in the present would be achieved.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 126.

One remaining poetical prayer fits into this general thematic category: "Daj mi złagodnieć" ("Let Me Be More Gentle"). Here the wishes expressed are limited to those related to life on earth, except that the mention of Satan shifts the prayer beyond mere earthly concerns into the realm of ultimate spiritual destiny:

O God, in Your inconstant weather
 let me be more gentle:
 let patience take over
 during rainy and cool days.

.....
 don't let me come under his influence.
 Already he is occupied, already he is at work . . .
 I don't wish to complain because of him,
 let me sin no more.⁶⁹

This is a very simple prayer, a prayer to be a good and gentle person in the face of temptation. Although life after death and the question of eternal salvation or damnation are not explicitly mentioned, they are present in the poem by implication. The danger posed by Satan is, in fact, not a danger that one feels completely while still living on earth. Sometimes people sin all their lives and never suffer while they are still alive--it is only after death that the meaning of sin is finally realized, and then it is too late. Therefore it is evident that, in praying to be freed of sin, Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is consciously praying for the avoidance of damnation--that is, for her

69 Ibid., p. 183.

salvation. This is in accordance with orthodox Christian belief.

In spite of the suffering Kazimiera Iłłakowicz expresses in the last several poems considered, her love of God and her faith in His help are unwavering. Inasmuch as these attitudes reflect love of herself, faith in herself, a strong ego and a healthy psyche, they can be called self-affirming. According to Spinks,

Self affirming prayers emphasize the individual's own existence, his longing for God, and need for salvation . . . more or less spontaneous petitions (proceeding from the unconscious) expressing, often vehemently, a sense of profound and exhausting need.⁷⁰

Another category of poetical prayer in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz moves away from the more conventional concerns of Christian prayer, although still employing orthodox thematic material, are those in which nothing more than a "sign" or an "appearance" is asked of God or a saint. This second group of prayers is generally more subtle than those just considered. An example of this type of prayer is seen in the following poem, "Połów" ("Fishing"), which is quoted in full:

70 G. Stephen Spinks, Psychology and Religion: An Introduction to Contemporary Views, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, p. 128..

O, black Mother of God, imprisoned in a silver icon,
 Who extends above the head of the Child narrow,
 tightly clasped hands,
 look upon the poverty of my fishing, upon the
 bottom of my torn nets,
 and may from your hands, suddenly opened, a bird,
 all shining, fly down to me.⁷¹

This is obviously not so much an actual prayer as it is a kind of fantasy--a prayer-like lyric in which the images themselves express the poem's idea: the unusual image of the Mother as a prisoner, the strange image of the hands firmly or strongly folded, and then the unique image of the unsuccessful fisherman and his torn nets. Suddenly these are all brought together by the image of the wished-for sign: the bird from quickly opened hands. There is no "message" here in the usual sense of the word; one sees no particular significance literally attached to the bird. But certainly the Christian reader remembers Noah's dove, and the representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove, and he is free to construct whatever allegorical interpretation he wishes for the images and the action of the poem. This is a good example of the way in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz sometimes utilizes implied metaphors. She does not tell us what the bird stands for, what it symbolizes--but out of our learning and experience we are able to create in our own imaginations the possible meanings that the poet has

⁷¹ Wiersze religijne, p. 83.

injected into the poem.

As far as its relationship with other poems is concerned, it is important to note that "Połów" ("Fishing") is much less direct and conventional than the poetical prayers of the previously discussed group, and that there is a more mystical quality to the prayer-experience; whatever the prayer means, it is wrapped up in the symbol of the bird, and the meaning of the symbol is indefinite, although the reader may "feel" that he understands what it means. It is clear, in any case, that fantasy and symbol replace the harsh images of poems like "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces"), suggesting a more serene and composed emotional approach to her difficulties.

Another prayer-like lyric, "Przy Tobie, Chryste" ("Near You, Christ"), has a similar quality, but in this poem the familiar use of the musical metaphor makes the symbolism not too difficult:

Nothing is necessary for my heart
near You;
when it is dark, shine for me,
melody.
With an unearthly light scherzo,
link together the melody and the heart.⁷²

As has been seen in "Za to mnie po śmierci zbaw!" ("For This Save Me After Death!") and "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"), music is associated in the mind of Kazimiera

⁷² Ibid., p. 151.

Illakowicz with the beauty and peace of experiencing the presence of God. This poem shows an interesting variation on a familiar idea: instead of saying "This melody reminds me of God," she is saying, "God reminds me of melody." Here there is very little sense of prayer in the poem, which asks Christ to link together the melody and the heart in a light scherzo. The poem manifests a very loving feeling toward Christ, a sense of joy in His presence which is felt without being visible. Like the other poems in this category, "Przy Tobie, Chryste" ("Near You, Christ") does not request the full experience of literal joining to Christ, but rather prays for a kind of manifestation, a "presence" through signs, such as a bird or a piece of music.

There are two remaining poems in which a "sign" or an "appearance" is asked of a divine person. Both are closer to fully developed prayers than they are to the prayer-like lyrics just considered. These are "Silniejsza niż moja niewiara" ("Stronger Than My Disbelief") and "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"). In both the feelings are very personal, and the "poetic" qualities are highly imaginative and intense. The more difficult and more intense of the two is "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"), which has already been examined in Chapter II in connection with the concept

of God in His union with the Holy Spirit. It is of interest here because of the particular nature of the prayer itself. In both the second and the third parts of the poem, the poet calls upon the Holy Spirit to appear. At the end of Part 2, she writes:

You, who in immaculate armor
placed me,
arise Yourself, as so many times,
on the way,
in three faces, in three burning helmets,
in crosses, swords, banners and birds.⁷³

This is a call to the Holy Spirit to make an appearance in a number of symbolic shapes. The repetition of the number "three" emphasizes the allusion to the Holy Trinity, but the impression given by these images is not only of their triune nature, but also of their association with warfare, as seen in "helmets," "swords" and "banners." These images are related to the early part of this section, where the poet refers to the destructive activity of the Holy Spirit in relation to her. She seems to be calling for the kind of destruction of self that accompanies the mystical idea of the "dark night of the soul" which ends in a spiritual rebirth. This is a prayer for the accomplishment of a process similar to purification by fire--a cleansing of the soul through suffering. The whole idea is referred to again

⁷³ Ta jedna nić, p. 17.

in the last stanza of the poem, but here it is even more complicated:

When I seek You, You do not manifest Your
light,
when I doubt, You shine in chaos . . .
Destroy, crush, but appear fully,
Holy Spirit.⁷⁴

The poet is saying that, although she knows the great destructive force of the Holy Spirit, she is not sure that she ever will see the Spirit when she wishes to. It is the sight of the Holy Spirit that presumably will provide comfort in the "dark night of the soul" and an assurance of the value of that suffering. The essential meaning of the prayer seems to be, "Please make sure my suffering is not in vain--show me You are always present, even if Your presence is accompanied by pain."

Finally there is one more prayer, "Silniejsza niż moja niewiara" ("Stronger Than My Disbelief"), in which a manifestation of God is requested. Here the poet compares herself with those who were alive at the time Jesus lived on earth, and imagines herself trying to follow in His footsteps. She compares her small wish with their great wishes:

74 Ibid., p. 18.

They--always requested For me there is
 no need of miracles.
 I need only one thing: Your footsteps⁷⁵

The humility of this wish is reflected again in the way in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz asks for signs of Christ's presence:

Let Him appear to me like a clear word,
 let Him speak through the colors on dusty
 paths,
 let Him deafen me with a blaring sound, to
 reach in a simple way, softly
 to my disbelief which is more lonely than my
 love.⁷⁶

In the two prayers just considered, as in the two prayer-like lyrics discussed before them--"Połów" ("Fishing") and "Przy Tobie, Chryste" ("Near You, Christ")--that for which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz prays is different from what was petitioned in the first category of prayers. Instead of salvation in heaven and goodness on earth, the last four prayers request something not so much to be possessed as to be seen or apprehended, an "appearance" or a "sign." In three of these poems--"Połów" ("Fishing"), "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit") and "Silniejsza niż moja niewiara" ("Stronger Than My Disbelief")--there is a very clear tone of humility on the part of the speaker. The expression is that of someone who feels that possibly she

75 Ibid., p. 186.

76 Ibid., p. 186.

does not deserve very much from God. This idea is supported by the sense of the near-destruction of the human spirit in "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit") and the fact of disbelief in "Silniejsza niż moja niewiara" ("Stronger Than My Disbelief"). The last poem, in fact, deals with a contradiction in feeling: there is both a love of Jesus and a doubt about His reality. What is important to the poet is that the disbelief be overcome by her love. But in order for this love to win, it must be supported by signs of the existence of Jesus. Both this and "Hymny do Ducha świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit") are deep and troubled and self-conscious poems; they reflect a lack of certainty about personal salvation together with a sense of the speaker as an undeserving person. So it is natural that a sign of some kind be prayed for; to ask any more might be asking too much, yet such a sign would be proof that faith and hope will not be in vain.

A third important category of personal poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz shows some similarity to the second category, to the extent that they dwell on feelings of insignificance and undeservedness. In these poems, however, the poet does not ask for salvation or a sign, but rather for an intensification of her low and insignificant status. Of the three poems in this category, the first to be considered is "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd").

Although, this poem employs traditional prayerful language--even in its title--it is probably best placed in the subdivision of lyric rather than actual prayer, for not only is it constructed more like a lyric poem than a prayer, but also the relationship between God and the poet is of comparatively little significance to the meaning of poem:

O God, grant me darkness,
darkness and silence,
and power so mysterious,
not to be heard.

And fame without notoriety,
and road with no return
O God, grant me darkness
and solitude.⁷⁷

It may be that "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd") should be considered an actual prayer rather than a prayerful lyric, but, compared to many of the other poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, this one does not develop an idea of any sort of meaningful relationship between the poet and God, as has been done in more completely developed prayers as "Dwie twarze" ("Two Faces") or "Hymny do Ducha Świętego" ("Hymns to the Holy Spirit"). God enters into this poem only as a remote Being of whom one asks favors. Still it seems as if here Kazimiera unconsciously wishes for the experience of the darkness, silence, and power of the void of unknowing that is knowing.

⁷⁷ Wiersze religijne, p. 113.

But the favor itself is important, for it reflects a mood that is characteristic of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz in some of her deepest and most personal poetry. It is a wish for darkness, silence, and solitude in the midst of bright lights, and a group of noisy people. The poet, in the center of all this confusion, perhaps receiving a great deal of attention, wishes that it would all disappear, that she could achieve the mysterious power of being able to communicate without being heard, without having to continue to show a certain public "self" to the world that is not her real self. The implication is that her inner self is extremely private, quiet and brooding. She wishes she could retreat into that self--be unknown, unseen, insignificant. Perhaps also there is a mystical element here: in the darkness is the power of the void, the knowing of unknowing.

The two poems remaining in this category are "Modlitwa w kościółku świętej Tereski" ("Prayer in the Little Church of Saint Therese"), which will be referred to hereafter as "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), and "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"). Both of these, especially the latter, are somewhat fully developed prayers, emphasizing strongly the desire of the poet to achieve a state in which she is unimportant, small, and hidden, practically anonymous, while at the same time

wishing to be granted some sort of divine acknowledgment of her existence. Both appear to be very personal, to make use of feelings and experiences that the poet senses at a deep emotional level. In "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), Kazimiera Iłłakowicz speaks of the difficulties of daily existence, describes morning as arriving "sharp as a stroke,"⁷⁸ and prays to St. Therese to take away her "cold fear of people."⁷⁹ The poem continues:

Do not let them see it this one time,
and do not let them follow my footsteps;
in the sphere of divine beauty
do not allow me to be neglected.

Let none know--how, and with what, and where I
survive,
light and heavenly [blue].
Let the space of the universe cover me,
St. Therese!⁸⁰

Like other poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz dealing with deeply felt emotions, "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church") has elements that are not easily understood. It is clear that, like "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"), this poem touches on the poet's desire to be free from the presence of other people, and to find some sort of obscure and private existence for herself. But some images are not explicit in their meaning or application. The matter of

78 Ibid., p. 114.

79 Ibid., p. 114.

80 Ibid., p. 114.

"how, and with what, and where I survive"⁸¹ seems to be a secret between the poet and St. Therese; the reader is left to imagine--like the crowd itself--just what is being referred to. The words "light and heavenly,"⁸² however, point at least to the possibility that the poet is referring to some sort of internal, spiritual existence--connected to her religious feelings--into which no one can intrude. This seems to be such a safe haven from the frightening crowd that she is willing to go even further, and pray to St. Therese that she be covered with the space of the universe. The references to the space of the universe, and to "the sphere of divine beauty,"⁸³ suggest a desire for personal identification with the spiritual world of God and the saints, and yet the poet seems to desire very little for herself except a small, obscure place. She wishes to be inside the sphere of divine beauty, but she would be content to be invisible, obscure, covered by the universe, yet it is clear that her desire to retain her personal identity still remains. She has not come to the point of wishing completely to lose herself in the Allness of God.

One of the petitions Kazimiera Iłłakowicz makes in "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church") is

81 Ibid., p. 114.

82 Ibid., p. 114.

83 Ibid., p. 114.

for St. Therese to relieve her of "the heavy burden of the day."⁸⁴ A very similar request is made of God in the first stanza of "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), which is the last of the three poetical prayers considered in this group. "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer") is one of the longest of the religious poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. It presents some difficulties in interpretation, but in general outline it is a prayerful monologue with God in which the poet expresses a series of changing feelings about herself in relation to God. The beginning reveals her low opinion of herself in referring to herself as "poor scrap"⁸⁵ who has awakened in the morning after a dream of Paradise, only to realize that once more she has to face the reality of the world. In echo of "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), the first stanza ends with the line: "Again I have to lift up the burden."⁸⁶ Wondering whether she will have such pleasant dreams again, the poet feels that the realistic world could not offer her the happiness that a dream world could. Immediately she calls upon Christ:

84. Ibid., p. 114.

85 Ta jedna nić, p. 10.

86 Ibid., p. 10.

In You is my confidence, O Savior!
 Take my cross and hang it up among Your holy votive
 offerings,
 that I may stand like a golden flag,
 to remain unbent, unbowed, for days on end.⁸⁷

The poem might have ended here as a simple prayer for salvation, but Kazimiera Iłlakowicz develops the theme of her weakness at great length, and turns what might have been a simple prayer into a rather complicated self-examination, especially in regard to the quality and strength of her religious faith. In the third stanza she prays that God will understand her weaknesses and repeats the idea that "my faith is weak."⁸⁸ In the fourth stanza the prayer begins to become more intense as the poet's account of herself becomes more complex:

Powers known only to You have taken hold of me,
 they have taken hold of me, weak insect me, the
 smallest particle of straw,
 me--ashes and nothing,
 and every day I have to go through this [i.e.,
 waking up in the world], like a new David,
 this something greater than my soul and my self,
 to get a key to the mystery.⁸⁹

There is the beginning of an illumination that suffering is a necessary prelude to self-discovery. She then pleads again that her cross be taken from her and put into the sky, and also that her strength, her sword, her crown, even the

87 Ibid., p. 10.

88 Ibid., p. 10.

89 Ibid., p. 11.

key of the city, be taken away from her. This set of images is a little obscure until the reader encounters the next stanza, only to discover that all these symbols of struggle, power, authority and accomplishment are symbols of which the poet feels she is not able to bear the spiritual weight. She has been through spiritually difficult and demanding times: "I knew, I carried, I fought,"⁹⁰ but now she makes this confession:

I am not of the same clay as the martyrs and
saints:
I want to live! From the sun to the abyss, each
form, each color, tempts me,
upon the heights, dizziness and nausea overcome
me
I am begging You, Our Father, from the depth of
my nothingness,
let others instead of me enter into Your kingdom
in the glory, in the strength, in the fire, in the
smoke.⁹¹

This confession is very important, for it reveals an aspect of the religious feelings of Kazimiera Illakowicz that she does not often display so completely--the sense that her faith and belief are inadequate; that in her weak humanity she does not deserve entrance into God's kingdom--in fact there is the suggestion that she is not completely sure that she wants to enter this kingdom, because such entrance demands more of her spirit than it is capable of achieving.

