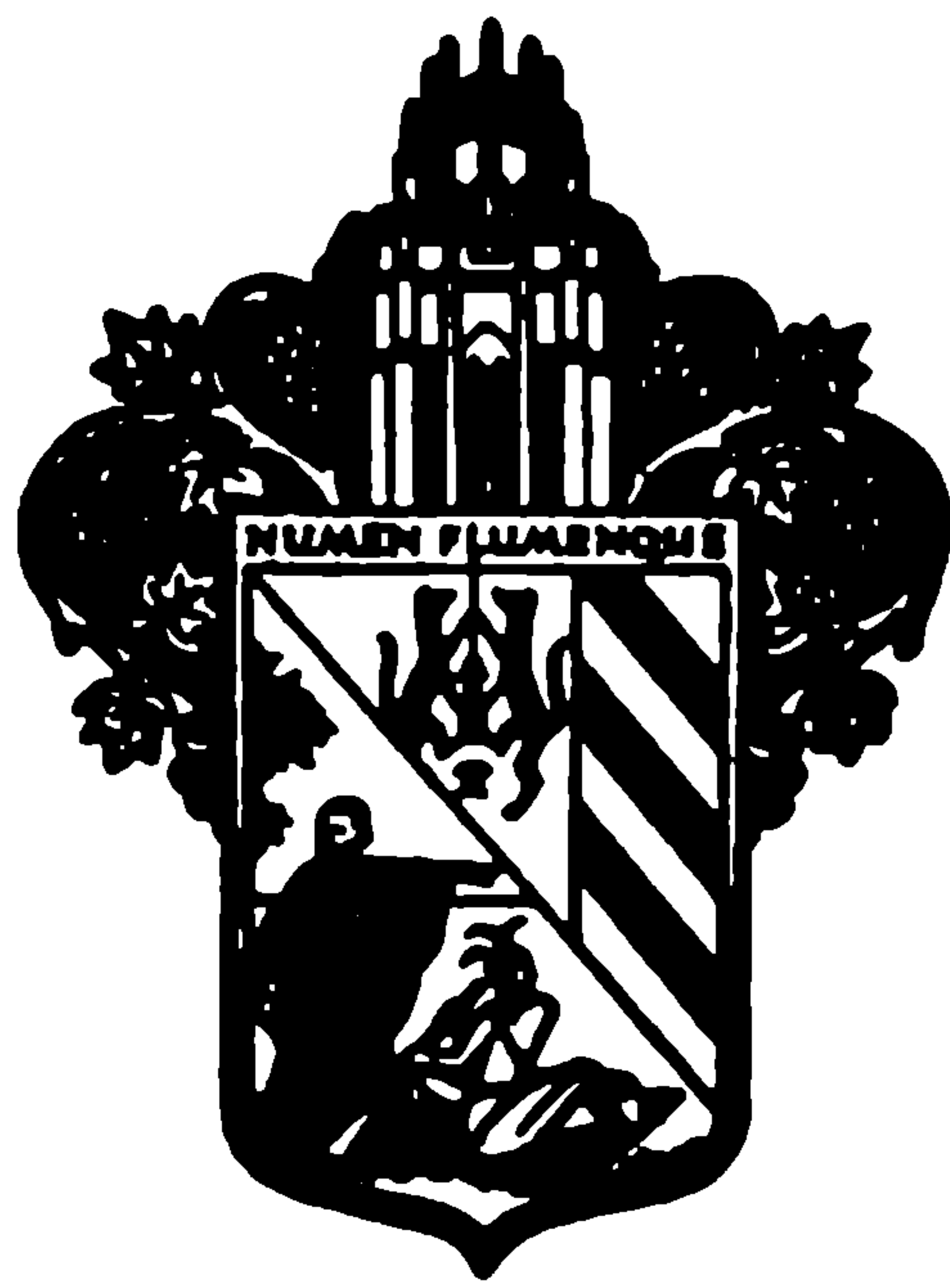


MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
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PAPERS

NO. 17

KLONOWICZ AND UKRAINE
An Introduction to the Poem Roxolania

BY
MARION MOORE COLEMAN



"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"

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P R E F A C E

MRS. Marion Moore Coleman became interested in Slavic matters through her husband, Arthur Prudden Coleman, for twenty years (1928-48) a member of the Department of Slavonic and East European Languages at Columbia University. A native of Brooklyn, New York, she is a descendant of Thomas Halsey, one of the founders of Southhampton, Long Island, on her father's side; on her mother's side, a descendant of Nathaniel Merrill, an early settler of Newburyport, Massachusetts.

While at Columbia, Mrs. Coleman worked with her husband and the Stetkewicz family on the preparation of the pioneer *Survey of Ukrainian Literature* which was published by the Ukrainian University Society in 1936.

In 1943 Mrs. Coleman founded the *Bulletin of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages* and for five years produced it single-handed. The *Bulletin* is now the *Journal* of the AATSEEL organization.

