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Appelé à prendre la parole: The Parisian Romanticism of Adam Mickiewicz and George Sand

In October 1840, Adam Mickiewicz returned from Lausanne, Switzerland, where he had spent the preceding year teaching Latin literature at the local university. Friends in the French government in Paris had created a fund to appoint a lecturer of Slavic literature at the Collège de France, nominating Mickiewicz to be the first professor. Although the poet enjoyed financial stability in Switzerland, he pined for the cosmopolitanism of Paris and its community of Polish émigrés; in France, Mickiewicz could more freely craft a radical discourse about Poland, "in the interests of our national cause" as he told a friend (qtd. in Koropeckyj 266). While the poet's French critics rarely openly espoused his call for Poland's political liberation, they were inspired by the mystical vocabulary in which he couched his ideas. In part because he purposefully used his brilliance as a rhetorician to distance himself linguistically from the French, his French colleagues were able to hijack the political dialogue on Poland, focusing the conversation on the concept of speech, and on the style and eloquence of his performances rather than on their content. This paper examines an aspect of Mickiewicz's relationship with French intellectuals by contrasting his self-presentation in his Parisian lectures with George Sand's reaction to his poetic image.

Although Mickiewicz's lectures at the Collège de France, known as *Les cours de littérature slave*, primarily investigated the history of Slavic and Polish literatures, the poet's impromptu discussions broadly explored diverse philosophical, literary, religious, and artistic subjects. For instance, he frequently directly and

indirectly stressed the concepts of speech and language—understandably, since he was a poet. Interestingly, however, Mickiewicz wrote very few poems during his stay in France. While the causes of Mickiewicz's literary reticence are much debated, the Polish bard made the act and idea of speech itself central to his political and literary discourses rather than emphasizing his written words.

While the transcripts of Mickiewicz's lectures indicate that he spoke French extremely well, in his courses, he repeatedly mentioned his unease at lecturing in French.[1] The Polish bard opened his very first lecture by noting the difficulty of speaking a foreign language. He doubted that a language student could learn even the first part of a language (that of "posses[ing] all the secrets of the language"), asking his audience, "Can a foreigner ever achieve this?" Yet acquiring a language's secrets was only half the task: the language student could possess knowledge of the language, and yet fail at making his or her speech "artistic." After all, Mickiewicz noted, "the wrong word, a word improperly used, or even one badly pronounced sometimes suffices to destroy the effect of an entire exposition" (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 2-3).

As Mickiewicz continued with his opening lecture, he lamented his supposed inability to speak French in the face of all these obstacles. Yet, he recognized that this language was the burden he had to bear in order to propagate his ideas on Poland to the French. If he hoped to gain a sympathetic audience, to impel the French to action on behalf of Poland, he had to speak French:

> I know these difficulties, Sirs; with each movement of my thought, I feel the weight of the chain just as your hear its noise. If I listened only to my literary pride, if I worried only about my artistic interests and my personal dignity, I would abandon the honor of speaking to you here out of fear; it is painful to present oneself before the public, when one feels that one does not possess the force which eases the facility of expression; but very serious issues (*considérations*) tie me to this chair. I was called to speak (*appelé à prendre la parole*) in the name of the people with whom my nation is intimately linked by its past and its future; I was called

[1] The reviews of the Pole's lectures also suggest that Mickiewicz was proficient in French, though he reputedly never lost his Polish accent (see, for example, George Sand's review in Mitosek 205-210). Wiktor Weintraub also points out that Mickiewicz had spoken French for some time, having improvised poetry in French since his time in Russia in the 1820s (Weintraub 124). There were, of course, detracting opinions about the poet's mastery of the French language.

