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UKRAINE AND KRESY IN TOMASZ RÓŻYCKI'S *DWANAŚCIE STACJI*. POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS

Dwanaście stacji (*Twelve Stations*), a postmodern epic poem by Tomasz Różycki (b. 1970), has been widely discussed in the Polish press and scholarly journals since its publication in 2004[1]. Awarded the prestigious Kościelski Prize, the text has been described as an ironic deconstruction of the Polish past (Skrendo 2004: 74). Moreover, it was labelled as a nostalgic story of a Silesian family caught in the myth of a lost Ukrainian homeland (Śliwiński 2004: 14). The poet himself admits that *Dwanaście stacji* was written out of sorrow, in an attempt to preserve the traditions that are fading away in the era of global unification. Różycki confirms that the story is based on family tales that 'transform every year, becoming more powerful and less verifiable' and therefore the book is a form of maintaining the colour and diversity of the past (Zaremba 2004). Its plot draws chiefly on the idea of a family reunion and a subsequent journey to Gliniany and Zadwórze[2] in western Ukraine, where the oldest members of the clan were born. The area, described in Polish as *Kresy*, 'the borderlands', became a part of the restored state of Poland as a result of the Paris Peace Conference (1919) and the Treaty of Riga (1921). The excursion to Ukraine is undertaken in order to visit and financially support the renovation of the local parish church, in which Babcia (Grandma) and Aunt Sydzia were christened. The important mission of collecting the relatives 'przez los i niedolę

[1] See for example Pilch 2004 and Śliwiński 2004.

[2] All geographical names are given in Polish according to the transliteration provided by the text.

rozrzuconą po świecie, / po Polsce i województwach [scattered around the world, Poland and voivodeships / by fate and misfortune]'[3] (33) is entrusted to Wnuk (the Grandson). His eventful wandering constitutes an excuse to portray an extended Polish family inhabiting the region of Silesia, where the local culture mingles with Ukrainian and German influences. It is also an excuse to depict the image of lost Ukraine and Kresy, as preserved in the family memory.

The image of Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, Ukrainians, and consequently Polish-Ukrainian relations will be at the centre of my discussion of *Dwanaście stacji*. Bogusław Bakuła's paper on the Polish borderland discourse will comprise an important theoretical framework of this article (Bakuła 2006: 11-33). Bakuła's study provides a relevant model to examine Różycki's depiction of the 'miłosna unia z Ukrainą [love union with Ukraine]' (Różycki 21), since as a postcolonial critique of the Polish concept of *Kresy* it furnishes an important polemic with the ethnocentric perspective on Polish-Ukrainian relations. Furthermore, the term 'colonial discourse', based chiefly on the Faucauldian notion of discourse, and defined most generally as 'knowledge' about the colonized *Other*, preserved in the language, literature, and culture of the colonizing nations in order to maintain power over the former, will also be an important tool in this analysis (Loomba 2001: 43-48)[4].

While an extended discussion of the relevance of *postcolonial theory* to Poland is beyond the scope of this article, it seems crucial to observe that the postcolonial *exotic*, as Graham Huggan describes it (2001: vii), has greatly affected Polish studies scholarship, in particular the field of history of literature and literary criticism. New interpretations, based on Edward Said's study *Orientalism* have come to the fore, providing an innovative approach to the works of such writers as Adam Mickiewicz[5] and Henryk Sienkiewicz[6]. Postcolonial analysis has also proved to be applicable to twentieth-century and contemporary Polish literature. Dariusz Skórczewski demonstrates that *Castorp* by Paweł Huelle is a postcolonial novel, which denounces the German 'white

[3] All translations are mine.

[4] The term 'colonial discourse' will be used interchangeably with Bakuła's notion of 'borderland discourse'.

[5] The articles constitute the Forum: Mickiewicz: 'East' and 'West' published by the *Slavic and East European Journal* in 2001. See for example Dixon 2001, Kalinowska 2001 and Koropeckyj 2001.

[6] See Klobucka 2001.

colonialism' by exploiting narrative strategies of colonial discourse (2006:1233), whereas Clare Cavanagh stresses the presence of 'postcolonial sensibility' in the oeuvre of Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska, Zbigniew Herbert, and Ryszard Kapuściński (2004: 88-91). The most recent works by Bogusław Bakuła, Helena Duć-Fajfer, Maria Janion, and others[7] confirm that postcolonialism has become very fashionable among scholars working on Polish literature.