At Alliance College, Cambridge Springs, Pa., where for twelve years her husband was President, Mrs. Coleman produced a journal devoted to Slavic matters, *Alliance Journal*, in ten annual issues (1951-1961) and also a quarterly *Polish Folklore*, in seven volumes, 1956-62.

Besides the above, Mrs. Coleman has translated many works from the Polish and written many articles on Slavic and Slavic-American matters, alone or in collaboration with her husband. Her major work is a biography of the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, *Young Mickiewicz* (1956). Also of major scope is her translation of the long topographical poem *Flis*, (The Boatman), by Sebastjan Fabjan Klonowicz (Alliance College, 1958).

Mrs. Coleman is a distinguished scholar among American Slavists. We are honored to publish her paper *Klonowicz and Ukraine*, as an introduction to the poem "Roxolania."

The Latin term Roxolania was used as a name for present day Ukraine as late as the seventeenth century. Peter Mohila (1556-1646), the great metropolitan of Kiev and founder of the Mohila Academy, called his Church in Ukraine "Ecclesia Roxolana,"¹ and the Ukrainian Hetman Bohdan Chmelnytsky (1590-1657) and Ivan Wyhowsky in negotiations with the Swedes used the term Roxolania also. K. J. Hildebrandt, a member of the Swedish delegation to Bohdan Chmelnytsky, who visited Ukraine and the capital, Chyhyryn (1656-1957), reports that a treaty could not be concluded because the Hetman and the Council of officers insisted that the Swedish King recognize "for them (the Ukrainian Cossack State) the right to the whole of old Ukraine or Roxolania (totius Ukrainae Antiquae vel Roxolania) where the Greek religion and language was and still is used. . . ."² Also in literature this term was used; and one of the first panegyrics in verse written by Ivan Ornowsky and dedicated to Hetman Mazepa (1632-1709), is entitled: *Muza Roksolanska* (Chernyhiv, 1688). The Roxolans are even mentioned in the eighteenth century "Constitution of Rights and Liberties" given at Bendery (1711) by the successor of Mazepa, Hetman Pylyp Orlik (1742).

What is the origin of this term? Professor V. Sichynsky explains the term Roxolani as "Roxo-Alani or White Alans." (?)³ According to the generally recognized authority for the archeology of Ukraine, Professor Yaroslav Pasternak, the Roxolanians were a Sarmatian tribe, like the Yazigs and Alans, which from the second century B.C. dominated the Southern Ukrainian steppe for over a century.⁴

All these tribes were Iranians who in that territory replaced the Scythians, the tribe which invaded the Ukraine from Iran, across the Don. This Sarmatian age included not only Ukraine but also Poland.⁵ To Sarmatian *tamgas*, originated from monograms of Greek deities, are traced some old Ukrainian-Polish coats of arms and, according to some scholars, even the Ukrainian national emblem, the Trident. There is a strong argument

for the Sarmatian origin of the Croats, but the theory of the same descent of the Serbs is questioned.⁶

The recorded history of the Roxolans Isidore Nahayewsky sums up:

At the beginning of the new era the Sarmatians were defeated by the Alans, also Roxolans or Rosomans (as they are called by Jordanes). The Roxolans (Iranian: rugh=light, and Alani, it means the "Light-Alani") settled down near the Azov Sea, as it can be seen from the map, prepared by Claudios Ptolemy of the second century A.D. The Roxolans challenged the power and authority of the Bosporan kings and especially the powerful King Mithridates VI Eupator (113 B.C.) who extended his influence to the northern shores of the Black Sea in order to gain access to the riches of South Ukraine. He was defeated by the Romans and committed suicide (62 B.C.) and South Ukraine was partially brought under the control of the Roman emperors.⁷

The Roxolans are often mentioned by classical writers like Strabo, Claudios Ptolemaios, Jordanes.⁸

The Iranians had a profound cultural influence on the Slavs, on their religious conceptions, burial practices, and language; also a whole series of Slavic deities were of Iranian origin.⁹

April 15, 1963

Roman Smal-Stocki, Ph.D.
Director, Slavic Institute

KLONOWICZ AND UKRAINE

An Introduction to the Poem *Roxolania*

AMONG the famous topographical poems of all time are to be found two, at least, from the Middle Zone of Europe to which AATSEEL is dedicated. Both were written in the great century of topographical poems, the sixteenth, and both were by the same man, Sebastjan Fabjan Klonowicz (*ca.* 1545-1602), a Polish public official and educator as well as poet. Of the two poems, one is in Polish and takes us on a leisurely boatman's voyage down the Vistula to Danzig and back; the other, in Latin, carries us in imagination over the rolling steppeland and wooded hills of the border region lying between the Polish city of Lublin and Kiev, "seat, in the olden time, of the Dukes." Known to us as Ukraine, the region has from time immemorial been referred to by poets as *Roxolania*, from one tribe of its most ancient inhabitants who dwelt in the marshy region just north of the Sea of Azov, and who were called by the Romans and others *Roxolani*.