90 Ibid., p. 11.

91 Ibid., p. 11.

But immediately the next stanza expresses an abrupt change in feeling:

Please let me achieve Your graces right now, here,
at prayer!⁹²

This line helps to make the whole poem appear to be like a genuine monologue to God spoken by a person undergoing the emotional strain of experiencing alternate moments of doubt and hope. The opening complaint of the burden of daily existence was replaced by the expression of doubt that heaven would be open to a person as weak as the speaker, which then turned into a kind of self-pitying rejection of salvation ("Let others instead of me enter into Your kingdom").⁹³ In this seventh stanza there is a new outburst of supplication for God's grace, asking to be part of God's procession, promising to proclaim God's holy name, but then the mood shifts again as the poet confesses that such forceful prayer is not something she can sustain--"I am tired. I can't go ahead."⁹⁴ And then, after having called upon God to "punish me by forgetting me,"⁹⁵ the poet concludes the prayer on a note of profound humility:

92 Ibid., p. 11.

93 Ibid., p. 11.

94 Ibid., p. 12.

95 Ibid., p. 12.

Let me disappear in the dust like a little speck,
of dust,
and let me not leave any footsteps in the place
where I once lived,
not even ashes after sacrifice, or blood after
oblation;
to be a flower, to be a bird, a child hungry for
love,
and enter Your home, to hide in the folds of Your
coat,
as unseen dust on the edge of Your garment.⁹⁶

In all of the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, this is probably the most fully developed statement of the wish to be as close to non-existence as possible without actually dying. In all three of the poems in this group being considered, "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"), "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), and "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), the emphasis is on insignificance, smallness, invisibility and anonymity. The metaphor of the speck of dust most effectively conveys this idea. Also, the speck of dust on the edge of God's garment serves to clarify the idea of the great importance of God as compared to one of His mortals. This metaphor provides insight into some of the deeper aspects of the religious feelings of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, as it reveals the profound quality of her humility as she contemplates herself in relation to God. The psychological, as well as the religious, paradox exists in the possibility

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

that the ultimate fulfillment of self can be achieved only by means of self-effacement.

Besides humility, another concept expressed in this stanza is God's protection, which is most clearly suggested in the lines:

to be . . . a child hungry for love,
and enter Your home, to hide in the folds of Your
coat⁹⁷

That is, the poet expresses a wish, not only to be made small and insignificant, but also to be made a child who can hide herself in the folds of God's clothing. It is interesting that a similar wish is made in "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), when Kazimiera Iłłakowicz prays to St. Therese: "Let the space of the universe cover me."⁹⁸ Also, it has been noted above that the poet several times refers to the protection of the "blue mantle" of the Mother of God, as for example in "Modlitwa" [I] ("Prayer" [II]) and "Za wszystkich" ("For Everyone"). What is seen here is a recurrent wish on the part of the poet for divine protection conceived of in terms of metaphors that involve the idea of being covered, as a child is covered by a blanket. Perhaps this is all related to the fact that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz was herself an orphan, to whom the

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹⁸ Wiersze religijne, p. 114.

picture of a small child being tucked in and protected by a loving parent would have very special emotional meaning. The desire for insignificance and diminution of self expressed in the three poems now under consideration is perhaps strongly related to the poet's desire to be a child again. This certainly seems to be a primary motif in "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"). The poet writes the poem out of adult experience in a world that offers her no comfort, and that intrudes, in the morning, upon her comfortable dream of Paradise. After the poet struggles with questions of faith and duty, and simple existence, that are imposed upon her by life in this world, she finally turns to God, not as a mature, wise, intellectual woman, but as a small child perfectly willing to allow herself to lose her ego, her identity, in the folds of God's coat, her Father's coat.

It might be pointed out that "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer") is not only a rich and complex poem, but is also a fully developed prayer in accordance with the definition of Friedrich Heiler: ". . . a living communion . . . with God, conceived as personal and present in experience, a communion which reflects the forms of the social relations of humanity."⁹⁹ The poet speaks directly to God;

⁹⁹ Heiler, op. cit., p. 358.

He is obviously present in the poem in the role of Father to the poet.

The groups of personal prayers or prayer-like lyrics considered so far have been presented in three categories: 1) prayers for personal salvation and for the gift of spiritual goodness that leads to salvation; 2) prayers for a sign or an appearance of God or a saint; 3) prayers for the achievement of a state of anonymity, insignificance or invisibility. All of these are positive prayers; that is, they are requests for some gift that has, or will have, a positive value for the petitioner. In this sense they are traditional in their intention, no matter how personal they are in intellectual content and poetic style.

There is, however, an additional major category of poems by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz which can best be described by the term "non-prayer" or "anti-prayer." This is a curious and unusual group of six poems which share, in various ways, a common characteristic: they utilize the language, images and concepts associated with prayer in order to make a statement which is consciously and deliberately not a prayer.

Some of the most complex religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is found in this group. For example, in "Odtrącona modlitwa" ("Scorned Prayer"), the visual picture is clear enough, as is the general feeling of the

poem, but the specific facts involved are left obscure:

I want to pray for you in church
before the altar renowned for miracles,
when gloom is creeping and spreading
under the columns.

I wish to beg guidance and grace
with humble, silent words,
from the Virgin, who has a gold band
around her head.

However, when I merely mention your name,
the most holy face becomes sullen,
and the Mother of God disappears,
as in fire and smoke.

Six-winged cherubim from the stained glass
with fiery swords in their right hands
come into the church and kneel on guard
under the columns.¹⁰⁰

It is clear that the poet has gone into the church with the intention of praying, but obviously something about the person to be prayed for, or the relationship between that person and the poet, has caused a negative response from the Virgin. It is more than that because the Virgin disappears from view as if she is in some threat of danger, and the six cherubim take up positions as if to protect the statue of the Virgin and other religious objects with their armor. The initial intention to pray has been rejected by divine forces. The reader is left to wonder why. Who is the person for whom the poet intended to pray, and what is it about that person which has resulted in such a negative

100 Wiersze religijne, p. 23-24.

response? The reader cannot tell. The absence of any reaction on the part of the poet is an interesting aspect of the poem, as well. There is no commentary, no analysis, not even the expression of sorrow or disappointment. One may surmise that Kazimiera Illakowicz is trying to pray out of a deep sense of her own unworthiness, and that perhaps some guilt over circumstances of her life makes her imagine the rejection.

Another poem in this group, even more difficult, is "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in the Cage"):

I cannot free myself, I cannot raise myself up,
 I cannot return from noise to silence.
 The calm within me is disturbed, the soul within
 me is wounded.
 I wish to be silent, I wish to think: "Under You,
 Protection,
 and the heart flutters, and the blood is beating,
 pounding.
 There was a Spirit and now in the cage a wolf
 snaps his teeth in the night.¹⁰¹

The major point of this poem is not clear--there is no explanation of what the "Spirit" is or what it represents. In the wish for silence and calm there is a similarity to some of the positive prayers that have been discussed. However, it is noted that although the speaker wishes to "think" the prayer, "Under You, Protection," the prayer is not actually thought. That is, the desire to pray has been frustrated, the wish for silence and calm cannot be

101 Ibid., p. 150.

answered--and now the speaker feels simply like a wolf in a cage, or perhaps that her own body is the cage and inside of her is the "wolf" snapping his teeth in the night. Like "Odrzucona modlitwa" ("Scorned Prayer"), there was an intention to pray, but the prayer is prevented by a mysterious force. Unlike that poem, however, in "Wilk w klatce" ("Wolf in a Cage") there is some evidence of a reaction on the part of the poet to her situation: The nature of that reaction is suggested in the last line of the poem, but the meanings of "Spirit" and of the wolf metaphor are not sufficiently clarified to offer the reader an opportunity for trustworthy interpretation.

From a psychological point of view, however, the poem indicates a state of emergency within. She is enslaved by the bonds of the world, of the body. There is no rest, nor the peace of silence or harmony. She is distraught physically and psychically. The soul of the wolf suffers the pain of separation from God; the poet feels lost in the depths of spiritual darkness and physical limitation.

The third poem in this group to be considered, "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer"), offers the reader a more readily available possibility for interpretation:

I have no time to love You anymore:
my end is very close.
I am only reaching out my hands in the crowd:
O Christ!

My heart wanted it a different way.
My foot walked with difficulty--not the right way.
If I had known before . . . if I had only known!
. . . Now it is already too late to turn back.

I am involved more deeply, because I know no
other way . . .
Everything in me and around me--unclean.
I am only reaching out my hands in the crowd:
O Christ!¹⁰²

The idea of the poet's wish to find some way other than that which the crowd follows is familiar from her other poems, such as "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"). But here, instead of making a prayer based on the hope of it being answered, the speaker is in a mood of despair. Prayer now seems to be too late, and she regretfully looks back to lost opportunities for following the right path. The reader can imagine the sinner, ashamed of sin, afraid of damnation, suffering the pain of knowing that she has rejected Christ's love, surrounded by a crowd--yet holding out her hands, reaching, stretching in the hope that possibly she may touch Christ or be touched by Him. The poem's title, "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer"), makes it very clear that the inability to pray is an essential idea of the poem. But perhaps the poet wishes to

¹⁰² Ta jedna nić, p. 178.

indicate that there are things that one might do "instead of prayer" that could still ensure, or at least provide hope for eventual forgiveness. The fate of the speaker is left unresolved--is she saved or damned? Whatever the answer is, it is not going to come in response to prayer, unless the stretching forth of the sinner's hands is intended, by the poet, to be taken as a kind of prayer in itself--a prayer that is not spoken, but acted. Possibly a paradox is intended here: the poem is not a prayer, in the sense that nothing is prayed for, since the subject-matter itself is the lack of prayer, and yet the intention of the poem is as religious and deep as any prayer can be, and in fact may describe an act which, in its profound intensity, goes beyond prayer. Psychologically there is a slight paradox here: the acknowledgment that she is undeserving contrasts with the self-affirming act of holding out her hands.

Another variation on the "non-prayer" kind of theme is seen in "Na Gromniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"), which comes closer to being an actual prayer than the other poems in this group. The speaker asks the Virgin, on the eve of Candlemas, an unusual request:

O most beautiful Maiden,
 on Candlemas,
 for Your blessed fire,
 hanging on the wax of Candlemas,
 through the prickly forest and howling' wolves
 I walk without any protection:
 do not pray for me, and do not provide, but only
 mention.¹⁰³

The idea here is very simple, though unusual. The speaker has come safely through the dangers of the woods to light a candle, but does not pray for any special reward, merely that she be "mentioned." She then describes the dangerous existence that Mary had as the Mother of the infant Jesus, which, in a way she compares to her own dangers, and the difficult life of the peasants. But again she specifically asks not to be protected, not to be prayed for:

. . . And do not pray for me, Most Holy Maiden,
 Star of a happy and unprolonged death,
 for protection or happiness,
 do not pray, Aurora of Grace, do not shield,
 only--mention.¹⁰⁴

It would appear that the request not to be prayed for comes from the speaker's feeling that even such a natural request is more than should be made of the Virgin, whose troubles and dangers were greater than those of the speaker. But still there is the hope that perhaps the mere whispering of the speaker's name might be made on her behalf: a small

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 47.

thing, an effortless "mention." Thus, although this poem has been placed in the general category of "non-prayers," it might actually belong in a category all by itself, being in effect both a prayer and a non-prayer. (Perhaps, too, the poet feels that just a mention of her is commensurate with her feeling of insignificance.)

There is no such ambiguity about the next poem to be considered in this group: "Łaska" ("Grace"). This indeed can be considered at the other extreme--an "anti-prayer."

It appears when it isn't asked for;
 It is waiting for me since the morning.
 I thought--to finish the matter . . .
 but It is upsetting my plans:
 When I wish to go my own way,
 it touches my shoulders,
 and turns me around like a blind man,
 and tiptoes,
 and leads wherever it wants to.
 I prayed some time ago for it . . .
 now--may God save me from it.¹⁰⁵

This is certainly one of the most unusual of the poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz written on a religious subject; it conflicts with the great majority of her poems in its attitude, which cannot be characterized as anything but a direct rejection of an important element of traditional religious belief. The devout Christian, even the occasionally doubting Christian, is not expected to turn her

105 Iłłakowicz, Poezje, p. 165.

back upon grace. Rather, it is something to be prayed for. Indeed, as Barth says, "Prayer is the extreme case of God's grace for us."¹⁰⁶ "Łaska" ("Grace") seems to reject this concept, and all of its implications. Possibly it was written in a light mood, out of a transitory feeling of being too much the good Christian, the poet's goodness (derived from grace) preventing her from the enjoyment of purely human pleasure, or simple personal independence. "Łaska" ("Grace") is an unusual poem in its point of view, and difficult to harmonize with the rest of the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz. Perhaps it can be understood in psychological terms as a rejection of the ego-annihilation implied in the acceptance of grace, if grace is conceived of as a means by which God "captures" the human soul. In any event, "Łaska" ("Grace") is an extreme example of an anti-prayer.

The last of the poems to be considered in this category is "Modlitwa o śmierć" ("Prayer for Death"). It is included here because it has the title and form of a prayer, but it is not similar to other prayers of the poet. Certainly, it is not addressed to God or any divine person; rather, it seems to be addressed to some impersonal

106 Karl Barth, Prayer, trans. Sara F. Terrien, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1952, quoted in Jacques Ellul, Prayer and Modern Man, trans. C. Edward Hopkin, New York, Seabury Press, n.d., p. 48.

audience. The poem concerns a request for the tranquility of death, a complete end to life and hope. Furthermore, it does not look forward in any way to salvation or any sort of spiritual redemption. The despair expressed in the poem results from the speaker having suffered disappointment in love:

. . . heaven and sea are poisoned,
 . . . bread and water are poisoned . . .
 My beloved no longer loves me,
 already I have no strength.
 Pray for death for me, not for a famous crown,
 not for wings, so easily destroyed,
 not for a pure heart, not for God's grace.
 Let them lay me in the coffin,
 so that finally my misery will come to an end,
 if only as soon as possible, if only as soon
 as possible!¹⁰⁷

The poem continues with the same general point of view. It can be classified as an anti-prayer because it is entirely negative, expressing a wish only for annihilation--not the insignificance or anonymity of "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), but total non-existence. It has the form and title of a prayer, but, being an expression of despair, it is the opposite of a prayer.

All of the poems just considered are in the category of non-prayer, or anti-prayer, lyrics, except possibly "Na Gromniczną" ("Purification of Our Lady"), which might

¹⁰⁷ Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, Wiersze zebrane, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 65.

reasonably be considered as being, in intention, an actual prayer, even though there is some ambiguity in this respect, for which reason it has been placed in this category of non-prayer.

There are two poems remaining to be considered in this study of the personal prayers and prayer-related lyrics of Kazimiera Illakowicz which are quite different from one another and thus constitute a miscellaneous category. The first is not an actual prayer, but a prayer-like lyric, "Do świętej Cecylii" ("To St. Cecilia"); it is a humorous poem, and obviously not intended to be taken seriously.

From the blaring radio behind the wall,
 spare me,
 from the flute under the floor, save,
 musical maiden . . .
 From the violin and piano,
 from "rubato" and "staccato" . . .

