

# Czarny potok and the archive

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## A writer's archive – an outline

The surviving artistic legacy of Leopold Buczkowski is incomplete. A significant portion of his works is missing – either lost during the German occupation, or in PRL [*Polska Republika Ludowa*, Polish People's Republic]. The aim of this paper is to generally characterize the heritage left behind by Buczkowski, especially focusing on areas which offer interpretative contexts for *Czarny potok* [black brook].

Out of the available biographical notes of the “recluse from Konstancin,” the one from *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim*<sup>1</sup> [memories of Leopold Buczkowski] seems to be the most reliable. However, it has its shortcomings – first and foremost, it leaves out a lot of information concerning his artistic activity.

The beginnings of Buczkowski's creative works are somewhat mysterious. There are several versions of the story how he became an artist – not always contradictory, as some of them, often modified in many ways, “develop” and complete one another<sup>2</sup>. It is almost as if Buczkowski “toyed” with the moment in which he became an author. We see this fact as a process which is difficult to delineate, problematic for Buczkowski himself. Justyna Staroń discusses some of the doubts related to Buczkowski's “biographies”<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim*, edited Jan Tomkowski (Ossa: Wydawnictwo Dom Na Wsi, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> I write more extensively on that topic in “Nie piszę przy biurku” [I don't write at a desk], *Regiony*, No 3 (2002).

<sup>3</sup> Justyna Staroń, *Biografie Buczkowskiego (w świetle zachowanych archiwaliów i wspomnień)* [Buczkowski's biographies (in the light of the surviving archival materials and memories)], in: *Warsztaty Młodych Edytorów* [young editors' workshops], 26–28.04.2013 *Rabka*, Kraków [2014].

A critical, comprehensive biographical note (which we still do not have), first of all, should be a result of reliable fact checking, and secondly, a compilation of data found in many sources, so that a reasonably cohesive picture can be obtained. The aim should be not just to draw from the already existing monographs and sketches, but also to conduct a detailed query in the Museum of Literature, Archive of New Records, as well as in the archive of the Warsaw branch of the Association of Polish Writers (which houses some of the biographical documents).

Correspondence is a separate, large collection of texts. Some letters are outside the collection of the Museum of Literature – in private hands (closest family), with friends and admirers (such as Jerzy Pluta, who published some of them in his *Przecinek* [comma] magazine). The edition of this correspondence has an accidental character, and it is a result of several people's individual initiatives. Staroń's paper<sup>4</sup> offers the most comprehensive, the best editorial presentation of Buczkowski's correspondence.

Official correspondence constitutes an interesting collection of texts. Buczkowski breaks the rules of communication. His formal letters to various institutions are far from typically dry reporting and purely formal character. In those letters Buczkowski is ironic, deceitful, constantly balancing between seriousness and clowning<sup>5</sup>.

It takes no expert to see that some passages from the letters, which were supposed to be utilitarian, could become documentary novels. There is no doubt that both Buczkowski's private and official correspondence offer an interesting complement and comment to his prose.

Most of the materials housed by the Museum of Literature are unfinished – they consist of drafts and ideas. Buczkowski wrote irregularly. He would typically sit down to write in winter. He did not write anything in the last decade of his life. In that period his individual artistic activity was replaced with three volumes of conversations with Zygmunt Trziszka [*Wszystko jest dialogiem, Żywe dialogi, Proza żywa*]<sup>6</sup> (everything is a dialogue, living dialogues, living prose). They can be seen as an *ersatz* of a sort – a substitute for his own writing, which rescued him from the overwhelming feeling of lost time<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Justyna Staroń, "Przejawy uczuć w zapisie doświadczeń. Między kartami listów męża do żony", [evidence of feelings in the record of experiences. Between the pages of letters from husband to wife], *Konteksty* [contexts], No 3 (2015).

<sup>5</sup> See "Leopold Buczkowski – korespondencja urzędowa" [formal correspondence], edited by Sławomir Buryła, *Kresy*, No 4 (1998); Leopold Buczkowski, *Dwanaście listów* [twelve letters] in: *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim* [memories of LB], 237–240.

<sup>6</sup> Leopold Buczkowski, *Wszystko jest dialogiem* (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1984); Leopold Buczkowski, *Proza żywa* (Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo Pomorze 1986); Leopold Buczkowski, Zygmunt Trziszka *Żywe dialogi* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Pomorze, 1989).

<sup>7</sup> Out of the unpublished and unfinished works, which constitute a bigger whole, we should highlight the typescript of *Bagules* (his last novel) with the author's hand-written corrections. See Sławomir Buryła, "Edytorskie aspekty twórczości Leopolda Buczkowskiego. Rekonesans", [editorial aspects of LB's works] *Pamiętnik Literacki*, No 2 (2008). The only surviving play by Buczkowski, *Czaszka w sieni* [a skull in the entryway] has the same status. Are those eight numbered pages the whole text, or a piece of a bigger work? See Leopold Buczkowski, "Czaszka w sieni", edited by Sławomir Buryła, *Akcent*, No 2 (1999). We know that before the war Buczkowski wrote short dramatic forms. He put them on stage with his friends in the Towarzystwo Szkół Ludowych [society of folk schools] theater. In *Grząski sad* [boggy orchard] there is a mention of a 1935 play *Zabójstwo* [murder]. Perhaps then *Czaszka w sieni* belongs to a more numerous group of theatrical plays written for TSL. Buczkowski's archive also contains – hidden in the first Act – a typescript of the play *Etola* [tippet]. It is very likely that *Czaszka w sieni* and *Etola* did not go beyond the initial project phase.

Without a doubt, it would be extremely intriguing for both the editor and literature historian to have an opportunity to investigate Buczkowski's personal library. We know, as shown by works by Ryszard Nycz<sup>8</sup> or Tadeusz Błażejowski<sup>9</sup>, that Buczkowski – especially in later texts – incorporated passages from other authors into his own work. We also know the role and significance played by *Sartor Resaurtus* by Thomas Carlyle in Buczkowski's novel. His personal library would hence offer a significant interpretative context and a source of information about his artistic inspirations. In his conversations with Trziszka, Buczkowski referred to Talmud, Zohar, as well as works by Dostoyevski, Iwan Bunin, Martin Buber, Miron Białoszewski, and Edward Stachura. We also know that he often referred to Leon Chwistek's concepts. Most likely he read these books purposefully – i.e. he thought about how to use them in his own idea of what art and artists are, as well as incorporating them into his worldview. It was predominantly observation, conversation and contact with another person that formed him. Buczkowski did not have a discursive, linear mind (we cannot exclude the possibility that the discursive parts of “living dialogues” are to some extent reactionary measures introduced by Trziszka). A multidimensional, non-linear way of thinking, based on associations and loose combinations of different ideas, is his element.