> to speak, in a time when speech is a very great power, in a city that I, a foreigner, am permitted call the capital of speech." (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 3)

Likewise, Mickiewicz contrasted French with his native language, linguistically distancing himself from his Parisian audience—thereby emphasizing his perceived Polishness and his status as an exile and a foreigner. "Sirs," he opened his first lecture, "I am a foreigner, and moreover, I must express myself in a language whose origins, form, and character has nothing in common with the one which normally organizes my thoughts. I not only must literately translate my ideas and feelings into what are for me foreign idioms, but must also, beforehand, entirely transform their expression" (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 2). From the beginning of his courses, thus, Mickiewicz stressed the difference between the two languages as well as the incompatibility of French and Polish. In thus emphasizing the distance both of himself and of his own thoughts from French, he fashioned himself as a linguistic outsider in Paris. He was ill at ease to speak French before such a large audience, because he so highly valued the word and its discursive power.

Several years later, at the end of his Parisian lectures, Mickiewicz returned to this same theme. He again claimed that French was the most difficult language he had learned (he had studied many), and that he could articulate his thoughts only with difficulty:

> Sirs, I speak your language badly; I have learned it only by use . . . I express myself with difficulty: often, in an ordinary conversation, my sentence gets tangled up, and I cannot find the right word; and moreover, I have to speak the most difficult language I know, the language which I have never studied, speak it before the audience at the Collège de France! But I must speak to you about my religion and my nation; I cannot permit myself to feel all these difficulties; I cannot permit myself to construct my sentences or to weigh my words. I am a Christian; I am reminded of this verse from the Gospel, where those who wish to speak of higher truths are forbidden, I repeat expressly forbidden, to carry in one's head previously-made sentences (*phrases toutes faites*).[2] Everyone knows this law, both moral

[2] See Mark 13:9-11: "But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that

> and literary. But is it practical? For myself, I decided as a rule never to prepare my speeches in advance. As a Christian, I thought I could prove my faith in the promises of the Gospel by this fact; as a Pole, I had to count on the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit. (Mickiewicz, vol. 5: 278-279)

Here, Mickiewicz associates his use of speech with biblical mandates; the Christian and mystical connotations inherent in this discussion about speech pervade many of his other lectures on the same theme. Furthermore, he emphasized his use of speech in the Parisian lectures not merely to sweet-talk his audience, but because language and one's ability to express oneself were the very center of one's humanity. "Speech is the flesh and spirit melted together by the divine spark which resides in man," he claimed (Mickiewicz, vol. 5: 117).

Mickiewicz drew further parallels between Catholicism and speech. He claimed that the concept of speech played a central role in early Christianity, but pointed out that the contemporaneous church deemphasized this concept: "We must prove to you today that the official Church no longer understands what speech is, that it has completely lost the idea and tradition of living speech, and that it has exposed all peoples to the temptation of confusing speech (*la parole*) with the word (*le mot*), things that were not confused in the time of the early Church" (Mickiewicz, vol. 5: 114). The Polish poet echoed France's historic relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, drawing on medieval traditions which viewed France as "the eldest daughter of the church" (see Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 4). Because of his host country's superior religious faith (which Mickiewicz ascribed to the possession of "the sacred fire"), he envisioned that France would mentor Poland (Mickiewicz, vol. 5: 228). Thus Poland would learn from France's superiority, just as the latter taught the former.

Speech, for the Polish bard, was not merely a mystical "divine spark" or flame, but also the proof of civilization. In Mickiewicz's imagination, French, the language of Paris, the capital of speech, marked individual speakers as civilized. He claimed that the Slavs wished to learn French to gain civilization—distinctively "Christian" civilization—for themselves. "In order to prove that they have the right to belong to the Christian community," the poet declared, "the Slavs

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hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (King James Version [See also Matthew 11:17-20 and Luke 21:12-15]).

for some time have tried to acquire speech, to speak your language, to push their works into the same trends as your literature" (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 4-5).