Send me a silent messenger
 from the leaden harmony of your stained glass image,
 so that the noises, that drink my blood,
 the messenger with his breast of feathers would
 shield.

Save, save,
 O Holy Cecilia. 108

The poet complains of the loud and disturbing noises being made by musicians who are practicing in the building in which she lives, and then simply prays to St. Cecilia (the

patron saint of music) to save her from "the noises that drink my blood."¹⁰⁹

The final poem of the group is also a prayer-like lyric rather than an actual prayer. This is "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales"), the most unusual of the religious poems of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz. In fact, like "Do świętej Cecylii" ("To St. Cecilia"), it perhaps has no serious religious intention at all. The gales, or strong wintry winds, are described as running through the forest with blood upon their eyes. But their efforts to bring the warm weather to an end are in vain:

It is still fall, it is still warm,
the white frost disappears immediately at
daybreak.
. . . Over the blackthorns and in the
forest
the gales are bleeding in vain.¹¹⁰

This highly creative imagery, with its strong personification of the winds, is not in itself unusual. But the attitude expressed towards the gales is quite uncommon, because normally one would expect pity to be shown, not to the aggressive and violent forces of nature, but to the peaceful victims of the wintry forces. However, it is the gales for which the poet feels her pity: "Have mercy, God, upon

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 103.

¹¹⁰ Wiersze religijne, p. 156.

the gales."¹¹¹ The reader has a choice, in attempting to interpret this poem, of deciding either that the poem is merely a fanciful, somewhat humorous play of the poetic imagination, or, that it is a kind of ironical allegory, perhaps in the same spirit as "Przestroga Ablom" ("Warning for Abels"), by means of which the poet makes a sarcastic allusion to the fact that the violent and aggressive forces of earth are frequently protected at the expense of their victims. The tone of the poem seems to suggest that this latter interpretation is not really warranted, and that the poem is nothing more than a curious and unusual exercise of the poetic imagination, but, looking at the poem not as an intellectual, but as an emotional statement, it could be that the "gales bleeding in vain" are her own feelings--her emotions warring with themselves to no evident purpose.

Before turning to a summary and conclusion for this chapter, it might be observed that a small but interesting insight into the use of prayer by Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is provided by an overall breakdown of the divine persons to whom prayers are addressed. The distinction between popular prayers and personal prayers is followed here. In the popular prayers, some are addressed to more than one person; in "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany of Those Who Love

111 Ibid., p. 156.

Jesus") all three persons of the Holy Trinity are addressed, as well as the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the chief emphasis is placed upon Jesus. In "Msza Maryjna" ("Mass in Honor of Mary") both God and the Blessed Virgin are prayed to. In "Modlitwa dziecka" ("Prayer of the Child") God the Father, Jesus, the Virgin, and St. Joseph are prayed to and, in "Modlitwa [I]" ("Prayer" [I]), both God and the Virgin are petitioned. The remaining popular prayers are addressed to their hearers in the following ratio: prayers to God in general--5, prayers to God the Father--1, prayers to Jesus--2, prayers to the Holy Spirit--1, prayers to the Blessed Virgin--4. Considering all the persons in all the popular prayers together, the following totals result: prayers to God in general--7, prayers to God the Father--3, prayers to Jesus--4, prayers to the Holy Spirit--2, prayers to the Blessed Virgin--8, prayers to St. Joseph--1.

The persons prayed to in the personal prayers break down as follows: God in general--7, Jesus Christ--6, Holy Spirit--1, Blessed Virgin--3, St. Therese--1, St. Cecilia--1.

Taking all the prayers together, it is found that the number of prayers for each of the persons listed is as follows: God in general--14, God the Father--3, Jesus Christ--9, the Holy Spirit--2, the Blessed Virgin--11, St. Joseph--1, St. Therese--1, St. Cecilia--1.

Summary and Conclusions

Of approximately ninety religious or religion-oriented poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz studied in connection with the present work thirty-six are prayers, prayer-like lyrics, or poems in which the idea of prayer is present in an important way. This means that, to the extent that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is a religious poet, she often uses a form of prayer as a means of expression. It should be noted, however, that without exact biographical information about each poem, which would be impossible to acquire, even if desirable, the reader cannot make an absolute distinction between poems that are primarily religious in their intention, and those that are primarily exercises of the poetic imagination. The distinction that has been made in this chapter, between "actual" prayers and so-called "prayer-like" lyrics, is to some extent an effort to distinguish religious from aesthetic facts, but it is clear merely from reading the poems themselves that some which appear to be prayers, such as "Modlitwa za wichry" ("Prayer for the Gales"), are more poetic than religious in meaning--and, vice versa, some that are more lyrical in form, like "Miejsce gdzie padnę" ("The Place Where I Will Fall"), have serious religious meaning.

This necessarily leads one to consider Kazimiera Iłłakowicz both a religious person and a poet, and that these entities are inseparable. It would be fruitless to attempt to relegate her religious poems into an arbitrary categorization of "sincere" or "insincere." One cannot tell, simply by reading a particular poem, whether it was written during a time of intense religious feeling, or whether the poet remembered a religious experience, or even observed someone else having it, and decided to write a poem about it, caring more about the success of the poetic expression than about the "sincerity" of the religious experience. Such an awareness should make a reader cautious about deciding that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is speaking about herself in every poem. It may be that the persona of each poem is Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, but it also may be that, like a playwright, she has created dramatis personae who represents views and feelings that she herself does not share.

With nothing else to go on, however, and with the knowledge that the poet is a practicing Catholic who has expressed in other ways at least a normal amount of religious devotion, the reader of the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz has the right to assume that the prayers and prayer-like poems do in fact represent her own feelings and point of view. The fact that differences, even contradictions, can be found between one poem and another (e.g.,

between "Modlitwa za nieprzyjaciół" ["Prayer for Enemies"] and "Modlitwa za lotnictwo" ["Prayer for the Air Force"]) need not be interpreted to mean anything more than that this poet, like any human being, experiences fluctuations of mind.

There are even more significant contradictions, when it comes to matters of faith, as is seen in the contrast between "Litania kochających Jezusa" ("Litany For Those Who Love Jesus") and "Laska" ("Grace"). Did the same person write both poems? Of course--being a poet, even being a devout poet, does not mean that one always loves Jesus, or always is satisfied with the goodness of one's motives. The same sort of contradiction, on a more subtle level, is seen between the various kinds of wishes that the prayers express. Sometimes the poet wishes to be someone important in heaven, and to be talking to God as a close friend, as in "Przy spotkaniu" ("In Meeting"); at other times as in "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), the poet wishes to be no more than a speck of dust, and God is a giant. On occasion the poet wants to live; sometimes she wants to die.

The following overall generalizations can be made about prayer in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłlakowicz. Her popular prayers show that she identifies with the Polish people, and with poor people, farmers, orphans, the "Abels"

of this world who suffer oppression and fear and look to God for comfort in this world as well as eternal life in heaven. Also, she is capable of reproducing the feeling as well as the form of traditional prayer, which shows that she empathizes with the traditional forms of worship that are practiced by the populace.

The personal prayers, to a very large extent, show a poet who accepts traditional Catholic attitudes and beliefs. She prays for salvation, for personal goodness and gentleness; she shows an awareness of the struggles with the realities of daily existence; she experiences suffering and looks to God for comfort; she confesses her weaknesses; and she thinks about death, wondering about the ultimate destiny of her soul. She shows in her prayers that she believes in God and the saints, and in heaven--these provide a basic element in the majority of her prayers.

The one important respect in which several of the most effective prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz differ from typical Christian prayer is in their emphasis on the wish to be outside of the crowd, separate from others, living in a dark and peaceful loneliness. The feeling of wanting to be unnoticed, to have almost no ego at all, is a particular mark of the prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. Although it is not a feeling that is present in every prayer, it is significant because it is unusual. The metaphor of the particle

of dust in "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer") is one of the most important in the poetry of Kazimiera Illakowicz, for it represents in a single, highly effective image, all of the poet's feelings about the desire for anonymity and diminution of self--a feeling that characterizes much of her most original poems, such as "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), "Modlitwa w kościółku" ("Prayer in the Little Church"), "Modlitwa w tłoku" ("Prayer in a Crowd"), and "Zamiast modlitwy" ("Instead of Prayer"). And finally, there is one emerging image which best sums up the basic religious feelings in the poems of Kazimiera Illakowicz--that for all her fame, and activity, and productivity in this life, she wishes in the end for nothing more than to be a particle of dust on God's coat.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Close to ninety religious poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz have been studied for the primary purpose of answering two questions: What is the concept of God of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz and what is the meaning and role of prayer in her poetry? The answers to these questions constitute the major portion of the study; however, before these answers are attempted, some general background to the religious poetry is given as an aid in understanding some of the underlying factors that have contributed to the poetic achievements of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. The cultural and political milieu of the writer, the kinds of literary movements that were taking place in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Poland, the particular religious background and upbringing of the poet, and her life and experiences as a political servant and then as a political exile, all contribute to an understanding of how certain themes and attitudes made their way into her poetry. One sees, too, that certain significant qualities of her poetry--a sense of loneliness, an awareness and sensitivity to suffering--were the natural result of a life that began in orphanhood, a life that has for the most part been lived alone.

In the life of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz the Catholic faith has always played an important role. She has never

displayed what one might call zealotry in the exercise of her faith, but religion has been a part of her life from her earliest years till her old age. There were occasions, in her youth, when she rebelled against ritual as superstitious or unnecessary, but she always felt a strong attachment to individual churches as places of worship, as places where the concrete symbols of her religion were to be found--the cross, the altar, statues, icons, candles--and as she grew older these became for her increasingly important symbols of spiritual security. Also, she developed increasingly deep internal feelings about God the Father and Jesus and about herself in relation to these persons. As she continued to internalize her religious feelings, she placed special emphasis on certain specific aspects of faith and doctrine, such as the commandment, "Love Thy Neighbor," but always this emphasis fell within the framework of Catholic belief. Although always an original and independent thinker, as far as religious belief is concerned, Kazimiera Iżakowicz has never been a revolutionary or iconoclast.

This quality, of being both part of and yet somehow separate from conventional systems, is seen also in the fact that Kazimiera Iżakowicz cannot be identified as belonging, or having belonged, to any particular literary movement or school of poetry. In her imagery and symbolism,

especially, she seems to be a "private" poet--puzzling and at times obscure.

In turning to the question of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz' concept of God, one discovers that, despite the occasional obscurity, her concept is not difficult to understand. It is a concept based on the traditional Christian doctrine, and colored to some degree (though not significantly altered) by the particular psychic demands of the poet as a human being, as well as by the creative process itself. It is a concept that does not oppose ideas held by traditional or contemporary theologians, although it is much less sophisticated and complex, and there are qualities attributed to God by theologians that are not mentioned by the poet.

In a division of God's attributes into the theological, the theological-psychological, and the psychological, it is found that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz tends to conceptualize God in terms of His psychological attributes, those that bear a direct relationship to mankind. While many purely theological attributes can be found in the poems, even these tend to be conceived in such a way as to relate them to the facts and problems of human existence, and others are ignored because they relate to God only in more metaphysical aspects. Kazimiera Iłkiewicz contemplates God not as a remote, abstract, metaphysical entity, but as a

reality that can be apprehended by man. This is why her emphasis is on the psychological attributes of God; and it is this emphasis which helps to reveal the individual psychology of the poet herself. In proposing certain attributes for God, she is in a sense "creating" God in the particular image that satisfies her own feelings and needs, and creating an image that permits the exploration of a complex personal relationship with God which, with its conflicts, doubts and deep sense of identification between "I" and "Thou," is of great importance in understanding the basic psychic constitution of the poet.

Besides a general concept of God, there is found also in the religious poetry of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz a concept of God as He is perceived in the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Here the Christocentrism of the poet is made very clear, for she chooses on the whole to ignore the first and third persons of the Trinity (although there is one important poem on the Holy Spirit), and to concentrate on a variety of aspects of Jesus Christ, both in terms of those attributes that are associated with specific events in His life, passion and death, and also in terms of more general attributes. The concentration on Jesus fits in with what has already been stated about her concept of God, because in Jesus she finds a "tangible" God, a divine source of salvation who is also human. His humanity makes

Him able to understand and sympathize with the weaknesses and suffering of struggling mankind. He is, in her poetry, on the same plane of existence as man. Thus He can place Himself mentally in the position of ordinary men, which enables Him to extend mercy and love easily. Also, He provides a model for man to follow. From the example of Christ's life--his love for the poor, the sick, the weak, even the sinner; his patient humility; his personal sacrifice--man learns what is for Kazimiera Iłkiewicz the most important lesson of all: "Love Thy Neighbor." It is obviously very important to her that Jesus felt no pride of place, was not "holier than thou," for she repeats several times in her poems the theme of Christ's sympathy with "lowly" people, and in several poems she assumes this role for herself, in imitation of Christ. Thus it is seen that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz conceives of God in very personal terms, as a person who relates directly to mankind.

The importance of prayer to Kazimiera Iłkiewicz is seen in the fact that over one-third of the poems under study are prayers, or have prayer-like characteristics. The bulk of these poems are addressed to God, but there is a substantial number addressed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and several miscellaneous prayers addressed to other saints. The majority of these prayers of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz fit the definition of prayer given by the theologian Friedrich

Heiler, inasmuch as they are a communion with God, who is conceived as "real" and present, and who bears some definable relationship to the petitioner, conceived of in human terms.

Two sets of categories, which cut across each other, are established for the poetical prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz. One set views the poems in terms of poetical language and structure, and distinguishes between poems that are fundamentally prayers in every respect, and those that are fundamentally lyric poems that employ, to a greater or lesser extent, elements associated with prayer. This is an important distinction because it shows that the poet tends to think prayerfully, to put herself in the mentality of petitioner, even in poems whose chief purpose is not petition.

The second set of categories, according to which the discussion of poetical prayers actually is organized, is based on the simple division of the prayers into "public" and "personal." Under each of these categories the poems are subdivided into those that are more or less standard prayers, those that are prayer-like lyrics, and those that are classified as "non-prayers" or "anti-prayers."

The public prayers of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, those in which "we" rather than "I" appears to make a petition, show both her interest in traditional modes of worship and

her ability and desire to share the feelings and concerns of ordinary people. This group includes poems that offer prayers in connection with the struggles and suffering of the Polish people during the period of the Second World War. The close identification of the poet with these concerns is very clear in this group, and one sees an interesting conflict in her mind between her typical willingness to forgive enemies, in imitation of Christ, and her desire to see Poland made safe from a brutal enemy, even if this protection means death to that enemy.

The personal prayers of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz are, in the long run, the more interesting group, for they reveal some aspects of the internal struggles the poet experienced in her life. It may be that the reader's difficulty in understanding some of the personal prayers comes from the fact that the poet herself has difficulty in putting into words the complicated feelings that she has about herself in relation to God and to her religious faith. It is clear, from one group of personal prayers, that Kazimiera Iłkiewicz is concerned with her own salvation and with leading a kind of life that will ensure salvation--she prays for both of these things. But in some prayers there is a hint of doubt or uncertainty about whether God is aware of her, or concerned about her, for she prays for a sign, some indication of the presence of

God that has a source outside of her own imagination. In another group she prays for things that one does not ordinarily associate with prayer: for solitude, darkness, anonymity. That is, she seems to be wishing to be made small and insignificant, even ego-less, rather than successful or happy. In these poems her need for a father-like protection from God becomes most apparent; it is as if she is returning to the basic needs of a lonely childhood.