The Vistula poem, *Flis* (The Boatman), published in Kraków in 1595, has been translated into English; unfortunately, *Roxolania*—this rich, nuggety poem in praise of the Ukrainian land—still remains hidden from most of us by the forbidding cloak of its Latin. Someday, perhaps, we shall ourselves translate the poem, line by line. For the moment, however, a look into its riches will have to suffice. This will be a step in advance toward acquaintance with the work, at any rate. Up to now not even a copy of it in the original existed or was known to exist in the United States; we ourselves had to get the copy we have used by photostat from the British Museum.

The author of *Roxolania* was not a son of the borderland he extols but a convert to Ukraine and Ukrainianism. Actually he was from the extreme outermost part of the Polish Common-

wealth, the province of Wielkopolska, having been born in the “salt-measuring” town of Sulmierzyce, near the Silesian border, where his father owned a mill. In front of the Klonowicz home stood a fine maple tree, and from this, as our poet tells us, “we got our name,” *klon* being the Polish word for this tree. Besides being born in the other part of Poland, Klonowicz was educated there, too, at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and it was only after he had completed his studies there and received a degree in jurisprudence that he was in any way identified with the eastern, Roxolanian realm.

What then drew Klonowicz to the eastern domain? The answer is: Roxolania’s unprecedented buoyancy and attractiveness in the mid-sixteenth century. Toward Ukraine’s spacious steppes and deep inspiring river valleys, as toward no other area of Middle Eastern Europe, was flowing at this time the tide of popular migration and colonization. Of late the ancient and once busy trade route from east to west, which bisected Roxolania, had been reactivated as a result of the Turko-Christian duel agitating the Mediterranean, and once again this highway had begun to serve, as of old, as the principal artery linking the Levant with the commercial west. Simultaneously, poets had discovered Roxolania—the arts inevitably follow in the wake of prosperity and widening vision—and in the newly burgeoning region had found, as they thought, the answer to their dreams. For the moment Roxolania was the poet’s land supreme, and it is not surprising that Klonowicz, with the others, fell a victim to her charm.

Klonowicz did not compose *Roxolania* in the midst of his eastern journey, nor at once upon his return to Poland. Settling in Lublin, he practiced law and in a short time entered politics, soon becoming a busy and hard-pressed public official, eventually Mayor of the town. And so the poem is, indeed, experience recollected in tranquillity, or, if not quite that, experience recalled to ease the burden of the present and bring solace to the soul.

Though shorter by some 73 lines than its companion piece *Flis*, *Roxolania* is still a long work, consisting of 1803 lines.

There is no division into stanzas, as in *Flis*, or into cantos, as you would think from the Polish translation made in 1851-52 by Ludwik Kondratowicz, who cuts it up into thirty-five, oddly divided sections. The lines are unrhymed, and the rhythm is irregular. The poem was published in 1584, probably around twenty years, as we have indicated, after the poet had seen the land of which he still dreamed.

In *Roxolania* Klonowicz uses two terms for the people who dwell in the country described, calling them indiscriminately the "Russi," and the "Rutheni." We have kept his Ruthenian term, but for "Russi" have used the more correct appellation, "the people of Rus'," Rus' being the term generally accepted for the border region between strictly Polish lands and Kiev on the Dnieper.

Coming at last to the poem itself, we find *Roxolania* opening with a burst of eloquence in praise of the region concerned, and with the warmest of invitations to the Muses to come there and dwell. "Sing, O Muses," it begins, "the fertile pastures of the people of Rus',"

The fields, well-favored and blest, of the land.
Sing of the meadows, rich with abundant grain,
The fields ploughed deep, that fail not of ample harvest.
Nor silent, O Muses, remain, the forests in praising,
Forests that everywhere yield magnificent bounty:
Honey, that's hid all about in the hollow trunk,
That flows in a golden flood, along with the acorn, forth
from the oak.

Tell of the cities of Rus', toward the Arctic inclining,
Cities high Helice passes across in his winding circuit . . .
Sacred Leopolis sing, and the customs Ruthenian,
The fatness of four-footed beasts, and flocks without
blemish. . . .

Come, O ye Pierides chaste, and with trembling reed
Open for me, I implore, the wasteland long hidden.
Charm such as bound thee of old to the Argolides' land
Here's to be met with no less, in our fruited realm:
Springs that will gush into life, as 'neath Pegasus' hoof,
Dulcet as ever the waters of Bellerophon loosed.
Living currents are here, and fountains life-giving,

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Floods that tear meadows asunder are present,
And fish in variety scarce to be numbered.

Here, the poet continues,

Here does the Sun-God Apollo reach with protective ray,
Bringing about with his touch the gracious procession of
seasons.