Although Mickiewicz claimed that France held the capital of speech, he still believed that the Slavs still had much to tell Western Europe. Quoting the "Bohemian" poet, Ján Kollár, the Pole told his audience that "all peoples have uttered their last word: now, Slavs, it is our turn to speak." As he continued, he claimed that "the Slavs have already spoken more than once; they have spoken, in their manner, with spears and canons (*à coups de lance, à coups de canon*)" (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 9). After all, as Mickiewicz argued in one of his final lectures, "*Qu'est-ce que la parole?*" ("What is speech?"), Slavs and speech were fundamentally intertwined: "Slav means a people of speech, or, more accurately, of the verb (*du verbe*)." Today the relationship of the words "Slav" and "word" in Slavic languages are debated, though the two do appear similar in Polish (*Słowianie* and *słowo* respectively), thereby giving Mickiewicz the opportunity to claim that his Slavs preserved "the pure tradition of the idea of speech" to the present day. For the poet, this implied that the Slavs still understood the "sanctity and creative power" of speech (Mickiewicz, vol. 5: 114).

Thus, although Paris was the capital of speech, Mickiewicz argued that Slavs better preserved historic traditions where literature, words, speech, politics, and religion related as one coherent whole. Literature was not a diversion from other parts of life, but an integral aspect of it. The bard pointed to an example from his personal correspondence:

> From the beginning of this course, I daily receive letters from Slavic savants who sometimes criticize my plan, sometimes address objections on certain details of this course. I make you a part of this correspondence because it is rather significant. It characterizes, in effect, the state of literature among the Slavs. Literature for us (*chez nous*) is not yet detached, like a dried flower, from the common tree of life. There, one does not write for pleasure, one does not do art for art's sake. Literature is still intimately linked to religion, history, and political life. Sometimes it suffices to criticize a poet, to incite all the religious and political questions which divide the Slavs. (Mickiewicz, vol. 1: 51-2)

In summary, having received a chair at the Collège de France, Mickiewicz knew he—as an educated Slav in Paris—represented Poland for the French. Not only his ideas, but also Poland itself, were to be judged by the poet's speech.

Because the audience at the Collège was primarily comprised of academics and writers, wordsmiths in their own right, Mickiewicz saw his reception in France as occurring in his imagined sphere of divine speech. Although Mickiewicz gave lectures for the French, he spoke on behalf of Poland. His speech thereby became a tangible link between France and Poland, as Poland, through the poet's words, aspired to achieve recognition in the capital of speech.

In a sense, by so clearly locating the relationship between France and Poland in religious speech, Mickiewicz became a prophet mediating between the two nations. He was, in fact, referred to as a prophet in Paris—in both Mickiewicz's imagination and that of members of his Parisian audience, his words, poetry, and language had direct religious import. Mickiewicz's lectures became the liturgy of a cult increasingly enveloped in radical messianism. It was this liturgy, the spiritual language and fervor of the Polish poet, which fascinated and enraptured the French. If Mickiewicz mattered in France during the July Monarchy, it was because the French believed the poet was indeed something of a prophet or an ecstatic.

The French novelist, George Sand, was one of the French intellectuals most fascinated and impressed with Mickiewicz although she was not religious herself. Often, in her reviews and discussions of Mickiewicz's lectures, improvisations, and poetry, she highlighted the same themes of language and religiosity which the bard himself had stressed. For instance, Sand praised the poet's skills as a rhetorician in her review of his *Cours de slaves*, harkening back to Mickiewicz's own conception of artistic speech: "the Polish poet's speech is as beautiful as his writing," she exclaimed, "the Slavic professor does better than to possess the French language; he guesses it, he forces it to reveal itself to him . . . he achieves eloquence." The novelist located the poet's eloquence in his "manner of feeling, of diction, of style"; Mickiewicz spoke with "color" (qtd. in Mitosek 205-206). While Mickiewicz had depicted French as a chain around his tongue, Sand declared it a pliable tool in the hands of a master orator. For Sand, Mickiewicz did understand and capture the spirit of French, revealing the language's "divine spark" to his audience. Their two visions could scarcely be more dissimilar.