It is in the group of personal prayers that are classified as "non-prayers" or "anti-prayers" that some of the most difficult problems of interpretation occur, for in these the poet is seen as rejecting prayer, or at least offering serious questions about its efficacy. Faith seems at times to have given away to doubt, or perhaps to exist side by side with it, in a paradoxical relation. This comes close to a kind of mysticism and it fits, poetically if not theologically, with the unforgettable image, in "Pacierz ranny" ("Morning Prayer"), in which Kazimiera Iłłakowicz arrives, after a long, agonizing recital of her struggles with her own weaknesses, at the desire to be nothing more than a particle of dust on God's coat.

In conclusion, one point made several times in this thesis warrants repetition: that Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is a poet and not a theologian nor a psychologist of religion.

This can be turned into a caveat that the student of her work not confuse poetry with religion. That is, despite the natural tendency to look for elements that demonstrate that the poet has such a religious outlook, or can be identified with this movement or that psychological theory, the reader will benefit most from approaching Kazimiera Iłłakowicz as a highly gifted creative artist whose chief concern is the producing of poetry and not of systematic opinions. A study of her concept of God and her prayers shows a complex, original mind deeply analyzing and contemplating certain elements of her faith, and yet often creating puzzles rather than rational answers. In this respect alone she appeals to the interest and appreciation of the reader, for both her faith and her doubts show her strong kinship with the rest of humanity. She does what any poet must do to be appreciated; she reaches into the recesses of her own mind and holds out to us ideas, images, questions and affirmations, that we share with her but do not fully recognize or appreciate until she reveals them to us.

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Study of controversial problems in current religious thought with contrasting discussions within each section. Especially helpful topics concerning the reality of God and the religious nature of man.

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Excellent critical appreciation of the period of Young Poland or the modernist movement.

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Compilation of literary research on Young Poland.

ABSTRACT OF

Religious Elements in the Poetry
of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz¹

Kazimiera Iłłakowicz, born in Wilno, Poland, in 1892, had an active life as a poet for over fifty years, publishing fifty volumes of poetry as well as other literary works, including translations from several languages. During the Piłsudski regime she occupied minor posts in the government; during the Nazi occupation of Poland she lived in exile in Rumania, where she remained until after World War II. She now lives in Poznań.

The poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is noted for its originality of concept and technique, although she is not considered a highly experimental writer. She has never been associated with any school or movement. A major difference between her poetry and that of the Skamander group, and other poetic movements contemporary with her work, is that a large number of her poems treat of religious subjects or use religious motifs. Kazimiera Iłłakowicz was born into a traditional Catholic environment, and most of her life has been a practicing Christian. Thus, although she is not primarily a religious poet, and not especially

¹ Thaddeus M. Swirski, doctoral thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies of the University of Ottawa, Ontario,

interested in theological questions, it is understandable that religion should play a significant part in her poetic endeavors. She has normal, deeply felt religious feelings, perceptions and responses, and she employs these with the same degree of commitment and creativity that she employs similar data that arise from other aspects of her existence.

The religious elements in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz are arranged for study under two major headings: 1) the concept of God, and 2) prayer. It is through analysis of these particular aspects of her poetry that a total picture emerges of the nature of her religious attitudes, beliefs and emotions, and of the relationship that she perceives (or is unconsciously stated) as existing between herself and God.

The concept of God as it is seen in the poetry of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz is broken down into two major categories: a general concept of God and God as represented by each Person of the Holy Trinity. In the general concept of God, three kinds of attributes of God are discovered: the theological, the psychological and the theological/psychological. Owing to the poet's non-theoretical but deeply personal conceptualizing of God, her poetry tends to emphasize those aspects defined as psychological, especially attributes such as love, mercy, and

protectiveness, that reflect the poet's own psychological needs. Of the Holy Trinity, it is Jesus Christ who is the central figure in her poetry. As with the general concept of God, the points emphasized about Jesus are things such as love, mercy and forgiveness. It is in connection with Jesus Christ that the most deeply expressed religious feelings of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz are found; the relationship established with Him is complex, intense, at times mystical, and obviously central to her religious poetry. In sum, her religious poetry tends, on the whole, to be Christocentric.

Although much about the religious attitudes and psychology of the poet is revealed in the way she conceptualizes God, it is in the "personal" prayers of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz that the greatest insight is afforded into her deepest religious feelings. The terms "popular" and "personal" are used to distinguish the two major groups of poetical prayers under study, and provide the basic categories for discussion. (Further categorization is possible; each group contains poems that can be considered "regular" prayers and others that are not strictly prayers but rather are lyric poems with prayer-like qualities.)

The popular prayers of Kazimiera Iłkiewicz deal with subjects of general concern, such as human suffering,

and are sometimes imitative of traditional Christian prayers. The personal prayers deal with subjects directly related to the private feelings of the poet herself. This group reflects most fully the complexities of the poet's perceptions of herself in an intense relationship with God. They reveal her religious hopes, conflicts and doubts. Besides the more typical themes of the desire for salvation and for a "sign" from God, several poems develop a wish for anonymity, solitude and diminishment of ego that seems to be particularly characteristic of her psychology. In addition, there is a small group of "non-prayers" which paradoxically deny the conventional petitionary attitude of the great majority of prayer poems.

Although very religious, Kazimiera Iłkiewicz is not a theologian, but a poet, and it is as a poet that she is able to articulate with power and beauty some of the deepest spiritual concerns of humankind.

APPENDIX I

SELECTED RELIGIOUS POEMS OF

KAZIMIERA ILLAKOWICZ

(TRANSLATED)¹

¹ The poems in this Appendix were selected and translated by the author of this thesis. An attempt was made to adhere as closely as possible to the word choice and syntax of the original poetry.

APPENDIX 1

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A LITTLE ORPHAN
(SIEROTKA)

And what is that above the field
glistening with snow?
Is it a reflection of fire?
Is dawn breaking in the night?
Run, little orphan, see--what is it!?

The little orphan ran
barefoot on the village green,
she saw a Maiden
with a crowned Child,
which shone in the moon like gold!

They had no home,
nor little hut,
however over their heads
a blackthorn branch
fashioned a pillow of snow.

The little orphan knelt down,
begging the Maiden:
"Take, bright Queen,
for the Child a dress,
because [He] is all stiff from frost!"

The Mother will
warmly wrap Jesus...
...The little orphan remained
in one shirt
"Stay, little orphan, in the service of Jesus!"

A POEM IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA
(WIERSZE NA CZEŚĆ MATKI BOSKIEJ CZESTOCHOWSKIEJ)

I. When winter makes the roads as hard as iron,
when upon the naked forest the frozen moon hovers,
when the wandering man up to his neck sinks,
floats above, barely touching the branches?...
From the holy face, half-gold mantle
flees the wolf, hiding, growling in the bushes,
the cold bird falls to the shining feet,
the traveller gathers his breath, joyfully moving his
feet
and whispers--every vowel resembles the column's
white frost:
"Permit me to reach home healthy, O Mary of
Czestochowa!"

When a child becomes ill in a home as in Mazowsze,
fever mounting and coughing, and it seems it will no
longer be well,
when the nurse or servant falls asleep at night in
the armchair
and the heart beats quickly and the head is so hot--
who moves along as a bright cloud upon the wall,
who descends with golden mantle, rustles it on the
carpet,
who from the picture came down and bent watchfully
over the sick,
who changes the poultice, the pillow raised higher?
The eyes shine with happiness, and on the face a
child's concern...
It is Our Lady of Czestochowa, my dears, this is the
Mother of God!

When it is a difficult day for the soldier and a most
difficult moment
when bravery begins to lag, and patience lessens,
when his own abandon him wounded in the field,
and blood stops flowing, and the wounds, pain, pain--
from prickly wires came, from bullet holes,
who holds the fainting in a safe embrace,
who with a dark face cut with a double sword
is for the dying, mother and country
for those who loved, venerated, for which he fought,
for what does he have to die?...
...and sweetly smiles the young soldier, happier:
behold the mother's hand... behold the father's thatch,
behold the native village,

APPENDIX 1

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A POEM IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA (Continued)

"With Your hands...raise them up, O Mother...
Mother of God, Our Lady of Czestochowa!

- II. We will go to adore her, in a wide, wide line abreast,
during a late spring, on roads covered with dust,
we will go among the growing wheat, which pushes aside
corn flowers,
leaving in the early morning, choosing an early night
stop,
sleeping in doorways among those praying and
those praying for themselves...
...We will go during the late spring through fields
and concrete roads,
We will weave a huge wreath, a wreath that is blue,
red and faded,
we will take it on a pilgrimage altogether to
Czestochowa.
With the faith of Czarnecki with Kordecki's flaming
heart
we will go to our mother, we, children, aware of her
love,
to fall at her feet and raise our shy eyes to her,
to see her dark face, dressed in gold glory.

A PRAYER FOR ENEMIES
(MODLITWA ZA NIEPRZYJACIÓŁ)

Have mercy, God, upon the Germans!
Lord!...

Upon those projecting fury and terror,
upon those locked in prisons,
upon those awaiting freedom
behind the barbed wires of camps...
...Upon the innocent and their families
have mercy, God, upon the Germans...

Upon those bent before false gods,
upon those lying in emptiness and waste...

Upon the obedient marching into the abyss like ants
have mercy, God, and anoint for death.
Remove from eyes the cataracts of those who are lost,
to the downtrodden, give a wedding banquet:
may Your angel break bread with them.
Have mercy, God, upon the Germans.

Upon those who hate, have mercy, God.
Not one of us is able to do anything any more...
They once had a banner, today they lie for a "symbol".
Red-black it was...What, when the unfaithful
became both--red and black!

AFTER THE HOLIDAYS
(PO SWIĘTACH)
(Fragment)

I used to come begging
to the stable.

--cooled, weary, spectator
And--nothing else.

"Why do tears run down your cheeks?
What do you perceive,
little old lady?"

"A stable, and in it a Child
and a light everywhere above their heads."
I look and there is nothing--not even a legend,
everything is of plaster, which will not mend.
See it--things!

ALL SOULS POEM.
(WIERSZ ZADUSZNY)

A son was lain upon the bier,
and his mother with greyed hair bent over him.

He left healthy, happy, with flushed face...
They brought him dead, covered with wounds.

The late hour arrived upon the world,
trees were whistling, under the window, the flowers were
fragrant.

The priest left, there was an echo of the horses hoofs,
"Go away from here, break away, leave us alone."

From the candle, hot tears were dripping on the table
the flame [from the candle] was bending towards
the wound on the forehead.

...O my son, my little son, mine alone
most grateful one,
tell me who killed you to lessen the grief.

I took care of you, one who is more beautiful than any
other--

I took care of you from the cradle to manhood.

How many times, my dear child, I fondled you,
--so many times now I would take revenge on someone who
killed you.

The yellow wax drops from the candle
and enlightens a little picture of the Mother of Sorrow.

Hour after hour was chiming...
the dead gasped, with blood newly shed:

O Mother, old lady, my love
my mortal wound does not bother me as much as

Your sorrow O my Mother,
that you outlived your child.

Do not wish revenge Mother, upon my murdered...
It is good for me--to be with God the Father.

ALL SOULS POEM (Continued)

...I don't know why, how great is the price!...
It is good for me to be with God the Son.

It was taken away from me, my life, like a heavy burden was
taken away...

Like a gale upon me wafts the Holy Spirit...
As I told you... In it you have everything...
and the Mother of God caresses your cheek.

AT NIGHT
(NOCA)

Braids at night are braided,
angels' wings at night are folded.
Sleep, sleep, tired little girls!
Stars, dolls, books, cats--all placed in a box.
And who opens the box at night?
God, the highest, who does not die.
The Lord God eternal places the colored toys until morning
on the knees of the Mother of God, the Queen,
on a blue mantle, on a dress so pure.

BAREFOOT LITTLE GIRL
(BOSE DZIEWCZĄTKO)

I walked out alone into the orchard upon the dew,
and around and above--a fog.
There is a barefoot little girl following me,
she is following me and playing.

All the roses are standing bent
and bending is the white lilac...
How will I recognize my little violinist?
Strings--heavy from tears!

Blue eyes, a dress as white as snow
and blue band around the forehead,
one string after another cracks
and falls from her hands.

Death quietly prepares a scythe,
and around and above--a fog...
Following me is the barefoot little girl,
Following me and playing.

BE GLORIFIED BY STORM
(BADŹ POCHWALONY BURZA)

My dream about the weather--pierced
by Italian poplars like nails.
The sun rose upon silent peaks
ominously.
Junipers bent low, they form a circle
like hedgehogs, low to the ground.
The storm approaches.
O God!...Be blessed with the storm,
since the storm is near to us!
Be blessed with lightning, when it appears on the horizon,
and also with thunder, which in vain strikes the nests of
the snakes.
Be glorified by the noisy flooding water,
and with the shouts of someone drowning, and by the
smashed boat.
Be blessed by the storm when it disappears from the peaks,
when the dream of the weather
in the valley
disappears,
pierced a hundred times.

BEFORE CHRIST OF THE FATHERS OF ST. FRANCIS (OF SALESII
(PRZED CHRYSZTUSEM SALEZJANÓW)

Upon dirt, upon ugliness, upon distress
--Christ, whiter even than chalk,
who will not let the worst man be hurt.
"Everything was organized against us,
sin, smell and--the knife in the corner.
Here we are, kneeling down on the bricks.
Give us, Jesus, O head covered with thorns,
the ability to raise the youngest child...
None of them were healthy!

For our sins punish us according to Your will,
but please in this punishment do not make it painful for
him,
because he cannot yet endure.

We are thieves from the time of our great grandfathers;
Let things work out better for him or differently:
may He grow up better than the neighbors.
Let us disappear, who gave such a life to him.
And may He be a priest, general,
He, of all of us--perfect. "AMEN."

BLACK SMOKE
(CZARNY DYM)

Black smoke over us,
black smoke...
Weaken, Jesus, the arm
of the bad people.

Out of Your kindness tie them
with a silver ribbon:
if they wish to do mischief,
let them fail.

Black smoke outdoors
all day long.
Breathe into it, for us,
good God, a star.

May there now be eternal
twilight of smoke!
...For this star
we will forgive everything.

BURNING BUSH
(KRZAK GOREJĄCY)

If God started the spark which consumes and devours me,
may He be blessed for that...He put me upon peat land,
upon huge flooded ground, upon marshes and upon little

chaotic paths,

I burn as a house on a hill,

I burn and call upon those who are alive:

"Here I am a burning bush,

which appeared out of chaos,

to call with a flaming voice,

upon peat land, upon marshes, upon chaos!"

CAIN AND ABEL
(KAIN I ABEL)

There were only two of us, brothers, on the empty globe:
Cain and Abel.
One was a shepherd of lambs, and the other labored in
the fields,
One was strong, the other--weak.

We were two brothers with two different ways of loving the
Creator, God!
One offered slaughtered lambs to God,
The other--wheat, field corn, mint, and sweet cucumbers.

There two of us, brothers; which of them was jealous
--Abel? Cain?
We argued at the altar of oblation
The weak killed the strong...It happens now...
I know nothing more.

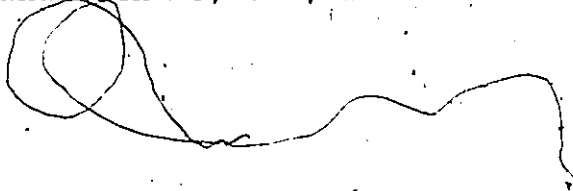
CHILD
(DZIECKO)

It embraced me around the neck in my dreams
and said, that it will be born, let me only desire,
it looked at me, it loved me,
I was not alone, it wasn't too hard for me.

And now, wherever I stand,
I see it and myself--the two of us.

COMMUNION OF SAINTS
(ŚWIĘTYCH OBCOWANIE)

So many times you obtained help through prayers!
It already seemed, that I would fall while running,
that my footsteps would slip into an abyss,
that slowly I would be poisoned...
You drove away--suppressing a cry--
Lightning brimming over
and driving to destruction with all hell waiting.
You defended me in the eyes of the people:
"You will never lose your child, for I will save it!
You will not hurt it beyond strength,
for I instead of She will carry her cross,
It will bend, but will not break,
because I with her, and with me, God, with choirs of
angels!"