Storms do not strike the Ruthenian land without interruption,
Cold Hyperboreas here does not always rage:

After the snows have departed, the Euri [winds from the
warm southeast] replace th' Aquilones [cold north winds],
Warming the ice-bound earth and freeing her bounty of gold.
Wintry Boreas retreats, to be followed by gentle Favonius
[the west wind]

Taurus returns, dissolving the snowdrifts and ice,
Impregnating all the fields, restoring the season of spring.
Cancer and Leo follow, bringing warmth to Sarmatia's orb,
Her fruits to maturity hast'ning, her grain fields to gold.
Next comes the parent of autumn, Libra, with menace
of frost,

But first the stored hopes of the seasons, assurance of food. . . .

Some, Klonowicz pauses to remind us, have spread evil
about Roxolania, and have done her harm. This, he says, is too
bad, as her climate is not all harsh, as they have said. And so,
he chides,

Let Rumor, the spreader of evil, the Giants' sister, be still:
Let her cease sowing lies of the harshness of Rus's clime.
For lies are they all, falsehoods, in truth, that tell of our
land

As one given over to ice, unyielding, hostile to plough.
And he lies, who declares we are sterile,
Held captive forever to cold.

Truth is, that our products are carried, by river and stream,
and by sea

So far, even Germany's nurtured with fruit of our fields,
Carried thither across very Ocean, though pity the truth be
to tell.

Our pastures feed herds without number, and nurture lands
foreign and far.

Thus, the poet declares, Roxolania is the perfect site for a northern Parnassus, and the more so as in Lublin it has the ideal Muses' Hill, topping a most charming city. Come, he invites Clio, come and bring with you the others of the Nine,

Down where the stream Bystrzyca, with placid wave,
Flows, there marshes creating, and ponds, and bogs,
Down where Bystrzyca, captive, courses the city around,
Lublin encircling, bringing it watery sustenance, gentle and
sweet.

Splitting in twain, the stream, with one of its arms,
Laps 'round the bastion, then onward flows, to enter a lake.
Admitted by copper piping straight to the city's heart,
It spouts in a fountain free-flowing, as circles it round.
The bank to the right, see covered with drooping willows,
The left one rising replete with fir trees and pines.
Bulrushes dense, the river steeps in its tide,
While yonder's a meadow, soggy, bursting with bloom,
And further, a bank all dry and greening with turf.
Thither, Pierides, come, thou chorus virginal, chaste. . . .

And so on, for lines on end of invitation to the Muses to settle in Lublin.

If this were all in *Roxolania*, Muses and gods and the like, the poem would be of slight importance to us today, but it is not all. Soon we have a most interesting exposition as to who the people of Rus' were, and where they came from. Apollo is speaking, and he says in fine, sonorous words, "In the beginning were the forests, cities had not been, the forests held all in their sway, man had not been born here, but the forests had."

Then in time men came into the region,
Men came, chosen scions of Japhet,
Whether you call them by the ancient name of Bastarnae,
Or Sarmatians, Illyrians, call them as you will,
Or perchance you may give them the name Hamaxobii,
People, that is, Yoked to Rude Wagons, — I shall not linger
to hear your vote.

By whatever name you know them, the tribe bears today
the name
Of the people of Rus', which posterity recognizes now and
approves.

Some also have become accustomed to call them Ruthenians,
And so, gentle reader, do not veto the example of the fathers.
These, having crossed the calm waters of Palus Maeotis,
Having sprinkled themselves through the frigid realm of
 Boreas,
Established a seat for themselves 'neath the constellation of
 the Great Bear,
And here gathered for themselves rich acres of land,
Where still they maintain the ways of their sires, and their
 statutes.

A very modern guess, we may comment, in the field of folk-migration, and of historical interest, worthy of coming from a god!

Klonowicz is impressed in Roxolania by nothing so much as the forests, and he devotes endless lines to them, singling out one tree after another for notice. He sees that the forest is the basis of the whole economy of the region and is particularly attracted to the ingenious way in which the Ruthenian successfully substitutes wood for iron in the construction of those light wagons of his, called the *kolasa*, the heavy, rude carts which he uses for transport of goods, and in the fashioning of his special kind of plough, known as the *socha*. To make wheel hoops of wood, as the Ruthenian does, seems to Klonowicz fantastically clever, and to produce a curved plough of this material seems nothing short of a miracle. He describes in great detail the way the Ruthenian searches the forest well ahead of time for the wood he needs for this tool, and how, often not finding exactly what he needs, he chooses a young oak and trains it to curve in the proper fashion. "What nature withholds," he says, "must be made by skill, by zeal, and by labor," and the Ruthenian, he declares, is willing to expend all three plus foresight, which is required so that the wood may be tough and hard, all the water extracted from it by a gentle smoking and curing process.

From the forest the folk of Rus' have much more, as Klonowicz notes, than mere lumber. In the fur of its innunmerable animals is to be found the true Golden Fleece, he declares, booty much more precious than any sought by the Argonauts—a band,

by the way, for whom both here and in *Flis* Klonowicz expresses the lowest esteem. Also from the forest comes the remarkable plant known as the mistletoe, so useful to the farmer in providing a perfect snare for birds. Klonowicz tells us how the mistletoe is produced; it springs up in the droppings of the fieldfare, a kind of thrush which eats the berries. From the branch on which the birds rest you have, in time "a second forest, of pale green leaves and light yellow berries," he exclaims, astounded.