While some of the accounts related to prose and poetry of the last few decades shed a completely new light on the literary representations of Poland's subjugation to Germany or the Russian Empire, there are other contributions that should be mentioned, that reverse this model by rejecting the notion of Poland 'haunted by the spectre of martyrdom', to borrow Aleksander Fiut's phrase (2006: 32-33)[8]. Dariusz Skórczewski rightly points out that Polish literary discourse is an excellent example of the historical dichotomy of Poland acting as a colonizer towards other nations, particularly Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Lithuanians, and in certain periods being the colonized itself (2006b: 111). This duality of Polish literature and its colonial rhetoric in particular, has also been stressed by Fiut, who calls for revision of the artistic images of Lithuanian and Ukrainian Others. He emphasizes the polonocentric character of such representations and claims that they replicate the orientalist clich s of writing, developed by the former Western colonial empires (2006: 33-39)[9].

This article is, in a sense, a response to the methodological debate furnished by the above contributions. By applying an integrated conceptual framework, I will mainly focus on three aspects of Różycki's representation of Ukraine and *Kresy*. First, I will investigate the notion of the lost homeland, which in the collective memory of the family has become an important object of worship, yet remaining only a phenomenon of the 'imaginative geography' (Said 2003: 54). I will also concentrate on the problem of land and its mental (dis)possession. Second,

[7] See for example Moskalewicz 2005 and Iwasiów 2004. Also the fourth edition of *Teksty Drugie* (*Second Texts*) in 2007 has been entirely devoted to this theory. The list of publications applying postcolonial theory to the Polish context is growing rapidly, both in Poland and abroad. From most recent accounts, see for example Korek 2007.

[8] Fiut fears that applying postcolonial theory to Polish literature may restore the faded image of Poland as a 'martyrologiczny upiór [spectre of martyrdom]'. Hence, according to the critic, exploring the literary representations of the Polish expansionist past will allow that perspective to be avoided.

[9] See also Skórczewski 2007: 683-84.

I will examine the image of the idealized fraternal union of Poland and Ukraine. Third, I will test the depiction of the Ukrainian *Other,* with particular attention to the demonized portrait of a Ukrainian nationalist -'the murderer'.

The Best Soil in Europe and Rivers Full of Crayfish

Dwanaście stacji describes Kresy from the position of different characters. It is therefore necessary to ask at the start if the depiction reveals any features of the colonial/borderland discourse. To answer this question, we first need to delineate the most important characteristics of the borderland discourse. According to Bogusław Bakuła the colonial consciousness typical of the Polish *kresowiacy*[10] is usually expressed by the following: i) idealization of the multicultural Poland; ii) demonization or 'exoticization' of the *Other*; iii) considering *Kresy* as the constituent of the Polish historical and civilizing mission; iv) avoiding a real contact with the *Other*; v) paternalism; vi) polonization of the diversity of borderlands; and vii) imposition of the Polish perspective (2006: 25). Which of these features appears in *Dwanaście stacji*?

First and foremost, Różycki's *Kresy* are idyllic. This programmed idealization, executed by the oldest relatives of Wnuk, begins with a megalomaniac depiction of Gliniany - 'słynna parafia [the famous parish]' (19) and its surroundings. The mythologization starts in the very first description of the town, which utterly embodies the lost homeland. One of the oldest members of the family, Aunt Sydzia, characterizes the place to Wnuk, preparing him for the journey:

> [...] Gliniany to słynna parafia,
> kto wie, czy nie starożytniejsze miasto od samej Warszawy
> albo też i Lwowa. Wystarczy powiedzieć, że przez samych Tatarów,
> którzy dawno wyginęli, spalona sześćdziesiąt razy (19-20)

> [...] Gliniany is a famous parish,
> who knows, maybe more ancient city than Warsaw
> or even Lviv. It is enough to say that Tatars,
> who have been long extinct, burnt it sixty times (19-20)

[10] The term refers to the Poles originating from the former Polish territories in Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus.