CREATURE
(STWORZENIE)

My Lord and my God
alone and full of glory,
but man in time, in a net of causes and effects,
gazing into an eternal flood.
Into a full sea--who knows,
how many similar rivers flow...
In glory my Lord and my God...
And I on a lyre, so indeed--on a lyre
in time, upon water am singing.

DEATH
(ŚMIERĆ)

Death in God's hands shines
as a white, gentle lamp:
my feet walk more slowly
my wings embrace drowsiness,
my heart has closed its eyes
and the scent of violets is wafted through the air,
and someone from on high speaks
to the heart: "Quieter...Quieter..."

DEATH OF A SINGER
(ŚMIERĆ ŚPIEWAKA)

They closed his mouth with force,
both hands they tied with a chain...
So today I see how leaves turn to gold,
how they shine after each breeze,
I see a live soul in every tree
and I do not know anything to say in song.

Ascendancy lies dreadful on the strings
apparently a fist of leaden weight,
already the weakened prisoner does not struggle,
already he does not hit with his wings, does not grumble.
The murderers killed the singer
and quieted down the restless heart.

In the sun the little linden trees are yellowing by
the village roads
and the maple trees are standing red in the fire.
The song of my violin will not be heard by
even the yellow and green ash,
even the hornbeams, which guard the gates,
even the birch, blown in the alley.

Do not wait for a song in vain,
small flowers delayed in the soil,
the singer died closed within me,
tomorrow I myself will bury him.
I must hurry, hurry a long distance
already behind me the entire road is burning!

My singer died, the soul of my soul.
Oh, say nothing more!... because there is nothing
more...
Clouds are coming, they are coming and the snow is
falling...
Today or tomorrow there will be a hard winter,
today or tomorrow... a little later--sooner...
My singer died and will not rise from the dead!

DEATH OF ST. HILARY
(ŚMIERĆ ŚWIĘTEGO HILAREGO)

Bishop Hilary became ill,
and when his breath grew weak,
the servants fell asleep. However he raised himself from
the bed
and asked: "Is the night silent?"
The servants fell asleep: they did not hear the noise,
and vibration of the branches, as before the approach of
dawn,
and the voices of the spirits, who answered singing:
"Yes, silent--as the breath of God."

DEATH OF ST. STEPHEN
(ŚMIERĆ ŚWIĘTEGO SZCZEPANA)

And who will pay him for his passion?
Stephen was taken by executors
upon a high place, separate,
very similar to Golgotha.
Already heavy stones fall,
already wounded in the side, wounded in the head.
And Paul [Szawel] sat on the side, and watching,
holds--clothing removed by the executors.

DIED...FRIENDS...BELOVED...
(UMARLI...ZNAJOMI...KOCHANI...)

They come to me only in guelder-roses,
over thorns, over blueberries,
dead, our friends, beloved.

They come to me only upon rustles,
among breathless gales that are braided:

"You are here! Oh, what weather..."

From the white frost--their eyebrows are gray,
young eyelashes became strangely heavy...

And I pet them, although I know, that--they are not
alive...

friends...those, whom I loved:

Little John, who burned together with the plane,
and little Casimir, who later disappeared,

Little Paul covered by the ocean,

Little Thaddeus shot by the bandits

Youngsters, pensive, wasted,

come to me, come over guelder-roses

friends, dead, beloved.

FISHING
(POŁÓW)

O, black Mother of God, imprisoned in a silver icon,
who extends above the head of the Child, slender, tightly
clasped hands,
look upon the poverty of my fishing, upon the bottom of
my torn nets,
and may from your hands, suddenly opened, a bird, all
shining, fly down to me.

FOR EVERYONE
(ZA WSZYSTKICH)

From blossoming trees you come down
with the light foot of a young girl
with a stary trail you wander
over Europe.
Your blue mantle you unfold
from China to Spain
over those, who are dying without forgiveness,
over those, who are cursed,
over those, who are sentenced.
To the dying Your way extends,
the condemned it does not miss,
Mary!

Honor to You--in the highest,
and our heart, is in the shade:
into each limbo you descend most erect
with the moon on your shoulder.
A criminal you admit to grace
and the wealthy you understand and support...
Defending themselves, the Basques
Saw you standing in the air,
and--executed in Valencia--
The Pole celebrated a prayer for you
Your scapular he wrapped around his finger,
O Mary!

The rustle of Your gown upon the country
is near, is near...
O Mary, pray in May
for all of us.

FOR THIS SAVE ME AFTER DEATH!
(ZA TO MNIE PO ŚMIERCI ZBAW!)

Cast off stupidity,
give up your rights?...
Only, Jesus, for You!
And for this save me after death.

To listen to thoughtless clatter,
to look at the ugliness of flesh...
Good! But for that let, in heaven,
angelic beauty cradle me!

May the hatred of that which I see,
what I am and what has happened to me,
be reborn again in the breath of God
as in music the bitter branch of the willow.

FUNERAL OF JESUS
(POGRZEB PANA JEZUSA)

On Dalmatian roads they carried
a dead Christ in procession.
The canopies swayed, the candles of the societies burned
down,
the wafer shone with the whiteness of a dead body.
The dead body could be seen through the shroud.
The Mother did not cry.
The little olive tree bent down, the palm was swaying.

...They walked there, where Joseph of Arimathea had
indicated,
where in the cool rock fragrant salves were set forth,
where in the silence it is possible to weep and wail.
But I, Magdalen, knelt down by the wall.
I will go no farther with the funeral procession,
because I know that tomorrow, upon the opened grave
I will see my living Lord.

GOD AND SILENCE
(BÓG I MILCZENIE)

God upon my silence rests, as along ago before the
beginning of the world
He moved over disordered chaos,
and I, in my inner depth, left alone, am arranging
pearls in a row
sounds, colors, breathing, emotions--without any reason,
and color and form with the voice
as in chaos.
And I am hurrying
and I am collecting, and at the heart of the treasure I
work without stopping for breath; I am afraid,
that I will not be able to prepare everything for the
moment, when God with one powerful word
will unbind my silence.

GOD IN HIS HEAVEN KNOWS WELL
(BÓG W SWYM NIEBIE DOBRZE WIE)

I was broken. Glued. The musician took me--
pressed me to the bow. I give forth a sharp tone,
here beside this melody of old, so heavenly,
which melody was played on the violin of Paul Kochanski.
The crowd does not know, claps noisily, foams with excitement.

However, God in his Heaven knows very well that I am
gritting my teeth.

GOD IS ALSO WITH THEM
(BÓG JEST TAKŻE Z NIMI)

God is also with them...
God is also with the condemned
near the same, the same earth.

Condemned their home and church,
condemned the dead bones,
and now nothing grows for them.

And God, as a seed from fire,
flutters over them every day,
will embrace and fertilize them.

And sprouting with thick flowers,
with wings, storm, happiness
will shake the entire world.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE
(BÓG JEST WSZĘDZIE)

You can't comprehend it: God is everywhere,
in each mysterious and terrible ceremony.
He is called forth not only by prayer and incense,
but also by the gallows and the executioner.
God is in the judge who judges unjustly,
and also in the witness who swears falsely,
He cannot absent himself. Therefore it frightens me,
Because if he is in St. Peter, so he is--in Judas;
If he is in the Jew innocently murdered by Germans,
so also he is in those Germans!...And I wonder
about truth and falsehood, about punishment and crime,
and in each little particle I discover God every day.

And I want to stretch forth my hands upon man,
upon innocent and guilty. Upon little and great;
I am worried that by judging a man someone would murder
God.

GOD OF THE FORTUNATE
(BÓG SZCZĘŚLIWYCH)

Never in agony did God come down to me,
never the Spirit carrying the cross gave me a cup,
never straying in the vipers paths
Christ did not show Himself nor leave a trace of His path,
And in danger--like a crooked sickle.

GOING AWAY
(ODEJŚCIE)

Indeed I will not go out altogether
--light 'shining and spiry...
Keep me earth, if you can't, keep me strangled
when you hug me!

Every day the burden of the heat is becoming smaller,
my destiny is becoming more like blue and silver
And every day I hear--a little happier--and more tempered
a stormy voice upon me.

Your eyes are burning with flame of the cities,
hands from the harvest are all rough.
...I am going away from the stars
hid in the sharp wings, invisible little prayers.

Don't be jealous of my simple dress...
The gale of God will destroy my beauty anyway.
...During my life I cried out
with all my little prayers.

GRACE
(LASKA)

It appears when it isn't asked for;
It is waiting for me since the morning.
I thought--to finish the matter . . .
but It is upsetting my plans:
When I wish to go my own way,
it touches my shoulders,
and turns me around like a blind man,
and tiptoes,
and leads wherever it wants to.
I prayed some time ago for it . . .
now--may God save me from it.

GREETING DEATH
(POWITANIE ŚMIERCI)

Already you are upon me, my death is near,
silent as wings, soft as a cradle,
how light, bright, comfortable the cradle.

They look into my eyes, your miraculous eyes, (O Death)
and already it feels good to me, and at once I feel no
fear...

Only I am afraid to live--not to die!

You place into my hands a multicolored rainbow
and now I do not worry, nor do I suffer,
now I do not torture myself or others.

I know you, One God knows well--from whence
You are my garden of violets and resedas
---roses and carnations, vervain and reseda.

With clear waves, you soothe my sick soul...
You are a deep, deep lake,
So clean to the bottom of the blue lake.

You are at my lips like an expensive bowl
in the hands of an angel carried from God,
through the mercy of the most holy Mother--from God.

HYMN TO THE BLESSED MOTHER OF THE VALIANT
(PIEŚŃ DO MATKI BOSKIEJ WALECZNEJ)

You shine upon us from a Clear Mountain, Mary,
with a scarred, cut, face.
Clouds will not cover, mountains will not hide
a soul that acknowledges you:
You will draw her, weak, out of the abyss
and never forsake her.

To You the prisoners called from tunnels,
from Siberia--the convicted
upon them Your face, black from dust,
bent before expiring,
conscious of conspiracies, torments and battles,
O Star of those who perish in your prayer.

As a banner torn in battle
--from ancient fabric--
you stand upon brief Polish peace,
Valiant Queen of Poland,
to the sound of arms Lady, You became accustomed,
as we, subordinates.

Before You, bravely standing,
are the soldiers bloody wounds,
praying to the scar upon Your face,
pierced with bullets, cut with a sword,
because You are also wounded, Holy Maiden,
therefore he does not fear You.

At your call, a crowd gathers,
those who believe and--those who do not
and the highest commander with his baton
at the head of all the soldiers.
...And You Mother of defenders,
give them all heaven at the end.

HYMNS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
(HYMNY DO DUCHA ŚWIĘTEGO)

I

The earth is empty, stingy,
it can do nothing more for me.
Upon my sadness tread,
Spirit, as upon the lake.

All the fish who had jumped onto the bank,
asleep occupied the shore,
the wind blew slime and foam
from drowsy rivers.

The apostles are swimming
the small wave casts them to and fro,
already Peter is midway
deserting the boat.

It will sink, of course it will sink,
in foam and slime and filth!
Come upon the water and walk upon it,
O Holy Spirit!

II

Spirit, whether because of this you break me
and destroy me,
because I know not how to live on crumbs
at all?
Chaff and sand in a bowl,
no jewels shine from it.

How many more rejections are needed,
failures,
before pride crawls out from the soul
at last?
What hands--foreign or brotherly?
What executors and witnesses?

You, who in immaculate armor
placed me,
arise Yourself, as so many times,
on the way,
in three faces, in three burning helmets,
in crosses, swords, banners and birds.

HYMNS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT (CONTINUED)

III

You are running and filling abysses,
You appear more openly.
Upon me from long ago without limit
Your shield and protection.

I know--they disappeared, went to the bottom, and are lost.
To Your wings the devils
guard my accessibility.

I do not feel my wounds, though they bleed,
with blind sight I am reaching truth:
At the precipice You will save me
always.

When I seek You, You do not manifest your light,
when I doubt, You shine in chaos....
Destroy, crush, but appear fully,
Holy Spirit.

I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES
(WIERZĘ W CUDA)

And this person, and that, and also that one, professors
and even doctors of law,
say there are no miracles...I, however, am able to testify
otherwise because every day with me--a miracle happens
stamped into the earth, mixed with everyday garbage,
the might of God draws me out and keeps me saved in His
hand as a live rose in a bouquet.

I FOLLOW YOU, CHRIST
(CHODZĘ ZA TOBĄ, CHRYSŹE)

I follow You, Christ,
I will never be weary,
when hurrying in this race,
which You won over death.

The greedy crowd is surrounding You
deaf, blind and cripples...
Behind Your apostles
You cannot be seen at all.

The crowd smells of blood and pus,
garbage covers your path.
Oh where is the God of Moses,
where is the burning bush!

I am following You, Christ,
over Your whole earth,
but not with those who are clean,
but with lepers!

I WILL NOT HATE
(NIENAWIDZIEĆ NIE BĘDĘ)

I promise you, sorrowful face,
that before I die,
I will not hate those, whom they will make known to me
at all!

...Not even in thought, not even in deed, not even in
word,
not even openly, not even secretly
--I promise you, tortured head...
...So help thus Redeemer.

None protects...
The crucified one is insulted by the crowd.
I will not hate those whom they will make known to me
at all!

IF ONLY TO LEARN
(GDYBY SIĘ NAUCZYĆ)

If only to learn from new growth of greenness,
death, and how to approach her,
how to bend beneath the snow covered with ice,
the small green grass
and how to organize within, the spark of life to lie
dormant
until springtime, until resurrection.



IN MEETING
(PRZY SPOTKANIU)

If I ever meet you, Lord, in my own home,
not Your Eucharist, a thing most holy and sweet,
not the projection of Your thought, a great person,
however You, Eternal One, for whom I am waiting,
--O rather increase the span of my wings unlimited,
O be pleased to crowd my body into the rhythm of my song,
and for me, a winged word, flaming music,
nominating me a lyricist in the choir of angels.

INSTEAD OF PRAYER
(ZAMIAST MODLITWY)

I have no time to love You anymore:
my end is very near.
I am only reaching out my hands in the crowd,
O Christ!

My heart wanted it a different way,
my feet walked with difficulty--not the right way.
If I had known before...if I had only known!
...Now it is already too late to turn back.

I am involved more deeply, because I know no other way...
Everything in me and around me--unclean.
I am only reaching out my hands in the crowd:
O Christ!

LET IT BE THAT ONE THREAD...
(NIECHBY TA JEDNA NIĆ...)

When it will be necessary to go
into the far darkness,
let it be that one thread
remained of me.
Let the entire remainder break off
and fall into an abyss.

--let this one last forever
resounding, although blind.
But for those, who lived their life
most vitally
--deathless love beyond the grave
will not ignore.

LET ME BE MORE GENTLE
(DAJ MI ZŁAGODNIEĆ)

O God, with Your changeable weather
let me be more gentle:
let patience take over
during rainy day and cool.
All days for sure belong to God...
Let not me give up.
Satan is short of breath:
don't let me come under his influence.
Already he is occupied, already he is at work with all
his power...
I don't wish to complain because of him, but let me sin
no more.

LIKE A LIGHT
(PODOBNY ŚWIATŁU)

You rise and set
like a light.

You appear like a child in a manger,
as a little Jewish goy in the workshop,
in the face which Satan saw in the desert,
in the wreath of thorns which was lifted up
for the ridicule of the crowd...

You set and you rise like the moon,
and I--I disappear and then rise again when
You are victorious.