Sand had also latched onto the religiosity inherent in Mickiewicz's poetry even before he had begun his lectures in Paris; she especially emphasized his

connection with the Roman Catholic Church. In 1839, the French writer published an essay in the famous *Revue des deux mondes*, titled "Essai sur le drame fantastique" ("Essay on Fantastic Drama"), and which compared Goethe, Byron, and Mickiewicz, repeatedly underscoring the religiosity of each poet. In doing so, Sand stressed the differences of Catholicism between France and Poland:

> One more word will silence every pedantic censorship: Poland is Catholic and Mickiewicz her mystical poet. His ideal has not yet developed a new form. The majority of the Slavic race is settled under the sincere law of the Gospel. We should respect a naive faith which has not been degraded as it has been among us by a restoration of the Jesuits . . . Recall the sublime word of M. de La Mennais in speaking of the infamous concession made the by sovereign pontiff with allied powers . . . Before passing from Christian philosophy to a more advanced philosophy, France endured the glorious expiation of a terrible revolution. Right now, Poland suffers its no less painful and no less respectable expiation. It would be as cowardly to criticize them for their Catholicism today, as it would be for them to criticize us for our atheism. (Sand, 1839: 628-9)

According to Sand, the essence of the Pole's poetry was religious. "Mickiewicz's language is Catholic" and "sincere," she summarized (Sand, 1839: 630). However, this Catholicism was by no means traditional: rather, the novelist wrote that "this Catholicism is a more audacious and advanced philosophy than the legendary Catholicism of Faust" (Sand, 1839: 644).[3]

We saw earlier how Mickiewicz emphasized his status as an outsider in Paris; Sand also stressed this same theme, arguing that exile had purified and strengthened Mickiewicz's religiosity:

> Perhaps there has been a moment in Mickiewicz's life where he has been given genuinely supernatural inspiration . . . persecution, torture, and exile have developed previously unknown powers in him; for nothing in his first productions (of a less serious order, but already admirable) incited such a string of misfortunes

[3] Sand was not the only French writer to perceive Mickiewicz's writings as Catholic. In his journal, French historian Charles de Montalembert wrote that "I am also still continuing my Polish studies; I just read the fourth volume of Mickiewicz's poetry, which consists of a drama where he tells of the persecutions in Vilnius [*Wilna*] in 1823. As poetry and also as Catholicism, this is without rival" (Montalembert 726).

> and of pain in the poet as has the concurrent vibrating, thundering, and moaning of the ruin of his homeland (Sand, 1839: 627).[4]

Thanks to these struggles, Mickiewicz achieved "the sublime fury" of genius (Sand, 1839: 598). She emphasized the poet's madness elsewhere in her writings, describing the Polish poet as "the only great ecstatic I know . . . he is touched by that *grand intellectual disease* that makes him akin to the famous ascetics, to Socrates, to Jesus, to St. John, Dante, and Joan of Arc" (qtd. in Koropeckyj 274); he was "a soul led to dizzying rapture through love for his country and the sanctity of its customs" (Sand, 1991: 1103). As a religious figure, "Adam Mickiewicz is not only a great poet . . . he is the moral expression of Poland" (qtd. in Mitosek 1993: 207). Therefore, Mickiewicz's Catholicism was integral to his artistic brilliance. He thus became a moral or divine figure, something of the prophet-arbitrator he had imagined himself. For Sand, and many of Mickiewicz's other critics, divinely-inspired language did exist, and the Pole was its fountainhead *par excellence*.