According to aunt Sydzia, the town is old, historical, and renowned. As the passage progresses, we find out that after Tatars had burnt it sixty times, it was burnt by Bolsheviks, Muscovites, Turks, Swedes, Laplanders, Germans and Hungarians, Walachs, Moldavians, Samoyedic, and Mordvin peoples, Petlura, and Mazepa's people, and many others, including the local peasants, Home Army soldiers, and the Soviet partisans. The list of invaders comprises in total twenty six different nations, ethnic groups, and military organizations. One of them is 'maruderzy' (20), which in the colloquial language means 'strayers', people who stray or fall behind, whereas in the specialist register it describes soldiers who abandoned their army. By placing the ambiguous term 'maruderzy' on the long list of raiders, the author encourages the reader to remain alert and wary of simple categorizations, displayed not only by the story itself but also by the use of language. At this point in the poem the reader stops and begins to analyse the myth.

The first mention of Gliniany appears in 1379, which confirms that the place is historic. However, it cannot be compared to Warsaw, which was granted city rights at the turn of the thirteenth century, or to Lviv, which was founded in 1264. There is no single reference to the multiple burning of Gliniany in the important scholarly works on the history of Ukraine[11], which would clearly imply that it was not a precedent in Europe, particularly when compared with such cities as Paris or Rome[12]. The only thing the town is well known for is its decorative art and two factories of kylyms opened in 1922 (Kubijovyc, ed. 1963: 392a, 428a). They will be later recalled by the character. The above facts demonstrate that Aunt Sydzia reveals varying levels of historical knowledge. This distorted conceptualization of the past relates not only to the borderlands but also to general facts, such as considering Tatars to be an 'extinct nation'. It not only signifies the instability of the character's memory, but is also an encoded message from the narrator, who urges the reader to avoid clear-cut historical truths.

The next passage of the poem foregrounds that an inquisitive, postcolonial approach to the text is an imperative. The character also idealizes the inter-war Ukraine, presenting it as a source of prosperity and abundance, in opposition to the Soviet and post-Soviet period.

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[11] See for example Magocsi 1996, Subtelny 1988, Allen 1940, Manning 1951 and the Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine, < http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/default.asp>.

[12] Aunt Sydzia claims that even Paris and Rome have not experienced so many raids as Gliniany (20).

Przecież ziemia tam najlepsza w całej Europie, a przed wojną
w każdej chałupie farbowali kilimy z owczej wełny [...]
[...] a potem kilimy szły na cały świat.
Ludzie mieli w domach, wzdłuż rzeki przez pięć kilometrów, farbiarnie,
a w wodzie żyły pstrągi i ogromne raki. Teraz jest jeden zakład
i to ledwie dyszy, a woda taka, że palca nie włożysz
i czuć ją z daleka. Wszystko bolszewicy popsuli [...] (20)

It's the best soil in the whole of Europe, and before the war
sheep wool kylyms were dyed in each hut [...]
[...] and then the kylyms were sold around the world.
People had dye-works in their houses, five kilometres along the river, and the river was full of trouts and crayfish. Now there is one workshop left
and it is hardly running, and you won't put a finger in the water
as it smells. The Bolsheviks have spoilt it all [...] (20)

Such a bucolic image of Kresy is, according to Bogusław Bakuła, one of the most important features of the Polish borderland discourse. The cult of lost homeland impinges upon Aunt Sydzia's conceptualization of Kresy. She considers it a paradise with excellent soil and mirror-like rivers that abound with fish. This textual metaphor of paradise suggests clear biblical connotations of the Garden of Eden before Adam and Eve's banishment. Moreover, the place is presented as the land of prosperity, where world-famous kylyms of the highest-quality were produced and where people lived in harmony with nature. However, this vision of Polish paradise and welfare is juxtaposed with the image of ruined workshops and environmental damage brought about by the Soviet regime. In this way Aunt Sydzia delineates her own identity, and at the same time the Polishness of the inter-war borderlands, by the process of 'othering'. Othering, or defining oneself in distinction to another, is based here on the binary opposites formed by the Polish and the Bolshevik, but also by division of time between the inter-war and the post-war. The Polish inter-war past is valorized positively; it is constructive and makes business flourish, while the Bolshevik succession brings destruction and failure of the industry. Strangely, there are no signs of the native Ukrainians, either in the depiction of the Polish 'paradise' or in the image of the 'Bolshevik post-industrial hell'.

