

I. ARTICLES

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ADAM SMITH'S POLITICAL ECONOMY IN POLAND. REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

This paper presents a reception of Adam Smith's political economy in Poland from the end of the 18th c. to now. Special attention to the first comments and translations of the work was given. The paper is divided into six sections encompassing the following periods: I. 1783–1800; II. 1801–1830; III. 1831–1918; IV. 1919–1939; V. 1945–1989; VI. after 1989.

INTRODUCTION

In *Adam Smith. A Bibliographical Checklist* (Franklin et al. 1950) only two Polish authors have been mentioned: W. Skarżyński and A. Haydel; the first is known from his book on Smith written in German (Skarżyński 1878). In a vast publication: *Adam Smith: Critical Responses* (Mizuta 2000) there is no text by a Polish author. Yet the most known Smith's work *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) found its way to Poland comparatively early, a dozen or so years after its first publication. Early editions of the work, whose title is usually shortened as the *Wealth of Nations* (WN), can be found in some Polish libraries, together with French and German translations (see Appendix). It must be remembered though, that the predominant economic theory in then Poland was physiocracy.

I. 1783–1800

The first Polish notice of WN was published in "Pamiętnik Polityczny y Historyczny" in 1783. In an anonymous paper on sheep farms and wool manufactures, after the following words: "According to precise and very thorough calculations by famous peoples, in all clothes, materials, stockings

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and other woollen handicrafts an English wool takes one third and labour two thirds of a price ...”, there is a footnote: “Recherches sur la nature & les causes de la richesse des nations Smith Essai sur l’état du commerce d’Angleterre, le Negociant Anglois Taube abschilderung der Englischen manufakturen &c.” (Świtkowski ed. 1783, p. 162).

Probably the first Pole to introduce Smith’s political economy was an ex-Jesuit priest, Michał Ossowski (1743–1799), an advisor of Prot Potocki, one of Poland’s great noblemen. In 1787 the Polish King Stanisław August honoured Ossowski with a medal with an inscription *dictus novas comercii Patrii*, as a man who had entered “new ways” for Polish trade. On 24th July 1790 “The Commission for a project according to domestic economics” was appointed with Ossowski as its most active member.

Having read a French translation, Ossowski bought copies of WN and gave them to supporters of his liberal economic policy. There is a supposition that he tried to translate the work into Polish (Leśnodorski 1954, p. 79). Also King Stanisław August in January 1791 ordered his agent S. Piattoli to buy for the King’s library, with a help of a Wrocław bookseller and printer W.G. Korn, some copies of the French translation: “Je vous prie de demander á Korn qu’il fasse venir plusieurs exemplaires: 1-o. De la traduction du livre de Smith sur la richesse des nations” (D’Ancona 1915, p. 244). Later, the King wrote about WN: “This book includes, undoubtedly, many new laws and observations, but it obstinately holds some errors which by authority of its author were given for new minds as truths. (...) Smith’s sophisms, explained according to circumstances, by speeches and writings came to the Sejm and grafted a new sect, which was supported by zeal...” (Wolski 1868, p. 118).

During the Four Year Sejm (1788–1792) Ossowski and his “Smithian sect” tried to introduce Adam Smith’s theories into Polish economic legislation. He and his political companions planned to pass three bills: the Government Act, the Economic Constitution, and the Moral Constitution. After lengthy debate, only the first bill was approved, which became known as the Constitution of May 3rd. J. Dihm has put supposition that Ossowski elaborated a project for the second bill, printed on 22nd June 1791, but the text was later lost. The contents of the document can however be reconstructed from other sources. These sources indicate that a group of Polish politicians, with Ossowski and Hugo Kołłątaj (1750–1812) as leaders, intended to put before the Sejm far-reaching reforms founded upon Adam Smith’s principles, but adapted to Polish conditions. Ossowski’s project *About the Arrangement of Crown Estates*, published somewhere about this time, was to smooth the path



not only for new economic views deriving from A. Smith, but also for some regulations of the prepared Constitution. In his projected Economic Constitution, Ossowski assumed three main origins of wealth: “the beneficence of nature”, “human labour”, and “expenditure” (stock and capital). He considered that state capital, realized from a sale of billets d'état, would be capable of stimulating the national economy and accelerating the transition from a feudal society to a commercial one (Dihm 1959).

Polish historians are not sure if Hugo Kołłątaj in the period of the Four Year Sejm had known WN, because in his writings from the period he did not mention Smith's name. But his cooperation with Ossowski and his critical approach to some threads of physiocracy (although, in general, Kołłątaj is considered as a follower of the French Physiocrats), may suggest that he had read Smith. In his later letters and in a note about books used by him, we can find Smith's name (Leśnodorski 1954, p. 88 f. 20).

Discussing this problem, B. Leśnodorski writes about the reception of WN in then Poland: “This work could be interesting for Poles not only as a theory, but also because of a remark about Poland, recognized by the founder of liberal economy as the most backward country in Europe, beside Hungary, which had not proceeded overseas trade in any product” (Leśnodorski 1954, p. 79). Smith's remark can be found in Book I, Ch. 11: “Poland, where the feudal system still continues to take place, is at this day as beggarly a country as it was before the discovery of America” (Smith 1981, vol. I, p. 256). By the way, Poland was mentioned by Smith a few times. For example, in Book I, Ch. 1 he wrote: “In Poland there are said to be scarce any manufactures of any kind, a few of those coarser household manufactures excepted, without which no country can well subsist” (Smith 1981, vol. I, p. 17).

II. 1801–1830

During the nineteenth century, Adam Smith's economic theory was advocated by Polish journalists, politicians and businessmen, together with some university professors and teachers of political economy in secondary schools (Warsaw, Krzemieniec, Poznań, Płock, Cracov). Their knowledge of WN often came from French translations and French writings on political economy, as well as from their time as students in Paris. The second most important source was German translations of the work and some writings by German economists.



It should be noticed that the political situation in Poland in the 19th c. was not conducive to the development of science and education, as well as the economy. The former Commonwealth of Both Nations (Poland and Lithuania) was divided between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Eastern lands (Lithuania, West Belorussia and West Ukraine) were included in the Tsarist Empire. Central lands (with Warsaw) first formed the so-called Warsaw Duchy (1807–1815), subordinated to Napoleon I, and then the Polish Kingdom with the Tsar as king and a Russian Prince as a commander-in-chief. But with time, limited autonomy of the Kingdom was restricted; after the November Uprising (1830–1831) the Polish parliament (Sejm) was dissolved, Warsaw University closed, and many Poles had to emigrate. After the January Uprising (1863–1864) the rest of autonomy was abolished and in 1874 the nominally “Polish” kingdom included into the Tsarist Empire as its part (The Vistula Land). In the Prussian and Austrian parts, a process of germanization proceeded more or less intensely.

Piotr Maleszewski (1767–1828) played a considerable part in disseminating knowledge of Adam Smith’s theory amongst those Poles studying in Paris during the first decades of the 19th c. Several future Polish academics, journalists and politicians came from the Maleszewski group, and propagated Smith’s political economy during the nineteenth century throughout the three parts of Poland.

Having graduated in Cracov, Maleszewski continued his studies in Paris and from 1803 lived there. During his studies he attended lectures delivered by Jean Baptiste Say (1767–1832). It is worthy of note, that Say’s *Traité d’économie politique* (Say 1803) had a significant influence in the propagation of WN in France and other European countries, amongst them Poland. But for Maleszewski the first guide in political economy was Adam Smith: “M. Say moins profond que Smith, moins habile à saisir des rapports éloignés et nombreux, est aussi plus méthodique, plus facile à suivre...” (Grodek 1963, p. 119).

During 1810 to 1823 Maleszewski organized free seminars for Poles studying in Paris. As Grodek writes, “...together with his students, Maleszewski analysed Adam Smith’s work, explained its principles, pointed to its defects and supplemented it with his own comments” (Grodek 1963, p. 94). Evidence of this activity may be found in his unpublished manuscripts from the years 1802 to 1826 and some letters of his students. For example, a young Polish nobleman, Leon Sapieha, wrote in 1820 from Paris to his mother: “[Maleszewski] has recommended to me to make excerpts from Smith, and next made corrections in them” (Grodek 1963, s. 210).



