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Direct and Intuitive Cognition in the Philosophy of Polish Romanticism

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Introduction

1. Intuition is what we usually mean by this cognitive power, thanks to which cognition occurs once (on a one-off basis) as though in one act, and synchronously, at one time. It does not even have to be accompanied by any special intellectual effort on the part of the cognizant. Intuition usually initiates the cognitive process, although it sometimes supports it at other stages. In the natural language it is often combined with a kind of feeling or premonition. In a more precise sense, in the context of the history of philosophy, and especially of its Platonic current, intuition concerns not only the beginnings of cognition but also the final act of learning of a problem or phenomenon. The intuition crowning the cognitive process is of intellectual nature. It is accompanied by a certain "vision", a comprehensive image of the object, Greek *θεωρία* ('watching, observation').¹ It is this cognitive power that is active at the time of summarizing the long-term discursive efforts, during which the problem was

¹ Cf. Wiesława Sajdek, "Wizja według Plotyna" [A vision according to Plotinus], *Kwartalnik Filozoficzny* 4 (1997): 119. "The Plotinian vision belongs to those that require enormous mental work and multiply the intellectual capabilities of the visionary. These types of visions assume full intellectual activity because they are of intellectual nature."

discussed from many sides, in many different contexts, and from many points of view. Intuition then performs a synthesizing function. So, it can be the crowning achievement of the cognition process. However, it is also indispensable at the first moment of raising a problem, seeing it, or the perception of a particular phenomenon, which, for the present, still requires explanation. It is intuition that translates into loadable metaphors a special kind of images that only introduce the reader in philosophical considerations. These initiating procedures usually concern a young person. However, these images would not have existed if not preceded by strictly logical investigations. Their subject are partial issues, solved gradually, at subsequent stages of the cognitive process. The final result appears as the result of the work of those who have personally explored the issue before, while long and persistently pondering and discussing it, without counting the costs, the loss of time, the possibility of mistakes and slips, and finally – any failures. A cognition summarizing a certain process, i.e. its mature form, must be mediated by a series of subsequent intellectual efforts, related to solving a process of partial tasks. The image accompanying this stage, created by the way, does not exhaust the depth of the theory by any measure, but it can be an appropriate introduction for those who want to become acquainted with it. Primary intuitions, awakened by such images, are certainly not the same cognitive powers which at one time allow, as it were, seeing the whole of some (just completed) process, e.g. a solution to a complicated mathematical problem, or a system of subtle correlations that make up the whole refined, coherent theory. So, you can talk about different types of cognitive intuitions, or, nay, about the intuitions accompanying different stages of cognition. The higher the stage, the more subtle the intuition. At the highest level, it has a strictly intellectual character, allowing you to grasp the full solution to a problem in one act, and thus, some “vision” of this solution.

A vision, insight observation, direct ‘seeing’ plays [...] a major role in Plotinian thought, both in explaining the differences and correlations between the three foundations of the mental world [of the soul, the mind, and “This One”], as well as when discussing ways to bring the soul and mind to perfection. [...] The vision, in the Plotinus system is therefore both the basis of the existence of “self-entities” and the world available to the senses, as well as the beginning and the end of cognition.²

It is certainly not the same “vision”, or, better: a kind of direct ‘seeing’ or ‘insight observation’. Naturally, we can also talk about various stages or levels of intuition, but this will apply to systems in which reality has been presented as hierarchically ordered. In the context of the

² Ibidem, 126.

history of European philosophy, these will be different versions and variations on Neoplatonism, starting from the system of Plotinus itself, presented in *The Enneads*.

In addition to this highest function of intellectual intuition, attention was drawn as early as in the 13th century (Duns Scotus) to the intuition of the intellect in a completely different role, regarding individual things, i.e. particular concretes, as existing. Such intuition initiated cognition by pointing to its objects. So, it was a condition of its objectivity. Directness of cognitive approach can be associated with intuition, but probably only with its function that initiates cognition. At least, that is how things seem to be portrayed by Romantic thinkers. Unlike Plotinus, who pointed to an ecstatic level from which real reality can be observed, as the pinnacle of intellectual development. The Plotinian path leads to a special mysticism which not exactly supersedes any discursive cognition, but ultimately crowns philosophical efforts. Usually, however, both types or ways of cognition (philosophical and mystical), are presented as oppositional and even mutually excluding each other. It does not have much in common with the European philosophical tradition (Platonic, as regards its sources), but it results from a sharp antagonization of the human intellect conceived in a simplified way towards all other possible cognitive powers. Such an attitude became obligatory after a period of intense propagation and popularization activity of the French Enlightenment *philosophantes*.

In the Romantic era, however, both this final 'insight observation', which involves intellectual intuition, as well as some initial intuitions, which initiate the cognitive process, were the matter of reflection of Romantic artists. Certainly, this cognitive power was granted the highest power in learning "the deepest secrets of being." Most often, various types of intuition were combined with Romantic poetry, but intuition is vividly present in the philosophy of that period. In so far, however, it was just a philosophy, not poetry, as long as reflection was practised in a clear order, according to lucid plans, so that you can not only follow its stages, but also have a creative discussion at each of them. In the Romantic era, complex and highly speculative philosophical systems arose. If so, the intellect, also through them and in them, seemed to have by far the most privileged position among other cognitive powers. And yet, the relation of contemporary philosophers to the language and the free creation of a new philosophical language, often based on etymological intuitions, bring the philosophical thought of that time closer to the artist's work. Especially this kind of creativity and the associated excessive – it seems – freedom allow suspecting that Romantic philosophers were poets. Sometimes they themselves were completely unaware of the fact, since the result and purpose of their efforts were to be a kind of "scientific" philosophy.

Bronisław Trentowski played a special role here. While presenting his “universal philosophy”, which was supposed to combine speculative metaphysics and empirical thought in a coherent synthesis, he used a specific, rich language. Ewa Starzyńska-Kościuszko, in a recently published book on his philosophy, summarizes his postulates as follows:

The style of philosophy must match its purpose. Because the goal of philosophy is truth, the style must reveal that truth. As a manifestation of truth and cognition, it must be: “as varied as the infinite, as sublime as eternity, and always true as ubiquity.” In the universal philosophy, according to Trentowski, there is room for “technical” words and for poetic metaphors and parables. The truth should also be shown in a beautiful way. Everything that can attract the mind and the soul of a man should have application in philosophy. The hitherto philosophy, which appeared as empiricism or as metaphysics, had no idea what the philosophical style should be.³

2. It should be remembered, at this point, that in the ancient thought and especially in its Neoplatonic synthesis, which was its most perfect synthesis, there was a conviction about a special cognitive act, referred to as ἐπιβολή – in its original meaning, in the natural language meaning: “imposing” – just as while you putting your clothes on. In philosophy, it began to mean, next to “imposing” – also “application” and, finally, direct intuition as a view of many things at once, in one kind of image. That is how we see the whole face without losing its details – eyes, nose, etc. This ἐπιβολή, in the context of the fragment in which Plotinus gives an example of a one-time grasp of the whole face (Enn. IV, 4, 25 (28)), was rendered in the Greek-Polish Dictionary, precisely, through direct comprehension and intuition.⁴ Plotinus considers this special kind of cognition when discussing the highest stage of soul perfection, which is already at the level of the mind. Reaching the highest level of being also means perfect cognition. And here is the relevant fragment of the fourth dissertation, from the fourth *Ennead* (in the chronological order, it was the 28. dissertation):