But the greatest of all the forest products in Roxolania and the most valuable in her economy is the honey from its bees. So precious is the bee that its protection is guaranteed by the most rigid and elaborate of rules. One violating these rules is subject to the punishment of disembowelment, publicly, at the scene of the crime and the girdling of the violated bee-tree with the thief's own entrails.

As to honey, it is in truth the peasant's one and only source of joy: sweetening his food, lighting his way in the dark and providing him with tapers for his worship (thanks to the waxy casing in which it is contained), and granting him those all-too-few moments of ecstasy that punctuate his hard life, through the heavenly wine—mead. "Italy has its wine," Klonowicz exclaims, "the land of Rus' its nectar."

Earth proffers wine from the rich moisture of the earth,
 Jove himself in heaven distils our mead.
 Bacchus is the author of the vineyard, Jupiter of honey.
 For if wine is born of the earth, then is mead born of heaven,
 None can deny it to be a dew celestial.

Other beverages the Ruthenian may enjoy—beer, for example, made with the help of the remarkable hop vine, which Klonowicz describes at length. And beer is helpful to the Ruthenian, easing his burden of pain, calming his worry. But the beverage supreme of the Roxolanian land is its mead, and for the honey to make it the peasant will risk anything, even, as one did in a yarn which Klonowicz repeats, his very life.

The story is the familiar one of "The Man in the Bee Tree," who, when he found himself slowly sinking to his death inside a

bee tree, managed to free one hand from the golden flood and stretch it over his head as he descended. A passing bear, seeing the hand, snatched it and hung onto it, thinking it was a branch. The peasant was able to pull himself loose from the sticky mass and to crawl out of the tree more dead than alive and in a chastened mood.

Speaking of the bear, Klonowicz decided Roxolania should really be called by the name Ursia, as this was in truth the Land of the Bear. The reason for this was, of course, the prevalence of forests, so dear to the bear, and of his favorite "sweet plunder," the honey we have spoken of above. The Ruthenian takes the young cub from its parent as early as possible, the very moment it begins to fur out and look like a bear—for when it is born it is no bear at all, but a monstrosity, we are told. The cub is taken home and brought up as if it were a child. It is taught to do farm work such as ploughing, to perform household tasks, and also to skip, hop, and dance to the music of the willow pipe or flute.

When commanded, bears will rise to the stars,
 With open mouth, wide open, as if laughing,
 And raise their arms in imitation of the human crowd.
 With their buttocks they imitate obscene dances
 Such as the lustful crowd of men is accustomed to execute
 in choral dances.
 Spectacles like these I pray the chaste virgin may flee,
 And modestly remain at home with her sweet mother.
 To the music of the flute and the sound of rattles
 and drums
 The bear is put through his paces and taken from one
 place to another
 In Rus', to the delight of all.

Klonowicz is interested most of all in the people of Rus' and their customs. He notes their Greek faith and takes a great interest in the way a child is brought into this. Immediately upon birth, the infant is taken from its mother and carried by an old woman to some running stream nearby. Here the woman bathes her charge in the pure, clear water, singing to it, at the

same time, of the woeful life ahead. Then she carries the child to the Pop, that shaggy-haired, long-bearded priest who with his wife and noisy brood of children so astounds Klonowicz. The priest baptizes the babe, and he is given a name selected by augury, after which he is returned to his mother for the first feeding. Thenceforth he is subjected to a training that is indeed Spartan and all his games are designed to train him in the fighting art. Thus as soon as he can walk he is given a strong stick to ride about on, as if it were a horse. Mounted on his steed, he plays a realistic game with his companions, using sticks for weapons, but conducting himself in a warlike manner.

Most of the lads of Roxolania become shepherds or cowherds, often in pastures far from home, perhaps on top of some hill surrounded by forest. The young man learns to console himself with the music of the willow pipe, which he fashions while he watches his herds, eternally vigilant lest some serpent attack his herd and suck the milk from his cows. For the great enemy of the cow is the snake, according to Klonowicz, and if a lad notices that one of his flock is giving less milk than it should, he knows there must be a snake somewhere about, which he must find and kill.

The herdsman learns also to make cheese, particularly the prized *brinza* (*bryndza*), which is made of goat's milk. Klonowicz devotes a long section to this, telling us how first the milk is allowed to settle until it thickens somewhat and then is poured, slowly and carefully, into a goat skin that has been thoroughly cleaned and prepared for the purpose, all possible holes stopped up. The goat skin is then hung up, and the curd within is allowed to ripen. After a time it is salted. And then, in good season, something remarkable happens to the contents of the skin. "From the fruit of one herd," Klonowicz says, "an entirely other herd is produced. Hundreds, even thousands, of tiny worms appear within the skin and do a great work of 'cheese-making' upon the now thickened curd." As to feeling any resentment against the worms, or any horror or nausea at thought of them, the Ruthenian feels nothing of the sort. He delights in the work of the tiny

worms and finds their product delicious. "But it is true," as Klonowicz tells us, that "with one bite you can destroy a whole fatherland, an entire republic, and all the citizens thereof"—with one single bite!

