

environment, usually absorbed by their own thoughts, the music in their headphones, or a book. Visitors from out of town look around, smile, and notice little things that normally wouldn't attract their attention. Kurowska's poetic 'I' seems to be traveling in both ways.

Some poems in *The Wall & Beyond* invite the reader to a particular place in Poland or to an internal space that has little to do with what is happening on the train. Other poems start with an observation—of an ant (27) or a sparrow (10)—and expand to include the larger world, philosophical abstractions, truth, and God. This variety of poetic perceptions makes the collection pulsate between the in and out, small and large, particular and abstract—it makes it alive. The mind of the poetic 'I' wanders freely and thoughtfully, even whimsically at times. The reader follows from the intoxicating smell of the lilies in Grandma's room in Ożarów, through the credo that begins with "I believe in the silence of the invisible God" (13), to the sudden disillusionment of hearing one's own voice "singing in Polish" in an American shower and feeling like "an abysmal stomach / crying to be fed" (28).

What makes Kurowska's poetic meditations interesting is not so much the "pulse" of this collection but interruptions of the pulse: "being surrounded by a rough wall" (1), "wall-like silence" (4), understanding that the wall "too / is full of despair" and "becoming a wall" (21), or foreseeing that "one day, the roughcast / of plaster and flesh will fall off // the wall will stay naked and transparent // there will be only you" (41). Readers of Polish poetry may associate this stirring experience of a clash between physical and metaphysical with the poems of Czesław Miłosz and Zbigniew Herbert. The association with a fiction writer would be less likely unless one is aware of Kurowska's scholarly interest in Joseph Conrad's amalgam of material and spiritual.

Besides the poetic kinship with the legacy of Conrad, Miłosz, and Herbert, there is another reason to consider this book in a broader literary context. Conrad made a conscious choice to write in English from the outset of his literary career; Miłosz collaborated on the translations of his poems with several American poets; Herbert left it to his translators to capture and interpret

the many dimensions of his poetry. Joanna Kurowska, who published two poetry collections in Polish *Ściana* (1997) and *Obok* (1999) a decade after she immigrated to the United States, translated her Polish verses into English as she was writing, more and more often, new poems in English. A comparison of Kurowska's English poems collected in *Inclusions* (forthcoming from Cervena Barva Press) with her translated poems and their Polish originals may contribute to the understanding of bilingual writing as an aesthetic and cultural phenomenon. How is active bilingualism affecting the poet's voice, considering that poetry is shaped by the unique linguistic features of its medium? It will be interesting to see how Kurowska's bilingualism develops. English has already become her primary poetic language, and she has also published Polish translations of her new English poems. Thus far, a reading of *The Wall & Beyond* demonstrates that it is possible to reenact one's own writing persona in a new language. The musical instrument has changed, but the score is the same. Compare the Polish and English last stanzas of "Joseph Conrad":

Ból jest duchem ukrytym w muszelce istnienia
Postać o boskich rysach, która otwiera drzwi
Wiodące do wnętrza dłoni i do wnętrza ziemi
Gdzie płyną po kamieniach zapomniane źródła. (29)

The spirit hiding in life's seashell is pain.
He is the god-figure that opens the door
and takes you to the earth's heart and the hand's palm
where long forgotten sources flow over stones.
(*Obok*, p. 60)

Nie można zdradzić Ewangelii Rozmowy z abp. Ignacym Tokarcukiem

By Mariusz Krzysztofiński. Rzeszów-Kraków: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej Oddział w Rzeszowie and Uniwersytet Jana Pawła II (ipn.gov.pl), 2012. ISBN 83-7629-348-6. 136 pages. Illustrations, bibliography. Hardbound.

John M. Grondelski

The Roman Catholic Church played a decisive role in Poland's struggle against

communism. While Primate Stefan Wyszyński's "non possumus" and Karol Wojtyła's efforts—as a cardinal building the Nowa Huta church, as Pope on the international cold war stage—are well-known examples of the Church's role in that struggle, other members of the Catholic hierarchy also played pivotal parts. A major figure in that struggle was Ignacy Tokarczuk, archbishop of Przemyśl (1966–1993), who died in December 2012. His church-building program and vigorous support of the Polish opposition elicited communist invigilation through most of his thirty-three-year episcopal service.

Krzysztofński's book consists of interviews with the archbishop. The first two chapters focus on Tokarczuk's birth, family, youth, and studies in the *Kresy* (Polish Borderlands) area including his ordination for the archdiocese of Lwów/Lviv and his early years as a priest, both in today's Ukraine and after his communist-induced exile in postwar Poland (Katowice, Olsztyn, and Lublin). The bishopric of Przemyśl was his last appointment. The subsequent five chapters cover his service to Przemyśl, with particular focus on his illegal church-building program that resulted in 400+ new churches built in the Przemyśl diocese during his tenure; his pastoral work such as the Millennium of Christianity celebrations and relations with Greek Catholics/Orthodox; his relations with individuals in his diocese, including priests who collaborated with the regime; his activities outside the diocese, such as travels to Rome and his meetings in Paris with *Kultura's* Jerzy Giedroyc, especially concerning Polish-Ukrainian relations; and his support for the Polish opposition, including the rights of rural dwellers, encounters with Lech Wałęsa, Jacek Kuroń, and Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko. The book concludes with two chapters on Tokarczuk's meetings with Popiełuszko and Pope Karol Wojtyła. It is profusely documented with extended notes and bibliographical citations that explain Tokarczuk's references and allusions.