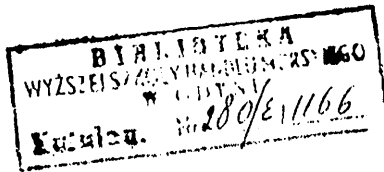
According to Grodek, who has studied the Maleszewski's manuscripts (stored in the Library of the Warsaw School of Economics), the general difference between the Polish economist and Smith was in the main motive of economic activity of man: for Smith it was self-interest, and for Maleszewski – consumption and human needs (Grodek 1963, p. 125).

HOENE-WRONSKI.

**System ekonomiczno przemysłowy
Adama Smitha**



Wstęp do ekonomji politycznej.



FILOZOFJA GOSPODARCZA I SPOŁECZNA HOENE-WRONSKIEGO
SKŁADIŁA Dr. Z. DASZYŃSKA GOLIŃSKA.

Figure 1. Title page of the Polish translation of *Economic-industrial system of Adam Smith* by Hoene-Wronski

A very interesting Polish thinker in the 19th c. was Józef Maria Hoene-Wroński (1778–1853), philosopher, mathematician, scientist, lawyer and economist. First, an officer of artillery in Polish and then Russian armies (!), in 1798 he finished his military career and went on studies to Germany. Three years later he settled in France, where he spent most his life, working on philosophy and science. Almost all his works were written in French.



One of his economic works is entitled *Economic–industrial system of Adam Smith* (about 1803–1806). Unfortunately, it was published only posthumously (Hoene-Wroński 1884). Hoene-Wroński sketches there very succinctly the system of an economy which has been presented in WN; he describes Adam Smith's theory as "useful and correct". A Polish translator has considered the Hoene-Wroński work as "not only a report and review, but in many points an independent development of Smithianism" (Hoene-Wroński 1912, pp. 73 and 33).

In the part of the former Commonwealth of Both Nations (Poland and Lithuania) included after partitions in Russia, the anglophilia of Alexander I (1801–25) and his advisors might have had some influence on the propagation of Smith's ideas. Duke Simon Vorontsov, Russian ambassador in London, who personally knew Smith, sent in 1786 a copy of WN to the young prince Alexander. A tsarist commissioner in the Polish Kingdom, N. N. Novosiltsev (1761–1836), had been educated in economics and learned of Adam Smith's theory during his visit to London. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, a Russian translation of WN and several papers on political economy had been published. A tsarist superintendent of the Vilnius Educational District, Duke Adam Czartoryski (1770–1861), also a well-known Anglophile and Scotophile, was persuaded of the importance of Smith's doctrine by Novosiltsev. In 1803 he actively participated in a state commission for educational reform, which introduced chairs of political economy in universities, and included some basic principles of this science in the secondary school curricula (Chodorowski 1980, pp. 127–130).

In 1805 the Vilnius University announced a competition. In the moral and political section there was a question: "To show (making an analyse of political economy) what are points in which principles of this science, given in Adam Smith's and Dr. Quesnay's theories, are in accord, in which are different or completely contrary. The dissertation should appear the truths, which could be used to improve a political economy science" (Dziewulski 1920, p. 17; Szeffler 1961, p. 93 note 70). The question shows that in then Poland a new theory of Smith's was competing with Physiocracy. But it should be added that the first Principal of the Emperor Vilnius University (who kept the post between 1803–1806), Rev. Hieronim Stroynowski (1752–1815), and a lecturer of law of nature and nations (including political economy), Szymon Malewski (1759–1832), the future Principal (1816–1822), were followers of the French physiocrats. In 1805 H. Stroynowski published the 3rd edition (1st in 1785) of his popular manual in which he propagated physiocracy (Stroynowski 1805). According to Julian



Marchlewski (1866–1925), “Stroynowski has not understood Smith, who spoke to him in incomprehensible language, because [Smith] was dealing with quite different things. These notions as: commodity, value, wages etc., had to have almost a different meaning for an Englishman of the 18th c., and a different one for a Pole. That’s why a thing which for the English economist was fundamental, for a Pole appeared as not belonging to the economy. Otherwise with the physiocrats; they spoke to him [Stroynowski] in his language...” (Marchlewski 1952, p. 69). But, in S. Dziewulski’s opinion, in Stroynowski’s work “we can find a considerable influence of Smith” and the Polish scholar “was able to join in his work two different systems and to produce a consistent theory” (Dziewulski 1920, pp. 15–16).

As Grodek writes, the University received no answer for the mentioned competition. A professor for a political economy chair was still looked for. One of the few candidates was a French Smithianist, Sismondi, author of *De la richesse commerciale* (Sismondi 1803), but his financial demands had not been accepted by the Vilnius University. Principal Stroynowski, hostile to Smith, in his letter (from 19th June 1804) to Duke Czartoryski wrote about Sismondi: “Although in his work he makes this just remark, that many of them, who are boasting as followers of the Smith’s teaching, do not thoroughly understand it; but himself [Sismondi] has often been in the same situation” (Grodek 1963, s. 45). By the way, in 1817 a Sismondi dissertation was printed in “Pamiętnik Warszawski” (Sismondi 1817; see also: Piątkowski 1976), and because its title is similar to the above mentioned question, a presumption has been put that Sismondi’s dissertation was written for the competition.

In 1810–1823 political economy in Vilnius was taught by Jan Znosko (1772–1833), earlier a teacher of law of nature. To receive a professor post, he wrote and published in 1811 a book *A Science of Political Economy according to Adam Smith* (Znosko 1811). His contemporaries thought it was an original work, but later it turned out to be a somewhat changed translation of a book by Georg Sartorius (Sartorius 1806), the first edition of which was in 1796 (Sartorius 1796). Sartorius’ book contains 131 sections, Znosko’s one – 134. According to Grodek, “differences between the original and the translation were minimal” (Grodek 1963, p. 41). Finally, Znosko received the chair of political economy in 1816. He had used his book in his political economy course, especially in the part concerning public revenues.

Znosko’s book is, of course, a summary of WN, but in places he inserts some critical observations, printed in a smaller typeface. The longest of these is related to Smith’s conception of “fertile” and “infertile” labour, that is, productive and unproductive labour (Znosko 1811, pp. 81–88). It appears



that Adam Smith's meaning of the word "wealth" lies behind his definition of productive and unproductive labour. Since Smith considered as wealth only those things which had a market value and could be preserved, he did not accept as wealth those objects which were directly consumed. But, in Znosko's opinion, the labour of a manager, judge, lawyer, teacher of religion and morality, physician, etc. is also useful and satisfies the needs of society; without them all the other kinds of labour would not exist, for no nation would be able to live (Znosko 1811, p. 87). Perhaps Znosko's criticism of Adam Smith's conception of productive labour could be taken directly from L. H. Jakob, the German translator of *Traité d'Économie Politique* by Jean-Baptiste Say.

N A U K A
E K O N O M I I P O L I T Y C Z N E Y

podług układu

A D A M A S M I T H

przez

J A N A Z N O S K Ę

Konsyliarza Nadwornego, Nauk wyzwolonych i Filozofii Doktora, wielu Towarzystw Uczonych Członka

W KRÓTKOŚCI ZERRANA.

W W I L N I E

W Drukarni XX. Bazylianów

1811.

Figure 2. Title page of *A Science of Political Economy according to Adam Smith* by Znosko



Znosko's successor was his pupil, Jan Waszkiewicz (1797–1859), who taught political economy between 1824–1831. He followed his professor also in his method of publication. In 1823 “Dziennik Wileński” published two fragments (signed “J.W.”), allegedly from a manuscript (Waszkiewicz 1823); but they were, in fact, translations of two chapters taken from *Cours d'économie politique* (1821) by H. Storch. In 1829 Waszkiewicz translated and published in Vilnius another of Storch's work (Storch 1829).