So what prevents the soul from having collective realization of the things gathered together? [τί οὖν κωλύει καὶ ταύτη τὴν ἐπιβολὴν ἀθρόαν ἀθρόων γίνεσθαι.] Can it be like some item at once? Rather yes, as it has

³ Ewa Starzyńska-Kościuszko, *Bronisław Ferdynand Trentowski (1809–1869). Filozofia uniwersalna i myśli o „wyjrzemieniu” ojczyzny* [Bronisław Ferdynand Trentowski (1809–1869). Universal philosophy and thoughts about “removing the yoke” from the fatherland] (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, 2018), 77.

⁴ *Słownik grecko-polski* [Greek-Polish Dictionary], ed. Z. Abramowiczówna, vol. 2 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1960), 221.

all the thoughts on many objects at once. Here is a multifarious spectacle, which is followed by a multifarious and multiple thought and many thoughts, as do many perceptions of the face when one sees both eyes and nose and other parts.⁵

The author of the “intuition” entry included in *Leksykon Filozofii Klasycznej* [Lexicon of Classical Philosophy], referring only to the Latin word *intuitio*, translates it as ‘viewing, seeing, observation, insight’.⁶ He completes, however, this narrow meaning by referring to the natural language and history of philosophy. According to S. Judycki, therefore, intuition ‘is, in colloquial use, a vague (nebulous) premonition of something, or a flash of comprehension of a situation, state of affairs, etc., without mediation of inference – often with the conviction that the cognitive result is true. In the history of philosophy, intuitive cognition was opposed to discursive cognition (stage-type cognition), or of abstract, symbolic, sign, intellectual type; some refused any knowledge-generating value to intuition’.⁷ The moment in the history of philosophy, marked by the rise of the Plotinian *Enneads*, points to the philosophical use of the Greek ἐπιβολή. Its meaning would include a one-off, sudden “flash of comprehension of a situation, state of affairs,” using the intellect. And yet, this final “flare”, crowning the cognitive process, would be mediated by an infinite multitude of discursive approaches that would cover possibly all aspects of the examined object, or objects, even if there were more. Detailed considerations could fill many years of logical – or “dialectical”, as Plotinus taught – research. Stanisław Judycki notes:

Beginning with the ancient philosophy, intuitive cognition was to apply to the general, grasped by the intellect in an act of direct comprehension of its meaning; the matter was, mainly, comprehension of simple concepts.⁸

In the history of modern philosophy, up to the present day, intuition was opposed to the discursive cognition and even completely deprived of cognitive values, as was the case in various mutations of positivism. However, subtle analyzes, the subject of which were individual stages

⁵ Plotyn, *Enneady*, IV–V, transl. A. Krokiewicz, vol. 2, (Warszawa: ACME, 2001), 407. A Greek passage: *Plotini Enneades*, ed. Ricardus Volkmann, vol. 2 (Lipsiae: B. G. Teubneri, MDCCCLXXXIV), 47. My own translation: “What disturbs that the soul should have a collective intuition of all things at once?”.

⁶ Stanisław Judycki, *Leksykon Filozofii Klasycznej* [Lexicon of Classical Philosophy] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego KUL, 1997), 306–309.

⁷ *Ibidem*, 306.

⁸ *Ibidem*, 306–307.

of discourse, indicate the need for intuition regarding the correlations between these stages.

In *Słownik przewodnik filozoficzny. Osoby – problemy – terminy* [Dictionary Philosophical Guide. Persons – Problems – Terms] we can read that intuition is (among others): “[...] a non-discursive, in-depth view, preliminary to further cognition (reasoning) or crowning it.”⁹ A very important and interesting thing is to put there, next the Greek concept of ἐπιβολή, as the Greek source of the concept of intuition, the well-known term νοῦς, which is usually uniquely associated with just reasoning. Meanwhile, νοῦς, or ‘reason’, also carries, next to its most common meaning, some contents close to the feelings and heart, such as disposition. They are by no means mutually exclusive, but rather complementary to the very ability to reason.¹⁰ The term “intuition” finds its development in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* [Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy], referring to the both above-mentioned Greek concepts, namely ἐπιβολή and νοῦς. Latin *intuitio* (as well as *intuitus*) is translated as “learning, looking, exploring” and as “indiscursive view”, since the antiquity referring to the total vision of the object of cognition.¹¹ “This ‘indiscursive, in-depth view’ was to fulfill a dual function as “initial in relation to further cognition (reasoning) or crowning it.”¹² This comprehension of intuition does not put it in opposition to discursive thinking and also gives it an important role, initiating cognition. Of course, this is not all – intuition is also the power that cognition crowns, combining (in one view) the results of many previous discourses.

3. If we want to analyze ready-made theories, meant as a set of sentences ordered in a coherent system, then, after Władysław Tatarkiewicz, we can distinguish two types of cognition assuming the type of sentences used in them as the criterion for their division:

⁹ *Słownik przewodnik filozoficzny. Osoby – problemy – terminy* [Dictionary – Philosophical Guide. Persons – Problems – Terms], ed. A. Maryniarczyk (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2012), 426.

¹⁰ *Słownik grecko-polski*, 215.

¹¹ *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii* [Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy], ed. A. Maryniarczyk, vol. 4 (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2003), 897. The author of the entry ‘intuition’ (pages 897–901) is Mieczysław A. Krapiec. “The first and indisputable form of intellectual intuition is the understanding of being and the resulting vision of the consistency of being.” (ibidem). On page 898 we read: “The vision of being and the intuition of the principle of noncontradiction associated with it is the indisputable foundation of human rational knowledge.”

¹² Ibidem, 897.

There are – Tatarkiewicz claims – two groups of sentences and two groups theories. of Some record the state of affairs directly and speak directly about it, the other ones record the state of affairs which is not directly given and knowledge about it is indirect. The sentences of this group's theory prove their arguments by reasoning. [...] This distinction is simple, it is a distinction between direct (intuitive) and discursive cognition.¹³

The thing is simple if we analyze a ready set of sentences with cognitive content. And even then, some intuitive sentences will concern the world available to the senses, while other sentences may relate to objects of faith perceived as existing. Intuition of an internally consistent being, as a necessary condition of rational cognition, occupies its significant place in classical philosophy. The being is intuitively conceived as existing and so this approach can be the basis of metaphysics.¹⁴ In modern philosophy, intuition concerns those ideas that, as too simple, no longer undergo further analysis.

