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**The National Style of Music
by Ignacy Jan Paderewski¹ –
Late Romanticism or Eclecticism**

A clear account of this topic can be based only partially on musicological research. The problem concerns the discussion, which was very intense at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries among Polish intellectuals (as Poland did not exist that time). The main issue concerned the possible directions for the evolution and future character of Polish culture. Should Polish culture be more “national” or “European”? In our specific situation – a nation without a state – this question easily transformed itself into more dangerous one. “Should we preserve the vision of a Polish heroic-pastoral tradition created by the early romantic generation of K. Brodziński, A. Mickiewicz and J. Słowacki, or should we follow the new, European trends of modernism, the avant-garde and artistic experimentation?” The same question concerned music, with F. Chopin and S. Moniuszko as patrons of the romantic style, and M. Karłowicz and especially K. Szymanowski pressing for modern tendencies. At least two generations of artists battled against this problem – with mixed results. Unfortunately Polish musical society, with prestigious

¹ B. 6 November 1860 Kuryłówka (Poland, district Podole), d. 29 June 1941 New York.

personalities like W. Żeleński or Z. Noskowski (who were both professors at the Warsaw conservatory), pretended to preserve the “national character” against the wild and crazy (as they used to say) new ideas from Germany and Austria. As a result, numerous Polish artists could not find their place in the country not because of political or economic reasons, but because of the reluctance of critics to embrace modern tendencies. Paderewski was one of them. The founder of Polish musicology, Adolf Chybiński, in his article ‘Muzyka Młodej Polski i jej stosunek socjalny w Polsce’ [Music of Young Poland and its Social connections in Poland]² complained bitterly:

Such names as Paderewski, Melcer, Stojowski, Karłowicz, Różycki, Wertheim, Fietelberg, Szeluto, Szymanowski, Opieński are well-known in our country only as names; their art is barely known; no one has noticed their importance so far. [...] Unrecognised and shoved to the side of our cultural life they could not find any possibility to use their abilities and knowledge; nobody had offered them positions appropriate to their aspirations; nobody gave them any high-level job to develop their skills, to let them raise the level of our neglected music. They had no other choice but to emigrate and to look for recognition outside Poland, although they would have served their indigenous culture better than others, who prevail among us only because they flatter the popular taste of the common people. [...] Our [Polish] policy is to force stronger against the weaker, it is the policy of arrogation, favours, nepotism and hypocrisy. If we are talking from time to time about Paderewski, Melecer or Stojowski it is (we should point it clearly) because of their concert activity, if they were not virtuosi nobody would know anything about them. [...] We have already wasted the creativity of one generation (Paderewski, Melcer, Stojowski, Karłowicz). And now we are wasting the work of our youngest artists by ignoring them or multiplying the spiteful difficulties within our concert life.

The case of Paderewski however was of particular importance. Paderewski began his musical education – and because of that began his musical career – too late, and with very mediocre professors. The lost years of youth – both in the field of composing and performing – caused a delay in his artistic development, a delay which could not be recovered later. Ignacy complained in a letter of 1890 to his father³ that:

² In *Nowa Gazeta* [New Daily] 1906, 19th August.

³ Paderewski to his father, 1890? Paris?

You had ordered me to stay in Warsaw, to suspend my enthusiasm and talent for five years, only because of those several hundred rubbles you did not like to spend to send me abroad, yet you were able to do so. [...] All I have now is at the cost of my hard work, my health, my life; but every minute I must struggle against difficulties and encounter barriers caused by the lack of proper education in youth. [...] For five years you had ordered me to do nothing with Prof. Babiński, although you knew that he, an 80 years old man, could teach us virtually nothing. [...] it was only my hard work, ambition and talent, which allowed me to arise above the level of mediocrity, to which you had sentenced me.

When Paderewski could finally go for his long-desired studies to Berlin in 1881–82, it was too late. He was not able to find the right relationship with his professors: Heinrich Urban and Friedrich Kiel. In his letters he complained of their boring lessons and of the slow tempo of Urban's work. We should remember that Paderewski for three years had worked already as a Warsaw conservatory professor and was already artistically mature. However, the crucial problem was not his relationship with Urban and Kiel. He studied composition with passion; he improved his technical skills and the art of orchestration but he could not, at that time, develop his artistic individuality and sensibility. It was just the contrary. His Berliner mentors suppressed Paderewski's modern and original ideas – we can find in his letters⁴ remarks to prove it. Later on however he appreciated the old, famous professor Urban:

I am coming to him three times a week, sitting sometimes almost two hours while he proof-read only half of my work. Three pages a lesson, at the most! But, on the other hand, I've learned from him a lot—much more than from Kiel.