In the Volhynia Lyceum (Academy) in Krzemieniec (established in 1800), which belonged to the Vilnius Educational District directed by Duke Czartoryski, Smith's ideas were propagated by Michał Choński (d. 1855). He was a pupil of Maleszewski and a graduate of the Vilnius University from 1806, later a teacher of political economy and law in Krzemieniec. In 1815, at a meeting commemorating Tadeusz Czacki (1765–1813), a founder of the Lyceum, Choński delivered a dissertation *On an influence of some taxation systems on the wealth of nations and their political being*. In it he criticized the physiocrats system containing only land taxes and contrasted it with Smith's system, according to which all members of a national society should pay taxes (Dziewulski 1920, p. 81).

Five years later Choński published his translation of a book by L.H. Jakob (Jakob 1805). He dedicated the translation to Duke Czartoryski. The list of subscribers of the book numbered over 250.

In his Foreword, Choński describes Adam Smith as “immortal” and writes about Smith's economic theory: “the Polish nation has this uncommon pride, that as the first introduced public teaching of the science in schools. (...) almost at the same time in the Emperor Vilnius University and the Volhynia Lyceum, the art of Political Economy began to be taught according to the Smith's principles” (Jakob 1820, pp. III–IV). Choński admits also that in the beginning of his lectures he used some “easier to get French books”, especially Say's *Traité d'Économie Politique*. But later he came to the opinion that Say's work is “too little scientific”. In this situation, he decided to use in his lectures L.H. Jakob's book, which “besides its systematic and truly scientific order and philosophical art of teaching, includes a comparison of the French economists and Smith. (...) the more necessary it was to prove the superiority of Smith's system over the above Physiocrats teaching, the more the latter had been disseminated in our country” (Jakob 1820, pp. V–VI). After several years of teaching, Choński was confirmed in the conviction that Smith's political economy, taught according to Jakob's book, had given quite a lot of benefits for his pupils and would give the same benefits for Polish readers, too (Jakob 1820, p. VI).



It is worthy to add that Choński, perhaps as the first, noticed Znosko's *A Science of Political Economy* according to Adam Smith was "in the same order, spirit, fabric and contents" as the above mentioned Sartorius book (Jakob 1820, p. 13).

In 1810, Wawrzyniec Surowiecki (1769–1827), a civil servant in the Warsaw Duchy, a member of the Warsaw Friends of Sciences Society (established in 1800), and a liberal economist, published a book *On the Decline of Industry and Towns in Poland*. In it, we can find some influences of the Smith theory – division of labour, factors of production and others (Surowiecki 1957, pp. xii, xxiv, xxxii) – along with the physiocrats teaching, but there are no references to WN. It may be supposed that Surowiecki had known Smith's theory, at least from J.B. Say who was cited in his book.

During the second and third decades of the 19th c. was a chair of political economy in Warsaw the most influential in disseminating of the Smith's theory in the Polish Kingdom. In 1812–1814 the post at the Main School of Law and Administration was held by the first Polish professor of political economy, Dominik Krysiński (1785–1852). He first encountered Smithian theory during his visit to Paris in 1809, where he attended J.-B. Say's lectures. In 1817/18 he taught political economy at the recently established Royal University of Warsaw. The chair of political economy was then a part of the Law and Administration Faculty. From 1818, Krysiński was a deputy to the Sejm of the Polish Kingdom and continued his scientific activity as a member of the Warsaw Friends of Sciences Society.

In his dissertation *On Political Arithmetic*, read in 1814 at a meeting of the Society, Krysiński called WN an "immortal work". In his opinion, Adam Smith has refuted those mercantile and physiocrats systems and opened "a new and more reliable way for political economy (...), becoming a founder of this important art" (Krysiński 1956, p. 69). Fourteen years later, on a public session of the Society he presented a paper "Some thoughts on a science of national economy", repeating his praise of WN as an "immortal work". Krysiński considered Smith to be a genius who in his "industrial system" demonstrated that "the sole path to be followed in political economy was that mapped out by Bacon" (Krysiński 1956, p. 92). The Polish economist mentioned also a "faithful presenter" of Smith's principles, J.-B. Say, who "in many places has happily explained and corrected the Smith's theory", especially "detected his mistake" as to a wrong concept of productive and unproductive labour. Quoting Say's noticing that Smith had not attached importance to political arithmetic, Krysiński regarded this as something obvious because then statistical data were only a "fabric of lies" and "political jugglery" (Krysiński 1956, p. 99).



The most well-known Polish Smithianist was Count Fryderyk Skarbek (1792–1866), a professor of Warsaw University. He succeeded Krysiński in the chair of political economy and held it until 1830. Skarbek had studied at the Collège de France and had been one of Maleszewski's students (Krzeczowski 1928; Grodek 1963). Maleszewski commanded him to do excerpts in French from some economic works. A manuscript of the Polish translation of one from those excerpts is now stored in the Wrocław Ossolineum Library (Skarbek Ms. 5444). It is a short outline of WN. The text is completed with some notes, written probably by Maleszewski (Grodek 1963, p. 209).

In the Introduction to his *National Economy* (1820), Skarbek writes: “Adam Smith, Say, and especially C. J. Kraus, one of the best teachers of Adam Smith's theory, are my guides. The aim of my work is to present, in my own arrangement, their writings and thoughts clearly and plainly, together with some of my own observations”. He dedicated the work to Maleszewski, expressing gratitude and regard for his old teacher. As a foundation for his inquiries Skarbek took two principles: economic freedom and the private interest of an individual. From this position he criticized the feudal system of Polish economy, especially the serfdom of peasants. But he tried also to find some modifications of the liberal economy, to adapt it to the then Polish conditions.

In the Introduction to his Polish translation of Ch. Ganilh's *Dictionary of Political Economy*, Skarbek presented a short outline of the history of political economy. He gave the most space in it for physiocracy and Adam Smith. Skarbek described Smith as “a higher above all genius (...) who had recognized some mistakes of the mercantile and physiocrats systems, put new principles of a theory called the industrial system, and directed minds for this road, on which they should necessarily advance”. According to the Polish economist, WN is an “immortal work”; it should be a base for a theory of “a science of national economy” (Ganilh 1828, pp. xvi–xvii).

By the way, the term “national economy” (gospodarstwo narodowe) was often used by some Polish authors instead of “political economy”. In their opinion, Smith's work was written for some rich societies, such as the English one, not for all, and especially not for any poor society. This kind of charge we can find already in a book *Universal Domestic Economics of Nations* by Walerian Stroynowski (1759–1834), who is considered as the last Polish physiocrat or a “gravedigger of physiocracy” (Dziewulski 1920, p. 18). He praises A. Smith, who “having learned the rules given by the physiocrats, had worked out a science of domestic economics” but did not present a “proper theory”, which should contain “things in all relations”. So, Smith had not given a theory which “could be useful for the nations not so rich as those”, e.g. England



or France (Stroynowski 1816, p. v–vi). Besides, Stroynowski has divided his “universal domestic economics” into two parts: 1) “Domestic economy of nations”, and 2) “Political economics”. F. Skarbek, in his translation of Ganilh’s *Dictionary*, added a new entry: “National economy”. By this term he understood “a set of powers and ways used by a nation to keep and improve physical existence of its members. (...) Moral good of a nation is a consequence of its education, and its physical good is a result of national economy” (Skarbek 1828, p. 159).

In the Introduction to the Dictionary Skarbek presented in seven points “the main and principal thoughts of the Adam Smith’s system”, adding: “many later authors have won fame in the world of science by introducing order to this theory and correcting those things which were found not to be part of the life of a nation”. Skarbek named the following authors: G. Sartorius, A.F. Lueder, N.F. Cunard, J.B. Say, J.C.L. Simonde de Sismondi, L.H. Jakob, Chr. Schlözer, Julius Graf Soden, G. Hufeland, Ch.J. Kraus, Ch. Ganilh, J.P. Harl, H. Storch, G. Graf von Buguoy, T.R. Malthus, J.F.G. Eiselen, E. Lotz, K.H. Rau, K.H.L. Poelitz. In his opinion, the most prominent place among these writers is taken by Jean-Baptiste Say whose “digest of Adam Smith’s principles accelerated dissemination of the [Smith’s] science on the Continent” (Ganilh 1828, pp. xix–xxi; McCulloch 1828, p. 69; see also: Grodek 1963, p. 27). Skarbek mentioned also D. Ricardo, J. Mill, and R. McCulloch whose work was just then translated into Polish by K. Sienkiewicz (McCulloch 1828). As an adversary of Smith, Skarbek named only Earl Lauderdale “who published a very witty work ‘Inquiry into the nature and origin of public wealth’ (1804)” (Ganilh 1828, p. xix).