However, the issue of intuition will be different when we want to indicate its place in the cognitive process. Directness and intuitiveness of cognition will seem to accompany only its initial phase. While intuition is present at the final phase, it is intellectual and synthesizing summarizing and consolidating the results that occur in the process of examining a specific object. Only at the introductory stage does intuition connect, or more precisely, is connected with feelings or premonitions. At the final stage of cognition, feelings can at most accompany it, but completely regardless of this stage.

We could summarize the cognitive process as follows: from those premonitions marked with emotionality and cognitive ambiguity, as well as with the work of imagination of intuitions, towards a theory fully refined in detail. It is the highest manifestation of the work of the intellect which usually extends over the years of studies of the subject, but it can also appear in one act of intellectual intuition, as synchronously integrating intellectual efforts into one image. Directness, as a feature of cognitive approaches, will therefore concern the first stage of cognition, still related to the separation and isolation of its subject, but also occurs at its last stage, associated with the summary act of intellectual

¹³ Ryszard Wiśniewski, *Dobro: moralność, szczęście, piękno. Studium aksjologii Władysława Tatarkiewicza* [The good: morality, happiness, beauty. The study of Władysław Tatarkiewicz's axiology] (Bydgoszcz: Oficyna Wydawnicza Epigram, 2013), 65.

¹⁴ Cf.: "The main topic of my interests was European philosophical thought from its inception up to the 15th century. I define this philosophy as classical, because in this period there is a perception that philosophy – as a love of wisdom – places metaphysics in the center of its problems." Stefan Swieżawski, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej* [History of the European Classical Philosophy] (Warszawa–Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2000), XI.

intuition. Both types or, nay, levels of intuition, differ significantly, as well as the degrees and types of directness that accompany them. Between the first and last stages of the cognitive process, we have cognition “mediated” by philosophical discourse. The more orderly it is, in the most general sense of the word “logical”, the greater the chance that in the end this direct, summarizing these processes, final intuition will appear. The integral image of the theory synthesizes the fruit of its direct insight into all stages of its creation, as well as into all “transitions” between stages, connecting them into a coherent whole. This unity in diversity is the most important achievement of intellectual intuition, and also its final act.

* * *

I. “The Sage’s Slide and Eye” in Wrestling with the Imagination of the Artist and Romantic Philosopher

Mickiewicz’s *Romantyczność* [Romanticity], with its trans-valuations, with a strong imperative to “have the heart and look at the heart!”, was invoked as a manifestation of “feeling”: “Feeling and faith speaks to me more than a sage’s slide and eye.”¹⁵ The reason and the whole system of science were to be brought to ruin. Meanwhile, the “sage” of Vilnius, Professor Jan Śniadecki, was, as we know, an empiricist. And here begins the string of associations that Mickiewicz himself could have. Empiricism was associated by romantics with “coarse materialism”, probably because it reached Poland in the popular version, via French *philosophantes*. Perhaps then, the aim was not to treat scientific work and any rationality slightlying as such in favor of irrationality, but to reject a certain philosophy, “thick” and materialistic, because it ignored the spiritual aspect of man – hence “faith” which “speaks more strongly”. The “feeling” can be presented as a kind of direct intuition capable of grasping this aspect. Jan Skoczynski, in a sketch devoted to Aleksander Fredro (a “separate romantic”), wrote:

The fact is that our Romanticism was dominated by the epistemological paradigm of “feeling and faith”, which was supposed to be a negation of the Enlightenment “slide and eye”, enhanced by the unlimited imagination of the poet – genius. It was able to recognize and reveal the absolute truth – both in its existential (individual) and universal (philosophical and

¹⁵ For the first time *Romantyczność* was included in the collection of A. Mickiewicz’s poetry *Ballady i romanse* [Ballads and romances] published in Vilnius in 1822.

historical) aspects. In this way, “feeling and faith” gained the causative power of transforming the existing reality and turning it into an ideal.¹⁶

It is worth emphasizing here, after Skoczylński, the frequently ignored cognitive aspect of the ‘feeling and faith’. If so, then – so common in Romantic stylistics – the “feeling” could be described both as direct and deep metaphysical intuition, reaching the “absolute truth”. Such cognition was, in fact, to result in specific life decisions regarding matters that are most important to man. Eleonora Ziemięcka wrote about the “cultivation of feeling” as a warranty of morality more reliable than the “cultivation of reason”: “Morality does not depend on the cultivation of reason, which has been admitted more than once [...]. Cultivation of feeling is a more confident warranty of the same.”¹⁷

There is no reason to link the meaning of this “feeling” to the lack of any rationality. Similarly, the criticism of a certain type of rationality, which is always present in Romantic poetry, only applies to its simplified version. This simplified version was at the same time limited to scientific reflection accompanying the use of the “slide and eye”, closely related to observation of nature, and thus, to “the inherent” aspect of reality. Added to this is a view of reality based on the common sense, a common conviction regarding the existence of what the senses teach us, regardless of a level of education. Summing up the nature of Maurycy Mochnacki’s early statements, Stanisław Pieróg recognized a kind of protest in them:

against the appropriations and usurpations of any empiricist and common sense philosophy [...]. They disagreed that scientific knowledge should play a decisive role in human life, and that borders of the sensual experience were to be insurmountable boundaries for “feeling”, imagination, will – for the powers which create goals, values, ideals.¹⁸

¹⁶ Jan Skoczylński, “Aleksander Fredro – romantyk osobny” [Aleksander Fredro – a separate romantic], in: *Romantyzmy polskie* [Polish types of Romanticism], ed. A. Dziedzic, T. Herbich, S. Pieróg, P. Ziemiński (Warszawa: Fundacja Historii Filozofii Polskiej, 2016), 212–232.

¹⁷ Cf. Eleonora Ziemięcka, “Myśli o filozofii” [Thoughts about philosophy], in: *Biblioteka Warszawska* 2 (1841): 421. “An outstanding philosopher may deviate into the wilderness, the development of the intellect, unfortunately, does not guarantee any moral progress, but the source of pure and true intuition constantly beats in the community, even if it consists of simple and uneducated people.” (Wiesława Sajdek, “Porządek społeczny czy indywidualna doskonałość człowieka – w kregu myśli Eleonory Ziemięckiej” [Social order or individual human perfection – in the circle of Eleonora Ziemięcka’s thoughts], in: *Polish Romanticism*, 119).

¹⁸ Stanisław Pieróg, “Wstęp” [Introduction] to: Maurycy Mochnacki. *Poezja i czyn. Wybór pism* [Maurycy Mochnacki. Poetry and the act. Selection of works] (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1987), 43.

Undoubtedly, this criticized “reason” inherited its simplified meaning after the Age of Enlightenment, when it was widely believed that nothing but the senses, as a source of knowledge and accompanying reflection, constitute the “rationality” of cognition. In the era of Romanticism, we deal with pointing to other else sources. It may be a philosophy of a different type than the empiricism (popularized in the 18th century), and it can also be mystical cognition, “reasoning mysticism”, as Karol Libelt described the cognitive method used and propagated by Adam Mickiewicz. Stanisław Pieróg noted: “The author of the »Self-Control of Reason« was convinced that mysticism and philosophy are similar in some respects, and therefore comparable, and what connects them and enables comparison is a common goal.¹⁹ That goal was to learn God.