Toward the end of *Roxolania* there is a long section on the cities of the eastern border, commencing with the pearl and prize of them all, Leontopolis, "City of the Lion," founded by Prince Lew of Halicz and named after him by Ukrainians, Lwiw (by Poles, Lwów; by Germans, Lemberg).

Klonowicz speaks of the splendid towers of Leontopolis, its walls, and its towering hill overlooking and guarding the city, then of its special protector, the guardian of its faith, the Archbishop. Lying as it does on the dividing point between two worlds, "the land of eternal flame" and "the home of everlasting cold," where the Baltic world meets the Mediterranean, the city might be expected, Klonowicz says, to deviate in its faith this way or that. But no, it is "semper fidelis," as its famous motto reminds us, firm in the Roman faith, and helping to keep it there, he notes, is the Bernardine Order, "strictest of all in the keeping of its hard vows."

But what a cosmopolitan city Leontopolis is, a city of many races and varying faiths. First of all, Klonowicz observes, are the Armenians, for whom he has the greatest respect. Driven from their homeland, they have acclimated themselves here and established their seats. They have built fine temples for their worship and through their adeptness at trade have brought to Leontopolis the riches of all the East: silks and spices, Turkish carpets and hangings, everything to tempt the appetite and the eye. Here also the Ruthenian has found a place to dwell in peace, with his "Pelasgian religion." He too has built temples for his particular worship. And then, out in the suburbs, are the Jews.

Coming to the Jews, Klonowicz injects the only unhappy note in the whole long poem. He has nothing good to say for them, alas. They live, according to him, in filth and make their way in the world by lending money at usurious rates, so that not only Leontopolis, but the whole state, monarch and all, from

top to bottom of the social scale, is enslaved to them. Although far from being a xenophobe, as we can see from his admiration for the Armenians and his tolerant attitude toward the Ruthenians, he is anti-Jew. Everything about them annoys him, for one thing the noisy way in which worship is conducted in their synagogues. Religiously he has no prejudice against any group, as we see in his treatment of the Orthodox Ruthenians, with their marrying priests, whom he tolerantly accepts, and so his attitude toward the Jews is surprising.

Klonowicz concludes his apostrophe to Leontopolis with lines about the city clock, which was evidently a fine one, beating out the hours for this pleasant and orderly, spirited yet devout city and reminding all, as he says, of how swiftly the day is gone, how "precious a thing time is."

Coming from Leontopolis to Zamos'c', which Klonowicz was to know exceedingly well in the years following his trip to Ukraine, as he helped organize the Academy there, we find nothing special noted beyond a catalogue of the gods who participated in the creation and ultimate glory of the city. All were there, apparently, and all blessed the town, but Zamos'c's peculiar mission, in Klonowicz's view, seems not to have been the one in which he himself was involved, namely education, but war. Lying on the frontier, its job, as he saw it, was to hold off the tribes of the East, and for doing this, the poet praises it.

Kiev next, and here Klonowicz finds nothing, as some have found, to remind him of ancient Troy: no River Zanthus, no Idalian fount, no Simonian waters. But what Kiev does remind him of, on the other hand, are the Tatars, and here he goes into a long reflection on this brutal race, describing them as they cross "the ocean-like waters of the Borysthenes [Dnieper], bare and without hair except for the long braid flying in the wind, a sight to terrify the wits out of the Ruthenian farmer and to bring him to the state of being a bloody meal for the foe." For all "Black Rus'," Klonowicz notes, Kiev is what Rome is to his own home country: the City of Christ, an object of universal pilgrimage. And here he breaks into a long dissertation on the fabulous

Pecherska Lawra of Kiev. "Who cut these caves in the ground?" he asks. Some ancient stream, he concludes, some long-lost Acheron that flowed here, changing its direction from time to time underground and slowly, through the centuries, gouging out these wonders. The reference in the Kieven section to "Black Rus'" is interesting and somewhat surprising, as Black Rus' is the northern part of the eastern borderland, the portion belonging to the Lithuanian orbit. It is odd our poet should mention this far-away region as looking Kiev-ward, and if what he says is true, it is mute testimony to the persistent strength of Orthodoxy in a region the Polish Republic had long cultivated. Truly, a Skarga was needed if the Roman faith were to prevail here.

From Kiev, Klonowicz takes us back by way of the great rocky fortress of Kamieniec (Kamyanets Podilskiy), on the border of Podolia, a city, as he says, "not made by human hands, but born." "Man did not make you," the poet exclaims, "nor will man destroy you. Only the One who made you can bring about your end, and this will happen all in a single moment, if happen it is destined to do. For Kamieniec is the bastion of the borderland, and no human art can ever take it." A religious shrine also, as Klonowicz points out, Kamieniec has its high priest and its cathedral. Luck, he says, may outrival Kamieniec in the eyes of the Muses, but Kamieniec outstrips its rival in its priests.