Because of Tokarczuk's robust defense of Polish Catholics' rights to religious freedom he was the object of particularly harsh communist repression, ranging from refusals to allow him to travel abroad (his first *ad limina* visit was impeded for almost a decade), through physical attacks by unidentified perpetrators, to the secret

police's elaborate planning in case of Tokarczuk's anticipated appointment to succeed Wyszyński as Primate. Because Tokarczuk advocated a good offense as the best way to defend Polish Catholic rights, he also sometimes proved inconvenient to some ecclesiastical circles, especially during the conciliatory *Ostpolitik* of Paul VI's later years. Tokarczuk discusses meetings in Rome with such key Vatican foreign policy figures as Luigi Poggi and Agostino Casaroli, who unsuccessfully pressured him to tone down his opposition to communism. Archbishop Tokarczuk's hardline helped save Cardinal Wyszyński from a fate similar to Hungary's Cardinal Mindszenty, who, as a result of an *Ostpolitik* deal with Budapest, was eventually sidelined in exile. In the interview Tokarczuk revealed that after Pope John Paul II's succession and the abandonment of the Casaroli pro-Soviet policies, Poggi himself eventually asked Tokarczuk's forgiveness for pressuring him.

Another interesting part of the book is the recurring theme of Polish-Ukrainian relations. Tokarczuk narrowly escaped death at the hands of the UPA [Ukrainian Liberation Army], and during his episcopate was sometimes criticized for taking over Greek Catholic churches in his diocese. In his defense, Tokarczuk argues that by taking over these churches, he actually saved these architectural treasures that would otherwise have been brought to ruin, as has been the case in Soviet Ukraine. He also addresses tensions over pastoral care of the Łemki people, who were largely located in his diocese and who claim separate identity (neither Polish nor Ukrainian). Finally, he notes that part of his diocese actually lay in Ukraine. This was a territory over which he was unable to exercise any pastoral jurisdiction, but because of his contacts with people there, "I knew that Russia faced the necessity of internal change, because otherwise there would have been an explosion within communism itself" (p. 68, my translation).

Scholars such as Sabina Bober in *Persona non grata* have recently devoted attention to Tokarczuk's role in ousting the most notorious institutions of communism. This book provides additional insight into this important figure and

religion's role in bringing down totalitarianism.

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MORE BOOKS

***Shadow Elite: How the World's New Power Brokers Undermine Democracy, Government, and the Free Market*, by Janine R. Wedel.** New York: Basic Books, 2009. xv + 281 pages. Index. ISBN 978-0-465-09106-5. Hardcover. \$27.50.

Janine Wedel is a brilliant social scientist who has articulated a problem that is often sideswiped by the powerful information industry: the fact that “upending rules and authority” (ix) has become the norm in virtually all countries, and the goal is to increase one’s own status and influence. “The new breed of international players” has fashioned new rules of the game to benefit themselves (x). Today power and influence are held not by their ostensible holders but rather by “flexians” (xi), who are the real agenda-wielding players. It is this “network of [anonymous] interlocking players” (xii) that matters and not the ossified institutions, titles, and offices. Those who participate in the networks are called flexians and perform overlapping roles in large foundations, the government, and industry. They “reorganize relations between bureaucracy and business to their advantage” (7) and are “accountable only to their patrons” (9). They are people of diverse ideological persuasions, which they change depending on which way they feel the wind blows. Their goal is not always money; more often it is influence and promotion of their ideological views. Flexians are particularly numerous in Eastern European countries; the former communist apparatchiks transformed themselves into go-betweens and mediators in the new system. This shadow elite undermines democracy and capitalism.

Wedel posits that “neoliberal policies facilitate the blurring of state and private relationships, and thus make local environments friendlier to flex activity” (33). She then offers examples of flexians that range from ostensibly ordinary folk to government figures. The Rywin affair in Poland that involved Agora, Adam Michnik, and many other persons of power is described in

detail. It should be stressed that many flexians are persons whose names are not household words, yet they behave as if they wielded some mysterious power—in the Polish case, they seemed to wield power over those who questioned them in the Polish Senate hearings.

Subsequent chapters show “flexing” in the U.S. government and argue that government today includes a “shadow government” consisting of “consulting firms, nonprofits, think tanks, and other nongovernmental entities” (76). Wedel states that at some point three-fourths of federal government employees were contractors (78). These figures make the perennial discussion about paring down the government mere campaign talk. In particular, the Department of National Security (called a “megabureaucracy” by Wedel) recorded “colossal increases in contract spending with Defense accounting for nearly three-quarters of the total federal procurement budget in 2008” (79). The general public has no idea about this shadow government that leaches out resources and in practice rules over the country. There are companies employing tens of thousands of workers who mainly work for the U.S. government. Supervision of these companies is scant, statistics are nonexistent, and the functioning of this system is shrouded in mystery.

Wedel also discusses Moscow and the privatization process in the former Soviet Union. Finally, we return to the United States to look at the “commandeers” of this new way of governing (147). Wedel submits that the “neocon core” (147) deserves that name more than anyone else. She mentions Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and Douglas Feith, three government officials who distinguished themselves by skirting bureaucracy, breaching regulations, and being skillful in bailing each other out of trouble (147).

Can one speak of accountability then? Not before another term is introduced, “truthiness.” It differs from truth in that truthiness means presenting events and ideas in the way we would like them to be, and not necessarily in a way congruent with facts. In literary studies this is called postmodernism. Truth has lost its