The common goal has – as you can see – a cognitive nature; the fundamental difference, which separates mysticism from philosophy, concerns the method or the path on which this goal can be achieved. The philosopher wishes to achieve this goal – learning about things – by “making out with the reason”, while the mystic wants to achieve it through direct “seeing.”²⁰

The author of the paper refers to a relevant fragment of Libelt’s work: “The philosopher will reason the matter and gives a rationale by the power of his conviction, the mystic has a direct vision, unwavering by imagination.”²¹

It can be suspected that the scope of the concept of “imagination” in Romanticism is significantly broader than other ranges of this concept, narrower in any other era. It would seem that the object of imagination, or “fantasy”, are images full of sensual aesthetics, freely transformed fragments of nature and in general – all the richness of nature, in its shapes and colors, constituting the basic material for artists. Mysticism, however, goes beyond and above the sensual world and therefore has little to do with imagination. Traditionally, mysticism, as the highest type of cognition – of intellectual seeing – crowned the work of the intellect directed towards the highest – and therefore religious – topics and objects. This tradition collapsed at the end of the Middle Ages. So first, the philosophy of the Enlightenment passionately depreciated certain topics as going beyond the reason, and thus, beyond the limits of the “rational” cognition, making concessions to the deistic

¹⁹ Idem, “Mistyka i gnoza w myśli filozoficznej polskiego romantyzmu (Mickiewicz, Trentowski i Libelt)” [Mystics and Gnosis in the philosophical thought of Polish Romanticism (Mickiewicz, Trentowski and Libelt)], *Kronos* 4 (2017): 109.

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ Karol Libelt, *Samowładztwo rozumu i objawy filozofii słowiańskiej* [Self-rule of reason and symptoms of Slavic philosophy] (Warsaw 1967), 358; after: ibidem, 109.

“God of philosophers”, and then Romanticism, valuing the “faith of the people” with all its abuses of pagan provenance, glorified the imagination, including in the comprehension of this concept all fantasizing. Not only as of full rights, but often, also the most perfect means and method of reliable cognition. It was to be accompanied by “feeling” and “faith”, in some of its manifestations: “purely Slavic”, pre-Christian, and since “of folk”, it was also authentic.

Stanisław Pieróg, writing about the pre-uprising, aesthetic work of Maurycy Mochnacki, notes that in this first period of nascent Romanticism:

it was necessary to philosophically justify the legitimacy of the Romantic attitude towards the world, thus questioning the legitimacy of criticism from the positions of the empiricist and common sense philosophy. The authority of this philosophy has already been weakened by driveway fights led by the first Romantic poets: “the sage’s slide and eye” has already lost some of its solemnity in the field of “feeling and faith.”²²

So it was not about depreciating philosophy as such, but about its concrete, historical shape – empiricism, usually simplified for the purposes of devastating criticism. Poetry was most often posed on its antipodes:

Poetry was privileged not because it was to express some special aesthetic needs and experience, but because it was to be an unrestricted expression of all feelings and desires – above all, those directed beyond the borders of the empirical reality of “feelings of infinity”, “ideal feelings”, “metaphysical feelings.”²³

So the “feeling”, “faith”, and imagination in Romanticism becomes an important tool of cognition. The point is not the kind of imagination that often inspires science itself but the fantasy itself, the “untamed imagination” that Jan Śniadecki was afraid of so much. The fantasy, as a manifestation of creative freedom, discovers areas of beauty, creates new worlds, acts inspiringly – because it strengthens man in his spiritual aspect. It is undoubtedly connected with direct cognition. It cannot be “measured”, its action is recognized by its effects, because it is associated with spontaneity. In the article entitled *Idea wyobraźni a romantyczny i postromantyczny dyskurs o wychowaniu* [The idea of imagination and the Romantic and Post-Romantic discourse about education], its author, discussing the ways of functioning and various manifestations of imagination, rightly reminds that it is one of the most important ideas

²² Pieróg, “Wstęp”, 32.

²³ Ibidem, 43.

of Romanticism.²⁴ Describing the operation of imagination, he focuses on its cognitive value, without depreciating its undeniable role in artistic creation. Cognition may, of course, also relate to the effects of the works of art themselves, but imagination has a cognitive value also outside of them and independent of them. Andrzej Kasperek writes:

Although the idea of imagination relates specifically to artistic expression, I do not want to limit it to the world of artistic experience only, but I would like to direct our reflection towards thinking about imagination as a tool of cognition. Imagination is based on recalling images and combining them into certain constellations, but also associated with the process of perceiving the world.²⁵

In the Polish philosophy of the Romantic period, imagination was not rejected as a source of cognition and as such enjoyed respect, although the place it occupied was special, certainly not the most important and not central. It was appropriate for philosophical reflection that imagination should give way to the reason, although the comprehension of the very concept of reason differed significantly from what had been taught in the age of the Enlightenment. Another philosophy significantly influenced a different comprehension of this concept. Maurycy Mochnacki, the most important aesthetist of the Polish Romanticism, often mentions “philosophy” in his pre-uprising, critical, and literary texts. He is also sometimes referred to as the philosopher.²⁶ It is special kind of philosophy that combines the freedom of poetic projections and related images with a function that stimulates activity according to ideal values created in the free creative act. These images paved the way to discover reality both extrasensory and closest to the truth about man, associated with his opening to infinity, with the “sense of infinity”. The sense of infinity and longing for infinity determined the philosophical program of inspired poetic actions. Poetry was perceived enthusiastically and was able to stimulate self-sacrificing acts. The philosophy of the German Idealism, which impressed Mochnacki in the way the discovery of the promised land could, in its Schellingian version, showed the awakening

²⁴ Andrzej Kasperek, “Idea wyobraźni a romantyczny i postromantyczny dyskurs o wychowaniu” [The idea of Imagination and the Romantic and Post-Romantic discourse on education], *Studia Pedagogiczne* L (2017): 91–103.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 92.

²⁶ Józef Kallenbach wrote about Mochnacki: “you have to take him as he was, completely, i.e. both as a writer, philosopher and politician.” (“O Maurycym Mochnackim” [About Maurycy Mochnacki], *Biblioteka Warszawska* VI, II, 3 (1910): 443). Stanisław Brzozowski: “the whole of Mochnacki, not only a politician, but Mochnacki-philosopher, Mochnacki esthetician and poet” (“O Maurycym Mochnackim”, in: *idem, Głosy wśród nocy. Studia nad przesileniem romantycznym kultury europejskiej*, introduction O. Ortwin (Lwów: O. Ortwin, 1912), 277.

of consciousness where it had been dormant before. The genius of the inspired artist was not only the highest manifestation of human cognitive abilities, but also aroused enthusiasm in numerous recipients of his works. Unlike in the teaching of the Enlightenment philosophers, the true nature of man exceeded the purely sensual and experimental dimension. The true philosophy went beyond the limits of science; it was the philosophical metaphysics based on imagination. It was certainly not metaphysics in its classical meaning but much closer to the process of researching ideas found within one's own interior of consciousness. Thus, romantics corporately criticized the idealistic "metaphysics", which was a product of the analysis of consciousness, and not metaphysics in its classical shape, whose purpose was to discover the deepest structures of reality, through the processes of the properly carried out abstraction, as intended by its creator, Aristotle. As regards scholasticism, Romantic philosophers were generally not of a good opinion, especially since they knew little about it.