In 2005 the Museum of Literature received a collection of several dozens of Buczkowski's poems<sup>10</sup>. Although Buczkowski never planned to publish a book of poems, the surviving material (some part of it – it is difficult to estimate how much – was lost during the war<sup>11</sup>) consists of poems which are uniform in terms of mood and themes. Some poems were written during the time of the German occupation, as evidenced by the dates (\*\*Zakwita barwinek, \*\*W upalny dzień)<sup>12</sup> [a periwinkle blooms on a hot day].

<sup>8</sup> Ryszard Nycz, *O kolażu tekstowym. Na materiale prozy Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [on textual collage on the example of LB's prose], in: *Pogranicza i korespondencja sztuk* [borderlands and correspondences of arts], edited by Teresa Cieślakowska, Janusz Sławiński (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> Tadeusz Błażejowski reveals in *Młodym poecie w zamku* [a young poet in a castle] intertextual games with the works by Thomas Carlyle and Marcel Schwob. See Tadeusz Błażejowski, *Przemoc świata. Pisarstwo Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [the violence of the world. LB's prose] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1991), 90–91, 96–97.

<sup>10</sup> Some have been edited for print by S. Buryła and R. Sioma. See Leopold Buczkowski: „Kopeć knota” [taper's soot], „\*\*Może strzelisz z sinej tarniny” [maybe you will shoot from blue blackthorn], „\*\*Zachybotało pokrzywą” [nettle has been swung], „\*\*O ty, święty robotniku” [oh you holly workman], „\*\*Liśćmi szeleścisz na starej topoli” [you are crackling with the leaves of an old poplar], *Przegląd Artystyczno-Literacki* [an artistic-literary review], No 10 (1998); „\*\*Czy to waszą ojczyznę” [was it your motherland], „\*\*Czołg ciebie wbił na kraty” [a tank has thrust you on the bars], „\*\*I ptak z drutem w sercu” [and a bird with a wire in its heart], „\*\*Zakwita barwinek” [periwinkle is blooming], „\*\*W upalny dzień” [on a scorching day], „Z notatnika, Siklawina: to nikogo nie obowiązuje” [from a notebook, Siklawina: this does not concern anyone], *Regiony* [regions], No 4 (1998); „\*\*Cisza pachnie zgniecioną ćmą” [silence smells like a crushed moth], „\*\*Wessałem w serce miąższ” [I sucked flesh into the heart], „Sierpień, Dym się pali” [August, the smoke is burning], „\*\*Wzdęło się żyto pod niebo” [rye has been taken to heaven], „\*\*Nie tobie skowronek” [not a nightingale for you], *Kresy*, No 4 (1998); Zapowiedź [announcement], \*\*Jedzie, jedzie, Nędza, [is coming, is coming, poverty] *Regiony*, No 2/4 (2000).

<sup>11</sup> According to the writer's son, who refers to Marian Kratochwil, Buczkowski had a “backpack full of poems”.

<sup>12</sup> Files with poems have numbers 5531 and 5556. They contain 86 pages of different format (mostly A4), most of them written only on one side (made of parchment, indicating that they were torn from school notebooks). Buczkowski continued to write poetry also after the war. Among the unpublished poems there is *Mira Kuś* with the mention of Halina Poświatowska, hence the obvious conclusion that Buczkowski must have written poetry after the war, at least until late 1950s/early 1960s, when Poświatowska had her debut as a poet.

Many of those poems are “working” versions. They are not final, for print. Some of them were definitely supposed to be edited, as evidenced by marginal comments such as “do it,” “work this out.” Their edition would have to preserve their notebook character.

Buczkowski metaphorizes prose and mythologizes space. *Pierwsza świetność* [first magnificence] contains the story of Dido, daughter of king Pygmalion of Tyre and his sister, the founder of Carthage. Similarly to the title of one volume of short stories, *Młody poeta w zamku* [a young poet in a castle] – the poetic aura is created by the titles of the short stories: *Mówiła, że szatan ma czoło zabliznione woskiem* [she said that Satan’s forehead is scarred with wax], *Patrzcie! Ona płacze. – Nie płaczę – wykrztusiła ze łzami i wybiegła z piwnicy* [Look! She is crying. “I am not”, she said with tears and ran from the basement].

This close relationship of poetry and prose (strong presence of the poetry element in the prose element) was indicated by Buczkowski’s old friend, the painter Marian Kratochwil. He wrote about it in a letter to Maria Buczkowska<sup>13</sup>. Indeed, what really captivates the reader is the lyrical character of Buczkowski’s prose: “There was no end to the road and the night,” “It was dead all around and noble as if under a stone ceiling.” These two sentences (the first one opens *Czarny potok*, and the other closes it) could be written only by a person with a deeply poetic nature. However, poetic does not mean sentimental. Buczkowski was far from affection and exuberance, as well as pretentiousness, which he often attributed to bourgeois novels. The third chapter of *Czarny potok* in its first edition ends with the following passage: “‘And what is a fairy tale?’ asked the one in the darkness. Is it what appears between love and death?” In the first printing only the question is preserved: “And what is a fairy tale?”

*Czarny potok* has a uniform color scheme dominated by various shades of black and grey, with contrasting red. Despite having a poet’s sensitivity, Buczkowski also had a painter’s eye. We tend to forget his artwork. On several occasions it is reflected in his texts: “The dawn pressed a thin mist to the ground, freezing with the damp of thatches; wet, immersed in the morning dew, blooming apple trees stood over the delicate yarn of smoke”. It is important that *Młody poeta w zamku* contains numerous Buczkowski’s drawings<sup>14</sup>. Also *Dziennik wojenny* is illustrated with photographs and drawings<sup>15</sup>.

In Buczkowski’s prose the word “to illustrate” means far more than an “aesthetic addition” to the word. Paintings, photographs and drawings complete, comment on, interact with the text. An edition of *Czarny potok* with some surviving photographs of pre-war Kresy (Brody, Kamień Podolski and the surrounding areas) would bring additional meaning to the novel. Such an idea of publishing Buczkowski’s *opus magnum* corresponds with the idea of document-novel, which was very close to him. Definitely this is how he saw the role of photography in *Powsta-*

<sup>13</sup>„List Mariana Kratochwila do Marii Buczkowskiej” [a letter from Marian Kratochwil to Maria Buczkowska], *Regiony*, No 3/4 (1992).