Daniel Beauvois stresses that 'the idyllic tone [which] has dominated the Polish discourse on Ukraine [...] was often the reason for the catastrophic relations between Ukrainians and Poles' (2005: 11). It is not only the exclusion of the natives that is striking in this highly mythicized depiction of Gliniany but also the notion of Kresy itself, which distorts the real image of Ukraine. Bogusław Bakuła rightly argues that the Polish term Kresy, directly translated as 'peripheries', is politically incorrect as it entails the marginality and remoteness of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania in relation to the Polish centre (14–15). However, in the quoted passages *Kresy* are seen as the very heart of Polishness and the genuine centre of Poland; thus, borderlands are not marginalized by the character. On the contrary, as the previous quotation demonstrates, the town Gliniany appears older and more interesting when compared with Warsaw, which clearly indicates its great importance in the eyes of Aunt Sydzia.

I argue that such an idealized representation of the 'Polish' Ukraine is a product of colonial consciousness, shaped during the inter-war expansion to borderlands and preserved since then in the national mythology. It fails to recognize the loss of *Kresy*, mentally polonizes and dispossesses it. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the Polish and the Soviet regimes places the borderlands on the map of power struggle, in which only two contestants take part.

The subsequent literary cameo of Lviv, which is portrayed as a Polish city that must be recovered, is another instance of colonial discourse. Its representation also signifies the battle for power and possession of the land, even if it is merely symbolic and uses words and mental images as its weapons. Historically, as a successful outcome of the Polish-Ukrainian War of 1918–1919, the place came to epitomize, in George Grabowicz's words, 'the new Polish state' and for most Poles it became 'a triumphant symbol of national assertiveness' (2005: 321–22). Hence the forcible relocations of the Polish population from western Ukraine to the Regained Territories in the 1940s, followed by the Soviet rule in Ukraine, transformed Lviv into a 'virtual reality, essentially beyond time and space' (idem: 330). According to the rules of this virtual reality, Lviv is legitimately Polish and therefore it should be regained.

[...] Jechać! Lwów odbić!
Jechać całą kupą! Lwów odbić! Wypędzić! Na Lwów!
Przekupimy celników, przekupimy policję, przekupimy Radę

Miasta i Lwów nam oddadzą, ha! W sposób bezkrwawy!
Sami oddadzą! [...] (35)

[...] Let's go! Let's recover Lviv!
Let's go altogether! Lviv must be recovered! People banished! Let's go to Lviv!
We will bribe the customs officers, we will bribe the police, we will bribe the Council
They will return the cities and Lviv, hah! In a bloodless way!
They'll return them willingly! [...] (35)

This expansionist demand is expressed by one of the male members of the family, which affirms the strong link between colonialism and masculinity. While a woman - Aunt Sydzia looks back to *Kresy* with a strong feeling of nostalgia, a man - Wujek views borderlands as a land to conquer. The notion of Polish Lviv reveals, therefore, that a colonized space is also 'a complex deployment of gender', to borrow Spivak's phrase (2003: 227).

The above fragment employs the imperial rhetoric in a clearly postmodernist manner, its aim is to denounce and demystify the colonial language. If we look more closely at the usage of two verbs 'odbić' (to recover) and 'oddać' (to return) and juxtapose them with the historical context, it will become clear that they fail to acknowledge the actual status quo. In fact, Lviv, as well as the whole eastern Galicia and western Volhynia, have already been recovered and returned to their legitimate owner - Ukraine. Wujek's demand for Lviv is thus another example of polonocentric perception of Ukrainian history[13]. The city is treated by him as a token of power and domination over both the land and its people. The latter are seen as dummies, willing to obey and give Lviv and other cities away without a fight.

George Grabowicz remarks that 'the case of making the city exclusively Polish [...] implied shutting one's eyes firmly to the Ukrainian presence there - in the past but especially in the present' (2005: 330). Furthermore, such an attitude failed to recognize some of the most distinctive features of the inter-war borderlands - their hybridity and cultural in-betweenness.

[13] For an interesting discussion of the Polish historical viewpoint in reading Ukrainian history, see Magocsi 1996: 16-18.

Under the Motherly Wings

Różycki's borderlands have different faces, which often reflect the complexity of their history. This section will primarily focus on two points of the borderland discourse recognized by Bogusław Bakuła, namely the notion of *Kresy* as an inseparable component of the Polish *mission civilisatrice* and the false multiculturalism of the borderlands, presented as an idealized relationship of the two Slavonic brothers.