II. Examples of Direct Cognition in the Views of Bronisław Trentowski

Bronisław Trentowski (1808–1869) devoted all years of his philosophical reflections to "cognition of God", as he himself said in the letter:

For fifteen years I have been working around learning God only. [...] The fruit of these works is about fifteen volumes of the manuscripts. [...] And so, what I can reveal forward is the work already promulgated: 'Christmas'. At a later date, I will publish "I believe in God or competence in Christianity" in three or four volumes on which I am currently working. Finally, 'Bożycy', a multi-volume work on old and new pagan faiths, will come out.²⁷

Cognition of God, and thus an issue of religious source on the basis of philosophy was usually identified with the cognition of the Absolute. Trentowski considered this kind of cognition most important for man. This does not change the fact that his approach to religious contents was,

²⁷ Emilia Lipiec explains, on the basis of her careful research, the intricacies regarding the connections between the contents and the titles of Bronisław Trentowski's works on *Bożycy* – cf. "Bożycy Bronisława Trentowskiego: dzieło w trybach czasu" [Bronisław Trentowski's *Bożycy*: a work in time modes], *Kronos* (2017). A fragment of Trentowski's letter to Aleksander Zdanowicz, quoted above, dated Aug. 10, 1855, I quote after the author, as above, 9. The source was the edition developed by Stanisław Pigoń "Listy Br. Trentowskiego (1836–1869)" [Letters of Br. Trentowski (1836–1869)], *Archiwum Komisji do Badania Historii Filozofii w Polsce* 6 (1937): 277.

in a nutshell, a kind of gnosis, i.e. one of many attempts to replace faith with a speculation in which the intellectual approaches seem to their authors incomparably clearer than the commented contents included in orthodox teaching.²⁸ The more that the teaching recognized by the Church is directed to everyone, and therefore mainly to the numerous masses who contribute to the uneducated “general” or “people” whose thinking and “the spirit” in general is just “waking up”. The feeling of exclusiveness certainly accompanied not only Romantic poets but also philosophers. Bronisław Trentowski comprehended well the uniqueness of the philosophical reason. He called him ‘mysl’ [the etymological base of ‘thought’], referring to the Slavic substrate, and, philosophizing in German, he described this power as *Wahrnehmung*. In his opinion, its proper use was manifested in creating the foundations of “universal philosophy”. It was to become a synthesis of two items of “one-sidedness” – the empirical contact with the external, sensory reality and the rational cognition of the “ideal” internal sphere. Trentowski called such a philosophy “national”, meaning that it would become the achievement of the “national philosopher” he wanted to take himself for. He intended to combine the elements of pure rationality in a total philosophical synthesis, creating the “universal philosophy”, absoluteness and “ideality” with what is sensual, directly felt, arising from the imagination and religious experience of the “common [country] folk”. His *Bożycza* was to gather the oldest Slavic beliefs, and therefore, the faith of “the common folk”. “The universal system of Trentowski’s national philosophy seems incomplete without God”, Emilia Lipiec notes.²⁹

An essential introduction to the system of universal philosophy was to become *Podstawy filozofii uniwersalnej* [Foundations of universal philosophy] originally published in German, as the fruit of Trentowski’s philosophical studies in Freiburg, Baden, where he stayed from the autumn 1833. His doctoral thesis, written in German, entitled *Grundlage der universellen Philosophie*, was presented in Freiburg in 1836.

Trentowski’s *Podstawy filozofii uniwersalnej* contain, above all, numerous attempts to synthesize what man can learn from two sources of cognition, senses and the reason. It is difficult because, at the same time, Trentowski himself repeatedly expresses the certainty that they remain absolutely separate. The certainty that accompanies his consciousness seems to have the closest connection with the philosophical

²⁸ “The goal of philosophy, says Trentowski, is to reach God. Its culmination is theosophy, which is a purely rational science of the Creator” (from the editorial by Wawrzyniec Rymkiewicz, *Kronos* 4 (2017): 4).

²⁹ Lipiec, “Bożycza Bronisława Trentowskiego”: 6. This comment was included, once more, by the editorial staff of *Kronos*, and the uncertain ‘seemed to be’ was converted to categorical “is”. Cf. *ibidem*: 13.

legacy of Descartes and a much looser connection with Kant's criticism; although Trentowski mentions Kant in the very content of his work, he returns to Descartes only occasionally. At the very beginning of the Introduction to the *Podstawy filozofii uniwersalnej*, we can read:

There are two sources of cognition: sensuality and the reason. Sensuality – the body of cognition, in a way – is external and refers to the shell of existence, that is, to the actual object; while the reason – the soul of knowledge, in a way – has an internal character and refers to the nucleus of existence, i.e. to the spiritual source of all its activities, i.e. to the proper subject in general. Both sources have direct and therefore unshakeable certainty. Both, the unconditionally necessary formula of sensuality: “sentio, ergo res est” and the unconditional-overbearing formula of reason: “cogito, ergo sum”, are pure items of directness that are shared by all people equally. The proof of this directness can only be demanded by those who lost them as a result of physical or spiritual illness, or who do not want to know that directness as such cannot be proven. What can be proven can be – according to its analytical significance – mediated and, therefore, not direct. [...] the reason gives rise to metaphysics, or idealism.³⁰

First, both the senses and the reason, as parallel sources of cognition, have, according to Trentowski, “direct and therefore unshakable certainty.” He associates directness with the obviousness, and this is not obvious, in itself. Secondly, “[...] the reason gives rise to metaphysics, or idealism.” Here we have a clear mix of meanings typical to Romanticism. After all, classical metaphysics has the ambition to search, organize, and teach what is most important in the reality, i.e. in the being which objectively exists and is faced with the cognizant subject. The classical metaphysics is a realistic philosophy. For Trentowski, “realism” means the area of reality available to the senses, which can be studied scientifically. Then, based on this research, inventions are created, which in turn can have a real impact on the lives of entire societies. Metaphysics, in the language of Trentowski, means a speculative system, drawn out “apodictically” from the depths of his own mind, and thus, “the interior”. It is so far “idealistic” as it is based on “ideas” conceived in a completely modern way, as thoughts. So defined, then it becomes the object of as devastating as naive criticism. As “idealism”, he sums up Leibniz's philosophy by accusing him of the following:

³⁰ Bronisław Trentowski, *Podstawy filozofii uniwersalnej* [Elements of the universal philosophy] (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1978), 17. The book also contains *Wstęp do nauki o naturze* [Introduction to the science of nature]. Both works were translated from German by Michał Żółkoś-Rosemary, reviewed and annotated by Jan Garewicz. Introduction by Andrzej Walicki.