Paderewski in the 1880s was too old to follow his teachers recklessly and to subscribe to their vision of music. He was however too young (while staying in Berlin) to gain from Kiel and Urban only strictly technical skills while preserving at the same time his individual artistic style. He was too young, to follow his own path and to play a kind double game with his masters. Is it not clear now why the best of his piano pieces were composed during his stay in Morges in 1903, although their first sketches

⁴ To Helena Górska, Berlin, end of June 1884.

appeared yet in 1885–87. At that time Paderewski could write in his own way ignoring the opinion of the famous professors.

On the other hand – and here we come again to the point raised in the title of this paper – Paderewski believed profoundly that every man must fulfil his mission towards God and his nation. The mission of the artist is – according to him – to integrate national-patriotic elements into his works. Paderewski followed this imperative, writing the *Symphony* in B-minor “*Polonia*”, *Polish Phantasy* op. 19, *Polish Dances* op. 5 and 9, a cantata for unveiling the A. Mickiewicz statue *Szum ty morze...* [*Roar, oh! sea*] (of 1897) and his last composition – an anthem for Polish Army in America for male choir and brass ensemble *Hej, Orle Białe!* [*Hey! White Eagle*]. The critics complimented the young composer on his “fresh ideas and skilful development” in *Album de Mai* op. 10 and variations op. 11⁵. Similar articles were published by F. Bylicki in *Czas*⁶ and Maurycy Sieber in *Przegląd Literacki i Artystyczny*⁷. Jan Kleczyński in *Echo Muzyczne i Teatralne*⁸ points out:

We can describe as very affected and poetically inspired five small pieces by Paderewski, published under the general title *Album de Mai* (op. 10). We can find the Polish Character just in the first composition *Au soir*, formed like a bucolic *mazurka*. [...] No. 3 *Scherzino* is once again *mazurka*, but longer and technically more elaborated.

It was a combination of the traditional school of composition he learnt in Warsaw (and later with F. Kiel and H. Urban in Berlin), and his enormous adoration of Chopin (we can observe this easily for example in *Dances polonaises* op. 9). It was also the strong desire to enrich “Polish national culture” which flourished in Paderewski’s pieces with the characteristic traditional use of music material. Paderewski himself remarked on this point⁹:

⁵ See J. STETTLER in *Bluszcz* 16th January 1884, no 3, p. 22.

⁶ 26th October 1884, no 248, p. 3.

⁷ 20th October 1884, no 19 and 20.

⁸ *Echo...* 20th September 1884, no 51 p. 524, in article ‘Nowości muzyczne’, [Music news].

⁹ Cf. Edward A. BAUGHAN *Ignaz Jan Paderewski*. London – New York 1908, p. 79.

The moment you try to be national, every one cries out that you are imitating Chopin, whereas the truth is that Chopin adopted all the most marked characteristics of our national music so completely that is impossible not to resemble him in externals, though your methods and ideas may be absolutely your own.

It was the bucolic-patriotic style and easy, familiar forms, that Polish critics demanded; this was what he was taught in Warsaw and what Berlin offered to him. That explains why Paderewski used “classical” forms like suite, variations, and sonata. He also followed the pattern of early-romantic miniatures but even then he relates them to tradition or makes of them historical *pastiches*. The most famous example is of course the *Minuet in G-major* op. 14, which immediately gained huge popularity. (Although it was composed as a musical joke for Tytus Chałubiński and Aleksander Świętochowski – the great admirers of Mozart’s work). But the *Minuet* was not alone. There were also three other minuets, a gavotte, a so-called “old suite” (including sarabande etc.) and others which belonged to that specific, “à l’antique” stream. Paderewski was fully conscious of the nature of those compositions. He writes in a letter¹⁰ of January 1887:

... I have written the already mentioned minuet, a quite Bach-like sarabande and a *Caprice a la Scarlatti*. These are not very remarkable as to their general idea, but one should not look for originality from somebody who wants to imitate only.