<sup>14</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Młody poeta w zamku. Opowiadania* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1978).

<sup>15</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Dziennik wojenny*, edited by Sławomir Buryła, Radosław Sioma (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego, 2001). The magazine edition of *Grząski sad* has the same character, edited by Zbigniew Taranienko, *Ex libris*, No 57 (1994).

nie na Żoliborzu<sup>16</sup> [uprising in Żoliborz]. On several occasions we can read there about his literary devices: “I photographed gigantic fires. Hopefully something interesting will come out of it”<sup>17</sup>. We also know that Buczkowski documented the Warsaw Uprising in photographs<sup>18</sup>.

The private collection of the Buczkowski family contains a photo of the funeral of priest Bańczycki taken by Buczkowski. Only several dozen out of around 3,500 photographs by Buczkowski have survived, mostly those which were given by him to Marian Kratochwil and Marian Ruth-Buczkowski.

Almost all of his surviving artwork entered the collection of the Museum of Art in Łódź in 2019. Since early 1990s these paintings were in his son's, Tadeusz Buczkowski's, apartment in Split. Buczkowski's paintings are a part of the permanent exhibition, entitled *Atlas nowoczesności. Kolekcja sztuki XX i XXI wieku* [the atlas of modernity, collection of art from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries]. They were presented for the first time to the Polish audience in the thematic volume of “Konteksty” (2015, No 3). Currently they can also be admired on the Museum's website<sup>19</sup>. Justyna Staroń's (*Dialog sztuk*) [dialogue of arts] and Agnieszka Karpowicz's (*Archiwum. Technika Leopolda Buczkowskiego – „spisz”*)<sup>20</sup> [archive. LB's technique – “write it down”] sketches present Buczkowski's paintings.

According to Tadeusz's son some of the paintings went missing during preparations to an exhibition in Israel in 1966<sup>21</sup>. Some sketches, drawings, small paintings were given to Trziszka – Buczkowski's friend and the author of a monograph devoted to him. Many sculptures are now lost because of Buczkowski's neglectful attitude towards his own work. He gave away some of them to his friends, other were probably stolen. Some sculptures are still in Konstancin, kept by Buczkowski's friends<sup>22</sup>.

On several occasions Buczkowski spoke about modern painting and sculpture, for example in “Życie Literackie” and “Magazyn Kulturalny”<sup>23</sup>. There is also a manuscript of a short sketch entitled *Na tropach sztuki* [on the trail of art]. These and other Buczkowski's comments on painting can be found in a file catalogued in the Museum of Literature as *Notatki* [notes] (inventory number 5537).

<sup>16</sup>See Sławomir Buryła, *Wstęp* [introduction] in: *Dziennik wojenny*, 6.

<sup>17</sup>Buryła, 81.

<sup>18</sup>It is known that Buczkowski, together with Bolesław Wierzbicki, made posters for the Uprising, which unfortunately have not survived.

<sup>19</sup>Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi. <https://zasoby.msl.org.pl/martists/view/3197> [date of access: 22.03.2020].

<sup>20</sup>Justyna Staroń, *Dialog sztuk. O twórczości artystycznej Leopolda Buczkowskiego* in: (*Dy*)fuzje. Związki literatury i sztuki w Polsce po 1945 roku, edited by Magdalena Lachman, Paweł Polit, Łódź 2019. The relationship between visual arts and writing is discussed by A. Karpowicz. See Agnieszka Karpowicz, *Archiwum. Technika Leopolda Buczkowskiego – „spisz”* in: *Kolaż. Awangardowy gest kreacji*. [avant-garde gesture of creation] Themerson, Buczkowski, Białoszewski (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Communicare 2007).

<sup>21</sup>File 4483 (*Dokumenty Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [LB's documents]) contains an invitation from Lechosława Amit-Chmielowska to come to Israel.

<sup>22</sup>Photos of some sculptures can be found in *Proza żywa* [living prose].

<sup>23</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, “Przerwany zaklęty krąg czynności – ceramika Krzysztofa Henisza” [broken enchanted circle of activities – KH's ceramics], *Życie Literackie*, No 10 (1960); Leopold Buczkowski, „Kwaszkiewicz”, *Magazyn Kulturalny*, No 1 (1981).

We should also mention film projects. Buczkowski was skeptical about adapting his *opus magnum* to screen. Despite being critical of film and its capacity for artistic expression, Buczkowski still worked on scenarios for film novellas. We have two typescripts: *Ponad widzialną* [above the visible] and *Nad dolinami* [above valleys] (a sketch of a film novella about the botanist, Feliks Beradu). Finally, there are also two biographical documentaries about him: *Wieczysty wrot* [imperishable door] and *Wyrazić siebie*<sup>24</sup> [express oneself].

Let us also add that since 1950s Buczkowski worked as a designer of book covers and illustrator (for example, *The banner of Janek Gwizdata*<sup>25</sup> by Alex Wedding/Grete Weiskopf, *Wybór wierszy* [a selection of poems] by Edward Szymański, *Miasto na złotym szlaku* [city on the golden trail] by Lucyna Sieciechowiczowa, *Śladami poety* [following a poet's footsteps] by Wanda Grodzieńska, *Fryderyk* by Tadeusz Łopalewski). Illustrations for "Nasza Księgarnia" were made in the 1960s (*Ofka z Kamiennej Góry* [Ofka from Kamienna Góra] by Kornelia Dobkiewiczowa). Unfortunately, there is no summary of book cover designs and books on which Buczkowski worked.

Anna Glińska-Trziszka, Zygmunt Trziszka's widow, keeps a collection of several dozen tapes with music and "live dialogues" in her Warsaw apartment. Only a part of that collection has been digitized by Trziszka's son, Filip. Most of them are decaying. The problem is not only about the poor quality of the tapes, but also how disorganized the collection is. It would require describing, cataloguing and classifying<sup>26</sup>.

Most of these tapes are records of conversations with Buczkowski. Jadwiga Pachecka, his close friend, is skeptical about *Wszystko jest dialogiem*, *Żywe dialogi*, *Proza żywa* and the issue of the authenticity of these texts:

I am [...] absolutely certain that the number of Buczkowski's short stories actually recorded or noted down by Trziszka is very small. Anyone who has ever heard Leopold's stories, or who has even been an attentive reader, can easily recognize his work. These are short, witty, and wise stories about the years spent in Podkamień, the people whom he'd met. They idealize the world which was completely annihilated and can only be resurrected through language. They are always a complete whole with a punchline.