Is everything that I can see and hear, feel, everything that I get to know through my senses, so all physics, chemistry, all natural sciences, all wonderful inventions that immortalize mankind were to be only illusions? Could the splendors of nature and even greater splendor of art, and therefore, the natural and aesthetic beauty, be phantoms just because I can see them and the juggling world of concepts only because is the reality that I think and can think? Oh no! Against this the direct certainty of external existence revolts that I owe to my senses.³¹

Trentowski criticizes equally enthusiastically the specifically comprehended “realism” for “one-sidedness” which he recognizes in the both types or kinds of philosophy. Only his own “universal” philosophy, which is a synthesis of realism and idealism, will be able to avoid the errors of the both criticized positions.

In addition to the above-presented concept of “directness” as an attribute and also an indicator of reliable and true cognition, Trentowski used this concept in a specific sense when he tried to emphasize the possibility get to know God without the mediation of the Church, i.e. without centuries of the old tradition, built around attempts to properly interpret the revealed contents, passed down to future generations in the teaching of the Church. Revelation as a source of knowledge, conceived as a kind of experienced, one-off vision, by no means inspired the philosopher’s trust. Andrzej Walicki writes on this matter:

In mystical supranaturalism, Trentowski saw not only the enemy, but also the competitor: his own theory of *mysł* also arose from the search for allegedly lost by direct humanity ‘direct eye for the transcendental’. By ‘directness’ of cognition Trentowski comprehended something completely different from Romantic supranaturalists: not a sudden, irrational flash of intuition, but independent cognition, one’s own, free from mediation of revelation. *Mysł*, in his concept, was a transcendental różnojednia [vario-unity] of empirical and speculative cognition, so his ‘unraveling’ required mediation through the development of the empirical and speculative reason. It resulted from the fact that ‘*mysłowanie*’ [using of the *mysł*] without basing on the proper development of the empirical and speculative cognition is one-sidedness, and that one-sidedness is particularly dangerous, since the worst thing to do is to distort the best. *Rozum bez myśłu* [‘The reason without the mind’] was something unequally better for Trentowski than *mysł bez rozumu* [‘The mind without the reason’].³²

³¹ Ibidem, 21.

³² Andrzej Walicki, “Polityka i religia w koncepcjach filozoficznych Bronisława Trentowskiego” [Politics and religion in Bronisław Trentowski’s philosophical concepts], Introduction to: Bronisław Trentowski, *Stosunek filozofii do cybernetyki oraz wybór pism filozoficznych z lat 1842–1845* [Bronisław Trentowski. Relation of philosophy

It seems that the first type of abuse, "rozum bez myśłu", was seen by "Trentowski in French thinkers of the eighteenth century, while this second kind, unevenly in his opinion more dangerous, he saw in the modern era. It was supposed to be the abuse of philosophical Romantic poets, or those philosophers who, in fact, were rather poets than thinkers, referring unrestrictedly to the 'um' [the etymological base of 'to be skilled, to be intelligent, to know'] and thus, exceeding the limits of thinking, the exuberant imagination.

On the occasion of the search for this highest cognitive power, the "myśl", as the "direct eye for the transcendentality," we are impressed by the significant inconsistency of the philosopher. Well, "myśl", on the one hand, is a clear sign of cognitive progress, appearing as a tool for a higher synthesis of two antagonistic items of "one-sidedness", while on the other hand, it is something that had once existed, but in unfavorable circumstances was lost by humanity. So it can be recovered at most, but it will not constitute a significant new gain. The progress is not made in the past. Not to mention the fact that such a "myśl", combined with some pagan beliefs, would thus acquire the traits of irrationality so hated by the philosopher.

III. Examples of Direct Cognition in the Philosophy of August Cieszkowski

The subject of disputes or arbitrary decisions is the answer to what extent and in which works Cieszkowski practiced philosophy. The answer will definitely depend on what definition of philosophy we use. In this case, it will be, in many respects typical for the Romantic era, a syncretic reflection of the worldview, with elements of bold speculation, from which, however, a specific social program should emerge. For romantics, practicing speculation as much as it seemed possible and sometimes even losing all limits of decency as it seems, at the same time, they have reformation ambitions. Therefore, bold reform plans made by them should inspire the life itself, its most vital process. So, they constantly wanted the kind and level of philosophical reflection that it flows directly from life and also directly concerns what is most important in both individual and social life. It often turned out that religion brought the most important things to the human life. After all, the unfinished work by August Cieszkowski is Romantic breaking all canons, in a Romantic way, of the

correctly – in the classical sense – arranged philosophical work, an extensive commentary on the Lord's Prayer, which is *Our Father*.

It is not difficult to isolate, among Cieszkowski's works, economic works,³³ as well as those with political content,³⁴ regarding the structure of the political system, division of power in the state, etc. You can also indicate texts on the so-called social issues, including social assistance.³⁵ Undoubtedly, a clear historiosophical skeleton can be distinguished in his thoughts, because this type of reflection accompanied him from his first important philosophical book, *Prolegomena do historiozofii* [Prolegomena to historiosophy], written and primarily published in German.³⁶ He continued this reflection during the next decades,³⁷ until his death and it is certainly one of the leading motives of his life's work, as he pointed out, an extensive commentary on the Lord's Prayer, under the common title *Our Father*.

In his *opus vitae*, Cieszkowski analyzes, in turn, all the isolated fragments of the *Lord's Prayer*, that is, "*Our Father*," starting from the "*wezwanie*" [a call, appeal]³⁸, which contains an invocation to God as "*Our Father*." He is followed by "*requests*", because this is how Cieszkowski

³³ *Du credit et de la circulation* (Paris: Treuttwel et Wurtz, 1839); second edition – Paris 1847; third – Paris 1884. Polish edition: *O kredycie i obiegu* [On the credit and circulation] (Poznań 1911), translated by A. Cieszkowski – son based on the third edition, Paris 1884. Fragment in: *Filozofia społeczna i myśl społeczna w latach 1831–1864 (700 lat myśli polskiej)* [Social philosophy and thought in 1831–1864 [700 years of the Polish thought]] (Waszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1977), 333–336. See also: "*Uwagi nad obecnym stanem finansów angielskich*" [Remarks on the present state of English finances], *Biblioteka Warszawska* (1842): 377–418.

³⁴ *De la pairie et de l'aristocratie modern* (Paris: Amyot, 1844); second edition – Paris 1847, third edition – Paris 1884. *O izbie wyższej i arystokracji w naszych czasach* [About the upper house of Parliament and aristocracy in our time] (Poznań 1908), translated by A. Cieszkowski – son. Fragment in: *Filozofia społeczna i myśl społeczna w latach 1831–1864*, 327–333.

³⁵ "*O ochronach wiejskich*" [On rural protections], *Biblioteka Warszawska* (1842): 367–411. *Zur Verbesserung der Lage der Arbeiter auf dem Lande. Ein Vortrag gehalten in der zweiten General-Sammlung des landwirtschaftlichen Provinzial-Vereins für die Mark Brandenburg und die Niederlausitz*, am 17 May 1845 (Berlin: Schroeder, 1846).