The poet presents the historical mission of Poland in terms of a battle for faith. Based on the seventeenth-century conception of Poland as antemurale christianitatis, the future of Europe and the world will be dependent on the 'Nowe Jeruzalem [New Jerusalem]' (21). According to Babcia's favourite reading *Proroctwa dla Polski i świata* (*The Prophecies for Poland and the World*) there will be a great war in which countries 'zepsute / przez prątki bogactwa, przez bezbożność oraz nieobyczajność [spoilt / by the bacilli of opulence, godlessness and indecency]' (ibidem) will suffer most. However the future of Poland will be different:

> [...] Jedynie Polska byłaby ostoją
> spokoju i ziemią bezpieczną, w nagrodę za przeszłe cierpienia
> i za swą wiarę [...]
> [...] Ta przyszła Polska,
> Nowe Jeruzalem dla wybranego od Swej Matki ludu,
> miała w opiekę wziąć wszelkie sąsiednie narody,
> co się w wielkiem błędzie i za podjudzeniem Moskwy od niej odwróciły,
> świecić im przykładem i skrzydła swe matczyne znowu rozpostrzeć
> zbawiennie od morza do morza, w miłosnej unii z Litwą, Ukrainą
> i Białorusią, a może i innym jeszcze też narodem (21).

> [...] Only Poland would be a pillar
> of peace and safety, rewarded for its past suffering
> and its faith [...]
> [...] This future Poland,
> New Jerusalem for the chosen by Its Mother people,
> will take care of all the neighbouring nations,
> who greatly mistaken, influenced by the Moscow's instigation, turned their backs,
> [Poland] will be a shining example for these nations; it will spread its

maternal wings
like a saviour, from one sea to another, in a love union with Lithuania, Ukraine
and Belarus, and maybe also another nation (21).

This remarkable postmodernist parody of the *Prophecies* emphasizes three mythical motifs that have been present in the Polish literary and historical discourse for centuries: first, the martyrdom of Poland and its past turmoil; second, its role as the saviour of all nations; and third, the imperative to unite the neighbouring countries under Polish rule and expand its possessions from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Before we look more closely at the specific elements of colonial consciousness so clearly indicated in this extract, it is worth stressing once again the absence of Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Belarusians, and the central, superior, and hegemonic role of Poland. It is Polish history that occupies the most important place in the Prophecies, whereas the *Others* are silenced and subjugated. It is Poland who speaks for them.

The conception of the Polish religious mission, rightly viewed by Bugusław Bakuła as one of the elements of the borderland discourse, overlaps with the French notion of *mission civilisatrice*. The idea, prevalent mostly in French colonial policy in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, was established to aid the political process and justify conquest (Burrows 1986: 127-29). In a similar way, the Polish catholicizing mission, as presented by the poet, would result in a Polish-Ukrainian-Lithuanian-Belarusian brotherly reunion, which is seen by Babcia as a means to regain the lost territories and restore Polish magnitude and domination in the region. The image of Poland as the saviour, that survived the great religious war and was chosen by the Mother of God to be the New Jerusalem, rationalizes and legitimizes this visionary expansion. The religious mission transforms into a military operation, in which Polishness, inextricably conjoined with the Roman Catholic faith, is an agent catalysing the enlargement of the state.

It is interesting how little attention is given to the Ukrainian religious orientation, which in fact steers away from this strictly Catholic perspective. Mykola Riabchuk claims that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the discrepancy between the Ukrainian-/Orthodox 'periphery' and Polish/Catholic 'centre' in western Ukraine was strongest, it was the religious otherness that determined one's identity and enabled one to stand in opposition to the hostile political

authorities (2002: 43-44). Hence, I propose to interpret such a representation of the brotherly reunion under the Catholic wings of Poland as an example of paternalism, which proves that in Babcia's view the multiculturalism of *Kresy* is just a form of controlled dialogue. This dialogue, in which the *Other* is muted, becomes another mask of polonocentrism.

Similarly, the planned family journey to the parish of Gliniany will be in the words of Ciocia, an act of reconciliation of 'dwóch krajów bratnich [two brotherly countries]' (34) and their mystical marriage. The metaphors of brotherhood, similar to other familial descriptions[14], appear very often in the Polish borderland discourse. It is not only a feature of the twentieth-century literature but also a characteristic of earlier writings, which often regarded Ukrainians as 'almost Poles or about-to--be-Poles' (Grabowicz 2005: 320). This Polish-Ukrainian 'fraternity' is an excellent example of what Elwira Grossman describes as the 'tendency in Polish culture [...] to prove the superiority of "sameness" over "difference"' (2002: 9), according to which Ukrainians would be considered as, for example, relatives of Poles, and not a separate nation.