In *Wszystko jest dialogiem* they are presented in a separate chapter, which proves that Buczkowski still controlled the reality around him. Some of them (which would prove the thesis about the evanescence of Buczkowski's material) were repeated in *Proza żywa*. However, the line between them and the editor-author invention of Trziszka gets more and more blurred. We have predominantly

<sup>24</sup>*Wieczysty wrot*, script and directing by Ignacy Szczepański (1983) and *Wyrazić siebie*, script and directing I. Szczepański (1985). See *Panie Ignacy, nie zrobiliśmy gówna* [Mr Ignacy, we didn't do shit] in: Ignacy Szczepański, *Bohaterowie moich filmów – spotkania* [characters from my movies], Brzezia Łąka: Wydawnictwo Poligraf, 2012. Szczepański –fascinated with Buczkowski and his art. – wrote a script based on *Dorycki kruźganek*. See Ignacy Szczepański, „Dorycki kruźganek według Leopolda Buczkowskiego”, *Miesięcznik Literacki*, No 6 (1989).

<sup>25</sup>Original title: Die Fahne des Pfeiferhänsleins [PZ]

<sup>26</sup>See Adam Wiedemann, „Miejsce i rola muzyki w twórczości Leopolda Buczkowskiego” [the place and role of music in LB's art.], *Teksty Drugie*, No 1/2 (1997).

stories about Ukraine, passages from Talmudic texts and others, incorporated in such a way as to suggest that they are a record of what Buczkowski said. In *Żywe dialogi*, which were published after Leopold's death, there is no trace of his contribution. It is pretentious, pseudo-philosophical babbling, with confusing and disrespectful comments about authors whom Buczkowski hadn't known nor read<sup>27</sup>.

Jerzy Kazimierski states: "The records of what Buczkowski supposedly said resemble a wardrobe, out of which Zygmunt Trziszka would take an appropriately composed outfit in which he presented his mentor"<sup>28</sup>. To test the degree to which the records have been tampered with, one would have to compare the book with the tapes. The process would not be easy, given the poor quality of the tapes, but it would not be impossible.

The doubt pointed out by Pachecka has a wider dimension. It is not just about the possible tampering with the text by Trziszka, but also about the disinvolution with which Buczkowski approached his stories, events and facts presented anew – and subject to subsequent transformations. The same story, the same anecdote could be modified by the author. Although it does help the story, which thus gains new meanings, it is misleading to researchers interested in the biographical facts. It is easy to be misled by a good story. It is enough to read Buczkowski's biography. We do not know what exactly his role was in the September Campaign (where and how long he served). In his passport application for England in 1960 we can read that he fought in communication troops as private, and in a self-defense group of Horowic<sup>29</sup> in Podole during the German Occupation. However, we cannot be certain about that issue.

## The problem of origins

Wojciech Kruszewski concludes:

Each literary work's origins can be worked out from its text. Even if we have a very scarce documentation of the creative process, if the reader is interested in this problem and insightful enough, they can uncover the information about how a given piece of work was created. [...] The more evidence of the creative process, the broader the scope of possible investigations<sup>30</sup>.

The question about the origins of *Czarny potok* has to take into consideration two questions: the date and the circumstances of the Uprising and the account of *Wertepy* [bumpy road] and *Dziennik wojenny* [war journal] (especially the first part entitled *Grząski sad* [boggy orchard])<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>27</sup>Jadwiga Pachecka, *Teatry Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [LB's theaters], in: *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim*, 52–53.

<sup>28</sup>Jerzy Kazimierski, *Recepcja twórczości Leopolda Buczkowskiego w latach 1966–1989* [the reception of LB's art from 1966 to 1989] (Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, 2009), 131.

<sup>29</sup>*Dokumenty Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, file No 4483.

<sup>30</sup>Wojciech Kruszewski, *Rękopisy i formy. Badanie literatury jak sztuka odnajdywania pytań* [manuscripts and forms. A study into literature as an art of finding questions] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 2010), 60.

<sup>31</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Grząski sad* in: *Dziennik wojenny*.

These two texts share the same place of action and the similarity of geography. They even share some characters. However, the issue is complex: in *Czarny potok* authentic characters from *Dziennik wojenny* meet fictional characters from *Wertepy*. A similar situation happens with spatial categories – real places from *Dzienniki wojenne* are intertwined with fictional ones from *Czarny potok* (e.g. Szabasowa). However, the question of place names requires deeper reflection, as those which are not supposed to have their counterparts in reality turn out to be real after all<sup>32</sup>.

The diary offers archetypes of the spy, snitch and court reporter. There are also mentions of names known from *Czarny potok*: Tykies, Szaja (also present in *Dorycki krużganek* [Doric cloistered])<sup>33</sup>. Interesting additional information about the protagonists of *Czarny potok* can also be found in the file *Wspomnienia i notatki literackie* [memories and literary notes] (No 5538). Some pictures are literally copied from the journal: “Stupid day, stupid beings, horrible boredom! Death is boring already, death sentences suck too – a death sentence for a horse, read out and performed in public, would be unbearable!”<sup>34</sup>. And in *Czarny potok*: “Death is boring [...]. And Death sentence... huh? A death sentence for a horse, for example, is a completely different matter. Read out and performed in public, it would be [...] unbearable [...]”<sup>35</sup>. In *Grząski sad* we read: “The war is dragging, and it is as boring to everyone as an unhappy marriage – it goes on, God knows where and what for!”<sup>36</sup> In *Czarny potok* one of the characters says: “The war is dragging and it is as boring as an unhappy marriage”<sup>37</sup>.

In the 1940s Dolinowszczena was annihilated. Towards the end of 1943 Buczkowski was forced to leave Podole. He was hiding in Warsaw until the Warsaw Uprising. He wrote about the Ukrainian slaughter and the tragedy of the capital in *Dziennik wojenny*. *Grząski sad* and *Powstanie na Żoliborzu* are an account of the process of the destruction of the language of storytelling, which in this sense is a bridge that leads to *Czarny potok*<sup>38</sup>. Between *Wertepy* and *Czarny potok* there is a radical passage from the world which can be told in a linear way to a form which requires a narrative of a different kind.