³⁶ *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* (Berlin: Veit, 1838); Polish edition: *Prolegomena do historyozofii* [Prolegomena to historiosophy] (Poznań 1908), translated by A. Cieszkowski – son.

³⁷ On the subject of historiosophy in August Cieszkowski see the monograph: Andrzej Wawrzynowicz, *Filozoficzne przesłanki holizmu historiozoficznego w myśli Augusta Cieszkowskiego* [Philosophical premises of historiosophic holism in the thought of August Cieszkowski] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2010).

³⁸ Hence the title of this part – *Wezwanie* [The call – which in the 1922 edition constitutes a part of the second volume, together with *The First Request* – i.e. *Hallowed be Your Name*].

recognized the parts following the initial “call” of *Our Father*,³⁹ beginning with the “First Request”, that is, *Hallowed be Thy Name*. Their content was to remain a mystery to humanity, until, through history, numerous experiences, but also the development of knowledge, it obtains an appropriate level of development, which Cieszkowski calls “the majority age of God’s children”. In the antiquity, humanity was on the children’s level, close to nature; in the next, Christian era, they grew up, matured, like every individual, to full adulthood, physical and mental. It was this level that humanity had just reached as late as in the nineteenth century that allowed us to properly read and comprehend subsequent “requests”, parts of prayer that primarily contain a great program to be materialized, recognized as a global act. The necessary condition for the implementation of this powerful, social program, evolution without any revolution, being the “progress without robbery” was to be the world peace.⁴⁰ It meant Christian relations at the level of international politics, which until now was an arena of truly pagan ruthlessness and wildness. Christian relations have only been built between individuals, but never between nations. The world peace, which is just a chance,⁴¹ was to be the right foundation and a necessary condition for the spontaneous and free creation of various societies and unions to join people in so-called “associations”, as was then said, of national and international nature, often supranational. The sense and purpose of their formation and activity was social help. It was to be mutual assistance, not alms, and therefore cooperation, and not distribution of goods, which ultimately only maintains passivity and stagnation, accompanying the human misery in all its manifestations.

An important impulse for all these activities was to be the prayer *Our Father*, known and recited for many centuries, but it was as late as in the nineteenth century that it was time to fully comprehend its “mystical secrets”: seven requests, which are in fact “the secrets of the future.” And yet, this initial “call” – the same: *Our Father* itself, according

³⁹ *The Second Request – Thy Kingdom come, third – Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, fourth – Give us this day our daily bread, fifth – And forgive us our sins as we forgive ours culprits, sixth – And lead us not into temptation, and seventh – But deliver us from evil* Cieszkowski also commented on the final Amen.

⁴⁰ Cf. Wiesława Sajdek, *Postęp bez rozboju. Podstawy teorii dynamizmu społecznego w filozofii Augusta Cieszkowskiego* [Progress without robbery. Fundamentals of the theory of social dynamism in the philosophy of August Cieszkowski] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2008).

⁴¹ Cieszkowski, according to his own notes, wrote *Wezwanie* in 1837–1838, i.e. at the age of 23–24. *Wstęp* [Introduction] to *Ojciec nasz* [Our Father], often treated as the first volume, was written only ten years later. It was first published in Paris in 1848. Cf. *Dziennik osobisty* [Personal diary], notes from September 6, 1837 to June 1839, Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Akta personalne Augusta Cieszkowskiego [Personal files of August Cieszkowski]. Rkp 153 III.

to Cieszkowski, does not contain a secret, but appears to everyone with all its obviousness. It is not only fully understood and grasped, and for everyone, but also “the most accessible”. This affordability and simplicity is also the reason for some kind of apophatism – neither a thought nor a word can respond to this “call” properly. So, they must turn to their hearts:

And at the very head of this last will, which under the form of requests covers all the present secrets of our future, – but which, under the conclusion of these seven requests, had to be a mystical will and await the majority of God’s children – we find no secret, nor the question of what we had to solve using our thoughts and words, but, of course, an open statement, the most accessible, the most obvious, understandable to everyone, touching everyone vividly, contained in a simple and tender exclamation, before which the thought and the word stop, calling for help to the heart.⁴²

It sounds both Romantic and philosophical if we recall the “heart order” of Blaise Pascal. The “openness” of the initial call is certainly accompanied by directness, sense of obviousness and some intuitions, especially those related to feelings.⁴³ In this initial turn to God as Father, Cieszkowski finds a meaningful abbreviation – “a summary of the summary”:

So, if the entire Lord’s Prayer was already acknowledged by the Fathers of the Church as a shortening of the whole Gospel, then its initial proclamation, so pregnant and loud, could be regarded as a summary of the summary itself. And indeed, no grain or embryo can more abundantly or subtly conceal, within itself, the elementals of the organism that is to fulfill it, no rule holds deeper within itself and more fully the elements of the skills to be revealed [...]. In it, as in a focus, all the aspirations of the past converged, from it all rays of the future gush like from a bonfire. [...] It is hard to find a basis more perfect for the requests, it is hard to fulfill them more surely, because whatever the requests light up in us with the universal concept, already in this call, it is flickering as if concealed in a premonition. Because also the Call (Invocation) itself has to do with further development requests, as a premonition is related to a notion, – as the possibility to the reality, – an assumption to the materialization, – a cause to the proof, a present longing to the future satisfaction.⁴⁴

⁴² August Cieszkowski, *Wezwanie i Pierwsza Prośba* [The call and the first request] (Poznań 1922), 6.

⁴³ “The divine Founder of Christianity proceeded not only to any of our Prayer, but also to the whole of His work with no Dogmatics or Eschatology, but first of all and above all he spoke to the feeling and good will – wrote young Cieszkowski in *Wezwanie*, 3.

⁴⁴ Idem, *Ojciec nasz*, vol. 2, 13–14.

The relationship of “a premonition” to “a notion”, without destroying anything from the richness of human feelings and the direct openness that accompanies the “call”, however, suggests that it also requires the fullest possible comprehension. It can be provided by a comprehensible commentary that filled the contents of the “work of life” of the Polish philosopher, his *Ojciec nasz* [Our Father].

According to Cieszkowski, “premonition”, “feeling” or, finally, feelings-related, direct intuition are the first, but necessary, degree of cognition, followed by the thought associated with the conception of what was previously felt as its next stage. These two stages necessarily precede each act of will.⁴⁵ This is the strongest argument that both are of great importance, although the thought stands above the feelings. This does not mean, however, that the feeling should be “rejected” or belittled in the act of the will – because it synthesizes both types of cognition without depreciating any of them.