LITANY OF THOSE WHO LOVE JESUS
(LITANIA KOCHAJĄCYCH JEZUSA)

Jesus, do not wait longer,
Christ, hear us,
Jesus, do not wait longer,
Christ, come down closer,
Jesus, do not wait longer;
With God the Father, of Whom we are afraid, unite us;
The Holy Spirit, Whom we cannot comprehend, explain to us;
Your Mother, who was a person such as we, include forever
in our blood:

All saints, faraway brethren and foreigners, be joined to us.
Above all and everyone we love You, Jesus!
Because it is so easy to understand You,
we love You, Jesus
Because Your truth about what is good and what is bad
does not change,
we love You, Jesus.
Because Your anointers, sinful or virtuous, always lead
us to You,
we love You, Jesus.
Because we learn something new from You every day,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You are the same day and night, winter and
summer,
we love You, Jesus.
Because it is impossible to live without You,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You suffered from Your own and were murdered
by Your own,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You forgave judges, executors and people,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You never disappointed us,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You remained with us on the battlefield when
all deserted us,
we love You, Jesus.
Because You went with us to our farthest banishment,
we love You, Jesus.
Because Your bread nourished us when there was a
shortage,
we love You, Jesus.
Because to gaze on Your crucifix gave us relief,
we love You, Jesus.

LITANY OF THOSE WHO LOVE JESUS (CONTINUED)

Because in You there is silence, tranquility and
 assurance,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because You are with us and against us,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because the unbeliever sometimes is closer to You than
 the pious,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because You speak to us always,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because it is possible to confess our most heinous
 crime, and You are not scandalized,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because You also redeemed the spy, the traitor, and
 the renegade,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because it is possible to leave You and return to You,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because of Your birth in the stable,
 we love You, Jesus.
 For Your carpentry in the workshop of Joseph,
 we love You, Jesus.
 For the Palestinian paths You tread,
 we love You, Jesus.
 For Your parables with which You surrounded us,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because You love us more than Your loved ones,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Because You will be with us at our death,
 we love You, Jesus.
 Be merciful unto us, do not stop loving
 us, Jesus.
 Be merciful unto us, come down lower, Jesus.
 Be merciful unto us, do not tarry longer, Jesus.
 You who live and reign with the Father, in the
 unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever
 and ever AMEN.

LONELINESS AND LOVE
(TEŠKNOTA I MIŁOŚĆ)

If I will remain in this loneliness,
if I will survive in it to the end,
I will lift myself into eternity
as a seagull upon the lake.
If I will drown in this love,
If I will burn in this loneliness,
when I awaken, God upon me
instead of day will dawn.

MARY
(MARIA)

(Fragment--end of poem)

...O Mary, Queen of sun and earth, and uncountable stars
and five swords of sorrow, which happiness
does not change in the heavens,
plead the grace of a beneficial and easy death for the
bearers of your name on earth.

MASS IN HONOR OF MARY MOTHER OF THE GOD OF HERBS
("Offertorium" from MSZA MARYJNA NA MATKĘ BOSKĄ ZIELNĄ)

What can man return to You,
O Lord our God?
A heart torn in half,
which You know so well?...

We came here in a crowd,
the entire church--full of greenery,
however, there is only one--sacrifice:
Your white covered table.

For wine from Your chalice
lips forever long
as here the rebellious one awaits
an enemy of the human race--SERPENT.

May the head of the serpent be crushed
by the Queen of God's graces.
O, One who has ascended, be victorious,
deliver us from slavery.

MORNING PRAYER
(PACIERZ RANNY)

I--poor fragment...I have no power to lift up my eyes!
Together with my clothing at night I lay down my cross,
cast it with a groan on the ground.
During my dream I was stepping upon stars as upon little
gold stones,
now day opens and the door is closing upon Paradise...
Again I have to take up my burden.

Well I don't know when I will again stay in the mysterious
garden of the night...
It would be better for me never to have been born into
the world...
In You is my confidence, O Savior!
Take my cross and hang it up among Your holy votive
offerings,
that I may stand like a golden flag,
to remain unbent, unbowed, for days on end.

Our Father, please understand my weaknesses:
At last, when he was carrying for many centuries, the whole
world on his shoulders,
maybe he was used to the heavy weight of it.
Weak--growth of my soul and my strength--like a bird,
each moment of my probation is like eternity in time,
because my faith is weak.

Powers known only to You have taken hold of me,
they have taken hold of me, weak insect me, the smallest
particle of straw,
me--ashes and nothing,
and everyday I have to go through this, like a new David,
this something greater than my soul and myself,
to get a key to the mystery.

Please take the cross from me, because from this cross
every day--is sick,
please take it and put it among Your star constellations,
between Scorpion and Lion and Bowman...
Take my strength, and sword, and crown, and the key to
the city,
because this flight is too far for me and this deed is
beyond me...
...I know, I carried, I fought, I know...

MORNING PRAYER (CONTINUED)

I am not of the same clay as the martyrs and saints:
I want to live! From the sun to the abyss, each form,
each color, tempts me,
upon the heights, dizziness and nausea overcome me...
I am begging You, our Father, from the depth of my
nothingness,
let others instead of me enter into Your kingdom
in the glory, in the strength, in the fire, in the smoke.

Please let me achieve Your graces right now, here, at
prayer

I am like a living rose wilting on Your armor,
before day is over--wilted...

I know You wanted me as a page near You in Your procession.
I love You, and I will remain under your standard
through all of the journeys of my life--simple and
complicated.

I will bless You and will proclaim Your holy name,
But I am tired, I can't go on... Please try me in blood
and punish me by forgetting me,
and then from the deepest depths and the abyss full of
tears

I will fly to Your heart without faltering and always
remain
attentive to Your will.

Let me disappear in the dust like a little speck of dust,
and let me not leave any footsteps on the place where I
once lived,
not even ashes after sacrifice, or blood after oblation;
to be a flower, a bird, a child hungry for love,
and enter Your home, to hide in the folds of Your coat,
as unseen dust on the edge of Your garment.

MOTHERS OF MINE--SOPHIE AND BARBARA
(MATKOM MOIM--ZOFII I BARBARZE)

(Fragments--second stanza)

Upon my dark suffering, upon fruitless toil,
upon evil, which soiled me, shame, which killed me,
you are blossoming--white roses upon emptiness--
always in truth always the same, in the same adornment.

(Last stanza--eighth stanza)

Remove from me all burdens, all weapons,
fright, which made me as stone, sin which has killed me...
And so it will be good for all of us together in this
paradise or in the grave
--o mothers of mine, mothers of mine, mothers of mine.

MY GOD HAS FORSAKEN ME
(PORZUCIŁ MNIE PAN MÓJ...)

(Fragment)

Since I have no peace...bleeding and perspiring
Jesus appeared to me while on His way to Golgotha.
The cobblestones were slippery dirty water and sticky
from dirt;
a crowd was pressing forth. There was Veronica with
her veil ..
and Miriam, and Salome...Today I don't know how it was,
it is enough that I stood in the little street among the
women,
I stood tired among the women with burning eyes, with
breath drawn short from the stench...
Like a reeking vapor--such a crime was hanging over the
chosen nation.

NEAR YOU, CHRIST
(PRZY TOBIE, CHRYSSTE)

Motet

Nothing is necessary for my heart
near You;
when it is dark, shine for me,
melody.
With an unearthly, light scherzo,
link together the melody and the heart.

O GERMANS, GERMANS
 (O NIEMCY, NIEMCY)
 (1939).

O my Lord, to possess so much of my own soil and sky.
 You need our land and our clouds...
 How many barren rocks there are, how many adventures not
 outlived,
 how much land it is possible to encompass which has
 remained in the race...
 You have strong shoulders, stubborn heads good for advice:
 the entire world is open to the honest, hardened and brave,
 go conquer it--pioneers, and referees...
 You gather with terror at my boundaries
 as a short time ago upon Sambra and Moza,
 O Germans, Germans!

And upon us--skylarks, and both with us
 and with You, wheat has blossomed;
 the same type of women weeding in the fields...
 They do not need too much
 to survive or to die. Not as much as the birds.
 The concern is just, so that they will not lack anything;
 Your care is there, my care is here;
 I want nothing of you, I do not envy anything of you
 Highways, nor forts, factories nor ships.
 However every crumb of my land is for me--holy.
 I stand upon each seed simultaneously--whole,
 and there is not such string in me, that would sway:
 all are tuned into one, they beat one hymn
 --patiently and rapidly, hot and cold.
 I stand as if ready and a consistent orchestra
 and one song from a million hearts is incarnated within me.
 Do you hear her [Poland], as she beats from Dniestr to Drweca
 "Hands off. Go with God into a world laid open to
 difficulties;
 Enough of my people's blood is wasted by you,
 O Germans, Germans."

It should have ended with robbery and armed invasions;
 We were supposed to continue to live as neighbors without
 war,
 Trust barely began,
 you are dreaming about a new invasion of peaceful Poland.
 We almost lived peacefully, we did not feel the trauma...
 To break new pacts, you waited moments,
 you think, that now is the occasion, therefore
 you try to start trouble with your friend...

O GERMANS, GERMANS (CONTINUED)

Who once burned himself because of you, that one has
learned a lesson.

New pacts? But not without witnesses.

With pleasure.

And let in the end be "clara pacta."

And so? You prefer to fight? Good...Hands itch.

Sometimes we struggled, and today--it is in vain to scare.

Let us fight, if you do not regret your blood or ours,

O Germans, Germans...

ORPHANS
(SIEROTKI)

After the flock of geese they walk,
maybe one will be needed...
The little goose has the look of a monarch,
because she is the oldest.
The father left with the soldiers,
lightning burned out the mother's eyes,
the old grandmother is feeding the entire flock...
They are existing on the stubble..They are happy.

PENTECOST SUNDAY
(ZIELONE ŚWIĄTKI)

Let us bring cattails from the lake
to decorate the house in time for Pentecost Sunday.
Let us put white birch branches
around the gate and on the side of the road
and also on the door of the estate.

Let us decorate the laundry for little Barbara and
little Mary.
Let us decorate the dining room for Jeannie and little
Johnny.
Let us put jasmine in the portico
that jasmin will shine fantastically.

And when the Holy Spirit arises in the morning
He will find everything orderly and clean,
He will find every place decorated with greenery,
He will be very pleased--
the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER [I]
(MODLITWA [I])

A silent night, Lord, grant us before daylight,
peaceful breeze among haymakers,
so that we might be well rested,
when we awaken.

A good night plead for us, Mother of God:
may the vagabond not worry about shelter,
may the vigilant guards fall asleep in prisons,
may absolution be granted to criminals
and the guilty.

May the path of grace for traitors be safe!
May the bloody torch of revenge be extinguished
and the midnight spy, who fears the shadows,
may forgiveness at last be granted him
and may he peacefully fall asleep.

May Your hand bless the silence,
and rock to sleep the tired land;
Mother most holy and Immaculate,
cover us with a blue mantle until morning.

PRAYER [II]
(MODLITWA [III])

To You, Mother of God,
to You through this sorrow,
You bend down over the crossroads,
where holy statues are not found,
from trees which leaves no longer cool...
You bend down through thorns,
from barren posts along the road,
upon which mercilessly
runs, runs the poisoned news...
To You, through this sorrow...
As You bend down over the crossroads,
Mary, Mother of God.

PRAYER FOR BISHOP NANKIER
(MODLITWA ZA BISKUPA NANKIERA)

1. We pray with brave and sincere prayer
for Bishop Nankier.
We don't know very much about him: nobody has enough
time to read a lot...
He was your servant.
We are praying for the seal of holiness for the
canonization of Bishop Nankier.
2. With the kings he fought for your law,
he wasn't afraid even of the might of lords and
citizens.
But he was betrayed, by them,
by lords, by citizens and also by his close counsel
and also by the king.
When he was dying he remembered all of them
let us pray for the grace of Bishop Nankier.
3. Let him at your footsteps, Your holy footsteps, taste
happiness without bitterness,
let him also be counted among the people belonging
to the Holy Spirit and Father,
let him, when he will be saved, send us down little
pieces of his vestments, like ropes
by means of which everyone, even if he is not worthy,
will be able to achieve holiness, to reach the hills
of paradise.
Let us pray with brave and sincere prayer for
Bishop Nankier.

PRAYER FOR DEATH
(MODLITWA O ŚMIERĆ)

Pray for me death, little beggar!
Already I do not sorrow, already I feel no pity,
because heaven and sea are poisoned,
because bread and water are poisoned...
My beloved no longer loves me,
already I have no strength.
Pray for death for me, not for a famous crown,
not for wings, so easily destroyed,
not for a pure heart, not for God's grace.
Let them lay me in the coffin,
so that finally my misery will come to an end,
if only as soon as possible, if only as soon as possible!

Because time has passed and there is no time for assistance
or advice.

Pray for me for death, I am already filled with love and
treason,

already traps and ambush torture me,
already faith and hope have sickened me!
How can the sun shine, how can the skylarks sing,
how could a wild apple tree blossom on the road,
how everything blossoms, shines, sings for nothing,
when my beloved has left me!

Brave death, thunderbolt death
beg for me through the power of prayer
in the open field, under the sky, during battle.
So that the noise of the banners upon my head,
so that shriek of munitions--close by,
so that souls of bronze knights
stand in a circle with wings of hussars!...
...Until life glows as whiteness,
until pupils become blind, until the flame does down,
until the heart falls asleep.

PRAYER FOR PEACE
(MODLITWA O POKÓJ)

O God, fill me with silence,
As fields blossoming with flax!
My country I hear
as it protects my dream.
Boundless trust comforts me,
and nothing more do I need,
my country, gently faithful,
reaches from earth to heaven.

I thought: a heart will never sleep
which is drawn by a deaf knock...
I am returning from an iron fairy tale,
I told my country about it.
The sound of her speech gathered me
her strong soothing circle,
and I drank--as always--again
magic liquor from her hand.

...I stepped between swords,
staring into huge auroras,
I was shielded by God's providence
and the name of my country.
Under the vigilance of watchful eyes,
whispers from afar and footsteps near
I saw closed--the iron
sleeping mouths of dragons.

Still upon me the auroras breathe forth
the scent of terror and foreign lands...
O God, fill me with silence,
As fields blossoming with flax!
...Stillness strangles me not my hatred,
The smell of the dragon and stench of the dead...
O God, deliver us
from revenge--blind and stupid...

I told this to my country,
told everything that I know...

O God, the scar of hatred
--as fields--blossoming with flax.

PRAYER FOR THE AIR FORCE
(MODLITWA ZA LOTNICTWO)

Christ, You who feed the birds, know the number of
butterflies,
I bow my head low before Your nailed feet.
You were merciful to the herbs, roses and vineyards,
delicate forms, hiding great mysteries.
You who did not permit the disaster of a scratch to a
blade of grass
and--so that heat will not destroy it--cover with
a mantle of dew,
with Your power we beg you to strengthen them,
wings of the fatherland, the air squadron.

Make their hearts strong and purify
with Your might:
let them shine in the sky as angels
that they may be saved from hell.
May they upon Your firmament
--weak mortals like something brittle by themselves--
govern over chaotic depths
being not frightened.

...Show them the way, Christ, and appoint the day for them
grant them a joyful and healthy life
and grant, that for the country
their death will not be in vain.

PRAYER FOR THE GALES
(MODLITWA ZA WICHRY)

Have mercy, God, upon the gales...
...In the mountain ashes there is fall.
...Let them not break their wings.
...During the night white frost upon the grass.
Blind gales ran through the forest,
blood ran over their ice.
It is still fall, it is still warm,
the white frost disappears immediately at daybreak.
...Over the blackthorns and in the forest
the gales are bleeding in vain:
din, clatter, whistle and howl
with thorn, with slope and roots!...
...In the mountain ashes--fall...
Have mercy, God, upon the gales.