The horror of war forces the artist to seek a more capacious and open form than that known from *Wertepy*. In *Grząski sad* and *Powstanie na Żoliborzu* the poetics of trauma begins its work. The editors of *Dziennik wojenny* in the name of making its complicated structure more approachable resigned from its experimental character. Meanwhile the manuscript reveals a torn, traumatic language. It is distinguished by punctuation marks characteristic

<sup>32</sup>See Radosław Sioma, „Pewien zakątek ziemi”. *Geografia „Czarnego potoku” – rekonesans* [“some corner of the earth”. Geography of *Czarny potok* – a reconnaissance] in: *Od poetyki przestrzeni do geopoetyki* [from poetics to geopolitics], edited by Elżbieta Konończuk, Elżbieta Sidoruk (Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2012).

<sup>33</sup>In *Czarny potok* these characters are named Aron Tykies, Chunya Szaja.

<sup>34</sup>Buczkowski, *Grząski sad*, 39.

<sup>35</sup>Buczkowski, *Czarny potok*, 14.

<sup>36</sup>Buczkowski, *Grząski sad*, 43.

<sup>37</sup>Buczkowski, *Czarny potok*, 138.

<sup>38</sup>See Sławomir Buryła, „Między Wertepami a Czarnym potokiem. Zagadnienia ewolucji prozy Leopolda Buczkowskiego” [between *Wertepy* and *Czarny potok*. Questions regarding the evolution of LB's prose], in: *Teksty Drugie*, No 2, 2001.



for Buczkowski's diary (#, = #, =, -)<sup>39</sup>. The modern theory of trauma and trauma realism make us see a form which is rather special on the ground of the Polish literature which attempts at reflecting the uniqueness of a borderline experience<sup>40</sup>. *Grzęski sad* and *Powstanie na Żoliborzu* are a testament of the decisive entry of the trauma element, whereas *Czarny potok* is a radical strengthening of tendencies already present in *Dziennik wojenny*. However, we should add that the first draft of *Czarny potok* already has occasional punctuation known from the diary (#, = #, =, -).

According to Buczkowski himself, he worked on *Czarny potok* from 1945 to 1946. The novel was written in Zakopane, where he was undergoing treatment for lung problems. "In 1946 I went to undergo treatment in Zakopane. It was then, while lying on a chaise longue, I started writing *Czarny potok*."<sup>41</sup> Trziszka corroborates that dating<sup>42</sup>. It is known for a fact that after the war Buczkowski treated his tuberculosis. In the application to Zarząd Warszawskiego Związku Polskich Artystów Plastyków [administration of the Polish association of fine artists] we find two important pieces of information: "In the same year [1945] I went down with tuberculosis, following my war-time experiences, and for the following two years I lived in Zakopane, and then I settled down in Konstancin, near Warsaw [...]"<sup>43</sup> It is unknown when exactly Buczkowski left Zakopane. The same file (4483) contains a medical certificate dated Dec. 2, 1947 by Dr. Józef Hano (in the analyzed "sample of sputum *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* was not found").

It seems that even if Buczkowski had started working on *Czarny potok* in the winter of 1945, it would have had to be an early project or ideas which lasted until 1946; during that time he must have devoted all of his attention to *Wertepy* (first print in 1947).

File 5533 is helpful in the reflection on the origins of *Czarny potok*. It contains a typescript (86 pages) of the fourth edition of the novel, entitled: *Część pierwsza: Szabasowa* [part one: Szabasowa]. The initial page with the title *Czarny potok* has a hand-written date "1947-1948." We should also refer to the letter from Robotnicza Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza "Prasa" [workman's printing cooperative "press"] from Aug. 8, 1948: "We are sorry to inform you that we will not print your novel *Czarny potok* [...]"<sup>44</sup> That short note shows that *Czarny potok* must have been finished in the first half of 1948 at the latest. Buczkowski himself wrote:

I wrote *Czarny potok* in Zakopane, while undergoing treatment for my lungs. The text was ready in 1947, but I had to wait for ten years. It spent two years in "Czytelnik" [reader] when I took it from PIW, and a year in "Książka i wiedza" [book and knowledge], and eventually it spent another two years at my home<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>39</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Dzienniki*, No 4226.

<sup>40</sup>See a doctoral dissertation by Dawid Skrabek *Traumatyczna tkanka prozy* [traumatic tissue of prose], advisor prof. A. Łebkowska (Kraków 2011, typescript available in UJ library).

<sup>41</sup>See Buczkowski, Trziszka, *Żywe dialogi*, 15. See Jan Tomkowski, *Krótkie kalendarium życia i twórczości Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [a short calendar of the life and art of LB]in: *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim*, 261.

<sup>42</sup>Buczkowski, *Wszystko jest dialogiem*, 67. That information is not confirmed by his son, Tadeusz.

<sup>43</sup>*Dokumenty Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, No 4483.

<sup>44</sup>*Listy wydawnictw do Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [letters from publishing houses to LB], No 4419.

<sup>45</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Koszmar na międzyepokę* [a nightmare between-epoque], Buczkowski, *Dziennik wojenny*, s. 160.

To provide a full picture it should be mentioned that Buczkowski prepared *Ruda bekiesza* [red coat] which was written to complement *Czarny potok* and *Dorycki krużganek*. The title of the trilogy was supposed to be *Brylant kahału* [kehillah's diamond], as stated by Buczkowski in an interview for "Słowo Powszechne" [common word]<sup>46</sup>. *Ruda bekiesza* was supposed to be the last element of the cycle. It is hard to say exactly to what extent it was a feasible idea, and to what – a future project. It is a fact that the second part of *Czarny potok* is entitled *Ruda bekiesza* in the typescript (following the first, *Szabasowa*)<sup>47</sup>.

Buczkowski rarely commented on his works. In *Żywe dialogi*, *Proza żywa* or *Wszystko jest dialogiem* rarely can we find any information about the origins of some novels, rather comments to the contents of his books or interviews in which he tries to reconstruct something we would call a private concept of what an artist and work of art are. However, Kazimierski advises to approach such declarations and judgments of the author regarding his own prose as well as that of authors that are close to him cautiously<sup>48</sup>.

We can also learn something from individual, scattered opinions of the author. However, even they allow us to confront only some of the information and accept it as certain and undisputable.

The Museum of Literature houses five editions of *Czarny potok* in the form of a glossed typescript (files 4220, 4371, 4372, 4373, 5533). A separate file (4219) contains the first draft of the novel in three A4 notebooks.