It is remarkable that the *Polish Phantasy d-sharp minor* op. 19 of 1893, still popular today, and the earlier *Piano concerto a minor* op. 17 (composed 1889–1890) were highly applauded by critics. Not only critics but also famous musicians of the time admired Paderewski’s national style and his traditional mode of composition. It is noticeable however it was Saint-Saëns and Brahms whose opinions were the most positive. Camille Saint-Saëns congratulated Paderewski after the first performance of the *Polish Phantasy* and positioned him “in the row of the contemporary most prestigious originators”¹¹. The famous neo-classical coryphaeus of romantic music,

¹⁰ To Helena Górńska, Berlin, January 1887.

¹¹ Cf. *Echo Muzyczne, Teatralne i Artystyczne* 16th September 1893, no 520, p. 442.

Johannes Brahms, after listening to Paderewski's *Violin sonata* said: "It is very spectacular and finely-drawn, but dear Mr Paderewski it is not a chamber music, it is a concert-sonata"¹². Due to lack of time Camille Saint-Saëns, did not initially want to meet Paderewski, who hoped to present his *Piano concerto* to him. Finally he agreed to listen to the young pianist. After the second movement, he stopped saying "Andante delightful, please, play it once again". Finally he said cordially:

Nothing should be changed here. You may play your *Concerto* safely as you had written it and the audience would like it, because it is successful. I guarantee, you do not need to fear anything¹³.

We must remember now about the Paderewski's unreliability and his tendency to use his autobiography as an important mode of self-representation. However these opinions still perfectly illustrate how great was his success and how well he was attuned to the late romantic art of composition. Indeed this very attunement was probably the main reason that his music was rejected by the next generation.

Paderewski however was aware that only by finding his own, independent artistic path would he achieve long-term success. He was disappointed with the popularity of his *Minuet in G-major*:

The *Minuet* became so popular I had to play it several times; it is blistering the ears¹⁴.

Bock [publisher] is in a heaven of heavens. He writes me only erotic letters. It is that odious *Minuet* which makes him so in love with me. Can you imagine this small, nasty piece became immediately extremely popular and made me famous in Germany. Next day after the first performance in Berlin 800 copies have been sold out. Is it not funny?¹⁵

His long-awaited new, original style of compositions appeared much later – most explicitly in the splendid *Sonata e-flat minor*

¹² According to Ignacy Jan PADEREWSKI'S *Memoirs [Pamiętniki]*, 3rd edition, Kraków 1972, Vol. I, p. 130.

¹³ I. J. PADEREWSKI *Memoirs [Pamiętniki]* op. cit., p. 188.

¹⁴ In a letter to Helena Górska, Vienna 21st January 1887.

¹⁵ In a letter to Helena Górska, Vienna 30th December 1887.

op. 13 and the *Variations and fugue* op. 23. We can find the first glimmers of this new stylistic approach in his *Krakowiak fantastyczny* (*Cracovienne fantastique*) op. 14, attached to the *Album moderne*, which Paderewski considered far superior to the minuet:

The [*Krakowiak*] is one of my rare novelties, which – although not as popular as the Mozartian minuet – is superior to it in the artistic value.¹⁶

Talking about the sources of Paderewski's "national" inspirations I must also describe his fascination with the folklore of the Polish mountaineers. After staying in Zakopane in 1883 he wrote to his father:

I am not able to find appropriate words to describe my fascination with the multiple and picturesque views of nature in the Tatra Mountains region. [...] I can only mention today that the best society stays here¹⁷.

There he met also for the first time Tytus Chałubiński the great admirer of Podhale and Tatra region, who persuaded the composer to note folk melodies and dances therein. These music sketches were the basis for 4 miniatures op. 14 entitled *Tatra Album*. W. Górski in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* praised this idea:

In the first part of the first book there is a mountaineer dance [*W murowanej piwnicy; In a stone cellar*] by Mr Paderewski, who created – on the basis of original folk melodies from Tatra region – several compositions of poetic style, colourful but simple and still musically skilful [...]. So finally there is somebody who agreed with Dr Chałubiński and showed what can grow of the wild seedling. It was Paderewski. He could also treat the folk-song this way that preserve the original colour; indeed, he was able to intensify its fantastic character and its environment with proper harmonisation.¹⁸

It was Paderewski who – years before Szymanowski – used for the first time the quotation of this Polish folk music in his pieces.

¹⁶ In a letter to Helena Górską, Vienna 21st January 1887.

¹⁷ To father, Zakopane 3rd August 1883.

¹⁸ Witold GÓRSKI 'Ze świata muzycznego' [*From the Music World*]. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 27th October 1883, no 42, p. 269.