Recapitulation

Referring to Mickiewicz’s “feeling and faith” Jan Skoczyński, in the paper already cited in this article, writes about the “revealing aspect of Romantic epistemology”⁴⁶. Indeed, the “feeling” meant insight into “the secrets of being,” as it was written at that time. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to give it the meaning of direct cognitive intuition rather than a simple opposition to what is rational, equally banally equated with all rationality. When criticizing Mickiewicz’s anti-philosophical attitude, it would be necessary to specify which philosophy he rejected, being prone, more or less consciously, towards a different kind of philosophizing. The tension between the philosophy and poetry, which has been from the beginning, as it were, concerns the ways of expression, philosophical and poetic, but also poetry can be philosophical or philosophizing, and philosophy sometimes uses poetic forms of expression. Some-

⁴⁵ Cf. : “Für Cieszkowski gibt es zwei Arten der Erkenntnis: das sinnliche Erkennen, von ihm die ‘Empfindung’ genannt, und das intellektuelle Erkennen, bei ihm durch das Wort ‘Denken’ ausgedrückt. Diese zwei Erkenntnisgattungen müssen für one wahren Willensakt vorausgesetzt werden”, Albert Wojtczak OFC, *Philosophie der Freiheit bei Graf August Cieszkowski. Eine spiritualische Lösung des Freiheitsproblems*, (Niepokalanów 1933), 45.

⁴⁶ Skoczyński, *Aleksander Fredro*, 230: “This revealing aspect of Romantic epistemology was supported by other ideas, which were, however, in an antinomical situation: living truths vs dead truths, nature vs culture; a lonely, rebellious individual in the face of immoral world, alien to him, and further: individual vs. nation, idealism vs. realism (especially: political); irrationality, fantasy, countless means of expression: literary, artistic, religious or philosophical [...]”

times it takes the form of “Chinese puzzle games”, called – according to Mickiewicz – “philosophical systems” by “this unbelieving generation of civilized people.”⁴⁷

In his early poems, e.g. in *Ballady i romanse* [*Ballads and romances*], [Mickiewicz] clearly established the hierarchy of the “feeling” and strict knowledge, “slide and eye” of the sage. And one could say that the poet was particular mainly about emphasizing the direct superiority, and thus, the source intuition of truth in relation to the planned empirical experience. That he wanted to establish an important hierarchy, not a total renunciation of the reason in favor of the simple emotions of the common people and their blind fideism.⁴⁸

An initial, direct approach to the object means, to tell the truth, a holistic view, and even an insight into the essence of a phenomenon, but without distinguishing the details. Moreover, it is a cognition marked by the impossibility of passing on its content to someone else because it is impossible to find a language suitable for them. The language is primarily a tool of social communication. It is not known if its imperfections prevent the contents of direct cognition from being passed on to someone else, or whether they, by their very nature, cannot be expressed in any language. They are, in a sense, too deep for formulations that could then be discussed in the dialogue.

The recapitulation of some selected threads of Romantic philosophizing is accompanied by the conviction that the philosophers of that era sometimes chaotically but consistently and passionately sought the unity and coherence of such a philosophical system that could sensibly merge the material and spiritual world. Schelling’s philosophy, however, did not so much inspire them in it, but rather enchanted them by showing them the way they themselves were unsuccessfully seeking. One can only ask whether, and if, it was a revelation and the “novelty” sought. The Schellingian system of unity of the natural and spiritual world presents itself as a modern variant of the Neoplatonic current, well-known in Europe albeit flowing in a hidden, underground channel, at least in the modernity. It seems that Romantic thinkers have tried to recover and integrate – in a uniform process of learning – various

⁴⁷ Adam Mickiewicz, *Dzieła*, vol. 13 (Warszawa: Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Czytelnik, 1955), 58. The wording comes from a fragment being a paraphrase from Emerson, written in French – translated by Leon Płoszewski.

⁴⁸ Wiesława Sajdek, “Czy poeci mogą filozofować? (Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński)” [Can poets philosophize? (Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński)], in: *Apokryficzność (w) filozofii. Nielanty/pozaortodoksyjne dyskursy filozoficzne* [Apocryphicity (in) philosophy. Non / anti / non-orthodox philosophical discourses], ed. M. Woźniczka, M. Perek (Częstochowa: Wydawnictwo AJD, 2017), 385.

paths and methods of truth, sometimes well known in earlier periods of the history of European philosophy. Also those that have been unauthorizedly ridiculed and rejected in the age of the Enlightenment as irrational. More or less consciously alluding to certain threads of philosophical tradition gave the impression of “destroying existing patterns” and “nowości potrząsanie kwiatem” [shaking the flower of novelty] in general. By the way, at least controversial statements could be read. In his *Bożyca*, Bronisław Trentowski discusses the need to refer to his own division of philosophy, already included in his earlier works, such as *Chowanna* and *Mysłini*. On this occasion, he states: “Each philosophical work should create a whole within itself and completely do without other works.”⁴⁹ Perhaps, as a unique literary work, but not as a philosophical work and, therefore, open to dialogue and ultimately grown out of dialogue. This postulate of absolute “sufficiency”, integrity and uniqueness of the work was accompanied by a desire to actively influence the reality, which was closely connected with the idea of progress. On this occasion, therefore, as a seeming paradox, it would be good to quote here the well-known saying by August Cieszkowski, who repeated that “after all, Tradition is nothing but progress.” Developing this apparent paradox, however, entails a different comprehension of the “tradition” associated with the generational message of Revelation, the “Tradition” written with a capital letter, in connection with the same. It would require adopting completely different initial assumptions than those which seem typical for this era for the vast majority of authors who write today about the philosophy of Romanticism. Meanwhile, the glaringly simplified scheme, dividing the views into “traditional” and, therefore, “backward” and what opposes tradition (and especially “Tradition”) becomes “progressive” almost *eo ipso*, actually does not put any order into anything and explain nothing. It is only a grave methodological misunderstanding, the more so that it ignores the important features of the historiosophical project of August Cieszkowski, one of the most important thinkers of that era.

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⁴⁹ Bronisław Trentowski, “Bożyca lub teozofia (fragments)”, *Kronos* 4 (2017): 27.

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Summary

The comprehensive introductory part of the present article is a discussion of the notion of the intuition in the ancient and classical understanding, ultimately established in the centuries-old European philosophical tradition. Especially important in this context are the intuitive components contained in neoplatonism. It is the intuition that initiates cognitive processes and then it involves references to metaphors and images, but it also crowns the cognitive process in the unifying vision of a true being, identical with reason. The stages of the process are accompanied by a special kind of intuition. In the context of this kind of tradition the understanding of both intuition and direct cognition in Polish Romanticism becomes enriched. “Feeling” can be legitimately interpreted as “intuition” for what really exists, and thus constituting the basis for an expanded hierarchy of values. It is thanks to the concept of reason, different from its understanding in Enlightenment, enriched with “feeling” and imagination, that Romanticism regained the view of man, forgotten in the preceding epoch, as the being directed towards its eschatological destination. Subsequently the above currents of thought were profusely illustrated with references to the views of Polish Romantic thinkers, like Maurycy Mochnacki, particularly Bronisław Trentowski and August Cieszkowski.

Keywords: intuition, direct cognition, neoplatonism, Polish Romanticism.