Translating Ganilh’s *Dictionary*, Skarbek included in it several of his own commentaries. For example, discussing an idea of national wealth, he did not agree with Ganilh who, in opposition to Smith, saw no connection between the principles and rules of “private” and political economy (Skarbek 1828, p. 148). In another place the Polish author criticized a definition of “production” given by Ganilh who had identified production with labour or with its product (Skarbek 1828, pp. 407–409). In this connection, Skarbek added two entries: “product” and “producer” (Skarbek 1828, pp. 415).

It is noteworthy to notice that in 1829 Skarbek published in French his other economic work *Théorie des richesses sociales* (Skarbek 1829). Unfortunately, because of the political situation, it was not to be published in Polish until thirty years later (Skarbek 1859). In Chodorowski’s opinion, Skarbek in his works “has matched the level of some outstanding western Smithians” (Chodorowski 1980, p. 154).



Apart from the university chairs in Warsaw and Vilnius, Smith's theory was also propagated in Polish journals. In 1825, "Dziennik Warszawski" (Warsaw Daily) published a dissertation *Labour is not the most universal and most accurate measure of value*. Four years earlier it had been awarded first prize in a competition announced by the Faculty of Law and Administration, Warsaw University. The author, Jan Dziekoński, was then a student of the Faculty. The question for the competition was the following: "Present shortly and concisely the main principles of Adam Smith's science, refute his opinion, that labour is the most universal and most accurate measure of value; and show what advances a science of national economy has made from times of the author" (Dziekoński 1825, p. 295).

As the dissertation shows, its aim was not a refutation of all Adam Smith's theory, but only making some corrections in the direction already pointed out by Say. It contains, apart from Introduction, three sections: I. Main principles of Adam Smith's science; II. Adam Smith's double understanding of labour as a measure of value; III. Some observations on advances of political economy from Adam Smith times. In sect. II, Dziekoński has discussed two points: 1) "The opinion, that the labour which is necessary to make a thing may be a measure of value of the thing, is wrong"; 2) "The opinion, that value may be measured by labour purchased for it, is also wrong".

Although there was clear interest among Polish political economists in the work of Adam Smith, few of them learned of his doctrine from reading WN – they took their ideas instead from German and French writers, the most popular of whom was J.-B. Say. Between 1800 and 1830, nineteen translations of economic works appeared that might be broadly characterized as Smithian in content. In 1808 a Polish translation of *Anfangsgründe der Staatswirthschaft* by Christian Schlözer's, one of the earlier Smithian "modernizers" of the German cameralist tradition, was published (Schlözer 1808). Three years later, Znosko's translation of Sartorius appeared, followed by books by Jakob (Jakob 1820), Soden and Storch (Storch 1829). From the French authors the most popular were J.-B. Say (Say 1815; Say 1821) and Sismondi (Sismondi 1817), while from the British – Ricardo (Ricardo 1826) and McCulloch (McCulloch 1828). But, it could be noticed, Ricardo "had little influence on Polish economic thought in the period 1800–1830" (Szeffler 1961, pp. 83–84).

There was however no complete translation of WN. A fragment from Book I, Chapter V, almost all "Digression concerning the corn trade and corn laws" (Smith 1981, vol. I, pp. 524–541), was published in 1814, translated by Stanisław Kłokocki (b. 1763). He translated it from the French edition (Garnier), and not directly from the English. The most parts of his Introduction contain



some citations from Garnier, among them a fragment of *Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith LL.D* (1793) by Dugald Stewart, with a quotation from a Smith manuscript written in 1755: “Little else is requisite to carry a state to the highest degree of opulence from the lowest barbarism, but peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice; all the rest being brought about by the natural course of things” (Stewart 1982, p. 321). In conclusion Kłokocki has expressed his belief that proper understanding and studying, at least some important parts of “this immortal work”, by persons called to government or trained to some higher offices, “the most effectively will defend our agricultural country against those adopted from neighbouring states some institutions, which seem to be useful but are favourable only for some classes; they are indeed pernicious for agriculture and industry” (Smith 1814, p. 5). As an epigraph Kłokocki used a quote from the just translated text applying to the corn trade: “No trade deserves more the full protection of the law, and no trade requires it so much, because no trade is so much exposed to popular odium” (Smith 1981, vol. I, p. 527).

In his Introduction, Kłokocki announced publication of the whole of Smith’s work, which “had been translated by me into my mother language already some years ago” (Smith 1814, p. 4). He then was supposed to have abandoned the project after severe criticism published in the next year in “Pamiętnik Warszawski”.

An author of the review was probably Fr. Skarbek. Firstly, he considered publishing of some excerpts “from any well-known works” as an improper thing, because the excerpts “are not insufficient for uneducated people and nothing at all for men of learning” (Skarbek 1816, p. 227). Secondly, he accused the translator of translating not from an original, but from a French translation which was “inaccurate in many places”. Thirdly, the Polish style of the translation was not good, because the translator had kept on to an exact sequence of French words. Fourthly, from Smith’s times the political economy has made progress, showing some inaccuracies and shortcomings of his “so justly famous work”, especially according to circulation and government loans, which subjects “contain few pages in the immortal Smith’s work” (Skarbek 1816, pp. 231–232).

A further three sections from Book III (Chs. II–IV) appeared in 1816, in the magazine “Pamiętnik Lwowski” (Lvov Memoir), but in neither case was the translator’s name given. In the March issue an editor wrote: “Our intention is to acquaint our Readers with some very important subjects, which have been discussed by Smith in many chapters, and which we are going to present in this and the next issues” (Smith 1816, p. 214). It is interesting to notice that the fragments of WN published by Kłokocki and the “Pamiętnik Lwowski” were



concerned with agriculture. It was connected with the then Polish economy and the dominant role of landowners. The most progressive of them were interested in an improving of agriculture and had supported a free international trade of com. Yet in 1866, an anonymous author of the entry "Adam Smith" in the *Universal Encyclopaedia* published in Warsaw, called the Scottish philosopher "the most illustrious teacher of country economy" (Smith Adam 1866, p. 715).

EKONOMIA POLITYCZNA.

Iak powstały i powiększyły się
miasta po upadku Państwa
rzymskiego. 1)

Po upadku Państwa rzymskiego nie lepiej obchodzono się z mieszkańcami miast, iak z włościanami. Składały się wprawdzie te miasta s klasy ludzi wcale innych, iakimi byli mieszkańcy rzeczypospolitey greckiey i włoskiey. W tych bowiem po więkšzey części mieszkali właściciele dóbr, pomiędzy których pierwiastkowie kray był podzielony, i którym zdało się dogodniey budować domy w bliskości ieden przy drugim, obwodząc je murem dla wspólney obrony. Przeciwnie po upadku Państwa rzymskiego zdaie się, iż wszyscy pra-

1) Wyiątek z dzieła Adama Smitha o naturze i przyczynach bogactw narodowych.

U 2

Figure 3. Translation of a fragment from the WN in the "Pamiętnik Lwowski", vol. I, April 1816, p. 307



One reason for the failure to translate Smith's work into Polish could well be that Polish writers had become convinced that there were errors in the work, and that his French and German followers had improved on it. This would explain why the writers chose to translate the works of commentators, rather than the original. In his preface to his translation of Schlözer's *Anfangsgründe* A. Gliszczyński wrote: "...despite the authority which Smith's works have gained in England, they lacked for system and order, both of which are necessary to comprehend all truths. Schlözer's work ... makes up for this deficiency" (Schlözer 1808, p. v).

III. 1831–1918

Capitalist economy in Polish lands, seized by Russia, Prussia and Austria, was growing slowly, especially in the Polish Kingdom. It is enough to remember that the enfranchisement of peasants in the Russian part has been established only in 1864. After Polish uprisings, properties of insurgents were confiscated or their owners were forced to sell them. Many men of letters, scientists, scholars had to emigrate. Only in the lands annexed by Austria there was more autonomy, and national culture and science developed, especially in Lvov and Cracov. Before its annexation to Austria, in 1815–1846 Cracov was a free city.