But everybody who remembers Szymanowski's *Mazurkas* op. 50 can notice the significant difference. Paderewski harmonises the folk melody in a kind of salon-bucolic mode. That is how he understands the "national character" of music. Szymanowski reshapes the ethnographic findings to create artistic miniatures using all the tools he had at his disposal just after 1900. His purpose was to bring folk music into the orbit of a modern compositional style. Paderewski's aim was quite the opposite. He used late 19th century piano techniques to "civilise" the folk melody, to "soften the edges" of the original rhythms and the rough harmonies. Only a few years separate their antithetic approaches but stylistically and aesthetically it is the difference of a whole era. One very good example of this stylistic manner is, as noted already, *W murowanej piwnicy* [*In a stone cellar*] – easy to memorize, easy to recognize but more salon-like than folk.

On the other hand, Adam Zamoyski was right to point out that:

Paderewski's nationalism was not metaphysical, like Chopin's, or pastoral, like that so many late nineteenth-century composers, but practical. This meant that he used music as a medium for making political points.¹⁹

I think however, that "political points" were not his main goal. He tried to be as famous a composer as he was a successful virtuoso, but all the time he was self-evidently Polish.

Musical taste in Europe was changing gradually while Paderewski continued his career. A good example is the reception of his *Polish Phantasy*. Its originality is modest and it fits the rules of technical correctness of the late 19th c. and that is why its performances – especially for large audiences of many thousand in the USA and Canada – gained a great success. In places more oriented towards an avant-garde, modernism and individuality, the situation was quite different. In Paris, for example, after the concert on 10th March 1895 in Champs-Élysées hall one could hear – besides the applause – catcalls and disapproving shouts "assez, assez". The critics, unlike those from Warsaw, adored Paderewski's performance of the *Phantasy* but called the composition itself "grotesque"; Gauthier-Villars described it more strongly as "habanera for bears [...] decorated with musty, unfashionable and regrettable gimmicks".

¹⁹ Adam ZAMOYSKI *Paderewski*. New York 1982, p. 134.

It is difficult today to judge if those opinions were based on artistic experiences or were the exemplification of personal animosity and envy only. It is however clear to me that Paderewski's style – based on Wagner and R. Strauss – was, according to newest concepts of beginning of 20th century, behind the times by at least a decade.

The convergence of novel orchestration and the late-romantic use of musical motive can be clearly noticed if we compare the introduction to the 3rd act of *Manru* with the initial fragments of *Tod und Verklärung* by R. Strauss. It is even more evident if we match up the *Gypsy March* from the same opera with the march of smugglers from *Carmen* by G. Bizet written 25 years earlier.

It is well known that the day of Paderewski's greatest artistic triumph was March 8th 1902, when his *Manru* was staged in the Metropolitan Opera and the same day he had a Master Concert in Carnegie Hall. The next day the *Tribune* informed everyone that the number of concert listeners was 3000 and in the MET–4000. The journalist estimated also the number of people who could not get a ticket rose above 2000. How could the eclectic composer, who followed old-fashion models and patterns, achieve such great success?

I am afraid the applause of the mass audience finally confirms the stylistic traditionalism of his compositions. It is worth remembering that the ovation of listeners was not in full agreement with the opinions of the critics. The newspapers described the *Manru* production as the great... society gala and listed the full index of personalities, ladies' dresses, and traffic-jam on Broadway between 32nd and 44th when all limousines try to approach MET. The score, piano excerpts and the libretto both in English and German were published before the first performance in New York (14th February 1902). The show was described as a "Slavic evening" because (the Maestro's wish) the prime parties were given by Poles: Marcelina Sembrich-Kochańska and Aleksander Bandrowski.

The article in *Times* on 15th February 1902 exemplifies the opinion of critics the best:

The production of *Manru* therefore, was attended by a large and brilliant audience, and the demonstration of delight were numerous and prolonged. What percentage of the enthusiasm was due to fondness for the man and what to be intrinsic merit of the work cannot be guessed. [...] As a work *Manru* commands respectful consideration, and for some of its features frank a hearty admiration. Its promise is great, its achievement not little.