Leaving Kamieniec, we have brief mention of a number of lesser points of interest: first of all Busk, "embraced by the waters of the Bug, in double stream;" then Sokal, famous for its "temples of the Divine Parent who, in her chaste virginity, gave birth to God;" after this Horodel, which "has begotten cranes in the slimy sod of its marshes, and nourished numerous birds in the cold Strymon;" Belz comes next, "surrounded by muddy swamps, a place renowned that has given its name to the whole voivody." Larger than any of these and more famous, is the "City of Prometheus," as Klonowicz calls Przemyśl. "You do not have to be hymned by me," he says, "for your walls the San

laps, with its sweet-flowing waters, and in you is to be found the two-fold cathedral of the high priests.”

Now in Rus', Konowicz goes on, there are a great many salt-producing springs, and of these the foremost is that which fortunate Drohobycz calls its own, supplying salt to all Rus'. How little did the poet know of the other treasure lying beneath Drohobycz's soil in those precious deposits of oil! As for Chelm, it shines white from afar, for here much chalk is to be found. Old Chelm was the seat of the faith, but now there is nothing left save the name, for in the course of time Krasnystaw has robbed her rival of the metropolitan's seat. They say that in the region around here if you cut a pine tree it turns to stone, Klonowicz tells us, but never having seen it happen, he can not say for sure as to this. He does know, however, that for walls the town of Krasnystaw has the river Wieprz, and that the name of the site is from the lake which in the course of time the river has made here, a great stagnant lake which is full to overflowing with fish that are free to anyone who can net them. God has given man fish, let no one deny him their bounty, warns the poet.

Following his tour of the cities and towns of Rus', Klonowicz arrives at last at the most important by far of all his explorations. The last section of all, commencing with line 1447 and concluding only with the end of the poem itself, line 1808, might well be entitled "Faith and Magic in Ukraine," and it is full of interest today, almost four hundred years after.

Klonowicz was a Protestant, but most of his friends were Catholics, and he was on the closest possible terms with devoutly religious communities of the Roman faith, in particular the Bernardine Monks of Sieciechów, whose agent for the sale of grain in Danzig, he was. He was always interested in religion and respectful of the religious faith of others. In his comments on the land of Rus' he never misses an opportunity to speak of the habits of worship of his hosts. He notes in particular how strict they are in the Greek faith and all its observances, especially fasts, and while the marriage of the lower clergy seems odd to him, he accepts it, explaining that it is in reality a very

pure and holy matter, since a priest can not marry but once, and that once may not take to wife a woman who has already been deflowered. Close to a religious rite is the oath of brotherhood about which Klonowicz learns among the Ukrainians. A brother taken by oath seems, he finds, to be much more rigidly and much more permanently bound to one than a mere blood brother—a reference, of course, to the ancient Slavic rite of *pobratymstwo*, so common in the Balkans.

But there is much superstition in Roxolania, Klonowicz notes, and this leads him to one of the good stories to be found in the poem, the tale of poor love-maddened Theodora and her wandering Theodore. It is the old theme that Bürger used in *Lenora*, Mickiewicz in *Ucieczka* (The Flight), and dozens of others in various poems, including Zhukovsky in *Svetlana*.

The Roxolanian Theodora is in love with a village lad named Theodore. But Theodore, for some reason, is away from home and shows no signs of returning to his one-time love, either now or ever. Consumed with love, Theodora is at her wits' end. She has prayed to God for the lad's return, but to no avail. Heaven has failed her, so she turns to Hell.

Carrying presents, Theodora goes to a witch and pours out her woe in the old woman's ear. The witch promises to bring the lad back but warns Theodora she must be patient. "Wait till the moon rises," she says, "then come back. In the meantime I shall be gathering various herbs. These I shall mix with millet and place in an earthen pot. I shall set this mixture boiling and a magic potion will be brewed. The potion will have the power to call up spectres and apparitions, and your Theodore will be restored to you."

Theodora followed the old woman's instructions and soon, sure enough, out of the cauldron rose, in the darkness, the form of a massive, shaggy goat. The girl was frightened half out of her wits and would have called on God to protect her, but the old woman had warned her,

Never, never speak once the word *God*, 'tis the Manes helping.
Let God be abandoned this night.

For never does God with the Devil work jointly,
Nor ever the Fiend with the Holy combine.

The goat mumbles something, evidently inquiring of the witch how he could help her. "Go and find this maiden's lover," she commands. "No matter where he may be, on land or sea or in the air, find him and bring him back."

The goat departs and Theodora goes home, to toss in sleepless agony on her bed. It is pitch dark now and there is no sound to be heard anywhere, save the barking of dogs in the distance and the screeching of an owl.