When Sand wrote positively of Mickiewicz's poetry, she imagined she did more than compose a favorable review. "I picture myself," she writes, "as accomplishing a religious duty toward Mickiewicz." When Mickiewicz uttered his sacred speech, he elicited religious obediences from his admirers. Sand told her readers that since the Polish bard was such a great, religious figure, he ought not be easily criticized. Because Mickiewicz was more than an ordinary poet, Sand interceded with his other critics to "weigh his judgments when such a great name is in the scale" (Sand, 1839: 598); because Mickiewicz's speech and writing was explicitly religious, Sand thought his works achieved new poetic heights, and that could not be evaluated by standard criteria.

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[4] Interestingly, Félicité de Lamennais (whom Sand refers to with an alternate spelling of his name: M. de La Mennais), one of Mickiewicz's early friends in Paris, emphasized a similar theme of exile and alienation in a letter he wrote to the Polish poet: "My soul, strengthen yourself, for soon you shall have nothing more than God. Men will go off and leave you alone. You have loved truth and justice; you wanted that, nothing but that; but for their part, they love the opinion that floats and passes; they wish for a soft bedside where they can lay their head. My soul, strengthen yourself, for you have more to endure; at the back of the chalice, there still remain several mouthfuls of the dregs which you must drink" (qtd. in Kridl 244).

Mickiewicz's reputation as a man of religious speech in Paris came not merely from his poetry and his lectures, but importantly also from his improvisations. Mickiewicz improvised in Polish from his early student days in the Philomath Club in Lithuania, and he began to improvise in French during his exile in Russia. These improvisations reputedly had a hypnotizing effect on his audiences, many of whom tried to copy him. Andrzej Walicki writes that Edgar Quinet and Jules Michelet, two of Mickiewicz colleagues at the Collège de France, "deeply felt the greatness of the Polish poet, admired and tried to imitate (unsuccessfully) his inspired improvisations" (Walicki 267). If the French, and Mickiewicz himself, thought the poet's speech had religious import, his improvisation most clearly demonstrated this mystical prowess.

In her *Journal intime*, Sand recounted an anecdote about Mickiewicz's improvisations at a gathering in Paris, which she recalled as "a rather strange event" (*un fait assez étrange*). She recounts how "in a gathering of Polish émigrés, a certain, one might say, rather mediocre poet, and somewhat jealous, recited a piece of verse addressed to Mickiewicz, in which, in the middle of his lavish praises, he complained with sincere resentment, although not in bad taste, of the superiority of this great poet. It was, as we understood it, both a reproach and a tribute." After this young poet had finished his poem, "the somber Mickiewicz, as insensible to one feeling as to the other, rose and improvised a poem in response, or rather a discourse of prodigious effect." The bard sent his audience into hysterics:

> No one could say exactly what happened; everyone who was there left with a different memory. Some said he spoke for five minutes, others for an hour. It is certain that he spoke so well and said such beautiful things, that they all fell into a sort of delirium. One could hear only screams and tears, several had nervous breakdowns, others could not sleep at night. The Count Plater, on returning home, was in such a strange state of exultation that his wife thought him mad and was extremely terrified. But, as he recounted to her as he best could, excluding Mickiewicz's improvisation (no one could repeat a single word of it) but only the effect of his speech on his audience, the Countess Plater fell into the same estate as her husband and began to cry, to pray and to ramble deliriously (*à divaguer*). (qtd. in Mitosek 93)

Although Sand emphasized the hypnotic nature of the event, she also located the importance of the poetry in its religious significance: "those there were

convinced that there was something superhuman in this man, that he was inspired like the prophets, and their superstition was so great that one of these mornings they could well have made him a God" (in Mitosek 94). Mickiewicz had ceased to be merely a fountainhead for divine speech, and nearly achieved divinity himself. Although Sand wrote that she herself did not wish to immortalize Mickiewicz, she still pointed out that the poet existed in a different sphere of reality than the average mortal: "Between reason and madness is a spiritual state which has never been well-observed or quantified, in which religious faiths of all times and all peoples have assumed man to be in direct contact with the spirit of God" (qtd. in Mitosek 94). Under this assumption, Mickiewicz certainly was in direct contact with the spirit of God. The bard's poetry, regardless of its actual content, was understood to be a revelation of other-worldly realities. He became a "prophet."