The libretto (by Alfred Nossig) encountered broad critical disapproval for: unsuitable gradation of tension, inconsequential plot, lack of coherence and inadequate characterisation. Paderewski's music received better marks, as a "composer who does not try, as many do, to achieve extraordinary effects at all costs and to express himself in a different way than others. All his music is sincere it looks simple; and spontaneous" (Laura Danziger). The *Philadelphian Inquirer* stated that the music of *Manru* exhibits the general character of Polish nationality and its colourful qualities. The common objection was imitation of Wagner's style. Sometimes journalists could find this positive because "orchestration tools were used in a proper way, varied marvellously and chosen deliberately" (*New York Herald Tribune*). But *The Press* offered the most concentrated attack:

Manru it is diluted Wagner.

Ignacy has more music in his fingers than in his head. His score is without an invention, but one can find fragments of a subtle melody, in which Paderewski goes beyond the German master's imitation and sings himself.

But the majority of opinions were encouraging. The fantastic topic of the opera, its elaboration, the professional composer's ability, the excellent lyric parts and the appropriate colour of the Gypsy music style (whatever that might mean) were approved.

However the day of his triumph was also the first day of his decline. The controversies surrounding *Manru* showed that Paderewski's style was out-dated and failed to meet audience expectations. His last great piece, the *Symphony in B-minor "Polonia"* (of 1903–1907) was poorly received in Poland. This, was probably, the result of critical remarks by Karol Szymanowski and Zdzisław Jachimecki, who influenced the new generation of younger musicians after 1901 (the date of the establishment of the Warsaw Philharmonic). Jachimecki did not intend to offend the Maestro too much, so (after the first performance of *Symphony* in Lwów, under Henryk Opieński) he could find very gentle words:

It is difficult, after listening to a symphony for the first time, to give precise and correct opinion. It is quite certain that one failed to notice many beautiful moments, that several great musical ideas disappeared in our memory, that our mind did not store many details perfectly. But we

can say for sure, that the world of music did not gain, in this sparkling work, a new masterpiece²⁰.

Szymanowski, on the other hand, reported the Vienna concert of the *Symphony* to Jachimecki with these harsh words:

The only cruel misunderstanding was Paderewski's *Symphony*, an unbelievable abomination for which no words are insulting enough. [...] The symphony was performed perfectly, with the greatest kindness and generosity – but nothing can help this work!! We had sworn solemnly with Fitelberg to Apollo and 9 Muses not to accept any other artistic compromise, even in the name of Jagiello statue²¹. And above all else the patriotism in the field of Art is the greatest absurdity. This dreadful symphonic buffoon offended us all.²²

A. Chybiński, the third personality of that time, spread similar views writing²³ that the *Variations E flat minor* op. 23 “are saturated with virtuosic glitter and cheap piano effects [...], trivial and tasteless concepts and gloomy structures”. Chybiński finally moderated his opinion three years later²⁴, describing the variations IV, XV, XVIII and XIX, as “very beautiful studies” and the ending as a “monumental and spectacular fugue”. He called also op. 23 “the most precious example of variation technique since Chopin, besides Melcer's and Szymanowski's pieces”. But unofficially, in a private letter to Jachimecki²⁵, he asked sarcastically “what about the congress of musicians [in Lwów]? Will they ‘crown’ Paderewski as the ‘king’?” Paderewski's era (started in 1887) was slowly passing away.

While talking about Paderewski, we must address the Maestro's personal opinion concerning his own style, his works and their

²⁰ Henryk OPIEŃSKI ‘Z uroczystości chopinowskich we Lwowie’ [From the Chopin celebration in Lwów]. *Przegląd Polski* 1910, s. 270.

²¹ The allusion to Paderewski's foundation of *Grunwald statue* in Cracow with the figure of King Jagiello on top.

²² Karol SZYMANOWSKI to Z. Jachimecki, Vienna 13th November 1911.

²³ *Przegląd Muzyczny*, Vol. 96, 1907 pp. 300–302.

²⁴ Adolf CHYBIŃSKI ‘Ignacy Paderewski jako kompozytor utworów fortepianowych’ [Paderewski as piano music composer]. *Przegląd Muzyczny* 1910, no 20, pp. 3–10.

²⁵ From München, on 14th May 1910.

relation to other composers. It is obvious that his masters were Richard Strauss and Richard Wagner. He admitted his connections with the author of *Tannhäuser* many times while presenting *Manru* saying:

Wagner changed the standards of opera, and imitation was absolutely necessary. [...] Because of [the] subject I chose, however, it was possible to introduce much of a lyric nature into the score, and in this perhaps I have followed what is called the Italian method²⁶.