However, this does not mean that those six files contain complete material that later became the printed version. File No 4370 has fragments (each several pages long) entitled *Chuny Szaja*, *Dno* [bottom], *Ruda bekiesza*, and two without any title. All of them – some after a few editions – entered the first book edition. *Dno* (in a different edition) is in file 5538, where we can also find two texts entitled *Rafał Bajc* (k. 1–19 and k. 20–25) and *Notatnik Szeruckiego* [Szerucki's notebook] (k. 32–34)<sup>49</sup>.

Here we should also mention one feature of Buczkowski's writing. *Czarny potok* is a special example – constantly going back to the same scenes, characters and dialogues. Importantly, Buczkowski does not modify the descriptions of nature, as if he had been certain from the start of what he wanted to achieve in that field. Typically the changes he introduces are not deep – mostly just individual words (or their sequence), rarely changing a whole sentence or paragraph.

Initial parts of the typescript of the first edition of *Czarny potok* (4220) and the second one (4371), which both open with the same passage – "slowly" – to a description of the end of summer, whose style is closer to *Wertepy* than *Czarny potok*. It is this painting-like style, typical for *Wertepy*, impressionistic in its tone that so often occurs in his first novel:

<sup>46</sup>„[Rozmowy z pisarzami]. Z Leopoldem Buczkowskim rozmawia Jerzy Hordyński” [interviews with writers. JH interviews LB], *Życie Literackie*, No 27 (1958). In that conversation LB believed that *Ruda bekiesza* would be printed in 1958.

<sup>47</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Czarny potok*, No 4373.

<sup>48</sup>See Kazimierski, *Recepcja twórczości Leopolda Buczkowskiego...*, 131–138.

<sup>49</sup>See *Notatki Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, No 5537.

After August the grass becomes red and shiny. Piglets walk around the yard in search of leftovers. Throng exploded from a sparrow's nest on the bean patch and sat on it suddenly, like husk thrown against the wind. The sky became cloudy. In the morning scarce, cold dew came out.

The summer cooled down, only the forest had brisk starlings, silently rambling through the underbush. Their rustling scared the people who had run away from Szabasowa. A quick evening was flatly falling down on the stubble into a red flame, closing in one color tree trunks covered with groats of overripe sage<sup>50</sup>.

This passage appears on page 57 of the book edition (1994). When working on the final version of the text, Buczkowski decided to make *Czarny potok* more dynamic and he started with the sentence: "There was no end to the road and the night." The reader is immediately thrown into the story. This initial sentence perfectly reflects the mood of the novel. The "bumpy" character of this passage can also be explained by the fact that already after the war Buczkowski was working on his debut novel. As we remember, at the same time he was still perfecting, correcting, completing, and sometimes even adding new passages to *Wertepy*<sup>51</sup>. By resigning from the classical story (like *Wertepy*), in *Czarny potok* he takes on a different artistic strategy. To present the events from after the Disaster he introduces a shattered, thorn form.

In the typescript (file No 4220) Buczkowski considers opening *Czarny potok* in the following way:

The autumn scarlet red is reddening behind the houses and ~~horse mills~~ old horse mills. Phloxes by girly paths. In sunny September a bee goes to phloxes. In sunny September the stream clacks, the nettle grows mouldy, the rooster ~~lover~~ chases ducks, hitting them on the head with a lover's enthusiasm. The ducks sit down, they like it<sup>52</sup>.

The ending of *Czarny potok* was also changed, though not so much, also becoming more dynamic. In the typescript of the final version of the novel (4373) the final sentence reads: "It was dead all around and noble as if under a stone ceiling." In the first edition, this is actually the penultimate sentence. However, Buczkowski overcame the temptation of an impressive coda, and added a hand-written note: "Then we listened carefully, because three rifle shots were supposed to be the answer and confirmation that Czaczkiés accepted the offer to look for Leit and Szerucki with us." This is how the book ends.

We know that Marian Ruth-Buczkowski also had an influence on the shape of *Czarny potok*. However, this influence is difficult to assess. Did these speculated suggestions make the story easier to follow, easier to read (through reducing all that was supposed to take the novel to the limits of intelligibility)? It would seem less likely that Marian would try to further complicate the text.

<sup>50</sup>Buczkowski, *Czarny potok I*, No 4220

<sup>51</sup>See Leopold Buczkowski, „*Wertepy*”, No 4355.

<sup>52</sup>Buczkowski, *Czarny potok. I*, No 4220.

If Ruth-Buczowski indeed had contributed to the editorial work and if that contribution had been significant, then today – based on the available documents – it is impossible to reconstruct, or even to generally trace that process. We have neither direct nor indirect evidence which would help to indicate specific changes suggested by Marian.

We can suspect that the language of *Czarny potok* was also formed by editing. Similarly to the case of Marian Ruth-Buczowski, it is hard to establish their character exactly (perhaps – what seems intuitive – it was about making the language and the narrative slightly more approachable). Did Buczkowski agree to that? We do not have the proofreading copy nor galley proof to confirm.

The question of possible mistakes and editorial error also remains open. Some of them can be eliminated. Unfortunately, in Buczkowski's prose it is hard to say whether a mistake concerning a given word, form or phrase was made by the proofreader or the author (or maybe they were conscious). In the case of *Czarny potok* the surviving editions with first drafts give a chance to eliminate some ambiguities and contaminations. For example, the following sentence can be found in the first print: "Cirla hugged the child and ran – she could still make out dahlias in the mud, red toads [ropuchy]."<sup>53</sup> In the first edition of *Czarny potok* (4220) the mistake "ropuchy" is corrected to "łopuchy" [burdock]. Another example: "Smoke can be the sound of a living city, but a silent city is smokeless, without the red glow, without the eternal flame of God's Saints [Świętych Pańskich], without the word...". In *edition princeps* we read "Świętych Pańskich" instead of "Świątyn Pańskich" [God's temples].

Reading four editions of *Czarny potok* and the first draft from *edition princeps* (1954) allows us to state that the number of characters in the novel evolved. For example, file 4220 we can find the character of priest Bańczycki, who becomes Klara Wasicińska in the first edition. Reading the subsequent editions carefully allows to gain additional information about each character. For example Hanczarka, who is a German spy in *Czarny potok*, turns out to be a German woman named Hedwig (4220).

The manuscript of *Czarny potok* – the basis of the first edition – has not survived. It is not archived in the "PAX" publishing house. As has been said, we do not even have the galley proof. In such a situation *edition princeps* should serve as the basis for a critical edition, which is also justified by the fact that we do not know whether Buczkowski worked on subsequent editions of the novel<sup>54</sup>. Hence, since we do not have any information confirming Buczkowski's involvement in the work on subsequent editions, and the observable differences typically concern spelling and punctuation according to the traditional rules of editing, we have to treat the first print as the basis.