PRAYER IN A CROWD
(MODLITWA W TŁOKU)

O God, grant me darkness,
darkness and silence,
and power so mysterious,
not to be heard.

And fame without notoriety,
and road with no return...
O God, grant me darkness
and solitude.

PRAYER IN THE LITTLE CHURCH OF ST. THERESE
(MODLITWA W KOŚCIOŁKU ŚWIĘTEJ TERESKI)

Yesterday shot away speedily from the core
a little too soon...
Remove from me the heavy burden of the day,
St. Therese.

Already early morning worries awaken,
sharp as a blow...
Remove from me the cold fear of people,
St. Therese.

Do not let them see it this one time
and do not let them follow my footsteps:
in the sphere of divine beauty;
do not allow me to be neglected.

Let none know--how, and with what and where I survive,
light and heavenly blue,
Let the space of the universe cover me,
St. Therese.

PRAYER OF THE CHILD
(MODLITWA DZIECKA)

MORNING PRAYER
(Modlitwa poranna)

1. After Getting Up
(Po wstaniu)

Good day, Lord Jesus, good morning, we got up without any sickness. I think first of You. To You first above all I say: good day.

2. Greetings
(Pozdrowienie)

God, who is in heaven above, I pray with the angels. Angels are singing day and night: "Holy, merciful, almighty!"

3. Confession of Love
(Wyznanie miłości)

You watch over me, God, like both my parents. It is impossible to see You. I can't hug You. But You know my heart, even if it is invisible to the eye, and You know that it certainly loves You warmly.

4. Petitions
(Prośby)

O God, accomplish through your grace, since my will is weak, that sin will pass me by, that only truth will live in me. Grant that I may be polite, conscientious, allow me quickly and voluntarily to listen to those whom You sent to me.... let me always have confidence.

5. To the Saints
(Do świętych)

Mary, Mother of God, and mother of all people,
St. Joseph too--
come quickly with your help.
Saints, patrons don't forget me.

PRAYER OF THE CHILD (CONTINUED)

6. To the Guardian Angel
(Do Anioła Stróża)

O angel of God, who became my guardian
from God's mercy, enlighten me today,
save me today, govern me and
make me strong.

EVENING PRAYER
(Pacierz wieczorny)

1. Thanksgiving
(Podziękowanie)

I am already going to sleep tired, sleeping; yet still
thinking of the whole little day.

2. Petition
(Prośba)

May nothing during the night harm
my mother and my father. If thou, O God,
would keep us in Your memory, we'll get
up in the morning replenished with joy and rest.

3. Apology
(Przeproszenie)

I was a bad child, and insulted You
O good Jesus. If it is necessary I will do
some kind of penance...Jesus...Mamie...
Please forgive me. I will correct myself tomorrow.

4. For God's Protection
(O Bożą Opiekę)

Jesus, You are eternal God: sustain my heart
safely. Mother of God, the most beautiful rose,
St. Joseph, angel custodian, take care of me now
and when I will grow up.

PURIFICATION OF OUR LADY
(NA GROMNICZNA)

O most beautiful Maiden,
on Candlemas,
for Your blessed fire,
hovering over the wax of Candlemas,
through the thorny forest and howling wolves
I walk without any protection:
do not pray for me and do not provide, but only
mention.

You, who gave birth to a child without hearthfire or
shelter,
and by running away escaped assassination,
and later spent Your whole life in fearful waiting
for the passion of Your Son...
You, who walked among mortals
closest to the earth yet far from earth
--seeking the light from the pale, flaming candles,
do not protect from the attacks of bandits,
but light the Candlemas for me, kindle the clear dawn
upon the foggy white frost, upon overblown roads
with snow between the huts.
...And do not pray for me, Most Holy Maiden,
Star of a happy and unprolonged death,
for protection or happiness,
do not pray, Aurora of Grace, do not shield,
only--mention.

SCORNED PRAYER
(ODTRĄCONA MODLITWA)

I want to pray for you in church
before the altar renowned for miracles,
when gloom is creeping and spreading
under the columns.

I wish to beg guidance and grace
with humble, silent words,
from the Virgin,
with gold banded head.

However, when I merely mention your name,
the most holy face becomes sullen,
and the Mother of God disappears,
as in fire and smoke.

Six-winged cherubim from the stained glass
with fiery swords in their right hands
come into the church and kneel on guard
under the columns.

SEEKING GOD
(SZUKANIE BOGA)

I, vagabond, am seeking You on a rough pathless road
through windy nights, days empty and blind,
and I struggle in thorns and I suffer.

You run like a wolf in empty spaces,
a bird of prey, a quiet owl...
I know not even half of You.

I was taught prayers of a child,
however Your trail--unexpected and winding...
Once to capture You! . Once...Nevermore.

In someone's face, destroyed by syphilis
you will flush instantly... My eyes only will be deceived.
Then again You will appear in a rose or a lily.

You fall like thunder upon innocent heads,
You break rafts, which flowing with wheat...
How can I find You in childlike prayer?

I am seeking You...sand is thrown into my eyes.
I am calling. Your gale burns my lungs.
I am going. Stay healthy. I will not return.

SOME
(NIEKTÓRZY)

SOME

are doing well
Not knowing you,
doing, well
--they are not seeking your grace,
busy with hard work in December as well as May.

In which word
they are blaspheming against your truth
like giant stars
forming patterns in your forge
which will make us different from you.

They are dying
black from sins
like ourselves
in troubles.

SOUL AND FLESH
(DUCH I CIAŁO)

A soul immortal,
locked in the flesh of man--
I detest resistant clay,
which binds me, surrounds;
from the exertion of my wings and claws
appears a condemned shell...
With a hymn of heavenly joy
I will rush forth triumphantly, a corpse!

STRONGER THAN MY DISBELIEF
(SILNIEJSZA NIŻ MOJA NIEWIARA)

My love is stronger than my disbelief,
it follows the pilgrim's path, it tries to reach
Your footsteps on the stony paths of Palestine.
This way passed thousands whom You fed,
Prophet without church, victorious without an army,
...O Christ, Son of God.
From the burden of my guilt, from stupidity, from treason
My days are numbered like the days of those people.
They--always requested...For me there is no need of
miracles.
I need only one thing: Your footsteps...

Let Him appear to me like a clear word,
let Him speak through the colors on dusty paths,
let Him deafen me with blaring sound, to reach in a
simple way, softly,
to my disbelief which is more lonely than my love.

THE CAROLS OF MARIANNE
(KOLEDA MARIANNY)
(Fragments)

...there are some holy children;
they smell like flowers in the wood,
and they sing like birds...

Paul is not like them;
once he destroyed a decorative plate
and also two bottles of juice.

He didn't have shiny golden locks
and there was nothing pretty about him.
He never washed his curly head
and all of his clothing was full of dirt.

He didn't experience miraculous revelations,
and didn't even foresee the future...

No one knows how he came, through the door or
through the wall;
Marianne looks and is not able to say a word:
There is somebody shining sitting at the vigil
dinner.

The angels covered the table with white cloth and
with hay.

Is that little Paul dressed in dirty clothing
Or maybe that's the One before whom people lie on their
faces?

The whole kitchen is filled with the beautiful
smell of roses;

Marianne is kneeling down quietly and cannot
close her eyes...

O miracle!

THE GRAVE OF MAJOR STADNICKI IN KLUZ
(GRÓB MAJORA STADNICKIEGO W/ KLUZU)

And there under the little grave, neither magnificent
nor lowly,
lies a Polish soldier, Major Roman Stadnicki.

An oak cross he has, he did not remain an orphan:
Master Bochenko himself made him a little fence.

Around all the graves--sunken, abandoned:
names erased by the rains, flowers consumed by drought.

Not even the pansies watch, nor does the ivy multiply,
instead of crosses upon the graves--sorrowful neglect.

The ground upon them is cracked--the grass is furrowed...
...And that little Polish grave is overgrown with flowers.

The rose bushes stand, the white bindweed is bent,
liverwort and pasqueflower, and violets for the butterfly.

Nowhere does the dew fall, the terrible heat is prolonged...
Upon the Major's grave roses are drooping over roses.

And during the dark nights, under this heaven made of
steel,
a bright lamp of love, the unseen God burns.

THE LITTLE ORPHAN SPEAKS
(SIEROTA MÓWI:)

There is none, who would love me,
There is none, who would fondle me...
The Good Angel of Comfort
such news revealed to me:

...Instead of loving eyes,
little orphan poor creature,
every day two gold auroras
will shine for you.

Instead of merciful hands,
upon your pale face,
exuberant flying winds
their cool wings will place.

All the larks in the field
will feel sorry for you,
and the bluebirds and bluebells
will kiss your damp eyes.

Again whichever road
into the world you will take, little orphan,
my white sisters
will clear your path before you.

Will clear your path before you,
the path before you they will pave
with a blushing field bramble,
angels wings they whiten!

THE NEGLECTED MOTHER OF GOD.
(MATKA BOSKA POMINIĘTA)

At the parish church--IS ONE WHO NEVER CEASES,
at Martin's--IS ONE WHO RADIATES:
but on Monastery street--is one who watches in the ruins
one alone with a child as in a forest...
Sometimes a pigeon brings a feather,
when something from paradise is lacking, which--is his.
Wall...Ruin...Emptiness, so awful,
bitter for the eyes, and stifling for the heart.

THE PLACE WHERE I WILL FALL
(MIEJSCE GDZIE PADNĘ)

Not even stained glass
not even silken curtains
will strengthen me when I weaken.
My gaze--hard and desolate--
sees the place where I will fall
unadorned:
without words, without tears. To Him all my life I
went...

You, who guided me between the good and the bad,
at least on this place rise up finally visible!

THE TEMPTATION OF SAINT VINCENT FERRERIUS
(POKUSA ŚWIĘTEGO WINCENTEGO FERRERIUSZA)

When Vincent Ferrerius became weak,
troubled by temptation which looked like fruit covered
with gold,
St. Dominic appeared to him,
stretched his hands to him and promised him God's help.

TO ST. CECILIA
(DO ŚWIĘTEJ CECYLII)

From the blaring radio behind the wall,
spare me,
from the flute under the floor, save,
musical maiden...
From the violin and piano,
from "rubato" and "staccato"...

Send me a silent messenger
from the leaden harmony of your stained glass image,
so that the noises that drink my blood,
the messenger with his breast of feathers would shield.

Save, save,
O Holy Cecilia.

TO THE MADONNA OF CONSOLATION
(DO MADONNY POCIESZENIA)

IN THE DRESS COLORED IN PARADISE STYLE...

You keep on the dress colored in paradise style,
and you come down to earth
when man laments over his harvest
and can see no help.

He sowed and planted in heavy toil
seed and song,
but the whole harvest in the fields
was eaten by bug and mold.

Your hands are most merciful,
shining in the dusk...
But you shielded the innocent little bird
from dangerous surroundings,
but before you can mention it to the man
among his flocks
the wolf will steal a little lamb,
the sheep will disappear at once.

TO THE MADONNA OF CONSOLATION
(DO MADONNY POCIESZENIA)

OUR WORKSHOPS ARE SAD

In the Nazareth man the carpenter,
O Mary, Conciliator...

With the little son when he was deeply thinking,
O Mary, Conciliator...

For neighborhood women at meager wells,
O Mary, Conciliator...

Our gardens are drying,
O Mary, Conciliator...

Our workshops are sad
O Mary, Conciliator...

Our children are walking, deeply thinking
O Mary, Conciliator...

There is a lack of living water in our well,
O Mary, Conciliator...

Wonder what kind of harvest there will be,
O Mary, Conciliator...

TO THE MADONNA OF CONSOLATION
(DO MADONNY POCIESZENIA)

WE OVERSLEPT THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DAY

We overslept the most beautiful day, sunny day.
We were waiting during the long, frozen, dangerous night,
we walked through swamps, we missed the steep hill,
and we hid where it is silent and safe and clear.

And here the bug bites us which later will kill us...
we didn't ask for the loan which we have to pay today,
we did nothing wrong to anyone--and we did no damage...
O Mother of Consolation, don't give us up to the Judge!

TWO FACES
(DWIE TWARZE)

O You, who know what will be and prophesied what happened,
please remove this burning loneliness, nightmare of my
rotten heart,
restore, cleanse, and change it into love.

You, whose light was food for the saved,
heal the bitterness of life, wash away humiliations,
and upon my bowed head place a humble garland.

Let empty suffering desires be purified with grace,
let my evil be transformed and become goodness,
let the dry leaves produce fruit with no difficulties.

And now, today--it is not the hour of death--this please
tell me,

You who promised a dying good thief
when You were on the cross, on the edge of eternity:

"Truly, even TODAY you will be with me in Paradise."

UNHOLY PASSION
(NIEŚWIĘTA MEKA)

On the way of my pain I didn't find, God,
footsteps of Christ's blood;
upon my crown of thorns, resting on my open wounds
there was not even a branch from the thorns on his head:
the hidden blows struck with force upon my back
were not like the flagellation of Jesus' passion.

The colleague who denied me, like the one at the fire,
had a different name,
Nobody gathered the blood of my footsteps,
No love, with the most pure shroud...
came from the shouting crowd
...and on my Golgotha was emptiness...

UNKNOWN
(NIEZNANE)

Yet not everything within me is known to me.
I am living on the porch, as in a sunny yard:
O pigeon of mine, O my yellow flower-bed of begonias,
O roses...roses...
There is a house and dark and labyrinthine corridors,
and a clock, which is ringing and beating like a heart,
and galleries, staring with dead eyes,
and--God who is everywhere. He is there where I am not.

UPON IGNORANCE
(NAD NIEWIEDZĄ)

Every love has died
every grief has turned to stone
and nothing is pleasant anymore
except God.

Plowed--man, pulled from him couch grass,
burned weeds on distant balk
and rises, rises after winter, not better
not worse than anything else
wide, green ignorance.
Upon ruin--skylark and heavenly clouds
Upon ignorance--only one God.

UPON POLISH GRAVES IN BUDAPEST
(NA POLSKIE GROBY W BUDAPESZCIE)

You placed them, Lord, in an even line,
as dropped swords and folded shields;
however, they will all come with us at Your judgment
and equally with us they will testify before You.

O, permit them to rest without reminiscence and longing,
and please do not let them relive the sufferings of the
past.

Their poverty before Christ--is richer than happiness,
and death on the forehead--more magnificent than a
diadem.

WARNING FOR ABELS
(PRZESTROGA ABLOM)

A noise in the darkness of the cherry and linden trees
comes from the orchard,
and drags with stones on the heart, on those who are
sleeping.

O God, through Your vast cable
sent Your warning;
"From the sky on the descendants of Cain
will come the destroying fire!!!"
O merciful God, please send warning to Abels.

WITH THE ANGELS' TONGUE
(ANIELSKIMI JEZYKAMI)

From the rain of death which beats upon earth,
there is no need for useless defense...
O please speak to me in the language of angels!
The world became gray with the haggard tree, with the
 nightingales became mute.

You, eternal witness, upon imminent crime
speak with sounding brass or by prophecy!--
Shake valleys and hills or appear in the little seeds
or appear to the unfortunate orphans
as a stranger with a star on the head
or else appear through public or private revelation.
May the most powerful lighting of Your love, the most
 holy one
which purifies the souls of the heroes, burn down
with flaming tongues among the noisy bombs on the ruins.

WOLF IN THE CAGE
(WILK W KLATCE)

I cannot free myself, I cannot raise myself up
I cannot return from noise to silence
The calm within me is wounded.
I want to be silent, I want to think "Under Your
Protection."

And the heart flutters and the blood is beating, pounding.
There was a Spirit, and now in the cage a wolf snaps his
teeth in the night.