After the November Uprising the development of Polish science and education in the Russian parts of Poland was significantly restricted. The Vilnius and Warsaw universities, as well as the Krzemieniec Lyceum were closed. Some revival ensued only in the middle of the century, but the next insurrection, the January Uprising (1863–1864), again stopped the process. In this situation, in the 19th century, Smith's theory was propagated first of all in the Austrian part of Poland.

The first to teach Smithian doctrine at the Jagiellonian University was Ferdynand Kojśiewicz (1801–1874), in 1828–47 a Professor of Political Sciences (his lectures covered jurisprudence and political economy). In a paper read on 28th February 1833 to the Cracov Scientific Society he said that "truly enormous progress in political economy began from Quesnay, Hume and Adam Smith". In Kojśiewicz's opinion, the biggest merit of Smith was "the explanation of the nature and causes of the national riches", and then "derivation of a fabric of political economy from its proper principles" (Kojśiewicz 1841, p. 76). In this way, according to Kojśiewicz,



the author of WN has built a strict and universal science (like Newton), which is independent from any time and place. The Smith's principles have been taken from reality, he never "had wandered in any metaphysical fantasies and questionable conjectures" (Kojśiewicz 1841, p. 83). But, apart from these praises, Kojśiewicz has pointed at some defects of WN, too. A scope of his criticism might suggest that he had interpreted Smith through Say and McCulloch. Probably, Kojśiewicz read WN in the French (Garnier's) translation, not in English.

Józef Supiński (1804–93), a student of Skarbek, had written a few economic works, but wasn't a professor at the university (he worked as a clerk). In his own unique system, called by him the "Polish school of social economy", as the main principles he took those presented in the WN (Supiński 1862–1865). Julian Dunajewski was also a follower of Smith's economic liberalism (1822–1907), first, university professor in Lvov and Cracov, and since 1880 the state treasure (the Exchequer) minister of the Austrian-Hungarian empire; he was the first Pole in this post. But as the minister he imposed a system of high duties, restricted the freedom of banks activity, was for the nationalization of railway. His university lectures were published many years after his death (Dunajewski 1935).

In 1904 R. Męciński delivered a paper at Lvov University entitled *Adam Smith, a great English economist in the context of his Time* (Męciński 1905).

In Warsaw, a better-known, if moderate, critic of Adam Smith was Witold Zaleski (1836–1908), the last professor of economy at the Main Warsaw School (existed 1862–1869). He suggested that WN was nothing but a theory of financial economy, not a general science of economy; that Smith "had dignified private interest as most important principle in the science"; that he had only discussed market value; that he only considered material labour productive; and that he had not perceived the importance of workers' associations (Zaleski 1889, pp. 51–52).

In the Prussian part of Poland, there was no outstanding Smithianist. Witold von Skarżyński (1850–1910), an unquestionable critic of Smith, published a vast work (461 pages) in German: *Adam Smith als Moralphilosoph und Schöpfer der Nationalökonomie* (Skarżyński 1878); a year earlier it was printed from a manuscript in Poznań by J.I. Kraszewski (the copy is stored at the Library of the Poznań Friends of Sciences Society). It was his habilitation dissertation refused by the Philosophical Faculty at Wrocław University. The book has been entered into the world of Smithianist literature, but have had no great influence on Polish economists. Only an anonymous author (G.) published a review of the book in the



“Dziennik Poznański” (Poznań Daily) (G. 1878, nr 114). Skarżyński replied in the same newspaper “Dziennik Poznański” (Skarżyński 1878, nr 152). In his opinion, the cause of the refutation of the work by the Faculty was his criticism of Smith’s liberal economy. Sixty years later Z. Zakrzewski in his monograph *Witold Skarżyński. Economist from Wielkopolska* refuted most of Skarżyński’s reproaches against Smith (Zakrzewski 1938).

ADAM SMITH

ALS

MORALPHILOSOPH UND SCHOEPFER

DER

NATIONALÖKONOMIE.

Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Nationalökonomie

VON

DR. WITOLD VON SKARŻYŃSKI.

(Als Manuscript gedruckt.)



POSEN.

DRUCK VON J. I. KRASZKOWSKI (Dr. W. LEIBERICH).
1877.

Figure 4. Title page of *Adam Smith als Moralphilosoph und Schöpfer der Nationalökonomie* by Skarżyński, published in Posen, Poland



The anti-Smithian position of Skarżyński might have been influenced by his study at Berlin University, where he also took his PhD for a dissertation *Pierre de Boisguillebert und seine Beziehungen zur neueren Volkswirtschaftslehre* (Berlin 1873). Gustav von Schmoller (1838–1917), a leader of the “Younger Historical School”, once publicly declared, in his address as Rector of the University of Berlin, that “Smithians” and “Marxists” were unfit to occupy university chairs (Oncken 1898; Montes 2002).

During the 19th c. partial information on Smith’s theory could also be found in some Polish journals, mainly in the Austrian part of Poland. The most often discussed subjects were agriculture and labour.

For example, an anonymous author of an article printed in Cracov “Pamiętnik Naukowy” (Scientific Memoir) praised Smith who had recognized labour as the main cause of wealth and the division of labour as both the effect and cause of growing refinement of society, but criticized the Scottish philosopher for his concept of unproductive labour. “A famous economist J.B. Say has reproached him for this fault and proved how far some intellectual works are productive” (O pracach 1837, p. 93). Another anonymous author, in an article “On praise and organization of labour” printed in the Vilnius “Athenaeum”, presented Smith’s approach to the division of labour (O pochwale... 1843).

In 1848 J. Miklaszewski in his article on domestic economy, printed in “Agricultural-Technological Weekly”, cited Adam Smith as an economist who refuted those physiocrats and mercantile systems and had recognized country economy as “an important and necessary industry, which satisfies first human needs and delivers rough materials for factories and industrial plants” (Miklaszewski 1848). However, an author, signing himself “rz”, in “Gazeta Lwowska” (Lvov Newspaper) praised the “industrial system” of Adam Smith and suggested that the principles laid down in WN “will for ever determine the foundation of the art [e.g. economy]” (rz 1852, no. 48, p. 190).

Henryk Kamiński (1813–1866) in a dissertation *A comparative picture of pauperism*, published in “Przegląd Naukowy” (Warsaw 1843, vol. III, nr 22), has mentioned Adam Smith as a founder of “the last century school of economists, which later did not take any step forward”. Kamiński, a radical democrat, reproached the Smithianist school that its representatives, analysing market of labour, had not taken into their consideration any social and moral consequences of unemployment (Kamiński 1959, pp. 365–370). According to him, Smith and Ricardo have manifested an indifference for the misery of the proletariat. Introducing three concepts: “material economy” (economics), “political economy” (a science of political institutions) and “moral economy”, Kamiński



paid attention, perhaps the first in Poland to do so, to some moral and social aspects of capitalism.

In 1865 “Tygodnik Naukowy” (Scientific Weekly), published in Lvov, printed as part of its first issue an anonymous piece entitled *Adam Smith and his school*, followed by two further parts (Adam Smith 1865). It begins with a short sketch of the mercantile and physiocrats schools of political economy, contrasting them with the “school of real political economy”. The latter, called «the industry system», is the school founded by Adam Smith. The author gives also a short account of Adam Smith’s life, noting that in Poland “his biography is very little known.” Probably the sole source of information for the author was the *Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith* by Dugald Stewart (Stewart 1982). *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS), suggests the author begins with the premise that “sympathy is a moral principle”. But in his opinion “the principle is wrong, because morals should be founded on a more solid basis than sympathy”. He also mentions Adam Smith’s dissertation on languages as well essays, misreporting some titles (Adam Smith 1865, nr 3, p. 48). He goes on to outline WN, presenting in his notes critical commentaries from Garnier, Müller and McCulloch. The third and last section (in nr 6) concludes with the rent of land.