<sup>53</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PAX, 1954), 61.

<sup>54</sup>So far there have been eight editions of *Czarny potok*: *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PAX, 1954); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1959); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, 1964); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1971); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PAX, 1974); *Czarny potok* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1979); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1986); *Czarny potok* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994).

The only competition for the first print is the 1994 edition from the series “Polish Twentieth Century Prose Collection” based on the “carefully prepared fourth edition of the novel” from 1974. However, there was another edition of *Czarny potok* by “PAX” from 1974. Probably what is meant there then is the 1971 fourth edition by PIW. There is nothing to indicate that the minor corrections were introduced or accepted by the author. Perhaps there is some confirmation waiting to be discovered in Buczkowski’s private correspondence.

Having accepted the primacy of *edition principens* we cannot ignore the obvious mistakes that can be found in the first print. It is quite careless in its language, with a number of editorial errors. There are spelling errors, such as the spelling of the “by” particle (sometimes as “byłoby”, sometimes as “było by” [it would be]). Prepositions and prepositional phrases are another numerous group. Some of them may have resulted from ignoring the 1936 spelling reform, others were probably missed by the PAX editor (“nie wesoło” instead of “niewesoło” [bleakly], “nie prawda” instead of “nieprawda” [not true], etc.). There are also mistakes in spelling “nie” [no] with participles (“nie ubrane” instead of “nieubrane” [not dressed]), etc.

Although the 1994 edition was quite carefully prepared (the spelling and punctuation mistakes were eliminated), it should nevertheless be treated with caution. The noun “ghetto” is spelled in its modern form as “getto,” even though during the war and immediately after it, it was spelled as “ghetto.” Since it is a testament of the time when the text was written, it should remain in its original form.

## Late print

*Czarny potok* was written in one of the best periods of Polish literature of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (especially 1945-1949). Some were already published in the Stalinist times, such as *Pożegnanie z Marią* [farewell with Maria], *Kamienny świat* [stone world] by Tadeusz Borowski, *Niepokój* [anxiety] and *Czerwona rękawiczka* [red glove] by Tadeusz Różewicz, *Medaliony* [medallions] by Zofia Nałkowska, *Ocalenie* [salvation] by Czesław Miłosz. There were also others written in the first months following the war, blocked by the censorship, such as *Rojsty* [mires] by Tadeusz Konwicki, *Buty i inne opowiadania* [shoes and other stories] by Jan Józef Szczepański, *Szpital Przemienienia* [transfiguration hospital] by Stanisław Lem, as well as *Czarny potok*.

It took several years before *Czarny potok* was printed<sup>55</sup>. PIW was the first publishing house to receive the typescript. According to Buczkowski, the text was rejected based on the negative opinion by Wilhelm Mach<sup>56</sup>. The problem ended in 1953:

<sup>55</sup>Buczkowski talked about problems with getting *Czarny potok* published in interviews. See “Czarny potok płynie przez Konstancin” [a black brook flows through Konstancin]. Z Leopoldem Buczkowskim rozmawia Monika Warneńska [Monika Wareńska interviews LB], *Trybuna Mazowiecka*, No 249 (1957) or “Jest jakaś skaza. Z Leopoldem Buczkowskim rozmawia Stanisław Zieliński” [there is some defect. Stanisław Zieliński interviews LB], *Polityka*, No 32 (1985).

<sup>56</sup>In the letter from 31 January 1952 PIW notifies LB that due to its character the book has to be sent to four reviewers and get their approval. *Listy wydawnictw do Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, No 4227.

About three months after Stalin's death they came here, to Konstancin, in a PAX car – Haggmajer and Horodyński. And there I was, poor like a church mouse. That poverty made me take a job as a *metteur en pages* in *Przyjaciółka* [friend]; for four hundred złoty per month I cycled to Warsaw every day. Fortunately I had some experience from Koziąnski, and I further honed my skills in *Przekrój* [section].

Until then I had had nothing to do with them, but they had various cultural tasks commissioned also by the secret police, and they could buy such “defective” typescripts which may or may not be published in the future. Anyway, there they are, saying that they know about my problems with getting published and offering to help me. Haggmajer says that PAX wants to publish *Czarny potok*, and if I say yes, they can offer me advance payment, thirty thousand. Mother of God, it was a fortune. I made four hundred for a family of four, and they offered me thirty thousand. They “bought” me with that money, took the typescript, and a year later *Czarny potok* was published<sup>57</sup>.

In 1953, in *Dziś i jutro* [today and tomorrow] *Rozmowa w ciemności*<sup>58</sup>[a conversation in the darkness] was published. It tells the story of a meeting at a presbytery and the confrontation between priest Bańczycki and Gail the Nazi. However, before that, in the years preceding the Stalinist times in Poland, a fragment entitled *W nocy*<sup>59</sup> [at night] was published in an issue of *Warszawa* [Warsaw]. The weekly *Dziś i jutro* wrote a comment:

The fragment below belongs to a more extensive work, *Czarny potok*, which tells the story of the brave Jewish resistance movement against the beastly consequences of the Nazi racial discrimination. The author, who himself participated in the fights he writes about – shows a humanist, and at times a tragically rough and ruthless idea of brotherhood tested in a difficult but at the same time beautiful alliance of people who fight in defense of humanity<sup>60</sup>.

There is a letter dated to 31 Dec 1952 from Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy [state publishing institute]:

We inform you that due to its character, we would like to have the first volume of *Czarny potok* reviewed by several critics. We have processed the book for further reviews.

We will announce our final decision to you at the beginning of this July. We kindly inquire whether you accept this date<sup>61</sup>.

From the conversation between Buczkowski and Zbigniew Taranienka we learn that “*Czarny potok* was in several publishing houses while I was writing *Dorycki kruźganek*. I was very sad that *Czarny potok* couldn't be published. I was writing *Dorycki kruźganek* without any hope

<sup>57</sup>Buczkowski, *Koszmar na międzyepokę*, 160

<sup>58</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, „Rozmowa w ciemności”, *Dziś i Jutro*, No 46 (1953), 6.

<sup>59</sup>Leopold Buczkowski, „W nocy”, *Warszawa*, No 3 (1948).

<sup>60</sup>Buczkowski, „Rozmowa w ciemności”, 6.