On the other hand, Ciocia's faith in the brotherhood of both countries may be a sign of yearning for the primal Slavonic community, untouched by the power struggle and religious differences. The 'mystical marriage' would be a chance to reunite and leave the conflicts behind.

Although the nation-building process in contemporary Ukraine is chiefly troubled with defining and forging the national identity in relation to Russia, Różycki's discussion of the characters' colonial consciousness calls for revision of the Polish notion of *Kresy*. Moreover, it draws attention to the aspects of Polish-Ukrainian relations that have been either distorted or concealed. The characters' colonial stance also proves that it is the almost ritual act of remembering that puts in motion the nostalgic theatre of the past, in which Poland still plays first fiddle[15].

'A Haidamaka Will Always Remain a Haidamaka'

Różycki's depiction of the Ukrainian Other relates to the most tragic period in Polish-Ukrainian relations - the ethnic cleansing of the 1940s. The poet chooses to present a controversial portrait of a Ukrainian

[14] The metaphor 'skrzydła matczyne [the motherly wings]' (31) can be interpreted as an example of the same phenomenon.

[15] See Bakuła 2006: 25.

nationalist. Similar representations constituted a dominating feature of the post-1945 popular Polish literature and were a significant element of anti-Ukrainian propaganda at that time[16]. Such representations have demonized, often unjustly, Ukrainian nationalism and, as in the case of the characters of *Dwanaście stacji* who still remember the bloody conflict, created severe ukrainophobia. The poem joins in the discussion about national stereotypes and ironically transgresses the paradigm of a 'bloodthirsty Ukrainian barbarian'[17].

While discussing this aspect of the borderland discourse, Bugusław Bakuła points out that *Kresy* have often symbolized lost community spirit as well as Polish suffering and victimhood, constituting a key to the national martyrology (2006: 15). Różycki's representation of the Ukrainian nation draws chiefly on this conception of borderlands. There are three elements that build and, at the same time, contest this image. First of all, a constant fear of Bandera's partisans - 'murderers,' implied by foresightedness of the oldest men in the family, who bring 'ukryty głęboko w pierzynie granat lub mały karabin [a grenade or a small rifle hidden deeply in a duvet]' (111) in case they meet any UPA veterans during their visit to Gliniany. This fear is further indicated by Wujek's brief remark:

> Tylko na nas czekają, banderowców pełno!
> [...] Wszystkich zamordują! (35)
>
> They are waiting for us, Bandera's partisans!
> [...] They'll kill everyone! (35)

Second, is the memory of cruel 'brotherly' massacre and hatred between the two nations. Finally, the closing comment of the narrator, who describing the number of family members boarding the train to Ukraine, thinks that the inhabitants of the Galician parish might be afraid of the return of Lendians[18] and another Polish colonization (132).

All of these components, which shape the overall image of the *Other,* entail characters' ignorance of the ideological origins of Ukra-

[16] See for example Gerhard 1967 and Żółkiewska 1989.

[17] The term has been used by George Grabowicz in order to ridicule the post-war anti-Ukrainian propaganda in Poland. See Grabowicz 2005: 319.

[18] Różycki employs the term 'Lachy', which is a variant of the word 'Lędzianie', used by the East Slavs to describe Poles.

inian nationalism in the 1920s, yet they are juxtaposed with the narrator's awareness of the very phenomenon. While Różycki's *kresowiacy* view the ethnic cleansing through the prism of their colonial consciousness, which envisions the inter-war Polish colonization of Ukraine to be a harmonious existence of two relatives, interrupted by a series of mass and random ethnic killings, the narrator is aware that for some Ukrainians it was an illegitimate occupation, which had its continuation during the Second World War. Therefore, despite the arrival of the new (Soviet and German) occupiers, Poles were still considered as the main enemy, particularly in nationalistic circles, which inspired and conducted the cleansings[19]. According to Alexander Motyl a 'xenophobic hatred of the Ukraine's national enemies, in particular the Russians and Poles, a tendency to think in exclusively national terms, [and] the desire for all-Ukrainian political and social unity and for the abolition of unnecessary party and class strife' comprised the cornerstone of the Ukrainian nationalism (1980: 172).