In 1869, a monograph on Adam Smith by Konstanty Wzdulski, the first in Polish, was published as a part of his book *Economic Sketches* (Wzdulski 1869). Earlier it had been printed in “Gazeta Rolnicza” (Agriculture Newspaper). Entitled “Adam Smith, life and works” (1723–1790), it consists of four sections: in the first (pp. 39–62) a short biography of Smith; in the other three (pp. 63–118) the contents of WN is summarized. As an epigraph Wzdulski used a quote from Pietro Rossi, successor to J.B. Say at the Collège de France, from his *Cours d'Économie politique* (1840–42): “Adam Smith, c’est le maître de nous tous”. The author sought “to acquaint Polish readers with the contents of the most important work in the field of political economy up to this time. It is still little known in our country” (Wzdulski 1869, pp. 112–113). In conclusion, he defends political economy as a science and – quoting L. Wołowski – refutes the imputation, put forward by representatives of the German historical school, that Smith was “an apostle of individualism and egoism” (Wzdulski 1869, pp. 116–117). In Chodorowski’s opinion (Chodorowski 1980, p. 155), the defence of classical political economy, against the German historical school, is significant, if we take into consideration that Wzdulski is said to be a precursor of a Catholic trend in economic thought, although later from this trend many reproaches against Adam Smith’s economy have been put (for example: Szymański 1936, p. 61).



In 1895 “Przegląd Polski” (Polish Review) printed a review of Rae’s biography of Smith (R.P. 1895). The reviewer praised the depth and detail of Rae’s account, but expressed disappointment that the book was “somewhat dry and prosaic”, regretting perhaps that Adam Smith’s life did not abound with colourful events. Nevertheless, the review demonstrates that the writer was familiar with WN.

In Warsaw, where the University was closed, in period 1865–1874 economic thought was propagated mainly by the journal “Economist, Quarterly” devoted to economics, statistics and administration. According to T. Kowalik, “in its first period, Warsaw positivists, whose tribune was the ‘Economist’, had propagated an extremely *laissez-faire* economic doctrine” (Kowalik 1992, pp. 53–54). The journal was restored in 1900 as a weekly and its co-workers then were a group of socialists. Editorial staff announced publishing of the so called Economic Library, and WN was planned as its first volume. But in the end of the year the journal was taken over by another group of writers and the socialists moved away for many years. The new staff changed its title to “Economist, Quartely” devoted to science and needs of life. After the rebellion in 1905, Stefan Dziewulski, a national democrat, became editor-in-chief, and the journal took a more conservative line.

In 1910 the “Economist” published a paper *Back to Adam Smith* by J. St. Lewiński (1876–1930), who took this slogan from August Oncken (1844–1911) (Oncken 1909, p. 215). The contents of the paper were: I. New trends in economics; II. Economic psychology and aspiration for harmony in Adam Smith’s system; III. Adam Smith’s method. The relation of deduction to induction; IV. Smith and the doctrine of *laissez-faire*; V. The importance of Adam Smith’s method for further development of economics.

Lewiński studied in England but in his paper we can detect also the influence of German authors, such as (besides Oncken) Feilbogen (Feilbogen 1903) and Huth (Huth 1907). His interpretation of Adam Smith’s economic policy is clearly marked by the contemporary debates on the “social question”.

Lewiński is opposed to the historical school of political economy, many of whose members had criticized Smith as a theorist of self-love and private interest. Following Oncken (Oncken 1877), he argues that Adam Smith’s two books represented a whole, and not contrary systems of thought. Lewiński cites in support of his argument Cannan’s edition of Smith’s *Lectures*, Dugald Stewart’s *Account* and Rae’s *Life of Adam Smith*. He quotes, using a French translation, the following fragment from TMS (II, II, 3): “Society may subsist among different men, as among different merchants, from a sense of its utility, without any mutual love or affection; and though no man in it should owe any



obligation, or be bound in gratitude to any other, it may still be upheld by a mercenary exchange of good offices according to an agreed valuation” (Smith 1984, p. 86).

Next, Lewiński writes: “The sentiments of sympathy and of private interest are for Smith the two factors upon which harmony in the social world is founded. Harmony is necessary, for it is dictated by a law of nature (...) The two great works of Smith’s are (...) parts of a larger philosophical synthesis. In the TMS he distinguishes the sentiment of sympathy, and in WN the sentiments of interest. Smith examines here how an invisible hand directs all affairs for the best by natural laws”. Emphasizing the principle of economic liberty, Lewiński states that “almost all reforms of the last hundred years were a realisation of Smith’s principles” (Lewiński 1910, p. 7). Later, however, with the emergence of class conflict, Smith was “rejected as a one-sided visionary”. Lewiński considers that the lengthy dispute over Smith’s method had recently been decided in favour of “a genial connection” of deduction and induction. He also rejects the accusation that Smith was an insensitive, doctrinaire idealist who believed that the laws of nature strictly governed social processes. “It is astonishing, but one can find in Adam Smith’s work anti-Manchester opinion concerning the privileged position of employers with respect to workers” (Lewiński 1910, p. 10).

Turning to the duties of the state as presented in Book V of WN, Lewiński writes that the reforms of which Adam Smith approved, or proposed, “are in accord with the spirit of the nineteenth century, or even of this century. (...) As to social problems, Adam Smith’s sympathy is with the working class. (...) To identify his science with the doctrine of laissez faire, laissez passer is essentially false. (...) In his lectures on jurisprudence he is an historical materialist par excellence; all political change is traced to economic factors” (Lewiński 1910, pp. 13–18). According to Lewiński, Adam Smith’s system was for many years presented in a false light. The historical school had enriched the history of economy, but it completely lacked any theory. Adam Smith had created an abstract homo oeconomicus and analysed his behaviour not with respect to reality, but in the ideal condition of perfect liberty. He then passed to analyse how his premises are realized in concrete historical conditions.

Since 1880’s the Marxist trend in Polish economic thought developed. Its representatives, in general, have recognized the role of Smith in the history of political economy, but criticized his “bourgeois limitations”. Their publications appeared mainly in some journals printed abroad.

A senior Polish socialist, Bolesław Limanowski (1835–1935), in his study *Physiocrats, Industrialists and Socialists in the pre-revolution age of the 18th*



century, printed in the first four issues of a Polish monthly "Equality" (published 1879–1881 in Geneva), presents a diverse evaluation of Smith's theory. He repeats the common mistake, that the Scottish philosopher had begun to be interested in economy subjects only after his meeting with F. Quesnay in Paris in 1763; that's why in both his works (e.g. TMS and WN) he "stands on two opposite poles". As one of five causes of the great popularity of WN, Limanowski mentioned, after W. Bagehot, the following circumstance: "Smith, although a Scot from his birth, had not manifested to England that dislike which was visible in some economic essays by D. Hume". Limanowski praises Smith for his great education and erudition, as a "historian-philosopher who wanted to study the ways and methods by which mankind got out from its former savagery and has risen to a high stage of civilization", but reproaches him (probably influenced by H.T. Buckle), that "he was immersed in abstraction, very little acquainted with the world of practice" (Limanowski 1957, p. 75). In Limanowski's opinion, Smith was a social and class conservative, he "had not felt this injustice, which was experienced by the workers' class" and "had not risen above selfish bourgeois opinions. Contrary, the fundamental principle of his system he had made egoism. (...) It's true, Adam Smith in the beginning of his work says that labour is an origin of the wealth of nations, but the wealth is seen by him as a goal, not as some means leading to welfare of all members of a society. First of all, he is interested in product, a lot less in a division of wealth" (Limanowski 1957, p. 76).

Cezaryna Wojnarowska was a co-editor of the Polish Marxist journal "Class Struggle", published in Geneva. In her article *Development and characteristics of bourgeois economy*, printed in the first issue of the journal in 1884, she reproaches the English classical economy, with Smith and Ricardo as its leaders, for a metaphysical character: "A. Smith, a child of his age and a pupil of Helvetius, and after him his followers, carry this character in their economic works, too (Wojnarowska 1957, p. 565). As a manifestation of the metaphysical character, Wojnarowska gives the Smith's values theory, which he and his followers have treated as ahistorical and absolute (Wojnarowska 1957, p. 569).