Meanwhile our wandering lad has just started home from a night of revelry. All remembrance of Theodora is gone and there is another, "light" love in his life. He has arrived at the gate of his dwelling and is about to enter. A form, shaggy and huge, blocks his way. Some stray goat, Theodore supposes, and bumps against him again. But the goat does not budge. Instead he picks Theodore up and places him across his back. The lad tries to get to his feet, but it is too late. Already he has a sense of being in the air, flying somewhere. He looks around. He *is* flying, on the back of the goat, above mountain ranges and rivers, high over land and sea. For a long time Theodore has no idea where he is. Then a familiar silhouette appears: the outline of his own village against the sky. The goat sets the lad down. Theodora rises before his eyes, and—but here the poet stops. "Who knows," he asks, "what happened? Let each one say for himself; the Muses refuse to do so."

But the Muses are happy indeed to tell us at length of the funeral customs of the Ruthenians. First to be noted is the custom of employing old women to weep at funerals for the dead, thus relieving the relatives of any obligation in this direction.

No sooner has the last short breath been uttered
From the living being's mouth,
No sooner has the vital heat left the members cold,
Than an old woman groans lamentations,
A woman hired for the very purpose.
For the woman so hired does not weep for her own husband,

Ah, no, she wrenches from her eyes tears that have been
paid for,
And simulating sorrow, fashions complaining lamentations,
So that the air resounds with sobs produced for a price,
With paid-for streams of water that flow from her eyes.

And then follow many lines of lamentation that could only have been made up out of the whole cloth by Klonowicz himself, as no Ruthenian farmer would ever have possessed the riches listed by the old woman: twice seven young cattle; fifty bulls ready for the yoke; twenty cows; poultry and pigs; beehives with thousands of bees; a "Capitoline goose," trailed by its goslings; a fine garden; and so on, on and on, though, as he says later, this fellow who lies dead is not "one of the richer ones."

While the wailing goes on, friends of the dead man, apprehensive as to how he may fare in the next world, approach the Pop and ask him to do them a favor. They want him to write a letter to St. Peter, pleading for mercy for their friend. They ask Peter to remember that in life the man was only a farmer, and that he may not be able to plead his own case well.

You yourself, remember, were no orator in life, O Peter,
When it was your job to cosy the wave with your nets.
It was but a single confession, remember, that made you great,
O Peter,
A single word by which you recognized and accepted Our Lord,
A word rough and short.
A fisherman yourself, do you show affection for a farmer,
Who has much in common with you.

The priest writes the letter and places it in the dead man's hand, then takes a small coin or two and gives this also to the dead one:

That the Ruthenian may be able to pay his fare across
the Styx,
And so be able to cross the Upper Regions and the
Elysian Grove.

After this, Klonowicz goes on, warm food is carried to the graveyard so that the dead one will be able to feed the spirits and himself on the long journey. "Winged shades," says Klono-

wicz, “are believed to feed on odors arising from food cooking” and “by a ridiculous belief, are supposed to eat flesh.” Of course all this is silly, he says, but however this may be, the fact is that in these regions they hold long festivities for the dead, “preparing them thus to live in the vault of heaven.”

With this Klonowicz brings his *Roxolania* to an abrupt end, in two short lines disposing of the case and bidding his reader farewell. Artistically it is a poor ending, the more so as the opening was so long and flowery and might have augured a correspondingly long and flowery adieu. Actually the poem is far from important or great artistically at all. Its significance lies in the concrete images he gives us and the sense of having been on the spot that he infuses it with. Having read the poem, one would like to visit the region and see for himself the land of Theodora, of the Wailing Woman, and of the man stuck so ludicrously in the honey contained in that ancient oak.

NOTES

- ¹ Volodymyr Sichynsky, *Roxolania* (Historical Monograph in Ukrainian) (Ukrainian Publishers, Ltd., 1957) p. 55. Critical comments were published by Roman Smal-Stocki, *Ukrainian Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 158, and Bohdan Krawciw, *Svoboda*, No. 201, 1957.
- ² Volodymyr Sichynsky, *Ukraine in Foreign Comments and Descriptions from VI-XXth Centuries* (New York City, 1953), p. 99.
- ³ *Op. cit.*, p. 19.
- ⁴ Yaroslav Pasternak, *Archeology of Ukraine* (Toronto, Canada: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1961) pp. 670-73.
- ⁵ Tadeusz Sulimirski, *Sarmaci w Polsce* (London: Polish Society of Arts and Sciences Abroad, 1962), XXI Rocznik 1961-62, pp. 65-93.
- ⁶ Francis Dvornik, *The Slavs, Their History and Civilization* (Boston: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1956), pp. 26-9.
- ⁷ Rev. Isidore Nahayewsky, Ph.D., *History of Ukraine* (Philadelphia: American Publishing House, 1962), p. 46, Cf. also V. Sichynsky, *Roxolania*, pp. 61-4, English summary.
- ⁸ Rev. Dr. Isidorus Nahayewsky, "Antiqua Ukraina documentis historicis illustrata," *Bibliotheca Logos*, Vol. XXV. (Yorkton, Sask., Canada, 1961).
- ⁹ Dvornik, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-55.