Even though he fashioned himself as a prophet, and even though he was perceived as a superior religious being, Mickiewicz still (at times) bowed to the perceived cultural superiority of France. However, precisely because Poland's literary tradition was less-developed, the French had to study Polish literature; after all, in a sense, Mickiewicz pointed out, the more educated one is about one's inferiors, the longer one's superiority is bound to last. Many Parisian reviewers highlighted this theme in their reviews of Mickiewicz's Paris lectures, enjoying the bard's assertion that Rome fell because it did not know and understand the barbarians around it. One French critic wrote that Mickiewicz "congratulated France and Paris for having understood the necessity of examining more deeply (*d'approfondir*) the history of these numerous and powerful neighbors, of studying their history and their intellectual development (*le mouvement actuel de leur intelligence*) to assess its flow before it menaces Europe once again. Rome and Greece, he said, did not deign to know the barbarians" (qtd. in Mitosek 190).[5]

[5] Another reviewer wrote that "after having traced the geography of Slavic language and literature, Mr. Mickiewicz, in an animated spectacle, showed the importance of their study. Rome had to repent of having too much neglected the knowledge of its barbarian brothers, who, in the professor's beautiful expression, took the future of Europe into their forests: France will not commit the same mistake" (qtd. in Mitosek 192).

When Mickiewicz said that Poland has suffered partition because the country had not written enough, he simultaneously indicated that Poland's perceived cultural inferiority made its literary tradition more important to the French. Though Poland may have been a cultural periphery to France, Mickiewicz emphasized that France, if she were to avoid the fate of Rome, had to know the cultures of her inferiors. Similarly, by promoting himself as a promulgator of myth, as a nineteenth century version of a prophet, an improviser and spiritual leader, Mickiewicz made himself the link in French and Polish romantic relations. He both imagined for himself a place of spiritual importance in French cultural life, and successfully defended his own place in it. He allowed himself to become an outsider—an ecstatic—in order to achieve even greater importance in Paris. Because he let himself be perceived as the most cultivated of the supposedly barbaric Poles, as their cultural avant-garde, Mickiewicz—the prophet, the poet—both legitimized the position of France as a cultural leader, and forced Parisian artists to address the imagery of Poland to bolster their supremacy.

Finally, the concept of speech, the word, played a much larger role in the *Wielka Emigracja*—the Great Emigration, the community of Polish exiles in Paris who sought refuge abroad after the Russians quelled the November Uprising in Poland; and this theme merits further research. While Mickiewicz may have been the most prominent Polish exile in Paris, many of the other immigrants were also writers. Words shaped the relationship not merely between Mickiewicz and the French, but also between the French and the Poles at large. Through the efforts of Mickiewicz and his followers, Poles and Parisians created a romantic discourse on Poland which functioned primarily via a religious vocabulary. But this discourse remained never much more than a carefully-crafted set of words. Words, written or spoken, were the essence of the relationship between France and Poland. The most influential Polish individuals in Paris were wordsmiths, as were the Parisians who received the Polish ideas. Adam Mickiewicz, not to mention Juliusz Słowacki, Cyprian Norwid, Zygmunt Krasiński, and the Polish bookseller, Aleksander Jełowicki, each based his artistic and political significance during his years in Paris off his written work. These Poles gained prominence thanks to their poetry, to their novels, to their plays, to their university lectures: to their words.