In music absolute originality does not exist. [...] When a great genius, like Wagner, introduces a method that will give better expression to an idea, it is not only a sin to follow it, but it is a duty to follow it. [...] A piece of music must be built like a house or a church. We would not accuse an architect of being a copyist if he put windows in the house, would you? And yet he is merely doing what others have done²⁷.

I tried to find a way between Wagnerian and Italian opera. I tried to keep the Italian air form, if the lyric scenes allow to. I gave to the orchestra Wagner-like dramatic music²⁸.

He named Strauss “the last of the great German composers” and said with sorrow that the “Genius of creativity moved itself to France”²⁹. But he also appreciated J. S. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Saint-Saëns and piano pieces by Liszt.

So Paderewski could clearly see the changes taking place in European music during his lifetime. Despite his rejection of contemporary composers (such as Schönberg, Webern, Hindemith, Weill or Berg) as “belonging to another generation”³⁰ he attacked the “modernists” even more strongly, remarking that:

The modern composers, named modernists (like Mosolov) create music similar to a wild noise of those great factories, which with their irregular mass-production generate a chaos of economic relations.

²⁶ New York Herald 31st January 1902.

²⁷ New York Herald 14th February 1902.

²⁸ Interview for *Collier's weekly*.

²⁹ He liked Saint-Saëns, Gounod and Fouré. He was suspicious to the younger generation: “The modern French are witty, clever, brilliant, but they are not writing music”. Cf. Daniel G. MASON ‘A Conversation on Music with Paderewski’. *Century Magazine*, November 1908.

³⁰ “I do not understand them; and we have almost nothing in common”.

He also characterised Stravinsky:

...If you take the lid off there would not be much of the composition left. I have heard many of his pieces and I think they are interesting and colourful. They have rich instrumentation and can play their role very well, but this is not great art. There is no richness of musical idea there, though sometimes an unexpected rhythm³¹.

He commented also on Poles:

Szymanowski is a very talented man for sure. Some of his songs are really beautiful; they can compete with works by any other composer. His instrumental pieces (piano in particular) do not mean much to me. I am not able to find anything in common with them and I must admit that, although I tried to play some of them, I could not find a spirit in them and could not interpret them properly. [...] His newer pieces are too cold for me, too intellectual. The same concerns other contemporary composers. Their music comes not from heart. This music is written, not felt³².

The last remarks allow us to understand his artistic *Credo* better. Artist must feel music. Art appears as the mutual interaction between artist and audience. He wrote in 1933:

Music must be like a stream of spring water which quenches a human thirst.

It was always my aspiration to play not for myself but for a large audience, which comes to listen to me. Listeners like older, well-known composers and I give them what they expect from me.

These passages help to clarify why Paderewski disliked all avant-garde ideas. It is also obvious now why he was strongly opposed to the newly established radio and against all attempts to record his music. He was sure that only a concert could produce that unusual fluid which connects the listener and the artist. It is now only a small step towards the revision of the principal romantic ideas, where artistic creations are seen as divine creations and art is viewed as a secular metaphysics. And that is a key to understand Paderewski's artistic attitude. **The focal goal of**

³¹ Ignacy Jan PADEREWSKI 'Myśli, uwagi, refleksje' [Thoughts, remarks, comments]. *Muzyka* 1933, no 100.

³² I. J. PADEREWSKI op. cit.

Manru's author was to bring alive again the early-romantic idea of Absolute Art, divinely inspired. Paderewski's inventive sensitivity and erudition was however well capable of understanding that his music was slowly drawing away from the European mainstream, whatever that was. He couldn't fail to notice that new movements such as futurism, modernism, expressionism and serialism overcame the imagination of audiences. The same new movements had destroyed the romantic conventions of correct composition, which – he believed – to be profound. That is why he stopped composing before the year 1910. He did not however change his beliefs. In the *Trzy wywiady z Paderewskim* [*Three Interviews with Paderewski*] he answers Mary Lawton's question about the meaning of human existence:

A creative work is what gives the happiness in life. [...] Ideas are eternal; and while we express ideas we reach the highest summit, despite the channel of expression. Working creatively man generates new life. Creation conquers death.

Paderewski the composer transformed himself into Paderewski the philanthropist, Paderewski the politician, Paderewski the statesman. Playing those roles he worked hard to realise the boy's dream "to help his country". Playing those roles he creatively "conquered death".

Rochester, 22nd February 2002