TABLE I.-

Distribution of Types of Rhyme in 423 Lines from Twenty-five Selected Religious Poems of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz.

Key: A--Exact B--"Poetical" C--Close D--Weak E--None							
Title	A	B	C	D	E	Total	
1. Odrażona modlitwa	14	2	0	0	0	16	
2. Modlitwa o śmierć	22	2	4	2	0	30	
3. Duch i ciało	4	0	0	2	2	8	
4. Pacierz ranny	26	0	12	16	0	54	
5. Połów	4	0	0	0	0	4	
6. Na Gromniczną	10	2	2	8	1	23	
7. Hymny do Ducha świętego	10	4	14	22	0	50	
8. Modlitwa w tłoku	2	0	0	6	0	8	
9. Modlitwa za wichry	5	2	4	3	0	14	
10. Grób majora Stadnickiego	4	2	4	6	0	16	
11. Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste..	8	1	0	3	4	16	
12. Modlitwa za lotnictwo	4	0	6	6	4	20	
13. Zamiast modlitwy	2	2	4	4	0	12	
14. Modlitwa	6	0	2	1	3	12	
15. Bóg jest także z nimi	0	3	5	4	0	12	
16. Szukanie Boga	2	0	8	8	0	18	
17. Wilk w klatce	0	0	6	0	0	6	
18. Tuż obok Boga	6	0	1	7	2	16	
19. Czarny dym	4	0	8	4	0	16	
20. Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa	2	0	10	2	0	14	
21. Przed Chrystusem (Salez..)	2	0	2	6	2	12	
22. Do świętej Cecylii	2	2	2	6	0	12	
23. Dwie twarze	2	4	3	4	0	13	
24. Niechby ta jedna nieć...	0	2	2	7	1	12	
25. Stworzenie	2	0	2	5	0	9	
	143	28	101	132	19	423	
Percent	33.8	6.6	23.9	31.2	4.5	100	

Table II. -
 Percentage of Types of Rhyme in 423 Lines from Twenty-five
 Selected Religious Poems of Kazimiera Iłakowicz.

Key: ——— Exact and Poetical Rhymes
 - - - - - Close and Weak Rhymes
 No Rhymes

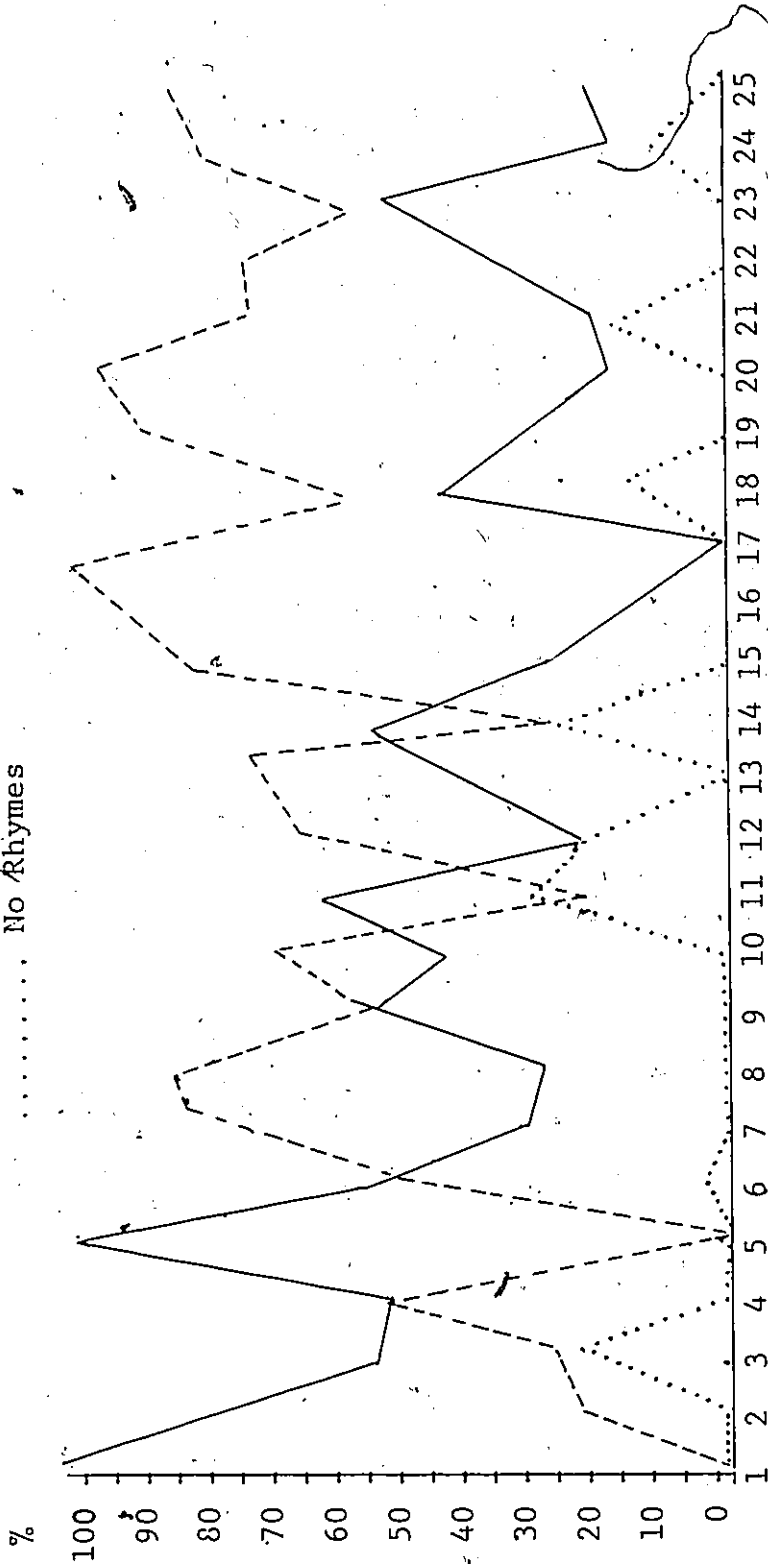


Table III.-

Distribution of the Number of Lines in One Hundred Religious
Poems of Kazimiera Iłakowicz.

No. of Lines	No. of Poems
4	5
5	1
6	5
8	16
9	4
10	4
11	2
12	12
13	1
14	6
15	2
16	10
17	2
18	5
19	1
20	1
21	1
23	1
24	1
25	1
27	1
28	1
30	3
32	1
35	2
36	1
40	1
44	1
45	1
50	1
54	1
78	1
84	1
97	1
107	1
170	1
	<u>100</u>

Table IV. -

List of Metaphors in Twenty-five Selected Religious Poems
of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz--Poems Arranged Chronologically.

Poem	Metaphor
1. Odrzucona modlitwa	fiery swords
2. Modlitwa o śmierć	heaven and sea poisoned bread and water poisoned speaker filled with love and treason speaker tortured by traps and ambush life glows white-hot flame (of life) burns down heart falls asleep
3. Duch i ciało	soul in body like bird embryo in shell (wings and claws) body is clay
4. Pacierz ranny	speaker is poor scrap cross is put down door closes on Paradise (dream) lift up burden garden of night (dream) speaker is golden flag now bowed speaker weak like a bird speaker is insect, crumb of straw, ash. seeks key to mystery every day is sick (God) take sword and crown attempt is like a flight clay of martyrs and saints travel from sun to abyss experience is like being on peak speaker sick from vertigo on peak feeling like depth of nothingness speaker as page experiences are journeys life is abyss full of tears

Poem	Metaphors
4. Pacierz ranny, cont'd	fly to God's heart speaker is particle of dust speaker not even ashes or blood wishes to be flower, bird, child folds of God's coat dust on edge of God's vestment
5. Połów	no explicit metaphors
6. Na Gromniczną	no explicit metaphors
7. Hymny do Ducha świętego	earth is empty, stingy walk on sorrow as on lake walk on water (of sorrow) live on crumbs, chaff no jewels in bowl pride crawls out of soul speaker in immaculate armor Holy Spirit in three faces, three burning helmets, in crosses, swords, banners and birds speaker's wounds bleed blind sight reaches truth spiritual fall equals precipice Holy Spirit dawns
8. Modlitwa w tłoku	road with no return
9. Modlitwa za wichry	gale is a wild animal
10. Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu	heaven of steel God is lamp of love
11. Chodzę za Tobą, Chryste	race won over death

Poem	Metaphors
12. Modlitwa za lotnictwo	<p> mantle of dew wings of the fatherland heart of the air force men shine like angels in sky men reign over depths </p>
13. Zamiast modlitwy	<p> speaker stretches hands in crowd feet go with difficulty speaker flounders more deeply </p>
14. Modlitwa (II)	<p>poisoned news</p>
15. Bóg jest także z nimi	<p>God as seed from fire</p>
16. Szukanie Boga	<p> speaker is vagabond on pathless tract speaker struggles in thorns God runs like wolf, bird of prey, owl God's track unexpected and winding God falls like thunder sand in eyes God's gale burns lungs </p>
17. Wilk w klatce	<p>speaker is wolf in cage</p>
18. Tuż obok Boga	<p>no metaphors</p>
19. Czarny dym	<p> evil is black smoke hope is star </p>
20. Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa	<p>wafer shines like white corpse</p>
21. Przed Chrystusem Salezjanów	<p>Christ whiter than fresh chalk</p>

Poem	Metaphors
22. Do świętej Cecylii	no metaphors
23. Dwie twarze	pull out, heal, cleanse burning loneliness, nightmare of rotten heart light fed the saved heal bitterness wash humiliations place humble garland on head empty desires let dry leaves produce fruit edge of eternity
24. Niechby ta jedna nić	threads of body, thread of spirit death as abyss, far darkness
25. Stworzenie	net of causes and results

Table V.-

List of Symbols Used in Twenty-five Selected Religious Poems
of Kazimiera Iłłakowicz--Poems Arranged Chronologically.

Poem	Symbols	
	Religious	Other
1. Odtrącona modlitwa	church altar statue of Virgin fire and smoke (?) cherubim stained glass fiery swords	twilight
2. Modlitwa o śmierć	heaven wings (?)	sea bread and water crown sun skylarks wild apple tree banners bronze knights wings of hussars
3. Duch i ciało	hymn	clay wings and claws
4. Pacierz ranny	cross burden golden flag (?) David constellations clay of martyrs and saints fire and smoke armor of God sign of God heart of God ashes blood home of God coat of God	Atlas sword crown key of city sun abyss peak rose deep (n.) dust flower bird child

Poem	Symbols	
	Religious	Other
5. Połów	icon folded palms fishing torn nets bird	
6. Na Gromniczną	blessed fire candles star cover (vb.)	prickly forest howling wolves frost
7. Hymny do Ducha świętego	fish lake boat walking on water immaculate armor three faces three helmets crosses swords banners birds shield of God wings of God wounds precipice dawn (vb.)	abysses crumbs chaff jewels blind sight
8. Modlitwa w tłoku		darkness (?) solitude (?) road (?)
9. Modlitwa za wichry		

Poem	Symbols	
	Religious	Other
10. Grób majora Stadnickiego w Kluzu	oaken cross crosses lamp of love	orphan rain drought flowers cracked ground furrowed grass butterfly dew heat roses
11. Chodzę za Tobie, Chryste	race over death burning bush	greedy crowd blood pus garbage clean (people) lepers
12. Modlitwa za lotnictwo	nailed feet of Christ angels	birds butterflies herbs roses vineyards blade of grass dew
13. Zamiast modlitwy		hands crowd feet
14. Modlitwa (II)	BVM bending over crossroads holy statues thorns	barren trees
15. Bóg jest także z nimi	church seed (God) wings storm flowers	earth home dead bones

Poem	Symbols	
	Religious	Other
16. Szukanie Boga	wolf bird of prey owl prayer of child God's gale	vagabond pathless tract windy nights empty days syphilis rose lily rafts with wheat sand in eyes
17. Wilk w klatce	prayer Spirit	noise silence wolf cage teeth night
18. Tuż obok Boga	stream three steps light twilight	starlike window nights flaming whips
19. Czarny dym	black smoke eternal twilight star	arm of bad people silver ribbon
20. Pogrzeb Pana Jezusa	canopies candles wafer corpse olive tree palm tree rock with salves broken grave wall (?)	

Poem	Symbols	
	Religious	Other
21. Przed Chrystusem Salezjanow	thorns of Jesus	knife in corner
22. Do świętej Cecylii		vertebrae of glassy harmony messenger with breast of feathers
23. Dwie twarze	light food for saved cross humble garland bowed head	nightmare rotten heart dry leaves fruit
24. Niechby ta jedna nić	far darkness thread abyss	
25. Stworzenie	net eternal flood full sea rivers lyre water	

APPENDIX 3

LIST OF WORKS AND AWARDS¹

In the course of her long and prolific literary career, Kazimiera Iłkiewicz received numerous literary awards. Among these were the literary award of the city of Wilno in 1930, the State Literary Award in 1935, and the Pen Club award for translation in 1954. In 1956 and 1967, she received the literary award of the city of Poznan for her total literary work. Her creative achievement was also recognized in 1967 by the Polish Ministry of Culture and Art which conferred upon her a special award in recognition of her total literary achievement.

Pre-World War II

Poetry

- Ikarowe loty (Icarus Flying), 1912
- Wici (Balefire), 1914
- Trzy struny (Three Strings), 1917
- Koleśy polskiej biedy (Carols of Polish Poverty), 1917
- Połów (Fishing), 1926
- Obrazy imion wróżebnych (Images of Names of Fortune Tellers), 1926
- Czarodziejskie zwierciadełka (Witches' Little Mirrors), 1929
- Złoty wianek (Cold Wreath), 1927
- Zwierciadło nocy (Night Mirror), 1927
- Z głębi serca (From the Bottom of the Heart), 1920

¹ Lesław M. Bartelski, Polscy pisarze współcześni, Warszawa, Agencja Autorska, 1972, p. 105-106.

Płaczący ptak (Crying Bird), 1929
Popiół i perły (Ashes and Pearls), 1930
Słownik litewski (Lithuanian Skylark), 1936
Wesołe wierszyki (Happy Poems), 1934
Wiersze bezlistne (Poems Without Leaves), 1941
Wybrane wiersze Andrzeja Ady (Selected Poems of Andrew Ady), 1942

Children's Poetry

Rymy dziecięce (Children's Rhymes), 1923

Fable

Bajeczna powieść o królewiczu La-Fi-Czaniu, o żołnierzu Soju i dziewczynce Kio (Fabulous Novel About the Little La-Fi-Czan, the Soldier Soja, and the Little Kio), 1919, reprinted in 1958

Drama

Śmierć Feniksa (Death of Feniks), 1922

Post-World War II

Wiersze wybrane 1912-1947 (Selected Poems), 1949
Poezje (1940-1954) (Poems), 1954
Wiersze religijne 1912-1949 (Religious Poetry), 1955
Wybór wierszy (Selected Poems), 1956
Portrety imion (Portraits of Names), 1957, reprinted 1968
Lekkomysłne serce (Reckless Heart), 1959
Szeptem (Whispers), 1966
Ta jedna nić (A Single Thread), 1966
Liście i posągi (Leaves and Statues), 1968
Poezje wybrane (Selected Poems), 1968
Rzeczy sceniczne (Scenic Things), 1969
Co dzieci wiedzą (What Children Know), 1970
Wiersze zebrane (Collected Poems), 1972

Sketches and Memoirs

Z rozbitego fotoplastikonu (From a Broken Photo-
plasticon), 1957

Ścieżka obok drogi (The Path Near the Road), 1939

Niewczesne wynurzenia (Late Outpourings), 1958

Trazymeński zajac (The Rabbit of Trazymen), 1968

Children's poetry

Wiersze dziecięce (Poetry for Children), 1959