The French recognized the importance of the word in the relationship between France and Poland; or at least, the French who deigned to recognize the Poles in Paris were frequently authors, or journalists themselves, and used their pre-existing talents to engage the Polish cause. In Paris, it was the numerous French poets, playwrights, authors who believed Polish Romantic thought—political, religious, and artistic—could and would make a contribution to European humanity. These poets used rhyme, cadence, and meter to engage "the Polish Question," especially in the first few years of the July Monarchy.[6] In the direct aftermath of Poland's 1830 November Uprising, playwrights took up their pens to craft plays in support of the Polish cause, capturing the power of the word both written—via the play's text—and spoken—via the play's performance. Banking on the social power of the written word, on essays, a group of radical Parisians founded a journal, *Le Polonais*, to defend Polish and European political liberalism in 1833. In this same period, the Marquis de Lafayette gave speeches in the National Assembly on behalf of Poland. Edgar Quinet asked "who has heard speech (*une parole*) more sincere, more religious, more Christian, more extraordinary than that of this exile in the middle of the rest of his people," than that of Mickiewicz, "a prophet under the willows (*sous les saules*)" (qtd. in Mitosek 223). And in 1834, Félicité de Lamennais, inspired by Mickiewicz's *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego* (*Books of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage*), wrote the book *Paroles d'un croyant* (*Words from a Believer*).[7]

The fate of Poland was discussed in parliaments, in streets, on sidewalks, in cafes, in essays, in newspapers; but this web of Parisian interlocutors rarely stopped talking to take concrete, political action. French artists and Polish artists were mostly satisfied with the effect of the written or spoken word; they found the activity of writing and speaking to be comfortable, more comfortable—and more possible—than direct political action. The familiarity of the discourse

[6] See for example, Christian Sénéchal. *La Pologne de 1830 à 1846 dans la poésie romantique française*. Paris: Bibliothèque Polonaise, 1937.

[7] On the relationship between Mickiewicz and Lamennais, please see Manfred Kridl, "Two Champions of a New Christianity: Lamennais and Mickiewicz," *Comparative Literature* 4.3 (1952): 239-267 and Manfred Kridl, *Mickiewicz i Lamennais: Studium porównawcze*. Warszawa: W księgarni E. Wende, 1909. Lamennais's name also appears frequently in vol. 5 of Mickiewicz's Slavic lectures.

of the ecstatic, religious word created a mutually comprehensible community between Polish and French artists. However, through such an obsession with the word, Poland itself, the territory, was reduced to a simple rhetorical device. Poland was no longer a cause, but an image, a series of words—the Polish Question.

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Summary

This paper examines the role of the word, whether spoken or written, in Adam Mickiewicz's reception in France during the July Monarchy. It begins with a discussion of the poet's conception of speech (*parole*) and self-presentation in his Parisian lectures at the Collège de France, demonstrating the religious nature of the poet's relationship

with language. It subsequently explores the writings of George Sand about the Polish poet, arguing that she was interested primarily in Mickiewicz's religiosity and the style and eloquence of his improvisations. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of the role of speech within the Parisian reception to the *Wielka Emigracja* at large.

Key words: comparative literature, Polish romantic literature, French romantic literature, concepts of speech, Adam Mickiewicz, George Sand

Appelé à prendre la parole: Paryski romantyzm Adama Mickiewicza i George Sand

Streszczenie

Artykuł analizuje rolę słowa, zarówno mówionego, jak i pisanego, w kontekście recepcji Adama Mickiewicza we Francji w czasie Monarchii Lipcowej. Autor rozpoczyna swoją analizę omówieniem koncepcji mowy (*parole*) poety i jego autoprezentacji w wykładach paryskich w Collège de France, przedstawiając religijną naturę związku poety z językiem. Następnie autor omawia teksty George Sand poświęcone polskiemu poecie, dowodząc, że była ona przede wszystkim zainteresowana religijnością oraz stylem i urokiem improwizacji Mickiewicza. W konkluzji omówiona zostaje rola języka w paryskiej recepcji *Wielkiej Emigracji*.

Słowa kluczowe: komparatystyka literacka, polska literatura romantyczna, francuska literatura romantyczna, koncepcje języka, Adam Mickiewicz, George Sand