Some Polish socialists studied in Western Europe. One of them was Julian Marchlewski (1866–1925) who in 1896 took his PhD in Zurich, Switzerland. In his doctoral dissertation *Der Physiokratismus in Polen* (Polish translation in a short version published a year later) he claims, quoting K. Marks, that "in WN, at every step we can see a direct influence of the Physiocrats on Smith", although the master and his followers, as "rich in words but poor in thought J.B. Say", say with disrespect about the French "sect" (Marchlewski 1952, p. 5). Beside Marx, Marchlewski cites French and German authors, amongst them H.



von Schell and A. Oncken. He accepts Schell's argument, that Smith "throws some abstractions and concrete things into the same pot" (Marchlewski 1952, p. 17), and Oncken's one, that it would be a fault to make the thinkers of the 18th c. responsible for "heartless capitalism" (Marchlewski 1952, p. 19).

The next wave of translations of economic works was in a period after the January Uprising, when positivism paved the way to Poland. In the late 19th c., mainly French authors were translated; among them were followers of Adam Smith's theory, too (Rychliński 1930, p. 74). However, we must admit that, in general, the reception of the work of the father of classical economy in 19th c. Poland had a limited range. The WN had not yet been translated into Polish. Finally, in 1914 the Editorial Board of the Economics Classics Library was established in Cracov, and a translator (August Zaleski) and editor (F. Bujak) began work on a Polish translation of WN, but the outbreak of war put an end to this project.

IV. 1919–1939

Following the war, Lewiński published another sketch of Adam Smith's economic ideas, preceded by a short outline of the philosopher's life (Lewiński 1920). As in his earlier paper, from which he borrowed a great deal, he sees Smith's principal merit in his method of investigation: Smith first takes an "economic principle" (earlier Lewiński used the term "private interest"), next by abstraction and deduction he formulates some economic laws, and then verifies and develops them by induction. However, this time Lewiński criticizes the composition of WN, and also suggests that Smith's theory of production is lacking in "the most important foundations". He criticizes in particular the theories of the division of labour, productive and unproductive labour, capital, rent, and profit. "In his analysis of some complex economic problems, Smith was unsuccessful. He achieved much better results in his observation of some aspects of everyday economic life" (Lewiński 1920, p. 76). Lewiński rated Adam Smith's writings on economic policy in Book V much more highly. At the end of his paper, Lewiński writes: "The trend to free commerce, declared by Smith, never had much success in our country. Our economic policy (..) was always protectionist" (Lewiński 1920, p. 152).

A Polish translation by O. Einfeld and S. Wolf of WN Book I (based on Cannan's edition) was published in 1927. They wrote in the Preface that: "The present translation, the first in Polish, is a commemoration, for it



appears on the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the original edition. This very evident delay can be partly explained by political conditions, which have limited and obstructed a normal course of development, denying us the opportunity for scholarly work. But the appearance of this edition testifies to the freshness and topicality of the work of that great Scot". (Smith 1927, p. 7).

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ADAM SMITH

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BOGACTWA NARODÓW

Z ORYGINAŁU ANGIELSKIEGO PRZEŁOŻYLI
OSWALD EINFELD I STEFAN WOLFF

TOM I



NAKLAD GEBETHNERA I WOLFFA
WARSZAWA -- KRAKÓW -- LUBLIN -- ŁÓDŹ
PARYŻ -- POZNAŃ -- WILNO -- ZAKOPANE

Figure 5. Title page of the Polish translation of the *Wealth of Nations*, Book I, published in 1927



In 1930 Stanisław Piotrowski published a lengthy critical sketch containing several critical comments on WN. We can find here a critique of Adam Smith's ideas on the division of labour, value, natural and market prices, wages, profits, rent, and the relation of silver to gold as money forms. "For us, Adam Smith's book is first of all a polemic [mostly with mercantilists], criticism founded on observations and deductions which are not related to each other. This is the main defect of Adam Smith's work" (Piotrowski 1930, p. 157). Piotrowski did however see some favourable aspects of the work: "But his lack of theoretical precision is compensated by his practical reason, which prompts Smith to abandon his erroneous theory of value; in the second book of the work he has forgotten all about it" (Piotrowski 1930, p. 120). He also shared with Lewiński a positive evaluation of Smith's economic viewpoint: "Wealth is a necessity if trade is to develop with other countries, for no-one will exchange with the poor. This principle is very important for Smith and represents a point of contact between economy and ethics" (Piotrowski 1930, p. 161).

As an example of the catholic criticism of Smith's economy we can point to a fragment from the book *Economics end Ethics* by Rev. Antoni Szymański. His criticism is directed against liberalism and socialism. In Szymański's opinion, the liberal economy has eliminated ethics from economic and social policy. Adam Smith, creating a new science of theoretical economics, had selected the private interest as the characteristic motive of economic activity. "It was a back step in comparison with the mind of the Middle Ages; direct responsibility for this bears associational psychology and utilitarian morality, which then omnipotently reigned in England" (Szymański 1936, p. 61).

On the other hand, Ferdynand Zweig in his *Twilight or revival of liberalism?* (Zweig 1938) speaks as a fervent advocate of liberalism, also economic. It may be interesting what he writes about the English classical school of political economy: "The classical economists, first of all Adam Smith, come from the philosophy of natural law school, and Smith's teacher was a famous philosopher of law, Hutcheson, from whom Smith had taken, in a general outline, a theory of values and prices, a theory of money and a theory of taxation" (Zweig 1938, pp. 183–184).

Of course, every author of any book containing a history of political economy (or economics), has discussed Smith's theory. One of more interesting, in my opinion, was Stanisław Głabiński (1862–1943),



politician and economist, Professor of Economy at Lvov University. In his *History of Economics* he included an extensive chapter on Adam Smith (Głąbiński 1939, vol. II, pp. 163–195). In a section “A Critical opinion on Adam Smith’s teaching” (Głąbiński 1939, vol. II, pp. 178–187) he criticizes Smith’s concept of labour and the division of labour, as well as theory of values. According to Głąbiński: “That wrong theory (...) of «surplus» value which an entrepreneur is appropriating, and many misunderstandings dragging on without end through the economic literature” are originated in the “oversimplified Adam Smith’s values theory” (Głąbiński 1939, vol. II, p. 183). The Polish economist reproaches Smith for not distinguishing between an industrial entrepreneur, who is a manager in his own enterprise, and a capitalist who invests only his capital. In his conclusion Głąbiński claims, that “common accusations, directed to the Smith’s system by the national school, for his individualism, materialism and cosmopolitanism, are right in most cases. (...) also in economic life a just measure should be preserved, which the physiocrats so rightly had accented, connecting closely true liberty with justice; and only in this connection they had treated liberty as favourable for a whole society” (Głąbiński 1939, vol. II, p. 186).

V. 1945–1989

After WW II, when Poland was included in the part of Europe controlled by the Soviet Union, Polish science was dominated by Marxism.

The importance of classical economics (together with German philosophy and French utopian socialism) to Karl Marx’s analysis of the capitalist mode of production had been outlined by Lenin in his essay on the three sources and component parts of Marxism, and so, as elsewhere in areas under the control of the Soviet Union, it was possible to translate and publish the writings of Adam Smith. Hence, in 1954 the first complete Polish translation of WN was published (Smith 1954), with a detailed introduction by Seweryn Żurawicki which presented a Marxist evaluation of Smith’s economic theory (Smith 1954, pp. v–L). Likewise, the bicentenary of the publication of WN was celebrated with a conference at Jaszowiec in October 1976, and articles were also



published in the periodical literature (Mieszczankowski 1976; Minc 1976; Żurawicki 1976; Piątkowski 1976).

The most typical for those years is an article by Żurawicki. In his opinion, Adam Smith was an exponent of his epoch rather than a genius reaching beyond his epoch. "Certainly, wrong opinions may be found in Smith's work, stemming first of all from the limitations of his class horizon. But it was not these opinions that have mattered for his position as an economist. Studying Adam Smith means studying, at the same time, the way leading to the Marxian turning point" (Żurawicki 1976, p. 1044).