The metaphor of fratricide employed by the characters to describe the ethnic cleansing is thus another sign of their colonial perspective which refuses to accept that, in fact, it was a violent, anti-colonial battle for an independent state. While the poem describes it as 'mordy z ręki bratniej [murders by a brother's hand]' (106), Ewa Thompson defines this type of violence as a defensive nationalism and attributes it to those communities 'which perceive themselves as being at risk, either because of their smallness ... or because their expansionist neighbours have threatened them [...]. [Thus] defensive nationalism is a means of resisting the encroachment of the hostile other upon one's identity...' (1998: 256).

The narrator's postcolonial declaration contrasted with the characters' stereotypical notion of the *Other* challenges the paradigm of representation shaped by the construct of Kresy as a site of national martyrdom. It also demonstrates that the strong ukrainophobia, revealed by kresowiacy, is deeply rooted in the misconception of the *Other*, which originates in the inter-war Polish colonization of western Ukraine. Last but not least, the depiction of eastern neighbours unveils the omnipresent in the poem, distorted historical knowledge, which is impaired by the rejection of the borderlands' right to constitute a part of the independent Ukraine.

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[19] Timothy Snyder explains that most of the OUN-UPA soldiers and nearly all of its leaders were west Ukrainians and were therefore more determined to restore their state without Polish colonizers (1999: 94-95).

Conclusion

The image of Ukraine and *Kresy* portrayed by *Dwanaście stacji* displays an unquestioning dialectic of the narrator's postcolonial perspective and colonial consciousness of the characters. The juxtaposition of both positions imparts the mechanisms of borderland discourse, which is dominated by the sense of superiority and represents a clearly distorted voice of the colonizing/polonizing centre. I noted that this deformed image of *Kresy,* projected by the characters, is a consequence of the Polish inter-war presence in western Ukraine and the outcome of an ethnocentric conception of the Polish-Ukrainian relations. Based on the above analysis, however limited in scope, it is legitimate to conclude that the literary representations of *Kresy* require an overall deconstruction. Bugusław Bakuła postulates that it is the comparative literature integrated with the tools of postcolonial theory that would enable such a project and contribute to creating an authentic dialogue on the borderlands[20].

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OBRAZ UKRAINY I KRESÓW W *DWUNASTU STACJACH* TOMASZA RÓŻYCKIEGO. ANALIZA POSTKOLONIALNA

Streszczenie

Zasadniczym celem mojego artykułu jest dokonanie postkolonialnej dekonstrukcji obrazu Ukrainy i *Kresów* w utworze polskiego poety - Tomasza Różyckiego. *Dwanaście stacji* to ironiczna, pełna humoru opowieść o śląskiej rodzinie pochodzącej z dawnych terytoriów polskich na Ukrainie Zachodniej. Ich podwójna, polsko-ukraińska tożsamość, a także wspomnienie polskiej kolonizacji Ukrainy w latach dwudziestych i trzydziestych, znacząco zniekształca postrzeganie wschodniego sąsiada. Postkolonialna analiza tekstu wykazuje, że owa zdeformowana konceptualizacja Ukrainy jest wynikiem powszechnie kultywowanego w Polsce pojęcia *Kresów,* ukraińskiego, białoruskiego i litewskiego pogranicza, które wciąż jest częścią narodowej aksjologii i symbolem utraconej ojczyzny, mimo iż sam termin, implikujący peryferyjność, jest bardzo krytykowany na Ukrainie, Białorusi i Litwie. Przywołując podstawowe cechy dyskursu kresowego zidentyfikowane przez Bugusława Bakułę, dowodzą, że Kresy zaprezentowane przez Różyckiego to miejsce, w którym toczyła się w walka o władzę i posiadanie ziemi, mimo iż w świadomości bohaterów przybrała ona formę bitwy o polskość i katolicyzm. Wizerunek Ukrainy w *Dwunastu stacjach* jest zatem ironicznym spojrzeniem na polską kolonialną świadomość, ukształtowaną w trakcie międzywojennej ekspansji na ukraińskie pogranicze i zachowanej odtąd jako część narodowej mitologii. Używając narzędzi metodologicznych dostarczonych przez krytykę postkolonialną, mój esej kwestionuje i demitologizuje stereotypowy literacki obraz Ukrainy i *Kresów*, który według Aleksandra Fiuta jest często niczym innym, a maską polonocentryzmu.