<sup>61</sup>*Listy wydawnictw do Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, No 4419.

it would be published. I was writing for myself. Hence I was leaving a lot out. This is not the complete version of the book.”<sup>62</sup> What does this sentence mean? Is it about the internal self-censorship of the artist, who never compromised on aesthetic choices? Although it is difficult to conclude definitely, it would seem there is another possibility. In the conversations with Trziszka published in *Kresy* we can find the following passage: “I already had the typescript of *Czarny potok* with me then, written carefully. I felt crafty, as if I slipped in between the Scylla and Charybdis.”<sup>63</sup> What does he mean? Perhaps communist censorship? It is very likely; after all, *Dorycki kruźganek* was written in the middle of the Stalinist era, but also *Czarny potok* was written in the time of increasing restrictions on the world of art. Probably we will never know what *Czarny potok* would look like if Buczkowski had not expected censorship. We do not learn much from it about the crimes of Ukrainian nationalists in Brody, Podkamień and in the area. It is surprising if we remember how much attention they received in *Grzyski sad*, which also includes specific place names<sup>64</sup>. It is also surprising because two of Buczkowski’s brothers died in the massacres<sup>65</sup>. Neither was there any mention of the Soviet policy in the areas occupied by the Red Army following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, whereas we know that forced displacements from Brody and Podkamień took place in the winter of 1940 – areas where the events of *Czarny potok* take place. And yet there is nothing about it in the novel<sup>66</sup>.

It would be desirable to determine the kind and scale of censorship. However, it is not easy. Exactly on Nov. 15, 1952 the typescript of *Czarny potok* was delivered to PAX. Several months later (January 1953) a contract was signed and advance payment was paid, and on March 26, 1953 a publishing contract was signed. In 1953, having decided to publish the book, PAX waited for several months for the answer from GUKPPiW [censorship office]. In a letter from Oct. 6, 1953 the editorial office informed Buczkowski that they rejected the changes suggested by Kazimierz Truchanowski (who after all did not work for the censorship office)<sup>67</sup>. The imprint tells us that the novel was sent for typesetting and text makeup on July 26, 1954. This means that between October and July there was still time to introduce changes by the editorial office, including possible suggestions from the censorship office. I did not find a copy of any review forms or any other information about other censorship interventions in *Czarny potok*, be it in magazines (*Warszawa*, *Dziś i Jutro*) or in the book form. Probably we will never know what the corrections suggested by Truchanowski concerned nor whether they were actually introduced.

\* \* \*

Artur Sandauer was not happy about publishing *Czarny potok*. In fact, he was quite hostile towards the book: “I have tried to read this book several times, but each time after having

<sup>62</sup> Zbigniew Taranienko, *Z dna „Tygla”* [from the bottom of a pot] in: *Wspomnienia o Leopoldzie Buczkowskim*, 134.

<sup>63</sup> Leopold Buczkowski, „Koszmar na międzypoka”, *Kresy*, nr 4 (1997), after: Buczkowski, *Dziennik wojenny*, 160.

<sup>64</sup> It can be explained by the poetics of the novel, but is it just that?

<sup>65</sup> Buczkowski’s two younger brothers died in the Podkamień massacre in March 1944, Zygmunt (24) and Tadeusz (25). Their names are on the list of victims’ names by Zdzisław Jan Iłowski, Stanisław Stefan Iłowski, *Podkamień. Apokaliptyczne wzgórze* (Opole: Wydawnictwo s.n., 1994), 117.

<sup>66</sup> Iłowski, Iłowski, 76–77.

<sup>67</sup> *Listy wydawnictw do Leopolda Buczkowskiego*, nr inw. 4419.

read several pages I had to give up on it, feeling empty-headed”<sup>68</sup>. To Sandauer the chaotic storytelling was evidence of Buczkowski’s incompetence. Apart from the fact that the genuine, radical breakdown of storytelling, the cause-and-effect narrative model, and traditional composition will only happen later (*Oficer na nieszpiorach* [an officer at vespers], *Kąpiele w Lucca* [bathing in Lucca], *Kamień w pieluszkach* [a stone in a nappy])<sup>69</sup>, the surviving first draft of *Czarny potok* and several editions of the novel allow us to definitely state that the “chaos” is a completely intentional artistic strategy. Each of the four editions has the same composition as the book version – individual scenes function next to each other, loosely neighboring.

Sandauer’s judgment directs our attention to one more thing. Without any doubt *Czarny potok* – as one of the most important novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – deserves an edition which would establish the canonic version of the text. In the case of such a hermetic text, which is so difficult to read, removing various mistakes (those made by the author as well as those by editors) is crucial for understanding it. Secondly, suggested interpretations would make reading the novel easier. Both clarifying meanings and eliminating linguistic errors are made easier by consulting the archive: the surviving editions and first drafts, transformations of the text, as well as the available bibliographic materials, notes, drafts (on different levels of completion).

translated by Paulina Zagórska

<sup>68</sup>Artur Sandauer, „Pod czy ponad?”, *Nowa Kultura*, nr 8 (1960). After: *Stanowiska wobec...* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1963) 91.

<sup>69</sup>See Arkadiusz Kalin, *Problem spójności prozy Leopolda Buczkowskiego* [the problem of cohesion in LB’s prose] in: *Zimą bywa się pisarzem. O Leopoldzie Buczkowskim* [in winter sometimes one becomes an author], edited by Sławomir Buryła, Agnieszka Karpowicz, Radosław Siomy (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Universitas, 2008).

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# KEYWORDS

## Holokaust

*extermination of Kresy*

## Leopold Buczkowski's prose

### **ABSTRACT:**

The paper discusses the problem of the origins of *Czarny potok*, a novel by Leopold Buczkowski. By reconstructing the complicated story of the origins of the novel, the author consults the surviving genesis documents (both published and unpublished) housed in Buczkowski's archive. Their analysis allows to address some issues regarding the origins of the novel, as well as the complex compositional and story-related aspects of the book.

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## GENERIC CRITICISM

**NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:**

Sławomir Buryła – literary scholar at the Faculty of Polish Studies at UW. His research interest include modern literature (especially wartime), editing, popculture and literary criticism. Coauthor and editor of the monograph *Literatura polska wobec Zagłady (1939–1968)* [Polish literature in the face of Holocaust] (together with Dorota Krawczyńska and Jacek Leociak). Lately he published *Rozrachunki z wojną* [settlements with war] (Warsaw 2017) and *Wojna i okolice* [war and the surrounding areas]. He has published for “Pamiętnik Literacki”, “Teksty Drugie”, “Ruch Literacki”, “Przegląd Humanistyczny”, “Znak”, „Nowe Książki”.