According to Minc, in WN Smith "finally refuted the mercantilist paradigm and formulated a new paradigm of political economy" (Minc 1976, p. 91). The paradigm is a theory of market mechanism as a regulator of capitalist economy. But Smith did not explain a social contents of the paradigm. His values theory, based on labour, was irreconcilable with solidarity advocated by him of both capitalists' and workers' interests. Ricardo made a step forward, showing a contradiction between the interests, but he did not solve some essential problems in theory of values and prices; did not define a character of capitalism and trends of its development. "Only K. Marx created a coherent scientific system, (...) crossed the Rubicon of political economy and explained a formation of capitalist's interest by means of exploitation of workers" (Minc 1976, p. 94). According to Minc, we are standing on a threshold of a new revolution in political economy. In the future, the economy will be managed on the basis of some long-term goals functions of big companies and states, not by market mechanism regulations.

It may be supposed that in writing its paper Minc was influenced by the then fashionable theory, which has been formulated by Th. Kuhn in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962).

In my opinion, more interesting is a paper by M. Mieszczankowski. It was described editorially as "controversial" since the neutral evaluation that was made of Smithian economic theory exposed certain ideological aspects of the way that the orthodox Marxist literature approached Adam Smith. Mieszczankowski describes Adam Smith as "the first great pioneer of capitalism", according to whom the private interest acting in the conditions of economic liberty gives an individual a maximum profit, and because private interest is consistent with social interest, it spontaneously enables the full development of the economy of a society



and the optimal realization of the social interests. The Polish author seems to regret that historians of economic thought have not tried to work out a mechanism of capitalist formation whose elements are quite distinct in Smith's work, but have limited only to an analysis of the several chapters and books of the first volume of WN. In Mieszczankowski's opinion, "socialist economy can not be pleased with a work like Smith's one, which could theoretically justify the superiority of socialism compared to capitalism, giving at the same time the whole mechanism of functioning and development of the socialist economy. (...) Output of contemporary economy of socialism, although quite sizeable, remains far from something what we could call a "wealth of socialist nations" (Mieszczankowski 1976, p. 11). The Polish economist criticizes a typical (especially in popular manuals) Marxist criticism of Smith's theory of values. In his opinion, careful reading of WN proves that Smith did not abandon the theory of values based on labour. But Smith encountered some serious difficulties which have not been solved by his successors (including Marx) either. It does not mean however that he had not seen many contradictions of capitalism. Contrary to common opinion, as Mieszczankowski claims, Smith has not considered capitalism as a full harmony system.

In 1978, a pamphlet *Adam Smith's economic system* by Waclaw Stankiewicz was published (Stankiewicz 1978). It contains the following sections: 1. Adam Smith at the background of the epoch; 2. General outline of the Adam Smith's economic system; 3. Labour – a basic origin of wealth; 4. Outline of a theory of capital; 5. Principles of an economic policy; 6. Summary and conclusion. The pamphlet was included as chapter 7 in Stankiewicz's book *History of Economic Thought* (Stankiewicz 1983, pp. 151–172).

In the conclusion, Stankiewicz emphasizes the importance of Smith's political economy, especially his theory of values, as one of the origins of Marxism. "Smith built theoretical foundations of economic liberalism. This liberalism during a century lent wings to some British politicians and well served the interests of the capitalist class. We have seen as some defects of Smith's method and limitations of his outlook did not allow him in many investigations to exceed some barriers." But all this "can't shade the fact, that Smith created a coherent and scientific system, giving inspiration to further inquiries" (Stankiewicz 1983, pp. 171–172).



In 1980, Jerzy Chodorowski published a very lengthy monograph on Adam Smith (Chodorowski 1980). It presents the life, personality, and inspiration for Smith and his method. Most of the space is however devoted to an exposition of the economic theory of WN, together with an account of its reception in Poland and in Europe (chapters 6–7). In the final chapter Chodorowski considered the question of where Smith belonged in the history of economic thought. He concludes: “Smith was not the founder of political economy, the earliest scientific system of economics having been composed by R. Cantillon (*Essai sur la nature du commerce en général*, 1755). Smith’s proper place in the history of economic thought is as the originator of a scientific economics. He was not its founder, nor a substantial innovator, but he was the first to initiate its development. He had many forerunners, but none as the inspiration for the development of economics. This fact renders his place in the history of economic thought a unique one” (Chodorowski 1980, p. 189).

In his Epilogue, Chodorowski points to three reasons for the topicality of Adam Smith work:

1. The substantial content of much of WN, especially Books I to III;
2. Smith’s outlook as an economist and scholar;
3. As a source of scientific inspiration.

On this last point, Chodorowski quotes Paul Samuelson’s opinion that “...the more important contemporary economic theories can all be derived from the arguments of WN, down to those theories influenced by the Club of Rome reports”. The work remains a “constant source of inspiration, and Smith himself a champion of a broadly-based liberalism” (Chodorowski 1980, pp. 193–194).

VI. AFTER 1989

The fall of the Soviet communist system and the transformation of the Polish economy after 1989 were not conducive to any historical philosophical discussions. The political situation and economic problems of Poland were the focus of our country. Only the Academy of Economics in Wrocław organized in November 1990 a conference to commemorate the bicentenary of Adam Smith’s death; ten papers, mainly on his economic theory, were delivered, and then published in a book *Economic works of Adam Smith* (Noga 1993).



I have to mention one event connected with Adam Smith's name. It was 16th September 1989 when in Warsaw a group of Polish advocates of a free market economy founded the Adam Smith Center. The Center is an independent scientific-research institute (foundation) to promote economic liberalism in Poland. It has published several pamphlets and books, among them in 1995 a translation *From Adam Smith to the Wealth of America* by Alvin Rabushka (Hoover Institution, Stanford University). In 1999 the Center had more than fifty members, mainly economists, lawyers, political scientists, sociologists etc.

In my two papers, the political and socioeconomic philosophy presented in WN, especially in Book V, is discussed (Zabieglik 1999; Zabieglik 2000a). I have also published a paper on some business ethical aspects in the TMS and WN (Zabieglik 2000b).

This paper is dedicated to Professor Jerzy Chodorowski, the author of the first Polish monograph on Adam Smith.

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Appendix

Early editions of the *Wealth of Nations* in some selected Polish libraries (Warsaw and Gdańsk)

OSD BUW: The Warsaw University Library, Special Collection;
 Gd: The Polish Academy of Sciences Library, Gdańsk;
 BN: The Polish National Library, Special Collection, Warszawa.

- An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. 2nd ed., 2 vols., eds. W. Strahan and T. Cadell, London 1778. [Gd: Kd 507.4^o]
 – 4th ed., 3 vols., London 1786. [BN: W23868]
 – 5th ed., London 1789. [BN. XVIII.21 1873]
 – 6th ed., London 1791. [BN.XVIII.2.15105; Gd: Kd 507.8^o]
 – ed. J. J. Tourneisen and J. Legrand, Basil 1791. [BN.XVIII.2.15477; BN: W.23869]
 – 9th ed., London 1799. [BN.XVIII.2.23774]
 – 10th ed. London 1802. [Gd: Kd 507.8^o; Gd: Kab 558–560]



Recherches sur la nature et les causes de la richesse des nations... Trad. de l'anglois de M. Adam Smith par M***. 4 vols. La Haye: [s.n.], 1778–79. T. 1–2 [BN.XVIII.1.10058], t. 3–4 [BN.XVIII.1.15669]

– Yverden 1781. [BN.XVIII.1.12786; BN.XVIII.1.17768]

– ed. Buisson, A Paris 1790–1791. [BN.XVIII.2.17112; BN.XVIII.2.20164; BN: W.16432]

– Neuchatel 1792. [BN.XVIII.1.13889; BN.XVIII.1.18095]

– ed. Buisson, Paris an 3 (1795). [BN.XVIII.2.16511]

– ed. Laran, Paris an 9 (1800–1801). [BN.XVIII.2.17760; BN.XVIII.2.10199; BN: W.16433]

Untersuchung der Natur und Ursachen von Nationalreichtümern. ... Aus dem Englischen..., Weidmanns Erben, Leipzig 1776–78. [BN.XVIII.2.23723]

- 4 Ausgabe neue übers.. Bd. 1–4. W.G. Korn, Breslau 1794–96. [BN.XVIII.2.1778; BN.XVIII.2.11311; BN.XVIII.2.11438; BN.XVIII.2.6308]

– W.G. Korn, Breslau und Leipzig. [BN.XVIII.2.5889]

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